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KINSHIP, FRIENDSHIP AND GENDER RELATIONS

IN TWO EAST AEGEAN VILLAGE COMMUNITIES (LESBOS, GREECE)

Thesis submitted for Ph.D
Euthymios Papataxiarchis
London School of Economics and Political Science

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the ways in which kinship and friendship are informed by cultural notions of gender in two villages of Northern Lesbos (East Aegean region of Greece) and it falls into four parts. It begins with a discussion of marriage and the creation of the domestic group, it moves on to consider relations in the predominantly female realm of house and neighbourhood and concludes with an examination of the social and cultural configurations present in the exclusively male domain of the coffeeshop and the village community at large.

In the introductory chapter I briefly discuss the socio-economic and demographic context in a historical perspective. The analysis of informal courtship, match-making and dowering and the process of marriage more generally forms the focus of part one. Here it is shown that the religiously sanctioned ideal of the bilateral household[which is based on gender complementarity] is administered primarily by women and exhibits a matrilateral emphasis.

This point is fully explored in part two where it is demonstrated that while men, especially those of low status, are domestically marginal, their wives in their maternal role dominate kin-based and mutually antagonistic networks of women. A close examination of the fragmented nature of male kinship and the content of affinity and neighbourship further confirms the centrality of women to kinship.

The third part begins with an extensive discussion of the code of commensality and the drinking patterns it supports, the cycle of participation in different categories of coffeeshop and the symbolism of drinks. An analysis of male commensal friendship and the more asymmetric ties that arise in competitive drinking and gambling gives

us the clues to understanding notions of gender that are specific to the coffeeshop and opposed to corresponding notions that arise in the context of the household. Finally the concluding part examines the values of individual personhood and 'belonging' in local society and assesses the contrast between two notions of the village and their implications for political behaviour.

PREFACE

This thesis is an anthropological study of two neighbouring village communities on the Eastern Aegean island of Lesbos. This is in no sense a complete ethnographic account. Certain theoretical concerns and the present state of specialization in the ethnography of Southern European societies support a narrower focus on the gendered character of kinship organization and cultural identity. In particular I discuss how women and men relate within and without marriage, in heterosexual and same sex settings. The cultural profile, the socio-economic foundations, the relational patterns of house and coffeeshop are examined in some detail. In both communities kinship is of utmost important for women. Men are much more divided and ambivalent vis a vis uterine kinship. This is particularly so in lower class settings and among bachelors whose allegiances focus primarily on drinking alcohol and other exclusively male activities in the coffeeshop.

For the purposes of analysis I abstract the culturally informed principles of social organization: the bilateral, inter-sexual, community of 'conjugality', the primarily female 'kinship' and the predominantly male 'commensality'. These are the principles with which I attempt to account for the contrast between the sexually inclusive conjugal domestic group and the sex-segregated nature of life in the neighbourhood and the coffeeshop; for the fluidity in the boundaries that demarcate male from female; for the subsequent penetration of female values in the male world; and for the contrast between different notions of community.

On the ethnographic level this thesis is influenced by and often engaged in a critical dialogue with the pioneering analyses of J. Campbell (1964), J. Peristiany (1966) and J. Pitt-Rivers (1971). Its

ambition is to contribute in enlarging the comparative scope of the ethnographic paradigm that they produced. To this effect I am intellectually indebted to writers such as M. Bloch, M. Strathern and S. Yanagisako who recently invited us to rethink our categories of gender, kinship and community. On another level I hope that this thesis will be suggestive for those who study social processes in the Aegean Basin.

Some technical issues should be clarified here. In the text I opt for phonological transliteration. Only standard usages of names of places and people are exempted. During fieldwork one pound equalled around 75 drachmas. One **modi** equals 640 kilogrammes.

Field research in Skamnia was conducted for 20 months, between September 1979 and May 1981. Skamniotes and Skaliotes insisted on not changing the villages' names. Yet I had to change all personal names. Sibylla Dimitriou joined me in the field for prolonged periods of time, took care of me in difficult circumstances and helped me entering the women's world. Without her fieldwork would have been more stressful and less productive.

A long time mediated between the conception and the completion of this thesis. This was a period of transformation, of radical changes in the perspective and focus of reflection that eventually led to this text. It was also a period of accumulation of debts, only a small number of which will be possible to acknowledge in this Preface.

This thesis could not have been possible without financial assistance from a number of sources. I wish to gratefully acknowledge a two year, graduate studentship from the London School of Economics, a Papanastasiou scholarship from the Agricultural Bank of Greece, a grant (no. 4042) to cover expenses in the field from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and two small grants in aid of research from the Central Research Fund of the University of London.

A research assistantship for a project directed by Peter Loizos and financed by the International Centre of Economic Research and an award from the Radcliffe-Brown Memorial Fund of the Royal Anthropological Institute helped me in writing up.

Further, I wish to thank David Elsworth and Gavin Allan-Wood of the LSE Photographic Unit who produced the field photographs including those printed in the thesis. Jane Pugh and Susan Horsfall of the LSE Drawing Office helped me in drawing the maps. Pandora Geddes skillfully typed this text.

John Campbell, Jill Dubisch, Ernestine Friedl, Michael Herzfeld, and John Peristiany commented on aspects of this or relevant work. I sincerely thank them. In London I profited from discussions with colleagues at the LSE department. In particular I want to thank Marina Iossifides and Maria Phylaktou. Nicos Mouzelis and Yiorgos Dertilis were very encouraging at various stages of the research. In Athens Theodoros Paradelles read the final text. Ileana Antonacopoulou, Eva Calpourtzi and Christos Lyritzis commented on some of the chapters.

The people of Skamnia and Skala entrusted to me the role of chronicler of their life as it is today and as it was in the past. I hope that this text does not betray the confidence they showed me. Strates Kaperones and Nicos Xenakes in Skamnia, Thanos and Lena Marmarinou, Yiorgos and Afrodite Yiyinte in Skala gave me scope to feel in my own way as a human being. Nikolas Yiyintes, Yiannes Zervos, Michales Zourzouviles, Yogos Kaligeres, Fotes and Penelope Kalipolite, Stelios and Metsos Karayiannes, Kyriakos Karakontes, Fotes and Garoufalio Karanikola, Elene Klossa, Ignatios Krantinos, Strates Kommenos, Yiorgos Sofokleous, Vasiles Tsakos and Manoles Fotiou treated my impatience with kindness, my ignorance with humour and my inquisitiveness with tolerance. I am grateful to them.

Finally I wish to thank two of my teachers at the LSE. Maurice Bloch brought me up into anthropology proper. His incisive criticism was indispensable as was his generosity and support throughout my LSE years. A special debt is owed to Peter Loizos. As a teacher he supervised this thesis. His comments on two subsequent drafts were invaluable help in adding substance and clarity to the argument. As a friend he stood by me during all the hardships I encountered in accomplishing this task. The debt to him is impossible to reciprocate.

Janet Carsten, friend and colleague, shared with me the ups and downs of a prolonged effort. She taught me many of the things I so much needed, including simplicity, balance, and the very sense of language. The finest of the spices used in this thesis come from her **dapur**.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

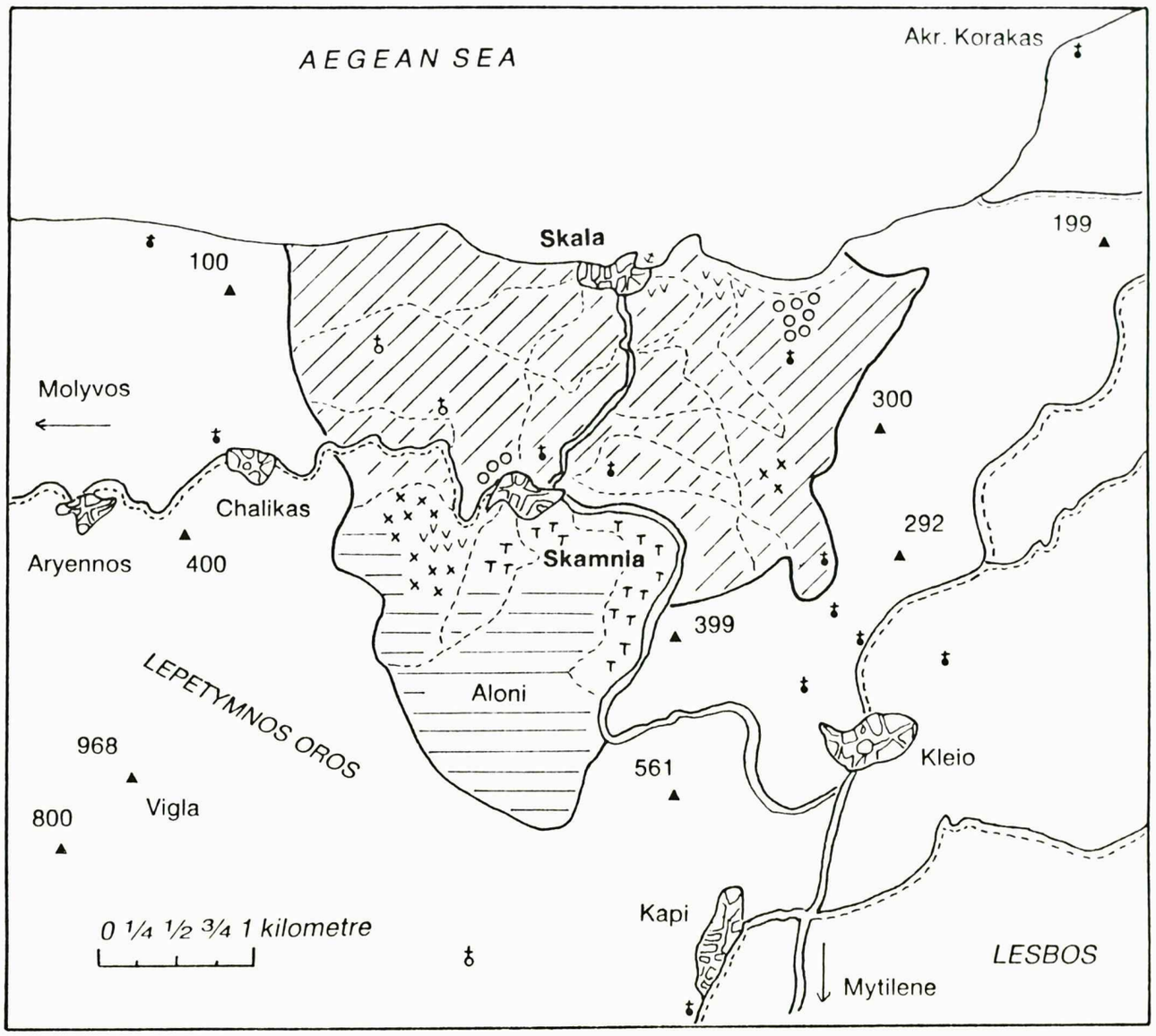
1. People and Place in Time

Skamnia lies 49 kilometres north of Mytilene on the paved road that links Mantamados, the headvillage of north eastern Lesbos, to the capital of the island. At an altitude of about 300 metres its inhabitants describe it as "hanging from the cliffs". The contours of the somewhat steep terrain are intensified in the southwest, where an altitude of almost 1000 meters is reached only a few kilometres from the sea shore, while they smoothly fade out in the north and north east sides, which face the opposite Anatolian shore. A narrow strip (6-7 miles width) of water separates Skamnia's coast from Asia Minor. Considerable temperature variations within a temperate climate, which becomes milder and more wet in the areas with low altitude that face the Anatoli, the East, as Asia Minor is called, reflect and shape the two ecological options offered locally as well as elsewhere in the island: a 'dry' and high-altitude zone used for animal husbandry, a 'wet', and low altitude zone for olive monocultivation.[1]

Variations between these two zones are also distributed on an east/west axis, thus reflecting two opposite ecological influences, the Aegean and the Anatolian. The rocky, barren terrain of south west Lesbos reminds one very much of the Cycladic landscape. The northern slopes of Lepetymnos, where Skamnia lies, and the eastern side of the island as well, appear as extensions of the Anatolian landscape. The public road serves as a boundary between the two major ecological zones (see map 2). Over the road and ascending towards the plateau one encounters a considerable variation in vegetation: at the eastern



Map 1: Lesbos in the Aegean Basin



Limits of Skamnia's land

Paved road

Unpaved road

Footpaths

Hamlet

Country chapel

Remains of place of Christian worship

Olive groves

Vineyards

Vegetable gardens

Pasture land

Commons (forest, pasture)

Barren land

Spot heights in metres

Map 2: Skamnia, Skala and the Surrounding Area

side a small forest with some pines, holm oaks, almond and walnut trees; at the western side, where a well preserved pathway leads to the plateau, there is a large strip of vineyards, most of which are now deserted. Over them among the thick wild vegetation of holm oaks and bushes, there are pieces of land once cleared to provide cereals for humans and hay for animals. At the plateau the terrain becomes barren: one can still distinguish fields once used for wheat or barley cultivation, yet today the place is only used for pasture.[2]

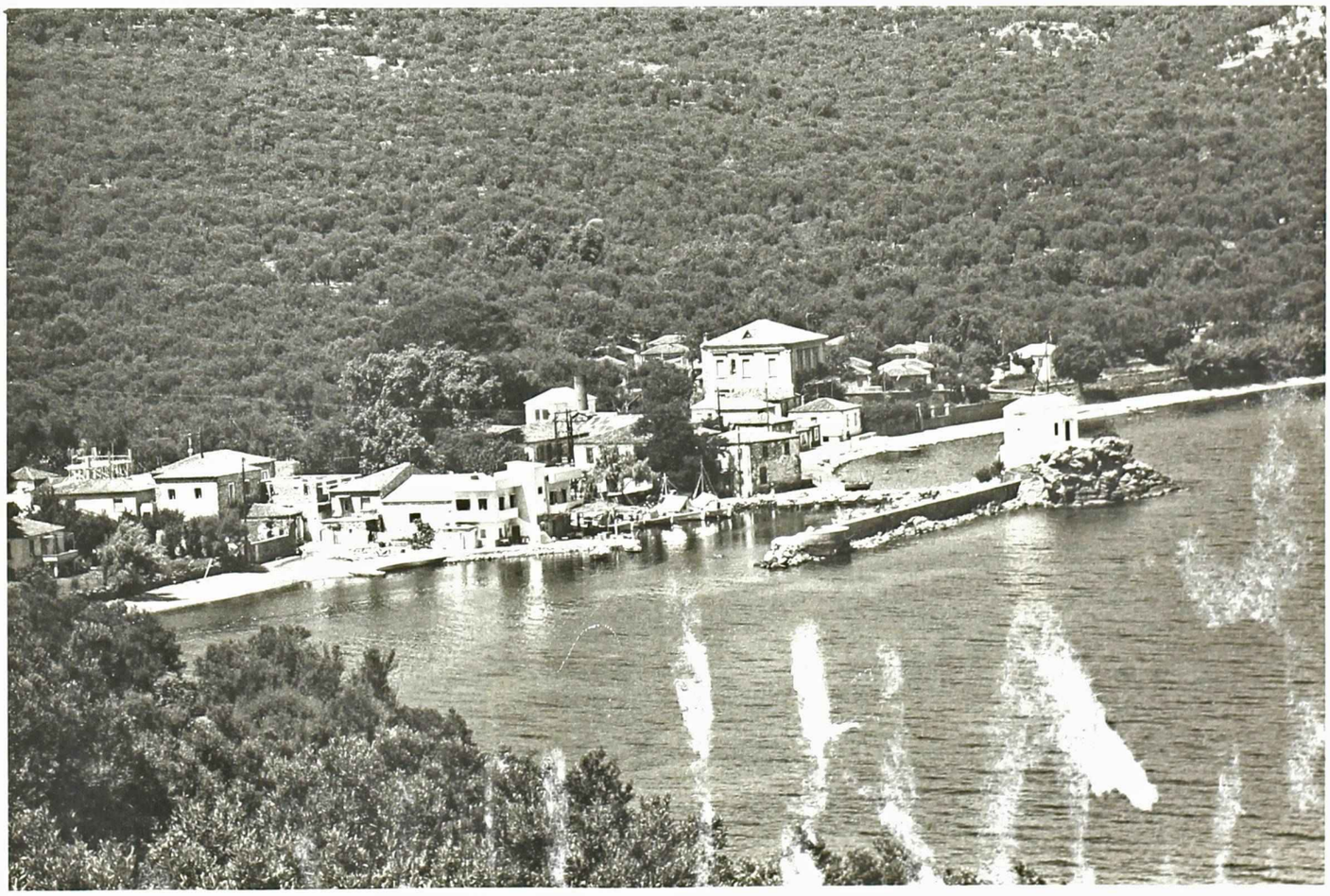
Under the road the monotonous green of the olive groves dominates. The campos (plain) is covered thickly in certain areas, less in others, with olives grow down to the sea shore. The only exception are small zones of vegetable gardens found very near to the village or in Kayia, a site northwest and by the sea which is well watered by a winter stream. Citrus trees and some vineyards are also cultivated in Kayia, with the help of recently introduced methods of irrigation, which involve electrically-powered pumps.

Some dates may add historical depth to the discussion that follows.[3] Being part of the Byzantine Empire since the fourth century, Lesbos suffered incursions and occasionally short term occupation by the Saracens and later by Seljuks as well as Venetians and Catalans from the ninth to the fourteenth century. It suffered a retaliatory attack by the Venetians who sacked it in 1171; in 1204 it became part of the Latin Empire of Constantinople and in 1225 was recaptured by the Greek Empire of Nicaea. In 1355 Lesbos was given as 'dowry' by the Byzantine emperor John V to the Genoese corsair Francesco Gattilusio who helped him regain his throne and married his sister. The island stayed under Genoese rule till 1462 when it was occupied by the Ottomans.

The Porte's sovereignty of Lesbos lasted 450 years. Local



1. Skamnia : a view from the public road.



2. Ska[illegible].

historiographers regard the first century of Ottoman rule as the 'middle age' of Lesbos despite the restoration of episcopal authority by the end of the fifteenth century and the establishment of new monasteries.[4] Since the beginning of the eighteenth century Mytilene became the seat of the Ottoman navy and a timar of the Kapudan pasa (grand admiral) till 1779 when the local tax started being rented out to local notables and traditional administrative forms were restored.[5] In 1770-1 the Christians of Mylitene suffered repurcussions because of Russian naval operations in the Aegean. They participated in the 1821 war of Greek independence, yet failed to join the emerging Greek state.

To turn to Skamnia, scanty evidence from cadastral surveys and traveller's accounts and a fifteenth century church located outside the village suggest a long history of settlement on the slopes of Lepetymnos and periodic changes in the site of the village, mainly due to 'piratic' incursions. What is particularly interesting from the demographic history of Skamnia is, first, the impressive increase of the local population throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth and the subsequent decrease; second, the socio-spatial dimensions of population growth. This is an important point. The present day drawing of the ethnic and political boundary between Greece and Turkey misrepresents the inclination of the local system towards Anatolia. Lesbos is on the fringe of a society in which various economic specializations, styles of living (sedentarism and nomadism) or great traditions coexisted for long periods of time.[6] The slice of history that we examine here shows that administrative stability, improvement in conditions of life and population increase bring Lesbos as well as Skamnia much closer to the opposite Anatolian shore. This is part of wider eastwards and southwards migratory movements within the Aegean Basin.

Demographic evidence is scanty. Yet, as table 1 shows, despite the setbacks that the population of Lesbos experienced throughout the nineteenth century, such as the plague of 1836, which allegedly killed around 25,000 souls on the island,[7] the big frost in 1849 and the earthquake of 1867 which according to Fouque killed 20 people and left intact just 30 out of the 300 houses in Skamnia,[8] there was a steady growth. At the end of the century the population of the island was nearly double what it had been at the beginning, not including those who colonized Anatolia.[9]

While in the seventeenth century Skamnia was a small ethnically mixed community with 25 Christian households and indeed half the size of the neighbouring Aryennos, in the course of the nineteenth century it grew more than its neighbours. By the end of the century it took advantage of its better placement at the centre of the olive-growing plain and its outlet to the sea, through the small port of Skala, and dominated a complex of administratively satelite villages such as Chalikas and Aryennos.[10] If we compare the reliable figures from the Ottoman census of 1831 with the 1909 report by Taxis, we note the impressive increase of ethnic Greeks and the corresponding stagnation of the ethnic Turks. This is confirmed by figures in the tax registers of 1865, 1866 and 1880-1 and is in fact bigger than actually reported if we consider the Skamniotes who colonized the opposite Anatolian coast, a point to which I shall return.[11]

In 1912 Lesbos was united with the Kingdom of Greece and ten years later the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey marked the island's irreversible separation from its Anatolian umbilical cord. The ethnic Turks of Skamnia departed and their past existence is since then covered with sympathetic silence: the mosque

Table 1

Ethnic Greek and Turkish Population of Skamnia and Skala in the Nineteenth Century

Year	Ethnic Greeks or total	Ethnic Turks	Men Greeks	Men Turks	Source
1618-1621	25 'Christian households'	'More than Argenno, Chalikas'			Bishop of Mythimna Abriel in Fountoulis, 1960.
1831	143 'Christian families'	62 'Ottoman families'	384	140	Ottoman census of 1831 in Aristeidou, 1863, 166.
1849	'almost' 150 'houses', including 'Christian and Turks'				Anagnostou, 1850.
1865	304 ethnically Greek units of taxation				Unpublished tax register, "Katastichon dosimaton chorion Sykamia 20 Martiou 1865".
1866			263 taxed men		Unpublished tax register, "Katalogisis oso dia tous dromous 1866".
1867	300 houses (total)				Fouque', 1868.
1868	129 'well to do families				Drakou, 1899.
1880-1	238 units of taxation		246 men who pay conscription tax over 14 years		Unpublished tax register. "Vivlio ispraxis foron 1880-1".
1909	260 'Christian families'	60 'Ottoman families'			Taxes, 1909

and its fountain were first transformed into a public bath, then into a dispensary. The Turkish coffeeshop was demolished and the land it was built on is now the village square. The fountains and the Turkish cemetery turned into a beautiful green place for pasture. Only via language can one trace the ethnic diversity and the mixing of cultural traditions in Skamnia's Ottoman past.

On the other hand, Skamnia got back a considerable number of the Skamniotes who had colonized villages such as Papasli, Narli, Freneli or Avtzilar on the now Turkish Anatolian coast. Shortly after 1922 a big group of more than 200 refugees mainly from Moschonisia, an ethnic Greek village of 4000 people lying opposite to Aivali, settled in Skala. In the early thirties more than half of the refugee families moved to the so called **Sinikismos**, a neighbourhood with two-room houses built by the Refugee Settlement Committee.[12]

Skala soon became a community with a separate sense of identity. It still occupies a central place in Skamnia's economic life since it is the seat of Skamnia's cooperative factory and Skamniotes think of it as an appendix to their community. Skaliotes, on the other hand, most of whom are fishermen, agriculturalists or work in the merchant navy, are very conscious of their dependence and try to overcome it by stressing their distinctive refugee identity and origins.

Skamnia is the seat of the joint communal council, of the priest, the doctor, the post-service, the tailor, the barber, the smith and the garbage collector. It retains two 'general stores' and two bakeries that extend their service to neighbouring villages. Skala has a small grocery shop and enjoys the services of a visiting barber from Kapi. Both villages have their own elementary schools with one teacher each, their own telephone line administered respectively by a coffeeshop manager and the tailor. Both got electricity in the fifties. Fridges, televisions and other electric appliances such as

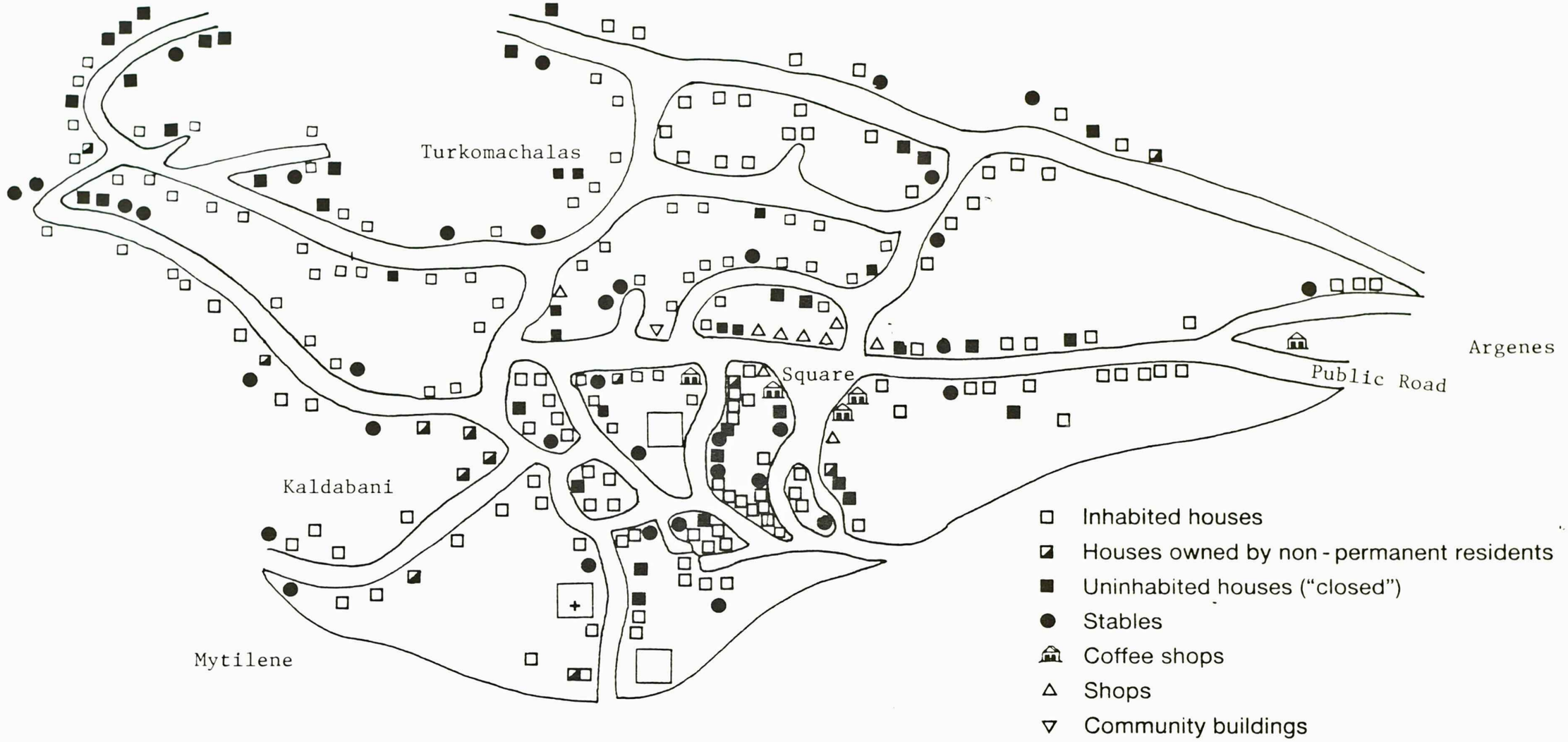
stereos are today's standard requirements in newly made households.

The physical layout of both villages is informed by a clear separation of female from male spaces, of the more inwards oriented realms of house and neighbourhood from the more exposed spaces of **platia**, square and the coffeeshops (see maps 3 and 4). Houses are closely assembled in a thick circle that contains the square. Attached to the latter are public buildings, such as the offices of the commune and the cooperative, coffeeshops and trading establishments of all sorts. The paved road that links the villages to Mitylene does not cross the settlements. A short, paved appendix to the public road links it to the village square without really disturbing life in the neighbourhood.

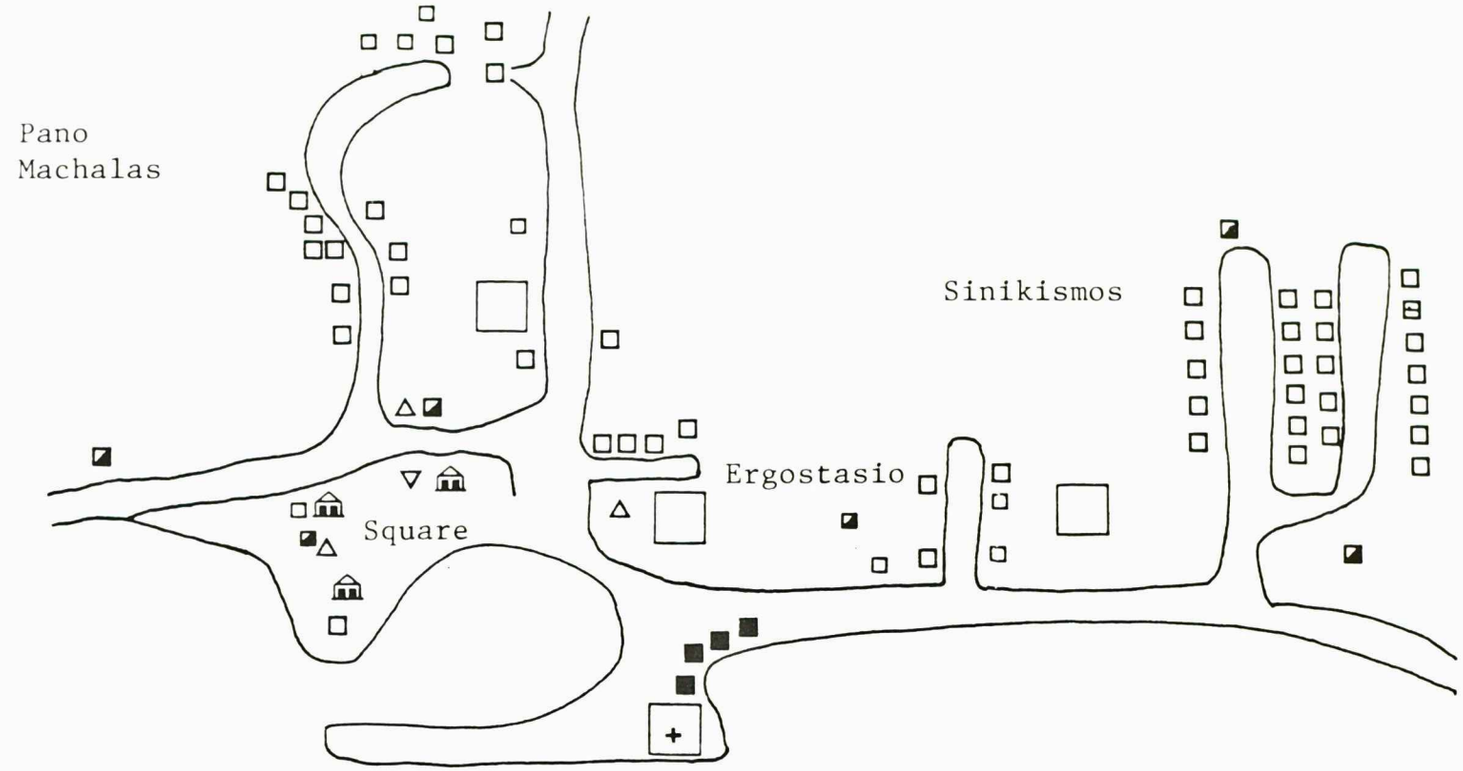
Despite a certain tension in relations between the two communities in the past, today there is a rapprochement based on an increasing process of inter-marriage, an established tradition of joint communal administration, which is accepted by the younger generation of Skaliotes, and the general improvement of the economic situation of Skaliotes, who enjoy increasingly bigger incomes from fishing and lately from tourism. Yet even today and under the premise of Skala being a neighbourhood of Skamnia, Skamniotes find it natural to visit Skala and they often do so while Skaliotes only visit Skamnia when necessary.

We will return to this theme of communal identity in chapter X. For the purposes of this thesis, however, I will deal with the two villages jointly as they largely share the same cultural understanding on the issues to be discussed here.

In contrast to the picture of demographic growth in the nineteenth century, the corresponding image for the twentieth century



Map 3: Skamnia: A Plan of the Settlement



- Inhabited houses
- Houses owned by non - permanent residents
- Uninhabited houses ("closed")
- Stables
- Coffee shops
- Shops
- Community buildings

Map 4: Skala: A Plan of the Settlement

is that of decline. Figures from table 2 show the steady decrease of the resident population in Skamnia which by 1981 was less than half of that fifty years ago. Skala's population remained stable in the post war period. As early as the first decade of this century, men from prosperous families in Skamnia emigrated to North America in order to avoid conscription. In the inter-war period there was some internal migration to Athens. Huge public works in Northern Greece attracted labourers from Skamnia who settled there seasonally or permanently. My informants calculated more than 25 households with at least one member from Skamnia in Thessaloniki, Drama, Serres and Nigrita. The population haemorrhage, however, was really felt after the war when Skamniotes left to seek work in the big urban centres. Today there are about 11 Skamniotika households in Germany and more than 25 in Australia. In Athens there are today at least 200 households that identify as originating from Skamnia. Members of these households have relatives in the village which they often visit, a considerable part of them own some land and more than two thirds of them participate in an Association aiming to bring together expatriate Skamniotes. The great number of houses that today are not occupied (see maps 4 and 5) clearly illustrate this point.

The pattern of migration has largely effected demographic structures. In Skala it involved three and four generation families instead of cutting kinship groups across generational lines or splitting sibling groups into two, as often happened in Skamnia. Skala retained a demographic basis that supported a certain growth; in Skamnia the percentage of elderly people is disproportionately large.

The contrast between the late nineteenth century phase of expansion and the middle twentieth century period of retreat is, indeed, impressive and accurately captures the extent of political

Table 2

The Population of Skamnia and Skala, 1920-1981

	1920	1928	1940	1951	1961	1971	1981
Skamnia and Skala - total	758	993	913	855	651	529	491
Skamnia and Skala - men	349	470	470				
women	409	523	443				
Skamnia total	691	816	713		494	375	332
Skamnia - men	316	445	369				
women	375	371	344				
Skala total	67	177	200		157	154	159
Skala - men	33	99	101				
women	34	78	99				

Source: National Statistical Service of Greece, The Population of Greece, Athens: National Printing House, 1921, 1935, 1950, 1962, 1972, 1982.

change and socio-economic transformation that effected Skamnia. In the course of 150 years the local society experienced two radical reorientations. The first was to the markets of the East, especially Smyrna and Constantinople, and either through them or directly to Alexandria, Cairo, or even further to France, England and Russia. This change took place in the atmosphere of peace and administrative stability that the Tanzimat brought to western Anatolia. The second could be described as a displacement from the core of a socio-economically developing region in the polyglot Ottoman Empire to the margins of a religiously uniform Greek nation-state.

We now turn to the geographical dimension in local demographic history. Evidence from the nineteenth century confirms a long-term tendency: that when population grows it expands eastward. Population

movement bridged the divide between the insular and the mainland components of a single regional system known as Aeolida. This long-standing inclination of the island to focus upon the **Anatoli** is historically portrayed in the conceptualization of the opposite shore as the **Mytilenaion aigialos**, Mytilene's seashore.[13] It is further exemplified in the eastward orientation of major urban centres in Eastern Aegean.

The development of trade around Smyrna, Aydin, Ayvalik or Bursa that linked local agricultural systems to the European markets was an important factor. The population appeared to traffic on the routes that led to the emerging commercial centres, from mainland Greece and insular Aegean to western Anatolia. The growth of a market oriented agricultural economy in late nineteenth century Skamnia fostered these movements locally. Their particular form, however, was decided by the terrain as well as by totally accidental factors such as natural disasters.

Lepetymnos was a big obstacle to Skamnia's links with Mytilene and other parts of the island, while the narrow water strip that separated the village from the opposite mainland could be easily crossed with boats from Skala. The roads on the island were and remained throughout most of the century in bad shape often made of 'loose stone or sheer rock'[14] or utilizing the 'dried up bed of a stream';[15] they were a 'luxury' to be used by mules rather than proper carriages. In 1866 Biliotti (1866, 953) reports the existence of "no roads for carriages, only small mule paths" and mentions the difficulties in collecting the recently instituded road tax. Later, Cuinet (1891, 454-5) reports the existence of two carriage roads with a total length of 45 kilometres. It seems that eventually the levy imposed contributed to road improvements.[16]

What is most probable is that Skamnia lay outside the existing

network. Kiepert and Koldewey who walked on the island in the 1840s and 1885 and mapped it, did not report passing through the village although there is a mark on their map linking Skamnia to Molyvos.[17] The same can be said for other travellers who approached Skamnia from the coast.[18] Only in the 1900s did the carriage artery reach Skamnia.[19] It seems then that sea traffic was the most appropriate option offered to the Skamniotes. This is confirmed by my eldest informants who notice how much easier and quicker it was to visit the headvillages on the opposite Anatolian shore rather than Mytilene in order to find a doctor or buy utensils.

The sea-wards and east-wards orientation of the Skamniotes, however, became institutionalised after the 1850s. Many of the villagers were pushed by the 1850 frost to seek paid work, first on a seasonal basis, in the Anatolian mainland. Favourable conditions such as vacant land and the penetration of the market as well as a certain underpopulation encouraged some of them to settle there, get married and even create landed properties.[20] Others came to own land and reside in both places.[21] A 1868 register mentions taxes collected from 81 Skamniotes who resided in villages of the kaza (administrative district) of Aivatzik on the exactly opposite Anatolian shore, 8 of whom lived in Phokies, 9 in Smyrna and 2 in Tsantarli. On the other hand throughout the second half of the nineteenth century the local society received population as well as exporting it. Men from less fertile islands of the northern Aegean, Thrace, Albania or Bosnia are recorded as coming to work and then settling in Skamnia. As we shall see in the next section the more mobile segments of the population belonged to the two socio-economic extremes, merchants and landless labourers.

What is even more important is the gender character of the population movement. It seems that men were more susceptible to the gravity of

the system, moving in and out of their place of origin and often settling permanently in the locality which provided a bride as well as work, in contrast to women who were more rooted and identified more closely with their place of origin. To put it another way, population growth and mobility were linked to a pattern of male village exogamy, which decisively affected patterns of kinship and household composition and conceptualization.

2. Social Classes in Nineteenth Century Skamnia

Social class is paradoxically both present and absent in present day Skamnia.[22] It is only symbols of class such as the big neoclassical houses with the painted ceilings, the marble fountain with the name of the donor or remminiscenses by men who offered their services to the big landed bosses that testify to the quite rigid lines of past social differentation. Here I will try to throw some light on Skamnia's class structure in the nineteenth century and its progressive transformation during the twentieth century, mainly through the analysis of archival material found in the community. This is necessary if we want to understand present-day variations and gradations in the configurations of kinship, gender and prestige (see part III).

The Anglo-Ottoman commercial convention in 1838 and the Hatti-Serif of 1839 marked the beginning of a new era for the economy of Lesbos and Skamnia as well. It abolished the existing local monopoly on olive oil and gave a great impetus in local commerce.[21] Ethnic Greeks, who under the old regime traded under western protection as **berat** (license) holders, formally seized control of the expanding market for agricultural products, and exploited their

connections with foreign capital that now intruded into western Anatolia on a larger scale, thus securing big profits.[24] In a wider context, the medium of this transformation was what Stoianovich (1980, 181) called the market oriented **ciftlik** i.e. the big landed estate which produced for the market by employing a wide range of labour arrangements that included: wage labour; seasonal, dependent labour; **kesim**, the renting of land for a fixed amount of money to be prepaid; and more traditional share cropping arrangements.[25]

The evident effect of the expansion of trade with Europe after 1840 was that sections of the regional economy came within the scope of the world economic system, the production of cash crops increased, new systems of rent were employed and there was wider use of seasonal wage labour (Owen, 1981, 92-3). "It was European merchants or local merchants who had managed to acquire either European protection or later European nationality who began to enjoy increasing economic advantage" (Owen, op. cit., 99).

The wave of administrative modernization and regional economic developments reached Skamnia in the 1860s and 1870s. At the focus of these transformations was the emergence of a new commercial as well as land-based elite and, eventually, of a trichotomous class structure and a more polarized social ladder which involved medium and small land-holding peasants, the so called **nikokirei** (householders), as well as the mass of plebeians, landless 'free' or dependent labourers.[26]

The principal feature of the incoming group was its identification with money and the market. The merchants were distinguished from their traditional predecessors the so called **chatzides**, pilgrims to the Holy Places, who were among medium the landowners and who administered power sanctioned by the church to function as managers of communal affairs, arbitrators, and tax collectors. Some of the newcomers originated in families who traded

with **berats** i.e. under foreign protection. Thus, they were known as **beratarei**, a term I will employ for all merchants and big land holders. The new elite replaced the old through a process of intermarriage. Most of the known **beratarei** of Skamnia were outsiders with good connections who got married to **nikokirei** daughters with respectable dowries and who moved on to expand their landed base through trade and borrowing.

Under the influence of the market and changes in land laws, land got a market value and started being bought and sold as well as rented, a tendency that intensified as we approach the end of the century. This was the period when Skamniotes merchants created large landed estates both in Lesbos and in the Anatolian coast and firmly controlled the local economy both from a production and a distribution point of view. The administration and borrowing of money by the merchants in a period when money was the standard means of exchange as well as paying taxes certainly turned to their advantage. There is evidence that debt became endemic in local economic relationships. It further eased the passing of the land into fewer hands and ethnically Greek ones.

The **beratarei** operated large **daifades**, harvest groups, of tens of men and women who were paid on a seasonal basis, and headed by a **kehayia**, overseer, and his assistant **parayious**, dependent labourers, to whom shelter and food as well as payment in kind or money were provided. In certain instances the **beratarei** extended their financial protection and guarantee to medium or small landowners who turned into **kesimtzides**, renters of land, on a fixed amount of money usually prepaid on the condition that the **kesimtzis** would bring the harvest to his guarantor's mill for processing of the olives, and sell his oil to the latter. It is difficult to calculate what portion of Skamnia's olive groves were exploited in the above way, yet it is most probable

that this was a means by which the local economy expanded as well as of its greater concentration into fewer hands.

Outside immediate **beratarei** control remained small enclaves of family-based labour operating in a land tenure system which was and still is quite fragmented because of partible inheritance practices. This sphere was governed by the historically persisting **nikokirei** ideal of self-sufficiency and autonomy followed by most medium and small landowners who managed to cope with the evil effects of debt.

The **beratarei** appear to have come from 'outside' and identified with urban culture. They were literate not to say educated, spoke foreign languages, and travelled extensively outside the village. They even went on holidays abroad. They dressed **frangika**, in western style, and they built as well as decorated their big houses in the neoclassical fashion using marble stones from Anatolia and importing their furniture from Smyrna. Once rooted in the local community they preferred to marry outsiders and establish inter-class alliances on a regional scale. The socio-economic boundary was thus confirmed and deepened by a kinship and cultural one.[27]

I will not present a detailed account of the process of class formation in late nineteenth century Skamnia. The focus will instead be on the picture that emerges from the analysis of two tax registers for 1865 and 1880-1. This will be further contrasted with the present day situation.

A first picture of the nature of class cleavages is given by table 3 which shows a breakdown of taxpaying Skamniotes in 1865 on the basis of a single category of proportional tax on olive oil. It is an impression rather than an accurate image since we do not know exactly how many among those who did not pay the tax under consideration participated in an olive producing household yet were taxed separately

from its head. 164 of those registered as tax payers in general paid no tax on olive oil and among them there were 101 male heads of households. Together with another 71 household heads who paid less than 20 grossia they comprised the category of those who did not produce olive oil for the market. These were the bulk of the local population. At the other extreme the heads of three families paid 456, 277 and 241 grossia respectively and led the group of the landowning elite.

Table 3

Stratification Pattern of the Ethnic Greeks of Skamnia, 1865[1]

Milayina tax in grossia	Units of taxation[2]		
0	164	0	164
1-5	19		
6-10	26		
11-20	26	1-20	71
21-50	29		
51-100	23	21-100	52
101-200	14		
201-300	2		
7300	1	101-	17

Note 1: It is based on the proportional **milayina** tax.

2: In most cases the units of taxation are households headed by men.

Source: Unpublished **Katastichon dosimaton chorion Sykamia, 20 Martiou 1865** (tax register)

More comprehensive evidence for 1880-1 is equally suggestive of a quite stratified land tenure system (see table 4). This is a more accurate picture since we are certain that the units of taxation are households. A little less than half of the households were landless or almost landless, each one of them paying a land tax which ranged from nothing to 5 grossia while 9 households paid 1813 grossia. In

percentages it means that less than 4% of the ethnically Greek households paid almost one third of the total land tax owed by the Greeks of Skamnia. Placing this elite minority on a genealogical canvas throws more light on the nature of the emerging class boundary. The three leading households of the 1865 register remained among the bigger landowners in 1880. Among the 17 heads who paid over 70 grossia there were three leading families with related households in the same category. One had links to four other households, another also to four, and a third to three. This suggest the degree of inter-relatedness among the **beratarei**.

The extent of differentiation was in fact greater than what is portrayed in the registers. It was members of the land-holding elite who owned the mills and the **magazia**, stores of Skamnia for which they were taxed separately and who led the expansion of the local economy by doing business and buying land in Anatolia opposite. Members of **beratarei** families later traded in Smyrna and Alexandria and were known in the village as benefactors of community welfare and summer visitors.

The picture of stratification that the two tax registers give us is quite similar, despite the twenty year period that lies between them. It is a tripartite class structure, with the middle stratum quite divided between a segment which is very near to those at the bottom on the social ladder and another segment holding the middle ground.[28] Indeed, between the plebeian, landless or small landholding peasants, who were the great majority of the population, and the **beratarei** and big landowners, who were not more than 10-20 households, there was a group of small as well as less small **nikokirei** who struggled to stay away from the sphere of paid labour yet hardly escaped being dependent on the money-lending elite for selling their

Table 4

Stratification Pattern of the Ethnic Greeks of Skamnia, 1880-1[1]

Land tax in grossia	Units of taxation[2]	Percentage in total (244 cases)
0	62	25.4
1-5	42	17.2
6-15	49	20.1
16-40	48	19.7
41-70	26	10.7
71-100	8	3.3
101-200	5	2.0
201-300	2	1.0
301-400	1	0.4
7400	1	0.4

Note 1: It is based on the proportional **ktimatiko**, land tax.

2: I include 5 cases of men or women who pay land tax without being described by the tax register as independent units of taxation. In most cases the unit of taxation is a male head of household.

Source: Unpublished **'Vivlio Ispraxis Foron, 1880-1"** (Tax Register)

produce and paying their taxes. Another segment of this middle strata were more closely attached to the merchants since as well as exploiting their own land with their family they rented land and employed hired labour.

In 1924 the local church divided the heads of households into four categories for the purposes of collecting a special tax. In the first category there were 28, in the second 30, in the third 62 and in the fourth 102 Skamniotes. What this document does not say is that by the beginning of the twentieth century a single **beratarei** group, the **Kaligerosoi**, owned one of the most modern steam mills on the island, traded directly with foreign countries, owned the two biggest houses in Skamnia and Skala as well as a big estate and exploited through

indirect **kesimi** arrangements even more land. Most important, in their **tefters** (notebooks of indebtedness) one could find the name of almost every single villager. Reasonably enough the nickname of the **Kaligeris** was **trapeza**, bank. Indeed, at the beginning of this century local economic power was largely concentrated in the hands of a single family.

3. Economy and Social Differentiation Today

What is the present day economic situation of Skamniotes and what evidence do we have of the nineteenth century class structure? On the surface the economic realities have changed, yet not radically. Skamniotes still earn their living primarily from cultivating the olives using family labour and commercial **daifades**, and Skaliotes continue their forefathers' preoccupation with fishing. According to the 1971 agricultural census Skamnia has 2295 stremmata olive groves with 53206 trees, 56 stremmata vineyards and 98 stremmata of orchards, 135 horses and donkeys, 175 cattle and 686 sheep and goats.[29] Olives are processed locally in the cooperative and the private factory, olive oil is sold at prices fixed and guaranteed by the state.

However, as we shall see, the effect that political and economic events in the second and the third decade of this century had on the local society match in magnitude the great transformation initiated by the Tanzimat, yet in a new direction. The violent dislocation of ethnic Greeks from western Anatolia and the loss of a vital hinterland for Lesbos as well as the collapse of the nineteenth century routes for trade, meant that a population that suddenly increased, because of the incoming refugees, had to be accommodated by an economic system that had substantially diminished in size; and that Skamniotes from

now on would have to turn away from a hostile Turkish Anatolia and look westwards for the purposes of political incorporation, administrative regulation and economic exchange.

On a deeper structural level these changes marked a transfer of economic power from within Skamnia to outside it. In the years between the two wars the state gradually and increasingly replaced the market oriented local landlords. First, the state supported a cooperative of **nikokirei** which gradually replaced the trading landowners in the spheres of processing and marketing olives. Second, the state via the Agricultural Bank guaranteed minimal prices for the producers and gradually took control of the olive oil market. Third, it initiated loans of different kinds and thus successfully replaced the local merchants as the single most reliable and legitimate lender of money. As we will see in chapter X the state came to be conceived of as the new 'boss' and a focus for opposition from certain categories of Skamniotes.

The old 'bosses' adjusted to the new situation. Some of them, having lost considerable property in Anatolia, sold what remained in Skamnia and left. The dominant group of the Kaligeri abandoned the trade, sold their factories to the cooperative, and retired to Athens as absentee landlords whose property is exploited on their behalf by their **ex-kehayias** and his family. Smaller landlords who could not afford the strategy of personally supervising the exploitation of their olive groves either started selling their property, which became fragmented by inheritance practices as well, or entrusted cultivation and harvest to local men of confidence on a sharecropping or **kesimi** basis. Today the private sector of the olive oil economy consists of a small factory which deals with less than 1/4 of local production. Quite a few producers distribute part of the olive oil harvest privately thus evading the multiple restrictions that the state

imposes through the cooperative.

At the other extreme, many among the poor of Skamnia left the village to seek work opportunities in public reconstruction sectors or in the expanding urban centres. After the 1940s, besides migrating to Athens or abroad, those of the landless Skamniotes who stayed behind could find employment in new or recently booming areas such as the merchant navy, building or tourism.

These changes led to a new post-war equilibrium between the productive capacity of the local economy and its human resources. The distinguishing feature of this transformation is that labour, instead of land, became the single most important factor in the local economy and consequently blunted the edge of the historically wide socio-economic differentations based on land.

A schematic view of this development is presented in Figure 1 in which I use the relationship between the price of labour and the price of olive oil in order to show the diachronic development of these two factors of stratification, assuming that in a commodity economy land prices will be dictated by the behaviour of agricultural products in the market and finally shaped by the forces that ultimately control it, i.e. the state. The emerging picture is impressive. From 1882 to 1980 the buying capacity of wages in terms of olive oil increased almost five times.

The most spectatular effect of this development is that while in middle nineteenth century it was basically through trade that one could buy land and labour as well, today labour can buy land. Indeed, ambitious small or landless peasants and some fishermen with a **nikokirei** orientation 'invest' their savings in buying land from the descendants of the outgoing landlords. Those who **diathetoun cheria**, dispose 'hands', i.e. with available labour which they intensively

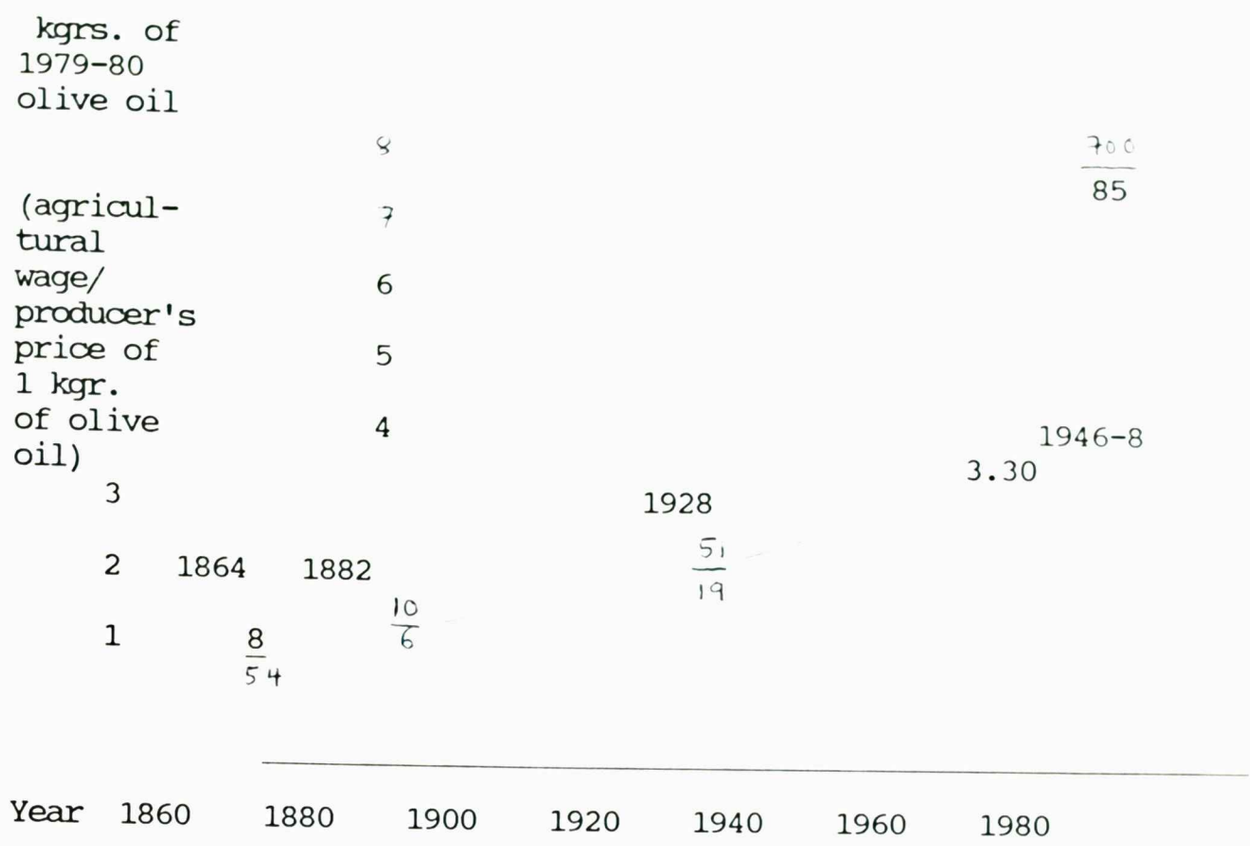


Figure 1: The Value of the Agricultural Wage in Terms of Olive Oil 1860-1980.

Source: Archive of the Church (1864, 1882)
Archive of the Kaligeri Family (1928, 1946-8)

exploit, are regarded as holding an important economic advantage. Besides the ideological significance that **doulia**, work, acquires under such circumstances (as a point of definitions and counter-definitions of personhood) it sets a new standard of stratification.

The radical inversion in the land/labour relationship meant the collapse of the large commercial **daifas**. The remaining landlords today agree that it is not profitable to exploit land through paid labour and not more than a couple of them opt for a harvest team of labourers. The only remaining option is to adjust land to the available labour either through tenure arrangements that benefit greatly those who work the land or through personal work and supervision. The resulting forms that the labour process takes are based on household and family labour. Those who dispose of land but

not labour occasionally prefer to leave it unexploited rather than succumbing to allegedly excessive demands.

Today, then, family agriculture prevails. Medium landholders exploit their olive groves using the labour of household members. Many of these men pursue fully the old **nikokirei** ideal of sufficiency and avoid both hiring others as well as being hired themselves or allowing members of their families to be hired. On the other hand men with an entrepreneurial spirit and a large family employ additional wage labourers to form small, family-based **daifades.**

Changes in labour arrangements relate to a more symmetrical pattern of stratification in the olive growing economy. Table 5 gives us an approximation of it and illustrates how the pattern of land use lessens the inequalities still inherent in the land tenure system. It is better to analyse this evidence on the basis of the socio-economic background of the olive oil producers. A little more than a quarter of them do not reside in Skamnia or Skala. Although the table in itself does not say anything directly about ownership, very few olive oil producers do not own some olive trees. The landless households in Skamnia today do not exceed 5-10% of the total. Most of the 37 households in the resident category that produce less than 5 modia belong to pensioners who have split the patrimony among their offspring. At the other end of the table the three largest olive oil accounts belong to two men who are typically big **kesimtzides** i.e. themselves own less than a third of the olive groves they harvest. The third one owns almost half of what he exploits. The really big resident landowners of today belong in the modest category of 35-40 modia.

Table 5

Stratification Pattern of Olive Oil Producers, 1980-1[1]

Olives in modia	Resident households	Absentee households	Total households
0-1	2	2	4
2-5	35	11	46
6-10	33	12	45
11-15	18	5	23
16-20	15	1	16
21-25	14	2	16
26-30	5	3	8
31-35	2	1	3
36-40	5	1	6
41-45	1	-	1
46-50	3	-	3
Total	133	45	178

Note 1: It is based on the amount of olives produced per household.

Source: Olive oil accounts from Skamnia's cooperative and private factories.

Compared to the nineteenth century figures we get the impression of a less polarized and more gradual pattern of differentiation. The gap between the big haves and the have-nots is smaller. Almost half of the resident producers are concentrated in the 'middle' bracket of 5-20 modia. Yet this evidence suggests a certain stratification in the local pattern of olive oil production. If we leave aside the pensioners there is still a big segment of economically active men who produce less or considerably less than the satisfactory average of 20 modia. These men as well as a number of fishermen usually follow an income earning strategy that is based on hiring out their own as well as their wives' labour. They use to call themselves **ergates**, labourers and **merokamatiarides**, daily-wage earners. Yet in reality they mix self-employment with wage labour and pursue diversified work strategies.

As the significance of land as a differentiating factor declined new domains for the employment of olive growers and fishermen emerged. Building, the merchant navy or tourism ran side by side with more traditional factory work, and are sectors complementary to agriculture in which Skamniotes can earn wages. These opportunities for work appear seasonally, when the demand for labour in the olive growing or fishing sectors declines. Table 6 shows the great diversity in the occupation structure. 35 out of 75 economically active men in Skamnia combine the cultivation of owned or rented land with paid labour in different sectors, while 10 and 9 are full-time agriculturalists and labourers respectively. In Skala there are 19 men who are exclusively occupied in fishing or agriculture and 17 engaged in wage labour as well, 8 of whom work in the merchant navy for part of the year.

In other words, leaving aside middle aged landlords and fishermen who operates caiques; the pensioners who cannot because of age be involved full-time; the two teachers, the priest, the doctor, the secretary of the communal council, the two functionaries of the cooperative who rely on monthly salaries from the state; the two bakers, the two grocery shop keepers one of whom is a blacksmith as well, the tailor, the taxi driver, the two butchers, and two of the coffeeshop managers, most of whom cultivate some land as well, the rest of the active population and especially those who have to support a fully grown households are involved in one or more of these supplementary activities. The same is true for the fishermen who operate small boats on a family basis while their wives earn wages a little more than half the size of the corresponding male ones in the olive harvest.

Supplementary incomes are earned in the building sector which has recently been blooming. There are three pairs of skilled builders (**mastori**) who undertake jobs on a regular basis and are paid 900

Table 6

Economic Activities of Men in Skamnia and Skala

Occupation	Skamnia	Skala
Salaried civil servant (**ipalilos**)	4	1
Agriculturalist (exploiting own or rented land) (**yeoryos or kesimtzis**)	10	4
+ salary, factory	1	1
+ income from services or shepherd	10	3
+ work in merchant navy	4	5
+ wage in building	6	-
+ wage in factory	7	-
+ wage in agriculture/fishing	12	1
+ wage in other sectors	6	1
Labourer (**ergatis**)	9	-
Fisherman (**psaras**)	-	15
+ work in merchant navy	-	3
+ income from services or agriculture	-	2
+ wage (factory, building)	-	5
Entrepreneur and other (**epagelmatias**) (e.g. grocer, baker, tailor, butcher)	3	2
Shepherd (**ktinotrofos**)	3	-
Pensioner (**sintaxiouchos**)	44	9

Note: I do not include the 6 outside civil servants

Source: Author's Household Survey, 1980

drachmas a day (1979-80). They are asisted by a varying number of men with a wage of 700 drachmas. Local builders cannot satisfy local demand, thus outside **mastori** often find jobs in Skamnia. In a good season the two factories employ more than 10 workers, earning in 1980 around 800 drachmas a day. More ambitious men leave the village for a number of months per year to earn relatively big salaries in the merchant navy; or get loans to build rooms to rent in the summer

season. Wages in agriculture are between 650 and 700 drachmas. On the other hand the village elite consists of salaried officials, shop-keepers or the owner of the small olive factory. Most households sustain a subsistence sector comprising a small vegetable garden, some goats and poultry, possibly a few citrus trees and a vineyard which is rarely cultivated. There are at least 18 households that produce between 6 and 20 kilos sheeps' milk a day.

The existence of work opportunities outside agriculture gives the **merokamatiarides** the chance to financially catch up the **nikokirei**. The resulting image of a mixed agricultural system then promotes economic equality and a sense of egalitarianism in the local community. From an earnings point of view Skamniotes seem to be nearer rather than further away to the average income in comparison to the past.[30]

This impression of equality of opportunities that depends on the primacy of labour is aesthetically confirmed in the style of living. In contrast to elderly Skamniotes whose life styles are rigidly divided between the neoclassical baroque dwellings of the **beratarei** as opposed to the humble simplicity of their **parayii**, some of whom still live in one room houses, younger ones live in increasingly similar conditions. They build new three or four room houses, buy modern furniture and electric appliances such as refrigerators, cookers, televisions and the more advanced ones, stereos.

In the last two sections I did not attempt to give a comprehensive picture of the changes in the socio-economic canvas of Skamnia and Skala over the past hundred years. Using hard, reliable data I attempted to illustrate the current socio-economic context against the background of a radical transformation in the local class structure. Historically present rigid socio-economic differences are today relaxed by the increased capacity of those who can sell their

labour to approach in income terms those who own land or trade. Present day society distributes an image of classlessness which, however, may be misleading, especially on the cultural level, if it is not placed in the historical perspective of an impressive class presence. What I am arguing is that class was and still is, despite the current lack of material socio-economic confirmation, a major protagonist in the production of symbolic forms that retain their currency in spite of changes in their terms of reference: the market and its adversary relationship yesterday, the state and its impersonal agents today.

To sum up: the overall image of local history, as sketched in this introduction, is the dialectic of geopolitical expansion and retreat, population growth and stagnation, differentiation and homogenization with and between local communities. In the end of the nineteenth century Skamnia enjoyed prominence in her small periphery of neighbouring villages, while being herself ruled by its own trading elite. Today it looks like its neighbours while its inhabitants remind us of what Marx thought about peasants: they tend to be similar as potatoes in a sack. The more far removed become the forces that shape the fate of local society, the less marked become the features that differentiate individual actors and social collectivities. Despite current economic prosperity, Skamnia is a society in retreat bearing the memories of a glorious and potent past. These images of the past carry a different weight for men and women, old and young, landed and landless, radical and conservative. Yet, as will become evident during the last chapters, they still provide the frame in which the subject matters of this thesis should be placed. Loss of a class-specific economic and political initiative, displacement from home, socio-economic marginalization permeate the meaning of kinship, gender and prestige to be discussed here.

The organization of this study is governed by the search for what gives cultural coherence in social life and particularly in the interaction between the sexes. It is divided into four parts. After the general introduction, I look at the demographic, social and symbolic features of marriage as a process. The second part examines relations within and between households. This is essentially a discussion about women in the neighbourhood, the pervasive concept of motherhood and the organization of kinship across female, uterine lines. In the third part the focus passes on to men and exclussively male practices, such as alcoholic commensality, competitive drinking and gambling. In particular I describe male emotional friendships. The coffeeshop and the house exercise opposite and conflicting influences on male identity. The dichotomies that the notions of expressive masculinity and conjugal obligation support in the world of men are further depicted in the local value system. The thesis concludes with a consideration of different notions of community, as they are informed by cultural meaning and social practice, and their political applications.

Notes to Chapter I

1. Average rainfall does not exceed 700 mm (Settas, 1962, 183). Average temperature is around 17° c.

2. According to Settas (op. cit., 186) olives can grow in all parts of Lesbos with an altitude under 450 metres. Olives cover one fourth of the island's surface and make it the single most important olive growing region of Greece. For the vegetation in Lesbos see Candargy (1889).

3. For the Byzantine and post-Byzantine history of Lesbos see Gogos, 1887, 58-84; Taxes, 1909, 39-48; Samaras, 1934. For the Genoese period see Deles, 1901. For the Ottoman period see Fountoules, 1960; Parodites, 1931; Samaras, 1947; Kamboures, 1962.

4. Parodites, op. cit., 10-12.

5. Samaras, op. cit., 8; Parodites, op. cit., 32.

6. See the work of Vryonis (1971, 1975).

7. Taxes, op. cit., 63.

8. The report by M. Fouque is extensively quoted in Paraskevaides, 1973, 125. See also Fouque, 1868, 449.

9. Taxes, op. cit., 62-3. For the effects of natural disaster on nineteenth century Lesbos see Kambouris, 1978.

10. De Launay (1897, 72 and 1891, 168) reports in 1887 the existence of a small port in Skamnia and reproduces a very interesting illustration of it. The same port is referred to earlier by Anagnostou (1870, 332). See also Cuinet, 1891, Vol. 1, 453.

11. For the population increases during the second half of the nineteenth century see Issawi, 1980a, 17-24. According to Quataert (1973, 12), "population increases probably were concentrated in the non-Muslim segments of the population". Issawi (op. cit., 7-8) mentions the improvement in living conditions after 1850.

12. See Pentzopoulos, 1962. The more detailed portrait of refugee settlements in a locality is presented by Hirschon (1976).

13. See Kontes, 1978; also Taxes, op. cit., 63. This slice of the Aegean basin is called Aeolida; the next one southwards is Ionia, encompassing Chios, Samos and the Smyrna region.

14. Turner, 1820, 299.

15. Anonymou, 1895, 598.

16. For example Taxes (op. cit., 75-6). Road tax was first collected in Skamnia in 1866.

17. Kiepert and Koldewey, 1890, 38-9. See also de Launay, 1897, 37.

18. See for example Michaud and Poujoulat, 1833-5, Vol. 3, 324 and de Launay, 1891, 157.

19. Taxes, op. cit., 76.

20. Relative underpopulation and land vacancy checked the development of a class of landless labourers. See Quataert, 1973, 46.

21. The colonialization of the opposite Anatolian coast by Skamniotes was part of a historical process of ethnic Greek settlement to the western Anatolian shores. Greeks from the Peloponnese and the Cyclades settled around Smyrna (Sfyroeras, 1963); Greeks from Lesbos colonized the Ayvalik area (Taxes, op. cit., 78-81).

22. Social class has not figured in the work of ethnographers who worked in Greece. For an exception see the work of Dimen (1975), and further the intervention of Mouzelis (1976) in the conference on "Regional Variation in Modern Greece". On the other hand, social class is an important parameter in the ethnographic analysis of Iberian societies (Lison-Tolosana, 1966; Cutileiro, 1971; Gilmore, 1980; Pina-Cabral, 1985; O'Neill, 1987).

23. The great expansion of agricultural exports in western Anatolia and especially around Smyrna and Aydin after the 1850s is discussed by Issawi (op. cit., 74-145), Quataert (op. cit., 17-26) and Owen (1981, 112). Issawi (op. cit., 109) calculates for Smyrna (Ismir) that "between the 1830s and 1880s imports rose about 7.5 times ... and exports more than 4 times" respectively. For the periphery of Lesbos in particular see Issawi, op. cit., 25, 94-8.

24. The magnitude of the post 1840 changes on the political structures of Lesbos is reported by Aristeidou (1863, 153-8). For the immediately preceding period see Anagnostou, 1850, 85-6.

25. For a comprehensive analysis of transformation in the region see the work of Issawi (op. cit.), Owen (op. cit.) and Quataert (op. cit.). The emergence of large agricultural estates in western Anatolia is particularly dealt with in an essay by Novichev in Issawi (1966). Also, see Owen, op. cit., 114-5, 206-8; Issawi, op. cit., 201-2, 207-8.

26. I am using the term plebeian after Pitt-Rivers (1971). It suggests a social differentiation that is not always based on class, yet it has an overwhelming cultural significance.

27. Attention to the subjective and cultural side of the class boundary is given by Pitt-Rivers (1960). The landed merchants of Skamnia reminds one of the Italian landowning signori. See Lopreato, 1961, 272-3.

28. The stratification pattern that characterises the society of Skamnia in the second half of the nineteenth century resembles that described by Lison-Tolosana (op. cit., 18-20).

29. According to Evagelou (1933, 14) olive groves in Skamnia occupied 2000 **stremmata** and produced 2000 **modia** of olives and 30000 **laginia** of olive oil. In 1932 there were also 200 **stremmata** of vineyards with an output of 70000 **okades** of grapes (58) and 500 goats and sheep (45).

30. See Brandes (1975) and O'Neill (op. cit.) for a similar point.

PART I

WOMEN AND MEN IN MARRIAGE

CHAPTER II: MARRIAGE AND THE MAKING OF THE HOUSEHOLD

> "Mytilene is the paradise of young girls. From the moment of her birth, the marriage and future prospects of a daughter are the subjects of highest interest to the entire family. The eldest daughter is particularly favoured."
>
> (Walker, 1886, 208)

Introduction: The Notion of Nikokirio

The subject matter of this chapter is marriage as a long process, divided into ritually marked phases that gradually initiate conjugality. It also focuses types of spouse selection, the property and residential arrangements that underly the formation of a new household, and the patterns of relationships that are formally acknowledged because of marriage. Marriage is significant for it marks the beginning of the most bounded, socio-economic entity in village life, the household;[1] it makes possible the reproduction of family and kinship ties; and it brings forward a model for the sexes that permeates social, economic and political life. Marriage, then, reveals the underlying canvas of kinship and community that is to be further explored in this thesis.

Men and women in Skamnia are unanimous that the purpose of marriage is the creation of a household. They think that a proper household should be based on conjugality and have a married couple at its very core. Indeed, the local term for the household, nikokirio, connotes a conjugal pair and their children, a group that is

residentially independent and economically autonomous. Nikokirio as a norm is coterminous with neolocality and in this sense requires the nucleation of kinship at marriage.[2]

Besides an emphasis on conjugality and neolocality, nikokirio further has an economic, corporate content, aspects of which are sanctioned by custom and law. The contract of marriage is called **prikosimfono** and its purpose is to describe the foundation of the household on property transferred to it from two sides. Ideally the household is a community of economic contributions at marriage and through life. It is based on the mutual dependence and cooperation of the conjugal partners who symmetrically realize their complementary, sex-specific potentialities (see next chapter).

From the perspective of **nikokirio** the residential autonomy of the married couple is highly valued as an indicator of status. In Skamnia two married sisters who co-reside are put forward as examples of deprivation. Women attribute it to the great poverty of the sister's natal family but also blame their husbands, while men acknowledge that 'every woman needs to be **kira**, mistress, of her own house'.

The emphasis on neolocality is exemplified in the custom of the **gerontiko**: parents either rent or build a usually one room house in order to transfer their own, which is much better, to their offspring. The ideal of residential independence at marriage is negotiated only in the case of the marriage of the last child. If both parents are alive co-residence is unlikely, but with a widowed mother of the bride it is probable. On the other hand it is marriage and not age that encourages residential autonomy of a child from his/her parents. Elderly bachelors are found living with their parents. Similarly, sisters may reunite under the same roof if they are widowed. Bachelors do not co-reside with their married brothers. They may

reside nevertheless with their married sister if the house is given as part of the dowry and the sister does not have children.

The physical structure of the house is an essential requirement of the **nikokirio**, as the great emphasis on the dowried house - to be discussed later - indicates. Indeed **nikokirio** literally means the posession of a house. 'Household', and 'house' sometimes interchange in usage. **Nikokirio** refers to the house as well as to the movable property within it and to property that is part of the domestic economy. As a house, **nikokirio** is primarily identified metaphorically by 'the door'. This is implied in various linguistic usages. For instance one of two men who wanted to marry the same girl argued that **safti tin porta allos den chori**, this doorway won't take two people. We can hardly escape the association of doorway to the vagina.[3] Similarly the household may be 'open' or 'closed' on various occasions.[4] Proper households do not share an entrance. In the local definition of the household, then, residence is fully acknowledged.

Yet, the existence of habit_ed houses that are not classified as **nikokirio** suggest that **spiti** does not conceptually equal **nikokirio**. **Spiti** means a physical structure with a separate entrance where one can sleep or even have sex. One of the meanings of the word **spiti** is brothel. Indeed, loose associations to this usage are made by men who refer to a room over one of the village coffeeshops. This is the sleeping place of the coffeeshop manager who is a bachelor. Twenty years ago, he used to employ **artistes**, female artists, singers and dancers. Besides entertaining the male clientele, the women allegedly had sex with him in this place. Further bachelors who stay separately from their relatives in often large houses are emphatic in that 'this is not a **nikokirio**': they do not cook there nor do they accept any visits and they were embarrassed to show them to me.

On the other hand the one room structures occupied by elderly

people who gave away their property to their offsprings are unquestionably classifed as 'household'. What they have in addition to bachelor's houses are active cooking spots which are exclusively managed by women. A place for cooking, ideally fully developed into a kitchen and reserved for women, is the distinguishing feature of Skamniotes' concept of the household.[5] The kitchen is most of the time a place for cleaning and cooking and for nurturing children. It is the umbilical cord of the household that links the physical structure to its inhabitants in a shared identity that is, however, primarily female. The departure of women deprives a house of its 'household' nature. Thus widowers with no offspring to take care of the house are treated as bachelors in certain respects.

One of the prominent features that distinguish men from women or men from men is the value they attach to **nikokirio**. Men's attachment to the household is governed by a sense of **ipochreosi**, obligation. **Ipochreosi** is formally sanctioned, culturally approved and enacted on men by those who represent the domestic, economic or political structures to which men are attached. It needs a lot of emotional effort and a deep sense of commitment to accommodate obligation in a man's career. For many men **ipochreosi** denotes a field of schism, conflict and trouble. This suggests a male relationship of externality to the **nikokirio**, well depicted in an image of men 'entering' it as well as **benoun stis ipochreosis ke sta vasana**, entering obligations and troubles, at marriage.

Women's attachment to the household somehow derives from what is regarded as the **phisikos proorismos**, natural destiny of women: to bear children.[6] Procreation is coterminous with womanhood and should only be attained within the framework of a household. Women identify with the **doulies tou spitiou**, tasks of the house: they maintain the physical structure and its inhabitants and in so doing they turn it

into **nikokirio**. Women initiate the 'household' and bear its spirit: they are the ones who **nikokirevoun**, apply domestic order in men's lives. A man is encouraged to get married, **na nikokirefti**, to be domesticated. Women are more closely identified with the **nikokirio** than are men. As bearers of the destiny to be a household they often remind men of their obligations. They speak on behalf of the **nikokirio** (see next chapter) and enact its values in society.

Nikokirio is a loaded term. Some of its other meanings which refer to relations in the family, gender identity, or even male prestige and political representation will be discussed in the course of the thesis. What should be kept in mind is that, while a man and a woman are necessary for the initiation of a household, a man cannot maintain in himself a **nikokirio** yet can be without it when a woman needs it as the only basis of female adulthood.[7]

2. Sponsoring Baptism and Marriage

The creation of the new household in marriage is sponsored by a third party which **zita na sikosi ta stefana**, asks to "lift up the crowns" and cover the expenses of marriage. There is a particularly close connection between marital and baptismal sponsorship in Skamnia. A joint discussion will show: first, that the emphasis is on the spiritual rather than the material aspects of sponsorship, and thus it is in baptism that the ideal of sponsorship is realized; and second, that ties of spiritual kinship tend to repeat already existing ties of consanguineal kinship or friendship rather than constituting a separate set of relationships.

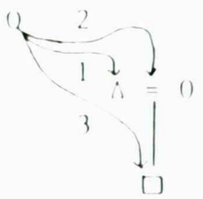
Baptism marks and sanctions the entrance of the person into the moral community through the offering of a name. Children who die



Ia



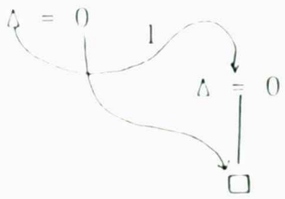
Ib



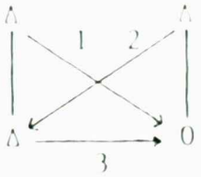
IIa



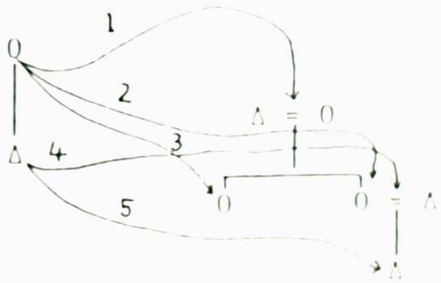
IIb



III



IV



V

Figure 2: Patterns of Sponsorship

unbaptized are buried outside the graveyard's wall. As elsewhere in Greece or Southern Europe the baptismal sponsor represents the community and is held responsible for the spiritual well-being of the child.[8] Despite the unstressed nature of baptismal obligations sponsors are often thought of with affection, somehow parallel to parents. The relationship is confirmed by the gift of a cross to the child. The spiritual kinship that baptism entails is captured in the classification of children baptised by the same person as **stavradelfia**, siblings of the cross.

The sponsoring of marriage, on the other hand, seems to be an issue only as far as the expenses of the ritual are concerned. Sometimes in discussions about who will be the **koubaros**, sponsor, the financial availability of candidates is the most important issue. In what is regarded as a loose relationship aspects of character or standing seem to be secondary. Although sponsorship is an act of offering, its hierarchical nature is rigorously denied. Thus sponsors of the same age as the sponsored are preferred. And despite the emphasis on the material it is not governed by a transactionalist spirit (see also chapter VII).

Koubaria means sponsorship. It further suggests the alliance between sponsor and sponsored and in this capacity in certain Greek communities the term **koubaros** is employed as a generalized term of address.[9] This is not so in Skamnia where **koubari** themselves rarely use the term to call each other. As we shall see this is in line with the general devaluation of alliances solely based on shared material interest. On the contrary the spiritual element in intergenerational sponsorship is stressed: for example, a young man refers to his mother's sister who has baptized him not as **thia** (auntie) but **nona**.

The term **koubaros** is used symmetrically between the marital sponsor, his/her spouse, and the couple sponsored. It may be extended

to include the parents of the involved parties, especially those of the sponsored. The same term is used symmetrically between the baptismal sponsor and the parents of the child. The baptismal sponsor calls the child **vaptismio** and he is called **nonos**. This term is very rarely extended to cover the spouse. Usually a child has only one **nonos** and the latter avoids baptizing more than one child.

The norms of sponsorship require that the marital sponsor baptizes the first child of the couple (see Ib in figure 2). Further, Skamniotes say that it is a 'good thing' if the **nonos/a** sponsors the marriage of a **vaptisimios/a** given of course that he can perform the ritual task. If both **noni** are alive the bride's one is ideally preferred, other factors notwithstanding (see Ia, in figure 2). If these two rules combine we get pattern IIa, which leads to the rare concept of spiritual grandparenthood. It is very unlikely that one may baptize child and grandchild without sponsoring the marriage of the child as well.

The ritual of marriage is regarded as more public and formal and a serious financial burden. Thus its sponsorship is usually assigned to men. Rarely women undertake this role. However, Skamniotes say that it makes no difference who holds the crowns: it is the couple that sponsors. Sometimes husband and wife stand together and jointly perform the ritual. On the other hand, there is a strong tendency in both villages to interpret baptism as an event that mainly involves women, to the effect that often women become baptismal sponsors. This gives rise to a sex-segregated pattern of sponsorship. The husband sponsors the marriage of the couple and his wife baptises their first child (see III in figure 2). Finally there is a tendency to baptize children of the same sex as the sponsor, but this tendency is not often observed. If a man baptizes more than one child, he does so with children of the same sex so as not to jeopardize their mutual

marriage chances, since canon law prohibits marriage between sponsor and sponsored, their children or between people baptized by the same person.

The realization of these normative tendencies depends on a number of factors, starting from the very availability of the preferred sponsor. The upheavals that local demographic structures experienced because of migration had seriously undermined the statistical confirmation of the norm. The three-generational patterns (IIa, IIb) rarely occur. Patterns Ib and III are the statistically prominent ones. Some of these norms appear to be echoes of old 'custom'. While for example, between 1907 and 1909 there are 21 cases of men and 12 cases of women baptizing a boy as well as 7 cases of men and 21 cases of women baptizing a girl, i.e. a clear tendency of same-sex sponsorship, this is not so during the fieldwork period. During the fieldwork 2 men and 2 women respectively baptized a boy, and 1 man and 1 woman baptized a girl.

If the three generational pattern of sponsorship is disrupted because of the physical inability of the **koubari**, then their child will undertake to crown his parent's **vaptisimios** as well as baptize his first-born child. Pattern V reproduces such a case that occured in a good standing family.

An important aspect of **koubaria** in Skamnia is a strong tendency to select the sponsor, especially the baptismal sponsor, from among close consanguines of the sponsored.[9] From the 29 baptisms that occured between 1972 and 1979 (see table 7) I could confirm that in 7 cases the sponsor is a matrilateral relative and in 5 a patrilateral relative to the child. In another 2 cases he is an affine. Skamniotes attribute this tendency to the financial burden that frustrates many would-be sponsors. Yet they further argue: 'Why should you put a **xenos**, an outsider, within the family?'

Sponsorship, then, repeats and reinforces kinship (for example vis a vis the fragmentation by migration) instead of functionally 'extending' it. Generally it enjoys limited recognition as an autonomous department of relatedness. This is more so with baptism because of its metaphorical association to parenthood. Sponsorship strenghtens the blood tie between **nonos** and **vaptisimios** and brings its parenthood-like qualities to lateral kinship. But this improvement is possible because of kinship: the closer the consanguineal tie the more reinforcing are the effects of sponsorship. For example, the aunt/niece relation tends to mimic aspects of the mother/daughter relation, without the hierarchy of the latter. So the **nona** who is a maternal sister is conceived as a second mother. The same trend is also observed if the **nona** is a maternal grandmother's sister: she is conceived as a second grandmother.

Table 7
Pre-baptismal Ties Between Parents and Baptismal Sponsor, 1972-1979

Consanguines, from wife's side	7
Consanguines, from husband's side	6
Affines, from wife's side	1
Affines, from husband's side	1
Koubari	1
Unrelated, from the same village	11
Unrelated, from different village	-
Unknown	2
Total	29

Source: Church Archive

This takes concrete social forms. A role complementarity or substitution is established between the "real" and the "fictive" parent. The **nona** undertakes the role of a secret, trustful advisor and her relationship with her **vaptisimia** may be more informal and

intimate, balancing maternal authority, or she may adopt the **vaptisimia**. A childless aunt by becoming **nona** of one of her nieces achieves a status equal to that of mother. She can take care of her godchild, undertake the costs of raising her and most important of all, undertake to dower her and arrange for her a respectable marriage. The **vaptisimia** may or may not stay permanently with her **nona**. In "return" the **nona** has the right to name her **vaptisimia** after herself and have a say in her fortunes. Forms of adoption are employed in cases of families with more than 2 or 3 daughters or in cases where a daughter has to live away from home, in a place where her **nona** resides. Adoption and dowering via spiritual kinship is employed mainly by childless women. Men do not seek an heir through adoption.

In practice, then, the dominant interpretation of spiritual kinship derives from the realm of motherhood. Sponsorship shows that the birth of a child is culturally more significant than the making of a household: somehow the former subsumes the latter. This is reflected in the often discussed but rarely materialized ideal of grandmotherhood as spiritual motherhood. There are cases where the grandmother baptizes her grand-daughter and she is expected not only to sponsor her marriage but also to baptize her first child or daughter (see pattern IIb). This shows the extent to which spiritual kinship is attracted by the magnet of female consanguinity. The significance of this point will be shown in the next chapter.

3. Dowry

A basic condition of marriage is property. Indeed, most of family property in Skamnia and Skala is transferred at marriage

according to the rule **to goniko sto goniko**, from parent to parent. What one got from one's parents in case there are no heirs should go back to the same kinship group.[10] This seems to associate with another norm that focuses on two gendered lines of transfer, respectively represented by father and mother. Often family property is distinguished as **patriki**, paternal and **mitriki**, maternal.[11] Sons should inherit post portem property that usually comes from the father's side, daughters should inherit at marriage at least the maternal property. As in Nisos (Kenna, 1976, 25) this relates to the pattern of name transfer: the first born son is named after the paternal grandfather, the first-born daughter after the maternal grandmother. And as in Karpathos (Vernier, 1984, 28) the gendered lines of transfer take shape under primogeniturial tendencies that are rare today.[12]

Testate inheritance is called **klironomia**. If there is no will the family property is divided usually by lot into equal shares among legitimate heirs. This is called **miresi**. On the other hand both the transfer of property at marriage and the very property itself are called **prika**, dowry.[13] **Klironomia** then usually applies to male heirs, **prika** to female ones.

It is often stressed that all offspring have equal rights to the parental property. Yet, it is not clear to what extent the principle of equal partibility applies to the division of property in each line separately, or whether it overrules the first principle.

In practice the applicability of these norms depends on the actualities of marriage and reference to them is usually made in order to protect the inheritance rights of daughters. For example equal partibility concerns mainly the daughters. Each successive marriage challenges the realization of the ideal pattern and introduces a double inequality reflecting the marriage order. Because daughters

have to get married before sons and in order of age and because the one who marries first is better situated to exploit the existing inheritance chances on his or her behalf it emerges that daughters have an advantage in inheritance over sons and older daughters over younger ones. As in other societies of the Aegean Basin, Skamniotes place a big emphasis on the dowering of daughters.[14] Indeed, in many cases most of the property achieved by the parents through their life is channelled in the direction of their daughters while sons remain propertyless.

In the process of securing the daughters, the mother's property is transferred first, and then the paternal or the achieved property. The transfer of property at marriage is an open, flexible, negotiable arrangement that involves a heavy financial burden, especially in cases where there is a "scarcity of grooms" in the marriage market or when female hypergamy is attempted. Such developments, sometimes linked to male village exogamy, result in the liquidation of the inheritance claims of the brothers.[15] All forms of property are increasingly concentrated in an attempt to secure a good marriage for the daughters or sisters. In some cases the brothers not only withdraw as heirs but also work in order to support their sisters at the expense of their own preparation for marriage. In poorer families, most of the property is transferred as a dowry. This, as we shall see, accounts for a defacto 'conjugal' fund that comprises the material aspects of the household and is administered principally by the wife. The implications of the 'lineage' character of the transfer pertain to the nikokirei families in which both sides receive property.[16]

Let us consider the case of Nikos Kyrianou. His daughter, Aspasia, age 20, married in 1980 to Fanis, 7 years older from a family who live in Skala but originate in Skamnia. The groom worked in the



3. Stones and bricks, old and modern house.



4. A **be:atarei** house : a symbol of class

merchant navy for several years and exploits family land together with his father and brother. Aspasia's brother, Nikos, aged 25, is a third mate. At her marriage Aspasia received a large two-storey house and a vegetable garden from her mother and two pieces of olive groves giving 7 modia from her father. Panis contributed with part of the furniture. She and her husband were offered usufruct of her mother's landed dowry (two olive groves of 16 modia); she will own this land after her mother's death. Her parents kept another 15 modia of olive groves and some pasture which will be claimed by Aspasia and her brother as post mortem inheritance. They further rented a one-room house, a classical **gerontiko** just one hundred yards away; thus, Aspasia could enjoy her mother's help.

There are two principal forms of property: houses and land. Boats are a perishable form of property and they are replaced frequently. Livestock in small quantities remains undivided. In large quantities it is subjected to joint administration or sold. Land is both mens' and womens' property and is transferred down both lines. It is distinguished in different categories according to the type of cultivation or use of the site: **kabisia** (low land) or **vounisia** (mountain land), olive groves and **anichta** (open fields), pasture land, vineyards and **baxedes** (gardens). **Anichta** and pasture land in general are almost exclusively male. The mother's land is usually transferred at marriage to the daughter.

In the category of immovables the house as the locus of domesticity and a status symbol occupies the privileged position. Houses vary from the huge neoclassical ones to the humble two room refugee homes in the Sinikismos (see pictures 3 and 4). Despite differences in size they all have to provide space for cooking, the **mayirio** or **yerivi**, and space to accommodate visits, the **odas**. The first is more private and kept by women, the second more public and

open to inter-sexual use. Both are necessary for the classification of a house as a **nikokirio.** In very small houses the kitchen is used for eating and informal gatherings while the bedroom is occasionally transformed into an **odas.** The more the house turns into a status symbol, the greater is the emphasis laid on the **odas.**

Movables such as furniture, linen, or clothes that are transferred at marriage are called **prikia.** Expensive electric appliances go together with **prikia** and are powerful status symbols.[17] Sometimes the groom has his own **prikia.** In most cases the house is the mother's dowry and is given as dowry to her daughter. If there is more than one daughter a new house has to be built and in this process the groom may cooperate. Analyzing the pattern of the latest transfer of the houses found in the **sinikismos** neighbourhood of Skala one can see that from 18 cases of transfer, in 15 cases the house was transferred as dowry on the occasion of marriage. Table 8 shows as well that the great majority of houses in Skamnia (68 out of 95 cases) have been dowried to daughters. In the absence of daughters, houses are not transferred to sons at marriage but after both parents' deaths.

Until the war parents used to provide the house at marriage or convert available money or land into the necessary house. Today due to increased monetization and exogamy parents have the option of dowering their daughter with a sum of money or land which she may use against building expenses. The cost of building a three or even four room house is manageable by wage earners, who often receive loans and contribute personal labour. Yet this often takes a long time and can be attained with difficulty if the house is to be dowried. Given the smaller size of families and the smaller number of daughters parents often escape the dowry problem by passing to the daughter their own house. This is the case with the two most recent marriages in



3. Stones and bricks, old and modern house.



4. A **bɛ:atarei** house : a symbol of class.

Skamnia. Otherwise, with a considerable number of empty houses it is easier for the newlyweds or the bride's parents to find accommodation.

Table 8
Mode of Transfer of Houses Owned and Inhabited by Married Couples in Skamnia

Category of House	
House of unknown origins provided as dowry to wife	5
Parental house provided to wife as dowry	51
House bought/built and dowried to wife	12
Parental house inherited by husband (married to xeni)	15 (7)
House built by husband/wife	5
Total	88

Source: Author's 1980 household survey

A formal contract that registers the transfer of property at marriage, the **prikosinfono**, is in certain cases signed, especially if the assets transferred are of big value. We should note that often part of the **prika** is in the form of promises by the bride's relatives to deliver the house or cash after marriage; or it may involve a labour contribution, expected periodically after marriage and throughout life. The bride's father or brother may contribute annually a portion of the income they get from a piece of land or offer their labour without any return for the cultivation usually of specific pieces of land. These side agreements may be also included in the contract.

Households with daughters are involved in dowry preparations as early as the child's birth. This relates to the nature of **prika** which

is household specific property that makes marriage possible and not an arbitrary or customary outcome of marriage as **miresi** is the customary outcome of death. In that sense it is an important extra-economic incentive for saving within the peasant household. There are many cases of parents working hard into their seventies in order to provide the necessary dowries. This is why it is considered a misfortune for a father to have many daughters and no son of an age to help. For some it is a concern throughout life.

By being involved in the making of dowries women as well as men exhibit domestic skills. This concerns mostly women who being more closely identified to the household are guardians of the effective transfer of their **prika** to their daughters. In any case, the preparation of a future household is a marker of how well one manages the existing one. One week before the marriage the dowried house and its interiors, the furniture and the **prikia** as well as all gifts received are exhibited by the mother's bride, the bride herself and female relatives. Most women visit as well as some men. They are shown around in great detail and comparisons are made with past 'exhibitions'. The viewers can be called to 'testify' about the presence of particular items. They sanction, then, aspects of the marriage contract that refer to domestic property as well as assess the domestic skills of mother and daughter. The first Sunday after marriage the bride hosts the **koubari** and other friends or relatives in a ritualized lunch called **antigamos**. The bride cooks and serves food in honour of the marital sponsors. What is being shown now is the effective administration of the dowry by the bride. This occasion postulates the new **nikokira**, mistress of the house in the position of hostess. It is the first public showing of the **nikokirio** in action and the formal 'opening' of its 'door' to the community.

From what has already been said we can conclude that in dowry we

may discern two components: property that comes across the line through the mother, and property that crosses the line from the father's side. The crossing of the line of transfer happens systematically only in the case of dowry and reflects the extent to which marriage shapes the devolution of property. The first component of dowry is specific to the kinship principles that regulate property transfer while the second is specific to marriage. The first is a kind of pre-mortem inheritance belonging to the gendered line and aiming to perpetuate it: a daughter is dowried even if she does not marry. At a certain stage she has the right to dispose of this property in the same line to either a sister or a sister's daughter for the same purposes i.e. as dowry. Dowry from that point of view is an unnegotiable minimum, a kind of security for the new household. The house is the privileged form of this component of dowry. The other component, however, is open more to negotiation. It involves a transfer of administration rather than tenure, its privileged form is cash and it focuses not so much on the emerging household as on the person and status of the groom. It is not at all exaggerated to say that the two components of the dowry are the new household's price and the groom's price. The more hypergamous the marriage, the more strong is the presence of the second component.

It is part of the fundamental ambivalence of dowry to be both public and private, to focus on the household as well as the person, to be loyal to the directives of kinship but also susceptible to class or demographic pressures that via marriage transform the nature of kinship and the family.

4. Marriage: Who, When, Where

Men and women are disposed differently towards marriage. Womens' attitude is summarized in the proverb **kalio kakopadremeni para kotzabekiarisa**, better in a bad marriage than not married at all. There are only five spinsters in both villages. For a woman to escape her 'destiny' is either a disgrace for the natal household and a mark of low status or is often attributed to some deficiency in the woman. Two of the four spinsters in Skamnia are regarded as insane, and this is offered as the reason for not marrying. In Skamnia, further, there is no scope for procreation outside the conjugal bond. In effect there are no bastards. Thus, women unconditionally prefer marriage to non-marriage because it is through the formal initiation of household and procreation that they enter adulthood. To become a mother therefore a woman needs first of all a husband, and the meaning of the proverb is that a bad husband is better than no husband. Such a view, nevertheless, even under a strong preference for marriage, needs an extra supply of confidence for it to be asserted. As will become clear in the next chapter, this confidence is well rooted in the very strong domestic backing that these women enjoy after their marriage.

In Skala there are no bachelors. In Skamnia, however, out of 55 men, aged between 31 and 70, there are 20 single (see table 9). More than one third of men in this age group are conceived as **bekiarides** and follow an appropriate style of life. This is a large proportion of never-marrieds.[18] **Bekiaris** means bachelor and **kotzam-bekiaris** is the man who remains single in old age, a definitely life-long bachelor. The term does not connote a celibate attitude.

Out of 22 men known as **bekiarides**, four of them in their thirties stay in the parental household, nine reside with their widowed mothers and two with an unmarried sister. The rest stay alone in houses

Table 9

The Marital Status of Adult Men and Women by Age in Skamnia and Skala

Age	Married		Widowers		Unmarried		Married		Widows		Unmarried	
	Skam	Skal										
21-30	1	5	-	-	10	11	9	6	-	-	4	1
31-40	10	6	-	-	4	-	15	9	-	-	-	-
41-50	15	7	-	-	5	-	13	9	-	-	-	-
51-60	18	8	3	-	5	-	26	9	1	-	-	1
61-70	22	8	3	-	6	-	14	2	6	-	2	-
71-80	22	3	2	-	2	-	13	4	12	2	2	-
81-	2	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	13	6	-	-
Total	90	38	9	1	32	11	91	39	32	8	8	1

Source: Author's Household Survey, 1980.

Note: In the widowers of Skamnia I include two men in formal separation from their wives.

either inherited or rented. This pattern reflects the developmental cycle of bachelorhood and the considerable dependence of bachelors on households with close female relatives. Among those residing independently some eat in their married sister's household, yet have very loose contact with a married brother's household, despite their close cooperation in farming family land.

There is nothing explicitly distinctive in the class background of the **bekiarides.**[19] Some of them are of plebeian origins, other have a **nikokirei** background. The great majority have done wage labour. More important is the association of male non-marriage with migration or work abroad. Ten **bekiarides**, most of whom in their fifties and sixties, were employed as builders or workers in Athens or Germany and settled there for long periods of time. Three others in their late thirties work in the merchant navy. Men of this category associate their prolonged absence with non-marriage in two ways.

First, being free of conjugal obligations they could more easily move, even in order to help their natal households. **Bekiarides** often mention the weight of obligations towards unmarried sisters or elderly parents. We should note that 15 of them have sisters, of which 5 have only sisters and 3 have an unmarried sister. Family obligations are among the factors that send them away and bring them back.[20] Second, being away from the village these bachelors had a greater difficulty in realizing an endogamous ideal as well as persuading a candidate wife to leave the city and live in Skamnia. In contrast to Skamniotes who established a household in Athens, they could more easily return to the village and take care of elderly parents, thus making it a depository of unmarried men.

Bachelors often interpret marriage from an exclusively masculine point of view (see chapter VIII). It is an attitude shared by married men as well, who often complain with the saying **I lefteria ine levendia ma emis den tin grikoume, stis pikres ke sta vasana yirevoume na boume**, bachelorhood is pride but we don't dare it, we look forward to entering pain and troubles. Marriage and conjugality represent an imposed set of formal obligations which bind men. It further entails compromise, radical shifts of emotional allegiance and even subordination. In other words it is an external, imposed 'social fact' closely related to women in juxtaposition to the experiental, 'natural' state of male freedom.

There were recently several cases where marriage was the main component of a strategy employed by the groom's family in order to keep him in the village and prevent him returning to the merchant navy. Men are conceived as **benoun**, entering marriage in the same way they enter the house they get as a dowry. Material considerations are important in men's marital strategies. They use to say **opios echi ke porevete, tifla nachi ke pantrevete**, the man who has enough to live

on, is blind if he marries. The more sound the financial situation of the man, the more open he is to delaying his marriage.

Bekiarides, then, hold an ambivalent attitude towards their non-marriage. What from the point of view of women and sometimes of married men is definitely a failure they think about as a source of pride. Bachelors stay **leftheri**, free and thus are successful in fulfilling their male 'nature'. On the other hand, they are not against marriage so far as it satisfies their requirements: it is based on romantic feeling, and allows them their own space for friends and relatives.

Many **bekiarides** renumerate cases when they were approached and even 'asked' by women which they (or their relatives) eventually rejected; and mention instances in which the women they 'wanted' were 'taken' by somebody else. Some are being characterized as 'shy' in courtship or 'too proud' to 'run' after women. Mothers afraid of being abandoned by their sons are pointed out as factors that harden men's negotiating attitude and ultimately lead matchmaking efforts to failure.

A recent case demonstrates this point. Takis Stamatiou is in his early thirties, has a younger brother and worked in Athens for some years before he recently decided to settle in Skamnia. He is very keen to find a girl from the village yet he has to feel strongly about her. Once he was back **tou proxenepsan**, he was proposed to by a girl, today married in Athens. Takis said that 'he was not yet ready' since he was not fond of her. His reaction cooled down village matchmakers while he started dating in secret Irini, a much younger woman from one of the **nikokirei** families. Her mother was of similar background to Takis' family. Women, however, from her father's **soi**, kin reacted strongly. They had much better expectations for a girl holding one of the larger dowries. To his surprise, Irini's cousins announced to

Takis, who thought their affair had become a family issue, that she would not come to their planned meeting. His reaction was weak. He left for some months to find on his return that she had been engaged in the meanwhile. Takis attributes his failure to the fact that he did not consummate the relationship thus imposing it de facto. Yet his overall approach has not changed and this promises a career in bachelorship.

Many **bekiarides** project themselves as bearers of high emotional standards. They say that they are not ready to compromise their loyalties to coffeeship friends and the village at large or abandon their exclusively male habits. Nor do they want to escape their obligations to natal households, to widowed mothers and unmarried sisters.

It is hard to establish which comes first: this self-image or the fact of non-marriage. It should be stressed, however, that the statistical picture supports their claims. And that many **bekiarides** are among those who lead in exceptionally masculine practices such as competitive drinking and gambling thus upgrading the world of the coffeeshop to a village subculture (see part III).[21]

Women conceive marriage as something natural because they subordinate it to procreation. If men 'enter' marriage as under a yoke, women **vgenoun sto gamo**, move out in to marriage. Some women are not confronted with the socio-economic burdens of marriage until married, when they care for dowering and finding a groom for their daughter.

As one reaches the age of marriage which is late teens and early twenties for women and middle to late twenties for men, the location of the new house or the origin of the groom or the bride has to be decided. The timing of the marriage depends on the marriage order, which we have seen regulates the transfer of property as well as more

accidental factors such as the outlook of the harvest. Sisters marry in order of birth and before their brothers. The first norm is closely observed while the latter's realization is conditioned by the number of siblings at marriagable age, their relative age difference and by property considerations. The more sisters there are and the closer they are in age, the greater the financial burden of dowring them, the greater the need for brothers to postpone their own marriage. The only way a girl can escape the marriage order is either by marrying outside the community and surrendering a part of her property claims or if she is asked by a groom who does not want a dowry. A brother sees that his sister, irrespective of their age difference, gets married first.

The ideal in marriage is to match a bride to a groom in character and appearance, in age and family background, in socio-economic status and life aspirations. Suspicion surrounds marriages which appear to contradict this ideal while happiness in conjugality is often attributed to similarity as well as complementarity between husband and wife. The most evident manifestation of this ideal is a strong endogamous preference.

The norm is that the closer you marry, the better. This is often phrased in kinship terms since as we shall see consanguinal kinship is a principal idiom of continguity. In other parts of Lesbos I found people openly arguing for cousin marriage as an ideal. In the past this endogamous ideal was reinforced by class considerations. Instances of marriages between second cousins have occurred in **beratarei** and good **nikokirei** families. Today this norm takes the form of marrying inside the village which is often regarded as a community of distant kin with whom marriage is both legitimate and preferred.

The endogamous preference is frustrated by canon law that prohibits marriage between collaterals up to the seventh degree.

There are families, however, who are related through marriage repeatedly in the same or successive generations. The pattern of brothers simultaneously marrying sisters or of uncle and nephew marrying aunt and niece occasionally occur. Today the same pattern of repeated marital links is observed between villages. The tendency is since one cannot base affinity on close consanguinity, to "insure" it by 'repeating' an affinal tie. The concern with the origin of the spouse is stronger among men than women, because marriage implies a radical shift in domestic allegiances for men rather than for women.

Post-marital residence is determined by the location of the house. Skamniotes and Skaliotes prefer to build the new houses as close as possible to the natal one. They say **to pedi sou pantrepse, yitona sou kanto**, when you marry your child, make it your neighbour. Since the house is dowried to the bride, residence after marriage is often uxorilocal. Most probably a bride with a proper dowry will not go to live elsewhere.

This pattern is disturbed by economic or demographic factors. When there are problems in the marriage market, houses act to balance demographic factors: women without houses tend to marry into villages where there is relative scarcity of women at a marriagable age and men are eager to find wives.[22] Indeed, during the last decade there has been a flow of women from 'poor' to 'richer' villages. Besides an emerging tendency of intermarriage between Skamnia and Skala, Skamnia 'imported' brides from nearby villages and 'exported' brides to Athens. Out of a total of 24 marriages in Skamnia and Skala between 1970 and 1980, in 9 of them the bride came from a village in the same periphery: 3 from Yelia, 2 from Chalikas, 2 from Kapi and 1 from Ayia, Paraskevi and Klio respectively (see table 10). The rapidly diminishing size of the villages extended the boundaries of the marriage market as to include the immediate neighbours. In the latter

case of village intermarriage the emerging pattern is virilocal.

Table 10

Origins of Bride and Groom, in Skamnia and Skala, 1970-1980

Cases of Marriage in	Bride and Groom from Skamnia or Skala	Groom from Skamnia, Bride from Elsewhere	Total
Skamnia	9	5	14
Skala	6	4	10
Total	15	9	24

Source: Church Archive

Class considerations do not enter marriage to the extent they did in the past.[23] Expectations focus on daughters who should marry equal or higher. Education is regarded as a factor that promotes hypergamy. It increases the woman's chances of finding an urban husband and moving upwards. In mixed sibling groups it occasionally occurs that the elder brother abandons high school to find employment in the merchant navy while his sister goes on to university.[24]

5. Informal Courtship: Marrying for Love

Given the considerably small number of people involved, the relatively frequent occasions of interaction, the quick way in which information circulates in the village - especially on delicate issues of marriage - it is not at all difficult for everybody in the marriage market to know the whereabouts of each other very well. Skamnia and Skala participate with the neighbouring villages of Argennos and Chalikas in the same **nifopazaro**, bride market. Young men and women

meet in the summer village festivals, in the regular summer volta, the leisurely strolling on the road that links Skamnia to Argennos, in open air gatherings at the country tavern of Doukas, in the noisy ceremonial visiting of Agia Fotini by girls of neighbouring villages during the Holy Week, in the preparation of the Epitafios, in dancing festivals that accompany betrothals and marriages and of course during the olive harvest. The degree of sex segregation among unmarried men and women is small, the occasions for interaction are there, and indeed most of them do not pass up the chance of courting and establishing informal relationships.

Girls who finish the high school and young men who complete service in the army often come together in informal contact at various degrees of intimacy but with a present and expressed sexual tone, although highly protected from the public eye. This is a trial period. It depends on direct intersexual contact or it is mediated by membership in an age group. Young women as well as young men take the initiative and encourage the formation of relations that in a certain degree resemble courting relations in an urban context without, however, adopting formal recognition.[25] These informal relations range from very preliminary courting, that starts in public and reaches, according to claims by informants, an advanced state of sexual contact, which usually stops well short of sexual intercourse. Meeting at night under a tree or during harvest or exchanging notes are facets of the relationship that add a romantic overtone. Once rapport is established, interaction takes place in private and the relationship is assumed to be a secret. The partners say that they come to know each other. And indeed the emphasis is on chatting. Courtship is often disrupted by the different pace with which the partners engage in the sexual aspect of the relationship. The partners are somehow generously referred to by co-villagers as

agapitikos/ia, lovers. Men are more eager to identify the relationship by referring to their courting mates as **i dikia mou**, my woman.

At this stage girls enjoy considerable freedom from domestic responsibilities. They go to high school at the headvillage of Mantamados or work in the fields. Young men are just entering the coffeeshop. In this period of disengagement from home or coffeeshop feelings became more private. However, the individualization with which romantic love is often linked, as we shall see, is hardly accomplished among women and is disassociated from heterosexual love among men.[26] This is manifested in the background of courtship.

In the very small world of the village it is very difficult to keep an informal courtship hidden. There are men who described to me confidentially relationships they had and which allegedly nobody knew about. It seems, however, that as the relationship grows it becomes known. Young women often involve age mates as well as their mothers and other female relatives on whose advise they rely as courtship advances. Young men, on the other hand, usually handle courtship without involving their relatives. Instead they are supported by very close friends and age mates, who even if they are not informed properly can easily guess what is happening. The degree of involvement of these accomplices in the affair varies, yet they hold a significant role especially in the starting and closing phases of the relationship. Thus besides the main protagonists we distinguish two main parties of courtship involving male friends and female consanguines of man and woman respectively who act, when needed or asked, as advisors to the main actors and who are proven instrumental in the publicizing of some aspects of the relationship or in negotiating others.

The degree of asymmetry in informal courtship, reflected in

the holding of initiative, depends on the relative social distance of the two individuals, measured in terms of village, economic or kinship status. Yet it is male courting behaviour that is culturally acknowledged.

The verb **gabrizo** refers to the flirtatious activity in which young men involve themselves before they get married: it originates from **gambros**, groom and means to act as a groom. A young man gabrizi when he appears well groomed, makes jokes and generally is easy going with girls. If this behaviour is appointed to a particular girl then that suggests that he is informally involved with her. This public display of interest towards girls marks the transition from adolescence to manhood and is considered childish and inappropriate if it involves a mature unmarried man in his thirties.

Gabrisma suggests an active demonstration of male availability and requires an individual initiative that threatens ties within an age group. This is less so among young women whose solidarity mainly with female kin remains firm throughout the courtship period. Women apparently keep a more passive profile, yet they still play the game of attracting the exposed men and finally choosing one by offering him the possibility of a special relationship.

The informal courtship relationship is not exclusive. I know of at least one recent case of a young woman in the village who was courting with two co-villagers at the same time. Both relationships were at a very early stage. One of these men later became her husband. Young men on the other hand tend to establish their parallel courtship relations in different villages. Simultaneous, parallel relations are usually indexes of special circumstances and from the woman's point of view of an urgency to marry. Property or other considerations related to the household of the two parties are of secondary significance. Liking each other is the basis of the matter.

Central to the tactics of informal matching is the handling of the sexual aspect of the relationship. Although sex is tolerated and in a certain degree promoted in this kind of relationship, a consumated sexual relation changes the status of the relationship to that of **aravoniastikos/a**, fiances. The handling of sex by both of them is a sign of their intentions concerning the formalization of the relation. I will deal with the issue of sex elsewhere. Briefly I want to note here that virginity still marks the status of the relation and the public acknowledgement of its loss implies an almost de facto transition into betrothal or even into marriage. Yet Skamniotes hold a concept of virginity that does not entail any material proof such as the mainland Greek custom of blood on the white sheet on the first night of the wedding implies, despite occasional references to this 'old' custom. Virginity remains part of the rhetorics of marriage.[27] It becomes an issue only if one of the parties publicly makes it so by claiming the consummation of the relationship or if pregnancy testifies to its loss. So to the extent that the relationship is not openly asserted by any of the parties and pregnacy is avoided, young women and men have no hesitation about entering the sexual dimension of the relationship and to a certain degree attempt to manipulate it.[28]

In the manipulation of premarital sex it is women who hold most of the cards. Apparently, they use sex in order to pool attractive suitors around them and select the best. There are cases of men who fall easy victims or misinterpret sex as encouragement for the formalization of the relation and proceed to ask for a woman's hand from her parents. Given the complexities involved in a similar situation, such as the possible disagreement between the girl and her parents, or her parallel involvement with someone else who she prefers, and the weak position of the groom who in such cases

negotiates without any backing from his household, a negative response is not only easily explainable but also highly expectable.

Both parties are careful in dealing with the sexual aspect as a means of pressure towards marriage. She has no reason to acknowledge any reductions from her public image as a chaste woman. And while he can hardly prove it, he is in danger, if he persists, of magnifying his failure and being accused of being a **mourdaris**, bully. The negative response without necessarily damaging the credibility of the suitor - although it may put some question marks on his seriousness - most probably adds to her reputation as an attractive bride. That she is asked in this way is regarded as a confirmation of her alleged beauty or attractiveness. Similar informal courtship strategies are employed by women with rather weak consanguineal linkages, with moderate dowry or with many sisters.

In short, then, in the terrain of informal courtship, much of the activity is carried out by the bride and groom themselves. Nevertheless, women are much better positioned than men. They are in control of the mechanisms of publicizing it through their consanguines and they are not socially restrained from initiating and 'using' the sexual aspect of the relationship. In this game it is men rather than women that are more exposed to being formally involved, even against their will. Womens' only weak point - and correspondingly mens' strong one - is the publicly acknowledged loss of virginity in pregnancy. While a woman can expose a man by publicizing their relationship, he can only enforce marriage on her by initiating a de facto pregnancy. To avoid marrying her once she is pregnant would entail a serious breach of conduct and may damage his reputation. Pregnancy is regarded as a terminal point in courtship. It is required that the two lovers get married before she gives birth. It seems that men 'use' pregnancy in order to formalize a relationship;

women, in their turn, 'apply' it to shorten a prolonged engagement. It is the woman's 'words' that count more in such matters.

A marriage that rests on courtship is called **gamos apo erota**, marriage of love. Courtship is idealized as involving romance that survives after marriage. Some informants warned me that the term **erotas** is misleading especially if it is confused with its corresponding meaning in an urban context. Yet it clearly juxtaposes this form of marriage with a formally arranged marriage through **proxenio**, matchmaking. Marriages of love are reported in the past and their present-day occurence probably depends on the relaxation of values concerning sex and the decrease in sex segregation.

6. Proxenio

Despite the contrast between marriage by love and by arrangement, most engagements, irrespective of whether they arise in courtship or not, are formally initiated in the negotiation between the households of the bride and groom. This usually relies on the services of a mediator, the **proxenitis** who takes the initiative to bring the two parties together. Depending on how confident they feel, a man and a woman 'in love' may ask for a mediator, who will ease the approach of their respective families, yet still think of the outcome as relying on love. It is indeed rare for a marriage to be totally 'free' of mediation.[29] This is especially true among the families of good standing, where property considerations are more important.

Proxenio is the first stage in the formal process of marriage and its positive outcome results in an **aravona**, engagement. Although in **proxenio** it is the two households that are brought into contact, it is still the two individual persons who are indirectly concerned. The

proxenitis promotes the idea that two persons of opposite sex and of the same standing in the village society are compatible as potential husband and wife. His task is paralleled to the making of a church. At the personal level their compatibility is not questioned since it is conditioned, secured and sanctioned by their respective households, which have supervised the incalcation of proper values into both of them. The commitment of the person to his/her natal household and to a specific set of values is a given. The issue in question in **proxenio** is the compatibility of the households themselves.

The **proxenitis**, then, is the person who represents and speaks on behalf of a household. There are case where there are mediators from both sides, but usually it is the family with the greater material interest which is the 'asking' side and which also employs them. One may have a team of **proxenites** but it is always one person who bears the title and is in command of the whole process. Women as well as men mediate. The male **proxenitis** should be married because otherwise he might 'promote' himself instead of the party he is supposed to represent. They say that **lefteros proxenitis tou logou tou kouvalitis**, the unmarried match-maker speaks on his own behalf. He may also shift his allegiance during a **proxenio** and try to match another person instead of the original. Although this very rarely happens, it is discussed because it shows his negotiating power. Ideally, **proxenio** is the matching of two people who are totally unaware of what is happening and who do not even know what the other looks like. Yet this rarely happens in fact.

In the task of representation the **proxenitis** is obliged to project and sanction with his or her authority all the positive attributes of the household and the person he or she speaks for. In mediating between the two households he has to assure them of the viability of their potential marriage and to find solutions to the

practical problems that arise. The role is to add to the negotiation options that would be very difficult to pursue directly. The **proxenitis** can 'absorb' a potent negation without harming the honour of the asking party or can guarantee commitments that the two parties themselves would hesitate to undertake. This authority and ability to persuade, besides its tactical significance, adds to the image of the party represented. Sometimes success in **proxenio** is solely attributed to the mediator's abilities. **Opou na to po piani a logos mou**, they never said no to me, boasts one of the prominent **proxenitres** of the village.

It is evident, however, that the **proxenitis** must consider carefully the conflicting interests in order to secure the best outcome. An arranged marriage that fails - not necessarily leading to divorce - or even an unsuccessful mediation may damage the **proxenitis'** public image. The opposite is equally true: success in **proxenio** adds to male or female prestige. The leading **proxenitra** in Skala, a grandmother in her seventies and co-head of a big family, boasts of her successes in **proxenia** with other villages. Her past successes act as a constant reminder and permanent source of invitations for new **proxenia.** The mediators' contribution, then, is not just to bring together or even sanction but to foresee as well the mutual compatibility.

The greater the social and geographical distance between the two households, the more formal and important becomes the **proxenio**, the more heavy are the responsibilities of representation, the more public and respectively male is the role of the **proxenitis.** In a case of households from two distant villages who hardly know each other, a whole team represents each of the parties and the central role is played by public figures such as the president of the communal council or a local merchant. This is also the case when big property is at

stake. To the opposite extreme, if the two households are neighbours and eventually know each other very well, it may even be the mother of the groom or the bride who will **proxenepsi** her offspring.[30] This most informal and less mediatated **proxenio** is called **prospesi**, from the verb **prospipto**, to fall at someone's feet. **Prospesi** clearly suggests an asymmetry resting on the fact that it is the bride's side that holds the initiative in the arrangement of marriage. The greater the consanguineal backing of the bride the greater the chance of being represented by a close female relative. In Skala today most of the internal **proxenia** are made by elderly kinswomen, the so-called **gries**, old women. **Gries** of 'public' standing are also employed in **proxenia** with other villages.

There is an anecdote in Skamnia that reveals another property of **proxenio:** Yioryos K. goes and finds Stratis P. working in his olive grove alone. He speaks to him with a very straight and sincere tone. I want your daughter, will you give her to me. Stratis cannot believe his ears and asks him to repeat it. Yiorgos repeats in an equally categorical tone what he said before. Then Stratis takes him to a nearby olive grove where Nicos T. is pruning some trees. There Stratis says to Yiorgos: what you said to me just before, say it again. I want your daughter, repeats Yiorgos, will you give her to me. Yes, I will give her to you, says Stratis.

Proxenio besides representation and mediation is also **martiria**, testimony. The **logos**, verbal commitment of either party in order to be valid should be shared with a third party. The **logos** binds only in front of the moral community or consanguines, friends and co-villagers. There are cases where the coffeeshop or the neighbourhood enter the **proxenio** as the third witness. Stratos **pseftogambrize**, was half-courting Maria, a girl in the neighbourhood. He discussed this issue relatively openly with some of his friends in

the coffeeshop. Costas, Maria's father, who heard about it and who wanted Stratos as a son-in-law, took the opportunity to come to the coffeeshop and ask for an explanation. Stratos openly declared his preference for Maria and asked to marry her. In such a case both sides are symmetrically exposed. Stratos had difficulty in saying whether it was marriage by **proxenio** or not or who asked whom. In fact he did not have any relationship with Maria before the incident and the coffeeshop was employed by both parties to bilaterally initiate the engagement and match a mutual preference.

In another case the girl's father did not react as Costas but on the contrary proceeded to ask a different groom on behalf of his daughter. Once she was engaged, discussion about his daughter in the coffeeshop could be regarded as a genuine source of insult and in effect stopped.

The less formal is the **proxenio**, the easier it is to extend it in time, especially if the groom's side is the asking side. Then the response may be not firmly negative but 'we are not ready yet'. A groom or a bride may simultaneously be exposed to a number of **proxenia**, but it is unlikely that one may occupy in different proxenia both the 'asking' and the 'being asked' position.

The **proxenitis** makes an offer that is in principle honourable, yet also entails the risk of refusal, which if publicized may be regarded as an insult that damages the marital prospects of the initiating party. If possible, proposals should leave space for retreat. However, the higher the status of the families, the more honour is at stake, the more serious are the effects of an even diplomatically phrased rejection. To avoid negative repercussions great secrecy sometimes ensues. This is very easy if the **proxenitis** is a close relative. A popular image of **proxenio** is that of the mother going at night and under cover of darkness to **proxenepsi**, her

daughter. If she is successful she comes back with the candle light lit up. The light does not only acknowledge success but the fact of **proxenio** itself. Indeed most of the **proxenio** become immediately known only if they are successful.

If there are fewer men in the marriagable category than women, then it is the women who 'ask' men. The informal courtship gives way to negotiations over dowry and discussions concerning the household. The negotiations of the representatives of the two households over issues related to the households and not the persons act as a buffer zone against any potential threat to the domestic position and authority of the women who are found in a demographically disadvantageous position. The more weak the bride appears in the marriage market, the more backed and covered she enters the process of marriage through the employment of **proxenio** and the more relatively strengthened is her future domestic position, given of course the capacity of her household to support it.

If the demographic situation favours women, the men are more disposed to 'ask' women. But in their search for a bride they act as individuals and use courtship thus decreasing the chances of humiliation if they are refused in **proxenio.** On the other hand, because women have to deal with men acting as individuals and not as household members, they can enter the game of informal courtship with the confidence that their relative demographic superiority and their closer association with their consanguines gives them.[31] In such cases women use the availability of men to improve their chances in the marriage arrangement and to find the most compatible husband. Women control the timing of the trial period and their relatives control the terms of the final arrangement.

Most recently, with the great decrease in numbers, the weakening of socio-economic differences, the exposure to 'urban' influences and

the relaxation of sexual restrictions, courtship, initiated by men, and matchmaking, initiated by women, are employed together in the selection of a marital partner from within the same and occasionally from a neighbouring community. Brides with a good dowry can be more selective and rely on **proxenio**, especially if they enjoy firm domestic backing. Women with physical charms but small dowry use courtship as a means of creating a pool of suitors and eventually a collection of proposals which improves their negotiating position, given that they avoid the dangers of overexposure. Their partners are men who are daring in **gabrisma** and not afraid of rejection.

In general men do the courtship preparation, they are then approached by the girl's side to settle the formal aspects and the final agreement is reached. A recent trend is that the bride is given (extra) individual negotiating power. Her household has the first and the last say. From a number of cases it appear that she exercises this power in order to secure an advantageous deal on the issue of male mobility which is sensitive, as the section on bachelors indicated. Yiorgos **gabrize** with the teacher's daugher for some time. He promised her that he would ask for her once he concluded his service in the army. Indeed, all the steps were taken. But Yiorgos had in mind to join the merchant navy during the betrothal. However, while her parents did not object she reacted against her proposed engagement saying that she did not want to get married before she was 25. In these, usually successful, tactics young women find allies among the relatives of the groom as well.

In the words of an old Skaliotis: "the bride will always ask the groom. Only if the groom is in love will he ask the bride." You ask if you have something to offer. In proper **proxenio** the bride's side offers the dowry, in courtship the groom is 'offering' himself. In the formal definition of marriage that **proxenio** entails the main

reference is to households while women are postulated as agents of a solid domestic order, passive before marriage, increasingly active after it. Young men sometimes challenge this order by projecting the exceptional quality of 'love'. Only 'male love' can challenge the primacy of the 'female house' in the arrangement of marriage. This conforms to the idea that men are the initiators of the 'love affair' and 'fall in love'; while women are thought as more 'materialistic' in their marital considerations and less ready to respond at the expense of challenging the wishes of their family. Men are more concerned with love and sex when womens's attention is on marriage and its institutional outcome. This crucial separation of male sentiment from the female domestic order will be explored in parts II and III.

7. Betrothal: Exchange in the Process of Marriage

A successful **proxenio** is followed by **aravonas**, betrothal. If courtship prepares the persons to fit into marriage, something that the **proxenio** guarantees from the outset of the relation, then **aravonas** formally acknowledges the matching of two persons and anticipates marriage, which certifies the matching of the households as well. In this respect it represents a gradual retreat from the considerable individualization experienced in courtship and a return to a life governed by household concerns.

Aravonas is the name both for the ritual that establishes the relationship between future husband and wife, the rings exchanged on this occasion and the period that mediates between the ritual and that of marriage. In the nineteenth century **aravonas** was sanctioned by the church, which **ierologouse**, sanctified the union at the house of one of the parties involved. As a ritual it is in certain cases more

elaborate and rich than the ritual of marriage itself.

Aravonas is usually a period of full sexual relations between groom and bride. In that sense full sex - and as an implication the loss of virginity - does not mark off marriage from premarital relations but courtship from **aravonas**. The fact of full sexual relations during betrothal is very openly discussed in the two villages. This practice goes back to the nineteenth century.[32]

During betrothal groom and bride exchange visits and stay at each other's homes. If they come from different villages they spend more time in the village they plan to settle in after marriage. If they live in the same village, they spend most time in the bride's natal house, especially if she expects a dowry house. Their relationship closely resembles that of a proper husband and wife. They use first names as terms of address and reference while the terminology of affinity is applied to each other's close relatives. The groom works his fiancee's parents' land and she may help him in his shop or coffeeshop or help his mother during the olive harvest. This is the least sex segregated phase in the developmental cycle of the conjugal bond. The groom and bride appear together on all public occasions, in contrast to married men and women who are segregated in sex specific groups of friends and collaterals. For example in the congregation of **Anastasi** (resurrection), when the holy cross is carried around the village, men lead, women and children follow, and in the middle, where the two groups join, the few couples of **aravoniasmenous** walk hand in hand in an exceptional display of conjugal affection. During aravonas the young man attends the house relatively more often, either his house where he has to support the coming together of his family with his future wife or her house where the reverse happens.

Aravonas also initiates affinity more generally. This is especially true for the two households that are linked with ties of

simpetherio, affinity. Parents-in-law start calling each other **simpethero/a**. Affinity is ritually acknowledged in a process of gift exchange that starts at the point of betrothal and may go on after marriage.

From the point of view of the husband and wife the **aravonas** refers to a fully developed 'marital' relationship that just falls short of full co-residence and children. But if from the point of view of its protagonists **aravonas** is marriage, this is not so at all from the point of view of their natal households, which are more concerned with the institutional and material facets of marriage. **Aravonas** has an economic meaning as well: it refers to an advance payment, the **kaparo**, deposit that guarantees that a financial agreement will be observed. Sometimes this term is used metaphorically to describe transactions over land or animals. During **aravonas** the two sides intensify the preparations for the new household, settle all outstanding issues of property and make sure that the terms of the **prikosimfono** will be fulfilled.

In **aravonas** the domestic qualities, mainly of the groom, but also of the bride, are tested. The emphasis is on his exposure to 'bad' coffeeshop practices such as heavy drinking or card playing which eventually contradict his expected conduct as a father and provider. Considerable concern is shown about whether the **prikia** of the bride are of the expected standard or the house is being properly built. The engaged allegedly test their mutual loyalty and responsibility. Yet, it is the women of the two households and other female consanguines who do most of the evaluation.

Aravonas often lasts two to three years. The more senior the bride and the groom are in their respective sibling orders, the fewer siblings they have or the fewer sisters expecting to marry the groom has, the better their chances of marrying quickly. Tension and

conflict focusing on property considerations and the marriage order are not rare. The groom may want to delay the marriage because his sister has to marry first and he is still contributing to her dowry. His fiancee presses for a quick marriage because as the years pass she gets out of the marrying age and a broken engagement may jeopardise her marriage chances for ever. The tension centres on the collateral responsibilities of both groom and bride, but very rarely becomes a cause of breaking off the **aravonas**.

The more **aravonas** is prolonged, the more it becomes a replica of marriage. As in the case of courtship, pregnancy is the only means to terminate the period of **aravonas** and impose marriage as a fait accompli. Although men are better situated in relation to pregnancy than women, pregnancy may be initiated by women also.[33] It is widely claimed that first, many women are already pregnant when they marry and second, the fact that a number of couples are childless relates to abortions that were proved necessary when the engaged couple could not agree that they should proceed to marry because of the pregnancy. Apparently in four recent marriages two brides were pregnant. It has been argued by some of my informants that it is an insult to the bride's family if she is pregnant at marriage but in the cases I know of I did not detect any similar attitude towards the bride or her parents. In principle pregnancy before marriage is to be avoided and its occurence testifies to a conflict on the timing of the marriage.

Aravonas is the most significant phase in the long process that leads to marriage. Yet some prominent features of the exchanges that pattern **aravonas** are also found in ritualized or unritualized phases that precede marriage. Indeed **prospesi** and **proxenio**, **aravonas**, marriage and **antigamos** are linked by a complex network of exchanges between the chief protagonists in the making of the new household.[34]

Let us consider briefly what these occasions involve. **Prospesi**



5 & 6 Women and men wait separately for the bride.



is initiated by the bride's side who visit the house of the groom. It may be followed by a small festivity that takes place in the bride's house. The bride is kept in the background while the groom with his parents are the honoured party. **Prospesi** is private and almost spontaneous. **Aravonas**, on the other hand, is a very stressed and public occasion. Usually the more stressed **aravonas** is, the less stressed is marriage. The ritual of **aravonas** is again initiated by the bride's side who cover the expenses and go to take their future affines from their household. Now the focus is on the bride in her natal house, she is the daughter who is becoming a wife. In **prospesi** (or **proxenio**) the two sides are brought together. In **aravonas** the bride and groom are brought together but they are revealed as wife and husband only at the point of the exchange of rings. Bride and groom dance separately, she with her mother's brother or her father, he with a very close friend, the **koubaros** or the **proxenitis**. The expenses of the ritual and the festivity of marriage are shared by the groom and the **koubaros**. Both of the sides of the groom and the bride remain in the background on this occasion.

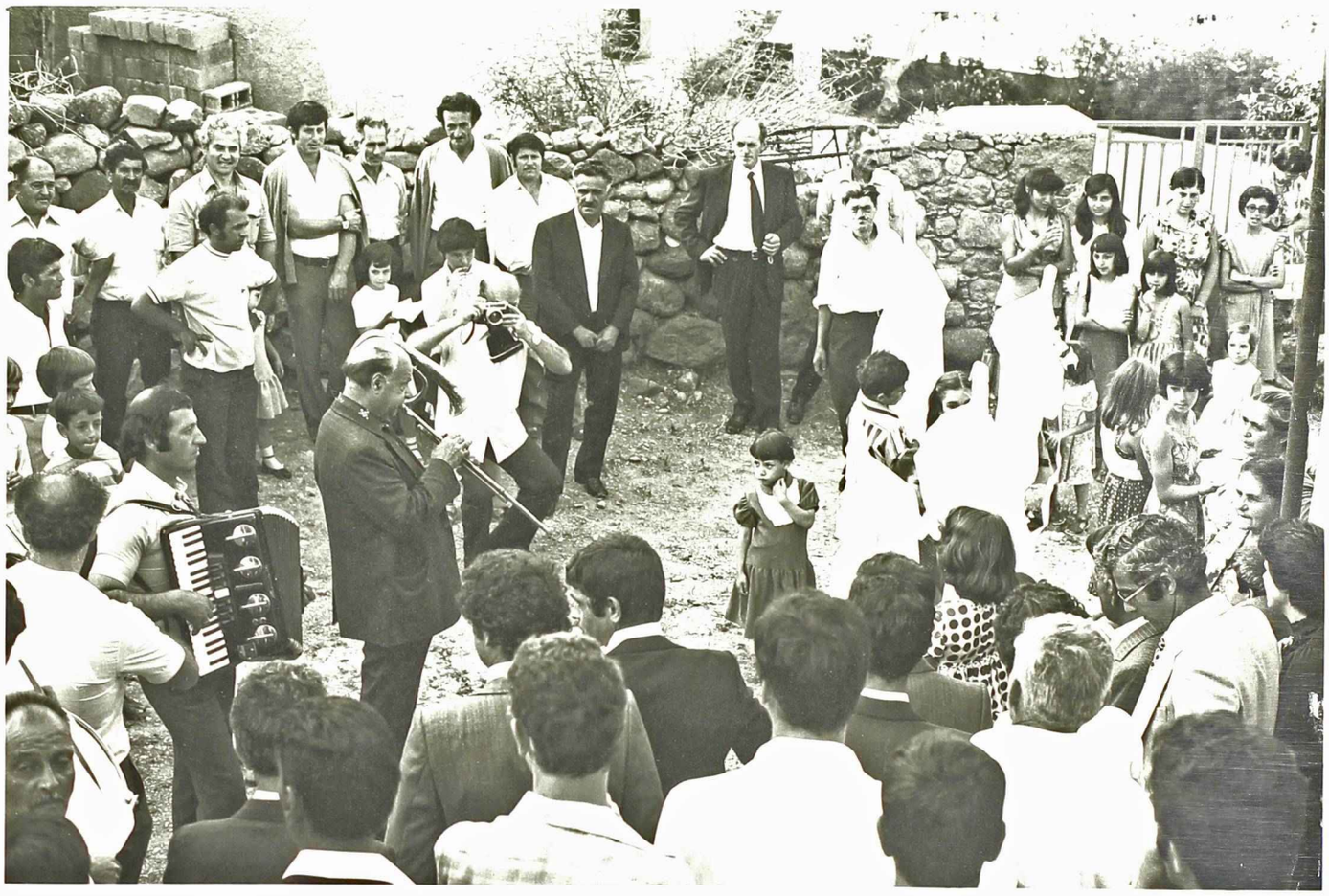
Marriage is a public as well as equally sex segregated ritual. Invitations are made separately: the bride passes by the houses and invites the women, while the groom with the **koubaros** invites the men in the coffeeshop. The ritual starts with the bride who is visited at home by female kin and age mates while the groom and his friends are collectively shaved at the barber. Before the ceremony at the church they all gather at the bride's house and from there men and women separately walk to the church. Then husband and wife become the focus of ceremonial attention: they dance together and they are exposed to the public as a couple. Equally significant, especially in dancing, is the relationship of the husband with the **koubaros** and of the wife with the **koubara**.

Finally, in **antigamos** which is the ceremonial opening of the new house, the focus is on the new wife as receiver of visits and hostess. The husband goes by himself to church and she goes by herself, while she stresses throughout her ritual relationship with her **koubara**. The **antigamos** ends with a meal in which the new couple honour the sponsoring pair at their new house.

From **prospesi** to **antigamos** the groom's side hardly takes any initiative. The initiative is shared by the bride's side, especially her female kin and her mother, the bride herself and the groom. At the rituals of marriage the young girl emerges from the background as a daughter and progressively occupies the ceremonially sanctioned position of daughter and prospective wife, of wife and at the end of wife and mistress of the new household. The 'exodus' of the bride from her natal household is ceremonially supervised until she establishes control of the new household.

An analysis of gift exchange from **prospesi** to marriage reveals a similar pattern. Despite a certain variation in the quality and quantity of these gifts, which depends on the economic situation or changes in fashion, the important positions of giver and receiver are stressed with the same consistency. First, the bride's side occupies the giving position much more than the groom's side. This is so especially in giving gifts to third parties. Second, it is women from both sides who play the dominant role in the exchange, as givers. The items that are almost exclusively exchanged are food, drink, and clothes, most of them prepared at home by the women. Today at least the clothes are bought from outside. The offered items achieve a special, symbolic significance only if they are exchanged in the context of marriage.

Let us consider the piece of cloth that is most significant from the point of view of marriage. The handkerchief is the public symbol



7. Marriage : the groom comes to fetch the bride.



8. The display of marriage : the bride with her **prikia.**

of **aravonas**. It is first given by the bride's parents to the **proxenitis** and then directly to the groom and his parents. If there is a formal occasion after the **proxenio** all people attending it receive the handkerchiefs from the bride's parents, usually her mother. At the **aravonas** ceremony, a close consanguine of the bride, her mother's brother or her father, offers the handkerchief together with the ring of **aravonas** to the groom. Afterwards the bride herself offers the handkerchief to all kin and friends who attend the ritual and in return she is offered money or small gifts. This is her first appearance in the ceremonial position of giver. Till the **aravonas** the basic protagonist in ceremonial giving is the bride's mother and the groom's mother appears as the chief receiver. From then on what emerges in the exchange pattern is the relationship between the bride and her mother-in-law.

This becomes most clear in the exchange of the **kouliki** or **tsoureki**. This is a kind of home-made sweetbread consumed in important ritual occasions in the place of bread. The bride prepares a **kouliki** and sends it to her **pethera**, mother-in-law on Christmas and Easter Sunday. At marriage the bride's side provides two **koulikia**: one for the marriage which ideally is cut above the couple's head and another for the groom's mother, who distributes it to visitors who come to honour the occasion. The groom's mother responds with a **kouliki** sent to the bride's mother on the same occasion. The bride's **kouliki** bears the sign of a spring flower, **martis**, that symbolizes the union while the mother-in-law's **kouliki** bears the same symbol plus the sign of a brooding hen, that symbolizes fertility. Another **kouliki** is offered by the bride to her mother-in- law at the occasion of **antigamos**. After marriage **koulikia** are sent by the bride to the groom's mother every year at the highest ritual occasions. In handling bread this major symbol of the house, the bride honours her

most significant affine as well as asserts her future domestic position. In both instances of handkerchief and bread giving she, together with her mother, further assumes the strategic role of supporting the linkages of the emerging household to the wider community. This is so even when the **pethera** receives a **kouliki**: she then redistributes it to visitors.

The pattern of gift exchange between the two sides favours the groom's mother who appears to be the principal receiver of symbolic sympathy. This is explicitly thought as a form of compensation for the 'loss' of her son whose domestic situation radically changes. Despite the fact that the groom is not usually a **sogabros** i.e. a husband who co-resides with his wife's parents, he is regarded as a person entering the world of his wife's relatives. The opposite is thought about the bride who appears to perpetuate the domestic fortunes of her natal household.

What is particularly interesting in the exchanges of marriage is an explicit stress on symmetry and an undercurrent of imbalances. When the two sides start visiting each other they make sure that each visit is carefully reciprocated. In bilateral gift-giving, especially on formal occasions, minor items, cookies, pieces of cloth or flowers, ensure that a 'big' gift will not remain unreciprocated for long. The terms of affinity are gradually imported and used by both partners and they are all keen to stress how equal the relationship is and how much the two sides match. However, not only the bride and her relatives initiate the relationship. They further handle the most symbolically significant gifts as well as appearing more generous in quality and quantity towards their affines. These latent imbalances, that intensify as the bride comes to the front, are explained in terms of what Skamniotes think as the core reality of marriage: the **pethera** loses a son, the bride and her household gain a husband. Marriage

means different things to the bride and the groom's households as it means different things to women and men.

8. Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the corporate and emotional aspects of marriage. This was an opportunity to bring forward a number of issues that permeate arguments to be developed elsewhere in this thesis, and to set the agenda for the analysis of kinship and gender in Skamnia. In this sense this chapter is a substantial introduction to the overall argument.

We saw that from the point of view of formal, sanctified conjugality the expectation is that marriage creates a new, residentially independent and economically autonomous group of husband, wife and children. The notion of **nikokirio** is not just linked to a neolocality norm; it further encompasses economic and political meanings that derive from the application of a definition of marriage and conjugality that is historically promoted by the church and the middle landowners.[35]

Indeed, being the end product of a long process of social interaction, institutional arrangements and ritual activity more or less governed by church ideal, the domestic group at the point of its birth comes nearer to the potent symbol of **nikokirio** and encapsulates certain symbolic properties to be negotiated and even lost in its subsequent life.

This preoccupation is ensured by the strong emphasis on dowry, which is, as we saw, a household-specific form of property and is clearly demonstrated in **antigamos** that postulates the entrance of the conjugal household into a community of households: it is even

symbolically reinforced by the identification of baptismal with marital sponsorship: the one who has the spiritual responsibility to bring a person into society undertakes the task of the social entrance of the household as well. It is in this capacity that he is the first honorary visitor to the new household.

First, the new household is thought to emerge from the symmetrical efforts of the two natal ones. In formal documents the matchmaking process is referred to as **sinikesio**: this suggests the coming together of two **iki**, households that resemble each other in socio-economic status. The compatibility of persons somehow follows from that. This image of affinity as an egalitarian relationship is demonstrated in gift exchange: both sides are eager to keep the balance.

Second, female and male partners are portrayed as sharing complementary responsibilities. This is in line with the ideally symmetrical treatment of sons and daughters in the devolution of family property. Generally, these ideas on the domestic group provide the basis of definitions of maleness and femaleness and set the norm for male-female interaction under the scope of conjugality. They constitute the domestic model of genders which govern relations within the household.

On the other hand, it has been shown that it is women in general and the bride's side in particular that are privileged in the marriage process. Marriage is primarily a female concern. The ratio of spinsters to bachelors demonstrates this point. As we shall see in the third part bachelorship may ease the path to male prestige. For women, there is no way to adult personhood other than that of marriage and eventual procreation. This is why pregnancy is the terminal point in the negotiation of marriage. It is in this spirit that daughters are given priority in marriage. Further, women from all sides are the

chief protagonists in the marriage process. They hold the strings, consult and mediate especially in low class settings.

Womens' predominance in marriage is acknowledged in property, residence, sponsorship and kinship in general. Women are endowed at marriage with a house, often at the expense of their brothers. Their interpretation of the neolocality norm is privileged. In residential terms this gives rise to a pattern of uxorilocality that perpetuates the mother-daughter relationship after marriage and as we shall see in the next part consolidates the domestic position of women and adds a female emphasis to kinship. This is further demonstrated by the tendency of spiritual kinship to repeat female kinship.

Finally, the bride's side has the initiative as well as profits in marriage. Courtship and inter-sexual interaction of people somehow detached from their households do not alter the overall scheme. The bride's side does **proxenio**, is more involved and manipulates contact as well as it is somehow distinguished in the affinal exchanges, and 'profits' with the perpetuation of the mother-daughter bond. The groom's side despite the 'honours' granted, experiences fission and loss.

Although a matter of concern to both sexes marriage seems to be more of a preoccupation to women. Ideally bilateral in its corporate outcome, the household, in property and residential terms privileges the bride's side. The poorer the families the more gender and kinship configurations of marriage and its aftermath deviate from the bilateral and symmetrical ideal of **nikokirio**.

To conclude, in all stages of the marriage process the bride acts under the scope of her domestic group, she enjoys the support of female relatives and she holds an initiative based on the economic security of dowry. More detached from his domestic base, volatile and expressive, the groom employs emotions (**gabrisma**) in order to effect

the conjugal outcome. In marriage, then, women seem to stand for structure while men identify more with sentiment. This theme runs through the next two parts of the thesis.

Notes to Chapter II

1. Here I adopt Netting's understanding of household as form, function and meaning since "physical location, shared activities and kinship need not be empirically or logically overlapping" (Netting et. al, 1984, xx). The identification of 'household' with residence and 'family' with kinship was earlier suggested by Yanagisako (1979). See also Gonzalez, 1970, 232-3. The disentanglement of residence from kinship in the anthropological definition of the domestic group allows the more accurate description of locally distinguished notions of household and family.

2. Loizos (1975, 508-9) reports a 'cultural rule of neolocality' in Cyprus. In the refugee quarters of Piraeus "the autonomy of each household is a fundamental tenet of life" (Hirschon, 1983, 312).

3. On the association between the house and a woman's body see Hirschon, 1978; Dubisch, 1986b. DuBoulay (1974, 133) argues that the woman "is the house and embodies in her actions the symbolic aspects of the house".

4. See Hirschon, op. cit., on the open/close character of the house.

5. On this point see Hirschon, 1981, 77-8.

6. DuBoulay (1986) in a recent paper focuses on house/household as the woman's **proorismos**, destiny through which redemption from original sin is achieved. This idea was earlier taken on by Hirschon (1978, 68).

7. Friedl (1962, 90) notes that "men and women meet only with respect to their joint family obligations". This is particularly so in the sex-segregated context of Skamnia.

8. See Aschenbranner, 1971; Campbell, 1964, 217-224; DuBoulay, 1974, 162-168; Kenna, 1976.

9. Kenna, op. cit., discusses the content of **koubaria** on the Aegean island of Nisos as increasing inter-familial ties in a society that promotes household independence. Yet she acknowledges that "**koumbaros** relationships also exist with families with whom there is a kinship or affinal tie" (357).

10. Property follows the blood line. This reminds of a point made by DuBoulay (1984) on the undirectional flow of blood.

11. The **paterna paternis, materna maternis** rule is what Goody (1976a, 25) regarded as a principal aspect of the 'lineage' system of property transfer. The husband has a legal right to claim part of his wife's dowry.

12. Also see Vernier, 1984, 69-70. Vernier (op. cit., 28) speaks of 'male and female lines' and of a 'bilinear fashion' of transfer.

13. For the legal status of **prika** before it was 'abolished' by the new family law see Lambiri-Dimaki, 1972; also Friedl, 1959.

14. Campbell (1974, 18) has noted that "between the mainland and some of the islands there are important differences in inheritance practices and residence patterns".

15. Lambiri-Dimaki (op. cit., 77-8) considers the need of providing dowries as a factor underlying migration.

16. See in Goody (op. cit.) for these terms.

17. For the meaning of furniture and decoration in Lesbos see Pavlides, 1986.

18. Brandes (1976, 207) records 8 per cent of unmarried males and 11 per cent of unmarried females among people over 40 in Becedas. What is most striking in Skamnia's case is not the much bigger percentage of bachelors but the insignificant percentage of spinsters. The high proportion of single men can be historically related to a pattern of primogeniture via dowry and late marriage for men and women in the 1930s. For related arguments see Hajnal (1965) and Goody (1976b, 56-61).

19. Yet I think that past class differentiation is linked to present day bachelorship. Nikokirei bachelors refused to marry downwards.

20. The son's attachment to the mother and maternal reaction to the son's marriage because of fear of abandonment are listed as principal factors of male non-marriage in Becedas (Brandes, op. cit., 216-18).

21. The social and cultural accommodation of bachelors in the coffeeshop contrasts to what elsewhere is the monastic alternative. See Goody, op. cit., 59. Skamnia resembles Becedas in this respect (Brandes, op. cit., 211).

22. For a similar point see Loizos, 1975.

23. See Papataxiarchis (in press) on the way marriage strategies supported the formation of classes in nineteenth century Skamnia.

24. This is an inversion of the tendency to educate as well as disinherit extra sons so as to increase the size of patrimonial shares that is noticed by Friedl (op. cit., 49-50).

25. The highly formalized pattern of courtship found in Andalusia (Price and Price 1966) and especially the use of spatial metaphors to describe the stages of formalization seems to me to resemble more courtship in the Greek urban context.

26. The close connection between romantic love and individualism in the European pattern of family and marriage has been noted by Stone (1979) and Flandrin (1979). Stone (op. cit., 22) advances the thesis of 'affective individualism': the differentiation of the conjugal family is linked to an increasing emphasis on emotion.

27. Herzfeld (1983) notes that among the Glendiotes chastity is part of the rhetoric of marriage and is manipulated as such. Brandes (op. cit., 225) notices that "as long as an unmarried woman avoids pregnancy, and remains discreet, her sexual relationships are considered private".

28. I have shown elsewhere (Papataxiarchis, op. cit.) that the consumation of the relationship before marriage is a local 'tradition' of some longevity.

29. Goode (1959) discusses romantic love as an element of social structure which has to be controlled in courtship and marriage, especially among the upper stratas, as not to disrupt social arrangements. **Proxenio** certaintly entails a form of control especially when it concludes a phase of courtship. The combination of 'love' with **proxenio** is recorded in Yerania (Hirschon, 1983, 305).

30. Bourdieu (1977, 34-5) describes a pattern of mediation in marriage that starts with the relatives "least qualified to represent the group", the so-called 'practical kin'. As negotiations proceed and look successful these are increasingly replaced by the 'official kin', who are determined strictly by the norms of genealogical protocol and carry greater representational value.

31. The more authoritarian handling of courtship by women is reported by Price and Price (op. cit., 310-1).

32. This was a source of concern for the church authorities in Mytilene. In a very interesting document signed by the Bishop of Mytilene and dated 1880 it is stated that "some of the fiances with the consent of the parents of the bride live together before their marriage and consequently many unpleasant and sad or even scandalous events take place" (see Papataxiarchis, op. cit.).

33. For the phenomenon of bridal pregnancy see Goody, op. cit., 60; Brandes, op. cit., 223.

34. For a very good description of the ritual phases of the process of marriage in village communities of northern Lesbos see Zourou, 1974.

35. For an examination of the ways in which church historically shaped European kinship see Goody, 1983. For the same process in nineteenth century Skamnia see Papataxiarchis, op. cit.

PART II

THE HOUSE AND THE WORLD OF WOMEN

CHAPTER III: WOMEN AND MEN IN THE HOUSEHOLD

I yineka ine to timoni tou spitiou

(The woman is the house's steering-wheel)

Local saying.

1. Introduction

Aris is a rather short, well built man with a moustache, in his fifties - an age around which a man reaches the maximum influence and power. He owns about 15 modia of olive trees - around the village average - which he cultivates together with his wife and with the help of their son. He also works as a pruner and he is one of the best builders in the village. It is not difficult for him to find employment throughout the year. However, the highest asset is his political office. Aris is the secretary of the KKE (Communist Party of Greece) **organosi**, organizational structure in Skamnia. He was one of the youngest guerillas in the National Liberation Army (ELAS) during the Nazi occupation; this is a prestigeous title in the left dominated village of North Lesbos. He is today a man both respected and even feared; by village standards he is **sevastos**, respected.

Aris lives in a comfortable house of 4 rooms, a dowry of his wife Athena. She is in her middle forties, a charming and dynamic woman, the youngest of four daughters. Athena married Aris because she loved him, not by **proxenio**. She works the family land, she takes care of the house but she also earns her own living by being employed as a

wage-labourer during the olive harvest and by renting olive-groves with her husband.

Being on very friendly terms with Aris I, once, witnessed a furious discussion. Athena wanted to build a small house for her son on a piece of land which Aris inherited from his father in Kayia - the summer resort of Skamniotes, near the sea. This is an easy and quick task for a team of two builders. Yet there was disagreement between the two spouses on a number of issues. Aris proposed what seemed to me an easier and quicker solution. He wanted a one room house; she wanted two rooms, in order that her agori, boy, would be comfortable. As building materials Aris opted for plinthous (unbaked mudbricks) because they are cheaper, and more easy to work with; she strongly refused this "cheap" solution and insisted on using bricks and making a proper building. Aris did not want to disrupt his normal working pattern. He preferred to build the house in his spare time. Athena held a very strong view on this issue: the house should be built soon so as to be ready to enter in the summer. In the discussion she proposed, he amended, displaying a spirit of apathy, or even indifference. At the climax of the debate Athena made it clear that if he did not like her idea about the material they would use, and if he did not want to be "employed" in this job, she would try to find somebody else to build the house. The house was finally built roughly on Athena's lines with considerable help from Aris.

Aris is undoubtedly influential among men. But his esteem and influence among men is not enough to generate a symmetrical effect among women. Indeed, in front of his wife Aris looks quite "small". The instance described between Aris and Athena is not an isolated case of female authority and determination. Women in Skamnia and Skala command their households, their houses and their land, themselves and their children, sometimes even their husbands. Women work in the

house and in the fields: they dispose of their labour power as they want and they administer their wage income. Women own and possess material assets - houses and land - transferred to them by their parents at marriage and occasionally are the legal subjects of financial transactions, a pattern found among upper class women in the nineteenth century. They are involved in disputes not only against other women but also against non-related men, mainly for domestic issues. They organise themselves: in a very spontaneous manner they try to improve their conditions of work and pay in the face of their male afentika (bosses). As we shall see, women even challenge mens' stronghold, the coffeeshop, in cases where the latter threatens the domestic order.

Yet there are limits to womens' power. Women do not hold office, nor do they become members of the village church or cooperative council. And only once a year, in Apokries, when a ritual of sex reversal is performed, women dress as men and wearing masks enter the coffeeshops and tease their male clientele.

The discovery of women by anthropologists has led to an increased awareness of their place in society: from a prolonged discussion on womens' 'position' we should keep in mind a point of strategic significance: the distinction between formally expressed authority, administered by men, and informal power, often latent and culturally unacknowledged, wielded by women.[1] Womens' placement into the 'inside' does not necessarily entail subordination but may provide them with their own sphere and basis of power.[2]

Indeed in Skamnia, despite the coming together of sex-specific roles, that the conjugal ideal supports, gender dichotomies which are well founded in family and kinship, persist. Women hold criteria of prestige that intersect or contrast to those of men. In the latter case norms of segregation guard gender specific territories. And as

it is expected of women to refrain from challenging men in their principal field of activity, so it is expected of men to keep a low profile in womens' matters and provinces of competence.

How can one, then explain the relatively weak position of men in the household? Why are women and their kinship side privileged in marriage? Why do women arrange marriages, inherit more and in spite of men? Why does gender qualify the transfer of property or name in a fundamentally bilateral system? Here I wish to try to show that what is exceptional about women in Skamnia derives from the full acknowledgement that the role of the mother enjoys among women and men, in private and public settings. Motherhood is a structural principle that permeates kinship, affinity and relations among neighbours. Its social and cultural organization underlies the female-centredness of kinship, it marks the prominent folk definition of female personhood and supports prestige spheres for women that transcend the boundaries of the household. Women as mothers are the agents of kinship and its symbolic representation in the religious sphere.[3]

Two methodological points should be made here. First, in this chapter, I discuss womens' work in the context of the conjugal relation. Second I consider womens' 'position' within the overall scheme of household relations, in their roles as wives and mothers. This strategy is not dictated by an analytic concern other than that which gives priority to what local women think about their 'work' and their place in society. The cultural logic of womens' work and place is what links them to the overarching theme of female personhood.

2. Husband and Wife: Rights and Obligations in a Segregated Bond

The formal aspect of the conjugal bond is shaped before marriage,

at **proxenio**, when the material background is agreed, and during **aravonas**, when the two **aravoniastiki** exercise their future roles. The more successful the formative process, the closer is the relationship between the new pair and their neighbouring kin. This is particularly true for the daughter/wife who is raised with the idea that one day she will have her own household and who experiences the lengthy process of its establishment as the outcome of a collective family effort.

The idea of **nikokirio** prevails in the definition of conjugal roles. Most of the rights and obligations are defined not against the person of the other spouse but principally in terms of the newly formed household. The husband has to provide for the material well being of the household: for its everyday consumption, for the elementary education of the children, for their health and care, for the provision of dowries. He has to cultivate his own land, he can work "outside" for a **merokamato** (wage) but also he is expected to cooperate with his wife in the cultivation and harvesting of her olive groves. If they improve the house he has to offer his personal labour. The husband is not necessarily obliged to represent jointly their household with his wife on public occasions. Maltreatment of the wife is condemned and if there are no children, is one of the few recognized reasons for divorce. He does not have a right to beat her or even to act authoritatively. To ignore her or to violate her wishes produces friction in the relation, and the wife is usually justified at least among women. He should demonstrate his interest in her welfare publicly, since he is more exposed in the performance of conjugal duties. Living usually near the relatives of his wife he is under their surveillance which may generate approval as well as criticism. A common image during the evening return from the fields is the husband coming on foot while his wife rides a mule. However

most men avoid publicly displaying conjugal affection since this may be interpreted as a sign of softness and weakness from the point of view of the coffeeshop.

The wife's rights and obligations against her household are more implicit since as we saw she is identified by her 'nature' with the household and the house. She cares for the domestic wellbeing of her children and her husband but at the same time she is granted the moral authority to question and criticize their attitude from the 'household' point of view. She controls the socialization of her children on which her husband has a minimal say and she regulates the finances of the house over which her husband can exercise a veto. A wage earner gives his earnings to his wife who keeps them. From there on she keeps a record of expenses, dividing them into domestic and personal ones, the latter being of secondary significance. The husband asks his wife for pocket money to buy cigarettes or have a drink in the coffeeshop. As in most matters, so in finances she represents the household's point of view and on this ground she is allowed to play the role of the household's bank. Men occasionally 'hide' money from the wives to spend it in non-approved purposes: helping a brother in need or gambling. A woman who works, on the other hand, has full control over the remuneration of her labours. She can dispose of it without asking formal approval or even consulting her husband since it is inconceivable that a wife could spend her money in a way that overlooked the household's needs. A household's prosperity or the education of children is occasionally credited to the able financial administration and domestic competence of the wife. By contrast, financial difficulties are attributed to mens' laziness or drinking habits.

Women use first names to refer to and call their husbands. Nicknames or terms of endearment are rarely employed. It is very

common to hear a woman calling her husband in public. Yet, I had the impression that husbands avoided doing the same. Privately a man refers to his wife as **I kira mou**, my lady, which is the generally accepted term of reference for a wife. To refer to a man's wife as **kira** bears respect to the man himself. **Kira** is the female equivalent of **afentis**, boss.[4] In Skala **afentis** is never employed to refer to the male head of a household but it is consistently used to refer to a male employer, a big land-owner who hires a **daifas**.

Conjugal relations are very much affected by the extensive segregation of sexes in Skamnia and by womens' participation in the sphere of wage labour. At the beginning of my fieldwork I attended a small harvest team comprising the husband, his wife and his wife's sister. They worked on rented land. He was beating the branches with a stick and the women were picking the olives. When lunchtime came he sat and ate separately from the two sisters. The women went on with their lunch as he returned to work. Very few words were exchanged between the man and the two women who looked disassociated from him. They were like employees of a non-relaxed **afentiko**. Instead of the husband/wife bond stepping in and shaping the labour relation, the gender specificity of tasks increased the segregation of the conjugal relation. This is a typical pattern in the fields. It is only when husband and wife cooperate alone that they sit and eat together. The presence of a third party, man or woman, relative or not, divides the marital pair, at home or in public, on formal or informal occasions.

More generally the allocation of domestic and agricultural tasks according to gender contributes to the segregation on the conjugal relation. Most domestic tasks like cooking, cleaning the house, washing clothes or dishes, preparing cheese or bread at home, are strictly female. Allegedly men mess around in the house and women react with horror to the western image of the man who cooks or washes

dishes. Elderly women who befriended me often offered to clean my place, wash my clothes or cook thus offering me an outlet to domesticity proper, of which men are in need. Domestic consumption is also female: women are the visitors to the grocers, baker or the 'supermarket' buying provisions for the house. Men buy the meat, often fetch bread and may prepare fish for cooking. Women buy linen and clothes for household members. They care for absent members as well.

Women take care of domestic animals and collect wild greens. Vegetable gardens are mixed domains, yet vineyards are exclusively male. In market oriented agriculture women pick the olives or cooperate with men in handling the nets. The rest of the tasks including ploughing, pruning, beating the trees, carrying the produce to the factory, are done by men. Animal breeding and milking of sheep is male, yet there are women who assist their husbands in milking the few cows. The same is true for fishing. Boats are strictly male territories. With great difficulty the newly married husband may take his wife and child on the boat for a small Sunday excursion and occasionally women may help in net repair.

The sex segregation of village space is another factor. Male and female spaces are clearly divided and protected by 'rules' of entrance and behaviour. These rules apply differently depending on the occasion or the time of the day. The 'public' space of the village square and the coffeeshops around are strictly male (see chapter VI). The neighbourhood, including the area between and around the houses, is usually occupied by women. In church men occupy the left side facing the alter, women the right. Young girls, engaged couples and children occupy the middle. At public gatherings, in open or closed spaces, men and women often sit apart. In marriage men and women wait separately for the bride (see photographs 5, 6 and 7). As we saw, in

the Easter procession family men come after the priest, young married couples follow and then come women and children.

A married man spends most of the time away from home. He leaves the house early in the morning, he returns for a short period at noon, then back at night. During the summer some men prefer to take their midday nap at the caique (or in the fields). Others prefer the coffeeshop for sleeping during the day. Consequently the husband looks like a guest in his own house and acts as a visitor on domestic ritual occasions instead of being postulated as the master of the house.[5] The small size of the house encourages this tendency that is more prominent among the lower classes.

Indeed, in domestic ritual occasions where the husband is usually restricted to the role of a passive participant. All the attention is focussed on the wife, her mother, possibly her sisters or some close female neighbours and the koubara. The husband sits with other men, passively watching what is happening around him, a stranger rather than a host. In the small feast accompanying the betrothal of the daughter, the host-father sits apart, all the attention focusing on the wife, the daughter and consanguines of the mother. In all formal family occasions where both men and women attend, the wife displays with confidence the air of the mistress of the house while the husband sits apart, evidently outside his depth, sometimes looking embarrassed by what is happening.

Segregation shapes the pattern of interaction within the house. Let us consider, for example, the case of the husband entering the house in order to have his lunch. He sits at the far corner of the table which is at the other side from the cooker and eats either with the rest of the family or alone. In this sitting pattern it is very difficult to discern who is the head. In serving a woman identifies with the household and assumes a position of control over the eating

process; being served is a position of some distance from domesticity. As soon as he finishes his lunch, the husband will hurry to retreat from the house back to the coffeeshop, as a child who escapes from the mother's attention. If there are other women in the house, sitting with his wife, they will give little attention to his presence. Yet they may exchange some words with him in a friendly and relaxed manner. They will not necessarily end their visit but may go on while he sits at the end of the table and waits to be served.

Womens' agricultural employment reinforces their position in the household.[6] Women work in their own fields. They are further expected to help their husbands in cultivating family land and do wage labour if joint finances are not enough. Women often face the choice of either cooperating with the husband in renting extra land or working for a wage in a separate daifas, harvest team. In the first case the wife has a full say in what kind of land will be rented, how the olives will be collected or how much rent should be paid to the owner of the olive groves. In this respect she is an equal partner of her husband.

Womens' labour is a principal parameter of family status. The upper, landowning class ideal is total abstention of women from work in the fields or from any kind of paid labour. Very few women, however, stay away from agricultural labour altogether. We can distinguish then three categories of female work in respect of their status implications. It is totally acceptable for a woman to work in her own or her husband's fields, especially at harvest, or undertake female agricultural tasks that relate to the household: take care of poultry or help her husband with the domestic goat or work in the baxes (garden). This places the household outside the professional or trading elite.

Earning a wage is quite ambiguous.[7] It is a sign of financial

difficulties and of the husband's inability to be a proper provider. On the other hand, women labourers of mature age can gain high esteem among women, especially if the image of the household improves because of their contribution. A woman's esteem may be added to that of her household's or her husband's when he works equally hard.[8] More than two thirds of wage work in olives is done by women. In a **maxoulochronia**, fertile year a woman can earn up to 40,000 drachmas. Most of Skala's women, age 15 to 55, and almost one third of Skamnia's **vgikan sto merokamato**, 'have gone out' to do wage labour. This outwards movement does not compromise household independence. Yet it contrasts to a third category of work. Women who **xenodoulevoun**, work away from home or **xenoplenoun**, offer their domestic services to another household are engaged in shameful tasks that contradict their **kira** role in their own household and lose prestige. They can save their domestic reputation, however, if their children are remarkably successful in a domestic or professional career.

Earning a wage leads to an unmediated interaction with men. As in **proxenio** women represent their interests, negotiate and even lead. **Daifades** are often hierarchically organized. They are named after the boss yet led by an experienced woman who collaborates with her kin. The **kopsimo**, 'cutting' of the wage is contested by elderly women who remember the 'old days': in 1945-6 two women were elected to the council of the **Somatio Ergaton Yis**, union of landed labourers.

In general, womens' right to work is undisputable once it is associated with their formal role as wives/mothers and stems from rights and obligations originating in the household with which they identify. Through paid work women earn confidence in their abilities to keep a household themselves. There are instances in which the financial contribution of the wife in the running of the household, the improvement of the house and the education of the children is

greater than their husbands. As there are cases of young widows, household heads who are brought as examples that women can do it all by themselves.

Womens' segregation in and close identification with the household in conjunction with involvement in paid labour are important factors of female domestic power. In principle domestic decisions are taken jointly after mutual consultation. Both husband and wife hold a right of veto which is bypassed, as we saw in an earlier case, if the discussed proposition can be carried out by the one spouse alone and concerns the welfare of the household. If property is individually owned by him/her, that spouse is awarded a certain priority in dealing with it.

Nevertheless this balanced setting of decision making among spouses is not always observed. Behind the image of the **nikokiris**, master of the house that certain men are keen to project lies the reality of female power. Skamniotes parallel the wife with **to timoni tou spitiou**, the steering wheel of the house. She sets everyday domestic issues, shows the greater interest in their consideration, presses more energetically for their resolution and is more clear on the strategy that should be pursued. The wife governs and the husband provides the critical opposition.[9]

Women further set the images of domesticity. They use to say **kata tin nifi ki o gambros**, implying that the groom is shaped after the domestic image of the bride. While the wife is raised up and prepared to exercise domestic roles, the husband enters marriage relatively unprepared. Conjugal asymmetry is often attributed to male nature. Skamniotes argue that: "God made man a beggar, and as long as the world continues he will beg from the woman. It is up to her whether she gives to him or not". This strong metaphor indicates that the husband many times is found in the asking position, the wife in

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the giving one.

The placement of men and women vis a vis the domestic boundary is crucial in the configuration of conjugal authority and power. Women, being more in the 'inside', are more subtle and mobile in their decisions. They may be engaged simultaneously and in a contradictory way in many discussions. Greater secrecy vis a vis outsiders covers their movements, thus allowing for flexibility. The cost of changing their mind is often negligible. Husbands on the other hand are more inflexible and immobile. As we shall see in Part III men have to act in the open and stick to their public statements.

Indeed, men are often trapped in the very image of the 'master of the house' and become victims of their greater exposure. Nikos Arniotis is of refugee origins, in his fifties and married to Vasiliki. He worked as a builder in Athens and became involved in union politics. Coming back he worked and is well known for his coffeeshop going character. Nicos's daughter, Kiriakoula, at the age of 13, had an affair with Photis. Nicos liked Photis with whom he shared friends, despite their age difference, and political views. Yet he, as well as his wife, ignored the affair. Photis decided to ask friends to do the **proxenio** yet Vasiliki was adamant that she did not want him as her son-in-law, envisaging probably a better opportunity for her very young daughter. During the negotiations Nicos allegedly fulfilling his wife's wishes rejected the suitor saying that he had given his **logos**, word elsewhere. Yet Photis and Kiriakoula with the help of friends **kleftikan**, were mutually stolen. Confronted with a fait d'accompli and feeling betrayed by friends Nicos stuck to his refusal. His wife, however, being on the 'inside' and thought to be more supportive to her daughter could change her mind. In the end she consented to the couple's marriage. This led to a marital crisis. Nicos could not step back. As the master of the

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house he had to have the last word, otherwise he would be humiliated. To preserve his pride and having been exposed to the coffeeshop he had to leave his household and the village altogether.

One would expect that on wider ideological issues mens' opinions would prevail. Yet women perpetuate allegiances and defend opinions held by their kin. I became aware of several instances of husbands and wives who openly argued on national politics in the house. The more educated and politically minded husband could not change his wife's mind, and she appeared determined to stick by what she had 'learned at home'. However, households divided on national politics are more united in municipal ones, where the linkage of household and communal interest is more explicit and directly pertinent.

The configurations of conjugal power depend on status and its implications. For example in an upper landowning family the husband owns the house in which the family lives, the wife comes from a lower class setting. This man identifies more with the house - being the example of the 'householder' - while she seems to be confined within it, in the roles of bringing up the children and maintaining the home. She is dislocated from her kin and disengaged from agricultural work while his linkage to the coffeeshop is eclectically activated. Segregation of sex-specific departments of domestic responsibility is less possible here. In effect the wife is left with less 'space' and consequently with a weaker say.

3. Emotions and Sex in Conjugality

From what has been said so far it becomes evident that there is very little room left for the development of mutuality, unity or sharing of emotions between two spouses. Romantic love, wherever it

occurs, fails to support the solidarity and autonomy of the conjugal pair over time. The proverb **t'adroyino ine dio echthri pano sena proskefali**, the conjugal pair are two enemies over the same pillow, denotes the conflict and tension that cripple the relationship. With the exception of the short formative period of **aravonas**, or a more prolonged period of courtship, when close emotional involvement takes place, the rest of married life is usually characterized by increasing segregation and a certain distance between the spouses. Conjugal relations for most of the time are based more on formal definitions of conjugal duty than on the imperatives of the heart. Affection between the spouses, if existent, is never displayed in public, even in the presence of the closest of relatives. In public occasions an outsider can hardly establish who are husband and wife.

The emotional development of the conjugal relation depends on the requirements of parenthood. During the first years of marriage men are often scolded. They are accused of being immature or unable to grasp the complexities of bringing up a child or giving it adequate attention. But the husband's inadequacies much more than feeding complaints are employed to justify the view that the mother is the genuine promoter of the childrens' interests.

When the children leave the household the husband/wife relation is increasingly relaxed, becomes more symmetrical, balanced, even affectionate. The old woman refers to her husband not by his name but as **o yeros mou**, my old man. Her attention is increasingly focused on him. She treats him as both husband and child. She will go to collect him from the coffeeshop at night if the weather is bad and she will drink coffee with him at home in the evenings. The husband/wife relation never attains the status of a relation between equals. When it becomes more emotional, it tends to be interpreted along the lines of the inter-generational parent/child bond, with the wife usually

attaining the position of the elder. The stronger the requirements of parenthood the more hierarchical becomes the conjugal bond.

Sexual relations between spouses are conceived as exchange relations between fundamentally equal partners. This domestic definition of sex departs from the more implicit folk physiology of the sexes that suggests asymmetry and mens' unilateral right over the sexual services of their wives. Sex is a right held by both parties and negotiated in the context of the overall configurations of conjugality. In fact, this perspective on sex is employed more by women to counteract ideas about their assumingly weaker and in need of social control sexual nature.[10]

Sexual mores in Skamnia are relaxed. Sex is openly discussed among men as well as women in same-sex settings. It is a favourite subject of gossip, yet moral reputations are rarely at stake because of sexual behaviour. We saw that chastity is part of the rhetoric of marriage; further, marital fidelity is premised on the whereabouts of marriage. What is most striking, however, is that female sexuality is not a favourite locus of male competition (see chapter IX) and most important the sexual behaviour of women is mostly a concern of female rather than male kin and husband. Indeed the departments of sexual control are sex-segregated. In effect husbands do not hold considerable moral authority over their wives' sexual behaviour, in the way that has been reported in other parts of Greece.[11]

Mens' sexual drives are difficult to control. As we shall see in chapter IX men with a sense of worth should put a brake on their sexuality or channel it into prestige rewarding targets. Womens' weaker nature often explained in terms of the Eve myth, underlies the assumption of a more passive role in sex and an attitude of shame. This is reflected in the arrangement of courtship. It is further suggested in techniques of contraception. This is an issue of concern

among young wives who want to limit the size of their families. Women allegedly cannot and do not intervene in the process of having sex. In effect they do not use physical or chemical means of contraception that allow them to decide whether to have a child. If for women sex means procreation, it contradicts their sense of 'destiny' to disrupt this equation. It is up to men who have the initiative in sex tc practise coitus interruptus or abstain from sex altogether during the fertile days.

In village gossip men as more active are credited with both successes and failures in sex. Married women have sexual needs that their husbands must satisfy. Men who are much older than their wives are thought of as having difficulties in performing their sexual duties and are teased in the coffeeshop.

Womens' active sexuality, what constitutes a wife as a sexually demanding person, is further suggested in the debilitating effects that sex has on men. In sexual jokes and rhymes women are portrayed as 'eating' the penis.[12] Men who are older than their wives put themselves in grave danger because their wives' sexual demands will eventually kill them. In general women are thought as consumming mens' potency: this is one of the burdens of marriage.[13]

On the other hand women use sex in order to negotiate aspects of conjugality. There were cases of women who allegedly abstained when the husband started drinking a lot or came home late at night. Women negotiate sex as men negotiate their presence in the house. Extra-marital affairs are discussed in this spirit. Women whose husbands are old or work, despite their relatives' protests, in the merchant navy and in effect do not perform properly their sexual duties, occasionally establish adulterous liaisons with single men, often younger in age. These affairs are dealt with discretion not to say sympathy by co-villagers. No moral stigma is attached to a woman

if she is low key and does not go on practicing adultery once balance in the marriage is restored. In case, however, that there is no definite evidence against the husband she is blamed, accused of **xediantropi**, lacking shame and this endangers the reputation of her kin while raising suspicions about her husband.

Married male adulters, on the other hand, are condemned with no reference to their marital situation. This suggests that marriage is more sexually restrictive for a man than for a woman. As we shall see in chapter IX, this is not altogether true since men are offered scope for committing adultery outside the village.

This set of conceptions applies, however, only to female insiders, who enjoy the support of local kin and participate in wider kinship networks of women. Village membership through kinship automatically grants a reputation for shame to a woman. **Xenes**, female outsiders married in Skamnia, on the other hand, are by definition thought to be **xediantropes**, shameless and metaphorically associated with **poutanes**, whores. Deprived of membership and outside the sphere of female consanguineal control these women, who represent a sizeable group, are often pinpointed as examples of promiscuous behaviour: they wear more colourful dresses, are more outgoing and allegedly 'outspoken' in the manner. Often quarrels and troubles in the neighbourhood are attributed to them.[14] They are not referred to by name but by the denigrating use of demonstrative pronouns, and placed just one step before the lowest of the moral denominators reserved for 'whores' proper. Female outsiders who are stripped of any domestic role are called **yinekes**, women.

Despite its segregated nature and the flexibility of emotions the marital bond is extremely stable. Canon and state law offer a scope for divorce, yet this occurs rarely. Divorce is strongly stigmatized

by village public opinion and in most cases it is attributed to the husband's misconduct. It is intolerable when the couple has children. Three recent cases of divorce involve couples in the first and second year of their marriage and without children. However, couples with children may separate for a short period. If it is prolonged the husband is expected to leave not only the house but the village altogether. His alienation from his wife and house is extended to include his children.

A man can separate from a women but not from a fully grown household. To abandon wife and children is morally unacceptable. It entails ostracism for the deserter and harms the reputation of the deserted who can recover only if she exhibits skills as an able administrator of the woman centred household. It took me many months to find out that an old woman in Skala, who had raised her children successfully and was classified as a **chira**, widow was in fact abandoned by her husband many years ago. To be treated and referred to as a widow bears an element of prestige. This woman has recovered successfully from the departure of her husband. This was given formal recognition in her status as widow.

Further, women seem more concerned in preserving their marriage. Womens' prestige does not only depend on their performance as mothers or mistresses of their houses but also on their keeping 'good' husbands. Men, on the other hand, in divorce, separation or minor crisis steadily appear as the departing party. It is characteristic that in a number of **sizigikous tsakomous**, conjugal fights I witnessed the climax of the argument was a threat to depart.

Manolis Arapoyiannis, aged 50, has a caique with his brother. He is regarded as one of the most experienced **tratareous**, men specialized in seine fishing, and a family man: he dowried his eldest daughter with a house and sends the younger one to a higher technical school.

He, further, represented Skala in the joint village council. His wife Maroula, age 44, and the eldest of four sisters, is the youngest grandmother and famous for her domestic skills. Skala receives tourists. They can be accommodated with difficulty and often on the basis of local hospitality. Two male tourists could not find a room and Manolis had no objection to them staying in church. He even proposed providing them with blankets but he relied on his wife's permission. Maroula was adamant in her refusal: the blankets will be soiled by the tourists and in any case they 'cannot go out of the house'. In the end, Manolis unsuccessfully threatened to go and sleep in the caique, something he has done in the past. What is striking in this case is that a well-known nikokiris so easily uses his identification with the household as a negotiating card.

Conjugal conflict spreads on the nexus of family relations and as we shall see later, most family members usually side with the mother. I want to mention here another very interesting case of dispute that shows how the order of departure from the house inversely relates to the order of identification with it. The household involves the wife's mother, husband, wife, a daughter that studies in Mitylene and visits the house in vacations and the wife's bachelor brother who stays there for periods of varying duration. This unstable regime of residence and the coffeeshop-oriented character of the male affines underlay a crisis that lasted for a number of weeks. First, the wife's brother left the house and went in a dami, one room agricultural house in the fields. Soon after the husband who had an argument with his wife because of her brother followed his example. Then the wife and daughter left to stay for a short while in Mitylene leaving the grandmother back home.

By threatening to leave the house the husband emphasizes his incipient volatility that may turn into an alienation towards the

domestic structure. He does not dispute his wife's property relation with the house; instead he further stresses it against the background of neglect shown to him. This is the extreme form of publicity that conjugal strife may take. Domestic disobedience threatens more the reputation of the wife because part of her duty is to ensure harmony and accommodate the reasonable claims of household members.

The developmental cycle of the conjugal relation depends on the husband's relation to his natal household. If he is still involved in the joint administration of family property with his brothers or if he has an influential mother and kin around then his emotional attachment to his natal household may survive his marriage. In this case, the husband's involvement in his wife's domestic group is minimal, restricted to very rare visits to his in-laws during festivities or some cooperation. In this scenario the emotional involvement of the two spouses in each other's lives is considerably delayed. If the husband's mother has sons only and remains active in the administration of domestic matters, conjugal attachment is usually delayed till her death.

To the other extreme if the husband's parents are dead or he does not have brothers to cooperate with or comes from another village, then he becomes much more incorporated into his wife's kinship group. Depending on his age, the status of his family, and his coffeeshop ambitions, he is accepted in his wife's domestic group as both husband of a daughter and son, especially if his wife does not have brothers, or she is a single child. The 'in-married' man holds an ambiguous status. As a 'son' in his wife's domestic group he occupies a junior status. His subjection to his wife's mother's domestic authority challenges his coffeeshop adult status and undermines his prospect of assuming a leading role in communal affirs. The 'in-married' husband is emotionally compensated for his domestic incorporation into his

wife's group. He is almost treated as an insider: he spends more time in the house, he is emotionally closer to his wife, he shares for a longer period and together with his wife a common interest in the children.

The conjugal relation, then, is conditioned by the fact that husband and wife are associated in a diametrically opposite way to the household. As the household developes womens' identification with it becomes more asserted when the husband's loyalty remains in question, since his coffeeshop career has not reached its climax.

The consolidation of the woman's domestic position is realized even at the expense of her emotional relation with her husband. Yet once she becomes a grandmother her orientation changes. Now she draws support not only from her mother but she receives attention and comfort from her children and married grandchildren. But if her ascendants divided her from her husband, her descendants unite them, since they are shared by both of them. Now that joint domestic concerns are minimal the relationship reaches a degree of intimacy and relaxation that parallels the period of romance. Young women sometimes come to the coffeeshop in anger, determined to collect their husbands who spend the household budget in drinks. Old grandmothers will come when the weather is bad with an umbrella or a coat to protect them, to offer their attention and help. Affection in the conjugal tie is attributed to a long symbiosis and loyalty and to the successful raising of a family. More than anything else it rests on men and womens' gradual withdrawal from the domains of an expanding **nikokirio** and a demanding coffeeshop that constitutes them antithetically.

4. Parenthood

The rhetoric of marriage suggests symmetry and complementarity between the spouses, with the men offered the privileged domain of representation and linkage to the 'outside' world. Yet the ethnographic analysis of the conjugal relation reveals a pattern of segregation;[15] it indicates a greater identification of women with the house and a subsequent alienation of men from it, especially in the lowest economic categories; and postulates women handling power within and outside the house. A more comprehensive look at parent/child relations will throw more light on conjugal asymmetries.

It has been said that the 'destiny' of woman is to raise children and against this 'natural' task all other obligations are evaluated. Indeed, motherhood is the highest value in Skala and Skamnia. A childless marriage arouses great suspicion about its overall state and sincerity.

Skamniotes hold a monogenetic theory of procreation. Men contribute with the **sporos**, seed, as semen is referred to. Fertile women are paralleled to a **karpero chourafi**, a piece of land that bears fruit.[16] This idea that women do not contribute genetic material does not fit the assumption that **to pedi perni apo ton patera ke tin mana**, the child resembles both father and mother.

Pregnancy is the proof of fertility and a source of pride for the woman who has just entered adulthood.[17] This is a period of intense exposure. Pregnant women wear clothes that stress their projected bellies, and even set the standards of physical beauty and bodily composure to be followed thereafter in married life.[18] They are very energetic and outgoing. Pregnancy gives the opportunity to women to assert more rigorously their place at the centre of the household.

The obligations of parenthood are the cornerstones of family

morality and dignity. Parents are obliged to take care and promote the wellbeing of their children: offer them shelter, feed them, provide them with clothes, be their emotional supports, protect them from illness and hazard, teach them the domestic and economic tasks. Parents have to ensure that their children will become successful parents. This is particularly true for the daughters who should be provided with dowries and principally with a house. For the sons it is sufficient to become able to support their future household. They have to be introduced into a **techni** or learn their father's occupation. Ambitious parents work hard to send at least one child to the university. Parents who do not take proper care of their children are rated very low by their co-villagers, both men and women. Women who are not satisfactory mothers are classified together with women who commit adultery as **xediantropes**. Men who are not proper fathers are conceived by women in the same category as those involved in 'bad' coffeeshop habits: drinking and card playing.

Parents expect to receive respect and obedience as well as the cooperation of their children in tasks that promote the wellbeing of the whole family. To this extent a son is expected to help his father as far as there are remaining domestic obligations. Once these have been satisfied the father has no right to enforce his son's cooperative attitude. Thereafter it is up to them to go on cooperating. This happens if the family estate is not divided or if the son thinks he can cooperate better with his consanguines than with someone else.

Children are expected to help their parents when they are old. Yet those children who live and work outside the village or who marry in another village are not criticised for leaving their parents alone. Still, they are normally expected to display their feelings and show that they have not forgotten them: telephone or write occasionally.

In general the attitude of giving and the expectation of receiving in the parent/child relation are not bridged by any element of filial piety, a moral principle that binds children to their parents on the basis of the tribulations parents undergo in order to bring up a child. The child has an obligation towards his parents as long as he is part of the same household. From the moment he gets married and 'makes a family' he is expected to focus on that. This is how he will compensate for what he was offered by his parents. He does not have to reciprocate his parents because he receives from them as a social person and not as an individual; this in turn is what he will do with his own children.

Rights and obligations are always defined in relation to the emerging household that receives the attention and care and has most of the rights and fewer obligations. Women and men start life from a receiving point and ideally move towards the offering one. The parent does not expect the reciprocation from his child because in offering to his child he reciprocates his parents. Life then is a continuously reinforced burden of obligations; it is against this processional task that the ultimate value of parenthood is tested and is conceived by women as a source of pride and by men often as a cause of strife. In sum, the exchange of material or emotional services between kin takes the form of a directional flow of services from the senior to the junior, from the individual to the family, from the senior household to the junior one.

Parents have expectations and preferences in relation to children. They say that **tis kalomiras to pedi, to proto ine koritsi**, the first child of a woman with good luck is a daughter. Indeed, mothers generally prefer daughters. The daughter is the support of the mother, **to stolidi tou spitiou**, the jewel of the house. She helps her mother materially and psychologically, especially in the face of a

heavy domestic burden. Fathers prefer sons, not so much because of the help they will provide or the continuation of the 'name' but because they will ease the burden of dowry: fewer daughters means fewer dowries and more sons means more hands to help in the provision of dowries. Parents treat their children with patience which sometimes reaches the state of indifference. They avoid beating them, and the spouses exercise a constraint upon each other when they lose their temper. The general pattern in early stages is that the father is more relaxed and soft in his attitude and sometimes he may provide a release from the mother's extreme attention. The mother somehow provides the 'basics', the father the 'extras'. Children have tharos, feel confident with their parents. They address them in the singular with considerable familiarity and intimacy. The mother is always addressed as mama. Women 'present' the father to the child and refer to him by his christian name or more usually he is called babas. The young boy identifies more with the father, who displays publicly his pride for his successor. He takes his son to the coffeeshop, he is tender and soft, easily making concessions on matters such as the consumption of sweets or in a volta with the caique. Young girls affiliate to their mothers and other kinswomen.

Boys and girls interact freely with one another in the school and in the neighbourhood and constitute from an early age their own world, which later will develop into sex-specific age sets. It is in the context of these age sets that courtship or friendship are primarily established. There is no avoidance between children whose parents are on bad terms and do not visit each other. Close association between families reinforces the intimacy between children. The most prominent example is that of the matrilateral parallel cousins who from a very early stage tend to be raised in the same house and consequently associate closely.

The intimacy between parent and child in the early phases of parenthood may survive to later phases, especially among family men who build their image in public displays of affection and discipline. The young boy rectifies his father in public on a matter of geography: the latter will feel proud with the progress his son makes and further publicizes it. A son who does better than his father adds prestige to the household since this is evidence of good upbringing. Scolding is equally public as praising. The father is expected to react if his son behaves inappropriately in public. Thodoros, aged 16, had an accident with a friend's bike. His father heard about it and sat in the public square waiting. When the son appeared, the father stepped up and started beating him in front of the male audience. The child learns that the coffeeshop, or the street, or the offices of the cooperative and in the last analysis everything outside the house is fundamentally different from the inside of the house. It implies a different behaviour and a different way of relating to people and especially to men. At this stage, such events do not receive serious attention by both parties. The parents make a symbolic exercise of their formal authority. The child receives the message, and publicly demonstrated parental violence does not generate any emotional cleavage.

Yet, in most families, and around school age the son is incorporated into his age group and a shift in his relation with his father takes place, while his relation with his mother continues to grow unchanged. At this stage he seems to identify more with women. For instance he is forbidden to enter the coffeeshop or to say silly things in front of his father. The avoidance built in his relation with his father is conceived as a sign that he is growing into a man. However this rarely shows since the boy is living exclusively in the female sphere of the neighbourhood and participates intensively in his

group of age-mates.

At the early stage of parenthood the attitude of both parents towards their children irrespective of their sex shares the same qualities: intimacy, relaxation, mutuality and a carefully restrained and moderately exercised authority. From early adolescence the daughter starts being distanced from her father and the son starts being distanced from both his parents and especially his father. Marriage reinforces the same trend in the father/daughter relation but it influences the relation of mother and son less. For an adult male the attachment to the mother may weaken but never looses its emotional potential.

5. Women In-Between Motherhood: The Applications of Maternal Love

Skamniotes argue that there is something special about maternal love which is often put forward as the example of kinship amity. **Kanis den se ponai opos i mana**, no-one cares about you as much as your mother. A mother's commitment to her children is unquestionable. This is captured in the image of the unconditional, perpetual offer: **i mana ine thisia yia to pedi tis**, the mother is sacrificed for her child. Local assumptions about maternal love suggest the Fortesian idea of prescriptive altruism.

Women maintain the physical structure of the household as well as its members. They feed them, clean them, take care of their spiritual well-being, provide them for the future. Most of these tasks derive from womens' role as mothers: they are expressions of maternal feeling. This is important since, as I will show, if maternal love is the archetypical example of kinship amity, then its application is the means through which women realize their personhood.

Feeding is the strongest idiom of maternal love. Women are very keen on breast feeding their babies. A considerable part of their life focuses on the preparation and distribution as well as discussion of food. They like to publicly display themselves in the role of nurturers. A young mother shouts to her offspring to come to eat or chases him with a plate in hand, despite the impression of bad discipline that this may entail. Children, but adults as well, are expected to empty their plates: this encapsulates an attitude of domestic obedience and discipline.

Women prepare fayito, food that is cooked and consumed in the house. This entails bread, a meal cooked on the basis of olive oil and made of fish, vegetables or on certain occasions, meat, substances which are thought to be of high nourishing value. Aesthetic preferences in food are neither envisaged nor tolerated. Fayito is an unqualified vital substance provided by the nikokira to all those who participate or are attached to the household. Fayito is subjected to quantification. Good fayito is food of high nourishing value in relative (high proportion of olive oil or meat), or absolute (big quantity in general) terms.[19]

Attitudes to food epitomize aspects of character and socialization. One should not be lemargos, greedy. This implies lack of self control and a dependence on food that sets the nurturing role of the woman who cooks in second place. Nor should one resist eating food specially prepared for one: this suggests a lack of will to associate. Women say of children with whom they encounter difficulties in upbringing, aftos ine diskolos sto fayi tou, he is 'difficult' with his food. Food idiosyncracies are thought to be almost exclusively part of the male character.

Fayito is a symbol of the domestic order as this emerges out of the combination of maternal love with maternal authority. The value

placed on feeding sets bodily and health standards. The fat child is a well loved, disciplined and maintained child: his composure reflects how ordered the household in which he lives is. A thin child is testimony to maltreatment and indifference. It is interesting to note that this contrasts to the slim image of the **levendis** to be discussed in Chapter VIII. It is in this light that we should consider preference for substances such as bread or olive oil: they stand for the household as well as, in big quantities, giving rise to the physical image of the well cared for person.

In ordinary circumstances women serve **fayito** in the kitchen, their exclusive territory, yet do not sit at the table where the rest of the family eats. Instead they, **trone sto podi**, have something to eat standing while performing other domestic chores as well. This reinforces their identification with the image of the feeder.

Feeding, then, is a basic mode of relating for women. Through the distribution of **fayito**, women define the boundaries of a set of relationships that are characterized by the morality of kinship. The range of feeding is that of female administered kinship: the grandmother brings together her household as well as her daughters in feeding her grandchildren. This image is inversed only once a year, in the annual festival of Ayia Fotini. Men cook the **tsiskeki**, meat boiled with wheat in large pots that are placed somewhere near the village square. Women may assist in cooking. **Tsiskeki** is then consumed in a big communal meal, often with food that is brought from home.

Children should be brought up in an ordered world. Women select as well as arrange household furniture, decorate the house, buy clothes for all members and make sure that they look well groomed in public. **Pastra** or **kathariotita**, cleanliness more than anything else stands for order. Women are engaged in a constant battle against

filth and dust that penetrate household space. They sweep the house floors and clean the house frequently. The exteriors of the house, plus the courtyard and part of the street are whitewashed, often twice a year. Substances brought from outside and consumed raw are repeatedly washed. Bougada, the washing of clothes is arranged twice a week. Only men, who are assumed to be by nature vromiki, filthy and akatastati, disordered resist attempts made by their wives in the first years of marriage to impose on them the stereotype of cleanliness. The successful accomplishment of these tasks earns the woman the reputation of kathari, cleanliness and pastrikia. In the 1930s women with this reputation could easily find employment as domestic servants in Athens. The idea of kathari suggests the moral virtue of a woman who keeps her social persona in order.[20]

Cooking and feeding, cleaning and maintaining the household are activities equated to female feeling and especially to maternal love. In the peak of an argument the upset mother reminds her son that I mana sou ime, ego se xeskatosa, I am your mother, it is me who washed your excrement. Only in the context of a relationship do women create order and guard it on behalf of others for whom they care. Domestic activities constitute the essentially practical orientation of women, in juxtaposition to men who are regarded as living in the clouds, as more absent-minded, and volatile. They further identify women more with consumption.

The systematic application of maternal love is better sustained through life if a woman has daughters. Daughters are expected to perpetuate the mother's name and put her dowry to good use. Further, their role as domestic helpers is appreciated. Yet what is most important is that they perpetuate their mother's active involvement in domestic life. A woman with no daughters does not have the chance to contribute to the rearing of her grandchildren and experience a second

round of mothering. In this respect a daughter is crucial for the maintenance of a woman's identity. To have many daughters is identified with good luck. They say that **opia echi tris na cherete, polles na kamaroni, opia echi mia ke monachi na klei na min mironi,** she who has three daughters should be joyful, if she has many she should be proud, but the woman who has only one should cry and be sad.

Raising a daughter is a process of ever increasing identification and familiarity, of greater mutuality and sharing through time. The life cycle of a woman focuses on her attachment to her daughter. This takes the form of a very deep affection moulded in a long process of continuous interaction. At adolescence mother and daughter develop a mutual devotion to each other and a silent code of communication that contrasts with the increasing alienation of the son from his father. They pass a lot of time together both at home and outside it, on public occasions, in summer **voltas**, at church or at various rituals. She works with her mother in the fields and together will make her first formal sortie from the village to the country chapels or go shopping in Mytilene. She walks on the road paved by the experience of her mother, and she is led by her to experience the outside of the house as an extension or projection of it. This is particularly so with the **protokori**, first born daughter.

Mothers and daughters are closely coordinated while looking for a groom. The mother consults and directs; she even pursues aspects of courtship on behalf of her daughter! They say that the mother is the daughter's **bistiki**, confidante. She offers her a sense of security and stability in her outside dealings. Young women act with a steadiness and purposefulness that is difficult to explain if it is not put in the proper perspective of their protective, advising mothers.

The mother represents the daughter in crucial stages of the

proxenio, supports her initiatives and defends her against accusations of improper behaviour. She enlarges the daughter's scope for risk and increases her chances of making a successful marriage. The two women act as an efficient team, dividing between them formal and informal aspects. This decides the future of the daughter's attachment to her mother, including uxorilocality and the groom's compatibility to the emerging regime.

After marriage the role of the mother remains instrumental yet less manifest. She is in and out of the new household, a deus ex machina who helps where it is needed. She makes efforts to protect the newly established conjugal relationship, often mediating between her daughter and her gabros. The smaller the number of daughters residing near the mother after their marriage, the greater the identification of the mother with their households. In principle the mother should divide equally her attention. In practice, she is unequally attached. Contiguity in space and age seniority underlie her preference.

At this stage both women are mothers. Yet asymmetry is not erased from the relationship. The mother has just completed a full cycle of motherhood and reaches the peak of domestic authority. The daughter is entering adulthood. For the mother this proves her good job as instructress; for her daughter it is the chance to realize the transition to the new status, and to demonstrate her efficiency.

The daughter is allowed space to demonstrate publicly the assumption of the new role: she postulates herself with the baby (see picture 9) at the centre of the new household: she appears more prominent in decision making, she exchanges visits together with her child. In other words she demonstrates symbolically an individuality in her new position as mother and house-mistress, which contrasts the fundamentally social nature of these roles. In the background her

mother deals with the more material aspects of the new household.

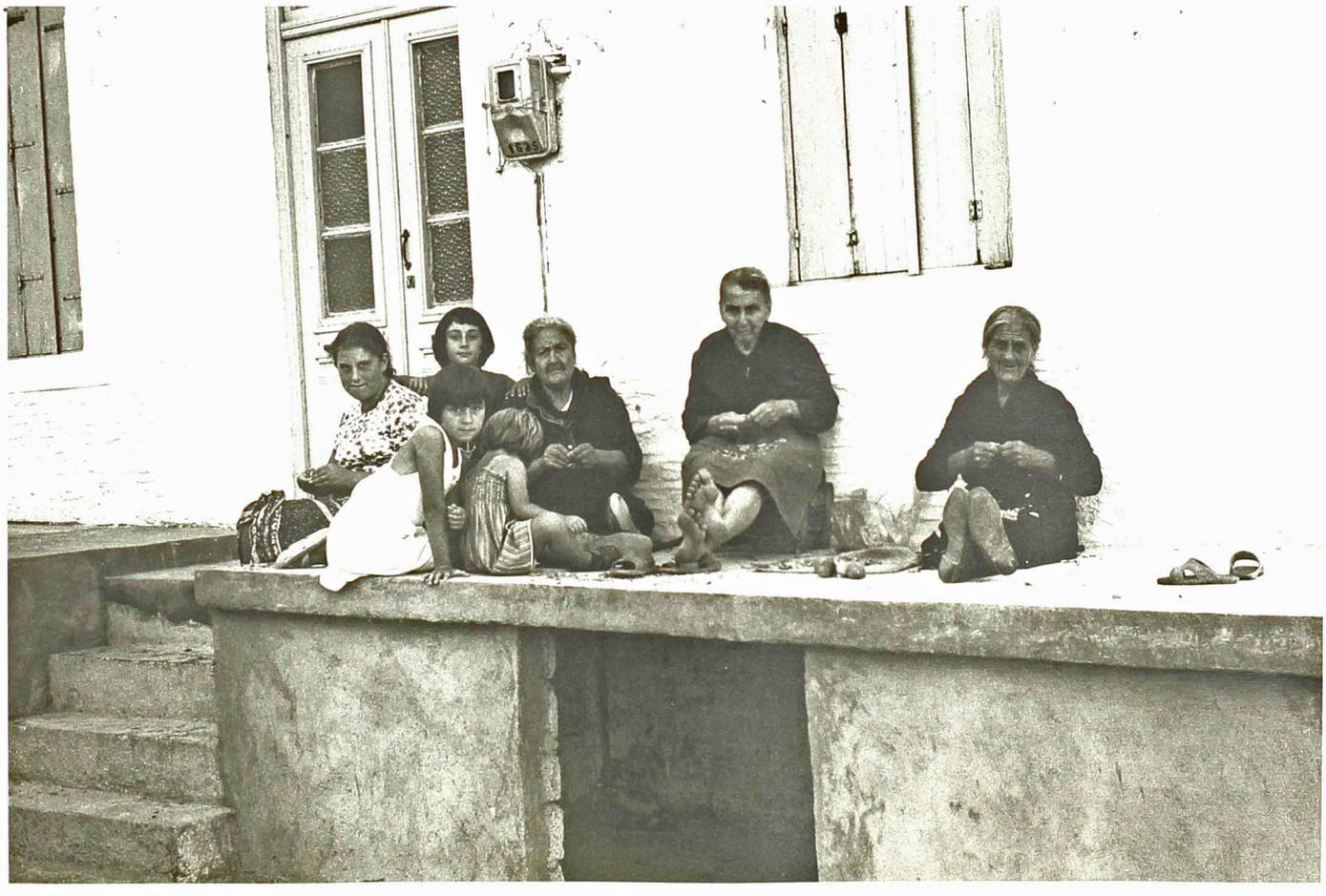
In the new household tasks are shared between a member of this household - the wife - and a member of another household - her mother. The mother's domain of responsibility lies principally in the interior of the new household, while the daughter, as we saw in the discussion of betrothal, is pushed outwards and carries out mainly 'external' tasks. The mother is responsible for 'assisting' in cooking and taking care of the children. This pattern is intensified during the harvest period. When the children are very young the daughter stays with them, but later her mother or grandmother replaces her at home and she sees to the fields. The mother feeds the children at noon and puts them to sleep. She usually does not clean her daughter's house but she may wash the clothes of both households. Feeding the domestic animals or taking care of the garden is done interchangeably. Sometimes the mother cooks for both households, although they usually eat separately. They hold a different budget and common shopping is usually avoided, yet certain essential
provisions such as bread or vegetables are bought jointly.

The physical presence of the daughter in the household reduces the frequency and extent of the mother's contribution. Nevertheless she still visits the daughter's household many times and keeps an eye open to see that everything is in order. The daughter's visits to her natal household are occasional and brief.

Mother and daughter closely cooperate in the fields. A woman whose children are married is not expected to work. There are women, however, who, health permitting, work in a daifas or enter tenure arrangements with their husbands and preferably with their daughters. A woman does not directly assist her daughter but saves her contribution in money or in kind for the dowry - probably house - of her grand-daughter. The mother determines in which daifas they will



9. Mothering : the new mother holds the baby, the grandmother retains the role.



10. **Yitonia** : the matrifocal neighbourhood.

work, what time they will leave, how they will get to the fields, or the form of their remuneration. If there is no need for both of them to work, the mother will stay at home. Sometimes a woman replaces her mother in assisting her father or brother in the fields.

The two women keep throughout their life an open channel of informal communication. This is, however, quite asymmetrical. It focuses on emotional, domestic, or financial problems of the junior one. The handling of information that passes from daughter to mother is often contrasted to **koutsobolio**, gossip that entails emotional qualities opposite to those of motherhood. It is inconceivable that close female consanguines would gossip about each other.

This is suggestive of the conceptual binding of the group of mothers to their married daughters. Relations between close female consanguines are not expressed as exchanges. The presence of the mother in her daughter's house is not conceived as **episkepsi**, an exchange of visits. The cooperation between mother and daughter (or female siblings) is not expressed as **sinalama**, exchange of labour services. The sharing of words and information and the discussion of issues are not thought of as **koutsobolio**, gossip, one of the prominent examples of negative reciprocity. **Episkepsi, sinalama** or **koutsobolio** are expressions of reciprocity. These idioms are reserved for contacts with outsiders and their application is a reminder of the externality that characterizes relations between neighbours or affines.

A joint division of labour, then, administered by women, brings together their separate households without formally interferring in the conjugal core of any one of them. For example, the young mother works with her husband on the family land. Her mother's help is not expected there. Nor does the old mother get openly involved in the house when the son-in-law is around. Equally so the wife's father

keeps a low profile: he visits briefly and after a warning. I will return to this point in the next chapter.

6. Grandmothers: The Domestic Imagery of Women

This chapter started with a discussion of womens' position and concludes with a note on womens' identity as it emerges from the analysis of female roles in the household. We must now discuss what seniority in motherhood entail for womens' personhood, female prestige and influence. The immunities and symbolic functions granted to elderly grandmothers reinforce the central theme of this chapter: that womens' involvement in the role of mother and the application of this role vis a vis daughters through life permeates most demonstrations of female personhood.

A woman as a **kori**, young daughter is related to girls and boys, kin and age mates. When she becomes a mother and then a mother of a mother her ties are increasingly restricted within the limits of her **oikoyenia**. In her seventies, if she becomes a great-grandmother her allegiances lie exclusively within this group. She is isolated from her age mates, she is opposed to her affines, she is emotionally distant from the surviving collaterals apart from her sisters. Yet, she is only a mother. A mother of her daughters and of their daughters. She is also a 'mother' of her husband. This is her sole social persona. Having lost her mother she is a 'mother' of all the people with whom she is closely related and accountable to no-one. Thus she can exercise domestic power without being subjected to it.

Grandmothers are very relaxed with children. An elderly woman is called **yiayia**, grandmother by her own grandchildren and sometimes **thia**, auntie by the rest. Unrelated men or women refer to her by her

first name, often adding the prosonym thia when calling her in public. This familiarity can hardly hide the tension that big age difference entails among unrelated women. They are also referred to as gries, old women, a term that often denotes the most threatening aspects of this female image.

A considerable proportion of women over seventy are widows (see table 9). Widowhood does not at all endanger a woman's domestic position, it rather improves her image. The absence of conjugal responsibilities and the relaxation from the burden of negotiation and compromise with one's marital partner makes the tasks of motherhood easier, especially among the poor of Skamnia. Younger widows that maintain the same style of living as if they were married and do not encourage gossip about their sexual behaviour are pinpointed as examples of how well women can conduct themselves. Female seniority allows freedom of movement. Elderly women are less tied down. The regulations of sexual behaviour do not apply to them. Trespassing, then, characterizes their behaviour vis a vis other women or men.

First, an elderly woman commands and handles visiting without being subjected to the widely held rules (see chapter V). She is not expected to reciprocate the visits she receives, rather she only invites, and she can visit without being invited. For example my house which was a taboo place for ordinary women, especially when I was alone, has accepted on various occasions visits by elderly women without any previous invitation or notice. On the other hand, grandmothers are very expansive in their invitations. They certainly have more time to be so. But they further use invitations as means of making alliances and expanding their influence. During my first months in Skala I was subjected frequently to invitations by old women to have coffee with them.

Visiting without invitation, visiting only by invitation: this

code is used to set the geographical boundaries of domestic or gendered space. Elderly women of the same standing visit each other, especially in winter. This demarcates in social space the networks of kinswomen. The grandmother is the only woman in her family who handles visits by men, irrespective of kinship or status. She is also the only woman who can enter the coffeeshop. Old grandmothers take the lead in the physical expansion of the neighbourhood during the summer. They will be the first to approach and occupy privileged positions at the margins of the village square, near the coffeeshops. Summer means greater contact with the outside world and exposure to attitudes to which men and youngsters are considered to be most attracted and potentially susceptible to. Then, grandmothers involve themselves in temporary alliances, turning their attention to the threatened infiltration of unfamiliar values, giving less attention to the internal gossiping that normally divides them.

Second, grandmothers handle visiting in order to shape neighbourhood opinion. The old grandmother is the terminus of the information that flows upwards in the network of kinswomen, and commands a broad understanding of the neighbourhood's current affairs. Her long experience and knowledge supports an aggressive attitude in the handling of words that others are reluctant to use because they fear reciprocation. Elderly grandmothers can handle words because they are immune to words. And they preach the moral code of motherhood by furnishing the example of their own family against the example of other families. As we shall see this is the essence of village gossip in which elderly women thrive, thus approaching the stereotype of the gossiper who I **mia porta tin dechete, i ali tin perimeni**, goes from one 'door' to another. The successful administration of words further consolidates their hegemony, both in defending the reputation of their junior kinswomen and exposing the

misgivings of unrelated women in the arrangement of marriages, the negotiation of dowries, the handling of disputes, or the formation of daifades.

Third, grandmothers act as brokers and are acknowledged by men who often come to ask their help. They have the trust of the afentiko in the harvest team. The olive harvest is a highly seasonal activity that reaches a peak of intensive engagement during which a third or half the crop is collected in a quarter or fifth of the harvest period. Afentika are afraid of loosing olive pickers at that time and put their trust in old women, who command respect to ensure that the operation will go on. In the last chapter we saw that grandmothers arrange marriages between families to whom they are not related or they represent the neighbourhood or the whole village in marriage arrangements with other villages. This adds to their prestige and their reputation as proxenitres reaches other villages. Similarly, in contracts with adult men grandmothers display confidence, realism and a deep knowledge and sensitivity of where the interest of the involved parties lies. In general they have many of the qualities of a successful broker.

Elderly women are the collective memories not only of their group or of the neighbourhood but of the whole village. Many of my best informants were old grandmothers. Their knowledge is usually based not on intuition or inference but on direct experience. The depth of their genealogical reckoning is considerably better than their husbands', asymmetrically skewed towards the female line; their descriptions are detailed and accurate.

A woman's career in motherhood and the backing she enjoys among her kinswomen decides the prestige and power she will be awarded towards the conclusion of her domestic life. Indeed, some women make a definite entry into public life, a passage from power to authority.

At the margins of the age-group of elderly women we can distinguish two extreme categories that are attributed with different spiritual functions and even magical powers that affect mens' and womens' lives.

Other ethnographers have mentioned the assumption of religious tasks by women.[21] Elderly women lead excursions to country chapels, are protagonists in mourning rituals and some of them are highly regarded as experienced interpreters of dreams. Few of them however assume the informal yet public task of **kantilanaftria**, church keeper. This is the woman who holds the keys of the church and is responsible for cleaning it and keeping the candles lit, often unpaid or in return for a small salary. She is appointed by the church committee and she holds the job for life. In Skamnia the **kantilanaftria** is a septagenarian widow with great-grandchildren. Thia Eleni lives in the same household with her widowed daughter, her grand-daughter and her husband and the two children: she lost her husband at a relatively young age in Macedonia where they migrated before the war. She had to come back and in difficult circumstances secure her single daughter's marriage in the early fifties. Now she 'leads' a four-generational group of kinswomen. In discussions she is often praised for her courage and **afosiosi**, devotion. Her poverty seems to magnify the moral properties that legitimize the position of the informal religious office.

As a projection of her authority over words, the grandmother is capable of cursing and blessing. During Christmas and Easter the very young grand-children before **metalavoun**, taking communion, ask her blessing. Cursing is very rare, but only an old woman's curse is thought to **piani**, have power.

Another aspect of the spiritual authority of old grandmothers is that they are the only ones that can maintain that they know the future! **Gries** love to drink coffee in their leisure time. Coffee is

considered one of the most precious gifts one can make to an old woman partly because of its relatively high price. Elderly women also give out coffee in the context of death rituals where they occupy a much more prominent place with men; **xenichtoun**, they pass the night with the dead, they prepare the coffee that is drunk after the funeral and they prepare or help in the preparation of the **koliva**, boiled wheat used in memorial services. However some grandmothers beyond being the best dispensers of coffee are the ones who can read the coffee grounds. First they invert the coffee cup and leave the coffee to spread over the coffee cup walls, and then they read in them aspects of the past history as well as the future prospects of the person who last drank from the cup. The coffee at the disposal of an elderly grandmother becomes a medium for the realization of her great spiritual authority and power.

Elderly women not only command an authority based on words or their ability to read the future, but in their physical presence they can affect the persons they come in contact with. Old women are agents of **mati**, evil eye and dispose the means of curing its evil effects as well as bearing good luck. Let us consider three cases of women from the same neighbourhood who are reknown as agents of these magical powers.

Andromachi is 65, still active in the harvest, with a son married in the village and two grandchildren who spend a lot of time with her. She comes from a big refugee family, unlike her husband who has no kin in the village. Yet she holds a 'reputation' for her sexual affairs during the war. Andromachi is the agent of good luck: in the summer she sits at her doorstep, wearing a skirt with her legs wide open. Fishermen say that if passing outside her place you manage to look through her legs at her **mouni**, vagina you have every reason to hope for a good catch.

Anthoula is a widow in her seventies. She is regarded as one of the most tragic figures, despite the fact that she brought up four children. Her first born daughter, with whom she lived after the rest of her offspring left the village, got married to an outsider, yet failed to have children. After thirty years of marriage she was killed in an accident. Despite accusations of indifference her husband kept her dowry and remarried a woman from his village with whom he has a son. He expanded the house yet left his ex-mother-in-law to live in a small one-room house almost in destitution. Terrible stories are told of Anthoula's evil eye. I was told that once she said 'what a nice boat' and the sailing boat soon after sunk; or that children prai ed by her became ill. To be looked at by Anthoula is a very bad omen. Fishermen going to work in the morning make sure that they will not find her in their way.

Finally, Kyriaki is 75, the senior woman in the biggest kinship group, married to a respected sailor. She has seven children, three of whom are married in the village. Seven of her grandchildren are in the same neighbourhood. She lives on the ground floor of her youngest daughter's house. Kyriaki is regarded as a **kafetzou** and a good healer. She knows **yities**, magical means of curing and in particular the technique of **xematiasma**, combatting the evil eye. The **yitia** against **mati** is apparently held only by women: it is kept secret and once passed from mother to daughter the initial possessor's **yitia den piani**, is not efficacious.[22]

The comparison of the three cases is quite suggestive of the factors that constitute the image of womanhood at the spiritual level. Fertility and success in mothering do not just add prestige but register the moral reputation as something 'natural', 'in the woman'. The infertility and death of a daughter, the usurpation of dowry and the break of a normal domestic order symbolize a tragic **mira**, fate

that cancels the normal advance in-between motherhood. The fate that disrupts the 'destiny' of a woman to become a mother and exercise this role throughout her life, once evidenced is registered in her and distributed through physical or eye contact. The grousouza, agent of bad luck is not the outsider but the woman who is placed outside her 'destiny'.[23]

In the life trajectory of a woman from kori and mana/kira to gria the predatory, expansive and domineering sides of womanhood are increasingly unfolded. While Anthoula and Andromachi are trapped in their bad and good 'fate' respectively, septagenarian peasant ladies such as Kyriaki are in the powerful position to administer social and magical means that shape the destinies of other women. Such elderly women are often called karota, carrots. This suggests sexual promiscuity, the androgynous image of the female libertarian, the woman who carries a penis. These powerful women are perceived with fear by unrelated younger women and men. Widows with no children are regarded as sexually predatory upon young men.[24] These ideas are phrased in an often humorous spirit that aims to counteract what is perceived as a real threat.

To sum up. Among the roles which women engage in through their lives the role of the mother assembles the principal components of womanhood.[25] Women do household tasks and work outside, arrange the physical world of the house and put in order the lives of those who inhabit it as well as maintain it spiritually primarily as mothers. They bear the experience of mothering when they undertake the prestigious task of arranging marriage. And they refer to tosa pedia megalosa, so many children I brought up and to the subsequent hardship when personal character and suffering, endurance and willingness are assessed.

The physical presence of children is instrumental in the practice of womanhood. Young women attend political rallies in Mitylene and religious pilgrimages in nearby Mantamados with their children and separate from their husbands. It is very important that mothering and house keeping are done more or less in public. The public image that emerges is the currency of female competition for prestige, as we shall see in the next chapter. Women without children retreat into a more private life, and play a minor role in neighbourhood affairs. Notional reference to children remains central in the rhetoric of womanhood long after they have left home. A child's career in life is directly added to his mother's reputation since she is the person who has emotionally and materially invested most in his well-being.

A number of ethnographers have analysed the cultural significance of motherhood in the Greek ethnographic setting. The emphasis however was mostly on the metasymbolic aspects of the role: women realizing the Panagia, mother of God prototype thus redeeming themselves from the sin Eve brought to humanity.[26] Here I stressed the social aspects of the role, its relational side. My ethnographic experience suggests that motherhood composes women as moral human beings when it is exercized in a long-standing process, preferably vis a vis a daughter. Motherhood is a life career for a woman, that decides her place in social interaction, moral evaluation and prestige. Let me conclude by developing this point further.

Within the spectrum of kinship relations the only one that survives genealogical time and is increasingly reinforced is that between mother and daughter. It is a uninterrupted relation. The woman as a mother of a son experiences his departure and alienation from the house. The man as a father and husband experiences a divided loyalty to his family, to the natal family and his mother, to his wife and to his coffeeshop friends: he is never exclusively and

continuously engaged in any of the family roles of father, son or husband. In contrast a woman as the mother of a daughter experiences a continuity in the universe of meaningful and amicable relations as a person who is always involved in the cycle of mother/daughter roles. She has a mother, she becomes a mother, she concludes her life as a mother of a mother. Even her role as a wife concludes in old age into a form of motherhood.

Motherhood is thought of as 'natural'. From a very early stage a young girl is introduced to the domestic tasks as mothering tasks. If she has younger siblings she starts acting as a mother by assisting or even replacing her mother in minor tasks. Motherhood is instructed as a single 'natural' objective around which all major female tasks in and outside the house are organized. Marriage, the making of the house and dowry, economic prosperity through outside work, become meaningful and focal issues in womens' everyday life only when they are associated with motherhood either as conditions or aspects of it. Indeed, women are always involved in the making of a **nikokirio**, that materially stands for their active engagement in the mother role. There are no other major sources of values that can be compared to that of motherhood, and the viability of other values depends on their successful coexistence with it.

The sharing of the mother role by close kinswomen suggests the social side of motherhood. Besides the biological mother there is also the mother's mother who undertakes serious aspects and functions of motherhood and also the mother's sister who is potentially a spiritual mother. The task of bringing up children is divided into various roles and aspects of roles carried out by different persons. The experiental turnout from these engagements is the ongoing feeling that they are within their 'destiny'.

The above analysis suggests that motherhood is an almost

exclusive source of female identity. As it is an overwhelming concept, so women as mothers are total persons fully integrated into the relevant role. This effects their personality. Women with children in Skamnia and Skala are rooted, solid persons irrespective of age, they exercise power in a subtle, confident and undisputable way: they seem to be more conservative than men and they stick to views held by senior consanguines.

The pervasive system of values that sanctions the woman's position as a mother within the family, as we shall see, certain implications for the domestic and coffeeshop behaviour of men. It sanctions the integrity of the household, the stability of the marital bond. It defines family obligations. It locates female shame not in the relation of a woman with her husband but with her children: a woman who abandons her children does not have a place in the moral community, but a woman who takes proper care of her children, even without a husband, does have such a place. It does not give priority to sexual shame and it sanctions a balanced sexual relation between the spouses.

Notes to Chapter III

1. For the shades of this argument see Rosaldo (1974) and Friedl (1967). A very good summary of the overall debate is given by Dubisch (1986a). Riegelhaupt (1967), Berkowitz (1984) and Rogers (1975) have applied threads of this argument in Southern European ethnography.

2. See Dubisch, op. cit., 12-16.

3. Aspects of the domestic configurations described in this chapter such as the extensive sex-segregation of conjugal roles and of social life in general, the domestic power of women and the overall mother-centredness of female kinship have been reported in various parts of Southern Europe. For Greece see Dubisch, 1973; Hirschon, 1983, 312-9. Also Beopoulou, 1981; Bottomley, 1974; Bernard, 1976; Gutenschwager, 1971. For Turkey, and opposite western Anatolia in particular, see Fallers and Fallers, 1976, 260; Olson, 1982; Tapper, 1983, 77. For Yugoslavia see Simic, 1983. For Italy see Giovannini, 1981, 413-8. For France see Reiter, 1975; Rapp, 1982; Rogers, op. cit., 738-44; Segalen, 1983 and 1984, 168-186. For Southern Spain see Press, 1979, 151-7; Gilmore, 1979, 288-90; Driessen, 1981, 20-8 and 1983, 126. For Portugal see Pina-Cabral, 1986, 82-92.

4. See the Portuguese **patrao/patroa** (Pina-Cabral, op. cit., 87-8).

5. See du Boulay, 1974, 129.

6. On womens' work in rural mediterranean societies see Davis 1973, 49; Masur, 1984.

7. Womens' involvement in wage employment outside the house does not seem to generate male anxieties about chastity nor does it give rise to any reference to female labourers as whores as it has been suggested for working-class women in Naples (Goddard, 1987, 174).

8. Masur (op. cit., 30) notes that the people of Las Cuevas, Andalusia say that "men's work brings in money while what women do saves money". Press (op. cit., 153) associates the female control of household finances in Seville to the lower class background of these families.

9. This reminds one of what Berkowitz (op. cit., 87) quotes from Sicily: "The husband is like the government of Rome, all pomp; the wife is like the mafia, all power".

10. Pina-Cabral (op. cit., 81) reports similar configurations in the sexual relation between spouses.

11. The Sarakatsani certainly represent a good contrast (Campbell, 1964, 268-296). Also see du Boulay, op. cit., 110-117. See more in Chapter IX.

12. A characteristic example is cited in Karayiannis (1983, 85): **Anamesa sti mnara sou tha grapso t'onoma mou yiati ti nioti mou efthires ke tin palikaria mou**, I will write my name in your vagina because you weakened my youth and my manliness.

Karayiannis (op. cit., 14) cites rhymes suggesting that as the size of the male penis symbolises male potency, the size of the female genitals reflects female sexuality.

13. For an equivalent case from Andalusia see Brandes, 1981, 224-227. Also Pina-Cabral, op. cit., 94.

14. Dubisch (1986a, 25) makes interesting comments on the quarrelsome behaviour of the **xenes** women in Falatados which according to her informants was due to their defective character, while from her point of view it was an aspect of the tension found in fragile, female alliances.

15. Olson (op. cit., 52) argues that "the relationship of a husband and wife in Turkey tends to be less a primary dyad than a bridge between the foci of two rather independent social networks".

16. For the monogenetic theory according to which paternity means begetting and maternity equals bearing and nurturing and the metaphorical association of women to fields planted by men see Delaney, 1986.

17. See Hirschon, 1978, 68.

18. The widely observed image of the fact woman metaphorically corresponds to a woman dressed in the mother role.

19. The symbolic significance of **fayito** preparation for Greek women is examined by Dubisch (1986b).

20. For the Turkish Anatolian equivalent of **kathari** see Starr, 1984, 104. Refugee women from Western Anatolia have the reputation of **kathari** and **pastrikia**. The moral implications of these characterizations are contested. From the mainlander's point of view they suggest the promiscuity and sexual impurity of Anatolian women.

21. For example Dubisch (1983), Rushton (1983). See also Mathias, 1977.

22. For the evil eye in Greece and its parallel treatment to gossip see Dionisopoulos-Mass, 1976.

23. Herzfeld (1980, 345) reports that in Rhodes **grousouzia** is linked to alleged possession of the evil eye. These are attributes attached to fellow-insiders with 'outside-like' tendencies.

24. Pitt-Rivers (1977, 44) links ideas on the sexual agressiveness of widows to the breakdown of the sexual division of labour. See also Brandes, 1981.

25. Giovannini (op. cit.) discusses six different types of womanhood as interrelated images of women - a core symbol of Greece culture and a holistic construct that stands for the family. Her typology embraces some of the images discussed here but stays short from linking them in the trajectory of motherhood.

26. See for example Dubisch, op. cit., 195; du Boulay, 1986, 141-5, 161-7.

CHAPTER IV: RELATIONS IN THE 'FAMILY': THE MATRIFOCAL NETWORK OF WOMEN

1. Male and Female Consanguines

In the last chapter I examined conjugal and parent-child relations. In the senior generation the household appears segregated into separate spheres of power. The formal stress on conjugality is not adequately recognized, spouses are emotionally detached, husbands are kept at the margins of domesticity. On the inter-generational level motherhood provides the key principle of household organization: women as mothers assume important domestic responsibilities. What remains to be discussed are other relations between relatives who live in the same or different houses. This will give us the opportunity to assess in a more systematic way the structural implications of motherhood within as well as outside kinship.

To start with, we saw that women are offered a quick exit from the most passive role in this complex: that of being only a daughter. Mens' engagement in the son role only seems to be more prolonged and problematic as well.

First, sons are systematically mothered till they get engaged in a separate household. Some men marry in their thirties, others never. A mother frontizi, takes care of the son until she is replaced by another woman. Women extend their 'maternal love' to their sons and are eager to contrast it to 'conjugal love' which is stigmatized as inferior, unstable, governed by material considerations and thus 'impure' and unreliable. Young men are warned by their mothers that the manipulative powers of women will make marriage a heavy burden. Thus women as mothers depict an image of womanhood that contradicts

their roles as wives. A subsequent section on female affinity will further clarify this point. As a mother a woman tends to frustrate other women in becoming wives, especially if she only has sons. Then she has to ensure that she can sustain a certain control over her daughter-in-law, who should preferably be detached from a major group of kinswomen, and thus keep close to her grandchildren. As we saw in chapter II persistent and insistent mothering is thought to lead to men not marrying. There are three cases of widows with no present grandchildren in the village whose sons are bachelors.

The intimacy and trust of the relation between mother and daughter is found in the relation between sisters. Sisterhood is the most strong metaphor of amicability between women of similar age. From very early phases of childhood sisters develop a mutual identification. They are taken together to public events, they play together at home or outside, they walk in the village hand in hand, the elder providing support to the younger. Yet there is one exception. The elder sister, the **protokori**, helps her mother in domestic tasks and assumes the role of mother to her juniors. She keeps an eye on her sisters and brothers while her mother is away, she does the shopping in the grocery store, she takes her younger siblings for a walk to the outskirts of the village. The **protokori** comes closer to her mother than the rest of her sisters. The younger sisters usually develop a relationship of mutuality. If there are only two sisters then the younger may develop a closer relationship with her matrilateral parallel cousin than with her sister. Sisters remain close till marriage, at work, at home, playing or flirting in the summer **volta**. After marriage, their houses are 'open' to each other and they act like mothers to each other's children. Usually it is the younger sister who developes a close relationship with her elder sister's daughters. The matrilateral aunt exercises more the

emotional aspects of the mother role and is very intimate with her nieces. The aunt offers accommodation or financial help. Later on the sister who first becomes a grandmother shares her new role with her sisters: her house and the house of her daughter who has just become a mother becomes the focus of attention of her sisters who pass most of their free time in their niece's house. The involvement of sisters in each other's children takes the most explicit form in the case of spiritual kinship. As we saw a mother's sister is considered to be an ideal **nona** of a child, especially of a daughter.

Sister solidarity is tested in disputes of a domestic nature with outsiders, where women assume protagonistic roles. Sisters present a united front; they unconditionally help each other and they even shift roles in the course of the dispute. Their solidarity is stronger if one or both of them are widows. Yet, they avoid involving their children in disputes.

United vis a vis their mother and common upbringing, sisters are often divided by incompatible domestic concerns, their own or their daughter's. Each sister has to look after her own dowry and household. The domestic burden is heavy and in early motherhood the sisters are completely absorbed in their 'private' affairs. Sisters are not expected to share domestic tasks, yet if they are neighbours they help each other chiefly in the fields and very rarely at home. If they reside in different villages the relation is reaffirmed through a systematic visiting pattern - they visit and stay for small periods at each other's home - economic cooperation, financial assistance, or very consistent and intensive correspondence (most of the letters exchanged in the two villages relate to female consanguines and principally sisters).

Domestic support by mothers and female kin is divided among the daughters who have an equal right to claim it. As seniority by age

determines the order in which sisters marry, it further organizes the offering of assistance. In effect the first born is privileged. The more numerous the sisters, the smaller their age difference, the smaller the number of men in the family, the greater is the competition for drawing help from the common pool of domestic support. On the other hand the earlier the sisters marry the less the competition, especially if they have the same age difference. This tension cripples the relation between sisters especially if one of them misses a chance to marry.

Sister solidarity becomes fragile if sisters do not have a mother or remain childless. Then it is difficult to absorb pressures from internal conflict, for example between their husbands. If there is a crisis among sisters its symptoms are expressed in the relation between their husbands. While the sisters may avoid each other, their husbands may take their conflict and give it a much stronger, interpersonal tone. Only if the mother openly takes sides does the conflict become public. Publicly acknowledged conflict between sisters is extremely rare and I never recorded a case during my fieldwork.

Intimate and functional sisterhood has positive effects on other relations. As we shall see it encourages the close association of sisters' husbands. Matrilateral cousins are also closely linked, especially if they are of the same sex and roughly the same age. Although men do not share a surname with their matrilateral parallel cousins as they do with their patrilateral ones, they have a much stronger relation with the first than with the second: to a certain extent the relation between male matrilateral cousins tends to resemble that between female ones while the relation between male patrilateral cousins carries the same avoidance present in the relation between brothers.

The pervasiveness and structural efficacy of motherhood contrast with the tension and resentment that economic cooperation among kinsmen generates. Ethnographers have noticed that agnatic ties among men are often preferred as the basis of intensive labour processes among pastoralists and agriculturalists in Greece.[1] The commitment of kinship to the requirements of ownership and cooperation creates a bias within consanguinity.

Economic cooperation between father and son decisively shapes the relation: two scenarios are possible. If the boy goes to high school and then works as a teacher or migrates to the town, then distance creates a formal respect between them. The two men keep lose contact. If the son climbs the social ladder with some speed, then he gets more relaxed with his father. There are instances of fathers and sons as well as brothers jointly running coffeeshops, small groceries or bakeries. Three married brothers cultivate family land under the logistic supervision of their widowed mother. There are a few other cases in which male agnates together work undivided family land. But the best example of cooperation among kinsmen is fishing.

There are fourteen professional fishing units in Skala. Of these nine are small **varkes**, boats owned and worked by a single person. The remaining five are caiques with crews of two to four men. The largest two of them that do **trata**, seine fishing in the winter are jointly owned by two brothers and two brothers and a matrilateral cousin respectively. The owners are joined by unrelated men on a share basis to make up the proper synthesis of crew. The three smaller caiques are owned and operated by a pair of brothers and two pairs of father and son respectively. In all cases the passage from boat to caique was made possible by a partnership of kinsmen, initiated by the father who at a certain stage retired from the commanding position without abolishing his right to supervise and if necessary veto the decisions

of his succeeding son.

Fishing is very demanding, physically and intellectually. It requires detailed empirical knowledge of techniques, fishing sites and weather conditions. It is based on very quick decision making and a constant guard against mistakes. In effect it requires a clear definition of tasks and a rigid hierarchy. Fishermen are categorical that **enas kani koumanto**, one person is in charge. The **koumanto** stays at the wheel, leaves the boat last after checking that everything is in order, decides where they will fish and when they will **kalaroun**, get the net up, represents the boat in outside deals, divides the shares and decides the price in negotiations with the fishmonger. He is responsible for training the younger crew and keeping the discipline. The **koumanto** is the formal head of the boat. Sometimes the whole unit is named after him.

There is a certain competition for the position of the **koumanto** among those regarded as technically competent. The job is usually ascribed by seniority to either father or elderly brother and contested in everyday life by the person next in kinship rank. The order of ascribed seniority cannot normally be reversed in the same structure of cooperation: the younger cannot command the elder. The most he can do is show the inadequacy of his senior, progressively disassociate himself and finally, withdraw.

Aspects of inequality also creep into the financial arrangements of the partnership. For example, in cases where the father is not a partner, i.e. he does not hold a share of the **caique**, he takes the same share of the produce as his sons. In cases where the father works in another unit he has the right to participate in his son's unit at any time, and to assume command. When a new unit starts, each son can join it when he returns from the army or the merchant navy. Yet the financial obligations of each new partner are not equal but

are inversely related to age and order of entry into the unit. The more junior he is, the greater the price he pays for the share he gets.

Under these conditions a lot of frustration and tension is stored in the relation of cooperating kinsmen. Junior yet married men are very resentful of the paternal rule, sometimes exercised by the elderly brother. While subservient not to say submissive at work they explicitly protest in the coffeeshop where they share their emotional frustration with commensal friends.

This is an important point. A man's adulthood is most decisively marked by entry into the world of the coffeeshop and its values that sharply contrast with both conjugality and kinship (see part III). The egalitarian and cordial aspects of male commensality provide the refuge against the tyranny of work and agnatic cooperation. Yet the boundaries between them and associated practices are well guarded outside work. Father and son or elder and younger brothers apply a well preserved code of avoidance. They do not drink or smoke together nor do they attend the same coffeeshop. It is up to the son to see that the egalitarianism that commensal activities entail will not mix with the rigid hierarchies that sustain agnatic relationships at work. They even avoid physical contact or verbal exchange. I was initially surprised by the total indifference displayed by men to the physical presence of brother with whom they hardly exchanged any words. Expecting some sort of familiarity between brothers, I thought they were total 'strangers'.

It is the father who decides who among his sons will succeed him. A sense of 'obligation' towards him and an expectation of succession keep the brothers together. The son who will leave the team while the father is in control endangers his relations with his kin altogether. Yet the father's retirement unleashes latent conflict and may lead to

the rearrangement or total breakdown of the unit, especially if there is no big age difference between the brothers or if there are alternative prospects.

The more the hierarchical structure of cooperation exhausts its potential the more authoritarian it becomes. Relations between cooperating agnates fail at some point and pass into a state of prolonged and total avoidance. In the relation between father and son or elder and younger brother authority is unitary and explicit, asserted and yet fragile. It encourages hierarchy to be registered and experienced as dependence.

There are two exceptions to what has been said so far about kinship among men: grandfathers and matrilateral uncles. An old man is called **papou** by his grandchildren, otherwise he is referred to or called by first name to which the prefix **barba** (another version of uncle) is added. The term **barba** carries an affectionate tone when it is employed by a young married man to address an older one. When it is used by people of relatively the same age it has ironical implications. Old men are respected, especially in the context of the coffeeshop. Yet an old man's relation with his grandchildren and particularly his grandsons is very informal, intimate and many times assumes aspects of a joking relationship. The grandson teases his grandfather publicly when the old man starts speaking about old times and boasts of his excellent record in fishing. The more secluded the old man, the more he retreats into silence.

A man feels closer and more relaxed with his matrilateral relations. The mother's brother is the only senior kinsman who is considered with affection among men. A man may use the same coffeeshop and even, occasionally, sit at the same table with his maternal uncle. Yet his relation with his sister's daughter is equally close. Patrilateral kinsmen such as the father's brother or

the patrilateral first cousin do not form any particularly close ties with ego, although they share the surname. They may be openly antagonistic or simply ignore each other. A man's close attachment to his married sister which may be reinforced by economic circumstances, such as the joint administration of land or domestic circumstances, such as the lack of children, supports a good relationship with his sister's husband.

Matrilateral cousins are close and relaxed with each other. They cope efficiently with the requirements of cooperation. A man may be on bad terms with his mother's sister's husband and at the same time on very good terms with the son of the latter.

2. Ikoyenia

In chapter II I examined the notion of **nikokirio** that summarises the values of marriage: it has a stress on conjugality, a material reference to the house and a corporate content that accounts for its bounded nature. Quite different is the semantic orientation of the equally important notion of **ikoyenia**. This is the greek equivalent of the English 'family'. It is a kinship category with a flexible yet traceable content.

Asked what **ikoyenia** is Skamniotes come with varying and often broad answers: is is 'people you trust', 'people you can rely on', **to ema sou**, your blood. They usually agree that one is expected to renumerate the people with whom one shares this special property. They conceive in other words **ikoyenia** as a unit of membership which focuses on those who enter the house without invitation or are being fed there on various occasions. Yet both the style of tracing members and the actual content suggest uncertainty and flexibility. They have

no difficulty in counting members of one's household, parents, siblings and offspring. The pace, however, becomes slower as one goes on tracing members and the attitude more subjectively eclectic. Certain aunts are privileged against others, uncles are ignored or even a discrimination is applied against cousins of one side. It is evident that the answer does not rely on the application of an abstract criterion of ideal membership but on how one feels about a particular person who is otherwise eligible. Inclusion at the margins is negotiated on the basis of the extent to which certain kinship relations are practiced.[2]

Women have a much more accurate, enlarged and documented concept of **ikoyenia** than men, whose version is more genealogically narrow. As we saw, kinship is the chief reference to a woman's personhood and women practice kinship more than men; in this respect the range of a woman's notion of **ikoyenia** tends to come closer to the remote boundaries of experienced kinship and exercised amity. This notional concept of **ikoyenia** is based on personal, direct or indirect experience and often embraces past and present, dead and living, physically present or absent persons. It further rests on memories, it is conserved, framed in pictures and it is sustained in the everyday sharing of tasks, words or things, in address or even in correspondence.

The practical orientation of the notion of **ikoyenia** is brought up in linguistic usage: **ikoyeniako** coffeeshop, or **ikoyeniaki sinantisi**, meeting. **Ikoyenia** qualifies the settings in which it is the principal category of membership. Seen as a unit of membership **ikoyenia** includes the members of ego's household, yet excludes one's affines, to extend towards the side of kinship that is most practiced in everyday life and in effect covers blood relationships that are more acknowledged and recognizable. **Ikoyenia** has flexible boundaries, its

membership varying according to the case as it ideally tends to embrace relatives up to the second cousin.

In contrast to the notion of **nikokirio** that is bound, **ikoyenia** is characterized by a tendency to expansion and maximum inclusion. Some **ikoyenies** are distinguished as being **megales**, big and referred to as a **soi**. **Soi** is a kinship category, yet its boundaries are not dictated by the everyday application of kinship. **Soi** is usually eponymous. Membership in a **soi** is primarily decided by the agnatic principle of sharing the surname with the founding ancestor.[3] Those who marry in the surname group are granted the right to claim a secondary membership. What upgrades a surname into a marker of the group is not sheer numbers, the volume of membership, but economic and political status.

In contrast to **ikoyenia**, which is flexible yet does not lack genealogical specification, **sigenia**, relatedness, is based on kinship and tends to be loosely defined. Many Skamniotes found the question 'who are your **sigenis**, kin', totally baffling. How could they remember? In the last analysis 'we are all **sigenis** here'. Asked whether a particular person is a **sigenis**, informants often gave loose confirmations acknowledging their inability to trace the genealogical connection. To entertain my informants I often attempted to fill the gaps of their genealogical memories with data from my kinship charters. Their reactions were disinterested amusement. The possibility of exact reckoning did not alter at all behavioural attitudes towards the **sigenis**. It seems that **sigenia** is a category of idle, non-applied kinship. Loss of genealogical memory and the subsequent inability to genealogically determine the exact content of **sigenia** occurs around the area of second cousinship, where the metaphorical and the genuine application of the terms **xadelfos**, cousin or **thios**, uncle mix. Outside **ikoyenia**, **sigenia** tends to be a category

of undifferentiated kinship the boundaries of which coincide with that of the locality (see chapter X). Sometimes I had the impression that **ikoyenia** and **sigenia** are contrasted, that **sigenia** referred to something other than **ikoyenia**.

This eclectic distinction between genealogically defined kinship loosely associated with **ikoyenia** and the recognition of a broad space in which kinship relatedness is entertained both acknowledges and deals with an imperative problem: village endogamy. The area of exact kinship is where the incest prohibition and Canon Law operate: **ikoyenia** is an exogamous category. On the other hand, once the inner core of exact kinship is removed from **sigenia**, what remains is a preferentially endogamous space that coincides with the locality. **Sigenia** is a kind of kinship that can be re-operationalized and give rise to **ikoyenia** through marriage.

In the preceeding sections of this and the last chapter it has become evident that gender qualifies kinship in different ways. Fathers and sons or brothers develop from an early stage relations full of tension, they find it difficult to cooperate or just spend time together. Male consanguineal relations are saturated with competition. The hierarchies of agnatic economic cooperation, rigid and fragile, often break down and have a high cost: a greater alienation outside work.

The authority of the father in early childhood is more based on words than on set example. His commanding image is injected from the outside into the household where the mother is the person experienced as in command. This happens in accordance with the **nikokirio** stereotype. The son who early on experienced an emotionally close father displaying a nominal and loose authority later faces an emotionally distant father asserting real authority. This transition is more difficult when it is mediated by a period of separation

because of the son's absence in the merchant navy or in the army. Respect and obedience stemming from age difference are not enough to offer a sense of stability to the relation. Instead the assertion of authority is the only means by which the relation remains functional where it is necessary. The cost of this transformation is the emergence of avoidance. As adults both men participate in the coffeeshop. While in terms of kinship they are perceived as senior and junior, in the context of male commensality (see chapter VI), they are by definition equals. As we saw, to make viable the coexistence of the two principles there is only one way: to avoid bringing them together at the same table or even under the same roof. Male consanguines lead strictly separate coffeeshop lives.

A man does not experience a continuity in his relationships. His life cycle encompasses three disassociated phases: a phase of involvement in his natal household as a son, a phase of participation both in the coffeeshop as an adult man and in the domestic groups of his wife as a husband and father, and finally a balanced involvement in the margins of the coffeeshop life and at home as a husband and 'son' of his wife. As we shall see in the next part towards their twilight men appear as lonely individuals, detached from domestic or other structures. In general, men are divided as social individuals between their natal household, their conjugal household and the coffeeshop. This division closely relates to the expressive individualism they display in the coffeeshop.

This strongly contrasts to the developmental cycle of women in kinship. The assertion of the daughter as an adult takes place under the aegis of her mother. This turns maternal authority into a form of hegemony: silent, preserved by the commonality of practice and by shared experience, nourished by the mutuality of sentiment and blessed by the wider community of women when it conforms to the values of

motherhood. The interhousehold exchanges of mother and daughter do not disrupt this pattern. Each woman is mistress of her own house and in that capacity equal to all other women independently of kinship status or age.

As kinship is less important for men when it is of the utmost significance for the definition of womens' personhood and the organization of womens' life so it is that male kinship especially in its agnatic form is loaded with tension. It is discontinuous and problematic if applied in economic cooperation when the structural implications of female kinship are pervasive, greater in scope and endurance, it decisively shapes domestic life. Female kinship overflows from the mother's side the boundaries of the household and receives notional attention in the concept of **ikoyenia** that is held and applied by women.

To assess further the structural implications of mothercentred and primarily female kinship in the wider realms of community we need a term to characterize and delineate the social form that it takes. Here, I will employ the analytic term matrifocal network of (kins)women. The English gloss 'family' is culturally loaded and does not depict the crucial properties of the social form to be described.

Network is a loose term, suggesting linkage rather than group membership and depicts the integration that arises from shared functions. It sufficiently describes the 'web of kinship' (Yanagisako, 1977, 208) that brings together otherwise autonomous households.[4] It should be noticed that it is mainly women who perform this highly social and structural 'community work' and emerge as primary agents of the kinship network.[5] The term matrifocal stresses the fact that the functions that make up the web are performed by women in their capacity as mothers (and secondarily as mistresses of households).[6]

The matrifocal netwok is intergenerationally organized around the joint division of domestic labour between the mother and her daughters. Uxorilocal residence reflects this, as does the circulation of first names and property. And as we shall see in some detail it is extended through matrilateral kinship, a kind of adoption or a culturally unacknowledged form of female friendship.

3. Households and Matrifocal Networks of Women: A Case Study

Residence is governed by the marriage ideal of conjugal independence; other important domestic functions, however, are informed by the kinship principle of mutual dependence of kinswomen from different households as this is dictated in the performance of their mother role.[7] At the conclusion of this chapter I want to consider the statistical attention that these principles receive and analyse in greater detail how independent households, because of their task orientation, integrate in larger kin networks in the case of a particular neighbourhood.[8]

Household composition in Skamnia and Skala clearly shows that the norm of **nikokirio**, the residential independence of the conjugal pair, is widely observed. Table 11 shows that in Skamnia household size varies from one to six members, the great majority of households however have two to four members. There are 29 solitary households, of which 20 belong to a widower and 7 to a bachelor. Of the 67 conjugal households, 35 of them are two generational comprising both parents and children and the rest are one-generational.

Table 11
Household Composition in Skamnia and Skala 1980

Type of Domestic Group	Size of Domestic Group: Skamnia 1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Skala 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Solitary							(29)								(6)
Widowed	20						20	6							6
Single	7						7								
Other	2						2								
Widow with children		4					4								
Coresident siblings		3					3								
Conjugal							(67)								(34)
one generation		32					32		9						9
two generation			18	14	3		35			10	11	2	1	1	25
Extended conjugal							(17)								(3)
lineally			2	6	4	1	13				1	1	1		3
laterally			2	2			4								
Multiple Conjugal							(3)								
same generation				1			1								
different generation					1	1	2								
Other			1				1								
Total							124								43

Source: Household Survey, 1980.

Note: Here, I employ Laslett's (1972, 28-32) typology of households with one modification: I substitute 'family' with 'conjugal'.

There are 20 cases in which relatives other than offspring correside with the conjugal pair. In 16 of them the residentially attached party is affiliated to the household through the wife's side. In fact in 9 cases it is the wife's mother, in 3 it is the wife's father. In 5 cases the wife coresides with a sibling of hers. In 3 of the cases where husband's relatives correside with the couple the

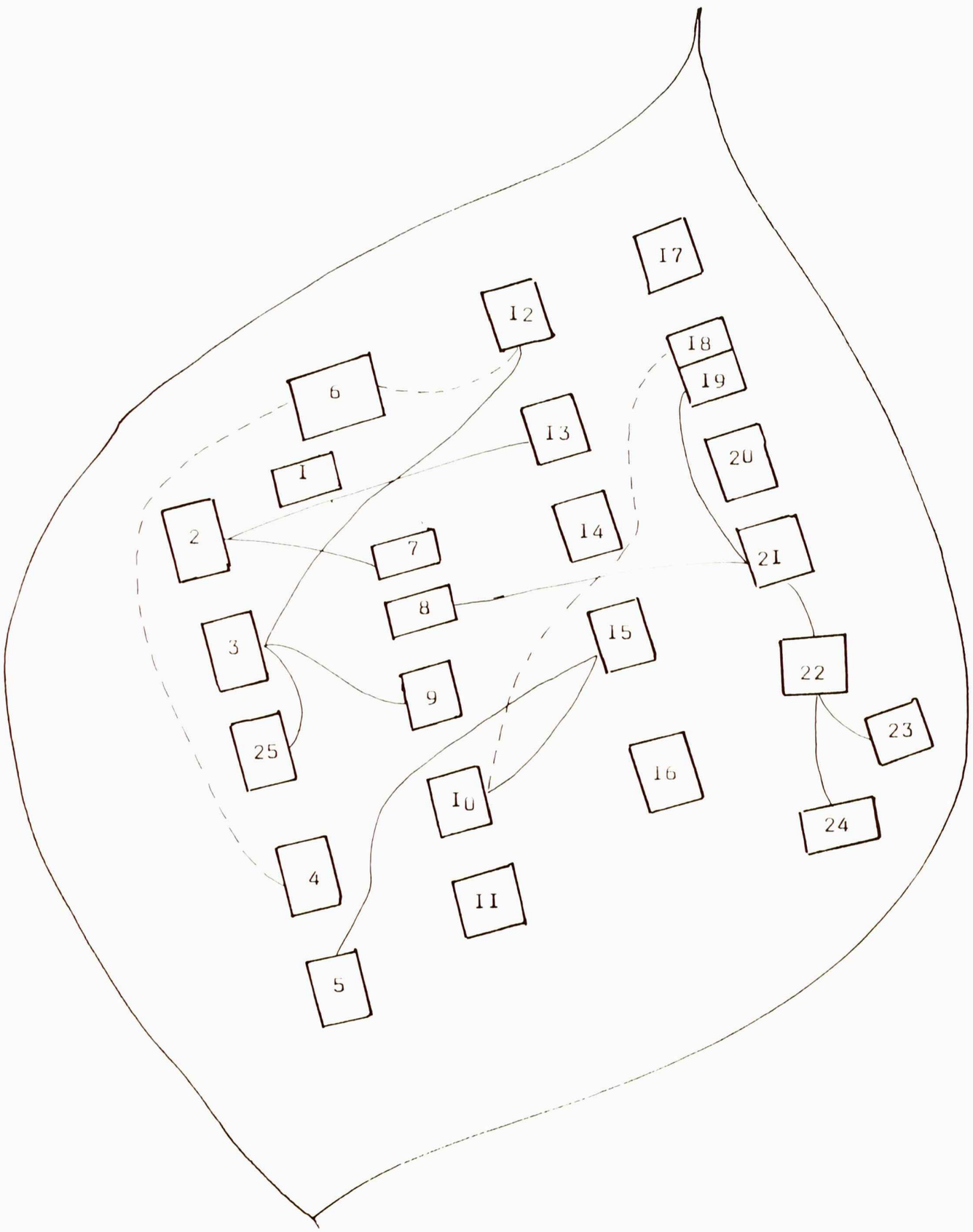
wife comes from another village: this is indirect evidence of the problematic nature of female affinity. The kinship configurations of residential extension suggest that the norm of neolocality is violated by matrifiliation, chiefly of women. In other words, extension if necessary is usually a symptom of the close attachment of a woman to her daughter.

In Skala out of 43 households more than half (25) comprise the husband, the wife and their children, while 9 are one-generational households comprising only the husband and wife who stay alone after their children build their own homes. Widows and widowers reside independently of their children. Only three households are lineally extended.

The principle of the residential independence of the newly married couple is more strictly observed in Skala, although housing conditions are not ideal. Till 1986 there were considerable restrictions on building. For example one was not allowed to build outside the boundaries of the village (**ektos schediou**). Such limitations did not discourage marriage nor did they delay its realization. On the contrary they lead to extreme cases of one room households as well as to intensive building within the available space and to a very densely populated settlement.

In the developmental cycle there is indeed a place for solitary or nuclear households. The alternation of simple and multiple configurations of the domestic group does not normally occur. Only practical considerations, sometimes linked to the farming orientation of the household, may affect this pattern and inject a phase of 'extension' that disrupts neolocality.

One would expect that in Skamnia where there are more violations of the **nikokirio** norm, one would find better illustrations of how the principles of mothering give rise to the functional integration of



Map 5: Household and Networks in Sinikismos

households related through female kinship ties. This is not so, however, due to the disruptions of the local population structure by migration, or land inheritance practices. Skala despite its more atomized on conjugal grounds residential pattern exhibits well the web of female kinship.

The Sinikismos district is the biggest neighbourhood of Skala. It is a complex of 24 two-room houses built in the 1930s by the Refugee Settlement Committee. Allocated by lot to refugees from Moschonisia these houses were transferred from generation to generation, mostly as dowries. Some of them have been divided into two so as to accommodate separate households. In the Sinikismos households of the same network tend to make up a compound, others tend to be more dispersed geographically (see map 5). Let us examine these networks more closely.

Immediately neighbouring households 19, 21, 22, 23 and 24 constitute a large four generational matrifocal network headed by the two septagenarian widows, daughters of Chatzinikolis, one of the founding fathers of the Sinikismos and personal friend of the Bishop who mediated in the building of the house. Ira, the elder one, lives in a one-room house (19) and her eldest daughter Ismini in a rented house (24) at the edge of the neighbourhood. Her only son left the village in the 1960s. Ismini's former house (23) was dowried to her eldest daughter Niki who got married to a Skamniotis and has two daughters herself. Immediate neighbour to Niki is her matrilateral aunt, Eva. She lives in a dowried house (22) with her husband, a coffeeshop manager and her two children. At the other side next door to her lives her mother and Ira's younger sister. Fotini administers house 8 as well. This was dowried to her elder daughter Maria who went to Athens less than 10 years ago. I lived in house 8 and I was

often offered the extension of the services that circulated in this network of kinswomen. Fotini has a son who migrated to Athens. Her third and younger daughter lives in another neighbourhood, and is equally attached to her mother and her mother-in-law who has no daughter.

The Chatzinikolis daughters with their daughters, grand-daughters and great grand-daughters provide an excellent example of the matrifocal network. The adult women share domestic, economic and ceremonial tasks. The two grandmothers use their houses only for sleeping. Most of the time is spent in house 25 where young chilren are raised.

A quite 'young' network in comparison, yet equally influential because of the dynamic character of the women, comprises households 12, 9, 3 and 25. The senior woman of the network, Despina, aged 78, after giving her own house (12) as a dowry to her second daughter Afroula, had to move out of the Sinikismos. Because of old age today she is immobile and marginal in the management of her daugher's affairs. Of her four daughters two married outside Skala. The elder one, Myrsini got house 3 as a dowry: this was bought back from her father's sister who migrated with her husband. Myrsini gave it, in her turn, as a dowry to her elder daughter, Koula who lives there with her husband, and her baby daughter. Myrsini with her husband and younger daughter, Efi, rent the immediately adjacent house 9. Attached to this network is solitary household 25, where Myrsini's father-in-law lives. Afroula has a son who works in the merchant navy and a daughter who is the same age as Efi and who goes to school in Mantamados with her. The two matrilateral cousins are very close and maintain the linkage between their mothers' households despite the grandmother's distance. The centre of attention in this network, however, during my stay was Koula's household: frequent **ikoyeniakes**

sinantisis, family gatherings took place involving the women of the mentioned households and occasionally her father and paternal grandfather.

Two conjugal households with women from outside Skala and thus with no relatives in Sinikismos are indirectly attached to this network. Antonia, in house 4, has a small daughter and is isolated from her affines despite the fact that her husband is the younger of four brothers. Her closest relationship in Sinikismos is Eftichia, who being an outsider somehow has been adopted by her mother-in-law who has no daughter and lives near the village square. Eftichia lives in house 6, has two very young daughters and keeps an intimate relationship with her immediate neighbour Afroula, her daughter and her matrilateral cousins. She is accepted at the periphery of the network, and in her exchanges she involves Antonia as well. We will return to this case later.

Smaller in size and less influential are the remaining three matrifocal groupings. The one technically is a four generational network of a 90 year old woman, Rodia, and her two daughters and involves houses 5, 10 and 15. What is distinctive in this network is the composition of household 15: besides the senior aged mother and her single as well as 'ill' daugher, who are conceived as dependent members, it has Rodia's grand-daughter, Fotini, with her husband and her newly born child. Fotini's mother, Taso, lived in this house till her husband inherited the parental house (5) and moved there. Recently conjugal household 10 was attached to this grouping because its mistress has no other relative in the neighbourhood other than her brother Nikitas who is Fotini's husband.

The fourth one comprises households 2, 13 and 7. The senior woman Pinelopi lives with her husband and younger son in a house (13) that was rented when she gave her dowried house (2) as a dowry to her

daughter, Irini. Pinelopi is the younger daughter of a big and influential ikoyenia. All of her siblings left Skala. In the Sinikismos she has two male first cousins but no female consanguines. Once Irini got married to Loukas, the brother of Pinelopi's neighbour (house 7) Stamatia, who has no other relative in Sinikismos, the two households established closer links.

House 1 remains closed during most of the year. Households 11, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 20 are detached from the pattern of matrifocal alliances despite the fact that agnatic linkages exist between some of them (for example between 11 and 16). Some others are linked to households in other neighbourhoods of Skala.

To sum up, the case of Sinikismos suffuciently illustrates how conjugal independence and matrifocal dependence, the corporate household and the network of kinswomen come together under conditions of demographic growth and a certain availability of housing that is skillfully manipulated by the interested parties. 16 out of 24 'open' households are linked with ties that are either matrifocal or resemble them and substitute for them as well.

Some concluding remarks should be made further on the nature of kinship formations in Skamnia. First, the matrifocal network corresponds to the outer boundary of nurturing and feeding; it is a circle of confidence, unrestricted, informal visiting and disinterested exchange of services. Thought of as a pattern of relations it developes in time around the axis of mothering and its changing filiatory potential. Horizontal, intra-generational linkages between sisters become weaker as the senior woman moves to the spiritual side of her role. In parallel, the closer the actual burden of commitment to mothering the more difficult it is to maintain sisterhood. Sisters rejoin at old age: they bring an element of

symbolic solidarity into their personal networks. The cases from Sinikismos represent different stages in the developmental cycle of this network.

Second, violations of the **nikokirio** norm confirm the pervasiveness of matrilaterality and matrifocality. As we saw, most of the instances in which the conjugal household is intergenerationally extended occur when relatives from the wife's side and preferably a mother are included in the residential unit. This is, however, a symptom of low status and poverty.[9]

Paradoxically enough extensions in the husband's side do not contradict the logic of (the independent household and) the matrifocal network. Patrilateral extensions are indeed possible if they do not antagonize an existing female matrifocal allegiance. This is usually the case of mothers with no daughters whose sons marry outsiders. Senior women 'use' this opportunity (to the creation of which they skillfully contribute) to perpetuate an otherwise impossible domestic career (in mothering) and treat the cooperating daughter-in-law as an adopted daughter. Coresidence with the married offspring is easier in these cases because its status implications concern the in-marrying female's family. Coresidence with the in-marrying **nifi** consolidates further the prospects of the 'artificial' and thus more vulnerable network. Households with coresident bachelors should be conceived in the above light.

In the last two chapters relations informed by the notions of **nikokirio** and **ikoyenia** were discussed. Matrifocal enclaves of women do not simply summarise the properties of consanguineal kinship in Skamnia. They are the 'armatures' of social organization, as becomes evident when one examines the social configurations of affinity and neighbourship. This is where we shall turn now.

Notes to Chapter IV

1. For pastoralists see Campbell, 1964; Herzfeld, 1985.

2. See the distinction between official and practical kinship made by Bourdieu(1977, 34). Female uterine ties that constitute the core of **ikoyenia** and enjoy minimal formal recognition certainly fall in the latter category.

3. Campbell (op. cit.) translates **soi** as kindred. For the agnatic emphasis in **soi** see Herzfeld (op. cit., 90-1).

4. The term 'network' has been employed by Bott (1971) to describe family life in urban contexts. She contrasts the network to an organized group: in a network "not all of the component individuals have social relationships with each other" (op. cit., 58). The extent of connectedness distinguishes networks in 'close-unit' and 'loose-unit' ones. The case I examine certainly belongs to the former category. The term has been more recently adopted by Yanagisako (1977) and employed by Segalen (1984) to analyze her French data. Also see Olson, 1982 for the Turkish case. The recent emphasis on network is based on the dismantling of the notion of the 'family' that is found loaded with eurocentric assumptions (see Harris, 1981; Yanagisako, 1979; Rapp, 1982). Rapp (op. cit.) in particular argues for the analytic treatment of the female-centred kin network not as an 'extension' of but on equal footing with the male-centred nuclear family unit. This criticism does not go far enough as to identify nuclearity with conjugality and marriage (see Goody, 1983) and juxtapose it to kinship.

5. See Rapp, op. cit., 14. Di Leonardo (1987) describes womens' responsibility to connect households on the basis of kinship as 'kin work'. Segalen (op. cit.) argues that in Pays Bigouden Sud "nuclear households are nowadays highly dependent on kin for the organization of their tasks, probably more dependent than they were in former times of extended or multiple households" (169). A female-centred urban kinship bias is reported for Southern France by Rapp (op. cit.).

6. I employ the term to suggest that it is "women in their role as mothers who come to be the focus of relationships" (Smith, 1973, 125). The term 'matrifocality' entered the anthropological vocabulary when ethnographers attempted to account for the centrality of the mother role in the kinship system of Black American or Caribbean (Smith, 1956, 1973; Solien, 1970), South-East Asian (Tanner, 1974) or African (James, 1978) societies. For parallel usages in Mediterranean ethnography see the work of Gilmore and Gilmore (1979, 281) and Gilmore (1980, 167) who describe relations in the lower class Fuenmayor family as matrifocal. Olson (op. cit., 36-7) applies the concept of 'duofocal' to refer to Turkish kin networks. See the critical reflections by Yanagisako (1977).

7. Goody (1972) has contributed significantly to this crucial distinction between the principles of kinship and the principles of the household by dismantling the myth of the extended family. Segalen (op. cit., 185-6) associates the household principle with modernity and the kinship principle with the continuation of tradition.

8. Segalen (op. cit., 169) insists that changes in household structure can only be understood in the context of an analysis of the wider kin network.

9. Segalen (op. cit., 167) notes that "the multiple family household is a sign of family crisis or marginality".

CHAPTER V: UNITY AND DIVISION IN THE WORLD OF WOMEN: NEIGHBOURS AND AFFINES

As min echi i yitonisa mou gaidaro ki' as min echo 'go moulari
(So long as my neighbours can't have a donkey, then I don't mind having no mule)

Local saying

1. The Making of Yitonia: Kalesma and Episkepsi

Both Skamnia and Skala are very nucleated settlements. Houses are jammed on the steep cliffs of Lepetymnos and increasingly so as we move from the peripheries to the main square of Skamnia. The more loose spatial association of houses built on the seashore does not radically alter this image. **Kalderimia**, well preserved, narrow cobble pathways in Skamnia and wider, dusty roads in Skala assemble the houses in groups, yet can hardly divide them. In fact they provide the children's playground throughout the year. Parts of the road are whitewashed, regularly cleaned and used as sitting ground by the inhabitants of a house with a small or no courtyard at all. The same is true for open spaces such as courtyards, parts of the square or even the beach: they are inhabited by women, especially in the summer. Water taps and fountains distributed at strategic points provide the meeting place for women who do their daily routine of washing clothes or collecting water. The smells from the oven, the cries of the baby or the loud argument between husband and wife link houses. Indeed, the boundaries of 'private' and 'public' are blurred by the social use of space.

Irrespective of whether houses are attached or not, separated with sizeable courtyards or standing at the opposite side of the road, sounds travel easily through walls made of stones or bricks to become common property at the disposal of everyone interested. Further,

houses that face each other are related by what their residents can see of each other. Doors and windows are often open: one can easily glance inside. In summer domestic life takes place 'outside' in the courtyard or road where household chores such as cooking or washing are performed. Houses, then, are de facto organized by the imperatives of space into small communities of knowledge. Indeed, the world of men is arranged in spatial units of closely linked houses the members of which share knowledge because they can 'unwillingly' trespass either through hearing or seeing into each other's privacy. Immediate, direct access to each other's houses through sight or sound is the foundation of the inevitable interaction between women not related by blood.

Skamniotes call these clusters of houses **yitonia**, neighbourhood or **machala**, quarter (a word of Arabic origin, probably via Turkish). The very etymology of **yitonia**, from the classic Greek **yitniazo**, of the same land and **machalas**, from the Arabic equivalent of 'place' suggest a geographical dimension. On a certain scale, involving usually between 10 and 40 houses, the **machalas** is objectively located in built space and named. In this sense **yitonia** can survive changes in its inhabitants. Yet it also has a more subjective meaning: each house has its own neighbours who do not coincide with the neighbours of another house. In the subjective sense neighbouring relations follow the developmental cycle of the domestic group and are under constant rearrangement.

As houses are womens' territory, so is the neighbourhood. **Yitonia** refers to the space a woman uses around her house. It further suggests female activity, relationships enacted in exchanges of words or labour services or in visiting.



11. Women in the fields : picking olives.



12. Women in the church : attending mass.

Skala's division into **mahalades** is dictated by the spread of the settlement on a horizontal axis between the sea and the fields (see map 4). The small port and square in the 'middle' divide it into two sections. At the edge of the western section is the **sinikismos**, the more lively neighbourhood in both villages, occupied mainly by fishermen and their families. Nearer to the centre is a cluster of loosely attached houses that focus on the **ergostasio**, factory and the large, neoclassical house of its ex-owner that functions as an upper class pension in the summer. His example is followed by smaller proprietors who upgrade this small neighbourhood into a zone of tourist development. The settlement, however, expands in the direction of the **pano mahalas**, the eastern and southern sections where new houses are being built. Attached to the square is a small cluster of houses and a meeting spot for women. It is jokingly called **kolonaki**, after the posh district of Athens to mock the allegedly gentile origins of some of its inhabitants.

Skamnia's settlement is circumscribed in the north by the public road, in the south by the 'rocks', in the west by a small stream that is dry in the summer (see map 3). These natural boundaries and firm building controls imposed by the Ministry of Culture in order to protect its 'traditional' nature have fixed the settlement in its historical place and form. As in Skala the neighbourhoods are not named after prominent families, but in terms of a distintive, spatial or historical feature. **Kalderimia**, well preserved stone pathways serve as boundaries between **mahalades**. In the north and around Agia Fotini is a cluster of sometimes detached big houses named after the church. This is the historically ethnic Greek **yitonia**. The upper class character of the former contrasts to the composition of the **turkomahalas**, a neighbourhood south of the square once occupied by the Turks and today inhabited by labourers and small peasants. To the

east is the so-called kaldabani, meaning steep ground.

In contrast to Skala there are a number of abandoned houses in Skamnia, some of which are used as stables; and other houses that 'open' only for one or two months in the summer when their inhabitants return to the village for vacations. This disturbs life in the neighbourhood, it makes for radical realignments in space or even reduces neighbourly interaction. Mahalades towards the centre of Skamnia are relatively depopulated.

In larger settlements mahalades tend to identify more closely with the church and reach the size of an enoria, parish. In our case each village community is a separate parish, administered by a council of appointed men. Its current power is a shadow of the broad range of jurisdictions it had a century ago: to collect taxes, borrow and lend money, regulate aspects of family and education and shape ethnic Greek consciousness. Besides the administrative running of the church, the role of men is limited to occasional attendance of the Sunday congregation. Women, however, still segregated from men in the church, are fully engaged in actual religious life. The church allows the participation of women from different households and neighbourhoods. At the local level the world of women takes the form of a religious community.[1]

There are two categories of relations, usually classified separately as being without and within kinship respectively. Both are 'enforced' by means of geographical orientation and ritual. The first category is structured by the mere fact of contiguity in built space. The extreme nucleation of the two villages makes neighbouring relations unavoidable. The second category emerges out of and is enacted in the fact of marriage. These are generally conceived as problematic relations of affinity.

In the last two chapters I examined the social and symbolic

properties of consanguineal kinship as it is informed by the notion of **ikoyenia** and structurally exhibited in the form of a network of kinswomen. Motherhood brings women together in associations of kin, and enlarges the scope of kinship for them. Now it is time to consider the implications of uterine kinship for spheres of relatedness clearly demarcated from consanguinity. As we shall see, the matrifocal network has a tendency towards atomism in the overall organization of community.

Ikoyenia and relations among kinswomen in particular are organized into inward-looking enclaves of amity and trust. Campbell (1964) has clearly shown how close identification with one's 'own' goes side by side with distrust of 'others'. The exclusive spirit of 'familism' well applies to the world of women in Skamnia, and is atomizing it along the matrifocal network lines.[2] The kinship boundary is expressed in space and to a certain extent protected by the application of the norm 'when you marry off your child make it your neighbour'. Yet lacking formal recognition, with an emphasis on the practical side that limits the scope, the matrilateral grouping never grows to a fully fledged neighbourhood. Thus, one is forced to live in geographicaly contiguity with **ton kosmo**, unrelated people, a situation often perceived as problematic. Skamniotes argue that **ine kalo nase makria apo ta aftia ke ta matia tou kosmou**, it is good to be away from 'other people's' ears and eyes.

The neighbour is in an extremely advantageous position for knowing details of daily diet, the time people next door wake up in the morning, or of a recent argument between spouses. The neighbour, then, as far as knowledge is concerned is in the position of an insider, without being trusted there. Sometimes she even comes to know things first, before close kin do. So, to keep a neighbour at a

distance entails serious risk. The more isolated the household is from its neighbours the more exposed it is to the negative effects that the uncontrolled administration of potentially damaging knowledge may have. Women prefer to negotiate what they know for each other in a well patterned interaction.

The rigidity of the house and the perpetuation and deepening of matrifocal boundaries make being neigbhours both fragile and crucial. Prolonged effort, a formal etiquette with an emphasis on strict reciprocity aim to preserve these relations in time.

Women **kanoun yitonia**, do or practice being neighbours; men are not conceived as being involved in this activity, they are just passers by. And when one applies the term **yitonas** to a man, one usually refers to a person who works a piece of land near his own. As an activity **yitonia** is the exchange of visits, particularly during the winter, and sitting together outside the yard during the summer. Women sit at the stairs of the outside door or the edge of a block of houses, which is preferred because it is a passing by point and allows full inspection of what happens around. Elderly women who command the respect of the community usually define the boundaries of the neighbourhood that are mobile and depend on the season.

In the winter, the house is more inward-oriented. Unconditional right of entry, which is often employed as a symbolic criterion of network membership, is held by the husband and close female consanguineal relatives of the wife. The brothers of the wife are sometimes included during the first years of marriage. Unrelated men enter the house mostly on formal occasions. The privilege of entry is awarded mainly to women as primary administrators of houses.

Episkeptome, to visit etymologically means to look upon, or at, inspect, observe, regard. This is what by definition neighbours do since their contiguity in space makes them witness each other's life.

Episkepsi, the noun, meaning a visit on the other hand is the physical entry into a house after an invitation. **Episkepsi** completes the process of viewing and listening in which close neighbours are involved.

However, only certain types of visit are conceived as **episkepsi**. These are usually based on a **kalesma**, invitation advanced to women who do not have a self evident right of entry. Close female consanguines' visits are not conceived as **episkepsi**. Men are involved in visiting only on formal domestic occasions, such as birthdays, when **kalesma** is adressed to households or it is a right disposed by every member of the community. Visiting relations then are primarily established by more or less close neighbours.

Kalesma sanctions the household boundary. The mistress of the house asks an outsider to share with her the interior of the house, the very core of her social self. The 'opening of the house' requires reciprocation and thus creates a visiting relation which is the subject matter of neighbourship. The sharing of privacy, done like that, is a symbol of friendliness and a precondition of other forms of exchange among women. On the other hand the lack of a visiting relation is a mark of mutual avoidance.

Once a visiting relation is established, **kalesma** is reserved for the more widely attended, more 'public' and formal evening occasions. In the informal morning ones women combine visiting with the domestic routine. They sit in the kitchen or around the television or outside. One knits, the other prepares **zimarika**, macaroni while a third one takes care of her baby. Usually nothing is being served. The duration of the stay is short, often no more than a few minutes, and there is considerable variation in the composition. Women with young children are less mobile and their houses are relatively more attended in the mornings. If the visitor stays long, she brings her embroidery

or children with her. In the morning, most visiting is done within the network.

Kalesma becomes redundant given the impressive intensity of visiting in ordinary informal circumstances. To illustrate this point let us consider a day's visits in Eftichia's house (6) at the **Sinikismos** in the spring of 1980. Between 8 and 9 in the morning Eftichia has a chat with next door while spreading the blankets in the yard. At 9.30 Afroula's daughter appears on the doorstep to borrow some powder. Antonia follows: she comes for **kouvenda**, chatting on her way to the grocer. At 10.30 Eftichia's mother in law arrives: she takes the baby to her place for the rest of the morning. Her visit coincides with Antonia's return. The three women chat while Eftichia cooks. At 12 Anthoula, her daughter and her niece plus a more distant neighbour, Efstratia (house 17) are in Eftichia's house: they stay for more than an hour. During the same morning Eftichia visits the grocer, passes quickly from her mother in law and stays for a while in Afroula's place (12). In one day two women may exchange two or three short visits.

Some women are distinguished from the rest of their neighbours by their manner of visiting. These are the women **tou spitiou**, of the house. Besides entering without knocking they are at ease with the space of the house, chat freely, serve themselves or assist the **kira**. The rest have to acknowledge the crossing of the household boundary by knocking at the door or shouting from a distance **ise do Maria**, are you inside Maria. Then they enter with some excuse and are asked to stay. They are less mobile, ask if they want something and are attended by the women of the house. Discretion and politeness hardly cover a curiousity to grasp every moment and detail of the occasion. Women of the first category are there to act as members of the house; the others are there to watch them doing so.

It is in fact through the sharing of the house that unrelated women are attached to a matrifocal network. Being 'of the house' formally acknowledges the integration to the network not only of an outsider but of an affine as well. This is also how I was attached to two groupings in Skala. In the first stages of acquaintance it was said that **to spiti mas ine anikto yia sena**, our house is open to you. Later, I attended a serious financial discussion among husband and wife in one of the households to which I was closely linked and the wife commented on my presence: **"tora pia ise tou spitiou"**, "you are 'of the house' now".

Being of 'the same house' is the idiom of rare instances of friendship among married but unrelated women of the same age group.[3] It should be noted that usually domestic attachment is unilateral, it involves dependence and injects a hierarchical element in female friendship. To go back to the case of Eftichia, earlier discussed. Eftichia and Antonia, both **xenes**, recognize each other as **files**, friends. Outside the house they pass a lot of time together in **volta** or in visits to Mitylene. They share **mistika**, secrets, exchange household items, and cooperate occasionally in domestic tasks. Eftichia looks after Antonia's daughter while she is away. Yet I was struck by the fact that Eftichia hardly visited Antonia's house. The two women explain the asymmetry in terms of Eftichia's heavy domestic burden: she has a baby and a young child. However, asymmetry can be traced in their domestic position. Eftichia has a supportive and daughterless mother-in-law and as we saw she is well attached to a network in the Sinikismos. Antonia is extremely isolated. She hardly has contact with her aged mother-in-law who is ill and is taken care of by her only daughter. Her co-sisters-in-law are equally distant.

Female friendship, then, does not only become possible because of lack of matrifocal membership but it is further a means of

substituting for the former. In female friendship the strict reciprocity that **kalesma** entails, is negated. In return, matrifocal protection is advanced to the weaker party. This function offers a certain stability to the alliances made at the margins and gaps of the matrifocal network.

2. Competition and Division Among Women: **Epidixi** and **Koutsobolio**

Women in Skamnia and Skala value domestic independence highly. This makes alliances at the margins of the matrifocal group rather fragile. The ambition of every adult woman is to have women attending her house by her invitation. This is particularly so among young mothers. So, these horizontal ties of attachment to one household usually last from some months to some years, and involve women with very young children.

To visit a house is to honour it and to add to the prestige of its mistress. The more public and formal the visiting occasion the more it exposes the 'open' house to wider attention and gives the opportunity to the house mistress to exhibit her domestic skills. A good example is the public inspection of the dowry before marriage and the formal 'opening' of the new house in **antigamos**. An ambitious woman is keen to **krata to spiti anikto**, keep the house 'open'. This, however, is a practical opposition to the everyday running of the **nikokirio**.

Formal visiting is always acknowledged in **kalesma**: once a visiting relation is formed this looks redundant, yet it goes on being stressed in the form: we meet in my place next time. **Kalesma** organizes the structure of visiting: it stresses the place of visiting and clearly distinguishes visitor from visited, thus ensuring

reciprocation. A woman who does not invite others falls out of the circle; the one who exceeds in **kalesma** is kept under control. On more public occasions such as domestic rituals or name days **kalesma** is substituted. If for example the house mistress **ton yiortazi**, celebrates her husband or her child's name day she will attend the church congregation. That means that she **dechete**, accepts visits. The occasion is to honour a household member other than her. Yet the celebrator is just a passive recipient of greetings. If she cannot afford 'opening' the house because she cannot treat her guests **"opos prepi"**, "as she should" then she avoids going to the church. If done systematically this certainly damages her reputation. The centrality of women in household visiting is also suggested by visiting restrictions that apply during mourning. Death **"klini to spiti"**, "closes the house". Visits are not accepted and in effect the women of the house are not expected to visit other houses. This, however, does not equally apply to men who go on attending public festive occasions.

Formal visiting often involves women of the same age and domestic status who regularly meet in each other's places, thus rotating in the position of the hostess. Some women in Skala from good **nikokirei** families or with a civil-servant as a husband conceive their meetings as a **kiklo**, circle. Their circle of visiting tends to be exclusive and its publicized isolation distinguishes those women from the rest, whose visiting is less systematic and more multilatera.

Visiting occasions are sometimes called **tsayia**, "teas" because tea or coffee together with home made cakes are served. They occur regularly, often one per week in a particular **machalas** and are attended by no more than five women.[4] The house mistress cooks for the occasion. Women meet in the room used for receptions sometimes called **odas** or **saloni**; this may be a bedroom specially prepared for

the occasion, but never the kitchen. The woman who receives also serves, is expected to lead the discussion and firmly takes the hostess role.

The ideal of reciprocity among neighbours is extended beyond the sphere of visit exchange in a considerably wide range of cooperative activities. Neighbours keep company or undertake domestic tasks in cases of weakness or illness, help each other in heavy domestic tasks, borrow household items from one another. Labour exchanges during the olive harvest, called **sinalamata**, are common among neighbours and in exceptional circumstances they take a systematic form in the organization of a common harvest team. Neighbours organize their program so as to go one day to one person's field and the next day to the other's till they finish. In cases where this cooperation lasts for some months, they avoid staying in any particular field more than two to three days consecutively although this would be more practical. By keeping short each one's involvement in the other's field, they can control much better the balance of all exchanges and they can put an end to their cooperation at any time. When they finish their fields, they stop collaborating. Usually they arrange the timing of their harvest in such a way as to finish together and to finish cooperating.

Women jointly administer the neighbourhood's ovens. Each neighbourhood has one to six traditional ovens, which are used by the women of the neighbourhood during the big ceremonial occasions of Christmas and Pascha. Women gather the wood for the fire and arrange its operation. Each oven has its **mastoras**, master and her assistants. The **mastoras**, who is usually an active grandmother, is an expert in the lighting of the fire, in the arrangement of the temperature, and also keeps the order of attending the oven, usually decided by who comes first. She has an assistant who eventually becomes **mastoras**. A few heads of matrifocal groupings but also women with influence have

been **mastores**, an 'office' which is not inheritable. It is very rare to find two women from the same family holding the post successively.

Generally exchanges between neighbours are compartmentalized and short in life, always ready for the best and the worst. There is an effort to reciprocate in the same way: a visit with a visit, a helping hand in the fields with an equivalent offer for cooperation, a domestic item for a kitchen utensil. Forms of exchange are not translatable into one another. The timing of reciprocation is always arranged - especially when cooperation is involved - to be quick, almost immediate. What is to be returned is calculated accurately. Again in **sinalama** the two women tend to equate their labour effort and even the conditions under which they work.

The fragility in relations between neighbours results from a more implicit aspect of exchange: antagonism.[5] The claim to symmetry hides the pursuit of asymmetry. Women perceive themselves as bearers of an attitude of **epidixi**, display and they recognize that they have a tendency for **koutsobolio**. gossip. These are thought as primarily female attributes. **Epidixi** and **koutsobolio** organize female competition according to a generational criteria. Younger women who are in the stage of identifying with a **nikokirio** that is either in the making or expanding engage in the former. More senior women whose domestic responsibilities extend to the households of their daughters specialize primarily in the latter.

The courting behaviour of young, unmarried women is conceived as **epidixi**, yet it does not have an antagonistic content. The principal focus of **epidixi** is not the physical self but the social persona of the woman: house, children, or even husband. I noticed that some women played with this distinction: they looked unattended and modestly dressed on public occasions while keeping their children very

well groomed and their houses equipped with luxury items. The demarcation of physical self pinpoints the image of the woman who cares for others at the expense of herself. This seems to be an asset in competitive display, especially among middle aged insider women. It is a kind of inverted or negative display.

Many women, however, use the **volta** or the Sunday morning congregation in church as an arena for display. They appear with their children well groomed, dressed in the latest Mytilene fashion. Pieces of jewellery or a new hairstyle are standard means of drawing attention and scoring some points. Nothing else resembles the expectedly sober atmosphere of a mass. Women create a lively atmosphere of chatting, full of aspiration which the priest unsuccessfully tries to control. Intensive formal visiting follows the mass. Women with a more 'orthodox' religious attitude who read the Gospel and discuss publicly religious issues are jokingly called **thriskevomenes**. There are few of them, teased or ignored by the rest. As a mark of their **paraxenia**, strange manner is cited the insistence of one of them to attend the coffeeshop together with her husband.

Of course **epidixi** and **episcepsi** are two sides of the same coin. **Kalesma** organizes an **epidixi** of the house. The career of a house starts with a supreme **epidixi** of dowry and goes on with more ordinary displays during reception. The emphasis is on cooking, on furniture or crockery, on handicraft skills such as weaving and knitting.

Novelty in display is appreciated. **Epidixi** encourages an attitude of innovation and consummerism that is often expensive to follow. Electric equipment is recently the preferred area of innovation. Let us take television. The first television set was bought by a coffeeshop, almost one decade ago. In Skala today there are no more than six televisions. The taste for television has gradually grown in the village, especially among children and young

women. Houses with televisions have a clear advantage over the have-nots. They are more attractive, seem much better equipped and come nearer to the urban prototype that is highly appreciated. The lack of television threatens domestic order! Children complain and mothers are forced to rely on neighbours with television, thus loosing face and looking dependent. Radios and tape recorders that are part of the bed, hi-fi's and videos are recent examples of this competitive march to consummerist modernity. Sometimes family men participate in the contest: together with the dowry the gifts of marriage are displayed. Each gift carries a label with the name of the donor. The week before marriage there is intensive discussion on who offers what. A much discussed gift attributes prestige to the donor.

The consumerist orientation of **epidixi** has another side: what is on display is best when it originates from a woman's own efforts. And it is especially appreciated if it is bought with a woman's earnings. Women compete over their wages: **I kathemia metrai ta merokamata tis allis**, each one counts each other's wages. Here wage refers to a day's work. Female labourers prefer to be paid at the end of the season instead of daily or weekly. This prevents them from using their earnings against everyday household expenses. Instead, they are saved to be spent on more prestigious consumption objects such as furniture, clothes, utensils or education. The competition focuses both on the net sum that a woman gets at the end of the harvest and the use she puts it to. The daily remuneration is not at stake. Thus, women remain united vis a vis their bosses. The more time a woman works, the more money she earns, the more prestigious the purchase she can make. This is how work outside the house is integrated into the realm of female prestige and the requirements of **epidixi** support work from outside the house.

Apparently less tangible, more convert yet most important is

antagonistic competition conducted with words: this is **koutsobolio**, gossip. Du Boulay (1974, 205) has described gossip as a 'socially determined way of talking'. Gossip is **logia**, words, a form of speech that is conceived as lacking a subject and addressed to no-one in particular. Thus gossip cannot develop into an argument, nor turn into a dialogue. Its inspiration is drawn from failure, it follows on to the cracks in the social fabric. Gossip is the undercurrent of all interaction among neighbours.

Logia contrasts to **logos**, a man's word. **Logos** is the testing point of a man's sense of worth. A man who **dini to logo tou**, literally 'gives' his 'word' is bound by it to act appropriately. Personal integrity adds weight to **logos**; the sustaining of **logos** makes the self worthy. 'Words' rather than binding, divide. Since they lack a subject they are unidentifiable, yet socially effective. Criticism, often malicious, can be easily accommodated in **logia** since the attacker is hidden in anonymity. Often domestic strife is accounted for in terms of **tis evalan logia**, words that have been passed to the protagonist. Because of its interpersonal nature **logos** cannot express hostility without leading to intolerable insult. Men express conflict by not speaking to each other.

Logos seems to be a male attribute while **logia** appears to be a woman's privilege. There are certain women who are identified as **glosou**, with the big tongue and **koutsobola**, gossiper. These women efficiently handle the subversive power of **logia**. A man who is **koutsobolis**, a gossip or **tou fevgoun logia**, 'from whom words escape' (ie loose-tongued) lacks character and discipline and need not be taken seriously. If he **lei logia**, says 'words' he is 'light' and silly. The same connotation does not stand when gossiping is attributed to a particular woman.

In its first steps gossip is a contained, sheltered commentary on

others. The women 'of the house' discuss in privacy whatever they notice as striking. The tone is joking and questioning yet it easily turns into a heavily emotional one. Themes of the everyday life are magnified and turn into focal points of debate once they are exported as group opinion that spreads in the form of a rumour. The more gossip is distanced from its original sender, the more it becomes depersonalised. And the more it hangs in the air, the more effective it becomes since it appears to represent widely held opinion. In that sense the neighbourhood functions as a depository in which all circulating 'words' are stored and where their mutual incompatibilities come to terms. In this depersonalized warfare with words, the kinship network is the fortress from which individual women wage their covert battles. Sometimes gossip merges with accusation. Then, the more identifiable is the accuser, the less so is the accused. Thus, it registers a suspicion that does not grow into an open insult.

As moral judgement, gossip is double-sided. Speaking up about the weaknesses of others not only helps undermine their position while enforcing compliance on them, it further guides and indirectly disciplines the behaviour of community members. In both senses gossip sets the norm.

Gossip determines prestige in a negative way. The more a woman is talked about, the greater the damage to her reputation. In the opposite way she preserves an image that is thought to accord to the moral code. It is the systematic promotion of the positive image in **epidixi** that places a woman on the ladder of prestige. Once 'talked' about a woman if possible must talk back using her network as a shelter. Otherwise she looses face.

Thia Ira openly complains on her doorstep about **tis palio-poutanes pou xelogianzoun ton egono mou**, the whores who seduce

my grandson. The message is easily decoded by the yitonises. She refers to the two grand-daughters of Thia Kiriaki who started socialising with her grandson after he returned from the merchant navy. Kiriaki inverts the comment without specifying who is the young man who flirts with them. Young children or babies seem to reflect their parents and their physical attributes are contested in gossip. Irini, a young mother herself, discusses how ugly Popi's baby is; she stresses that he has a strange shape and she names him kefala, big headed. Popi's reaction is the same in kind: she circulates the name aftias, big ears for Irini's son.

Gossip is the extreme end of an outward orientation in women. The unmarried girl should refrain from a lot of talking. The married woman does her gossiping under protection and in the shelter of her house. It is those women at the outer margins of the matrifocal network who are the aclaimed mistresses of gossip. First, elderly women because of age and indirect domestic involvement are less vulnerable to exposure. Second, they are well informed and as senior persons bound to defend the reputation of their junior kinswomen. Elderly women maintain the values of matrifocal kinship. Yet their moral judgement is usually addressed to younger, unrelated women, thus while gossip supports a sense of community it segments it on kinship and age.

Through gossiping the neighbourhood is made into a collective actor who supervises female behaviour according to the values of matrifocality. Many young women are afraid of ti tha pi i yitonia, what the neighbourhood will say. The women who evaluate and criticize are the same women with whom one has already established antagonistic and competitive relations in epidixi and episkepsi. The supervisory role of the neighbourhood then, merges with the antagonistic role of the relations between neighbours. The neighbourhood speaks, but

usually speaks negatively. It is the malicious gossiping of elder women and its formative contribution to neighbourhood opinion that in fact are most threatening.[6]

A woman cannot count on the judgement of the neighbourhood but nor can she ignore it. The most elementary suspicious activity is immediately grasped, magnified and thoroughly discussed. Yet, the neighbourhood focuses more on the explicit side of a woman's domestic behaviour. Neighbours can know more easily that a woman buys meat or beans for the Sunday meal than they can know the quality of her cooking. Visiting activity or behaviour in the fields are more easily followed than a woman's sexual relation with her husband or the way she enforces discipline on her children. The neighbourhood promotes values of moderation and conformity; it argues for the middle way. For example a young woman who makes frequent trips outside the village is regarded both with jealousy and suspicion for a privilege that clearly demarcates her from the other women. Neighbours stress the negative effects that this may have on her domestic routine.

A woman has to rely on her close female cognates for support. The matrifocal grouping closes ranks against gossip, reinforcing the domestic boundary and, if possible, keeping the neighbours out may have a similar effect. Yet, if enclosure is the safer means for safeguarding one's reputation, it is only through exposure that prestige can be gained. Women are trapped in this contradiction. Indeed the exchange of 'words' and visits is the substance of life in the neighbourhood. 'Words' need visits to fill them with accurate information: to authoritatively discuss the affairs of a family one has to visit its house. A closed house is a house impregnable to gossip but at the same time it is a marginalized house, excluded from the contest for social prestige. On the other hand 'words' are the only vehicle through which one communicates the different experiences

from visiting and translates them into prestige. 'Words' require visits to be given meaning, visits need 'words' in order to transform them into prestige.

4. Simpetherio and Affinal Relationships

As we saw in Chapter II affinity is initiated in betrothal. Thereafter it is intensively expressed in formalized exchanges that reach a climax at the ritual of marriage to follow, afterwards, a declining path. Ideally **simpetherio**, the term for affinity that literally means co-parenthood-in-law, links the recognized consanguines, the **ikoyenies** of each spouse, who **simpetheriasane**. It connotes a marital alliance between families which can be rhetorically acknowledged in both address and reference by use of the term **simpetheros/a**, co-parent-in-law. This is how siblings of cousins of the one spouse may call the other's parents of collaterals and vice versa. **Simpetherio** supports an image of generalized equality that is carefully cultivated in affinal exchanges before marriage.

The notion of **simpetherio** suggests a conjugal perspective in the local definition of affinity since it derives from the term **petheros/a** that is employed only by a spouse to refer and address his/her parents-in-law. Affinity is a projection of how the couple view a shared universe of relations. This is an indication that affinity follows closely the trajectory of conjugality.

This point is supported by further analysis of affinal terminology. **Kouniados/a**, are the terms used by the spouses and his/her parents to refer and address the other spouse's siblings. Husband and wife, on the other hand, are addressed and called by members of each others **ikoyenia** as **gambros** and **nifi**. The application

of these terms is usually restricted in exchanges between members of the natal households of the two spouses. If a married man wants to refer to his sister's husband's brother he may say **o kouniados mas**, our brother in law: thus he acknowledges affinity through adoption of a natal household perspective (his **kounados** is his wife's brother).

In contrast to **simpetheros** the terms **gambros/nifi** are not used reciprocally; they are the only gender specific affinal terms unique for each sex, open to inter and intra-generational usage. Technically they provide the focus of affinal terminology. What is interesting is that these terms literally mean groom and bride, thus denoting the position held in the ritual of marriage. Indeed, marriage marks the creation of affinity since it bases it on the division of two households and of consanguinity in general.

Closer etymological examination of affinity reveals its roots in ritual. The general, 'official' Greek term for affinity is **anchisteia**. It means 'nearness of kin' as well as rights of kin and rights of inheritance and it is very rarely employed by Skamniotes. On the other hand in classical Greek kinship terminology there are two principal affinal terms: **kedestes** and **pentheros**. Quoting from Miller:

> Kedestes is applicable to any male who is a close relative by marriage, but who does not belong to the circle of heirs within the **anchisteia**: the term then covers our father-in-law, stepfather, brother-in-law and son-in-law. The close association of the word with words for mourning suggests that this name arose from the duties performed in the funderals of members of the wives **anchisteia**, even though they were outside the circle of heirs. The terms **pentheros** and **gambros** are, apparently, influenced by the usage of **kedestes** and tend to the same classificatory employment.
>
> Miller, 1953, 46

What Miller seems to argue is that father-in-law equals **kedestes**

equals **pentheros** while son-in-law equals **kedestes** equals **gambros**. **Kedestes** or **kedestos** comes from **kedevo** which means to attend to a corpse, close the eyes, bury or mourn but also to contract a marriage, ally oneself in marriage. This etymological association between the concept for affinity and the ritual of death is also present in the second term for father-in-law, which is currently used in Skamnia. **Pentheros** comes from the same root as **pentho** which means mourn. On the contrary, in Skamnia, the only term used for the groom/son-in-law is **gambros**, a term that relates to marriage. In other words the conceptualization of affinity in Skamnia both in its narrow, organizing term of **gambros/nifi** and in its wider, 'social' term of **(sim)petherio** is based on ritual. The etymological parenthesis suggests that affinity is polarized between the ritual of marriage: the children in law are the ones that marry, the gambros/nifi and the ritual of death: the parent-in-law is the one who mourns, the **pentheros/a**. Affinity is produced in the ritual of marriage and its outer boundaries are sketched in the ritual of death.

Affinity emerges in marriage and in the course of the marriage process. The meanings of marriage thus inform the relational configurations of **simpetherio**. Looking back to chapter II a number of points should be by now more clear. First, women are the chief protagonists in the marriage process. It further seems that affinity is of much greater significance for them than for men. Most of what is to be said will be, then, on female affinity. Second, the units of 'exchange' in marriage are matrifocal networks who are differentiated by the fact that the one network realizes the 'destiny' of one of its women and thus is perpetuated by 'receiving' a husband at the expense of another one that 'gives' him. This conception of marriage as involving a certain asymmetry that has to be compensated (see gift exchange in marriage) qualifies affinity as hierarchical: it involves

a kind of debt and a certain obligation to reciprocate the 'giving' affines, through life. Third, affines are expected to assert an element of kinship when they promote particularistic, consanguineal concerns. Friction, then, tension, covert conflict and antagonism are endemic in affinal relations.[7]

Affinal relations develop in two ways. On the one hand, the points of conduct between affines are canonized in time, formalized not to say ritualized, well controlled by etiquette. At this level there is a state of truce from which the positive elements can be activated, if necessary. On the other hand, covert antagonism and often hostility inhibit any attempt to make the prospect of cooperation more genuine.

A good example of the tension between female affines is that between **kouniada** and **nifi**. This relation is terminologically stressed yet remote enough as to leave space for negotiation between the affines of the same generation. There are cases of women who need help and cannot but rely on affines or neighbours. Thia Taso is 73, a widow with no children. For help she relies on her elder sister's son who is a village grocer. He takes care of her financial matters. For company, visiting and gossiping she is attached to her **nifi**, Evagelia, widow of the same age who lives in her daughter's household with her grand-daughter. Taso is very assertive and demanding with her **nifi**: she takes her cooperativeness for granted and she will often visit her without being invited. In public the two women look very friendly, not to say initimate. And I was quite impressed at the beginning with Evagelia's tolerance. As I came to know the two women better I found out that Evagelia is outspoken on her **kouniada**'s behaviour. She strongly complains, but never in front of Taso, that she takes advantage and she stigmatizes her **paraxenies**, strange habits, her egoism and selfish regard, her insensibility when being in a **xeno**

spiti. The relationship works on this double standard. The elderly **kouniada** asserts her rights as a principal in the groom giving household. The **nifi** is expected to practically accommodate her affine's dependence, while putting the record straight as part of the repayment of a debt that was ritually acknowledged in the affinal exchanges that preceded marriage.

The senior female affine provides the example of a domineering attitude that is coupled by malicious curiosity. For the person who intervenes and inquires without having the right they say **pethera mou secho**, you are just like my mother-in-law. The inquisitiveness of the **pethera** is not justified since she is the example of emotional indifference: **i mana ponai stin kardia ki i pethera sti fterna**, the mother suffers in the heart and the mother-in-law in the heel. Skamniotes enjoy raising stories that show how the **pethera** faces her **nifi** as **skilaki me gataki**, dog against cat; they parallel her maliciousness with cholera, a fatal illness thus explicating the passive resistance which the **nifi** is forced into. The frustration of the junior affine gives rise to a typified state of animosity. The two women rarely cooperate.

In the stereotypical representation of kinship the relation between **sinifades**, sisters-in-law occupies the extreme end of maliciousness and hostility. Despite its quasi-affinal status this relationship is more discussed than affinity proper. In a couplet form the co-sister-in-law is paralleled to 'the demon's crutch' (**sinifada, sinifada, tou demonou i dekanikada**); or to a scorpion, suggesting a subversive, covertly 'poisonous' attitude. **Sinifada** literally means bride of the same person (co-bride). Indeed, **sinifades** share a single **pethera**: this is, however, not a basis of a defensive alliance against the latter, intruding behaviour. Defaults in male or patrilateral kinship are often explained in terms of the

hostility among co-sisters-in-law. They allegedly divide their husbands and oppose their offspring. What is true is that a woman identifies more with her husband when he has an argument with his cognates and exploits the opportunity to bring him closer to her matrifocal grouping.

When the **sinifades** meet on a domestic or other occasion they are never relaxed and they are considerably silent in comparison with the normal chatting record of the rest of the women. They may be neighbours but they hardly exchange a visit, except on formal occasions when they accompany their husbands. They refer to each other using emphatically the term **sinifada** and the small name and their tone is usually one of dislike. They hardly cooperate, and if they do it depends on their husbands' initiative and never involves domestic tasks. In cases where brothers jointly own land and harvest together, their wives may be 'forced' to form a daifas. In a similar case I found out that the cooperating **sinifades** were not from the same village, while a **sinifada** with strong matrifocal backing was 'abstaining' totally with the excuse that she had to take care of her children.

Affinity among men is unstressed either in terminology, exchanges or ritual. There is no evidence to suggest any pattern of economic cooperation or political alliance emerging out of **simpetherio** besides the diffusion of any existing tension **yia chari ton pedion**, for the childrens' sake. In ritual occasions, where female affines appear to intensively socialize, their male counterparts sit aside from the centre and apart from one another. Formal cordiality fades out as soon as it is not demanded by circumstances. The alliance effects of the childrens' marriage seems not to be part of any calculation. **Simpetherio**, however, fits a pre-existing drinking partnership in the coffeeshop.

The configurations of affinity are stressed in case the husband takes the position of what elsewhere has been described as the **sogambros**. This is so when he co-resides with his widower parent-in-law and consequently he is forced to commensurate his domestic status with the single domestic and formal authority of his senior affine. It makes little difference if the single affine is a man or a woman. The **petheros/a** treats the **gambros** with great familiarity, addresses him by his first name and expects him to share responsibilities in the affairs of the household. The **gambros** treats his senior affine with respect and even unquestionable submission and obedience. His status as a **sogambros** is considered with concealed scepticism by his fellow villagers. He is much more involved in domestic matters than his married age mates at the expense of the quality of his coffeeshop participation and status.

A parallel scenario exists among fishermen and involves heirless men. In such cases the husband of the eldest daughter who works also in the same fishing unit is treated as an adopted son. However, in opposition to the **sogambros** case there are no domestic applications. The **petheros/gambros** relation is kept secluded in the context of economic interaction. Again the element of familiarity and submission is present. The **gambros** is the most consistent in his duties among the rest of the crew members: he comes first, never complains about the excesses of the **koumanto**, does not discuss aspects of the work with his friends or relatives and is increasingly being entrusted by his **petheros**. The **gambros** may even call his in-law **patera**, father in exceptional moments of familiarity while he is called, sometimes with affection, by his first name. Their link is not stressed in other contexts: in the coffeeshop or in the house, neither their rather close and mutual interaction effect their relation with the rest of their male affines. In contrast to the father-son relation it is a

voluntary one: its openness keeps this relation balanced and less authoritarian.

In striking contrast to most of what has been said so far about affinity is the tie between **batzanakides**, co-brothers-in-law, or more caressingly **batzanakia**. It is an open, warm and humorous relation that provides a venue of cooperation alternative to that between brothers or male cognates in general. Men often retreat to their **batzanakia** if strife with brothers occurs. Despite the absence of any formal obligation this relationship carries a remarkable potential for help. Being a kind of domesticated friendship, it exists at the crossroads between kinship and commensal friendship. Its warmth and spontaneity is owed to its parallel cultivation in the coffeeshop where friendships are easily made. Its commitment, however, and endurance derives from its indirect grounding on matrifocality. The close, domestic tie between the sisters and wives of the two men provide a firm basis that can be easily activated or put aside, depending on the circumstances.[8]

If the co-brothers-in-law cooperate in fishing, authority is decided indirectly, given they are of the same age group, according to the seniority of their respective wives. The husband of the elder sister, who married first and who often has the initiative to start the cooperation, leads the team. If a junior **batzanokis** faces economic problems his senior co-brother in law is to some extent obliged to help him and take him in his boat. The hegemony of the senior **batzanakis** in many instances is more solid than that exercized by the senior brother. He is treated by his affine's sons as a kind of maternal uncle: with sympathy and respect. This form of cooperation cannot survive the strains of succession.

To sum up: in the last three chapters I discussed the social

configurations that are informed by notions of **nikokirio** and **ikoyenia**, **simpetherio** and **yitonia**. What has been demonstrated is the overwhelming pervasiveness of female kinship. Matrifocality is the structural principle of all forms of relatedness that occur in the primarily female realm of the neighbourhood. It juxtaposes the properties of maternal love, that constitute the network of kinswomen as an enclave of trust, domestic cooperation, and mutual identity to the antagonism and hostility that is evident outside the realm of recognized kinship (**sigenia**). It distinguishes within kinship a department of applied and exogamous relatedness with flexible boundaries. And it segments the world of women along kinship lines.

These properties of matrifocal kinship have been demonstrated in the framework of relations of an involuntary nature, which are imposed on individuals by geographical contiguity or marriage. Antagonistic competition, tension which takes the form of hostility, and malicious gossip underly a pattern of formal reciprocities that make these relations both visible and manageable, i.e. subjectable to manipulation. These characteristics are stressed when women are involved. Among men both categories of relations are of minimal significance.

Matrifocality indirectly shapes relations by setting their conditions of existence. As we saw forms of adoption and female friendship grow in the gaps of the matrifocality: they provide the means with which problems in the relational manifestations of female kinship, arising from the lack of a daughter or the absence of matrifocal support, are coped with. Under 'normal' conditions these forms contradict the matrifocal principle.

The structural properties of matrifocal kinship are best shown in gendered forms of second-order affinity. Among women it represents the negative extreme of relatedness outside kinship; among men it is

the pole of relatedness that comes near to the ideal of friendship. Second order affinity is a recognized category that because of its loose formal specification can minimally inhibit the structural efficacy of matrifocality. **Sinifades** are loosely related by obligation, yet totally juxtaposed by their exclu sive allegiance to their kin. **Batzanakides**, on the other hand, can add to their otherwise indifferent connection in the coffeeshop, a systematic and sympathetic bond that derives from conjugal attachment to the same matrifocal network.

Notes to Chapter V

1. For the religious tasks of women and their community implications in the Greek context see Dubisch, 1983.

2. The organization of neighbourhoods on the basis of female kinship has been reported in Greece (Hirschon, 1983), Cyprus (Arnold, 1982) and Italy (Davis, 1983, 68).

3. Kennedy (1986) analyzes female friendships in a Cretan village from a psychological perspective, yet she does not bring forward any evidence on kinship or other forms of relatedness.

4. Gatherings of unrelated women never approach the size of receptions or domestic religious celebrations (**mevlud**) in Turkey. See Tapper, 1983.

5. On the problematic nature of neighbourhood relations elsewhere in Greece see du Boulay, 1974, 217.

6. The 'constructive or destructive' nature of gossip is well sketched by du Boulay (op. cit., 212) who characteristically treats gossip in the same chapter with friendship.

7. The problematic nature of female affinity has been adequately recognized in Greek ethnology. See for example du Boulay, op. cit., 155; Hirschon, op. cit., 314. Campbell (1964, 71-3) mentions the frequent quarrels between co-resident **sinifades**.

8. Hirschon (op. cit., 318-9) reports the amicable character of the **batzanakis** relationship.

CHAPTER VI: THE COFFEESHOP AND THE ORGANIZATION OF COMMENSALITY

> "bottles of rakee, a very potent spirit, were produced, and the glasses were filled and emptied during what seemed to us, who were tired and hungry, a most interminable time. Our visitors were the most seasoned vessels I had come across in my travels. They disposed of several bottles of strong rakee in a most methodical and business-like manner, and then walked straight out of the room in a way that did credit to their heads and understanding."
>
> (Anonymous, 1895, 597)

1. The Coffeeshop in the Local Society

Despite their evident antiquity, the remarks of the sensitive traveller who visited the headvillage of Mantamados nearly 130 years ago capture the impressions of the present day ethnographer who enters Skamnia's coffeeshop on a Saturday evening. The configuration of commensality is the subject matter of this and following chapters. Drinking and especially of alcohol is a very significant activity among the Skamniotes. It supports a sphere of exclusively male relatedness; and it provides the symbolic means for the cultural expression and taxonomic organization of masculinity.

Comparatively little attention has been shown to the ethnographic and historical study of drinking establishments in Greece or Turkey despite their central position in local societies.[1] This is especially true for the Aegean Basin. The islands of Eastern Aegean, Crete and Western Anatolia have a greater proportion of coffeeshops per capita than the respective Greek and Turkish average. Skamnia has five and Skala three coffeeshops, a ratio of one for every sixty inhabitants.[2] The eminent place that the coffeeshop holds in these societies can be associated historically to social class and urban

influence.[3] It may be further linked to movements of religious syncretism that were institutionalized at the socio-economic margins of these societies during the centuries of Ottoman rule.[4] This is an important point as it suggests certain parallels in the symbolism of coffeeshop based practices that occur in different religious or ethnic frameworks.

Coffeeshops are divided by the inward and outward orientation. This depends on the coffeeshop's history, the manager's preferences and the composition of the clientele or the kind of drinks it serves. Hereafter, I use the term coffeeshop to refer to a wide range of drinking places including the **kafenio** or **kafenes** (coffeeshop), **rakadiko** (raki drinking place), **ikoyeniako** or **exochiko** (family or country drinking place). All of them primarily specialize in serving drinks.

Most coffeeshops are large, rectangular rooms with a single entrance and large windows. They are equipped with tables, chairs and benches which are placed near the walls. Maps, advertisements, old framed photographs are hung on the walls. Coffeeshops provide newspapers as well as cards and backgammon for evening entertainment. A television set completes the picture. The tables, usually not more than 10, are arranged in two rows so as to make possible the formation of a circle: either a circle of individuals who face each other or a circle of groups habitating separate tables. The **stofa**, stove that burns wood is at the centre of the room. Sometimes it is used for cooking. The serving spot (counter) is called **tezaki** and lies either at the right hand side as one enters or opposite the door, clearly distinguished from the tables.

The majority of the coffeeshops are gathered in the main square, side by side with the grocery stores, the butcher, the blacksmith or the tabaconist (see maps 3 and 4). Thus, the coffeeshop is placed at

the crossroads between the house and what is perceived as the public place. It is frequented by people who live in houses, have relatives and often carry their domestic obligations in the field of commensality. Functions, which are perceived as domestic, occur in its quarters: the preparation of snacks, cleaning, and even sleeping. Every man has his **steki**, the drinking establishment he frequents and identifies with most.[5] This is the place where a villager can be either found or be traced through. **Steki** etymologically originates from standing. Indeed, it reflects a fluid, temporary accommodation of the male self that contrasts to the more static perception of female nature: a man is on the move and in effect his **steki** is changeable, a woman steadily identifies with the same **spiti** and **nikokirio.** On the other hand, the coffeeshop provides the informal framework for doing business, conducting politics, learning about and debating issues of wider significance. The coffeeshop often functions as an informal jury and a mutual aid group. This is the place to meet outsiders or host the authorities.[6] In the past it provided public services such as hairdressing and it combined with the local emporium. All these different and often symbolically opposed activities are mediated by what gives the coffeeshop its distinct character: drinking. Indeed the exchange of drinks results in exclusively male ties of varying intensity, it creates an atmosphere of familiarity and privacy and constitutes the coffeeshop as an institution comparable in significance to the house.

The coffeeshop, then, could be described as a mens' house. Here men meet each other, chat, play cards, sometimes sing or dance. It is the place where most men **pernoun tin ora tous**, spend their 'time'. Time refers to leisure i.e. to what remains when the volume of time devoted to **doulia**, work and secondly to household obligations is deduced from a man's life. A man's daily routine often starts at the

coffeeshop where he has his morning coffee or tea and discusses with companions the coming day. After work he rests at the coffeeshop and has an evening coffee while later he enters a prolonged session of alcoholic drinking. Card playing, watching television or reading newspapers occurs in the evening. Some men favour a quick mid-day nap at the coffeeshop. To counteract this tendency, which contradicts his economic interest, the **kafetzis**, manager employs the couplet: **O kafenes den ine na katsis ke na kimithis, ine na piis ke na xekoubithis**, the coffeeshop is not a place to stay and have a nap but to drink and go away. Sometimes, in the winter elderly men among the regular members of the establishment replace the **kafetzis** who is occupied with the harvest. They serve each other and occasionally cook on the stove.

In Skala the coffeeshop is more embedded in economic life. It is an integral part of the fishing economy and the site of a number of tasks that could otherwise be performed on the boat. Activities ranging from repairing nets or sleeping while waiting for the weather to clear up to making decisions and financial arrangements are carried out in the coffeeshop. On the other hand, the identification of the coffeeshop with leisure occurs within limits. The man who spends all his time in the coffeeshop is called **kafenovios**. His abstinence from work is regarded with suspicion. It suggests the attitude of the **tebelis**, idler who cannot cope with undertaken obligation. A man who drinks spirits in the morning is also in danger of being classified as **bekris**, drunkard.

In principle, women are not allowed in the coffeeshop unless they are attended by a relative or husband. The female kin of the **kafetzis** who sometimes help him are exempted. This restriction does not apply in domestic or communal ritual occasions during which the coffeeshop code is suspended. Then, the units of participation in coffeeshop



13. **Meraki** : taking care of the vineyard.



14. **Tiranidha** : ploughing the olive groves.

life are not individual men but married couples or whole domestic units. A coffeeshop known as **ikoyeniako**, of the family, or **exochiko**, of the countryside, since it is located at the margins of Skamnia is particularly prone to catering for families. This together with coffeeshops in Skala that serve food for visitors and tourists in the summer are paralleled to a **taverna** (tavern). Younger women regard their participation in the coffeeshop as contradicting their domestic responsibilities. In former times only upper class married women attended the coffeeshop during the big festivity of Saint Fotini. Allegedly, they were not allowed to drink but instead they were offered halva. As we saw, female avoidance of the coffeeshop is clearly marked by womens' use of space. A married woman very rarely enters the coffeeshop in order to speak to her husband. She prefers to send a kinsman or a child to ask him to come out.

A sexual division of labour is almost absent in coffeeshop activities. If cooking, a traditionally female task, is required it is performed by men, usually the **kafetzis** or his married son, who may be helped by a wife or a mother. And if snacks are to be prepared by women, this takes place at home and not in the coffeeshop which has its own cooking facilities. On certain occasions a group of age mates prepare their own snaks thus replacing the **kafetzis**. Cleaning, preparing and keeping the stove running, washing the dishes and other traditional female tasks in the context of the coffeeshop are performed by men.

Certain coffeeshops are closely identified with their managers. On very rare occasions, and particularly if the coffeeshop occupies a very special location, for instance near the church or in the middle of the square, or if it provides space for public activities, it is identified by these special uses. A coffeeshop, the manager of which is regarded as unsuitable for the job, is employed because of its size

and position as the locus of communal gatherings and called the **kinotiko**, municipal. If the lifespan of a specific coffeeshop survives a number of changes in its management, the composition of its membership may or may not radically change, as the case may be, depending on whether the new **kafetzis** retains the allegiances of his predecessor, runs his coffeeshop in the same spirit or provides the same kind of services for his clients. If the **kafetzis'** position is inherited, usually along the male line, then the continuity of the coffeeshop's membership is secured. The **kafenio** of Nikitas is the most typical case: it was founded by his mother's father and then transferred to Stamatis' father, who still helps in its running. The **exochiko** in Skamnia is owned by Doukas who is helped by his married son. In Skala, Ipsilantis' coffeeshop was founded by Pazarikos whose son-in-law inherited the establishment yet left the village. The coffeeshop was let first to Mavros, who later became a commercial share cropper, and then to Roditis, who has become the chief **manavis**, fishermonger of Skala. Ipsilantis is not related to any of his predecessors. Dounias, on the other hand, inherited the coffeeshop from his father.

The latter two coffeeshops are managed as family businesses involving the kafetzi's father, his wife and sometimes the children as well. Husband and wife work together in the fields. Usually the coffeeshop stays open all day, provided that an elderly kin or friend can replace the absent manager.

The social composition of the coffeeshops varies according to social class and local identity. The Fragos' and Doukas' coffeeshops are high in the preferences of people descended from the refugee camp. Fragos himself is of refugee origin; Doukas' wife belongs to a big matrifocal group of refugees. Divisions built on class or economic specialization are equally important. **Parayii**, agricultural workers

and small tenants prefer Arnioti's coffeeshop; big **kesimtzides** and proper **afentika** opt for the obsequious and professional treatment offered in Martinos' coffeeshop. Twenty years ago class divisions were more prominent in coffeeshop composition. The one which catered exclusively to big landowners was called **Chorodidaskalio**, dancing school and did in fact offer dancing lessons. Political allegiances play a minor role. Skamnia is a politically left-wing community, with the two communist parties sharing more than two thirds of the votes. Supporters of conservative parties are too fragmented from the point of view of kinship to be able to form the core group of a new coffeeshop. Skamniotes are very proud of the fact that their coffeeshop life is not fragmented across political party lines.[7]

In Skala, the coffeeshop composition reflects the degree of alignment with Skamnia. Both **kafetzides** are Skamniotes in origin and affinally related to the group of Moschonisiotes who form Skala's core. Nevertheless, their personal histories and the nature of their affinal linkages determine which is the coffeeshop that represents Skala and which is more close to Skamnia. Ipsilantis was born in Skamnia and married in Skala. He was involved in the EAM resistance movement and this furthered his identification with Skamnia. Dounias is a second generation Skamniotis, born in Skala, and his wife's matrifocal network is one of the most influential in the village. Ipsilantis uses a political criterion to contrast the two coffeeshops: his coffeeshop is left-wing, the other **dexio**, right-wing. Dounia's describes his coffeeshop as the genuine Skaliotiko one: it is mostly Skamniotes who frequent his neighbour's coffeeshop. In fact both classifications are correct. Dounias' coffeeshop is inwardly oriented and more conservative while Ipsilantis' one is outwardly oriented and left-wing.

A coffeeshop is further characterized by the drinks or services

it offers. The range of drinks consumed in Skamnia and Skala includes soft drinks such as orange or lemon juice or the omnipresent Coca-Cola consumed mainly by children, young men and women, alcoholic beverages such as liqueurs, cognac or brandy, **retsina** (resinated wine), beer and **raki** or **ouzo** (a grape based liquor with an aniseed flavour) consumed by adult men and women and coffee, tea or chamomile which are the favourite drinks of elderly people. Today all drinks are imported, while before the war the production of **raki** and wine was part of the domestic economy of some of the households. Liqueurs are primarily used in gatherings of women. Men who visit a household are treated by the **nikokira** to either brandy or coffee. Wine (or beer) is consumed on festive occasions but in contrast to **raki** it is rarely used as a treat. Brandy appears to be the formal treat of the household and is the alcoholic drink sometimes consumed by domestically oriented men in the coffeeshop. Food rather than alcoholic drink is consumed in work parties. Most alcohol drinking occurs in the coffeeshop.

The kind of drink offered depends on the time of day. Skala's coffeeshops are open all day and serve alcoholic and non-alcoholic drink. In Skamnia Nikitas' coffeeshop does not serve alcoholic drinks and it is open all day: it fully deserves the characterization of **tsagadiko** which carries a somewhat contemptuous meaning. In contrast, Martinos' coffeeshop offers coffee only in the evening and on Sundays and **raki** in the late evening. It is also the locus of prolonged gambling sessions. Martinos' establishment has inherited the prestigeous title of Skamnia's **rakadiko** from Arnioti's coffeeshop. The latter is also known as the **kabare**, since its proprietor used to invite **artistes**, female artists to entertain its clientele. Arniotis is a bachelor who runs the coffeeshop with the help of friends. He lets his establishment for card playing in the evenings. Yet he organizes proper **raki** sessions only for his drinking partners. As we

shall see village coffeeshop life is polarized between the **tsagadiko** and the **rakadiko.**

The rest of the coffeeshops which usually stay open in the mornings offer all available drinks.

The character of the coffeeshop shifts in the course of the day with consequent changes in the composition of the members who attend. Martinos's coffeeshop is the meeting place of **kesimtzides** and **afentika** for tea and coffee only in the afternoons. Later in the evening it becomes the most appropriate **raki**-drinking place in the village and is widely attended by lower class men as well.[8] Doukas' coffeeshop which usually offers coffee and **raki** at the morning and evening sessions respectively, is extended during the summer to a proper taverna attended by families from nearby villages (the so-called **ikoyeniako**).

2. The Constitution of the Coffeeshop: Core Group and Parea

Men divide their leisure time between different drinking places. Besides his **steki**, one usually visits at least one other coffeeshop a day. On the other hand, since avoidance is marked in the use of space, one does not attend the **steki** of people one wishes to avoid. Sometimes the exclusive allegiance to a coffeeshop is based on kinship. Some coffeeshops rely on a primary core of habitues who are kin to the **kafetzis** or his wife. For example, while Ipsilantis' coffeeshop has a core group of five men, the father and brothers of his wife, who very rarely attend another coffeeshop, Dounias enjoys the regular support of his **batzanakis** and his **gambros.** Both coffeeshops function as family businesses. In Skamnia Doukas' clientele is drawn from the refugee segment as well because of his wife's refugee status. Relatives of Doukas' wife attend regularly his

place. On the other hand in Arniotis' or Martinos' coffeeshops, with a stressed **raki** orientation there is no core kinship group at all. For the members of the core group, allegiance to the coffeeshop is a projection of domestic or kinship obligation. Among the refugees kinship is more stressed and its relevance in coffeeshop life is greater in supporting the function of refugee based establishments as family businesses.

However, the coffeeshop as a social institution is founded on the all important notion of **parea** (plural **parees**), drinking party that informs and socially organizes commensality. This is an informal, voluntary grouping of co-drinkers, who meet regularly, chat and play cards. Parea members are usually of the same age, yet not kin to one another.[9] Parea corresponds to a generalized sense of friendliness, as this arises in commensality. Men **kanoun parea**, make company when they drink together. As we shall see, there are no limitations to who applies this principle. Thus **parea** is fundamentally open. Despite, however, a flexible membership at its margins, the **parea** usually has a core of three or four regular members who exclusively identify with each other and with a particular coffeeshop. Each one of the big **parees** in Skamnia has its own **steki**. Interpersonal conflict eventually results in avoidance of the **parea** itself.

It seems that from the viewpoint of the social constitution of the coffeeshop, **parea** and core groups of kinsmen are complementary: the smaller and less important the core group the more significant the contribution of the **parea** to the solidarity of the coffeeshop. Further, coffeeshops specializing in either coffee or mixed drinking are based on a core group of regulars who are kin to the manager. Drinking establishments, however, that come closer to the **rakadiko** type exclusively rely on groups of drinking partners who are kin neither to the manager nor between them. The **kafetzis** seems to depend



15. The coffee shop in the morning.



16. The coffee shop in the evening : a **parea** of male friends.

on the circle of co-drinkers, rather than them being affiliated to him. The core parea gives the tone to coffeeshop life and often survives changes in management. The more exclusively alcoholic is the orientation of the coffeeshop, the less pertinent is kinship in its organization and the composition of its clientele. As we shall see later this point suggests a symbolic opposition between kinship relatedness and raki commensality.

Conflict and division among men is attributed to kinship. Unrelated men who have an argument quickly retreat from the setting of conflict, start habituating different coffeeshops and avoid each other. Thus an image of conflict emerging from commensality is contained through coffeeshop re-alignment. The limited number of available options often forces men to associate and disassociate with the same coffeeshop in successive periods of time.

Age determines what one is allowed to drink. In effect it defines the type of coffeeshop activities one is can engage in and further the timing - hour of the day, normal day of work, weekend or festivity - of participation and the type of coffeeshop. One is excluded from the coffeeshop that specializes in drink he is not allowed to have. A man starts his coffeeshop career with soft drinks, coffee or tea, then moves to raki and retires with coffee. His scope of choice increasingly enlarges till the age of maturity - between 35 and 55 - to be followed by a period when one can drink everything yet can hardly exploit the right of full participation in coffeeshop activity.

Children are initiated in drinking and become familiar with coffeeshop life from a very early age. On festive occasions parents give their four or five year old children light alcoholic beverages such as beer to taste - if the child likes it, this is repeated regularly while the idea of moderation is introduced. Later boys are

differentiately treated on the issue of drink than girls. Schoolboys are not allowed in the coffeeshop without their fathers. A boy at the age of 14-16, if he has left school and works independently, is allowed to have soft drinks to the **tsagadiko**, the favourite place of the village elders and pensioners. Young bachelors occasionally attend the **ikoyeniako** where they have their first **raki**. Yet they spend most of their time at the **tsagadiko** where one cannot do much more than watch television or occasionally play cards with age mates and drink coffee or soft drinks. After service in the army, which is a two-year period of absence from home, a young man is eligible for Sunday noon **raki** drinking sessions in any coffeeshop but preferably in the **rakadiko**, or in coffee drinking sessions after work in Arniotis' coffeeshop, where light card playing takes place. Marriage opens the door to the evening **raki** drinking world of male adults, the Parthenon of which is Martinos' coffeeshop. Adult men attend coffee drinking places only in the morning and early evening. Incorporation in a **raki** drinking **parea** is a condition of initiation to dice throwing or card playing with a lot of money. At old age retirement from **raki** drinking is related to retreat to the **tsagadiko**.

Drinking encounters provide an avenue for talking.[10] Many Skamniotes notice the impressive contrast between the more sober morning and the very talkative evening occasions. **To poto lini tin glosa**, alcoholic drink loosens the tongue, they say. The 'talk from the straw' is not thematically bound. It is usually informed by issues of wider relevance that are brought to local attention via the newspapers or the television or it focuses on the recollection of past events and characters. Skamniotes are well informed on current international events such as the Iranian crisis or Greek foreign policy. Coffeeshop discussion often tends to avoid the locally

current and immediately pertinent; it anchors on the distant. It is thus exhausted in exploring the inside margins of consensus rather than trespassing into the territory of argument. Men conceive the coffeeshop as a place to go and listen rather than argue. Only men with official status such as the president of the village council, party representatives, a Bank official or the postman directly address the coffeeshop members. Verbal performance that conforms to the code of sociability is appreciated and space is left for men to tell their stories.

Skamniotes bear a monist concept of opinion. It is natural for men to agree. Disagreement is regarded as exogenous to and imported in the world of male commensality and it is thought to eventually lead to conflict. What a man says, his **logos**, verbal commitment expresses his composure as a moral human being. **Logos** is also an expression of feeling. The collision of contradictory opinions is registered as a clash of emotionalities that sets a moral issue and in effect is intolerable. Men in conflict **den miliounte**, do not speak to each other. This is the extreme end of avoidance.

This is not to say that debate is altogether avoided. In the narrower framework of the **parea** local issues are often discussed. The goat that was set free and entered the neighbour's unfenced landholding invites a discussion on the grazing of animals in Skamnia, the character of the people involved, the attitude of the rural policeman and the state and even the goat itself! Diversity of opinion, if any, is slight and easily accommodated. The discussion in the **parea** usually develops at a quick pace, it is synthetic, easily manipulatable and enjoyable. Yet nothing about it resembles a private conversation. **Parea** members speak loudly in order to be heard by consociates in the coffeeshop. Verbal performance is appreciated. The **parea** speaks to itself while it indirectly addresses itself to the

rest of the coffeeshop and sets issues on the agenda of discussion. A privately held opinion turns into group consensus and thus adopts a hegemonic quality and a privileged position vis a vis contesting views.

The sharing of opinion, as we shall see later, arises on the common experience and it is one of the formative factors of friendship. The parea is not just based on shared identity but it attributes identity to people, events and objects. For example, it is a collective sponsor of names. Each man is known by a number of nicknames. Each nickname is exclusively used by a particular parea: it exemplifies its unique point of view and symbolizes its distinctiveness as a discussion unit.

The parea monologue can escalate into a coffeeshop dialogue. In general men use the idiom of parea talk to register disagreement rather than directly interrupting and challenging a point of view expressed in a parea context. Different parea opinions cross each other, often with a humorous spirt, yet collision is skillfully avoided. The formation of public opinion, then, passes through the corridors of indirect and depersonalised debate: one loudly agrees with the one he directly addresses, and thus registers an opinion that may not be shared by a listener who follows the same method to register his disagreement. In this way the conduct of the debate rarely escalates into a fully fledged interpersonal argument and eventually tension and friction in the coffeeshop is diffused. On the other hand the co-existence of parees which consistently argue fundamentally different views under the same roof becomes intolerable. In Skamnia one can distinguish three separate pareas with different age composition that hold consistently different views. These drinking parties rarely attend the same coffeeshop at the same time. Coffeeshops tend to identify, further, with the view of particular

parees.

One does not address the coffeeshop directly as an individual but indirectly through speaking loudly to one's friend. The **parea**, then, and not the individual is the subject of debate. One needs a **parea** as a platform for argument and a means to influence village opinion. Otherwise the only scope that the coffeeshop leaves to its private members is to listen to the 'spokesmen' of drinking circles. Individual argument is registered as eccentricity or as a symptom of a quarrelsome, anti-social character. Some men, however, opt for the role of the sole speaking individual. To speak loudly to the coffeeshop equals speaking loudly to yourself. The sole speaking individual looks like a kind of Shakespearean fool. He is apparently ignored but also heard. His expressed opinion is not legitimized by any direct and immediate response. In one sense it is expressed exactly because it will not be challenged. On that ground he can raise the currently unacceptable, the alternative that in the long run may be approved. In this sense he enlarges the scope of consensus by forerunning an opinion in the process of becoming collectively approved. During official visits of representatives of the **nomarchia** (district commission) when various communal issues are raised and discussed and when politics are openly conducted at the coffeeshop he may expose **ke tou stravou to dikio**, the blind man's right: a view that everybody is happy to listen to but nobody wishes to express. Such men are known to apply teasing and mockery. They, somehow, police the margins of appropriate behaviour.

3. The Code of Kerasma

The consumption of drinks is a condition of entry and

participation in coffeeshop life. In Skamnia it is important to know not how to ask for your own drink but how to ask for somebody else's drink and how to react when you are offered a drink. The social significance of drink is that you get it without asking for it. **Kerasma**, from the classical Greek verb **keranymi**, meaning blending drinks and offering them to outsiders, is the treating to a drink. Sometimes **kerasma** relates to household hospitality. In Skamnia, however, it almost exclusively organizes commensality in the coffeeshop and it is contrasted to **tratarisma**. The latter refers to hospitality offered by the focal women of the house in the form of treating to a sweet or a soft drink, coffee or tea. Treating to and serving are conflated in **tratarisma**. **Kerasma** refers to the drink that is treated. The act of treating is also described as **kerasia**.

Four separate speech acts signify four separate stages in the performance of **kerasma**. First the sponsor informs the **kafetzis** of his intention to treat someone to a drink. He says loudly **vale ena poto ston Vageli**, give Vangelis a drink, or **o kafes tou Kosta ine dikos mou**, Costa's coffee is mine, so as to be heard by the interested party and the rest of the coffeeshop or he communicates his intention with a sign or with a low voice. Second, the **kafetzis** serves the drink and at the same time announces loudly **apo ton Strato**, from Strato or **o Stratos kerna**, Stratos' treats. If he fails to acknowledge its origin, the **kerasma** is invalid even if the sponsored party has heard the initial ordering. The realization of the exchange depends on its acknowledgement. This is in accordance with the priority that is assigned to the concept of **logos**. Third, the receiver of the treat responds by choosing a form that reflects the intensity and closeness of the relation. The most usual form of acknowledgement is **eva**, or **stin iyia sou**, both meaning to your health, or **ela**, come. The use of the name of the sponsor adds a formal dimension. Verbal thanks are

strictly avoided. Fourth, the sponsor reacts with the same speech act or with a less formal one which signifies his superior position. It is inappropriate to pay for a drink which was not acknowledged in any form. In theory a non-acknowledged **kerasma** is a **kerasma** that never existed. The speech act somehow makes the **kerasma**. Sometimes, however, verbal acknowledgement can be suspended. This usually occurs in the context of a **parea**.

The verbal exchange between sponsor and sponsored is conceived as **cheretisma**, greeting.[11] Skamniotes are not economical at all in their greeting behaviour. Those who do not greet are regarded as unsociable. **Yia sou**, hallo, is the common form of addressing someone in the street. This is the same with a form of applaud and with the expression that acknowledges **kerasma**, and it is frequently exchanged in a low voice with a certain indifference among men who are on speaking terms without being commensal partners. The passer by must greet first. Ritual occasions are especially made for **cheretisma**, the delivery of greetings. Greeting marks movements in and outside the village. Whenever I left the village for a few days, on my return I became the subject of systematic greeting from men who advanced me the **kalos orises**, welcome (back). This comforting and apparently redundant gesture reminded me of the volatility of my position. An outsider who enters the coffeeshop has to greet: this gives him the right to sit. **Kerasma** is a means to invite greeting: in this sense it is a confirmation of the place one holds in local society. When the 'Athenians' came back to the village in the summer they spend their first days treating their fellow villagers in the coffeeshop and thus collecting greetings. Yet treating is clearly distinguished from greeting. The acknowledgement of **kerasma** does not wash out the obligation to reciprocate.

The same code organizes appropriate bodily movement. The

sponsored keeps the glass of water or raki at the height of his chest and moves it upwards and forward to the direction of the person who treats (see plate 20). The sponsor turns so as to face him and greets back. He may avoid doing the same gesture with the glass. An alternative, more relaxed way is to knock the table with the glass. Sometimes treating and greeting come close in their symbolic manifestation: the sponsor and sponsored shake their glasses as men shake their hands in a gesture of friendliness.

The performative side of **kerasma** enacts an image of social symmetry. In the acknowledgement of **kerasma** sponsor and sponsored appear as equals. The handling of the **rakopotiro**, raki drinking glass is also regulated by this egalitarian code. The riddle "my lip at your lip, my finger at your arse" refers to the **rakopotiro** bearing the form of the human body, having lips and arse. The image is enacted in assumptions about the mode of shaking glasses. The accepted mode is to shake glasses at the same height; this suggests symmetry. Otherwise, the sharing of glasses appears to involve the lips of the one glass making contact with the lower parts of the other. This is a sign of contempt and highly insulting.

Skamniotes say that **to kerasma ine mia kalimera**, **kerasma** is a good-morning. The association of **kerasma** to a form of greeting suggests two of its properties. First, it places **kerasma** into the category of elementary forms of friendliness. As a gesture **kerasma** behaviour is governed by the values of **filotimo** (see chapter IX). A man's sense of worth rests on exhibiting an attitude of generosity and fulfilling one's obligations. **Kerasma**, then, is the elementary gift and in this respect it has a honourific side, as well, the implications of which will be examined in Chapter VIII. Second, it disassociates **kerasma** from its monetary evaluation. Drinks have a price, yet they are treated as priceless. The purpose of **kerasma** is

to relate: the expression **Yianis kerna, Yianis pini**, Yianis treats, Yianis drinks ironically points to a meaningless form of generosity shown by the self to the self.

Raki's price is sixty drachmas per 50 gram bottle, coffee is ten drachmas, tea and soft drinks cost fifteen drachmas. While there is a constant concern about fluctuations in the price of coffee and indeed a reaction when its price went from 10 to 12 drachmas, little attention is given to the price of **raki**. When coffee is served or even before that money is put on the table. If one wants to treat a person sitting nearby, one can put the monetary equivalent to a coffee on the table in front of the prospective recipient of the drink while ordering for the **kerasma**. Thus the sponsor secures the treating. On the other hand monetary transactions surrounding **raki** are never manifest. **Raki** is served from a big bottle that contains between one and two litres of the drink. Once ordered, the **kafetzis** pours **raki** into the glasses. It is inappropriate to pay for a **raki kerasma** during drinking. The transaction, in whatever way it is calculated, takes place at the conclusion of drinking. Usually each person leaving the coffeeshop arranges silently the payment either at the table or at the counter. At the end one has the impression that payment for a **raki** session is not paying the monetary equivalent of **raki** but compensating the manager of the **rakadiko** for the services he offered (or even paying the rent for the table, services included). One does not have to pay immediately but 'another time'. It is as if **raki** belongs to everybody in the coffeeshop and the **kafetzis** is hired by the collectivity to distribute it.

From this angle we can explain why the **kafetzis** who specializes in serving **raki** is of much lower status than his colleagues who administer a much wider range of drinks or just coffee. Martinos who administers the **rakadiko** is in his forties, married with two

daughters. He owns a couple of goats and during the sixties and early seventies he worked on building sites in Athens. In the middle seventies he came back to the village with his wife, who is from central Greece, and rented the **rakadiko**. Both of them work very hard to provide dowries for their daughters, and they are often employed as labourers in the olive harvest. In class and status he belongs to the category of dependent labourers. Kanelis never sits at a table together with his clients, he rarely treats nor is he treated. He is virtually thought of as an outsider to the drinking collectivity, despite the authority he has to administer **kerasma**.

One is obliged to accept treating to a drink. A blunt refusal equals an insult and leads to avoidance. The only tolerable form of non-acceptance is through the inversion of the proposal: this reminds the like-to-be-donor of the fact that he lacks seniority.

The **kerasma** act is phrased in reciprocal terms. As we saw similar words and gestures are exchanged between sponsor and sponsored. This can hardly obscure the deep inequality that a single **kerasma** introduces in the relationship. A man with **filotimo** has to reciprocate and the **kerasma** code safeguards one's right to do so on a future occasion. To reciprocate in the same drinking session is considered inappropriate. Men handle the expectation of reciprocation and its timing so as to specify the content of the commensal relation. One is expected to keep his **kerasma** account in balance even at the expense of other obligations towards kin or his own household. In a financial sense **kerasma** threatens to drain off a limited household budget and the drinking behaviour of men often becomes the subject of bitter quarrels between husband and wife.

Kerasma leads into a rich pattern of exchange relations. A man relates with a number of consociates in exchanges of different intensity and form. Often, in a single drinking session a man is

sponsor and sponsored in cross-cutting commensal encounters with more than one partner. Order in this complex situation is secured by a code of conduct that determines who has priority in cases of conflict or ambiguity between competing treatings to the same person. The one who orders first has priority over all other competitors for the same **kerasma**. This accords to the principle that all holders of **kerasma** right are equal and is applicable in prolonged **raki** drinking sessions where there is plenty of 'space' for anyone in his turn to treat. Yet, the smaller the number of drinks one has or intends to have, the smaller the number of opportunities to be treated and the greater the competition over a specific **kerasma**. Then, if some treats are to be cancelled, priority is assigned in terms of commensal proximity. A friend, an age mate or a drinking partner is privileged over an outsider or a colleague at work. It is preferred that **kerasma** reinforces the very ties it has produced rather than extending them. An exception to this rule is **kerasma** to a **parea**. If somebody from within and someone outside the **parea** compete over a **kerasma** to the **parea**, the outsider is given priority. This transcends the individuality of the **parea** and contributes to the integration of the coffeeshop. When the two men compete over **kerasma** to one another seniority in age determines the outcome.

The **kafetzis'** **kerasma** has absolute priority. The supervision of the application of the **kerasma** code is in his hands. His dominant position is not a function of his property relation with the coffeeshop as a business but arises from a combination of factors. He is a central figure in his coffeeshop, knows the history of particular **kerasma** relations and often mediates and administers the code in order to resolve ambiguities over priority.

Drinking is closely related to smoking. In fact drinking is still the idiom of smoking: a man **pini tsigaro**, 'drinks' a cigarette.

This suggests the historical origins of smoking in the coffeeshop practice of narghile. Elderly Skamniotes recollect how narghile was shared in local coffeeshops before the Second World War. A good smoker roufa, sips his cigarette as he drinks his coffee. The code for smoking is shaped after the code for drinking: it is an activity that rarely occurs at home or at work. Women are not expected to smoke and the image of a smoking woman usually invites strong reactions. Men enter smoking as they enter drinking. A man is not allowed to smoke in front of his father as he does not drink with him in the coffeeshop. In the first stages of treating to a drink, the sponsor treats to a cigarette as well. Men give and take cigarettes and have a clear understanding of where the tally of exchanges stands. A man should reciprocate, otherwise he may get the reputation of trakadoros, the man who relies on his consociates for smoking. Cigarettes today are bought from the local tobaconist or the coffeeshop. In effect smoking has become so widespread and technically 'easy' that it is perceived as nearer to greeting, with which it usually associates, than to drinking. When two men meet in the village square they have a small chat and a cigarette, usually provided by one of them, before they enter the coffeeshop.

4. Patterns of Commensality Among Men

The right to kerasma is held by all male, adult insiders and it is coterminous to proper coffeeshop membership. Men who cannot or do not treat are placed at the margins of coffeeshop life. Women and children are not allowed to treat, nor are they treated to as individual persons. Socially marginal figures such as the village 'drunkard' retain a nominal right which is never exercized. Outsiders

are in principle denied this right, yet they can gradually achieve it.

Here I will furnish evidence from my own experience as a candidate, a novice and later a handler myself of **kerasma**. During the first months while I was treated to coffee or **raki** constantly, I found out that I could not apply my own sense of Athenian honour and reciprocate. This was embarrassing since the tally of reciprocities with men I knew better was showing an ever increasing debt. I was either invited to a drink or whenever I took the initiative of approaching someone, that was immediately followed by a **kerasma**. Any contact, then, was phrased as an invitation to a treat. To stand away from these 'invitations' would have meant that I was avoiding relating. It became evident from the very beginning that I could not avoid a **kerasma** by refusing it but by reciprocating it. Yet nobody was ready to receive my **kerasma**. The classic reply to my insistence was the smiling comment, 'tomorrow' or 'your turn will come'. It took more than four months to bypass the barrier of either polite refusal or just plain indifference to my attempts to treat a Skamniotis to a drink.

My first systematic **kerasma** partnerships were with Orfeas, a young married man of my age, and with Pavlos, one of the most influential fishermen and **koumanto** in an agnatic partnership, who accepted me on his boat. My commensal relationship with Orfeas was mediated as well by attachment to his household. With Pavlos it worked otherwise: being in a different age group he somehow adopted me and gave me scope to reciprocate and borrow his status and authority to treat his social equals. Through my reciprocal **kerasma** relationship with Orfeas I entered his **parea** and earned the right to treat others.

The right to treat, once gained did not apply equally to all cases. Some men went on eclectically refusing my **kerasma** under the

logic of posponment: 'another time; this is my turn'. Their refusal, however, was not a mark of distance but just reflected their understanding of my coffeeshop status. From their point of view I was allowed occasionally to treat but not to enter a normal pattern of reciprocal exchanges of drink. That accounted for an in-between status: my right to treat was not of the same weight as that of local men. It was neither commensurable, since it was held outside normal reciprocity. But it was just right to register my presence in the coffeeshop.

Few men remained throughout the period of fieldwork totally immune to my **kerasma** propositions. One particular case is quite didactic. Timotheos own_s the only private olive factory and is the leader of a political fraction and well known as a prominent **tzogadoros**, gambler. In other words he is one of the big men with whom I had neither the intimacy nor the interest to relate closely in the coffeeshop. On a number of occasions, after the first year in the field, the attempt to treat him to a **raki** backfired and I was in turn treated by him. Thinking about it afterwards I realized that the double fault involved in my proposal had escaped me. During the same period I used to visit Timotheos' factory and study the records of agricultural production as well as extensively interviewing the owner himself. Treating this particular big man was not just a challenge to the power structure of local society but also the application of a symbolic payment to someone who used to do the same with his employees. The consequence of this could be the symbolic transformation of an act of hospitality into a material transaction.

Generally, the right of **kerasma** is gradually achieved with age. An adolescent is restricted from **kerasma**, yet he can be treated to soft drinks by kinsmen and he can drink soft, non-alcoholic drinks with age mates but not during the day in the **ikoyeniako** or the

tsagadiko. When young men, students or soldiers form raki drinking groups they are treated to as a group by senior customers, who are kinsmen or commensal partners of their cognates. The young men are not allowed to reciprocate, yet a distinctive relation is established with their initial sponsors. Later, the first individuals from a senior age group that these young men will treat are men among those proto-sponsors, with whom rapport is already established. Young men apply kerasma with members of their parea as well. They also involve themselves in bilateral coffee kerasma relations with people they meet at work.

Marriage marks full passage to the world of adult men. A man is now eligible to the rakadiko and can treat others. The newly wed is temporarily alienated from his unmarried age mates without necessarily being attached to a new drinking party. Usually he engages in bilateral kerasma with a married age mate or a colleague while he starts being treated by a parea of individual senior men, usually kin to his wife. Attachment to them does not grant him equal rights: he is still being treated by the parea but he can attempt to use the sympathetic umbrella of the parea to reciprocate over some existing obligations. This is prolonged until a number of his age mates marry and a real possibility of forming a proper drinking group based on age is present. It is only then that his right to treat is fully asserted.

The climax in a man's coffeeshop career is reached when he can exercise the right to initiate a kerasma relation with everyone else. He then belongs to the age group that provides village leadership. The competitive element and consequent asymmetry often qualifies the relations that adult men initiate. In the leading age group kerasma is increasingly interpreted as a means of establishing hegemony over village public opinion. This depends on economic status, success in

marriage, number of kinsmen, yet the decisive factor is the manipulation of **kerasma** in a **parea**. The break-up of the **parea** marks the end of the political appropriation of **kerasma** and eventually leads to retirement in the sphere of coffee and tea consumption. Yet, an old man retains his right to **raki kerasma**. Bachelors follow the trajectory of their married age mates. Once the **parea** of young men is reconstituted in the **rakadiko**, married and non-married rejoin in the new environment.

Briefly, one starts by being treated as an individual and then as a member of a **parea**, one first treats one's age mates then other individuals and then another drinking company, one progressively shifts from soft drinks to **raki**, to coffee. In the developmental cycle of drinking commensal partnerships are constituted, disolved and reconstructed, age being the primary criterion of their formation.

Kerasma gives rise to different patterns of commensality, that in their turn support different and often opposite political conclusions. These range from the extreme egalitarianism of emotional friendship to the symbolic asymmetries of competitive drinking. To grasp the structural implications of **kerasma** we have to examine closer its syntactic rules.

Reciprocation in **kerasma** usually takes the form of dyadic or serial alternation in successive drinking sessions, or rotation in the same session. The successive alternation of two men in the position of sponsor and sponsored in successive drinking sessions is the typical form of the **kerasma** relation. This elementary dyadic network of exchange can be direct or mediated through participation in a **parea** and can be performed at a short distance or over the same table. Asymmetry in this form of **kerasma** network is never structured.

The same effect is achieved when **kerasma** serially alternates not

in time but in space. In morning coffee drinking sessions I noticed that the person who just enters the coffeeshop is treated by someone who already has his coffee. The two men usually do not sit together. In the same spirit the late comer treats the first person who enters the coffeeshop after him. Position in this chain of treatings is determined by entrance into the coffeeshop. The implicit rule is very simple: one treats only one person, the one who will enter the coffeeshop after him.[12] In this context **kerasma** does not refer to a past obligation nor does it generate a future one. What matters is to start your day by treating somebody. Conceived as a form of greeting **kerasma** allows one to treat. It thus ceases to be person specific and emptied of particularistic content may be passed around instead of supporting dyadic ties. The end result is that nobody has paid for his own coffee, everyone has paid for somebody else's. In this form of drink exchange the individuality of the self merges in social exchange and the collectivity of the coffeeshop is reasserted.

The drinking of raki unlocks more options in the organization of commensality. The most interesting form is the **parea**. The structuring principle of a **parea** is the rotation of its members in the sponsoring position. Rotation ensures symmetry and constitutes the **parea** as an egalitarian grouping. Usually the rotation of **kerasma** is not ordered and it is implicit. An example of random rotation is the traditional mode of **parea** drinking that does not occur today. **Parea** members drink from one glass that circulates on the table from left to right. The person who empties the glass first has the right to fill it again. The order of treatment is both random and manipulable and depends on the amount each individual drinks. If each individual drinks in principle an equal amount, then the 'random' rotation of the glass will ensure that all of the involved men will occupy the sponsoring position, while the order of treating reflects seating

arrangements and depends on the number of drinks contained in each round of **kerasma**. However, men stressed how they manipulated their drinking in order to give their partners the chance to initiate a new round. In a non-ordered rotation what matters is that the total number of treats should be divisible by the number of **parea** members. This is ensured during the session (and not after the completion of the drinking session and the monetization of its outcome into a by definition divisible sum), through the arrangement of drinking into sets of as many rounds as the participants are.

Today men do not share the glass. Instead, each round of buying drinks for the **parea** is marked by the ordering of a bottle of **raki**. This form of rotation is more ordered and gives the impression of the **parea** as a grouping with a centre and a periphery. Each individual **kerasma** act is identified with varying intensity with a specific **parea** member. The increasing individualization of **kerasma** acts makes their serial arrangement both significant and problematic. The first position in the order of rotation is usually the most significant one and is taken by the person who initially mobilizes the group. Usually such a person may be superior in age or status. The first position conditions the rest in the series since it defines criteria with which social contiguity within the **parea** is determined. The ones closer to the centre of the **parea** are privileged. **Parea** membership is not always fixed. New members are added in the course of drinking and some men attend more than a single **parea** in a drinking session. Further, the core of the **parea** is often responsible for the provisional recruitment of new members. The addition of newcomers cannot alter the series in which **kerasma** rotates: the newcomer may be invited by Nicos but if it is Nikita's turn to treat, he will be treated by Nikitas **pano stin kerasia**, on the treat and Nicos will have to wait for his turn.

There are two ways of playing down the asymmetrical affects of an ordered rotation. The first is to have more than a single round of treats and thus give to each member the chance to initiate a new round. Usually the person who initiated the first round avoids doing the same for a second time. More often the first position is rotated in subsequent drinking sessions, or at least between the core members of small and relatively young parees. In big parees, however, men compete over avoiding the last positions in the serial arrangement of rotation that entail the danger of being de facto excluded from initiating a treat. Rotation balances the often egocentric nature of a parea.

The rotation of kerasma in a parea apparently violates the norm that one cannot reciprocate a treat during the same session. This inconsistency is resolved if we examine closer the nature of the treat. Indeed, the recipient of kerasma is not the individual members but their collectivity. Each drinker takes his turn to treat the parea. Further, the individual never appears as a subject of kerasma. The minimization of the individual as either sponsor or recipient of kerasma within the parea is clearly depicted in the performance of treating. The person who orders is the one who first says eva while drinking and the rest follow him. The sponsor temporarily acts as the parea 'spokesman'. As the one who temporarily initiates commensality he speaks for the wellbeing of the parea. This form of kerasma is not reciprocated. The parea never treats back any of its individual members. Thus the parea is constituted as a unique collective recipient of kerasma from within its own ranks.

The parea is the only form of social differentiation that arises from within the coffeeshop and that does not threaten but reinforces the kerasma code. Commensal exchanges between drinking parties or between a parea and certain individuals counteract the segmentation of

coffeeshop life across parea lines. The kerasma that crosses the parea boundary is decided and initiated by one of its members, yet all members acknowledge sponsoring it when greetings are exchanged with the sponsored party. In pursuing external kerasma relations the parea applies the method of refenes. Internal and external treating are jointly calculated and their monetary cost is divided by the number of the parea members. Refenes may be employed as a means of discriminating the core group of age mates from their hosts. Sometimes, only regular parea members participate in refenes. The rest are excluded from paying for external treating or, if they were not given a change to initiate kerasma within the parea, from paying altogether. In refenes the apparent asymmetry between members in the initiation of external treating is overlooked. This is a sign of parea solidarity. Members trust that their turn will come to dominate the alliances of the parea. Yet, this is left to chance: if a member has friends in the coffeeshop whom he wants to treat, he is expected to do so even if he has monopolised external treatings on a past occasion. Two members of the parea avoid separately treating the same person.

Serial alternation in the morning coffee kerasma and rotation in the raki drinking party produce an image of equality among men. Indeed, kerasma gives rise to social groupings that are characterized by a certain egalitarianism. Refenes is the epitome of kerasma egalitarianism. It is a kind of worship of egalitarianism. Yet, commensality is practiced in a social environment characterized by socio-economic or class inequalities and to a certain extent organized by the hierarchies of kinship. How do these principles associate? A few points could be made here.

First, Skamniotes apply kerasma irrespective of socio-economic status.[13] However, kerasma seems to represent a spirit of generosity

most appropriate among the declining class of landowners and merchants, but equally followed by their socially opposite, landless and dependent labourers. Medium landowners and poor refugees have a greater tendency to be 'economical' with **kerasma**, yet they rely on it as the sole idiom of relatedness within the coffeeshop.

Second, in Skamnia **kerasma** is not just complementary, as the relation between the core group of the manager's relatives and the drinking party has suggested, but oppositional to kinship. The round buying of alcoholic drink usually does not involve kin. As we saw in Chapter IV male agnates lead separate coffeeshop lives, clearly marked by avoidance. Sometimes distant kin or affines may be instrumental in changes of coffeeshop status. And a married man may treat his elderly father to a coffee. The overall impression, however, is that one does not exchange drinks nor does one participate in the same **parea** (or even coffeeshop) with a close agnate.[14] In particular, the exceptionally stressed hierarchical properties of applied, agnatic kinship contradict commensal egalitarianism.

This brings us to a third point. The relationship between coffeeshop commensality and kinship in Skamnia is a graded one. There are aspects of commensality that are more compatible to kinship and others that totally contradict the hierarchical requirements of kinship, economic cooperation or interested exchange. Some ethnographers have found that in different societies there is a department of drinking that is autonomous from kinship, it is organized in commensal lines and provides the core symbols of an egalitarian ideology.[15] In contrast to coffee commensality that is more adaptable to kinship or economics, **raki** commensality corresponds to a sphere of autonomous drinking. In the following section, then, I will examine what is distinctive about alcoholic versus non-alcoholic commensality through the symbolic analysis of drink.

5. The Symbolism of Raki and Coffee

So far we have examined the social side of the coffeeshop. Here I will consider the symbolic aspects of drinking: what, in what quantities and combinations and how a man drinks reflects who he is. It seems that ideas about gender and personhood are deeply embedded in local notions of the two most significant and extensively consumed drinks, coffee and raki. Drinking is a pervasive theme; it lies at the very core of Skamniotes' theory about life.[16] What drink stands for informs different forms of political or other action, in and outside the coffeeshop. And further, the symbolic properties of drink are closely linked to and contrast the patterns of commensality in ways that are significant for the making of symbolic status, prestige and the political organization of the community.

Coffee and raki are the most widely consumed beverages and the two significant poles of a treat in the coffeeshop. Coffee, whose theraputic value was advertised by an Arab physician of the fifteenth century to include "drying of rheumes, and flegmatic coughs and distillations" and the "opening of obstructions" is still part of folk medicine, apparently used against bleeding.[17] Skamniotes cannot trace when it was introduced into the village, yet they do not register a change in the way it is being consumed.

Greater ambivalence is found in the use of raki. Raki, as its etymological origin from the Arabic araq or the Persian araqui, alcohol suggests, stands for the purest form of alcohol in most parts of the Aegean basin, including Crete where it is known as tsipouro.[18] Tsipouro or stemfila are the grape skins that are boiled and distilled once to produce raki. It is a beverage of high alcoholic

concentration and is consumed without any addition. During this century **raki** was gradually replaced by **ouzo**, which today dominates the market of manufactured alcohol and represents Greekness to outsiders.[19] As Skamniotes say, **ouzo** is **raki metaurasmeno**, i.e. **raki** that is reboiled and distilled with the addition of sugar and mastic or anice. **Raki** is coarse and a little bitter in taste, **ouzo** is sweet and aromatic, a more refined version of its predecessor. The former was extensively used by Aegean and western Anatolian Greeks. The latter was invented in mainland Greece. Skamniotes in fact drink **ouzo**, yet call it **raki**. This is not just a reminder of their past identification with the **Anatoli**, East. It relates to gender connotations as well. As will become clear, **ouzo** represents a feminization of **raki** that contradicts the multiple uses of the latter as a symbol of gender.

Coffee is usually boiled with water and sugar and is consumed in a small cup, of less than half the capacity of a tea cup. There is impressive variation in the composition, taste and flavour of this beverage. More than one hundred different types of coffee have been recorded, most of them being variations on the theme of weight: **varis/elafris**, heavy/light; the amount of sugar: **sketos/me oligi**, plain/with some (sugar); sweetness: **glikis/pikros/metrios** sweet/bitter/medium; mode of preparation: **vrastos**, boiled or **me kaimaki**, with foam. In Skamnia, I recorded more than ten different types. The crucial factors underlying these variations are the coffee to sugar ratio and the timing and mode of **psisimo**, boiling (literally roasting). There is plenty of scope for the expression of personal taste in the consumption of coffee. Particular types of coffee come to be associated with types of personality: a **polavaris**, the man who drinks a very heavy coffee, is full of frustrated emotion and pain; the man who drinks a **sketo**, without sugar is considered rather close

and austere; a coffee with a rich **kaimaki**, the Turkish equivalent of bread that refers to the creamy foam on the surface of the coffee corresponds to the **meraklis**, an emotional man with good taste (see chapter IX). Since the making of coffee involves a transformation, considerable variation is possible so that coffee adjusts to the drinkers' individual personalities, even becoming a symbol of the latter. What matters in coffee is taste. Every **kafetzis** knows the drinking habits of every individual client equally well as other facets of his character. Dissatisfaction with the coffee served is often referred to as a cause for shifting from one coffeeshop to another.

Raki is consumed in small, low glasses. The glass is usually filled to one third with raki (ouzo), while water is added afterwards. Proper raki on the other hand is never mixed with water. The mixing of the alleged raki with water does not seem to disturb at all the semantic properties that Skamniotes have invested in their drink. Raki is conceived as raw alcohol in the consumption of which there is no scope for personal taste. Enquiring about different makes of raki I often got the answer: all rakia are the same. The addition of water is not regarded as changing its nature. Good drinkers are very generous in the addition of water, since they think that the more water one adds, the more raki one can drink. What matters in the consumption of raki is the quantity consumed, an indication of the drinker's natural abilities, physical persistence and endurance. A good raki drinker is regarded as a person physically capable of withstanding other kinds of pressure in life without losing control of his temper.[20]

Coffee, then, reflects the quality of the individual person. It supports an image of the coffeeshop as being segmented into individual units. And it leaves great scope for the administration of taste by

the **kafetzis**. **Raki** as an undifferentiated category embraces all individual drinkers under the assumption that they are physically able to drink alcohol; the only differentiation that creeps into the world of **raki** is that of quantitative performance.

Coffee is usually served with water; **raki** goes together with a special category of food, called **mezes**, snacks. Usually the coffee **kerasma** is acknowledged with the glass of water, which may or may not be drunk first. The cooked nature of the coffee allows it to establish a symbiotic relation with brandy - drops of which may be poured into the coffee cup - but never with **raki**. Coffee either begins or concludes a good midday meal or is consumed independently of food.

As we saw in chapter III, **fayito**, is always cooked by a woman and consumed at home. It is often accompanied by wine or beer, not by **raki**. **Fayito** and **raki** seem to occupy two opposite poles. **Fayito** is always referred to as something definite, closed: **Ela, yia fayito**, come and eat, or **to fayito ine etimo**, food is ready, while the beverage is always conceived as indefinite and open: **Ela, yia ena raki**, come for a **raki**. The taste of **fayito** determines which beverage can go with it and thus subordinates it. **Raki** contrasts these domesticated beverages. First, it is consumed mainly in the coffeeshop. On domestic ritual occasions and on Sundays it may be consumed at home. Second, **raki** usually does not mix with **fayito**. A proper **raki** drinking session usually replaces the corresponding meal. Third, **raki** is the only alcoholic beverage that subsumes and reclassifies cooked food as **mezes**. **Mezes** is prepared by men or women in the coffeeshop and usually consists of cooked beans, fried or tinned fish, olives, cheese and sometimes bread, all eaten in small quantities. In principle every round of **raki** comes with its 'affiliated' **mezes**. What is valued in **mezes** is not quantity but

taste. Aesthetic preferences are, thus, openly asserted. **Mezes** is openly ackowledged when it is something special like **kalamaria** or **pastourma** slices or raw, salted fish which are recognized as '**mezes** that goes well with **raki**'. The ideal type of **mezes** seems to be uncooked food. **Mezes**, then, is a subordinated to drink type of food and **raki** is the only drink which is linked to this coffeeshop specific concept of food.

The unit of measurement and treating (the so called **merida**), of both coffee and **raki** roughly equals the size of a small cup. However, the two beverages vary significantly in terms of the quantities consumed per drinking session. This is very important for the arrangement of **kerasma**. One small cup of coffee is considered adequate for a single drinking session. It is very rare for a Skamniotis to have two successive coffees at one session. **Raki** is served, particularly to a **parea**, in a small bottle containing around 150 grams. This bottle is called **penintareli** (literally translated as fifty) and corresponds to 5-6 **merides**. There is no restriction on the number of **rakia** one can drink in a single session. The only limit is that of physical endurance. In Skamnia, allegedly one of the most heavy-drinking villages of Lesbos, an average drinker may have a daily consumption of one and a half **penintarelia**. This ranges from half (very rare) to two or three **penintarelia**.

This pattern of consumption suggests that there is a fundamental difference from the point of view of **kerasma** possibilities between coffee and **raki**. Coffee decisively limits the number of treatings to which one person may be subjected. Because one can, in local eyes, consume only one coffee, one can accept no more than one **kerasma**. This limits sponsorship via coffee as well. One avoids making repetitive coffee treatings to more than one person because such behaviour would entail an extremely manifest asymmetrical relation

with the rest of the coffeeshop and would challenge the genuine character of his treats. Treating to a number of coffees is considered a superfluous show of 'generosity' that may even cancel the obligation of the recipients to reciprocate. The restricted kerasma potential and the identification of coffee with its individual consumer prevent it from becoming the principal ritual currency in the social life of the coffeeshop.

In contrast, the nature of raki unlocks more options in the handling of the kerasma relation: one can treat more than one person and one can be treated by more than one person. In a single drinking session one can produce a network of kerasma relations that focuses on oneself while he participates in the egocentric networks of a number of people. These kerasma networks intersect with each other. The greater the number of treatings which focus on one person - independently of whether he appears as sponsor or receiver - the more this person is at the centre of coffeeshop life. Two options are open to the individual who participates in a raki session. One is to manipulate raki kerasma so as to place himself at the centre of the coffeeshop. In order to create an imbalance with the coffeeshop one has to involve as many of the coffeeshop members as possible in an exchange relation and to challenge, if necessary, existing relations by increasingly occupying the sponsoring role. In the raki culture it is legitimate to violate the fundamental rule of reciprocation and to increase the debt burden carried in a commensal relation, without necessarily damaging it, at least in the short run. The second option is to take advantage of the more social nature of raki kerasma without challenging the existing relations. Usually this means entering a parea.

The different structural implications of coffee and raki are

closely linked to the kind of state or condition of life that these drinks symbolize. They further suggest the gender aspects of drink symbolism. These points will become clear if we consider the contexts of drinking.

Coffee is usually associated with serious, non-frivolous social commensality. First, in the context of the coffeeshop, coffee sessions are long, low profile and segmented. The tone of discussion is low, the rhythm is slow and well patterned. Coffee is usually consumed individually, not in the company of others. The coffeeshop is segmented into its individual members, each of whom occupies a separate table and drinks alone. What unites the coffeeshop in such circumstances is the **kafetzis** and the symmetrical rule of morning **kerasma**. This is indeed a community of individual persons rather than a collectivity. The performance aspect is devalued. The acknowledgement of coffee **kerasma** is equally low profile, tired, and indifferent. It is just spoken, not acted. The eyes do not meet, the glass is not raised to the other person.

Second, coffee is the only drink that tolerates the symbiosis of material transaction and commensality and to a certain extent accommodates hierarchy that arises on kinship or socio-economic status. A coffee **kerasma** celebrates a financial deal or supports the on-going relation between employer and employee. In the rare cases of commensality among kin, the preferred drink is coffee or brandy. Third, coffee is the drink with which one starts and often concludes the day. This is especially true for old men but also for young men who are not allowed to participate in **raki** sessions. Coffee is further identified with the life cycle: a man starts his adult coffeeshop life with soft drinks and coffee and he retreats back to coffee as his sole drink in old age.

Fourth, coffee is the beloved drink not only of the old

pensioners but also of the elderly grandmothers, who consume coffee extensively at home, alone or in the company of neighbours. This is a rare instance of coffee commensality supporting group formation. The association of coffee with the close of life is further portrayed in the privileged position that coffee occupies in death rituals, often together with brandy. The so-called **kafes tis parigorias**, the coffee of consolation is usually prepared by women and served with a biscuit either in the graveyard or at the house. Funerals are the most widely attended rituals, especially by men, and thus provide formal avenues for the reunion of the community of men and women. Coffee, in general, relates to both house and coffeeshop and stands for the less segregated version of the bilateral community.

Coffee, then, embodies a cyclical representation of life and reflects the individual personality of its consumer. It represents a self that is subordinated to existing social relations, to the domestic, economic or other tasks of everyday life; a self subsumed to the powers of the community of men and women and to the natural rhythms of the life cycle. A common practice among elderly women who serve coffee during evening visiting is the reading of coffeegrounds. There are few women identified as **kafetzou** (feminine of **kafetzis**), who are apparently able to read in the coffeegrounds past and future life aspects of the person who drank from the examined cup. It is exactly this finite concept of life and self expressed in coffee that makes possible the reading of the past and the prediction of the future in the coffeegrounds.

Let us now turn to **raki** or **ouzo**. The **raki** drinking session represents an impressive contrast to the orderly atmosphere of the coffee session. It is charged with noise and smoke, laughter and smells. In all directions glasses are raised and lowered, men are moving around, words are exchanged from all quarters. The **raki**

session is identified with a euphoric, joyful disorder. Initially, to my great surprise, I found that barba Michalis who is a real sphinx in the mornings is transformed into an uncontrollable orator in the evenings, able to speak continuously about anything. At a very early stage in my fieldwork I was warned that 'if you want to know our village you have to come for some rakia in the evenings'. In the eyes of Skamniotes the raki session is privileged as an authentic and more autonomous instance of their life, alternative and superior to the times spent at home or in the field.

Raki is to be shared, usually in the context of parea. It is to treat and to be treated, the ideal symbolic currency of the coffeeshop. One would expect that in a society with a heavy record of alcoholic consumption people would be quite sensitive to the manifestation of drunkenness. This is true. Yet, Skamniotes do not hold a biological concept of drunkenness. The bekris, drunkard is the person who consistently drinks raki alone. The lonely drinker of raki epitomizes total failure to relate through commensality. It is not the amount he drinks but how he drinks that manifests anti-sociability and places him in the contemptuous margin.[21] The acknowlegement of a raki treat is fully acted out. Sometimes the actors even synchronise themselves in the public demonstration of the honour they have received. Voices are raised, the arms holding the rakopotiro are projected upwards, the eyes met with a dignified smile on the face. It is the drinkers and not the kafetzis who are the protagonists of the coffeeshop.

Raki is generally connected to all the exceptional movements of the yearly or life cycle, except those related to death. It is drunk by men at the Sunday evening drinking sessions, on name days, at marriage and baptismal festivities and at the village paniyiri, festival. Generally raki suggests life. As we shall see, it

semantically embraces leisure in opposition to work.

Many ethnographers have noticed two separate meanings of drink. The first usually arises in autonomous drinking and accounts for drink as a symbol of friendship, diffuse solidarity and unencumbered sociability. The second relates to instances of subordinate drinking. Then to drink acts in a utilitarian capacity while the drinks exchanged stand for images of division and fragmentation.[22]

In Skamnia these meanings are accommodated by two different drinks rather than in a single drink. Raki represents an image of the social world as an unbounded set of emotions that do not tolerate division. In glendi, festivity the parea of raki drinkers represents the prime example of unity, singularity and cohesion. Raki is symbiotic and universalistic, the symbol of disinterested exchange. As we shall see in the next chapter raki commensality marks the end of all reciprocity as it symbolizes male identity in friendship.

Coffee on the other hand is a more ambiguous symbol of good fellowship open to varying interpretations from the standpoint of class, kinship or gender. The world of coffee reflects idiosyncracies of all sorts and tolerates differences in sex, age or socio-economic status. It is treatings to a coffee that are applied in exchanges between boss and labourer, father and son or between economic partners. In this respect coffee is thought to be most appropriate for the purposes of interested exchange. Coffee exchange enacts an image of symbiosis that is vulnerable and short-lived since it rests on and is undermined by division and conflict that Skamniotes regard as endemic in a world governed by the principle of kinship and social status. Coffee cohesion is an epiphenomenon of structural, more basic disparities that bound and fragment this side of the male world.

Raki commensality enacts an idea of male equality that rests on an image of the world without limits, where the only difference that

can be registered derives from physical prowess and in effect can support no social hierarchy. Coffee commensality is adaptable to hierarchies that are imposed or ascribed without drinking.

The symbolic contrast between coffee and **raki** is well guarded in drinking practices. Indeed, coffee and **raki** are mutually exclusive in space and in time. Skamniotes avoid having **raki** and coffee during the same drinking session. And usually the coffeeshop does not serve coffee and **raki** during the same session. Thus the evening life of Skamnia is polarized between the **tsagadiko** that serves only coffee and Martinos' coffeeshop that serves only **raki**. Ideally a day starts with coffee but should conclude with **raki**. If coffee is to accompany **raki** - a rather modern, allegedly Athenian, habit - coffee has to be taken in another coffeeshop.

Wine is not usually consumed in the coffeeshop, yet it is clearly associated with communion and is apparently used in burial practices, to wash the dead. In terms of religious ritual wine stands for (Christ's) blood and appears to be asexual. It is worth noticing that while **raki** is thought to **anavi ta emata**, light up the spirits, coffee frustrates bleeding and is good to be used in menstruation. Blood, therefore, reinforces coffee enclosure and **raki** openness.

The gender connotations of **raki** and coffee further enhance their symbolic contrast. Coffee's gender specifications vary according to context. Being a domestic as well as coffeeshop beverage, and dispensed in inter-sexual treats, it is identified with both men and women.

Raki, on the other hand, is consumed mainly in the coffeeshop, in specifically male treats. The **rakadiko** is a place where no women, under any excuse, attend. A woman who insists on drinking **raki** on public festive occasions is in danger of being accused of illict behaviour and damaging her reputation. Men refrain from treating a

single woman to a drink. Whenever it occurs it involves soft drinks. Apparently the treating of a woman to a raki is interpreted as a publicly expressed sexual proposal.

Raki is apparently a metaphor of masculinity. Men who do not drink raki are virtually excluded from active coffeeshop life and their public status suffers serious damage. There are stories of men who were forced to marry outside the village because they were continuously challenged and teased for not drinking alcohol. Further, raki is a means of measuring the degree of masculinity. All consumers of raki are equally male, but some of them are more exceptional men than others. These exceptional drinkers raki are called rakitzides (see chapter VII). The physically able and generous drinker of raki employs his superior physical powers and mental control to come under the spotlight of kerasma exchange. He is the one gifted by nature to appropriate the asymmetries inherent in kerasma. It is through the sharing of raki that the first steps to male seniority are achieved.

As a symbol of masculinity raki is the core construct of an exclusively male world. Its symbolic configurations permeate a wide range of activities that primarily take place in the coffeeshop. Primarily competitive drinking and gambling, and secondly dancing or singing, are avenues in which the primarily expressive aspects of raki commensality are demonstrated and alternative definitions of personhood come to the fore. Further, the emotional states that raki supports become the focus of secular, socio-political heterodoxy.[23] Indeed, raki commensality is invested with meanings of opposition to the social givens of Skamniotes' life. In the coming chapters I will focus on the independent moral foundations of raki commensality, its distinctive theory of prestige and community as well as its political implications.

Notes to Chapter VI

1. For exceptions see the work of Photiades (1965), R. and E. Blum (1964) and Herzfeld (1985). For Turkey see Beeley, 1970.

2. As a comparison with heavy drinking Andalusia shows this is indeed an impressive ratio of drinking establishments per capita. For the Andalusian town of Fuenmayor Gilmore (1985, 265-6) counts twenty-seven establishments for 7,500 people (almost one per three hundred inhabitants). Driessen (1983, 126) records nine cafes in an agrotown in the area of Cordoba. Brandes (1979, 3) reports three bars for the 800 inhabitants of Becedas.

3. Beeley (1970) contrasts coffeeshops to guest houses. The former associate with differences in wealth and education, and the latter are linked with distinctions arising from age and family status only.

4. On this point see the excellent study by Hattox (1985) who examines the historical origins of the coffeeshop in Muslim heterodoxy.

5. Despite its 'open' character that qualifies the coffeeshop as a 'public' space the presence of an outsider often disturbs what clients feel as their privacy. See also Currier, 1976.

6. As a public guestroom the coffeeshop replaces the traditional Anatolian oda. See Starr, 1978, 65 and Beeley, op. cit.

7. In contrast to other Mediterranean societies (for example Gilmore, 1985) political party membership and ideological affiliation cut across coffeeshop allegiances in Skamnia. Skamniotes' behaviour reminds one more of Becedas where groups of men make the round of all three bars (Brandes, op. cit., 4).

8. This is also noticed in the Andalusian bar (Gilmore, op. cit., 271).

9. Notice the contrast with the economic content of parea, a group of agnates who graze their animals together, among the Sarakatsani (Campbell, 1964, 8).

10. On this issue see Frake, 1964. Also Moeran, 1984 verbal performance does not reach the degree of sophistication recorded by Herzfeld (op. cit., 123-149).

11. For the greeting behaviour in a Cretan coffeeshop see Herzfeld, op. cit., 154-5.

12. The morning kerasma pattern rests on the principle that "seated men (are) obliged to offer hospitality to those who enter" (Herzfeld, op. cit., 154).

13. In contrast to the English case described by Hunt and Satterlee (1986), where drinks are exchanged only in an upper class setting. In the lower classes this is redundant since drinking is based on kinship or neighbourhood ties.

14. In Glendi kinship and coffeeshop commensality relate differently. Herzfeld (op. cit.) reports that "fathers and sons may often be found sipping coffee together in public" (51) and stresses that "it is in the coffeehouses that the importance of agnatic loyalties becomes most obvious" (59).

15. In certain cases, such as the Japanese, this is a phase in a pattern of drinking which in its overall organization is shaped after kinship. Saki commensality gradually grows out of the hierarchies of kinship and age, the breakdown of formality to be followed by politically relevant egalitarian drinking talk among junior consociates (Moeran, 1984). In cases where alcoholic consumption is less institutionalized, as in Iceland where there are no public drinking establishments, drunkenness in approved public, ritualized gatherings gives rise to unstable, short-lived and autonomous from kinship encounters (Pinson, 1985). In the English village pub (Hunt and Satterlee, 1986) only in an upper class framework there is scope for alcoholic consumption outside yet not against kinship whereas, at the other extreme and nearer to the case we examine, the Andalusian bar offers scope for ritualized interaction among (unrelated) men (Brandes, 1979). This contributes to the formation of male identity (Driessen, 1983) and in effect offers an outlet for 'left' or 'right' political radicalism (Gilmore, op. cit.).

16. Karp (1980, 83) argues that "beer drinking is Iteso social theory". This can be said about raki drinking in Skamnia.

17. See the rich philology on the theraputic value of coffee in Hattox, op. cit., 61-71.

18. For the contexts of red wine and tsikoudhia drinking in Crete see Herzfeld, op. cit., 126-7.

19. Lots of evidence from local usage, newspapers or even a recent debate in the parliament suggest a long history across the lines of alcohol being used as a symbol of ethnicity.

20. Davis (1964, 198) has noticed that "each man's standing within the group of friends is assessed by the amount he drinks".

21. The same point is made by R. and E. Blum (op. cit., 94, 96-7).

22. See Szwed, 1966, 438; Karp, op. cit., 84; Hunt and Satterlee, op. cit.

23. On the same point see Hattox, op. cit., 112-130. The words of a nineteenth century ethnic Greek scholar, who worked as a religious teacher and preached in the wider periphery of Lesbos, against the coffeeshop are quite indicative of the heterodoxous meanings of coffeeshop practices. He equates the coffeeshops with the "altars of Dionysos" where men "are stripped of their mind and their money" through kerasma and methi, drunkenness. These practices antagonize the worship of God and constitute a "big scandal" (Sarafes, 1909, 99).

CHAPTER VII: THE FRIENDS OF THE HEART: RECIPROCITY AND IDENTITY IN EMOTIONAL FRIENDSHIP

Esti gar o filos allos aftos
The Friend is another self

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics

1. Introduction: Structure and Function in Friendship

Filia, friendship from the ancient greek filo which means to love, is a relationship of the utmost importance, stressed for its emotional content rather than its practical significance. As in other northern Mediterranean societies, friendship in Lesbos is predominantly male.[1] In the context of the coffeeshop and through the medium of commensality, friends derive from each other a sense of identity as individual male persons. Women are less prolific in their friendships, which grow in the small gaps of kinship and are expressed in kinship terms (see chapter IV). A woman's sustained loyalties to her consanguines do not leave much scope for relating outside the house, a realm thought of as full of antagonism and gossip.[2] Inter-sexual friendships are equally incomprehensible: an exchange between a man and a woman cannot but have a sexual connotation before any other. This is sufficiently demonstrated in the interpretation of a woman being treated to a drink by an unrelated man or a man visiting an unrelated woman's house as an indication of sexual liaison.

Male friendships in Skamnia are regarded as the apex of an egalitarian ideology. Friends have to be equals. The relationship cannot be based either on the assertion or the structural premise of an inequality that arises from age, social class, wealth, not to mention professional occupation or family background. Status differences are thought to divide men while friendship is considered as the bond that resists all cleavages.

A sociological analysis of the social background of friends is quite revealing. They are usually of the same age group or yenia, generation. In the two communities there is only one case of friendship which can be described as inter-generational. The matching of marital and household background is important. Friends are equally involved or distanced from the domestic sphere, this being dependent on number of children, the personality and kinship network of the wife, or the property situation. Marriage and the making of a household creates a serious imbalance in the friendship tie and puts the relationship to the test. Friendship thrives in the rather big group of kotzam-bekiarides, male bachelors who are structurally householdless. Bachelors with a nikokirei background and a more conservative orientation are more reserved in their friendships. Despite the recent demise of class inequality and divisions, the idea of symmetry in class background survives as a guiding principle of friendship, but adopts another form. Friends may come from a similar "professional background", yet there are cases of a peasant smallholder and factory worker being friends with the butcher and medium landowner, or a pensioned cook with a fisherman. Wage earners, prouners, or builders who are friends may often be members of the same harvest team or work for the same afentiko. Landless farm labourers, dependent labourers, builders i.e. men with no land-based status, exhibit a greater tendency to form friendships than middle ranking peasants who are attached to land and the household. On the other hand, men with non-commensurable status such as the owner of the local olive-processing factory or the secretary of the cooperative are perceived, and rightly so, as really hav no emotional friends. The "big men" of the community (see next chapter) who bear a disproportionately large and contesting sense of masculinity are equally thought to be friendless.

Differences arising from political persuasion or origins play a much smaller role, especially if they are not part of the formative experience of friendship. Men who vote for a different political party or are not equally autochtonous since the parents of one are refugess or even have different class origins which fade in time, can be friends. Aris Papas and Stamatis Psaros are a good example. They are both in their middle forties, married with a son and a daughter respectively, of almost the same age. Their households could be described as equally matrifocal. As I showed in Chapter III, the wife of Aris, despite the fact that she is the youngest of five, very poor, refugee sisters, is one of the most dynamic as well as respected women in the village. Stamatis' **nikokirio** on the other hand, is even more typically matrifocal since it is under the control of his energetic mother-in-law. Stamatis could be described, although never referred to, as **sogabros** (groom who resides with his wife's parents) since he is from **Stipsi**, a neighbouring headvillage. Aris' roots, on the other hand, are from the Asia Minor coast. The two men work together as skilled labourers in pruning or building, they are **sintrofi**, comrades, in this case partners. Their "partnership" at work apparently relies on a commonality of character, on the enjoyment of being together, as well as a shared sense of **meraki**, emotional involvement in what they are doing. This certainly overrides their different formative experiences and their current political standing which could be a source of friction. Aris is is very active in KKE while Stamatis is a follower of Pasok.

Male friendships are regarded as examples of voluntarism and openness. A man **kani filous**, makes friends or **dialeyi tous filous tou**, chooses his friends, in juxtaposition to a marital partner to whom one may be introduced or even marry by **proxenio**. Choice is somehow endemic in the relationship. In a playful manner old friends

often act as if they are in the first stages, thus importing to the relationship the fresh air of spontaneity and individuality. The commitment that binds the friends, however, remains throughout a voluntary one. As there is no obligation to remain friends, there are equally no penalties to prevent an exit from the relationship. No stigma is attached to the friend who chooses not to meet his companion or who concludes the relationship. Yet, as we shall see, despite their openess and apparent fragility, friendships are characterized by stability as well as flexibility.

The stress on the matching of backgrounds, the absence of strict rules and jurally binding obligations, the reliance on sentiment and mood, which will be fully discussed later, leaves us with the impression of a light, structureless relationship.[3] Ethnographic analyses of friendship have shown that relations as "light" as this borrow a certain degree of structure and solidity either through affiliation to other more hard and heavy forms of relationship such as kinship, or through attachment, as a kind of moral gloss to well structured patterns of economic or political exchange. By using another structure or serving another function, friendship then covers its endemic lack of presence in the more persistent layers of social reality. It is a relationship living on credit from jurally based or contractual reciprocity. Unlike other Mediterranean societies, friendship in Skamnia appears to be emptied of both structure and function. It is totally separated from the realm of kinship, secluded from other available forms of relatedness and lacks the contractual properties which might make it a privileged ground for counteracting the atomism of households by linking local society to wider social wholes and institutions such as the market or the state. Let us examine these points one by one.

Among the Sarakatsani, Campbell (1964) noticed that an air of

friendliness permeated the relationship of matrilateral cousins who neither grazed their domestic animals together nor shared a compound. Otherwise the non-agnatic realm was considered as hostile terrain. Thus little scope remained for friendships with non-kin. In Skamnia (as elsewhere in Greece) the social realms of kinship and friendship are kept strictly apart.[4] Among the pairs of men who think of each other as emotionally bound together, only one is based on kinship. These are two elderly borthers, of very low status. The one is 76 and an ex-dependent labourer who has a good reputation among the leftists of the village as a just man since he served in the **Laiko Dikastirio** (Popular Court) formed by the National Liberation Front during the Nazi occupation. His younger brother, around 70, is currently a **kehayias**, a labour overseer of the only big absentee landlord of the village. These two men have not experienced conflicting interests in the same land or property or the strains coming from enforced cooperation. I assume that the experience of uprootedness from their Asia Minor homeland and the closing of ranks across family lines pushed their kinship into friendship. On the other hand, there are friends who are linked indirectly, through the shared matrifiliation of their wives. These men do not regard their affinal attachment as the basis of friendship. It just makes it easier. There are cases, as well, of emotional friends who sponsored each other at marriage. **Koubaria**, then, merely reinforces an already existing bond.

Male friendship is not only clearly demarcated from, but is further contrasted to, male kinship. Ties of friendship are regarded as small havens vis a vis the closed and obligatory, materially binding and hierarchical nature of relations between brothers and between fathers and sons. Yet, friendship is cultivated on a different basis to male kinship. Thus, it can hardly be considered as its substitute.[5]

In many ethnographic examples it is reported that friendship demands the free association of the two parties who relate independently of instrumental considerations. Yet few ethnographers have failed to notice that "a friend ... in reality cannot and will not remain economically disinterested in the bond" (Brandes, 1973, 758).[6] Early in the debate, Wolf (1966) distinguished instrumental from emotional friendship. He is however criticized by Pitt-Rivers (1973, 97) who attempts to incorporate friendship into an enlarged model of "amiable relations" together with kinship, and insists that "by definition all friendship must be both sentimental in inspiration and instrumental in effects" since "the instrumental aspect validates the affect".

I will return to this important point later. Here it is worth noting that in Skamnia and Skala friends do many things together. Yet, this is not conceived as a kind of **sinergasia**, cooperation or **sinalama**, exchange of labour services. What these forms of activity sharing usually have in common is either an element of expressivity and masculinity or the joint dependence on a social superior.[7] For example, friends may dance together or offer their services in return for a wage to the same boss at the same time. Friends, on the other hand, very rarely cooperate in fishing, in the olive harvest, or in the execution of special tasks, except under exceptional circumstances. Nor do they engage together in spheres governed by the logic of economic calculation and self-interest.

The demarcation of **sinergasia** or **sinalama** from the sharing of activity is symbolically confirmed by the application of different forms of commensality. After the completion of a task the men who helped in sheep shearing or building may be invited to have a drink or a meal that concludes a session of "cooperation". Commensality is arranged in return for the generous offering of practical help or even

the skilful accomplishment of a paid task. It symbolically compensates for this extra-input of personal effort. As we saw in Chapter VI raki is never employed in these fundamentally asymmetrical exchanges. Instead either coffee or a soft drink is used in order to demarcate the autonomous and purely expressive from the instrumental form of commensality.

There are however cases in which the friends unilaterally assist each other. Stratis is helped by his friend Zacharias to take his cows out of the stable for occasional grazing in the open pasture. Nicos Arniotis helps Manolis to deal with the nets in the olive harvest while the latter often prepares the coffees in Arniotis' coffeeshop when the proprietor is not there. These two men do not have wives or close relatives. However the idea of reciprocity is fully suppressed. These are unplanned, almost spontaneous and purely voluntary offerings of help that ideally derive directly from the sentiments of friendship and never reach the state of being an independent from sentiments plane of material reciprocities. In effect no record of exchanged services is kept.

Although friends in theory provide a pool of ultimate and unconditional help, which elsewhere is usually provided, as Bloch (1973) has argued, by kin, the practical reliability of friendship is put to the test only in really imperative and exceptional circumstances. For example Theologis' cousin is a bachelor who has nobody to take care of him. When he broke his leg in an accident, Theologis for some time had to provide food and comfort for his cousin since he was his closest relative, yet he could not rely on his wife. His friend, Pericles, assisted him a great deal during this difficult time. He helped him to carry the wounded man to his bed immediately after the accident, and later either joined him or took turns in keeping Theologis' cousin company. In these truely exceptional

circumstances Theologis had to rely on his close, emotional friend. Thus, friendship can accommodate functions that for various reasons are considered too costly or just inappropriate to be maintained through kinship.

The application of raki commensality and of friendship in the making of political or economic contract is not at all welcomed in Skamnia. Skamniotes, irrespective of political persuasion, are very critical of all kinds of patronage arrangements, which they consider damaging to the reputation of a man for taking care of himself and his business without relying on outside help. The use of rousfeti, favour stands in contrast to the male values of self-reliance, autonomy and freedom. Rousfeti is thought as projected into the local society from the outside. Occasionally the critical statements against rousfeti are phrased in terms of an evaluation of the fundamentally immoral nature of the state and its functionaries or the politicians who pursue such attitudes.

In the past there were cases of big wealthy landowners from Skamnia who hired as servants, domestic labourers or dependent agricultural labourers men and women from among the newly arrived refugees and who later sponsored their marriages or baptized their children. The uprooted Skaliotes were generally more prone to form alliances of this kind. However, today contractual exchanges of this kind are restricted to a specific pattern: fish are exchanged for "favours". The recipients of the fish are usually officials of the Agricultural Bank who arrange loans for fishing, "mortgages" for the making of new houses or generally provide technical advice. Fish are sold in the market, rather rarely consumed in the coffeeshop and usually cooked by women at home. They are not part of the sphere of male morality. In this sense these exchanges are regarded as morally neutral. The gift of fish just eases the flow of financial support

from the state.

Outside these rather restricted asymmetrical exchanges of "fish for favour" between civil servants and local peasants, there is little to remind us of the extensive use of patronage in other parts of Greece or Cyprus.[8] However, it is worth considering the only "proper" case of patronage that took place during my two years of fieldwork: this was the baptism of the daughter of a Skamniotis by a local M.P., an event that soon became the source of extensive criticism within the local community.

Pavlos Papadopoulos belongs to one of the well-off landowning families of Skamnia and he is patrilaterally attached to the leading **beratarei** surnamed group of the village. His father's patrilateral cousin is one of the local big men as well as president of the communal council, of which Pavlos is also a member. He is in his early thirties, married into one of the nouveau-riche families of Skala and although he owns more than sixty **modia** of olive groves, he also works as **apothikarios**, warehouse foreman in the local cooperative. Having been brought up in Athens and completed some years of high school education, he is both more cosmopolitan and rather critical of mainstream politics in Skamnia, which he thinks are obstacles to the economic development and prosperity of the local society. In recent years tourism started being a serious source of income for Skaliotes. Pavlos was among the first to see the "golden" opportunity. He thus decided to extend his dowried house and start renting rooms. To do so, however, he had to get a loan which under the circumstances looked very difficult unless he used **meso**, leverage. Pavlos did not hesitate to take the opportunity when a member of parliament from the governing conservative party (New Democracy) visited Skala. He gradually negotiated the sponsorship of the baptism of his daughter. The politician saw this as a source of political

influence and the potential creation of a political following he lacked in the village, although Pavlos allegedly did not inflate the political benefits that could be accrued to his protector from the arrangement. Equally frankly, Pavlos from the start made clear to his perspective **koubaros** what he wanted.

Pavlos' initial contact with his patron was premised on the offices he held as **kinotikos simvoulos** (local councillor) and employee of the cooperative. In this capacity he treated and generally extended a village-wide hospitality to the visiting politician. Yet he soon turned a relationship of symmetrical commensal hospitality into a much deeper, and from the point of view of the **kerasma** code, asymmetrical political contract which served his **simfero**, private interest. This mixing of codes, unusual for the local culture, ignited the criticism of fellow villages who scrutinized everything: from the lack of interest that the governing party had shown for local prosperity, to the immoral nature of such arrangements. To avoid the village reaction and in order to minimize its social signficance, Pavlos took the unprecedented step of baptizing the child in the church of a headvillage 15 kilometres from Skamnia and inviting only the close family circle. Nobody in Skamnia was informed besides his wife and close relatives, and these only one or two days before the event. To my surprised reaction that I was neither informed nor invited, since as a regular visitor to their house and commensal friend of Pavlos I had on many occasions shown my interest in the forthcoming baptism, Pavlos assured me that it was nothing really serious or worth bothering about.

On the other hand, Pavlos explained his decision in strictly material terms by stressing the calculative aspect and by diminishing the moral content of the relation. For him the baptism of the child and **koubaria** did not really have any moral content. This is why in

the last analysis he had delayed the baptism for so long. On the other hand he was very much interested in getting the loan and koubaria appeared a safe and quick way of achieving his goal. Pavlos didn't boast or advertise his relationship to the politican nor did he refer to him publicly as koubaro. On the contrary, he emphasized his different political stand and that he would not "of course" vote for him. The koubaria then made very little impact on the relationship of the two men. Apparently, in the end Pavlos thought that he had in fact taken advantage of the weak position of the politican who desperately needed a safe "welcomer" in Skamnia.

The story of Pavlos' koubaria is characteristic of the restriction of patronage to an act of exchange, a koubaria for a mortgage, rather than an exchange pattern or an exchange based relationship. It is true that the baptismal sponsor still has a person with whom he can exchange drinks in the coffeeshop. However the development of the relationship into a broader basis of political support is blocked by the purely transactionalist spirit of the insider who having got what he wanted loses interest in the perpetuation of a more or less problematic exchange. This contract operationalizes an economic tie with the help of a symbol that in Skamnia carries female normative power and meaning. For patronage as a mode of political exchange and incorporation to be effective it is necessary for structurally asymmetrical reciprocities to have a moral influence. This is not so in Skamnia and Pavlos knew it very well.

Friendships are exceptionally important relationships, especially among the plebeians and the kekiarides (bachelors) of Skamnia. However they lack any firm root in what we usually perceive as social structure; nor are they subject to what in anthropological jargon are conceived as social, economic or political functions. These relationships appear as structureless and functionless, firmly

insulated from the morally suspect practices of economic or political exchange. This paradox marks the distinctive feature of friendship in Skamnia: the very basis of an anti-structure. Men appear in the essentially dyadic arrangements of friendship naked of any role, bearing an individuality that rests on the expression of what makes them essentially men and showing an urgency to share some aspects of male sentiment. This is the point to which we shall now turn.

2. Aspects and Types of Male Friendship

Friendship starts with **kerasma**.[9] The offering of the drink is regarded as a minimal expression of recognition, especially if it does not originate from a person to whom the recipient is already related. When it comes from a superior, from an employer to an employee, or from an insider to a visitor it is interpreted as an attitude of **ektimisi**, appreciation, also meaning evaluation. If the treat is more or less systematically reciprocated it turns into a gesture of **sevasmos**, respect, a mutual acknowledgement of the relative position of the two men and the starting point for an exploration of personal character and the prospects for closer relations.[10] Yet, at this stage, central concern is with symmetry and equality. The relationship is unilaterally qualified by the subtleties of the code of **kerasma**. Thus, at this elementary level, friendship corresponds to a kind of ideal behaviour among men of roughly the same age or status who retain harmonious ties.

Friendship stands at the outer boundary of belonging, and it conceptually qualifies the category of **xenos**, outsider. If the outsider is unilaterally treated to a drink without being given the right to reciprocate, then he is not thought of as a friend. However,

he is subjected to filoxenia, hospitality which etymologically refers to a feeling of love, amity, friendship towards the xenos. The very gift of hospitality, to filema, can be reciprocated only at the same level i.e. when the host visits the village of his guest. On the other hand, once the outsider is granted the right to treat he is conceived of as a friend. The postman who regularly visits the village or the anthropologist after a period of residence is referred to third parties as filos. This entitles the outsider to ask for the moral protection of the local society. Then, the general term for friendship is used as the most broad term of inclusion.

Friends of this sort may be involved in a network of material reciprocities. A friend may ask for mia chari, a favour, such as a small, casual service. A sack of olives is conveyed to a factory, or spare parts for the engine are brought from Mytilene. Although the successful accomplishment of a chari may be followed by a treat to a coffee, a favour belongs to a network of reciprocities distinct from treats and is not commensurable to a drink, although the two orders of reciprocity are certainly related. The more or less systematic exchange of drinks makes possible the exchange of favours. On the other hand the relationship is too rudimentary to accommodate more serious pressures for cooperation.

These first, exploratory steps towards commensality may lead to a kind of casual friendship.[11] Two men start parea (keeping company), exchanging drinks systematically and even suspend the use of the kerasma code itself. They use the refenes mode of paying for their drinks. Firstnames or nicknames are used as terms of address, implying familiarity, and the term filos may be used in reference. Casual friendship is not an exclusive relationship. A man can have a number of casual friends with whom to associate in the same or a different context, yet they all derive from the same sphere of

drinking companionship.

The parea of drinking men is generally characterized by the diffuse solidarity of casual friendship. It is especially prominent among young men who as yet have more loose dyadic ties than their more senior fellow villagers. Adult men form less homogeneous, more stratified pareas focusing on a particular pair of individuals.

Among young men, who have completed their military service yet are not married, the parea constitutes the section of the peer group from which casual friendships can develop into something more deep, affectionate and important. Casual friendship serves as a testing ground to find out "who matches (teriazi) with whom" in new avenues of purely masculine activity such as excursions to the nearby town for a glendi, festivity or flirting with women.

A good example of matching in friendships are the card-playing sessions that usually take place after work. It is mainly young men who assemble to play xeri: each man gets six cards face down, and is obliged to turn up a card when his turn comes. If a player, whose turn has come, holds the same number or figure as the card which has been played before him, then he can collect all the cards that have been played since the last player did the same. Each card carries a certain value. At the end of each game, which involves two rounds of dealing from a single pack of cards, the score of each player is recorded. The games are repeated till the first player has reached an agreed number of points.

Playing cards or throwing dice are competitive modes of relating among men (see next chapter). Xeri, however, is markedly different in many respects. First, it is the only card game which remains part of the realm of commensality since no money stakes are used. What is at stake in xeri is the right to kerasma, awarded to those who lose. Xeri, then, focuses on the honorific side of kerasma. The defeated

side honours the winners by offering them a brandy or a soft drink. The treating becomes a penalty for losing that does not require future reciprocation.[12] Second, the defeated party has the right to invite the winners to play a new round and the winning party is obliged to accept the challenge. Rounds of xeri are repeated regularly among the same men for long periods. Thus xeri leads to the formation of rather closed, although not formally exclusive circles which often coincide with a parea. The third and most important aspect of xeri is that the unit of participation is not the individual player but a team of two players. In fact xeri is ideally played between two teams, thus involving a total of four men. Xeri provides a unique opportunity to consider how two men match each other; it tests their ability to be coordinated, and to cope with the strains of competing together. The testing period of friendship usually occurs after the army and before marriage.

If friendship in general relies on commensality, emotional friendship is described as steming directly from the heart. This is certainly implied in the reference to the close, emotional-bond friend as kardiakos filos, the friend of the heart, or as a local saying puts it: a man's friend is tis kardias tou o yiouldas, the close associate of his heart. Sometimes emotional friends use the term akranis, which originates from the Turkish for peer or equal, as a term of reference, or the term much used in parts of Macedonia, kardasi, from the Turkish for brother, as a term of address. Brothers may refer to each other as adelfos, brother but they never employ the term to address each other. Friends on the other hand may use this term for purposes of address but they never employ it to refer to each other. Most often emotional friends call each other either by their first name or in a more private context by a nickname or even jokingly by surname, thus stressing the distinct individual identity of their partner.

These ties of emotional friendship are small havens of relaxation and intimacy in the world of men; they are regarded as examples of **empistosini**, trust, amity, reliance, as well as cordiality and fraternity. Between emotional friends "there are no secrets": a **kardiakos filos** is the best confidant. In the idealized image of friendship, the friend is unquestionably **pistos**, faithful and **afosiomenos**, loyal.[13]

Emotional friendships are strictly bilateral and exclusive. It is regarded as part of man's nature to have an intimate friend of the heart. A certain possessiveness seems to characterize these ties: the friend ceases to be a general, abstract category but a person attached to a particular person. Skamniotes occasionally employ an "Athenian" usage **o dikos tou**, his man to refer to a man's friend. Emotional friends have full priority in demanding each others attention. They are **koliti**, stuck together in exactly those circumstances in which neither material interest nor binding obligation demand.[15] The same idea is implied in the image of friends who **chorizoun**, separate when one of them leaves the community.

Emotional friends stop treating each other. Yet the idea of friends of the heart sponsoring each other survives in the performance of dance. **Zeybekiko** is a dance in eight-time, originating from the dancing traditions of a warrior tribe, the Zeybeks, who lived on the outskirts of Smyrna and supplied the local notables with hired soldiers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There are other kinds of dance like the **chasapikos** or **nisiotikos** linked to the traditions of the islands as well as of the East. Yet **zeybekiko** is the most distinguished form of all, accruing prestige and the so important, from the view of the masculine identity, reputation of the good dancer, to those who perform well. Ideally it is danced solo or by individual men who occupy the dancing floor or part of it.

However, most of the time it is the pair of emotional friends who dance it together: while the one exhibits his virtuoso skills the other stands at his side, either grasping him by the hand or applauding (see picture 18). Thus the one partner acts as a sponsor to the other. The two men may alternate the solo dancing position during the same or consecutive dancing sessions. It is not unusual for both men, as a pair, to be treated to a raki while they are performing. They then have to stop, acknowledge the kerasma and go on. Dancing together as well as the treating of a raki to the dancing pair by the collectivity, could be described as an initiation ritual for friends of the heart and takes place in local paniyiria, festivals, or in domestic celebrations.

The norms of emotional friendship include the obligation to be alithinos, true to one another, to be pistos, loyal and afosiomenos, a faithful friend. The drinking table, the habitat of friendship, is surrounded by antagonistic forces which the friends will have to keep at bay. A friend is expected stand by under any conditions, to keep a secret, give refuge, to give support when help is difficult to find and make sure that the relationship stays gossip-proof.

Friends do not extend their mutual loyalty to third parties; yet they equally avoid the interposition of third parties in their relationship. This is especially true for women who are often thought to have a negative influence on male relations. At a late night post-raki discussion about sexual adventures during bachelorhood and current cases of adultery in the village, two friends came out with the categorical assertion that "you cannot go with the wife or the sister of a man with whom you drink every night". This is in fact the most sacred barrier to real as well as imaginary adultery within the village.

The primary sanction in friendship is the individual sense of



17. An evening session of cards.



18. Male friends dance at a **glendi**.

moral worth (**filotimo**) that each man carries in him. For plebeian men who value the sentimental bonds of friendship more than the hierarchical, encompassing, obligatory bonds of **ipochreosi**, obligation the record of behaviour in friendship is the sine qua non of moral worth and reputation. A good friend is a proper **anthropos**, man, a moral human being who deserves everybody's respect and trust. A man who betrays the trust and amity shown to him by a friend is thought to be lacking **filotimo** and a **zoo**, animal.

Friendship initially appears as unstable and endemically fragile, full of anxiety. The friends are very jealous of one another. If a regular, habitual meeting is broken, or one of them is unpunctual or joins another **parea** in the same coffeeshop, a feeling of resentment and neglect is expressed. However the very sentiment that creates the problem is the basis for facing it. Anxiety surfaces easily, complaints are stated, explanations are offered and emotional settlement is usually reached. At other levels there is considerable toleration of asymmetry. Occasionally men buy their **mezes**, snack from the grocery shop and bring it to the coffeeshop. Everybody brings something yet usually one has the "responsibility" of bringing the most special component of the edibles, this being raw fish or meat to be fried. I noticed occasions on which the provider of core **mezes** was the same person in successive drinking sessions. No notice was taken of this. On other occasions the pair of friends act as collective hosts, providing **mezes** for the **parea**.

What gradually takes place in emotional friendship is the disentanglement of the emotional side from the network of reciprocities that formerly somehow validated the authenticity of feelings. On the one hand material reciprocity cannot function as a proof or a guarantee of emotion. On the other, certain aspects of reciprocity, which are there because the first steps of the

relationship relate to commensality, are depicted as representing the state of the relationship. The occupation of a drinking table is the most prominent among them.

Thinking of men in Skamnia or Skala, it is very easy and natural to recollect at the same time their intimate drinking companions. These are figures who appear with intensity and clarity that matches, not to say supercedes, that of other characters such as a mother or a wife. Indeed male friendship reminds one of a membership of a non-present, implicit structure, symbolized by a particular drinking table in a specific coffeeshop. The metaphor of cohabitation conveys well this image. Emotional friends habitate their table with the consistency and regularity not to say zeal with which a conjugal couple occupy a house or even a bed. No particular rights attach them to 'their' table and no offence is taken if somebody occupies it in ignorance. However every insider knows very well which table is attached to whom. The pattern of regular attendance at the same table during raki sessions resembles a parallel and equally consistent yet more solitary pattern during the mornings: individual men usually occupy the same table.[16] These uniform spatial arrangements provide the elementary social structure of the coffeeshop.

The joint attachment to a drinking table provides, then, a "structural" marker of emotional friendship in Skamnia. This is, indeed, a very narrow basis for a relationship, yet a very important one since this table links and integrates the fragments of male experience. The only scope which remains open is that for repetitions and perpetual reenactment of the commensal basis of friendship thus transforming occasional habitation into an order or habit. The perpetuation of the empathic, almost circumstantial solidarity of commensality increasingly cements the relationship. The principle at play is simple: the more and the longer one habitates the relationship

the better and deeper it progressively becomes.[17] The more it is occupied, the more the drinking table becomes the focal centre of the relationship, a kind of observation point from which all achievement as well as failure is accommodated, all experience is moulded and the distinct identities are blended into a unity.

As long as the table is inhabited and the friends still kanoun kefi, enjoy being together, the feeling is that the bond cannot decline or break. Prolonged absences, usually due to emmigration, and consequent separation of friends can be accommodated. The partners rejoin at the point at which they have left the relationship. A special quality however marks those friendships in which the friends have stayed together all the time. These relationships are brought as examples of the resiliance of **filia**. In general emotional friendships are characterized by remarkable stability and endurance as long as the friends can go on enacting the gesture from which their bond emerged: the sharing of **raki**.

Emotional friendship is part of an exclusively male career. As far as the two men can endure the pace of drinking that their company demands and go on occupying their table the relationship goes on. However, the departure of either of the two does not only gradually conclude the relationship but initiates an even more important move away from the coffeeshop. The emotional spirit to make new friends departs. The demise of male friendship marks the withdrawal from the **rakadiko**. The epilogue is to be written in the same style as the prologue, men resign by reasserting a closer attachment to the realm of the household. Yet, as we saw, by this time, the senior woman of the house enjoys considerable domestic power. The **yeros**, old man comes back, and retreats under the guardianship of his **kira**, wife who will see that his evening outings to the coffeeshop will end happily and safely.

3. Friends of the Heart: The Sharing of Gender Identity

What is interesting about **kardiaki filia** is that rather early in its development the idea of symmetry and reciprocity is superceded by the more prominent theme of matching identities, of individuality achieved in the context of a relationship and shared with a particular person. As exchange and the periodic allocation of the two partners into two distinct poles moves into the background, a sense of "sameness" permeates the relationship. The two men feel that they reflect one another both in terms of subjectively experienced and objectively demonstrated male sentiment. To employ a Durkheimian metaphor, the matching of friends in Skamnia resembles a situation of mechanical solidarity. The case we are examining, then, ethnographically contrasts with the organic complementarity that Paine (1969) considers as a distinguishing feature of emotional friendship.

Let me make this point more clear. I argued earlier that **kerasma** is both exchange and expression, both senses are captured in its archetypical description as a gift giving gesture. It encapsulates a feeling of giving, of generosity specific to men. In a sense it demonstrates that generosity is a male property, that it is alien to contractual considerations and part of emotional (**endiaferon**) rather than material interest (**simferon**).

In friendship the expressive side of **kerasma** overides the transactional one. Friends of the heart through time match their expressive potential; and as they pass together through the various stages of malehood they mirror in one another an identical degree of male achievement, culminating at the conclusion of life in a kind of shared history; these elements provide the core of their "sameness".

Friends of the heart thus appear to be of the same heart.

Commensal friendship is the only relationship that relies on **kefi** as well as being the social means of reaching **kefi**. **Kefi** originates from the Turkish **keyif** or **keyf** which means pleasure and delight, humour, a healthy state as well as a state of slight intoxication. In Skamnia it refers to an ideal state of joy and relaxation, achieved when the worries and concerns of this world "are banished". A state of lightness is a biological symptom associated with **kefi**. This is demonstrated in the privileged realms of male expression, drinking as well as singing and dancing. Private **kefi** reaches its climax when it is collectively shared and the evening **raki** session builds into a **glendi**. We will return to this point in next chapter.

Friends of the heart share what lies in their heart. Men of a roughly similar background are expected to face similar problems and reach comensurable moods. If they have moods that cannot match because they arise from fundamentally different worries, then they can hardly match their emotional states and reach the expected level of jollity. Men friends **xelafronoun**, become light in the company of each other by giving away the emotional waste they accumulate; thus they circulate emotional strain without fear of rebuke or humiliation and **vasana**, suffering and **parapona**, complaints, in the atmosphere of **endiaferon** and **simpathia**, liking that arises amidst those who bear identical worries as well as trust.

Male friends avoid debating issues. Yet, this does not mean that they avoid verbal communication all together. In the context of friendship men exchange **kouvendes**. This could be described as the other pole to argument or debate. It is words exchanged which carry no binding force. For example, the expression **kouvenda na yinete** refers to a purposeless discussion that leads nowhere. It is a kind of tautology that is premised on an already shared point of view.

What is most characteristic of kouvenda however is that words capture moods. This is why kouvenda can be qualified by the mood it contains into "light" and "heavy". By exchanging words, then, friends just share their verbalised moods.

Friends sometimes are of the same sira, literally rank. Sira is a subdivision of klasi, class that is the nominal year in which one is called to serve in the army. This refers indirectly to one's year of birth and thus to age. Sira is one of four subdivisions of klasi and refers to the actual quarter of the year one is conscripted into the army. So sira is the group of men who are conscripted and actually serve together. The term sira is used in a number of different contexts, to refer to the order of marriage priority among sisters, the turn of treating to a drink or even as an indicator of class status. In all cases, therefore, a kind of rank order is implied. This rank is of class, drinking or marital status and the individuals are differentially placed in accordance to it. The only case in which that the reference to rank connotes similarity instead of difference is in the context of friendship. Friends who have been to the army together may refer to each other saying, "he is my sira" or call each other sira. Apparently, sires are age mates and the application of the term points to a cameraderie that has emerged during the army service and is subsequently projected into the social life of the village.[18]

However, there is something more important than the acknowledgement of comradeship in the use of the term. In the last analysis, men of the same sira were previously classmates at school for many years. Why don't they use symbols from that era to mutually identify each other? What distinguishes sira is that it is usually associated with the first call out of the local society. The year before beginning military service, candidate conscripts are called to

Mytilene for a physical as well as written examination by the Periodevon, as the unit of examiners is called. In the nineteen sixties this was the first visit to the capital of the island for some of these young men and thus a most significant moment in their lives. This move out of the local community coincides with the first authoritative and even traumatic test of the young mens' masculinity. What survives in the memory of the candidate soldier is the physical comparison with the rest of the men who sit naked in a row, and the examination of the anus to diagnose signs of homosexuality.[19] Despite its traumatic nature, this visit to the Periodevon then, marks both a confirmation of physical masculinity and probably the first, most important, formally approved transcendence of the local boundary. It finally leads to a prolonged separation from "home".

A similar basis of mutuality and correspondence is observed in the cordial friendships which arise after army service. Men friends who worked together as gastarbeiter in Germany for some years in the early sixties, or earned their living as builders and construction workers in the Athens of the late sixties or in Macedonia in the mid thirties, or even "went to the mountain" as guerilla fighters of the resistance and later of the Democratic Army, regard these experiences as formative of strong, emotional ties. A prolonged shared, experience which takes place outside the village occupies a prominent place in the emotional foundations of the bond of friendship. What makes it distinct is the sharing of movement. The actual transcendence of the local, geographical boundary is regarded as symptomatic of freedom loving male nature. As far as the coffeeshop is concerned, men are just "standing" there, in other words they are passers by, somehow always on the move, as the idea of steki implies. The joint involvement in these movements is classified within the broader category of sharing masculinity. In this respect forms of

male mobility are thought of as special rituals of masculinity. Today adolescents are initiated into this "mobile" version of masculinity during military service. This may be followed by a number of years of work in the merchant navy. Working away from home ideally precedes marriage and thus characterizes the years of bachelorhood as years of mobility. However, a number of men assert these essentially male practices after their marriage in the face of the open disapproval of their wives and relatives. Despite the fact that some of them exploit the idiom of obligation to the household to mask these exoduses, in more private debates within the coffeeshop it became clear that these were moves to reassert their masculine "freedom".

At the conclusion of their lives, men in general, and especially those who have travelled a lot, and seen a lot, are "full of istories", stories which usually focus on a single theme: the making of the male self as it was jointly experienced by the friends. Expressive or emotional friendship between men is the social medium of a folk notion of history, istoria. Men tell istories which focus on male achievement. These are narrative representations of a fundamentally open and biographical order of reality.

Friendship in Skamnia appears as a relationship full of "history" because it is the filter through which personal history is both made and collectively experienced. Its existential status corresponds to what men in Skamnia think is "their" history. This native concept of istoria history is the privileged terrain for recollection. It focuses on events, things, people that are conceived as different or even exceptional, timeful parentheses in a timeless order, bearing always the unforgetable mark of the individual protagonist. Despite its female gender, folk istoria originates in mens' actions and is extrapolated in equally male memories. At its heart lies a fundamentally male idea: that the most interesting and attractive

source of history is what is associated with either becoming or being a man. In other words what men love to narrate are events that embody male sentiment. This particularly male emotional overtone links these stories to a genealogy of experience that is worth remembering.

During the formative years, friendship corresponds to an open and dynamic definition of male identity: what is to be shared and how it is negotiated with more than one drinking companion and new prospects of relating arise while in the process of becoming a man. However in the concluding years it appears that friendships are more fixed, while unchanging senses of the male self are brought together. Men have stopped growing in masculinity. This is reflected in the closure of the boundaries of friendship. Friends of the heart exclusively relate to each other, avoiding the company of other men. The closure of ranks is accounted for in the statement made by two septagerian friends. "You know, we are of the three **rakis**. And we want to drink them **me tin isichia mas**, in peace. This is why we avoid mixing with others". In other words, the habit of being together is reflected in what they drink, and in what quantity, when and at what pace. These aspects of male idiosyncracy constitute the exclusive core of mature male identity and are extremely difficult to share with third parties. Men say that they neither have the **endiaferon** nor the courage to step outside this orbit of drinking habit and explore new directions. Of course a good friendship extends the drinking career in time of men who would otherwise be forced to leave the **rakadiko** because of the lack of a partner.

4. Conclusion

In the preceding sections I examined the cultural and social

morphology of forms of friendship. We saw that the friends of the heart share an alcoholic beverage which symbolically stands for undifferentiated masculinity, as well as a table, the core of an avenue for exclusively masculine expression, both being properly insulated from economic cooperation of political contract. Thus sharing is clearly demarcated from exchange. As it is mediated by the habitation of a "structure" of commensality, sharing assumes the form of participation in an expressive avenue that is necessary for the making of male identity and of a progressive distancing from the ethic of the gift that kerasma encapsulates. Filia is independent of any material proof, it relies on a past and present "matching" of identity that is vindicated by its very perpetuation. In other words, all patterns of interaction between friends of the heart, the joint activity of the coffeeshop, the shared movements outside the local boundary, are fused with male sentiment and thought of as experientally constitutive of the male self. To share, then, means to look alike. And the more you share, the more you become the same. The pair of friends, by representing the most enduring cell of the anti-group that is the male collectivity of the coffeeshop, stands for the demolition of all reciprocity and difference.

This constitutes the sentiments of friendship as opposite to the sentiments of kinship and in effect it poses certain problems in the conceptualization of friendship and kinship in the same continuum of morally pertinent reciprocities.[20]

As I showed in chapter III, kinship sentiment, especially in the form of maternal sacrifice and suffering, rests on the assumption of reciprocity that is suspended for the future, when the present day receivers of nourishment take their turn in the position of generator of kinship amity. Thus the altruism which is predicated on the sharing of blood flows down the generations, an emotional undercurrent

of practical services and material support of parent to child. That male kinship demands concurrent reciprocation in kind further confirms the above point.

These configurations of kinship sentiment are in sharp contrast to the sentiment of kardiaki filia. The latter stands for an unstructured and inchoate yet strong feeling of camaraderie and commonality as well as devotion and trust among men who see each other as mirror images of themselves. What, then, is distinctive in filia is that it is pure sentiment. It is even, more than that, the context in which one can view society and its various structural arrangements that relate to household, work or politics from the standpoint of sentiment. In filia men express their feelings not to one another but with one another. The feeling is not just independent of material validation or practical consideration, it is also free of jural guardianship. The relationship is its own sanction.

The feeling is the relationship. The vocabulary of friendship is fundamentally an emotional vocabulary illuminating the states of the heart, forms of emotional experience as well as the modalities of male sentiment (see next chapter). Only a heart that achieves its natural state of kefi can support the extension of the self and the creation of the emotional bond. Filia, then, is the most advanced and socially solid symptom of kefi. The joyful sentiment is recycled in the bond of friendship. This almost develops into a closed circuit: friends love to be together because by being together they can love. If filia is the mode of activity which participates in masculine life, then kefi is both motive and reward. Men who do not live as men should live, do not and cannot have friends. The feelings of friendship, then, derive from successful joint participation in the fundamentally emotionally rewarding avenues of male expression and are equally distributed to the participants. Friends are expected to somehow have

identical feelings or at least feelings that are analyzable in the same terms.

To sum up: in part II of this thesis we saw that the cultural constructs of ikoyenia and sigenia, kinship organize the sharing of essentially biological substance. Male consanguineal relationships, which are part of this constellation are considered as given, ascribed at birth and thus involuntary, non-terminable, deeply hierarchical and in the last analysis incompatible with the values that govern the formation of male identity in the coffeeshop.[21] On the other hand, the cultural constructs of filia and parea organize the sharing of male sentiment and accommodate the making of male identity on a fundamentally expressive, performance oriented avenue. Male friendship belongs to the symbolic constellation of raki sharing and, in juxtaposition to all other available relational forms, is voluntary, open, freely terminable, deeply egalitarian and the preserve of personal autonomy and other exclusively male values.[22] Male friendship combines both a foreful sentiment comparable to that of kinship and an openness matching that of contract. In this capacity it is at the core of a morally significant set of relations and practices for men. The "prescriptive altruism" of uterine kinship and the "amity" of male commensal friendship are the two most developed and positively valued emotions in local society.

What makes the moods and modalities of male sentiment so significant as to provide the very basis of an all-important relationship in a society full of "structures" deriving from kinship and class, the market and the state? An adequate answer to this question could be provided by analysing the symbolic means by which "big men" come to the fore. This is the subject matter of the next chapter. Filia is culturally informed by concepts and values that aim

to exemplify the symbolic production of masculinity. Great symbolic value is invested in the ritual and social practices that constitute malehood. These are thought to embody distinctively masculine traits like autonomy, negation of hierarchy, mobility, freedom, as well as generosity and expressivenes. Prestige is accrued to those who participate. In the last analysis, then, emotional friendship relies on the same symbolic material from which big men are made.

Notes to Chapter VII

1. The ethnographic literature on male friendship in the societies of the Northern Mediterranean and Southern Europe focuses on the work of Pitt-Rivers (1973, 1977). Pitt-Rivers attempted to bridge the gap between a traditional emphasis on the institutional aspects of interpersonal relations (e.g. Foster, 1953, 1960; Wolf, 1966) and mainstream kinship analysis. The work of Brandes (1973, 1981), Gilmore (1975) and Murphy (1978, 1983) who studied male relations in Andalusia profited from this reorientation. For the Greek case see the brief but sensitive analyses by Currier (1974) and Loizos (1975, 89-92) and the very interesting insights into friendship in Crete by Herzfeld (1985). Campbell (1964) and Loizos (1977) reported the wide relevance of asymmetrical, contractual ties that often link the isolates of the family or the local community to the surrounding institutional complexes.

2. It has been argued recently, however, by a psychologist who did fieldwork in Crete studying women's friendships, that the lack of research in this area arises from the rather "androcentric" research assumptions, "the women's social and experiental lives are limited to the domestic context" (Kennedy, 1986, 92). I think that this criticism is unfounded in the case we examine.

3. The general structurelessness of friendship gave rise to its characterization as a supplementary or interstitial (Wolf, op. cit., 2) or residual relationship (Pitt-Rivers, 1968a, 415).

4. Herzfeld (1975, 196-7) noticed that in the Rhodian village of Xiromeri friendship and kinship are mutually exclusive. Equally so Du Boulay (1974, 214-220) argues that in Ambeli short-run friendships of practical expedience contribute to a continuing system of extramarital alliances that are in a continuous stage of flux. Olson (1982) reports similar juxtapositions of friendship to kinship.

5. Nor do I think that it is adequate to consider friendship as "an escape from the press of life" (Wolf, op. cit., 11), thus attributing to it the functions that cannot be attained by kinship.

6. This is certainly almost a concensus view among ethnographers of the Mediterranean. Another good example is Galt (1973) who describes interpersonal relations in the South Italian island of Pantelleria along the lines of Foster's dyadic contract model. "People become friends and maintain friendships through the exchange of services or goods such as small gifts or even small loans" (327).

7. I borrow the term sharing of activity from Gibson (1985).

8. See Campbell (op. cit.), Loizos (1977).

9. Reciprocal drinking has often been associated with forms of friendship. For example Aceves (1971, 48) argues that "the offering and taking of beverages is part and parcel of the whole ritual of friendly social relations". See also the etiquette of drinking among amigos in Andalusian bars (Driessen, 1983, 128).

10. These notions correspond to what Pina Cabral (1986, 155-161) glosses as relative and absolute respect in friendship.

11. I borrow the term from Gilmore (1975) who refers to this kind of friendship as "disinterested companionship" governed by "subtle etiquette" and "enmeshed in an on-going system of continual reciprocations" (315).

12. Davis (1964) reports a more competitive type of card-playing which reminds one of what Skamniotes call **bilot**. Yet it is the winner in passatela who has the right to select his partners. Herzfeld (1985, 157) reports a pattern which resembles that in Skamnia.

13. Emotional bond friendship resembles the Andalusian **confianza**, "a dyadic tie leading to emotional fulfilment" (Gilmore, op. cit., 317) which Gilmore juxtaposes to **compromiso**, "an instrumental bond between households" (ibid., 315). Campbell (op. cit., 205) notes that among the Sarakatsani "personal friendship with an unrelated person, based simply on linking and sympathy is impossible".

14. What is worth noting here is that this very interesting usage of this term of inclusion denotes a level of membership which is of a lower order than that of the family: this is the dyadic tie of friendship. Yet at this level "membership" equals "possession" and in this sense the reference to one's friend as **dikos tou** resembles reference to one's female erotic partner as **diki tou**.

15. The element of time spent together and the significance of mutual attention for the validation of the bond of friendship is stressed by Currier (op. cit., 148) and Brandes (1980, 128).

16. A similar, even more fixed pattern of sitting is observed in the church: each stall is usually occupied by the same individual.

17. Gilmore (op. cit.) came near to these conclusions in conceiving friendship as "the moral and modal basis" of alliance, "being a changeful state of mind and a <u>cumulative feeling</u> as well as a set of rules and roles" (322, my emphasis).

18. There is a close similarity to the Spanish **quintos** (strictly translated as conscript but extended to mean age mate). See Brandes, 1973, 752, and 1979, 6; Murphy, 1983b.

19. The inspection of anus as diagnostic of homosexuality emerges at the end of the eighteenth century when homosexuality is perceived as physical illness and thus susceptible to clinical examination. See Aries, 1985, 65-6.

20. Here I refer to the work of Fortes (1969) and Pitt-Rivers (1973). Fortes has argued that kinship "is associated with rules of conduct whose efficacy comes, in the last resort, from a general principle of kinship morality that is rooted in the familial domain and is assumed everywhere to be axiomatically binding" (op. cit., 231-2). The Fortesian model has been criticized for conflating notions of gender with the ideas of kinship and domestic/politico-jural domain and for resting on unwarranted assumptions of Euro-American kinship ideology (Rapp, 1982 and

other papers in the same conference). Yet Pitt-Rivers' (op. cit.) enlarged scheme of amiable relations survives the above criticism. Pitt-Rivers argues that there is a single sentiment of amity that derives from consubstantiality: kinship, ritual kinship and friendship are all part of the wider phenomenon of the extension of the self through a likeness that is achieved in the sharing of substance (Pitt-Rivers, op. cit., 92-96). His major distinction is between jural-based and jural-free amity in a "scale ranging from systems of purely jural to purely moral reciprocity" (op. cit., 100). Yet this rests on the contention that all morality is somehow trapped in reciprocity and that giving and receiving is the only means of testing sentiments.

21. Murphy (1983a) notices how peer friendship escalates the father/son conflict, as the young man pursues his way to masculine autonomy. The incompatibility of agnatic kinship with commensal friendship is certainly less exagerated in Lesbos than in Seville. The succession of the hierarchical father/son bond by the egalitarian relationship of emotional friendship is sensitively depicted for Turkey by Olson (op. cit., 50-1).

22. For another yet quite different case of juxtaposition as well as opposition between the non-amity of "kinship" and the amity of "companionship" or sharing of activity among the Buid of Mindoro in the Philippines see Gibson (op. cit.).

CHAPTER XIII: BIG MEN: COMPETITIVE DRINKING, GAMBLING AND THE CONFIGURATIONS OF MASCULINITY

Toutos ine evdomida oukadion kardia, oulos kardia
(This man is seventy okades of heart, all heart.)

A local characterization of the big man

I. Men of the House, Men of the Coffeeshop

In the last chapter we examined the passage from male commensality to male friendships "of the heart". We further saw how the egalitarianism of kerasma accomodates a relationship of male identity. In this chapter we will consider the other end of the continuum of relationships that are organized by the commensal code within the coffeeshop and shift the focus from sameness to hierarchical difference. Thus we will consider the creation of asymmetrical ties which do not contradict but confirm the plea for equality that is implied in kerasma since they are premised on the contesting commensuration of masculinity. And we will explore the avenues in which precedence is achieved and 'big men' are established. The shift from 'friends of the heart' to men 'full of heart' will give us the opportunity to explore the images of masculinity that are current in Skamnia'; this will provide the context to further assess the interrelationship of these cultural constructs of gender with the values of prestige, and ideas about moral worth and reputation.

My first encounter with a 'big man' was almost fatal to my reputation, since I got drunk while he was quite innocently demonstrating his appetite for drink as well as his generosity. This happened at the very beginning of my fieldwork, when it was almost impossible to assess the cultural meaning of my experience. The next

meaningful encounter with a character of the same calibre was radically different. Towards the ninth month in the field I read a short novel written by Stratis Myrivilis, the most prominent Skamniotis writer and a member of the Academy of Athens. It refers to the **palikaries**, masculine achievements of a young **contrabatzis** (smuggler), Vasilis Arvanitis who allegedly lived in Skamnia at the turn of this century. Myrivilis and other writers such as Venezis, Kontoglou, Makistos and Paleologos, who originate from Lesbos or the opposite Anatolian shore, and wrote on the same theme, provided me with an insight into the issue of cultural organization of manliness in the Aeolian context. My debt to them is certainly not exhausted in the few references that I borrow from their writing in order to illustrate my argument.[1]

I soon found that the activities of Vasilis Karayiannis, a Skamniotis smuggler who was killed in a fight in Aivali at the beginning of the century and whose story has been partially used by Myrivilis in the writing of his famous novel still excites the memories of men in Skamnia. As the enquiries went on other personalities appeared in oral memory in historical settings which involved warfare and death as well as festivity and love. These stories refer to the past, yet their vocabulary and the very taxonomy of manliness which they support retain their pertinence today. They exhibit a rather stereotypical set of priorities on the actions of a proper man, what he should fight or even give his life for, and they further present an aesthetic side of manliness, fragments of which survive in various parts of the island. These discussions led me to the modern hero who no longer fights with weapons but displays his masculinity with the glass and the die.

In this part I will consider the cultural categories available for the classification of manliness and the ways in which the tendency

of the naming system to postulate individual autonomy works to establish the big man. Before that, however, the discussion on the images of masculinity and the male values which are held by men in Skamnia should be placed within a wider perspective. Indeed, it is necessary to distinguish between two sets of attitudes held by men. The first set has a women-related character and is founded in practices which have been discussed in the first and second part of the thesis. Here I will simply recapitulate its principal facets. The second set of values appears to be exclusively male and informs most aspects of life in the coffeeshop, some of which have been discussed earlier and others will be more fully explored here. The juxtaposition of these values provides the context in which one can consider two opposed categories of men: the men of the house and the men of the coffeeshop.

The first set of attitudes is informed by the values of the household which postulate men and women to be symmetrically placed in a formal, corporate, marital union and to hold complementary roles which are projected in the spheres of domestic responsibility, economic activity or religious participation. According to the domestic model, then, men are perceived in inter-sexual contexts i.e. in conjunction with roles (marital, familial) that involve women (and children) as well. The centrality of the household in this value system is reflected in the very conceptualization of men who bear these attitudes as nikokirei, householders.[2] The term nikokirei refers to me who own some property, in land or something else. The nikokiris, however, more than just a proprietor, is a man whose primary allegiances stem from the domestic group. The material well being of the nikokirio, its self-sufficiency and the independence of its members from the need to hire their labour, borrow or migrate, are the prime concerns of the nikokiris.

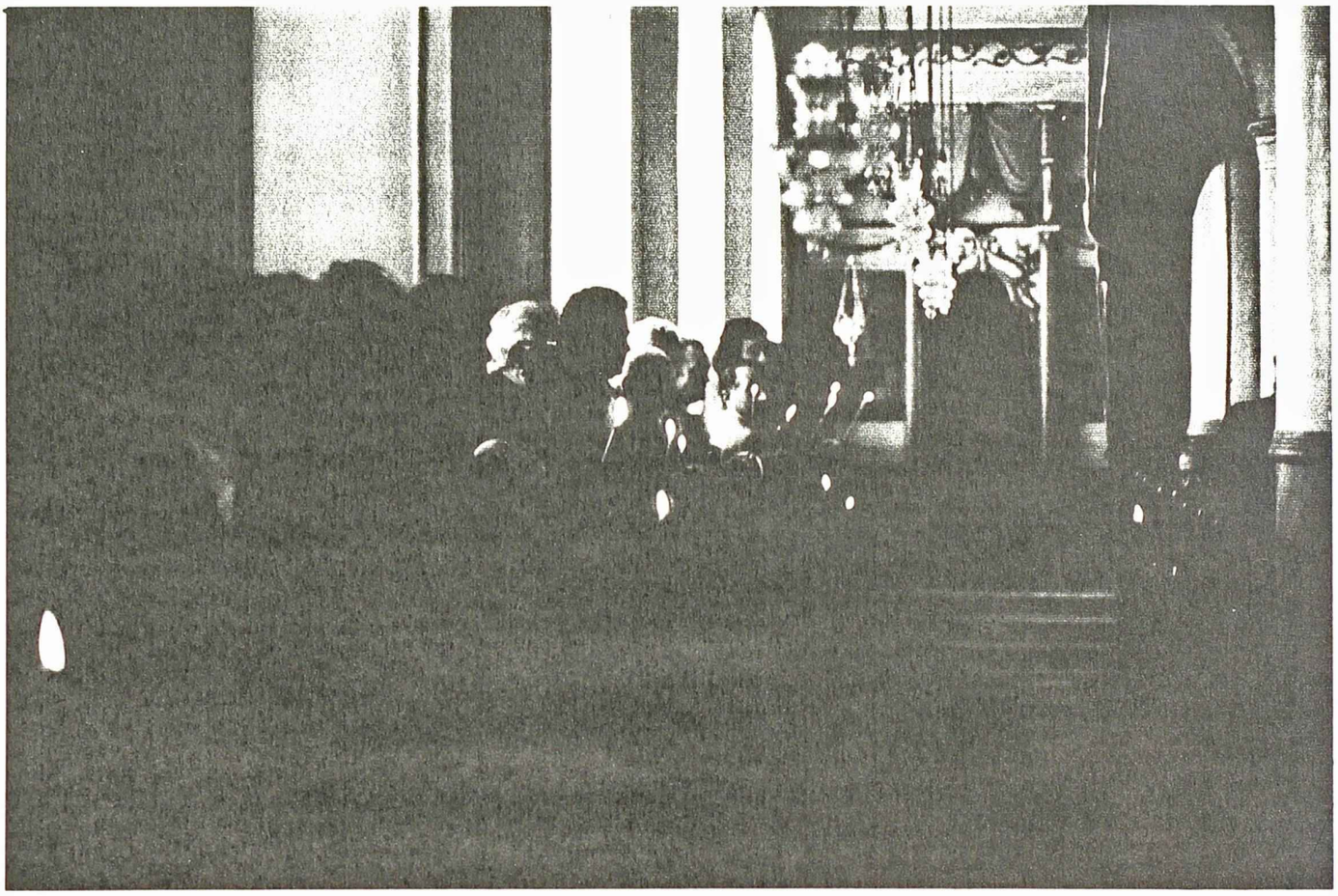
Nikokirei divide their time equally between house, work and coffeeshop. They have the reputation of hard workers and they are proud of the fact that their wives do not have to **kanoun-merokammato**, do wage labour in the harvest. They visit the **rakadiko** quite rarely, on special occasions or Sundays; they ordinarily drink tea or brandy in the evenings and they are rather stingy in their **kerasmata**. They attend the Sunday morning mass and they lead the religious processions at Easter without necessarily being religious believers. They often appear in public together with their children and/or wives and they are quite involved in domestic rituals, in the settlement of betrothals, in the provision of dowries and the education of their offspring. They are **ikonomi**, save money and they settle their debts regularly. They personally supervise the **ekthlipsi**, pressing out of the olives, and ensure that they will not be cheated. They often get into arguments about land disputes, the trespassing of animals or the order of irrigating fields and their fiercely debate the degree of **ladisma**, oiling of the neighbours' olives. They are the men who will passionately support the female view that card playing for high stakes destroys **nikokiria**, they leave the coffeeshop or retreat to a corner when a card-playing session starts.

Ipochresosi, obligation and **sinfero**, self interest, reign in the world of the **nikokirei**. As we saw in the chapter on marriage, **ipochreosi** binds men to the realms of house and work. **Nikokirei** stand by their obligations and they are conceived as representing in the realm of the coffeeshop, politics or religion the very realities to which they are bound. On the other hand, their behaviour is limited by the need to conserve, and if possible enlarge, the terrain to which they are committed. **Sinfero** means to act in accordance to these social foundations of personhood. A defensive vigilant attitude is necessary in order not to be dominated by unrelated consociates who

bear their own committments to the realm of competition. **Nikokirei** are expected to take care of their **sinfero: kitane to atomo tous**, look after themselves and are **sinferontologi**, do what their **sinfero** dictates, as men from the other camp often accuse them. Indeed, the world of the **nikokirei** is rather atomized, fragmented into opposed, private, inwards oriented enclaves of sinfero.

The prestige of **nikokirei** men rests primarily on material factors. Their economic standing is assessed in terms of land which is owned or rented and olives collected. The state of their houses is of prime importance. Large dowries or big houses are still marks of **nikokirei** status. The successful marriage as well as the education of their offspring, the degree and the effectivity of the diligent attitude they display, the image of responsibility are equally important components of prestige. **Nikokirei** prestige culminates in the holding of public office: these men almost specialize in being members of many different kinds of **simvoulia** (councils) and **epitropes** (committees) such as the **eklesiastiko simvoulio**, ecclesiastical council, the **scholiki epitropi**, school committee, the **simvoulio tou sineterismou**, cooperative's council and others.[3] According to these material factors the men of the house are divided into subcategories of big, medium and small **nikokirei**. In other words, the conceptualization of men from the point of view of the domus or ikos provides the standard taxonomy of material status which is employed by the agents of the church or the state (tax) authorities. This is not a paradox if we consider the role of church and state in the production of this domestic model of gender.

Nikokirei, however, do not differ from the more coffeeshop dependent category of men as far as a deep understanding of the dichotomous nature of men is concerned. They, too, think of their male identity as divided by this partly chosen, partly enforced,



19. **Nikokirei**, 'men of the house', at church.



20. Men of the coffee shop : drinking at the **rakadiko**.

domestic imperative. They, too, have to struggle against the 'natural' temptation to be with their male associates, to spend more time in the coffeeshop. I often heard nikokirei men claim that "when I enter the coffeeshop I become another man". They 'are' not domesticated but they become so, and they experience this transformation in more or less masculine terms. Their fundamental difference is that in big and small decisions they tend to take the opposite position to their less compromising and more self-confident masculine counterparts.

The second set of attitudes could be said to be informed by the values of the coffeeshop. These are the values of a strictly male-oriented world of men, of male practices and of male relationships. Some of these values have been discussed in the last two chapters. Some others will be more fully explored in what follows. One aspect of these male values pertains to a definition of what is masculine and what 'real' men should do. Another aspect projects this definition antithetically on to the household, state or church. In this regard, then, this set of attitudes appears to stand in opposition to those of the nikokirei.

Skamniotes do not employ a single term to refer to this category of somehow more 'real' men. Instead they use a number of concepts which denote a competence in various departments of male life, such as drinking, gambling, fighting or just taking care of oneself. These concepts capture the shades of masculinity, a topic to which I will turn soon. Yet for the sake of this introduction I will apply the term 'men of the coffeeshop' to refer to men who stand by these values and insist on being more masculine than 'men of the house'.

Men of this category are systematic participants in coffeeshop life irrespective of the cost this may have in the realm of their obligations to household, kin or boss. Yet, they exhibit a special

preference for the activities of the **rakadiko**: raki drinking, card playing or even gambling. Thus they fully identify with the **raki** pole of the coffeeshop; they spend little time at home and they transfer most household concerns to their wives who play the dominant role in household management. They value leisure highly and they support the ideal "to sit in the winter and not to work in the summer". They manifest anti-state, anti-church attitudes, and they try to show how they stand above economic considerations; they are for spending rather than for saving. On the other hand, they value their **parea** and their commensal friendships highly and they remain loyal to their feelings.

Kefi rather than **ipochreosi** reigns among men of the coffeeshop. As we shall see, these men stand by emotionally justified imperatives: they upgrade the modalities of sentiment into directives of action. Their world is a universe of more or less frustrated, contained or negotiated emotions and their supreme ideal is to achieve an expressive freedom that will effectively counteract the social forces that limit them. Material status ideally plays no role in the world of masculine emotions. And the only stratification available is the one that derives from the heart: the gradations of prestige must reflect the size of the heart that each man bears.

To the attachment of the **nikokirei** to household and family, land and place, men of the coffeeshop counter-propose the ideal of a man in a state of flux, a perptum mobile;[4] to the household's symbiotic link to the hierarchies of state or church they juxtapose the ideal of male autonomy. We will revisit this set of opposites in chapter X.

The contrast between these two categories of men seems at first to be a cultural rather than a socio-economic one. Men of the house and men of the coffeeshop are placed at either side of a deep cultural opposition which adopts the form of household v. coffeeshop; family v. **parea**; coffee v. raki; money v. raki; saving v. spending, depending on

the context. Skamniotes hae little doubt about the outcome of this struggle between the more 'founded' forces of the corporate household, the market and the state, on the one hand, and the purely masculine claim for autonomy and expressive freedom, on the other. Ordinary men are expected at a certain stage to surrender their claims to a life in accordance with the 'pure' masculine ideal either for ideological or 'biological' reasons. Thus the two sets of values can be thought of as stages in the developmental cycle of manhood. Nor is it necessary for men to hold one or the other attitude as a package. Some Skamniotes seem, eclectically, to support both sets of values, which, however, they invoke in different contexts, thus ignoring their formal opposition.

Despite the mobility around this cultural division there is a certain system to the way various groups of men interpret these values and take sides. These groups are primarily based on an interaction of factors such as social class, age and material status.

Men descended from the **kesimtzides** (big sharecroppers and renters of land) and medium landowners, in other words the middle socio-economic strata who do not enter into wage relations, retain a scope for savings. These men are the upwardly mobile elite which enjoys the blessings of the state (see more in next chapter). **Nikokirei** values tend to serve the class interests of this group. Ex **parayii** and dependent labourers, **merokamatiarides** (wage labourers), with the exception of skilled labourers (pruners, specialized builders etc), and small landholders, who depend on the labour market, stand closer to the values of the coffeeshop that promise equality for all and prestige stratified, not in economic or political terms, but in accordance with 'natural' attributes of the male character. Members of the elite, merchants and big landowners, who experienced a big setback when the state undertook control of the market but didn't

leave the village, lead in the performance of coffeeshop masculinity, in juxtaposition to the absentee big landowners, who, when they visit the village, totally abstain from coffeeshop life.

Age and generational status is equally important since it refers to the formative experiences of groups of men. As I noted in the previous chapter, the collective movement outwards, the crossing of the village boundary, seems to be the basis of a folk criterion for defining the generations.[5] Very schematically I would distinguish four generations of men, each one of them focusing on a group of age mates who moved together. The eldest generation comprises men who today are in their late seventies and who worked as migrant labourers in the big construction works of Macedonia before the second world war. The core group of the next generation are men in their fifties and early sixties who were organized in the resistance and **vgikan sto vouno**, went up into the mountains, as guerillas and later as members of the Democratic Army. This is the most numerous and influential generation, and together with the senior generation they give the leftist tone to village politics and they provide the most effective barrier to **nikokirei** values. The attitude of another group of men who are in their late thirties and forties is quite different. Most of them have left the village to be trained in agricultural schools located in other parts of Lesbos for short periods of time. They further lack the experience of a sustained absence from home. These men tend to be more conservative and promote the domestic model. Finally, young men in their twenties and early thirties who have lived and worked in the politicized atmosphere of post-dictatorship Athens give the radical tone to their rather 'depopulated' generation. If we stand by the mobility-based folk criterion of defining generations of men in Skamnia, then a generalization which emerges is that the greater the social distance covered, the more radical and allegedly

masculine is the attitude to life. The supreme example is the men who moved up into the mountains. These men uphold the masculine ideal of autonomy and they conflate it with tones of political radicalism, anti-clericalism and anti-statism.

Marital status is an important factor because of the high proportion of bachelors in Skamnia. Most of the **kotzam bekiarides**, advanced bachelors, belong to the so-called "generation of the resistance" and they are quite active in the radical camp. Among them one can find two of the best gamblers in Skamnia. It is evident that the bachelors' non-attachment to a household through ties of marriage allows greater scope for involvement in masculine spheres. The prime difference, then, between the two sets of attitudes and the men who aspire to them lies in the corresponding models of gender they are drawn from. Behind the apparent household v. coffeeshop, or female v. male, opposition lies the distinction of a "domestic" from a "natural" model of malehood. The subject matter of this chapter is the cultural configurations of the natural model of malehood which are encapsulated by big men.

2. Titles of Masculinity, Names and 'Big Names"

Before we proceed, a last issue should be tackled: how are 'big men' recognizable? What are the terms by which masculinity as such, as well as its gradations and their manifestation in particular men, are expressed? Here I will be concerned with two regions of local terminology which in different ways capture fragments of gender ideology. The first is a set of terms which I will call titles of masculinity. These terms have an exclusively 'masculine' import and most of the time are used to refer to (rather than address) physical

characteristics, aspects of behaviour, or just events that in various ways demonstrate what is regarded as masculine. They are titles because they are awarded to those worthy of them and because they reflect a certain hierarchy within the world of men.[6] Personal names provide the second repository of terms with which excessive masculinity can be expressed. This will be also an opportunity to consider certain properties of the naming system that make possible the depiction of individuality, particularly of individuality that is defined in gender terms.

Myrivilis (1978) begins his novel Vasilis Arvanitis with this sentence: "There are different kinds of **palikaries**, and there are different kinds of **palikaria**" (9). Indeed, if the primary notion for masculinity is **palikaria**, a term which encapsulates courage, audacity, physical and moral strength, and which is found all over Greece, then it is equally true that the same term covers a broad semantic terrain and denotes varying magnitudes of masculinity. The primary meaning of **palikari** is the young warrior, member of an informal group of men who usually put their martial skills at the service of an external authority. The historical example from Lesbos is traced in the **contrabatzidikous daifades**, teams of smugglers who guarded the illicit circuits of distribution of tobacco in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Yet, **palikaria** as masculine achievement is graded. As we shall see, the various degrees of **palikaria** as masculine achievement is graded. As we shall see, the various degrees of **palikaria** are recognized and accommodated in terms which constitute the taxonomy of masculinity.

In Skamnia boys, girls and young men who have not gone into the army and have not grown a moustache yet, are called **moura**, babies. Sometimes the expression **moura mou**, my baby, is used jokingly among adult men and it shows a certain familiarity. Once, however, a young

man returns from the army and starts attending the **rakadiko**, he is thought of as a **palikari**, in the sense of a young, adult unmarried man. The term is rarely used as a term of address. However, in contrast to what has been reported elsewhere, this term does not only refer to a virginal phase of masculine development, a phase which is destined to be superceded at marriage by **andrismos**, a mature and 'polluted' manhood which requires somewhat anti-social and aggressive tactics for survival.[7] In Skamnia men do not employ the concepts of **andras/andrismos** to refer to a more mature stage in the development of masculinity. They think that the presence of **palikaria** is an index of an active masculine career which is further assessed according to various criteria.

Ideally men are expected to grow in **palikaria** irrespectively of their domestic, working or political careers. This is equally true for domestic and coffeeshop oriented men. **Nikokirei** do not hold a different set of criteria to evaluate masculinity. Men no longer participate in this unitary and prolonged state of being actively masculine when they retire from the **rakadiko**. Then they enter the category of **yeros**, old men, which does not however exclude them from temporary, spontaneous and well received demonstrations of **palikaria**. When **barba-Nicolas**, in his seventies, stood up in a public meeting, interrupted the District Governor and used rough language to stigmatise the misdeeds of the administration, his action was acclaimed as **palikaria**. This extension of the semantic field of **palikari/a** to refer both to a virginal phase, as well as to the whole range of and stages of masculine development represents a paradox which will be explained when we discuss the cultural organization of manliness around the notions of male sentiment.

As **palikaria** 'matures' it is linked to other attributes of masculinity which represent a kind of expected progression to a higher

order of achievement. The upgrading of masculinity is captured in titles such as **levendis**, **meraklis** and **efes**. The meaning of these terms significantly overlaps in everyday use: in principle they can simultaneously be applied to the same person. However, some men are thought to embody these attributes more and for longer than others. The term **levendis** corresponds to the physical image of a light-footed man with an upright carriage. In this physical sense the term is addressed to men as well as adolescent boys, usually in an affectionate manner. The physical attributes of the **levendis** are thought to reflect moral characteristics: he is **isios**, straight, and does not hesitate to voice his opinion and stand by it, even against his own interest. **Levendia** is a **palikaria** which has matured and can be traced in the manners, style or appearance of a man. Thus, some men are distinguished as the **levendes** of the village. These men have something exceptionally 'masculine' to show in their record. Often the same men are called **meraklides**. If **levendia** implies the 'straight' treatment of others, **meraki** invites a 'masculine' treatment of the self, keeping the self in a 'masculine' order that is recognizable and in effect appreciated. **Meraki** will be more fully treated below.

All active men bear the potential for being **levendis** and **meraklis**, yet most of them only reach this grade occasionally and then retreat back to a more ordinary status. Some men, however, retain it permanently, thus bearing masculine titles together with their names. These men are distinguished from the social whole by reference to this masculine title. And if a man goes on exhibiting these masculine attributes in old age, he is called **levendoyeros**.

These titles capture a middle range of masculinity, which one expects to encounter in a small locality such as Skamnia. The actual 'big men' of the village are in fact men whose masculinity is in this

middle range. In other words it does not reach the top level, occupied by the efes. Etymologically this term derives from a title of nobility held by the Zeybeks, a warrior tribe who lived on the outskirts of Smyrna. The term is reserved for figures that exist only in a mythological charter of palikaria. In the idea of the efes we encounter the themes of singularity and perfection. It seems that there can only be one efes whose masculinity reigns over a vast spatial and temporal territory. This man captures an ideal to be approached yet never reached by other men. This is the ideal of masculinity always in the making, of constant refinement, of touching the inside boundaries of freedom where the only limitation remains the very self. Layers of ethnic, political and religious meanings are assembled around the symbolically masculine core of the efes ideal.[8]

The terms palikari, levendis and efes refer etymologically to a field of martial traditions, where masculinity is physically contested. The activity of hired soldiers, drawn from the warrior tribe of the Zeybeks and their revolts against the central Ottoman administration in the course of the nineteenth century as well as the illicit trafficing of tobacco by the ethnic Greek contrabatzides of Aivali and Lesbos at the turn of the twentieth century are the repositories from which these supreme symbols of masculinity are drawn. Today men are deprived of this terrain for demonstrating their masculinity. Thus the relevant terms are preferably employed to refer to historically concretized versions of what is masculine in the context of istories, partly true partly fictitious narratives about big men of the past. Still, today, in Skamnia and northern Lesbos the historically real personality of Tsakitzis efes or efes t'Aidiniou, efes from the Aidin reigns in these tales of masculinity side by side with the lesser figures of local contrabatzides. The warrior was, it seems, the supreme masculine heroic model.

The other classificatory level on which masculinity can be expressed is the naming system. There are three categories of names in Skamnia: onomata, first names, paratsouklia or paronomata, nicknames, and epitheta (onomata), surnames. Onomata are the standard, life-time designators of personhood in most contexts, allocated to individuals from a limited pool and in a more or less given order.[9] Paronomata, as the etymology of the term suggests, indicate and register some secondary aspect of the self.[10] Epitheta, on the other hand, reflect a structural reality which is hierarchically superimposed upon the self. If paronomata capture the aspects more hidden from the outside world, to be shared only in informal contexts, epitheta reflect the more public and formal sides of selfhood which are preferably only for outside consumption. Onomata stand in-between this informal/formal, inside/outside, particularistic/universalistic dichotonomy.

An inherent property of the naming system is Skamnia is the depiction of individuality. This is a tendency which the naming system seems to exhibit more in the case of men than of women. Formal and informal nicknames, first names and surnames are in principle equally available to both men and women. I will not consider here differences according to sex in the way names are allocated or transferred. However, nicknames go deeper in tracing individual character and thus are the most appropriate means for depicting what is unique in a person, and are much more common among men than among women. And further in most instances the nicknames that women bear in male as well as in female or mixed settings are feminizations of their husband's nickname: if the husband is nicknamed Galis his wife is nicknamed Galaina. Thus female nicknames, which it should be noted are more commonly employed by men, reflect women's relational rather

than individual status. It appears, then, that women are deprived of individuality which can be socially meaningful and thus translatable to the order of nicknames.

Nicknames usually describe a **psegadi**, a fault in a man's character.[11] Hence the process of nicknaming is called **psegadiasma** and is part of the activity of a narrow circle of men or a **parea**. Nicknames often have an ephemeral character, being 'lost' if the groups that sponsor them change radically in composition or orientation. Many men in Skamnia have two and three well known nicknames, reflecting different aspects of character which have been depicted in different contexts.

Nicknames are further means of hierarchical inclusion in the moral community. Members of the 'big' merchant families in Skamnia, however, do not bear nicknames, because "who can give them a nickname?", "you cannot **psegadiasis** the rich men". Instead, the big landowning families of Skamnia are usually referred to by surnames. These are names which at a certain point were fixed and inherited by men through the paternal line. In this respect the surnames by which the upper classes are known represent exactly the opposite mode of incorporation from the nicknames held by plebeian men. Surnames are not circumstantial, nor do they change in time. They are permanent, inter-generational symbols of social status. They reflect a position in the social structure from which successive generations pass. Thus they connote the total subsumption of all the particularities that make up an individual self to the overarching reality of material status. In the classificatory order of surnames the primary object of naming is not the individual person but the social group which is named after the man who gave it high status. The best examples are the surname **soyia**, big families of the village. Direct genealogical connection to the founding father and name-giving ancestor makes a

person eligible to bear the surname of this family and at the same time places him outside the range of nicknaming. Today there is only one surname group in the village which comprises a number of families of absentee landlords.

As has been stressed, nicknames reflect an identity which is fragmented according to the criteria of evaluation of the naming 'sponsor' and the social context in which the particular nickname is attributed. This is why most men have more than just one nickname which usually reveals the more 'silent', publicly unspoken, sides of a man's character.

In juxtaposition to the particularistic often shameful and informal nature of nicknames, there is another category of names which are held in public and are the most common means of reference and address. In this category we find ordinary first names, combinations of first names based on matronymics or patronymics or a more 'public' category of nicknames (and surnames for the 'rich').

Among them the more common form of addressing as well as referring publicly to a male person is by first name, which in most cases, in juxtaposition to nicknames, is religiously sanctioned, thus placing the individual under divine protection, and normally inherited, the first son getting the paternal grandfather's and the second the maternal grandfather's name.[12] The repertoire of first names used in Skamnia and Skala is quite limited, with some names being held by a considerable number of men. For example, in Skala the names Stratis (9 cases), Panayiotis (8) and Nicolas (7) account for almost half of the baptized males (see Table 12). When nobody else in the village has the same first name a man may be referred to by his first name only, but this cannot apply in most cases. Everybody knows who Petros in Skala is or Loizos in Skamnia. To ask for Stratis, however, is clearly hopeless! In these cases the solution is offered

by the patronymic: ego's first name is followed by his father's first name etc. Thus many men in the village are known as 'x of y'. When two men have the same combination, an extra patronym is added to deal with any confusing resemblance.[13] A good example that I know of in Skamnia is **o Stratis tou Yianni**, from whom another man with the same combination of names is distinguished by reference to his FF and FFF name: the latter is referred to as **Stratis tou Yianni tou Nicola tou Yianni.**

Table 12
Distribution of First Names in Skamnia and Skala

Name	Skala	Skamnia
Stratis	21	9
Nicos/Nikolas	17	7
Yioryos	17	5
Yiannis	16	6
Panayiotis	6	8
Dimitris	8	3
Michalis	7	3
Lefteris	9	1
Costas	7	1
	Out of 159 baptized males	Out of 72 baptized males

This tendency of the more public classificatory system to be based on first names which reflect the unique place that a person holds in a religiously sanctioned, relational, genealogical order is relevant to the classificatory expression of degrees of masculinity. To turn to the question addressed at the beginning of this section, first names can function as titles of masculinity and accommodate the inflation of character implied by excessive masculinity. They thus publicly express the surplus of prestige that distinguishes big men from ordinary men. I will refer to such names as 'big names'. The 'enlargement' of a name to accommodate the very size of its holder is

quite simple: the suffix-aros, meaning something big in size, is added to the end of a first name. Nicolaras, Yiannaros, Stelaras are prominent examples in Skamnia. 'Big names' are used in address as well as in reference. Skamniotes have a rather broad idea of what a big name means: this includes large physique, a 'large' manner (loud voice, good performance record), largess, and, most important, a big heart. As we will see later, all these are ingredients of masculinity which make the fimi, fame of a person. When these various components of masculinity are incorporated in the name they inflate it thus serves as the most important referent for the classification of a person. Some men, then, depict an individuality which is phrased in terms, not of their unique position in the social canvas of genealogical connection i.e. the relational order of kinship, but according to the degree of gender imput which inflates the 'size' of their name.

When I tried to find nicknames of men who have big names I failed to find examples. Equally, use of name or surname in the context of the village is extremely rare in either reference or address for the big man. It appears then that the big name overrides all other designators of personhood and narrows down the choice of term of reference/address to a single man. This may imply that, as masculinity grows, it overshadows relational, physical or behavioural traits of identity.

The big name, then, represents a compromise in the classification of the male person. It draws from two orders of classification. One is based on genealogical connection and places the individual in a network of kinship relations. The other derives from the field in which masculinity is defined according to a model of gender which needs to be further explored. The big man is bearer of both kinship and gender based status, the second enlarging the first.

'Big names' stand between the excessive particularism and fluidity of nicknames and the extreme universalism and rigidity of surnames. They have the 'simplicity' and onesidedness of nicknames extrapolated to the level of formality and scale of acceptance of surnames. They lack, however, the emphasis on the weak and deflated sides of the self found in the former category of names as well as the latter's reliance on a supra-personal, hierarchical social order. They reflect a 'natural' attribute of male character, masculinity which enlarges the individual until it takes on the characteristics of a group, and thus is eligible for a surname. The name of a big man travels a good deal further than the boundaries of his village. However, 'big names' vanish with their holders or survive only briefly in oral memory, since they rest on the actions and reputation of a person who can hold this 'title' till his death. Only in extreme cases can a 'big name' be inherited, and the inheritor must be a man of the same calibre as the initial possessor.

What remains to be explained is how and on what cultural grounds a first name can be inflated. How does the reputation of a big man grow in a way usually limited to those belonging to upper class or higher status groups? Who deserves the title of a big man?

3. Competitive Drinking and Gambling

Contest over raki and over money creates power, establishes moral authority and underlies the symbolic statuses of **rakitzis** (raki drinker) and **koumartzis** or **tzogadoros** (a daring gambler). A man known to be a **rakitzis** and/or **koumartzis** is somehow eligible for the titles that signify the big man. On the other hand, non-participation or a weak profile in these activities disqualifies a man from the higher

positions of prestige, irrespective of his domestic or economic status.

The **rakitzis** is the good drinker of **raki**, a symbolic status acquired through handling the code of **kerasma**. Although Skamniotes respect the altruistic aspects of **kerasma**, no one ignores the asymmetries emerging from the fact that, besides being a form of greeting, **kerasma** is a structured exchange as well. To secure and perpetuate the amicable aspects of commensal friendship one should be **filotimos** and reciprocate. Yet, to be **filotimos** not only implies the defensive attitude of reciprocation, but also the expansive attitude of inviting reciprocation. The first steps of a **rakitziz'** career are founded on expansive over-generosity: he is the **hyper-filotimos** man. He displays an exemplory readiness to treat others, while conforming to the code and accepting their response.

The **rakitzis** is neither merely a good drinker, nor a person with a greater propensity to give than to receive. He combines both qualities. He can drink a lot without loosing self control, and can deal with the flow of drink with which he is challenged. On the other hand, he is a leader in initiating new **kerasma** exchanged. In these capacities he is exactly the opposite of the **bekris**, drunkard. He dominates the **kerasma** exchange because he has more staying power, accommodating the generosity of others while others fail to accommodate his.

An adult man builds his reputation as a **rakitzis** by exposing himself both as a giver and receiver of drinks outside his more normal involvement in a **parea**. As his prestige grows, he is granted especially among his **parea frieds** a special status, and is not obliged to accept their treats. Yet while he withdraws from the binding influence of the **parea** code, he attempts to exploit his **parea** membership in order to expand his sphere of influence.

In the structure of **kerasma** relation the maximum asymmetry that can be achieved is when an individual participating in a **parea** sponsors another **parea**. There are two options for counter-prestating in such a situation. One is that the sponsored **parea** treats his **parea** on behalf of its sponsor. It is impossible to treat an individual separately within the **parea** but the opposite is negotiable. In this way the initiator of the **kerasma** is honoured indirectly, and his dominant position is reinforced, especially if he manages to exclude his external **kerasma** from the **refenes** (equal share of expenses). The second option is that he may be treated separately by individual members of the **parea** on future occasions; this by no means challenges his dominant position. The mechanism of treating a **parea** through another **parea** is the usual means of achieving and reasserting control over a **parea** and consequently over a whole coffeeshop. This is how a senior **rakitzis** handles his focal position in a **parea**.

Because the **rakitzis** partially withdraws from the code of drinking together, he cannot succeed in being both in and out of the **parea** at the same time. In order to maintain and capitalize on his external **kerasma** relations he becomes marginalized in his principal **parea** since he comes in to conflict with the fundamental egalitarianism of rotation and **refenes**. Nevertheless, he is granted a unique status in being a marginal member of a number of **parea** - and he is thus able to manipulate them - but he losses his right to perform the **refenes**. He may now participate equally in the internal **kerasmata**, he keeps his own individual account of the external ones, and he has the right to withdraw from the **parea** before its formal dissolution and to be attached during the same session to another one. Thus a senior **rakitzis**, on the basis of his past record, is granted a right of mobile and shifting participation in a number of pareas. In this way he becomes a link between pareas and coffeeshops and

exercises a hegemonic role in the formation of public opinion in the village. His hegemony is tested not by his physical strength and endurance, but by his ability to handle words and reflect and shape the ideas of his fellow villagers. The senior **rakitzis** increasingly alienates the egalitarian spirit of the **kerasma** code and ritual from the **kerasma** relation. He imports a kind of 'natural' asymmetry from that is confirmed through rather than in opposition to the egalitarianism of commensality. **Kerasma**, then, is the epiphenomenon of his power, a power that has been achieved through **kerasma**. If the shared masculine identity on which friendship is based is at one end of relating in the **kerasma** code, the achieved seniority of the **rakitzis** represents the other extreme.

The alientation of the **rakitzis** from the **parea** is reflected in the physical position he occupies in the **rakadiko**. The **rakitzis** is not usually found sitting, he stands up. He is to be seen either moving from table to table or drinking alone, standing in front of the **tezaki**, counter opposite the **kafetzis**. The place in front of the **tezaki** is considered as a privileged one, reserved for those who are heavy drinkers and busy with their **kerasmata**. It further symbolizes what we have already inferred from the idea of the coffeeshop as a **st^ki**, standing place for men i.e. the essentially mobile male nature. It is characteristic that **nikokirei** men hold a sitting perspective towards the coffeeshop (as well as the church). For example, one of the gestures of respect much used in the past towards the biggest landowner of the village was to get up and offer him a seat as he entered the coffeeshop. The standing/sitting opposition then serves as one of the prominent boundaries between the two models of masculinity.

The power of the **rakitzis** is limited since it depends in the last analysis on the availability of drinking partners and their

determination to stand by the code of the contest. This is the message of a story told in Skamnia about how a famous drinker fell into the trap of an organized rebellion by men who were 'jealous' of him. The hero of the story was invited to enter a set of rounds of successive bilateral **kerasmata** with a group of men. Although the big man beats his competitors individually, he failed to contest their united challenge and was finally 'outnumbered' and defeated. There is little doubt that the big man cannot match the collectivity of men if the latter closes its ranks against him. This is, however, also a warning against the big man who may by his anti-social, aggressive behaviour turn the collectivity against him.

Competition over **raki** is very rarely formalized as a continuing contest between two men. It usually involves somebody exchanging drinks simultaneously or successively with a number of coffeeshop members. Thus the **rakitzis** emerges as the focal person in a network of relations which transcends the boundaries of individual **parea**. These men are linked indirectly and irrespectively of their primary drinking allegiences by the fact that they share - whether competitively or not - the act of drinking with the **rakitzis**.

The **rakitzis** takes the lead in the inducing of **methisi** (literally, drunkenness, intoxication), a collective, festive state that usually occurs in **glendi**, and in which individuals relinquish their individuality in order to participate in group euphoria. An association of drunkenness with loss of control and individual disorder contradicts local practice and does not apply in the present case. One could say that **methisi** is a higher state of collective order, and that in Skamnia it is sobriety, not drunkenness, that is stigmatized. **Methisi** does not necessarily come from the consumption of alcohol. Drum beats and music are said to produce the same effect. These means of intoxication activate male sentiment. Men in the state

of **methisi** unburden their hearts and **kanoun kefali**: the head, the locus of worries and practical concerns, gives way to the heart. If the drinking of **raki** is conducive to liberation from pains and burdens of the heart, then **methisi** represents a state of collective sharing of lightness and gladness. Indeed in **methisi** men achieve **tsakir kefi**, supreme euphoria which cannot be reached on an individual basis. The men who reach **tsakir kefi** contrast with the lonely, sober and despised figure of the drunkard, whose distinctive feature is not that he drinks a lot but that he drinks alone. **Methisi** pushes the logic of sharing to its extreme: if **kefi** is a private sentiment, its supreme form belongs only to a collectivity. **Methisi** encourages singing and dancing, activities which are - in an expressive culture - essential for the definition of masculinity and in this regard are highly valued by local men.

Methisi is highly ordered. Yet its order does not depend on a role of leadership and incipient asymmetry. As men reach **tsakir kefi** the **rakitzis** gradually withdraws or assumes a protagonistic role in the new arenas of expression, possibly in dancing. This, however, is extremely rare. The pace of **methisi** and its intensity depends on the intensity of **kerasmata**. In any case **kerasma** works as an isomorphic mechanism, equally distributing the physical pressure from excessive drinking. As the tables are joined and the context for sharing drink enlarges, it becomes easier to check deviation. Drinking becomes slower and varies according to individual capacity. Men from different tables and **pareas** may start singing together. In general **methisi** appears to be closer to trance than to drunkenness. Further, it has a rythm of its own.[14] At its conclusion the participants leave together and help each other home.

The **rakitzis** exhibits the core sybolic properties of **raki** which have already been contrasted to those of coffee (see chapter VI).

These earlier points are reinforced by a comparison of the 'role' of rakitzis and that of the kafetzis. As we have seen the kafetzis is institutionally rooted in the coffeeshop, often he is owner as well as administrator, and in these capacities he secures the support of kinsmen and friends. Thus he appears to be the guardian of social order in the coffeeshop and a kind of host who holds more rights than his clients. What, however, is apparent is the oppositional complementarity of his position to that of the rakitzis: the latter's influence is based on natural charisma. He is gifted with the ability to sustain the coffeeshop not as an institution but as the setting in which male identity is established as well as contested and graded. The rakitzis is exceptionally influential in the rakadiko. The more the coffeeshop turns into a theatre of competitive drinking, the more the kafetzis passes into the shadows, leaving the limelight to the natural leader.

The other avenue for assessing malehood is competitive card playing and gambling. The terms for gambling in Skamnia are koumari which derives from the Turkish kumar (gambling), and tzogos, from the Italian guiocco (card playing). What Skamniotes conceive as koumari includes evening sessions as well as prolonged night sessions of card playing and gambling with large sums of money.

The favourite game of the evening sessions is bilot: it involves a varying number of men who know each other without necessarily being members of the same drinking circle. Bilot sessions take place very regularly (often on a day to day basis), depending on the season and the load of agricultural work. They can be organized in any coffeeshop and they coincide with normal coffeeshop activity: drinking, chatting and watching television. Small sums of money, a packet of cigarettes, treating to a drink or to a turkish delight are

the stakes. It is not, however, the prize of a drink or one hundred drachmas, but the public image of winning that really matters. A man who accepts losing without protest loses face and is in danger of being called agathos, naive. Old Skamniotes often recall a renowned loser who never accepted his defeat. On leaving the coffeeshop and being asked about the outcome of the game he would pretend ton adiaforo, to be unconcerned. Having turned the corner of the square, he would be adamant that he had won. I found myself the victim of the irresistible determination of my opponents to win. Cheating is a rule of the game during the evening sessions. One has to argue continuously to enforce conformity to the rules. Thus the forcefulness of the players' personalities is often the most decisive factor in the outcome of the game.

In this section I will focus on a more heavy form of card playing which semantically overlaps with proper gambling and which is referred to as tzogos or koumari. Comparatively few Skamniotes participate in this 'elite' gambling circle; and the men who bear the title of koumartzis or tzogadoros are just a few among them.

Skamniotes are very proud of the reputation of their village as the kazino tis Lesvou, the casino of Lesbos. They say that Skamnia is preferred by outsiders because there is 'freedom' in the village. In principle, gambling can take place all the year round, but the gambling season starts around November and reaches its climax at Christmas and the New Year. The gambling sessions are judged on the basis of the sort of people who participate, the amount of money played and their duration. The biggest gambling sessions during my fieldwork lasted almost 36 hours, while 'ordinary' sessions start at night and end towards the following noon. The amounts spent are not easy to report accurately, but sometimes reach tens of thousands of drachmas. In principle any man can participate in a gambling round, given that he

claims to know the rules and does not have the reputation of a bad loser, who does not or cannot honour his debts. Yet what is particularly interesting is the kind of men involved. If **xeri** involves a **parea** of friends and somehow is a form of card playing that conforms to the code of commensality, **tzogos** is exactly the opposite. Ideally it brings together unrelated men, who come from different localities or different pareas in the same locality. In fact it is an occasion dependent on the availability of these 'prominent' outsiders, who usually, directly or indirectly, know each other. The more distant the men involved, the grander the occasion. When two 'professional' gamblers from Mytilene visited Skamnia and joined a few **koumartzides** from Skala and Chilikas, they produced the most exciting and celebrated session of the year.

Gambling, then, inverts a fundamental aspect of **filoxenia**: the **xenos** can be the condition of existence of the gambling circle, his presence may activate an otherwise latent collectivity of gamblers. To take that to the extreme, the circle of gamblers is composed of **xeni** who, instead of being passively incorporated into an already existing whole, unconditionally share the right to contest, a privilege which is ordinarily granted only to a special category of outsiders. In contrast to the **parea**, whose membership depends on being treated, the right to contest, which in principle gambling entails, is open to anyone and is granted to no-one. The gambling circle then comes close to what can be sociologically conceived as outwards-oriented and non-bounded.

Tzogos takes place at night. The **koumartzides** occupy the big table at the corner of the **rakadiko** which is specially covered with green felt for the occasion. They start with light poker. This is a kind of warming up exercise which goes on till the last clients leave the coffeeshop and some latecomers join the circle. Then the **kafetzis**

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closes the doors and draws the curtains; this is the only instance that the rakadiko becomes totally secluded. The curtains remain closed till the end of the session. They symbolize the total seclusion of the gamblers and their immediate environment from the rest of the local society. The village, which in ordinary circumstances has the rakadiko at its very centre is suddenly excluded. Everybody in the village knows what the closed curtains mean and everybody respects the wish of the players for seclusion.

For the players themselves at this moment the rakadiko supplants the community. The closed curtains, further, place the players in an artificial state of darkness and night in which they remain until the session is concluded. This reflects the general mood of the occasion. Faces are tense and sober, guarding against the mistake that can be interpreted as an attempt to cheat. Parexiyisi, argument hangs in the air; the slightest wrong movement and everybody is ready to take offense. In fact this happens rarely. My impression is that the rules were strictly observed, in contrast to other forms of card playing like bilot. Players are mainly silent. Words may be exchanged only if a dispute arises. Then the tone of the discussion quickly rises to a climax, a parenthesis of expressed tension which is followed by another prolonged phase of silent participation. Soon, the contestants manifest symptoms of tiredness. Brandy or coffee are often employed to sustain them, yet raki is avoided. The atmosphere of tzogos represents an anti-climax to the glendi which it succeeds. It is dark, heavy and silent against the light and noisy mood of the raki drinking session.

The total seclusion of the rakadiko is often attributed to the apparently illegal status of gambling. It is true that policemen stationed in nearby Kapi are expected to arrest the gamblers when a formal complaint about gambling is made to them. Yet the oppostion to

gambling stems primarily not from the state, but from the realm of the household and women. Skamniotes tell many stories of wives who have informed the gendarmerie that their husbands are gambling, thus hoping to put a brake on an activity that threatens household finances. And in fact they were often successful, thus increasing the load of magistrates in Mitylene. However, the fines imposed do not put a stop to the gambling. Instead, they appear to inflate the reputation of the gamblers. The big gamblers of the village do not hesitate to recollect with a certain pride the number of times they have been charged with illegal gambling. Excessive 'secrecy' then, seems to be redundant and part of the rhetoric of gambling. The closing of the curtains in Kanelis' coffeeshop clearly stated the message 'we are here', thus constituting an open challenge to all who stand against the realm of the **rakadiko**.

Yet, we should not underestimate the degree of female resistance to **tzogos**. As Skamniotes themselves confess, few married men manage to stay in gambling. This is mainly due to the strong opposition of their wives. Among those who do are a number of medium landowners, a fisherman and one of the few remaining dependent labourers. More than half of the systematic gamblers in Skamnia are bachelors. I often witnessed quite bitter exchanges between **nikokirei** men and men who are well known as gamblers. The **nikokirei** argued that gambling 'destroys families'. "The man who gambles is the worst monster to his wife, who is defenseless against him." For the gamblers themselves, however, gambling has nothing to do with the household. As one **tzogadoros** who recollected an argument with his wife put it: "This is how I am. You knew it when you married me. You should keep your mind on your work (**doulia**) at home (**spiti**). You should not be concerned with what I do at the coffeeshop."

Poka, poker, and a set of variations of poker and dice throwing

are the games played in a gambling session. In principle, the player whose turn it is to deal the cards has the right to determine the game they play. If it is a card game, markes (counters) which are provided by the kafetzis, rather than money, are used. The opposite is true for dice throwing. The game is always premised on consensus. If a rule is disputed an agreement must be reached before they proceed. While the loser has the right to leave the table at any moment, the winner is usually bound to stay till no one challenges him further. In contrast to light games such as xeri, and to a lesser extent bilot, comments on the style of playing or the cards themselves are not made. Nor do they attribute any metaphorical significance to the cards.[15]

I will not discuss the technical details of card playing. My impression on a number of occasions that I witnessed was that a considerable number of players are not technically proficient in the tactics of these games. They appeared to make crude mistakes which most of the time resulted in loss. However, skills and technical expertise do not really count nor do they form part of the requirements for participation. Everybody is assumed to know the rules. And what is most important is to know how to conduct oneself towards one's fellow players, to know, in other words, the explicit and performative, rather than the implicit and more technical, side of the game.

This point becomes clear if we compare card games with the throwing of dice. A pair of dice are put into a glass and thrown, successively, by the two contestants, after the stakes have been decided. The man with the biggest total wins. The winnings are put on the table and moved between the players. Zaria, dice throwing is the ideal form of tzogos. It may be a side event, taking place either between or even parallel to a card game. It may also be the climax and conclusion of a gambling session. In zaria expertise does not

count. The two contestants are exposed, without technical competence, to an eventuality that they cannot predict or control. Zaria, then, points to the core meaning of a gambling session. According to Skamniotes, what is at stake in dice throwing is the determination and courage of the player, his willingness to risk. The gambler is not afraid of **anapodies**, adversities; nor is he **mikropsichos**, lacking in courage. The gambler comes face to face with his **tichi**, luck, as well as his **mira**, fate. Gambling, then, involves the maximum exposure to chance. However, as we shall see, these abstract properties of gambling take a more concrete form when the object of gambling, money, enters the analysis.

What is particularly interesting about gambling is the mode of its evaluation. At the conclusion of a particular session rumours start spreading in the village. Surprisingly, they mainly concern those who have lost and the amount of money lost or owed. Considerably less excitment surrounds those who have financially profited from the occasion.

Gambling is the subject of a significant number of the stories that make up the mythological charter of **palikaria** in Skamnia. What is commemorated in this folk history of gambling are the personalities of the big riskers and losers and the occasions when they lost or came near to an extraordinary loss. One of these stories, which occured in the sixties, involves two of the men now acknowledged as big men of the village, the one still active while the other 'retired'. Allegedly the two men stayed on playing poker during a long gambling session while their co-players dropped out. One won consistently and the other lost a large sum of money. At the climax of the confrontation the one who already owed a record sum challenged his contestant to throw the dice. They agreed to gamble the total of his debt for an olive factory that the losing party owned. Apparently the

factory owner won this single round, saved his property, and was credited with the fame of a big **koumartzis**. This story has an interesting message. Actually, there was no winner in this contest. Yet it reached a climax of risk. And most of the credit goes to the man who, despite his big losses, stayed on till his luck **yirise**, turned. This was the sign of considerable **palikaria**.

This brings us to the folk meaning of gambling in Skamnia. Veteran **koumartzides** insist that **koumari** or **tzogos** is not a profession but a **choui**, a unique and idiosyncratic property of the male character as well as a **pathos**, passion.[16] It is, like **raki**, subject to the deepest wishes of the male heart. **Koumari** is further compared to a **bineliki** (from the Turkish binek, to ride, which is metaphorically applied to male homosexuals), a term which often refers to good **mezedes** and sweets. This suggests that **koumari** 'sweetens' the heart in the way that other exclusively male **sinithies**, habits, such as going with **yinekes**, women, do. In fact **koumari** has been pointed out to me as a substitute for these male 'habits'.

Further, **koumari** is an extreme expression of **chouvardaliki** (spendthrift behaviour) and generosity, attitudes that are more usually expressed in **kerasma**. **O tzogadoros den logarizai to chrima**, the gambler does not take account of money, he risks big sums in a single **zaria**. He fulfils the 'natural' destiny of money: **to chrima ine yia na to xodevis**, money is to be spent. It is interesting to note that the idea of spending money, **xodevo** (and **exodo**, monetary cost) derives from **exodos**, exit, and implies an outward movement. In some sense, then, money 'comes out' in gambling.

Money is physically prominent in heavy card playing. It may circulate openly around the table, come and go between players. It totally prevails in dice throwing where creased and dirty bank notes are put in front of the players.

The centrality of money in gambling is further brought out in the folk history of tzogos. According to my informants, it is the plousii, rich guys who brought gambling to Skamnia. Apparently, the biggest money-lender and his circle of friends were the only systematic players at the beginning of this century. Later, men of this category used a kind of upper class club, where dancing was taught and drinks were served.

Today, however, there are no signs of gambling as an exclusive custom of the upper classes. On the contrary, it is part of a repertoire of masculine practices of the 'haves' as well as the 'have nots'. The recent economic prosperity of the village, the increase in wages since the war, the direct fueling of the local economy by the state and the Agricultural Bank through a loan system, as well as remittances from migrants or men who work in the merchant navy, have created an image of abundant money in the locality. Despite this impressive picture, few villagers can really afford the fluctuations of the stakes in a card game. Sometimes the sums played can well exceed the wages of one or two months. It is true that playing is adjusted to the agricultural cycle. Most dice confrontations take place in a maxoulochronia, fertile year, when the first income from the harvest starts flowing into the pockets of the players. But even under these financially favourable conditions the ambitious tzogadori have to borrow money in order to keep themselves going.

Borrowing for card playing is suggestive of the symbolic meaning of money, in particular, and tzogos in general. Debt has been endemic in the socio-economic structure of Skamnia since the intensive commoditization of the local economy in the late nineteenth century. Small and medium landowners as well as wage labourers depended on the regular flow of large sums of money in the form of loans from moneylenders who were usually also involved in commerce, as olive oil

merchants or grocerers. If debt was in the past at the centre of economic dependence of the great majority of the population on the two or three **beratarei** of the village (one of whom was known in the thirties as the **trapeza**, bank) today it characterizes the relation of the villagers with the state owned Agricultural Bank. Loans are needed between the harvests while the expenses for various stages of the labour process are borne, for repairs and renovation of equipment, for specialized agricultural tasks such as fencing, for building or repairing houses. This is one of the most important facets of village economic organization and as such will not be dealt with here. It is quite evident, then, that the debt situation is not just a marker of class dichotomies in the past, but even today permeates the relationship of men of both categories to the state. **Nikokirei** men pursue a defensive attitude towards debt. This is both uneconomic as well as an impossible aim because of the nature of the labour process in both fishing and olive growing. **Nikokirei**, then, are pushed mostly by need into borrowing. Usually the attitude of **nikokirei** is to repay their loans regularly and escape from debt as soon as possible.

Men of the other category adopt an offensive strategy. First, some of them tend to exploit the economic advantage that rests on the quite low rate of rent. Their attitude is often rationalized in terms of an argument which may look very familiar to many students of rural underdevelopment in third world countries.[17] The loan is viewed as an obligation of the state to those who feed the wider society. When I did a survey of the olive processing cooperatives of the island I came across two men who viewed loans as a form of wage or salary. Second, they do not regard repayment of their debt to the Bank as a moral obligation. Thus many of them avoid repaying the loan and thus enter an almost permanent state of debt. The 'understanding' of the state which at successive times during the 1970s has either frozen or even

suspended agricultural debts has reinforced this strategy. These men are at the same time reluctant to borrow from an individual person rather than from the state institution. A gambler once stressed to me that he does not borrow from a fellow villager, even if he does not have money to eat. The same man, on the other hand, does not hesitate to borrow from anyone if he needs money to play cards. This in fact is a kind of custom among gamblers. What, however, is even more striking is that these men who are usually ready to fully exploit the opportunity to get a loan from the Bank and do not pay it back, insist that the **chreos apo tzogo ine iero**, the gambling debt is sacred. A proper man, **ofili**, is obliged to repay it. If the debtor is an outsider, he should be paid immediately - one can delay, however, repaying a fellow villager. Thus one usually borrows from within to close the amount of an external gambling debt.

Nicos P, is one of the reknowned **koumartzides** of the village. He holds a respectable record of fines, sentences 'awarded' by the Mytilene Court where he was taken for illegal gambling. Nicos is a **bekiaris**, he owns as well as rents together with his younger married brother, one of the big **kesimtzides** of the village, more than 90 **modia** of olives. He is naturally regarded as one of the **kalous tou choriou**, good-standing of the village, and does not need to do **merokamato**. Yet, during the harvest season, he worked as an unskilled labourer in the local olive factory. When, quite surprised, I asked him why he had to do so, he explained that he had to repay a large debt from the previous winter's gambling. Nicos couldn't ask for a bigger share of their joint earnings because gambling should not be mixed with household earnings. Nor could he sell part of the patrimony. In his case the money got from selling his labour financed his gambling. **Merokamato** and **tzogos**, wages and gambling money, are directly commensurable sectors of a non-domestic, extra-household sphere of

circulation.

The maneouvres of married men in similar circumstances are even more limited. The renumeration of joint ventures with their wives are often under the scrutiny of the latter and should secure the prosperity of the household. As we saw in part II, women are usually the guardians not only of their dowries and independent earnings, but also of the channelling of male income into household reproduction. Family or household property must not enter the financial cycle of gambling. This is thought of as part of a domestic order which intersects at the margins with the market economy without ever becoming fully 'economized'. The money that is used in gambling appears to be a more economic form of money that derives from the non-domestic order of wage labour or monetary circulation (loans from the bank) or, in the last analysis, from the selling of olive oil which has not yet been domesticated through the intervention of women. Koumartzides seem to share a view prominent among the nikokirei: that the property which a woman brings with her at marriage is inviolable. Thus a man from a neighbouring village who allegedly 'ate' part of his wife's dowry at the card table was stigmatized even by some of his gambling partners.

Gambling, then, represents the extreme form of an anti-savings attitude: the koumartzis is the exact opposite of the ikonomos and nikokiris. Yet, in contrast to all other forms of money consumption, gambling presents us with the rationalist problem that there appears to be no purpose in spending one month's income at a gambling table. Money spent in kerasma or in glendi is justifiable in terms of the effect it produces: in the last analysis it maintains male communion and conserves the egalitarian, integrated and joyful picture of malehood. Gambling, on the other hand, produces an opposite image of the male world: segmented, dark, tiring, sober. No-one in the village

was ready to describe gambling as a means of profiting at the expense of another man; in fact some men worried about the ethics of winning the daily wages of those in the same class position. In other words, gambling does not only contradict the requirements of a house-centred ideology, but apparently does not accord with the call for equality in association, sharing and identity. From the point of view of the code of male commensality, gambling, then, appears as an almost purposeless act of financial destruction which, despite its contrasting features, figures as one of the major avenues for the demonstration of excessive masculinity.

4. The Symbolism of Money

The cultural evaluation of loss in gambling, the contrast between the gambling debt and the ordinary 'economic' debt, as well as the separation of a gambling sphere of money circulation from the domestic one invite a deeper look at the wider symbolism of money. This is also the place to account for the tendency of big men in Skamnia to bring together in one career of excessive masculinity the activities of competitive drinking and gambling.

The modern tendency of Skamniotes and Skaliotes to gamble with money that has not crossed the boundary of the household, as well as attitudes towards debt, are suggestive of the wider meaning of money. These points will become clearer if we adopt a historical perspective in the analysis of the symbolism of money. Indeed, in various parts of this thesis I indirectly implied the early familiarity of the local economy with external markets and money. Unpublished historical evidence indicates that, as early as the middle nineteenth century, money was employed in land or olive oil transactions, in the

renumeration of labour, in tax payments, in dowries, in offerings to the church. Given this early monetization one might expect to find a highly symbiotic attachment of Skamniotes to money. Yet, the attitude that prevails historically as well as today among different categories of men is that of antipathy towards money.

To account for this paradox it is necessary to distinguih money as a mode of economic calculation from the actual availability and use of cash. Indeed, it appears that the two or three merchant families who controlled the access of the local economy to the big external markets at the end of the nineteenth century also controlled the very sources of money and its flow within the local society. Thus, as money increasingly became the principal means of economic calculation and payment they used their vitual monopoly to consolidate further (through usury) their hold on the local economy.

One example of economic exploitation was the so called **selimia** (unknown etymology) which rested on olive oil/money convertibility and its administration by merchants. Because small or medium peasants needed money, they often sold part or all of their expected harvest in advance to a merchant and money-lender. The loan was in money, yet was calculated on the basis of the current price of olive oil and converted into olive-oil. If the debtor could not honour his obligation because of a poor harvest, then the lender could extend the initial loan plus interest but phase it in either olive oil or money and according to the current price of oil, depending on which was more advantageous to him. In periods of poor harvest, when usually the debtor could not repay, the price of olive oil was high and thus the debt was calculated in money terms. At good harvests and lower prices, the debt was calculated and paid in olive oil. Because of fluctuations in the price of oil the money lenders could easily put their debtors into a state of permanent debt.

Under these conditions money came to stand for those who handled it most and the ways they related to the local society. It symbolized, in other words, the trading class and a relationship of exploitation established with a great part of the local population. The nikokirei, who lost most from this situation and at the same time were best placed to react, pursued a defensive strategy which relied on the detachment of the household-based economy from the hold of the merchants. They promoted an internal sphere of exchange based on olive oil as the principal means of exchange and payment. Landless, dependent labourers, on the other hand, could not avoid economic dependence.

In the introduction I argued that post-war changes, and especially the dramatic increase in the prices of labour and lesser increases in the prices of principal commodities, such as olive oil and fish, as well as the transformation of the land tenure system, radically changed the profile of the village economy. Yet, despite the greater availability and more equal distribution of cash and a parallel rise in living standards, the agricultural producer's dependence on the market, which to a great extent came under the control of the state and its bank agents, remains today equally marked and provokes reactions that resemble those of the past.

Present day nikokirei farmers pursue an attitude of avoidance towards money as well as towards wage labour. Indeed, they tend to rely on family labour and sinalama, symmetrically arranged labour exchanges between households. On the other hand, some of them still use olive oil as a means of calculation and payment in a number of transactions (e.g. buying land) and in saving. Despite the favourable conditions for borrowing from the Agricultural Bank, they tend to avoid taking loans.

Many nikokirei fishermen who share these values find it more

difficult to avoid money. Most of them depend on fishmongers who act as brokers and advance cash loans as prepayments for a catch in return for an exclusive relationship with their fishermen-clients. Yet even in fishing there is side by side with the market a non-monetary sphere of fish distribution. At the end of each fishing trip two separate calculations of output are conducted, the one being in terms of fish and the other in terms of money. Fist, a certain portion of the catch is set aside and divided into equal shares to be taken by each man to his household for consumption. What remains is for the market and its cash equivalent is divided into equal shares of money for all those who contributed with either labour or capital. In both instances the natural produce, olive oil or fish, stand for the values of household sufficiency vis a vis money that today represents the ethic of market and state as well as the dependence of local producers on these institutions.

This opposition between the principles of household autonomy and the forces that promote its dependence on money and the market is mediated by women in their double role as focal persons in households and earners and administrators of money. Women appear to be closer to money than men. Men pass their small daily or weekly earnings to their wives who are, as we saw in chapter III, in control of household finances. Women have a much greater ease with money: they earn it themselves as well as get it from their husbands, to whom in return they advance small amounts of pocket money daily, they store it, spend it in small everyday transactions as well as in larger household oriented 'investments', for ritual and other purposes. Thus women resolve male ambiguities towards money and effect the running of the household in a predominantly monetized economy. They further extend to money their ability to transform natural, unprocessed products into 'cultural' processed ones.[18] They somehow 'domesticate' the monetary

earnings of the household just as they cook and clean. Thus they make money part of the order of the household, and essential ingredient of its present welfare and future reproduction.

Today plebeian men exhibit the most clearly antithetical attitude to money. These men cannot avoid coming into physical contact with money. They rely on wage labour and they have to get different kinds of loans in order to improve their conditions of living. On the other hand, the eventual bettering of their economic situation allows for a more aggressive attitude towards money and, indirectly, towards what money stands for.

These men are keenest in arguing against, and demonstrating the ill-effects of, money. They articulate the general view that money is vromiko, filthy, stinking. This image is captured in the widely held idea, which from an early stage mothers instruct their offspring in, that one needs to wash one's hands after money has been touched. It further relates to the moral devaluation of cash as originating in the amoral and hierarchical order of the state and the market, as changing hands and crossing boundaries without restriction.

Men who hold the values of kefi further oppose the symbiotic attachment of money to the household. From a coffeeshop point of view, money is part of the order or interested exchange and thus reinforces the effects that sinfero has on men. In the form of mamonas, a kind of spirit, money appears to upset the correct order of things.[19] According to one of the big gamblers of Skamnia, o mamonas tous echi kiriepsi olous, mammon has mastered them all. Under the influence of money men allegedly adopt an economic attitude aimed at saving, accumulation and profit, they prefer money-yielding work rather than money-consuming leisure, they pay less respect to the values of education and enjoyment with consociates. Moreover, in pursuing money, men are increasingly enslaved to the forces of sinfero

that promote selfishness, competitiveness and divisiveness in the male world. From this point of view money is a burden on the heart; all it does is foster worry, anxiety and misery.

Male attitudes to money are reflected and graded in various forms of coffeeshop behaviour. In treating to coffee, money is often publicly acknowledged: the one who treats can initiate **kerasma** by putting the monetary equivalent to a coffee on the table. In chapter VI we saw that coffee symbolizes the household and the compromise of masculinity within the coffeeshop, and in this respect it refers to a form of commensality that is compatible with interested exchange. The sharing of **raki**, on the other hand, is represented as unconnected with its monetary renumeration; the money that buys **raki** is usually invisible during drinking but it appears at the conclusion, behind the scenes and with a certain diffidence. Moreover, as we saw, there is no room in **raki** commensality for contract and interested exchange. This strict separation of **raki** from money is also evident in gambling where **raki** is not consummed, and suggests that these two symbols stand for mutually exclusive orders. To the question that is often explicitly asked, **ti axia echi to chrima**, what value does money have, the men of the coffeeshop give a negative reply.

Yet a certain ambiguity surrounds **raki** commensality since it relies on **raki** bought with money that comes to a certain extent from within the household. This ambiguity is resolved in gambling, where the symbolic opposition of what **raki** and what money stand for is fully demonstrated: the first is a symbol of the festive and joyful spirit of **methisi** and **glendi**, the second of the sober and solemn atmosphere of the gambling session. Light and outward-orientation is attached to **raki**; heaviness, darkness, inwardness, seclusion and isolation to money. This catalogue can be extended to involve meanings that have been explored in other contexts. Interpersonal exchange and the

circulation of common substance in the world of men refer to raki; impersonal exchange, atomization, antagonism and fragmentation refer to money. It is evident then that what kefi is to sinfero, raki is to money. And last but not least, if we think of the 'un-domesticated' kind of money used in gambling, it is the contrast between the equality and autonomy symbolized by raki and the submission of the hierarchy of the state and market symbolized by money.

Gambling, however, not only exhibits the big cleavage that separates money and raki but it is also the setting in which the values of raki override those of money. In gambling money is emptied of its exchange value, the transaction power that underlies all threatening and divisive properties of money is set apart. Instead, it is treated as an object of consumption, a point confirmed by the prestige advanced to the big loser. Money is a burden to be got rid of, an object of filth and denigration. In gambling the market and state definition of money is inverted and defeated. The protagonists in this destruction of money are precisely those who stand for the values of raki commensality, the rakitzides and 'big men' of the village. The context in which they meet seems to transform the open character of commensality into the extreme form of non-relatedness. Indeed the gambling table is the most open structure of the male world: it brings together men who have transcended membership of parea (as well as family) and men who are outsiders. These men do not turn into friends nor can they practice filoxenia since no-one can play the role of the host. They do not seem to relate with ties of interpersonal contest. Loss is not conceived as the loss of a particular person and does not initiate a new round of gambling with the same contestants. Gambling appears to focus on the absolute singularity of the players who meet in alien territory to engage primarily not with one another but with money and what it stands for.

Gambling, then, carries a heavy sybolic load. Interpreted from the perspective of the coffeeshop and in the context of the wider symbolism of money and raki, it seems to be a major symbolic gesture of emancipation from ecoomic debt, of defiance to the institutional producers of money, and an important response to economic dependence, social displacement and class marginalization. In this capacity it is the most extreme demonstration of autonomy, which is, apparently, expressed in gender terms.

I initially posed the question: why are money and raki symbols of opposite orders handled by the same men in the rakadiko and how do they contribute equally to the making of masculine status? Why do rakitzides turn into gamblers? The anti-money nature of gambling provided the key to the answer I propose. This is part of an anti-state mentality that will be further explored in the chapter on the community. A final point should be made here. In gambling, big men seem to stand on the boundary that separates the rakadiko from the realms of household and state. These men guard the order of commensality from the divisive and threatening properties of interested exchange. Yet, in contrast to women who extend their transformative power to money as well, thus resolving its moral ambiguity and making it part of the order of the household, big men pursue a negative attitude towards money: they contest its meaning from the coffeeshop point of view and, instead of adapting it in the commensal realm, they either hide its presence or deflect it. Radical opposition rather than transformation and symbiosis characterizes this exclusively male attitude to money.

The conceptual foundations of the masculine spirit of autonomy, of deflection and opposition to whatever threatens the world of male friends, heavy drinkers and gamblers, is the subject of the following section.

5. Kefi: The Organization of Male Sentiment

The **rakitzis** and the **koumartzis**, the modern versions of the **palikari** and the equivalents of the historical type of the **contrabatzis**, are thought of as men with big hearts or big souls. These men encapsulate the spirit of contest, mobility, freedom, courage, masculine ideals which are regarded as properties of the male heart. The magnitude of the heart is the very measure of masculinity. The highest accolate for men is to be called **olos kardia**, all heart.[20]

Men are born with emotions. It is considered **fisiko**, natural, for men to have emotions as well as to express them, irrespective of the effect they may have on their social surroundings. This is in fact a central aspect in the inter-generational transmission of gender identity. In contrast to young girls who are continuously told to behave properly and exercise emotional control, young boys are encouraged to display and make a show of their emotions. When they do so they may be rewarded by the address **levendi mou** or **yie mou**, which shows approval.

The anti-social effects of emotionality are not due to weakness, or lack of consideration for others, but to the nature of life. As life progresses increasing layers of role engagement, social obligation, or more mundane concerns deriving from participation in life are placed over the expressive centre of male individuality and threaten this primordial state of emotional purity. As we shall see men have two options: to reject such obligations, or to accept their burden.

The notion of the heart and the cultural organization of the modalities of sentiment are at the roots of the concept of the male person in the society of Skamnia. Men whose behaviour derives from their emotions, sometimes in spite of and against that which is

dictated by the rational calculation of self-interest, are thought of as anthropi, 'men' or 'human beings'. Proper men are expected to feel, to express their emotions and to tailor their actions to them. The moral side of a decision is thus judged primarily in terms of the emotions or the lack of emotions embedded in it.

Emotions should surface spontaneously, they should be and are shown to be authentic, rather than mediated by considerations external to sentiment, and checked by the fear of the effects they may have on the self.[21] If there is an etiquette to regulate emotional display, then this etiquette aims to reveal the 'real', 'authentic' almost 'natural' self. Discursive means are too limiting for the expression of the vast repertoire of emotionality. Bodily movements, gestures, culturally specific sounds are other important parts of the language in which emotionality is expressed. Satisfaction with a meal is shown with a sound of approval that seems to ascend straight from the stomach! A supreme state of festivity and joy invites the most total form of participation: the body expresses its wholeness in dance. Yet, it is assumed that there is a privileged centre of emotionality; this is the heart.

Some men are virtually disqualified from participation in the moral community of the coffeeshop. These are men who occupy the top of the local class structure: they are civil servants, big landowners and men who administer money. However some of them through their coffeeshop career manage to escape coffeeshop marginalization. Aftos ine anthropos, he is a human being, they said about the local industrialist, who had the reputation of being an expressive person who often attended the coffeeshop. Anthropia is contrasted to kalpia, a treacherous and deceitful attitude, and poustia, passive homosexuality. Poustides, passive homosexuals, are regarded as the antipode of anthropi.[22] They are thought to be men who lack any

active participation in emotional fulfilment. Instead, they rely on other men for sexual satisfaction and adopt a feminine posture which they convey to the male world. Further, these men are regarded as emotionally crippled, as lacking an expressive potential through which they can actively relate, and thus are agents of an attitude of jealousy and cunning towards their fellow men. The idea of having sex **apo piso**, from behind is regarded as characteristic of animals but not of humans.[23] It contradicts the masculine ideal of open, face to face encounter and of 'straight' dealings, **sta isia**. A proper man is **dobros**, frank; his **logos**, word is **isios** since it is made straight by the consistency of his feelings. As we have seen, the **apo piso** posture constitutes a major threat to masculinity and male decency. In this respect the sexual mode with which the passive homosexual is identified classifies him, together with the **bekris** in the category of moral outcasts. A **poustis**, however, is not tolerated in the coffeeshop in contrast with the **bekris**.

The theme of lightness pervades the images of masculinity. It is a sign of expressiveness, associated with the **glendi** and the state of **methisi** in which **kefi** is achieved. In heavy drinking and in gambling men **xelafronoun tin kardia tous**, lighten their hearts and unburden them. The ideal **palikari** or **levendis** is a tall and slim man with an upright carriage rather than a heavy, stolid man. This image should be demonstrated in dancing, yet it is indeed surprising to watch how rather overweight men manage to create this unpredictable impression of lightness and almost feminine grace when they dance the **zeybekiko** alone or with a friend. I should note that the local tradition concerning the outstanding **palikari** of the island, in spite of variation from village to village, is unanimous on the most significant display of manliness: it is the local hero's extraordinary leap over a fountain (allegedly located in Ayiassos, Skamnia or some

other village).

Being in a state of lightness that intoxicates the self and brings it into an expressive or even creative mood is the core meaning of the notion of kefi, which has already been discussed in the last chapter. Kefi is the ideal emotional state, a kind of natural orientation of the self which may be fulfilled in an act of festivity, in a particular relationship or in the demonstration of expressive skills. As we saw kefi is the ultimate reserve of a commensality that keeps its distance from instrumental exchange. Men are not expected to be always in a state of kefi: that would be quite suspicious since it would imply that one follows an escapist tactic. Yet proper men should choose kefi whenever the chance is given and even at the expense of other commitments.

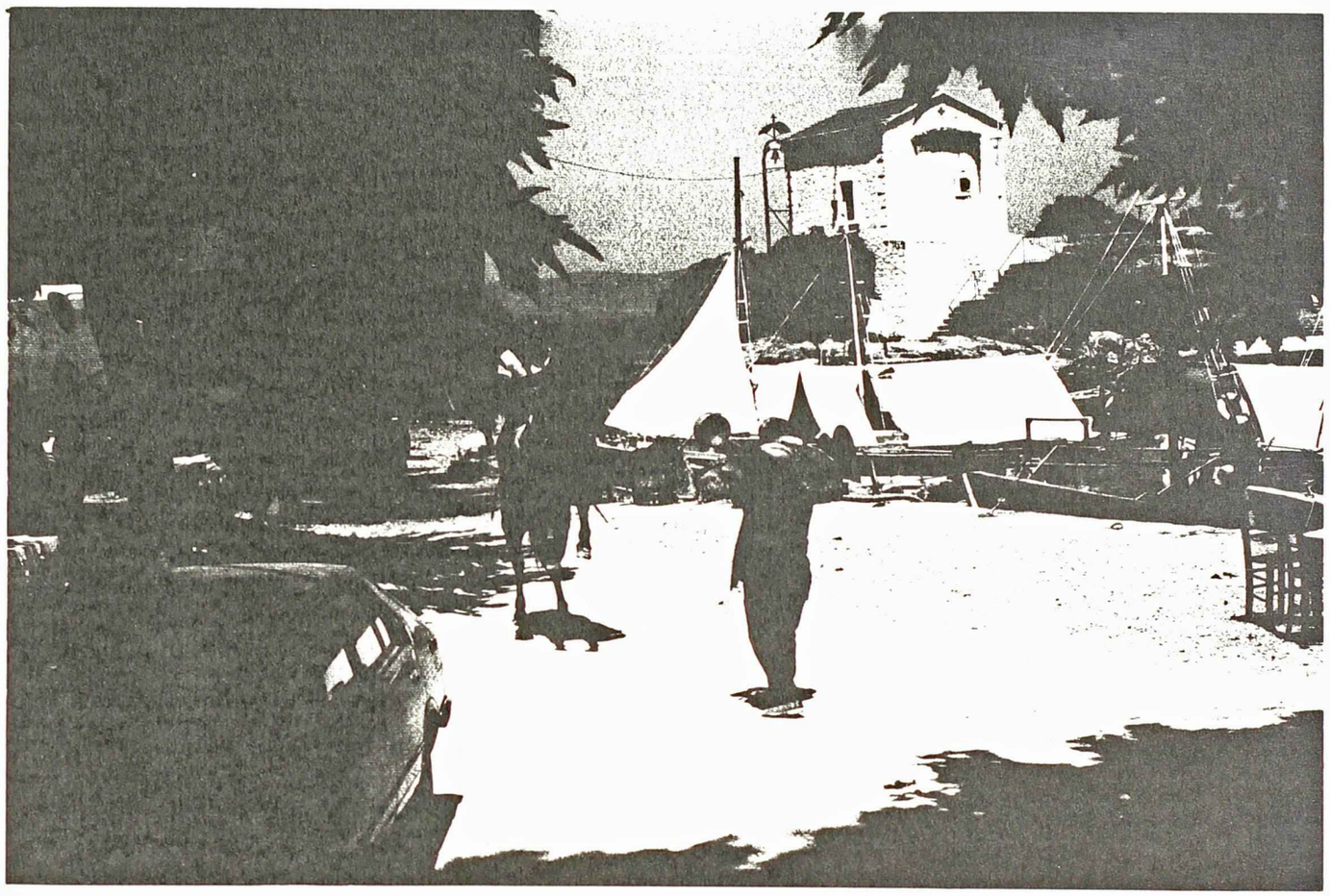
Kefi underlies the demonstrations of palikaria in the coffeeshop. As it has been argued it represents a direct opposition to ipochreosi and sinfero. It is a 'natural' imperative, that centres on the individual self and guides it to the realization of the masculine sides of selfhood. And it is the core notion in a constellation that involves other modalities of male sentiment such as meraki, sevda or derti.

'Meraki' is the triumphant expression of male sentiment in its struggle against the hostile surroundings. It comes from the Turkish merak which means curiosity, whim or passion for something and refers to an expressive potential, a surplus of the self which carries the shield of individual male identity to whatever person or object with which the self associates. In contrast to kefi which is an unqualified sentiment, external to the self, meraki is more particularistic, it is not shared, and adopts a different form and magnitude in each individual. Men are distinguished by their specific meraki 'for something' or 'in something'. Meraki applies to women and

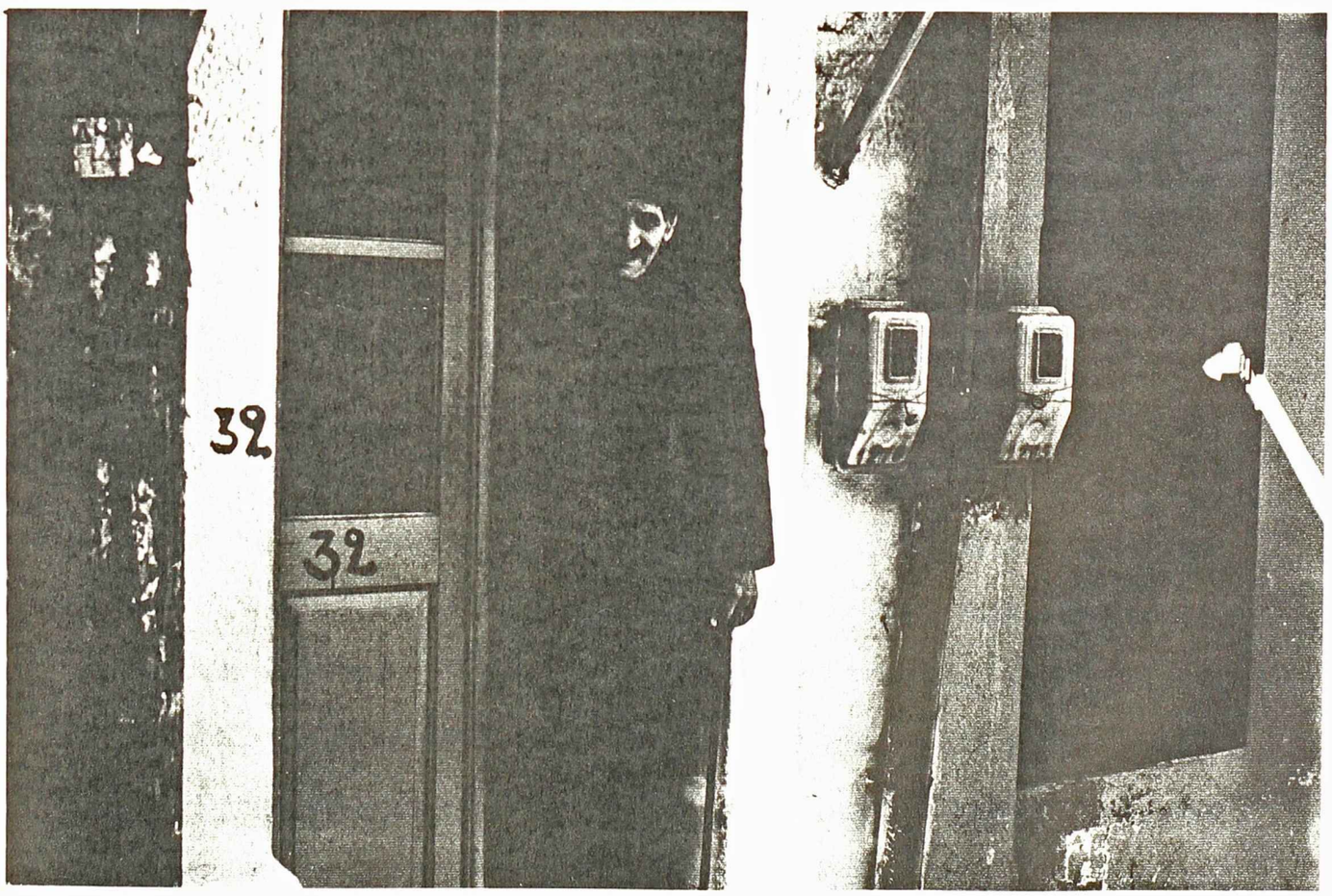
relates to craftmanship that derives from woman's hands. Women exhibit **meraki** in cleaning, decorating or cooking and they further receive praise for the health of their hands, **yia sta cheria sou.** This is deprived of any esoterical, emotional value. However, **meraki** differs also from **choui** which is an attitude of male idiosyncracy.[24] **Choui** is responsible for the unsociable, uncreative, even destructive and pain-producing sides of individual male character, in juxtaposition to **meraki** which captures the more rewarding and sociable sides of male expressiveness. This is why **tzogos** is part of the **choui** rather than the **meraki** territory of the male self. **Choui**, further, refers to idiosyncracies that cannot be accounted for in terms of the cultural configurations of male sentiment.

Men with a developed sense of **meraki** are called **meraklides.** From the **kefi** point of view **meraki** is the mode and style of life which all decent men should adopt. It is an energetic attribute of taste that further justifies male existence. This idea is well reflected in the motto that a well known **meraklis** of Skamnia had inscribed on the side of his carriage: **opios den ine meraklis prepi yia na pothani, yiati ston kosmo adiko mono ton topo piani,** whoever is not a **meraklis** ought to die because without justification he holds his place in this world. **Meraki**, then, is a kind of return gift that individual men make to their creator. It is confirmation that they are alive.

The privileged site of expression of **meraki** is the body and its apparel. **Meraki phenete**, appears, in the way a man keeps his moustache or his hair, in the way he dresses, rides a horse, takes care of his car, sings or dances. **Meraki** organizes the aesthetic side of the public image of the male self. Wives or children do not participate in this image since it is assumed that they cannot constitute a man's **meraki.** The apotheosis of **meraki** is **asikliki**, from the Arabic **asik**, a wandering minstrel or a lover. This is a state of



21. Images of the male : the display of masculinity in front of the camera.



22. The twilight of manhood.

being well groomed, which is a result of deep passion and has an erotic flavour.

Work in general is **tiranida**, tyranny, and **vasano**, torture. This evaluation refers to hierarchical forms of labour and it includes wage labour, dependent labour and, more generally, labour that is oriented to money and the market. **Meraki** relates to the creative (not to say artistic) sides of work. One cannot display **meraki** when one is bound in labour arrangements controlled by others. Thus **meraki** is channelled only in the unmediated paths that unite the autonomous self to the outcomes of work. In this sense it is usually an attribute of the 'independent' professions, especially those which are part of the 'service' sector of the local economy: Skamniotes still commemorate the **meraki** of an old **arabatzis**, carriage man, who used to decorate his horses and carraige with various ornaments. Certain activities, however, are thought to be a direct outcome of **meraki**, those who perform them are the undisputable **meraklides**. The best example, today, is the care of vineyards. Thirty years ago the slopes opposite the village settlement were full of vineyards which were cultivated by their owners and provided a part of the local supply of **raki**. Today, only a few of the vineyards remain in use. Their owners and cultivators are thought of as exemplorary **meraklides**.

During my first months in the field an old man in his seventies, an ex-**parayios** with a big moustache was pointed out to me as an example of a **levendoyeros** and a **meraklis**. Barba-Zacharis still takes care of his vineyard. **Apo meraki**, out of enthusiasm Barba-Costis dug the entrance of the village and built both a coffeeshop and a terrace out of stone. This was an enormous task which took him years and could be accomplished "only because of his **meraki**". **Meraki** conserves the cable pathways of the village, the old, Ottoman fountains (but not the Turkish cemetery), and unites all that is regarded as an authentic

expression of the heart in a single universe of meanings to be preserved and passed on to the generations to come. Meraki, on other words, underlies a folk concept of paradosi, tradition. By investing the self in objects and aspects of material culture, meraki extends the scope of istoria to include these items which, by surviving the passage of time, remain as silent reminders of the past in the present.

Male sentiment, of course, is not restricted in its application to self or the objects to which the self is extended. It is also applied to other human beings. Filia, the sentiment of friendship for one's own sex has been fully explored in the previous chapter. Sevdas is the sentiment that applies to heterosexual liaisons with an explicit erotic content.

This idea of men 'falling in love' has been discussed in chapter two. Men are ideally expected to apply their emotions towards finding a sexual or marital partner. A certain cult of courting and forms of expressing erotic feeling which are recorded in local literature are certainly exaggerations of everyday practice in Skamnia. Men are fond of discussing their love affairs with their kira (wife) or other significant moments in their love life. Yet they are eager to distinguish these experiences from the category of conquest. The idea of agapisiaris, a man who falls in love rather easily and shows his feelings, is ambiguous since it implies a certain dependence on women. On the other hand, equally ambiguous is the reputation that undisciplined sexual play with women can bring to a man. This is a demonstration of virility, which probably cannot be channelled in another way, yet at the same time it shows a certain latitude and emptiness of feelings. Being sevdalis, from the Turkish sevda, melancholy love, intense longing, in other words, being in love, is a state that all men are expected to experience. Mens' view of

sevdalisma, explicit courtship, is that women hold a rather passive role, just igniting an erotic feeling that is primarily male.[25]

Men should not exploit their natural superiority over women; they should be neither possessive nor aggressive, but should extend their sentiments to include women. In this respect the image of the **palikari** and the **levendis**, or the **meraklis** and **asikis**, does not conform to the well known Mediterranean macho stereotype.[26] A man who is sexually aggressive to women and is known to have tried to take sexual advantage of a defenseless woman is called **mourdaris**, from the Turkish **murdar**, dirty. This is a mark which without definitely stigmatizing and excluding a man, nevertheless makes him an object of gossip which damages his reputation.

However, a considerable number of discussions I had with men on this issue were on failure rather than success, on feelings towards a woman that never found their way to fulfilment and eventual marriage, but led to disappointment. It is not always easy to assess the 'truth' of these 'love stories' which often do not involve sex but appear to be part of a male erotic fantasy about women.

Failure in love is the supreme example of **vasano**, suffering, and a principal source of emotional stress. Indeed, the ways of the heart are fraught with obstacles, most of which emerge from the conflict, endemic in the world of men, between the externally imposed requirements of social participation, on the one hand, and the internal need for expression, on the other. The majority of men who possess average **meraki**, and a limited capacity to conform to the dictates of the heart, live between **vasano** and **kefi**. Usually these conflicting emotional states are symmetrically divided, balanced between morning and evening, house and coffeeshop.

Sometimes, however, emotional stress and pain, associated with failure in love, death or monetary debt, is neither ephemeral nor can

be easily set aside. This is so in derti, which derives from the Turkish gloss derd, meaning pain and malady as well as trouble and grievance. Derti refers to a deep wounded heart, a pain and a worry that does not go away.[27] If a man says to another mouyines derti, you have become a derti for me, he means that the other adheres to him in an unpleasant manner. The derti is a weight on the heart and may lead to a temporary paralysis of expression: the man with an emotional malady may detach himself from the male collectivity, cancel his commensal obligations and sit alone.

Even the most negative of these modalities of sentiment are positively evaluated. Derti, for example, which may legitimize anti-social, sober, and unfriendly behaviour is tolerated not to say admired. A dertilis is a man who lives rather than avoids his deep passions, who does not compromise but defends the right of his heart to expression, even at the expense of high risk, failure and pain. Dertia are not discussed openly but should be shared in private with commensal friends. The 'deeper' dertia are dealt with by a friend of 'the heart'. Dertia, then, are to emotional friends what secrets are to consanguineally related women. In the philosophical discourse of plebeian men, life is full of misery, and within man's destiny there is ample space for suffering. Pain is the under-current, the deep structure of joy, derti lies behind kefi. The solemn, inward-oriented atmosphere of the coffeeshop in the mornings encapsulates this collective mood.

Notes to Chapter VIII

1. Here I refer to a set of novels by Myrivilis (1978; First Edition 1943); Kontoglou (1944); Makistos (1976; First Edition 1953); Paleologos (1980; First Edition 1971); Venezis (1928).

2. The farmers of the plain are thought of by Glendiot men as **spitaridhes**, a relatively female category of men (Herzfeld, 1985, 134). This seems to be the Cretan equivalent to the **nikokirei**.

3. For an extensive discussion of different kinds of formal office and the characteristics of office-holders see Loizos, 1975, 104-115.

4. It is quite interesting how a novelist describes the **nikokirei** of the past: "The **nikokirei** settled in the place where they were born, they had a separate piece of land to be buried there whenever their turn came." (Paleologos, op. cit., 9.) On the issue of **nikokirei** see Salamone and Stanton, 1986.

5. Lison-Tolosana (1983, 170-201) systematically discusses the formation of generations in the Aragonese context, yet from a more sociological approach.

6. The idea of 'titles' has been explored in the Spanish context where they refer primarily to social rank (Pitt-Rivers, 1971; Brandes, 1980, 38-44).

7. This point has been fully presented by Campbell (1964, 278-282).

8. The secular idea of masculine perfection that the efes image captures brings to mind its religious counterpart. Among the plebeians of Western Anatolia, christians as well as Muslims, we find the worship (usually in local or regional shrines) of saints such as George, the horse rider and dragon killer, Michael or Taxiarchis, the Archangel with the sword. These images of sainthood around which plebeian syncretism was organized and practiced for centuries are exceptionally masculine and today they are often used in the metasymbolism of the efes.

9. Aspects of the naming system in Greek communities are discussed in Bialor (1967) and Herzfeld (1982). Kenna (1976) and Vernier (1984) consider the association of name and property rules in the Aegean.

10. Nicknames are favourite topics of anthropological analysis in Greece (Bernard, 1968) and Medieterranean Europe (Brandes, 1975; Cohen, 1977; Pitt-Rivers, 1977, 84-93; Barrett, 1978; Gilmore, 1982).

11. For an analysis of the moral content of nicknames in the Mediterranean see Pitt-Rivers, op. cit., 84-90.

12. This is a widely spread pattern in the Aegean. See Kenna, op. cit.; Vernier, op. cit.

13. Loizos (1975, 96) reports for Kalo the differentiating function of nicknames in cases of men who bear the same first name.

14. For a detailed description of **glendi** see Caraveli, 1985. Caraveli (op. cit., 278) stresses that "at the highest moments of **kefi** the group (**parea**) speaks almost as one coherent unit, sharing the same sense of being, appropriateness, and meaning".

15. For a rich metaphorical discourse which focuses on male themes and arises at the occasion of card games see the very interesting analysis by Herzfeld (1985, 152-62).

16. For the notion of **choui**, see Herzfeld, 1980, 348.

17. See for example Roseberry, 1978.

18. On the transformative ability of women in the Greek context see Dubisch, 1986b. Carsten (forthcoming) applies this argument to the case of women handling money in a fishing community.

19. Notice the origins of the term in Christian literature. The gospels of Luke and Mathew record Christ employing the term to refer to a personification of material wealth.

20. Brandes (1981, 230) notes that in eastern Andalusia "the locus of power and will, of emotions and strenght, lies within the male genitals". This comes closer to the testicle focused image of **andrismos** reported by Campbell (1964, 269-70) than the heart-based construct of masculinity found in Skamnia.

21. Here I follow Rosaldo's (1983, 136) view that "emotions are by definition not passive states but moral acts" in juxtaposition to Fajans (1983, 166) who distinguishes between emotions, "a private, subjective state" and sentiments, "a culturally constructed pattern of feeling".

22. **Poustis** and **poutana**, whore, are the lowest denominators in the local moral taxonomy. Herzfeld (op. cit., 158) reports the metaphorical association of the jack and the queen to these two labels of immorality. Sometimes the two terms are used interchangeably to refer to a crafty and shifty man.

23. Brandes (op. cit., 232-4) discusses the connection of anal penetration with moral weakness. For an Italian case see Dundes and Falassi (1975, 188-193).

24. Caraveli (1982, 138) reports that in Olymbos, a village of Karpathos, "**meraklis** is a performative category with connotations of passion and aesthetic excellence in performance". The **meraklis** manipulates **glendi** to reinforce or renegotiate the social and moral order. For the idea of **kefi** see Caraveli, op. cit., and 1985, 263-4.

25. Erlich (1970, 29-33) discusses in the context of what she regards as a fusion of Slavic and Oriental elements the strong emphasis on love and initimate feelings among the Muslims of pre-war Yugoslavia and notes the synthesis of love and grief in the notion of **sevdah**.

26. For an analysis of Mediterranean machismo see Pratt, 1960; Gilmore and Gilmore, 1979; Brandes, 1981; Driessen, 1983; Murphy, 1983b.

27. There are obvious parallels to Christian orthodox and Islamic religious imagery of pain. At Easter Greeks honour "Christ's **pathi**", pains and his holy **anastasi**, resurrection. Notice the double meaning of **pathos**, pain and passion. It is this paradigmatic transcendence of the state of darkness and suffering into ressurrection that provides the sanctified, archetypical and holy image of **glendi**. On the other hand, Tapper and Tapper (1987) remind us of close parallels in the treatment of Muhammad in **mevlud** ceremonies and practical Islam.

PART IV

THE VALUES AND POLITICS OF LOCALITY

CHAPTER IX: THE VALUES OF PERSON AND COMMUNITY

1. Introduction

It is by now a tradition not to say an act of loyalty to the established anthropology of Mediterranean Europe for the ethnographer of notions of gender, sentiments, aspects of prestige, or the modalities of rank in a southern European society to discuss the well-known and recently disputed concept of honour.[1] This discussion is facilitated by the extensive semantic range of the gloss 'honour'. As one of the founding fathers has put it:

> The notion of honour has several facets. It is a sentiment, a manifestation of this sentiment in conduct and the evaluation of this conduct by others, that is to say, reputation. It is both internal to the individual and external to him ... (it is) simultaneously all of these, for both its psychological and social functions relate to the fact that it stands as a mediator between individual aspirations and the judgement of society. (Pitt-Rivers, 1968, 503.)

This extension of meanings has been instrumental in the definition of the Mediterranean as a culture area. Yet it has also attracted criticism from those who emphasize the need to focus on semantic variation and account for it at the local level, as well as to open the boundaries of the cultural paradigm for the purposes of cross-cultural comparison. Other criticisms have been voiced against the granting of analytic status to an indigenous notion and its upgrading to a major term of comparison. The translation of local

glosses into the English 'honour' is not always satisfactory. This is certainly the case with the Greek terms **timi** and **filotimo** which I will not translate in this section.[2]

It is one thing to question the use of the terms 'honour' and 'shame' as glosses which can be used for the purposes of analysis and comparison, as well as means for granting to the Mediterranean the status of a culture area. It is another to assess ethnographically the content of local notions which postulate the ideas of worth and esteem, prestige and reputation, the semantic range of which overlaps with the domain of 'honour' proper. Instead of totally dismantling the 'honour' paradigm of Mediterranean values we should allow more space for local meanings and their articulation across the domains of gender, personhood, status and prestige. This strategy may lead to a more multifaceted approach to what is 'common' to different Mediterranean cultural practices.

In the description of competitive drinking and gambling I approached the ordering of male prestige, reputation and 'achieved' symbolic status from the point of view of notions of gender that prevail in the coffeeshop and, in particular, in the **rakadiko**. Heavy drinkers and gamblers stand on a male frontier, which is expressed in the idiom of contest. Yet many men never enter this borderland. Does that mean that they are deprived of any kind of reputation? Here I will enlarge the context of the ethnographic discussion of status and prestige to include men of all categories as well as men's relationship with women. It is not the **rakadiko**, then, the male collectivity and its big men, but the community of men and women, of coffeeshop as well as household, that provides the social context of the discussion that follows.

This change of viewpoint is significant because it reveals a set of meanings that support membership of the community and equally

pertain to men of different categories. It suggests a mode of evaluating men that does not rely upon coffeeshop and **rakadiko** masculinity, and in this respect it is of special relevance to those who do not obtain their prestige in the **rakadiko.**

The prestige criteria of the community in general to some extent encompass the particular prestige structures of the **rakadiko** and are informed by the cultural configurations that have already been discussed. Yet they semantically rely on a wider range of factors that include the demonstration of male sentiment as well as the consistent fulfilment of inter-sexual obligation. They are compromistic in nature, binding in effect, flexible and open to interpretation by different categories of the population. They permit the placing of men in the contradictory continuum that unites **kefi** and **ipochreosi** according to the degree of commitment that individuals have to these competing forces.

In fact the values that centre on the notion of **filotimo** refer to the minimum prestige requirements for both categories of men; they point to a shared definition of moral integrity, to what constitutes as well as to what threatens the wholeness of the individual person irrespective of whether this person aims to achieve a status granted in the **rakadiko** or household. To enter the prestige competition you have to be and feel worthy.[3]

Filotimo has been described as "a man's sensitivity to his reputation for **timi**" (Campbell, 1983, 207), "the quality of ... doing the proper thing in one's relations with others" (Dubisch, 1974, 324), a necessary component of man's "self esteem or amour propre", expressed in the "fulfillment of his obligations to his family and especially to his women" (Friedl, 1962, 86). The **filotimos** man is "the person inspired by self respect, ... a high souled and generous

person" (Peristiany, 1966, 179) who besides fulfilling expectations can subordinate selfish to collective interests and put a "brake (**freno**) on aggressively competitive behaviour" (Herzfeld, 1980, 344).

Most points in these references are confirmed in the case examined here. **Filotimo** is a key word in the world of Skamniotes. It refers to an individuality and distinctiveness that is neither inherited nor awarded but derives from a man's own efforts. **Filotimo** dwells within the man, reflecting the authenticity but not necessarily the magnitude of feelings. It points to an idea of moral integrity which is based on the extent to which behaviour is governed by the expressive centre of the self. The attributes of **filotimo** are indicative. The **filotimos** man is generous in his dealings irrespective of his economic standing; he is **dobros**, a word of Albanian origins meanings straight and frank, despite and ideally against, his own interests: there is no allowance for cunning and treachery in defence of a noble cause. **Filotimo** requires a consistency of feelings through time as well as a correspondence between words and deeds. A man has to stand by his **logos**, word. Yet once the correspondence between word and action has been proved then discrepancy between verbal commitment and its realization is by definition restored.

In the above respect, then, **filotimo** appears to be premised on the same configurations of meaning that we encountered when we analyzed the notions of masculinity and male sentiment. For example, the idea of the 'human being' and the fundamental equality among men intersects with the notion of the man who is **filotimos**. Yet **filotimo**, rather than supporting the opposition between **kefi** and 'obligation', bridges it. The proper fulfilment of commitments to others is essential to a reputation as **filotimos**. **Filotimo**, then, legitimizes 'obligation' from the side of expressiveness while ignoring the

inherent conflict between the desires of the male heart and the opposition that they meet from other quarters of society. In fact, there is a much wider potential for legitimization in the values of **filotimo**. It is a kind of moral catalyst that rephrases the situations the self is found in as deriving from internal properties. It has the potential to masquerade the imposed, enforced or ascribed as the naturally given, or achieved, and, further, turns various forms of asymmetry into emotionally-based equality.

In Skamnia there is limited semantic correlation between the notions of **filotimo** and **timi** despite their etymological affinity. The discrepancy between **timi** and **filotimo** derives from the incompatability of behavioural patterns which are informed by the two notions and is expressed in linguistic usage. Among the Sarakatsani, who are familiar with the notion of **filotimo**, a man ought to be **filotimos** i.e. be "concerned about the nobility of his own conduct" and "take into account how his actions affect the honour and prestige of others" (Campbell, 1964, 294). This is, however, an unattainable ideal because "the responsibilities which each individual owes to the family group absolutely preclude his acting in this manner" (ibid., 295). The Sarakatsani "do not use the substantive **to philotimo**, a 'sense' of this honour, which is a concept of popular thought extremely common in many parts of Greece" (Campbell, 1983, 197).

Dubisch described a different pattern for a village on the island of Tinos: "the word **timi**, honour was one I did not hear used, though some of the villagers' ideals could be related to what has been described as the concept of honour elsewhere in Greece" (Dubisch, 1972, 112). In Skamnia this discrepancy takes an extreme form: **timi** is not of any apparent concern to the Skamniotes, nor do we find among them the same stress on the physical and moral properties that constitute the ideal man or woman in **timi**-oriented societies.[4] In

fact, the stigma of 'anti-social' is attached to behaviour that in other Greek localities seem to be guided by a concern for **timi**. In the Greek ethnographic context this is a paradox.

The roots of the incompatability between the two standards of conduct that have been ethnographically reported in various parts of Greece represent a problem not fully explored;[5] and, more particularly, the prevalence of the **filotimo** code in certain contexts remains unaccounted for. Here, I will attempt to tackle these issues.

2. The Sentiments of **Filotimo**

A prominent Skamniotis writer, Myrivilis (1930) argues that: "**Filotimo** ... is a kind of **egoismos**, self regard and assertiveness, which moves here against the **ego**, self" (364). This turning of the self inwards, even against the self, captures one of the principal images of the **filotimo** man, who is expected to feel **dropi**, shame, as well as **perifania**, pride.

Dropi has been associated with the ideal of women's behaviour especially in sexual relations. It has thus been translated as the sexual shame of women on which their own as well as their families' moral reputation is based.[6] As we saw in Part II, women believe that sexual shame is dependent on membership of a matrifocal network. Among local women there is no overall, stressed concern with sexual shame since their reputation is beyond dispute. Female outsiders, on the other hand, are almost by definition thought of as lacking shame and are often classified as **xediantropes**, irrespective of their actual behaviour.

There are, however, no grounds for restricting a discussion of shame to female behaviour. Indeed, recent ethnographic work shows

that shame pertains to male behaviour and applies to individual acts without bearing upon the whole person.[7] Evidence from Skamnia suggests that there is a more broad and I would suggest primary meaning of **dropi** as a sentiment which encourages people to comply with a code of sociability and self perception to social expectation.

Dropi is a widely employed gloss in everyday oral discourse. The expression **dropi sou**, which has a much weaker connotation than its English equivalent, shame on you, is often used for scolding a child, reminding a relative of his obligations or just pinpointing the anti-social tones of a particular act. Generally, it is a way of bringing to order anyone who has slipped temporarily into deviance. The more **filotimo** one has the more sensitive he is to social expectation, the less he is subject to external reference to his **dropi**. On the other hand, the reference to shame does not impose permanent moral stigma. It is rather a temporary reminder of proper conduct.

Pitt-Rivers had defined **verguenza**, the Spanish equivalent of **dropi** "as a concern for repute" (1977, 20). In the above sense he considers shame as the opposite of honour and its complement. "A person who has verguenza is sensitive to his repute and therefore honourable, but if he is given it, he is humiliated, stripped of honour" (ibid., 21). To be given shame means you lack honour. In Skamnia **dropi** corresponds to a 'sense of failure' (Campbell, 1964, 310) which, however, does not carry the same implications nor does it have the overall effect that Pitt-Rivers indicated. There is a long way between **dropiasma** and the loss of moral reputation. This is so because, especially among men, **dropi** is primarily an aspect of an act and only indirectly an aspect of the person. Scope for manoeuvre, negotiation and regaining reputation remains. The shamed man is given the chance to prove that moral fault is not innate to his character.

In fact to be **xediantropos** is to be **afilotimos** and means that the normative implications of **dropiasma** have no effect on you. The **afilotimos** is immune to **dropiasma.** Only men who stay for long in a **dropi** bearing activity are so classified. The lack of close correlation between **dropiasma** and loss of repute is another fact of the flexibility and tolerance of mores that characterizes Skamnia.

A term used interchangeably with **dropi** is **tsipa**, skin. Challenged on the basis of **filotimo**, a man may be asked whether he has **tsipa.** Men who are thought of as shameless are also referred to as **xetsipoti. Tsipa** represents the outer self, the boundary between the inner self and the social forces that surround a person. It registers a state of shame by changing colour. When a man is ashamed he is expected to blush.

Dropi and **tsipa**, then, demonstrate the active interaction and sensitivity of self to others. A similar sensitivity is captured in the idea of **sinidhisi**, a kind of awareness of self and others.[8] **Sinidhisi** is the intellectual side of **tsipa.** Both are requirements for the recognition of obligation. **Sinidhisi**, however, allows more scope for negotiation with others since it enables people to think about instead of merely responding emotionally to what is required.

Dropi is the side of **filotimo** that is antithetical to the sentiments which I described as masculine. **Kefi, meraki** or **derti** justify an expressive attitude that, despite its authenticity and subsequent legitimacy, can create tension and unease among some men and between men and women. This is in fact one of the most fraught terrains of the application of **dropi** since male expressiveness has an outward orientation which can easily manifest itself as trespass of another's private territory. The example is almost standard: men who achieve **kefi** in the **rakadiko** feel the need to broadcast their meassage. They parade through the village singing late at night. At

the same time a window may open and a woman will shout: **den drepeste**, aren't you ashamed? This plea to their sense of shame is usually effective, the **parea** either retreats to the **rakadiko** or just goes home to sleep. The 'shaming' cleanses the anti-social overtones of male expressiveness. **Dropi**, as a brake, limits the self and operationalizes the symbiotic properties of **filotimo**.

Dropi and the behavioural patterns that derive from **sinfero** are, similarly, in conflict. **Sinfero** sustains **egoismos**, self regard, which also includes specific others.[9] In fact reference to these others, usually dependent members of the family, adds a moral gloss to this attitude. Yet, in Skamnia **egoismos** is seen as the aggressive pursuit of **sinfero** which can even divide friends or members of the same family. It is inappropriate for a man who is **filotimos**. The men who fiercely quarrelled in the village square because the domestic animals of one had trespassed on the other's olive grove were treated with a certain contempt by passers by who watched the scene. They ought to have been ashamed of making such a fuss. Even more shame accrues to the brothers who stopped speaking to each other because of property differences. The amity of kinship or friendship, the spirit of cooperation between partners or neighbours, the mutual loyalty of the labouring peasant and his landed boss should not be jeopardized by the more particularistic concerns of **sinfero** and **egoismos**. **Filotimo** guards social cohesion and disclaims whatever promotes fission and anomie.

From what has been said so far about the images of men, it appears that the ideal of **filotimo** is threatened from two sides. The big drinker and gambler can easily be seen as promoting an individualistic rule; he is secluded in a one sided world of emotions that may get out of proportion and generate conflict. The householder, in his turn, has a tendency to barricade himself behind

his self-interest and antagonize his fellow men because of material goals. **Dropi**, then, is an entrance to a self often entrenched behind emotions or material considerations and an internal plea for conflict resolution and harmony between differently tuned individuals. And if **kefi** is the sentiment of expressive individualism and same-sex solidarity, and **egoismos** of corporate familistic particularism and atomism, **dropi** is the sentiment of unqualified, generalized social cohesion.

Dropi submits the self to the 'court of reputation'. Yet in a culture that promotes male autonomy and expressiveness, the total submission of self to others that **dropi** represents seems paradoxical. This paradox is resolved by a sentiment related to **dropi: perifania**, pride. The man who is **perifanos** is a person with a highly developed sense of shame, who does not need to be reminded of deviance. He holds superior standards of conduct which place him outside the reach of public moral intervention. The same standard is applied to others. As an effect **perifania**, safeguards a subjective sense of worth and represents an emotional readiness to defend it. It is an oversensitivity and vulnerability to insult, to real or potential asymmetry which usually coincides with the enlarged **filotimo** of the big man. In contrast to the **egoistis**, who represents particularistic interests, the proud man stands for widely approved ideals. He is the keeper of values. In Skamnia they refer to a deaf person as a man **perifanos staftia**, proud in his ears. Indeed, **perifania** can easily result in a state of isolation. Once the big man ceases to earn his reputation, he exploits his immunity from **kerasma** and the 'tolerance' shown him in order to preserve the 'big' image.

There are two men in Skamnia who still enjoy the reputation of big men without any current justification. In fact I was astonished when people praised a man who, as I found out later, is one of the big

tzogadorous of the village and protagonist in the famous gambling contest I referred to in chapter VIII. This man hardly interacts with anyone, he does not exchange drinks, nor does he voice his opinion aloud, and for some time he was an enigma to me. This can be attributed partly to his 'difficult', 'idiosyncratic' character and partly to his pride. Yet, despite his abstention from social life he enjoys considerable **sevasmo**, respect. This is an extreme case in which social esteem rests on self esteem which was socially justified in the past and is now sustained on the basis of pride. Yet the cost of the disjunction between the image held and the image sustained is high: it is a kind of honorary retirement to a state of untouchability. A man is forced to the inner margins of social participation in order to preserve a past reputation with his **perifania**. In the last analysis **dropi** and **perifania** do not just delineate a subjective as well as a social sense of self and others; they are, further, feelings of displacement in the opposite direction, lower versus higher in the prestige order, outwards versus inwards in the realms of social participation.

Perifania relates to an image of the self as a territory that has to be kept integral and intact. This image is captured in stylistic presentations of the self, in standing, walking, speaking or arguing. The self is full and upstanding, occupying maximum physical or discursive space. In this sense **perifania** is a cognate of **meraki**, though its points of reference are enlarged to include the successful accomplishment of all obligations.

Perifania guards the territorial image of the self. If this territory **patiete**, is trespassed it is an insult that provokes a response, usually a closure of the boundary. Yiorgos and his father in law rented a car to carry the members of the harvest team to the fields. Thanos joined them at Yiorgos' invitation, yet his **filotimo**

patithike when Yiorgos' father-in-law commented on the fact that he did not contribute to the expenses. Thanos stopped speaking to him after this. In conjuntion with **dropi** that mitigates against self-exposure, **perifania** may lead to closure as a means of guarding the borderline between self and other, and defending the territory of selfhood.

3. The Loss of Reputation

In the previous chapter we saw how a man's prestige grows according to a scale of feelings which are thought to reflect masculinity. It is now necessary to consider the domain in which reputations are lost and men are deprived of the right to hold any prestige and to assess the social effects of moral displacement. In what situations is a man's **filotimo** put at stake? First, it should be made clear that the idiom in which reputation is expressed is not that of **timi**, nor even that of **filotimo**, but of **dropi**. As we saw, failure or misconduct of a certain kind is perceived as **dropiasma**, the descent of shame upon a particular person.[10] Secondly, the situations in which reputations are damaged are rather non-dramatic. Reflections on incidents of this nature tend to underplay their significance. I often had the impression that the collective mind was oriented towards the gaining of a reputation and this not at the expense of that of another man. Third, and most important, events such as homicide or the drawing of blood, seduction or adultery, do not provoke the kind of reaction that one would expect in a **timi** oriented moral system.[11] Incidents of violent domination are very rare, they do not give further recognition to the successful challenger, nor is it assumed that the victim should respond with equal or superior force.[12]

Skamniotes still recollect the interesting case of a murder that took place in the village more than sixty years ago. A **parea** of young men, described as **'efedes'**, were drinking together in the Greek **rakadiko**. At a certain stage they sought out the orchestra which was offering its services to another **parea** of men, holding a **glendi** in a house. Some of them went to the house, interrupted the festivity and attempted to get the musicians to the **rakadiko** by force. The recollection of the event by villagers as well as close relatives of those involved was unclear. Apparently, one of the leaders of the **parea** that was challenged reacted and in the fight that followed was killed by one of the intruders. What is most important is the cultural value that my informants put on the event: this was an unavoidable fight between two **palikaria**. Nobody commented on the loss of the life over a dispute about music's worth. The murder **yia ti mousiki**, for music is representative of the local variant of the 'honour' crime.[13] Failure to meet a challenge which focuses on a masculine theme - in this case involving the achievement of **kefi** - can lead to a loss of face and may damage one's reputation.

However, this is an extreme example of 'high' stakes among the **palikaria** involved. Shame does not accrue to the loser of the contest as long as he conducts himself in a noble manner. Both protagonists, the victor of this contest and his victim, are equally remembered as **palikaria**.[14] Further, the drawing of blood does not violate the **filotimo** of the kin or associates of the victim. Thus homicide does not initiate a cycle of reciprocations as in feud-oriented societies. There is no evidence in either practice or discourse of vengeance killing, nor does the idea of repayment prevail. On the other hand, in discussions about everyday disputes it becomes clear that the same men who praised those involved in the above incident pointed out their difficulty in morally justifying the drawing of blood in the present.

The effects that homicide has on a man's sense of worth, its meaning, as well as how it impinges on the social fabric, are indicative of a contrast between **filotimo** and the constellation of values that focus on the notion of **timi**. This contrast will become clearer as we consider more ordinary circumstances in which **filotimo** is put at stake.

Usually, at the subjective, experiental level, **filotimo** corresponds to a state of feeling **entaxi**, alright, i.e. not feeling shame. This should be the condition of every man who meets the social expectations for noble conduct. As a drinker, the man with **filotimo** exhibits a readiness to reciprocate the **kerasma** to which he is subjected by his consociates. As a labourer, he works hard to justify the renumeration of his work and thus is above accusations of laziness. He recognizes the problems of the **afentiko** and shows sympathy and understanding to his class superior. This is especially the case when the employer is identified in some sense with the community. The employer **dini doulia**, gives work, and the employee should reciprocate properly. The four workers in the cooperative's factory who went on strike 'should have been ashamed', because they did not recognize the problems facing their employer, as well as their moral duty to the locality. The husband with **filotimo** fulfills his obligation to his wife and household by being a proper provider.

However, the par excellence locus of shame is the state of debt, especially when the creditor is an insider and a social equal. **Pote ise entaxi? Otan den chrostas**, when are you alright? When you don't owe. The repayment of a debt represents an extreme and most alienating form of obligation because it arises from the most hierarchical form of dependence. In a spirit of generalized egalitarianism **filotimo** works against the subsumption of self to others. It represents what Peristiany (1966B) has rightly diagnosed

as a struggle to remain equal in an environment suffused with binding **ipochreosis**. **Filotimo** is normally judged by the manner in which one fulfills obligation, and plays the role of husband and friend, labourer, tenant or debtor.

One way of avoiding the moral obligations is to abstain from 'exchange' altogether. This tendency, which suits the householder's ideal of sufficiency, eventually leads to a contradictory state of passivity. **Filotimo** has to be demonstrated, the self has to be exposed to the possibility of a debt, the moral integrity of a man needs to be proved in the challenging circumstances of treating, wage labour, monetary loan or marriage. Men with a low profile in the coffeeshop are placed at the margins but are not conceived as lacking **filotimo**. Their strong card in the household realm partially compensates here. Yet, a man who does not show signs of **filotimo** in both domains is in danger of being conceived as **adiaforitos**, as apathetic as well as being without morals. Asking about a would-be informant I was warned by a friend: **Aston afton, ine adiaforitos**, don't bother with him, he is not interested, meaning that this person neither knows, nor is he a reliable source. He is a man whose views should not be taken seriously and who should be avoided in commensal life or in economic arrangements. The same man is also thought of as **grousouzis**, ill-omened, and a bringer of misfortune to others.[15] He is an 'absentee' insider, who **den filotimite**, does not show willingness to take initiatives, even if asked. His **filotimo**, however, is thought to be idle rather than totally lost.

At the other extreme, **filotimo** appears to intrinsically relate to the values of the gift.[16] I was once reminded by the mother of a married Skamniotis that her son is **iperfilotimos**: he shows an extreme sensitivity in his coffeeshop obligations, he is always ready to treat others even at the expense of his loyalty to his household. This was

said in a tone both of complaint and admiration. The **iperfilotimos** is the man who pays respect to an obligation of a superior order. For example he represents as well as protects the good image of the collectivity, which he himself gives rise to. Thus **filoxenia** is one of the test points of the **iperfilotimos.** The **filotimo** of the village requires the offering of hospitality and generosity to outsiders. A Skamniotis should not show indiffernce when a **xenos** enters the coffeeshop, otherwise **to chorio tha dropiasthi**, the village will be shamed. The man who shows the greater readiness to face these collective obligations need not necessarily be in the 'big man' category. Yet he is among those who gradually gain the right to speak on behalf of the community.[17] Being myself a **xenos**, I had many opportunities to consider the various instances of **filoxenia** presented to me. This usually took the form of a treat to a coffee or soft drink and more rarely to a raki. My impression is that **nikokirei** mostly exploit the opportunities to offer hospitality in order to build the reputation of being **iperfilotimos.**

From what has been said so far **filotimo** emerges as a sentiment, a subjective sense, as well as a code of placement within the moral community. It symbolizes membership which is granted irrespective of age, social class or economic status, and which has to be sustained according to a code which both limits as well as engages the self vis a vis the other. The **adiaforitos** or the **grousouzis** is the man who lacks a sense of place and who in the last analysis is deprived of one; yet he is part of the social whole despite the fact that he remains outside the game of prestige. The contrast between the 'indifferent' and the 'hypersensitive' is one of grade. There are instances, however, in which a man is stripped of his moral reputation. Drunkenness and failure in betrothal or marriage eventually leading to separation are the standard issues over which

moral reputation suffers an irreversible setback.

The 'drunkard' is thought to be a **chameno kormi**, lost body. He is a man who cannot respect any of his obligations even that of taking care of himself. He is a burden on his relatives as well as on the collectivity. The 'drunkard' personifies a state of shame which is thought to pollute. Thus he is avoided by everybody in the community and treated as an outcast. Yet, once he is placed in the margins, it is those on whom he depends who are mostly exposed to the shame he brings to the community. In 1959 when Kriton, who is 48, got married to Tasoula, who is 6 years younger, nobody expected what was to follow. His **nikokirei** in-laws relied on the good reputation of his family and the good economic position of his father, who was a grocer. They believed that Kriton would follow in his father's footsteps, but he turned into a friendless, heavy drinker, who quarrelled with for no reason, breaching the harmonious spirit that **filotimo** encourages, and he did not support his family properly. His wife, who gave birth to a daughter in 1963, had two options. She could ask for a divorce, but was ashamed to do so, despite the public approval for her and the recognition of the justification of such a move. On the other hand, to have a child by the wrong man is too great a mistake for a woman to bear. Instead of acknowledging this mistake, she took the second option of leaving the village together with her husband and son.

A more common source of shame is failure in marriage. In Skamnia I counted at least four cases of broken betrothals or marriages which were arranged in the decade of the 1970s. In all four cases it is the husband or husband-to-be to whom guilt was attributed. A man 'should be ashamed' to maltreat his fiance or wife: this is the standard accusation that is voiced against the men. An accusation which is difficult to check and which equally did not lead to any repercussions beyond the 'return' of dowry. All four men, having been stigmatized

for breaking of their betrothal, failed to find marital partners from within the community; the opposite was true for their ex-fiances/wives, three of whom got married to Skamniotes. Demographic factors certainly played their role in favour of the separated women who could choose from a wider circle of eligible men. Yet it is also true that the moral reputation of these men suffered a setback: none of them ever obtained any kind of public office, despite their good economic standing. In two of these cases the husband/fiance was accused of drinking and of not attending to his household duties properly. As far as I know, the domestic credentials of the women involved were not questioned. It is evident, then, that these men failed to stand by their household obligations, and match the standards of their female partners. This image of man who fails confirms a point made in chapter II: that it is women who mainly hold the initiative and set the standards of marriage. It is evident that the failure of the marital partners to match in attaining shared obligations leads to conflict not only in the formative but also in the advanced stages of marriage. And while 'formal separation' and divorce is an option when there are no children, the existence of a family requires the formal perpetuation of the conjugal bond whatever the cost.

Another area that in the Southern European context is traditionally thought of as a vulnerable point for men's 'honour' is the sexual behaviour of women. The ethnographic literature of Greece and the wider Mediterranean clearly indicates that men's reputations stand and fall in accordance with the sexual conduct of their women folk. Women's sexuality represents a threat to the reputation of men and endangers the moral integrity of the kinship group to which they belong. The classic example is the woman who 'puts horns on' her

deceived husband through her adulterous activity.[18] In general, a woman's failure to keep up moral standards provokes a reaction by the man responsible for her. This emphasis is usually reflected in social concern about premarital chastity and marital fidelity.

In Skamnia as we saw in part II, any reference to women's chastity before or during marriage is to a large extent rhetorical. Two pieces of evidence support this point. First, the considerable number of cases in which the bride is already pregnant at marriage, as well as a certain scope for women to change sexual partners during courtship. Second, the equally significant number of extra-marital sexual unions which involve women whose husbands for various reasons, usually prolonged absence, do not fulfill their sexual duties. These adulterous liaisons are dealt with the tolerance that derives from an understanding that they aim to restore an equilibrium which has already been disturbed. Generally, such forms of sexual behaviour do not create anxiety or moral indignation in men or women, nor is there any evidence to suggest that they represent a threat to the reputation of the male kin or affines involved.

On the other hand, there are forms of female sexual behaviour that are regarded as illicit and seem to contradict the moral standards of the community. It is such behaviour that one would expect to test whether and to what extent men's sense of worth rests on women's sexuality. The typical examples of illicit female behaviour are adulterous unions which involve a married man and a married woman both residing and commiting adultery in the village, or the sustained sexual activity of an unmarried woman who does not aim to formally marry. The idiom of **keratoma**, the putting on of horns, which is used in other parts of Greece to refer to the adulterous activity of a spouse, is not used in Skamnia.

Let us consider the case of Foti's daughter. Fotis is a landless

labourer, age 72, who worked for many years as **parayios** and later **kehayias** of one of the big landowners of Skamnia. He is of refugee origin, the second of four sons and well attached to the large matrifocal group which came to Skamnia from one of its 'colonies', Papasli, in the 1920s. Despite his low economic status, Fotis had achieved the reputation of an intelligent, calm and honest person, the example of the **filotimos** man in his dealing with equals as well as class superiors. This reputation was publicly confirmed when he was elected as a member of the **Laiko Dikastirio**, Popular Court, which was active in Skamnia during the last months of the Nazi occupation in 1944. Through his service in Popular Justice Fotis earned the nickname **dikeos**, just, which encapsulates his image of integrity and sound opinions. In 1945 Fotis married Chrisoula, a woman of similar status and had a daughter, Areti, on whom they bestowed a large dowry. Yet Areti, who apparently was distinctive in her physical charms, despite her youth was involved in an affair with the village doctor. Allegedly, he used to take her to Mytilene and, apparently, she had sexual liaisons with other men as well, but not in the village. Some informants suggested that she became a **poutana**, whore, and that she was once even arrested by the police thus causing a big scandal. Fotis' brothers knew all about it but they did not tell him. His wife responded to the **loyia**, words, of other women with the comment that these were rumours by people jealous of her daughter's beauty. The village doctor, who had the reputation of being **mourdaris**, was considered responsible for Areti's failure to keep the standards of sexual conduct. His class position, the dependence of the local community on his services, and his friendship with one of the village's wealthiest men made him effectively immune to local reactions. Areti got married to Stelios, a man of good standing from a neighbouring village who lived in Athens and used to visit Skamnia

in the summers. What was said was that while Stelios fell in love with Areti, his kin fell in love with her dowry. That is why they accepted his marriage to Areti who epitomized the fallen woman. After her marriage to Stelios, Areti, who is now 34, left Skamnia to go and stay with her husband in Athens.

Fotis remained immune to this systematic denigration of his daughter's image and kept his reputation as a man of integrity intact, despite the fact that he was the father of a woman thought to be **i teleftea tou choriou**, the lowest of the village. Apparently his **filotimo** was not damaged in any of the contexts in which he had gained his reputation. He provided his daughter with a dowry, 'no-one could have done more in his place'. His wife, on the other hand, experienced serious damage if not to her image as a mother and guardian of her daughter's fortune in marriage, at least in her own prospects for heading a matrifocal group within Skamnia. Once she 'lost' her only daughter, she became rather marginal to the neighbourhood and oriented to the outside world.

Another case, this time of an adultery which involves one of the protagonists of the last story is equally interesting. Eleni, today in her late fifties, is the second daughter of Manolis, a labourer who came as a refugee from Asia Minor and settled in Skamnia with his wife Maria, a woman from a nearby village. Eleni got married in the early fifties to Yiorgos, who belongs to one of the old, good standing families of Skamnia and who was seventeen years older than her. Soon after their marriage they had a son. Ten years later, Eleni got involved in a sexual affair with the same village doctor. Allegedly, at some stage she left the village, leaving both her son and her husband behind. Apparently her mother and sister did not side openly with her, while a male cousin of her husband allegedly insulted the doctor for his behaviour. During this crisis, her husband also left

the village but he eventually returned while she still has not come back.

This second story contrasts significantly to a third one: the same doctor had an affair with a woman whose husband was twenty years older than her and a known drunkard of the village. This affair was accepted and did not place the unfaithful wife in the category of the **xediantropes**. Niki, who is in her middle fifties and a widow now, enjoys the respect of other women in the village and fully participates in the social life of the neighbourhood. The extra-marital affair of the drunkard's wife does not cause any serious concern, nor does it affect the moral standing of any of the principal parties. In fact, moral default and the consequent loss of face of the husband preceded rather than followed the adulterous union, in contrast to the previous case where the seduction of the wife exposed a husband who from the village point of view was properly fulfilling his conjugal duties.

4. Conclusion

Let us now draw together the pieces of this analysis and consider the ways in which the value system discussed relates to the wider nexus of social and cultural configurations in Skamnia and Skala. And let us further assess its comparative implications for the wider ethnographic understanding of the Greek value system. What I will argue in effect is that the constellation of meanings that focus on **filotimo** conforms to the constellation of meanings that support the local notion of masculinity. They constitute the same cultural property, individual personhood, and in this sense they contrast with the values of **timi** which morally sanction the extreme familistic

orientation of certain Greek societies.[19]

What is particularly interesting in some of the cases examined is the association of the feeling of 'shame' with the local boundary. An act may be shameful, not in general, but in the particular geographical and moral context of the village. Foti's daughter's shameful activity is remembered as taking place outside the village, in Mitylene. One informant said that today her husband "goes with other women but not in the village because he would be ashamed to". Other adulterous liaisons between local men and women do not find physical expression within the village but elsewhere. Everybody knows about such affairs, yet there is a certain appreciation of the fact that the principals do not damage the village **filotimo**.

One could push this point further and say that double standards of morality in Skamnia do not apply across kinship or gender lines but in relation to the local boundary. Indeed, it has been noted for various parts of the Mediterranean that the moral standards that pertain within the family or kin group are dropped when dealing with outsiders and that what is morally expected of women does not apply to men.[20] In Skamnia if there is a boundary which separates a sphere in which one is bound by the moral standard from a 'free' or 'non-moral' zone, this is the boundary of the locality. In other words it appears that outside the village activities are tolerated which within its confines of are thought of as shameful.

Of course, as we saw, within its ranks the village appears to hold a single standard of moral evaluation. Indeed, there is no evidence to suggest divisions across kinship lines after a crisis focussing on the moral reputation of a man or woman. The moral community is not segmented into opposed camps which defend a version of events and the corresponding evaluations held by the protagonists. All insiders are expected to conform equally to the code of village

filotimo and keep the local standards. Once exposed, they remain largely unprotected by the wider network of kin or friends who are not expected to oppose the communal assessment. Moral condemnation, then, is enforced on the individual by the moral community. In the last analysis, kin and consociates remain at the margins because shame only secondarily and slightly accrues to them.

Moral standards operate consistently and homogeneously within the village. They can be set aside only where anonymity surrounds the deviants and their identification with the village is precluded. The same toleration does not pertain to men who are eponymous outside the locality and thus are thought to stand for the community in its dealings with the outside. This point will become clearer in the next chapter.

Another sign of the fact that the game of reputations is played in an arena which contains both the individual and the moral community of the village is the nature of the penalities enforced on deviants. Ostracism is the most common. In a culture that promotes expressiveness and rewards the individual who places himself at the centre of the community's stage, the shameful internal exile of the man or woman found guilty of moral default, is difficult to bear. In such a cultural milieu moral marginalization cannot be easily dealt with and pushes the individual outwards. If the deviant is married he may leave together with his wife and children. Such is the 'drunkard' case discussed above. In other instances, for example, Areti and Eleni, the person who lost his/her reputation departed leaving behind members of the family, and friends.

The exile of the 'drunkard' or the 'whore', the geographical exclusion of those who have failed morally, restores the moral image of the collectivity and saves local **filotimo**. At the same time it gives the stigmatized party a chance to win back their good name.

Extensive migration and considerable mobility between the village and Athens provide an excellent context in which the departure of the transgressor can be given the pretext of looking for better job opportunities. On the other hand, usually the breaking of ties with the community is not radical. Eleni's summer visits to the village have become quite regular in recent years. There is some scope for return and re-incorporation, for new images of the person in question which cover early blemishes can begin to circulate.

Let us recapitulate, at this point, the thrust of the argument. Moral indignation and displacement is the penalty for deviance that the code of **filotimo** requires. Shame, however, is neither inflicted on nor passed to other persons. It only focuses on the individual man or woman, rather than spreading to the nexus of kinship or extra-kinship relations in which the individual in situated. One man's shame is not another man's source of pride. Nor can shame be partially or fully removed by an attempt to shame others. Thus, shame producing challenges cannot be exchanged. Moral failure is absolute and so is the penalty for it.

The social effects of this value system are evident: not a kinship based differentiation and opposition, but the exclusion and isolation of the deviant party; not social fragmentation, but individual displacement; exile instead of vengeance.[21] What always remains is the solidarity of men and women bound in a well-knit nexus of mutual obligations.

The overall impression from this set of values is of a certain moral permissiveness. In the constellation of the values of **timi** men and women are part and parcel of the moral image and reputation of a kinship group, usually the family. **Timi** assembles the components of reputation on a social/kinship/corporate basis, it accounts for more heavy dependencies and thus supports a more inflexible moral rule.

In Skamnia, however, as probably in many other parts of Greece, the values of **filotimo** underly a certain flexibility. Local mores appear to be more liberal, the penalities for moral deviance are less severe, quite diversified and are not diffused in the body of local society creating schism and fragmentation. There is greater scope for deviance from moral standards.

At this stage it is worth bringing a more comparative tone to the discussion. In this as well as in the last chapter I presented the values of worth and prestige that prevail among the Skamniotes in two sets which are organized around the notions of **filotimo** and **kefi/palikaria**. The latter focus on the expressive individual male who, the more he attains the ideal of autonomy and non-dependence, is granted the credentials of exceptional masculinity and grows in the scale of symbolic prestige. Men inclined to the coffeeshop are more prone to follow this moral path. **Filotimo**, on the other hand, focusses on a wider and more diverse notion of individual personhood and thus it is open to men of all inclinations as well as, in certain circumstances, to women. The sentiments of **filotimo** aim at the equal recognition of the social other and the placement of the self in a moral community. **Filotimo**, then, applies more to an individual person who is more or less bound to the household, market or state and whose expressive faculties are to a certain degree compromised by the need to participate in a community of obligations. In effect, **filotimo** provides the definition of moral worth which is an essential requirement for the acquisition of material as well as symbolic prestige.

The focus of both sets of meaning is the male individual - the expressive man and the obligated man. The first pursues his autonomy and detachment under the imperatives of **kefi**; the second is more bound, dependent, compromised, fulfilling obligations as **filotimo**

requires. **Kefi** primarily supports detachment of coffeeshop from household, of men from women and even of men from men. **Filotimo**, on the other hand, is a moral force of centripedality, that promotes the coming together of the sexes and classes within the locality.

This system of meanings contrasts with those observed by Campbell on a number of points. This comparison, of course, should take account of the fact that the study of the Sarakatsani was undertaken twenty years before this study. If we think of reputation as a container, and prestige as a kind of liquid kept in this container, then in both societies there is a steady concern for the condition of the container, since if it is broken any prospect for prestige accumulation is jeopardized. This is the idea of moral integrity or wholeness of the person which, however, has a very different content in each case. Among the Sarakatsani it consists of the inviolability of a self which maintains its possessive control over the components of identity: women, family at large, animals, dealings.[22] In Skamnia, on the other hand, it refers to the integrity of the expressive self that primarily rests on the consistent and long-standing application of emotions. While the possessive self corresponds to the image of the social person, the patriarch who represents and is accountable for a whole family, the expressive self is the individual person, a moral entity that arises from the culturally specific expression of emotions.[23]

In effect, prestige bearing activity in each society is conducted according to a different code. The Sarakatsani hold an image of a closed world of limited resources in which unrelated families are expected to show distrust and hostility to each other. Practices of negative reciprocity, what Campbell (op. cit., 212) calls the reciprocal exchange of animal or grass theft, decide the degree of inviolability and the relative prestige of each family.[24] The values

of generosity govern prestige bearing practices such as **kerasma, filoxenia** or even **tzogos** in Skamnia. Individual persons who are detached from the particularistic and divisive concerns of household or work observe a code of positive reciprocity. Prestige rests on the expressive potential that is kept in each man's heart. The world of men then, appears open, with an unlimited supply of sentiment. Finally, a third point of contrast is that in Skamnia male prestige is decided in same-sex contexts, man to man, in ritualized exercises of generosity and in a spirit of friendship to unrelated others which stands in sharp contrast to the fragmented nature of male kinship. Prestige structures are exclusively male, and do not depend on women's sexual behaviour. This is not so among Sarakatsani men, whose image rests on the chastity of related women.

One of the central points of this chapter, then, is that different constructs of the male person underlie reputation and prestige in the two societies. And, further, that the values attached to different constructs of personhood reflect the position of men in the realms of household, kinship and the family as well as the coffeeshop.

Notes to Chapter IX

1. For a background to the analysis of the values of personal worth, reputation and prestige in the Mediterranean, see the seminal collection of essays edited by Peristiany (1966a) as well as the pioneering analyses of Pitt-Rivers (1968b, 1977), Campbell (1964) and Lison-Tolosana (1966). In this chapter I am detached from the kind of 'materialist' thesis on honour put forward by Davis (1969, 1977) or J. Schneider (1971) and apparently supported by evidence furnished by Cutileiro (1971). These authors view honour as "an idiom in which differences in wealth are expressed" (Davis, 1977, 91) and correlate its intensity to economic organizational problems (J. Schneider, op. cit., 22) in contrast to Campbell, Peristiany, Pitt-Rivers or Lison-Tolosana, who view honour as an egalitarian principle, reflecting moral equality rather than status inequality. The work of Lison-Tolosana (op. cit.), Wikan (1984) in Mediterranean ethnography and Dubisch (1972, 1980), Herzfeld (1980) in Greek ethnography draw conclusions which run parallel to mine in this chapter.

2. This is also a point recently made by Campbell (1983, 206). There is scanty evidence on the notion of **filotimo** in Greek ethnography. Most probably the first presentation is by Lee (1959) to be followed by Friedl (1962, 86-7). Peristiany (1966b, 178-190) and Dubisch (1972, 112-8; 1980) dwell extensively on aspects of **filotimo** while Herzfeld (1980) furnishes evidence to tackle the widely observed local variation in the Greek moral taxonomy.

3. This strategic distinction between worth and prestige is eminent in Campbell (op. cit., 263-274) as well as in Lison-Tolosana (op. cit., 108-9) but also in Wilson (1969, 73) who further distinguishes between the subjective (dignity) and the social (respect) sides of worth.

4. The association of social class to the values of reputation is hard to bypass. Lison-Tolosana (op. cit.) makes clear that among the Aragonese plebeians the Spanish term for honour, honor is not used. Wikan (op. cit.) stresses that the poor of Cairo do not employ the available Arabic terms **ar** (sexual shame) and **sharaf** (honour).

5. An exception is Herzfeld (op. cit.).

6. Campbell, op. cit., 269.

7. For similar points see Herzfeld (op. cit.) and Wikan (op. cit.).

8. For the idea of **sinidhisi** see Herzfeld, op. cit., 346-8.

9. Loizos stresses that **sinfero** "is not acceptable in the meaning of individual self-interest, but only when meaning the self-interest of a person with dependents" (1975, 66, his stress). Herzfeld (op. cit., 345) takes this point to further suggest a familial versus an ego-centric notion of **egoismos**.

10. On parallel lines runs Wikan's (op. cit., 636) comment that among the Cairo poor "it is shame rather than honour which is the predominant concern".

11. It is worth noticing the kind of situations in which **timi** is violated or betrayed among the Sarakstsani: "homicide, the drawing of blood, verbal insult, seduction, rape, and broken betrothal" (Campbell, op. cit., 269).

12. In contrast to a code that rewards the seducer, thief or killer who meets no resistance and in parallel stigmatizes the passive victim. This code is vividly exemplified in feud oriented societies (see Black-Michaud, 1975; Campbell, op. cit.).

13. This incident brings to mind the famous Koemtzis affair that shook Greece in 1972 and later became a film. A man whose **paragelia**, order to the musicians to play a particular tune (so that he could dance solo) was declined killed, in effect, three men.

14. Thus contest is a mechanism that produces moral equality, irrespective of its outcome. This is the essence of what Peristiany (1966a, 14) has called the agonistic character of honour.

15. It etymologically originates from the Turkish gloss **uvgursuz**, inauspicious. Herzfeld (op. cit., 345) refers to **grousouzia** as an antonym of **filotimo** reserved for insiders.

16. There are certain similarities between **filotimo** and the **civilta** ethos described by Silverman (1975, 1-12). This is particularly true as far as generosity, holding the etiquette in coffeeshop exchange, attitudes towards manual work or land relate to the urban and class qualities that historically permeate life in the coffeeshop.

17. Herzfeld (1987) notes that hospitality is an idiom of domination.

18. See Pitt-Rivers, 1977; Schneider, op. cit.

19. For the family reference of the Mediterranean value system see Pitt-Rivers (op. cit., 71-93), Campbell (op. cit.).

20. The 'double standards morality' theme, either in the form of different standards applied for ego and alter-ego or different standards for men and women (Pitt-Rivers, op. cit., 74) is not found among the Skamniotes. This marked absence relates to the existence of uni-sexual departments of virtue.

21. Among the Sarakatsani voluntary exile of a killer may be preferred because it prevents the execution of vengence (Campbell, op. cit., 194).

22. See Campbell, op. cit., 269.

23. Meker (1976) distinguishes what he terms 'glorious deeds', such as hospitality, generosity, martial prowess or public oratory from the practices that lead to control over 'prohibited domains' (e.g. land or women). It is through the first that honour is created or achieved. The manifestations of **filotimo** seem to stand more on the performative side of this typology of honour oriented acts.

24. The networks of animal theft that Herzfeld (1985) studied in Crete are excellent examples of negative reciprocity.

CHAPTER X: THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONFIGURATIONS OF LOCALITY

1. Introduction

The notion of community is an organizing concept (Gilmore, 1976). Indeed, this thesis was based on the assumption that we are speaking of a community (or communities) as a bounded whole with "its" history, "its" population, "its" social and cultural forms of organization. Here, and as a conclusion, I will consider this operational assumption in the light of both the formative parameters of social life so far examined and the sense of locality that is held by Skamniotes.

As we saw in the introduction, this idea of social cohesiveness and boundness finds an important geographical justification in the extreme nucleation of local settlements. This is sanctioned by law (see chapter V). The geographical version of the community is further manifested in non-built space.[1] Skamnia has its 'own' agricultural periphery, which is marked by means of natural or artificial boundaries like streams or pathways and includes, as well, the part of the sea chiefly exploited by Skamniotes. The geographical boundary, however, is often contested. In case the proprietor is the community itself, it is still customary for the boundary **na kovete**, to be 'cut' through the personal confrontation of shepherds or fishermen from neighbouring localities.

The demographic basis of community is equally flexible. This is due to extensive out-migration or to the temporary mobility of men or women or families in the pursuit of work opportunities. As we saw both village communities have experienced a drastic depopulation, especially during the first two decades after the second world war. Today a considerable number of people who originate from Skamnia and

think of themselves as Skamniotes live outside the village. In effect one can hardly rely on the combination of the geographic and demographic version of the boundary in order to delineate the community.[2]

To overcome these difficulties it is more appropriate to rely on the idea of community as a shared sentiment and sense of belonging into a structured social whole. This hardly solves our problem. As we shall see, Skamniotes hold rather diverse views of their locality and its properties. This multiplicity of indigenous conceptualizations of the local has to be accounted in its own terms instead of being reduced into a reflection of the geographical, demographic or social-structural realities that the anthropologist traces at the very foundations of local society.

Indeed, there is no justification for taking the notion of community as a given. Here I will distinguish between the anthropological and indigenous notions of community. I will further assume that locality is both relation and symbol. If locality is a cultural fact, then the very symbols and idioms of its cultural construction should be properly examined.[3]

The main task of this chapter will be first, to recapitulate points earlier discussed and consider the social organization of the locality, the network of relations and institutional structures which transcend the boundaries of the domestic group and mediate in its articulation with the state, the market and the church at the level of the division of economic and ritual labour. Second, I will look at the symbols that culturally convey the sense of place or "villageness". In Skamnia, indigenous glosses like **kinotita**, community, **chorio**, village, **topos**, place, **ikoyenia** or **parea**, embody the cultural meanings attributed to locality. These symbols delineate, in ways and directions which differ, the boundary that

separates a social plane between the primary structures of kinship, friendship, or neighbourhood on the one hand, and the state on the other.[4] Their semantic fields are detached in some respects, and converge in others. Finally, I will examine how these symbols of locality are interpreted by the two major social categories of men to form more coherent as well as oppossed ideologies of locality, and in this respect inform political action in general and relations with the state in particular. Here, I will attempt to show how the cultural experience of belonging to a locality can be an important factor in political action; while demonstrating the relevance of political action itself for the social reproduction of local boundaries.

2. The Institutional Basis of Locality: **Kinotita, Sineterismos, Enoria**

In previous chapters we examined indigenous forms such as the **nikokirio** and the **parea** and the relational patterns they support. We saw that despite its ideally sexually symmetrical, conjugal focus, the fundamentally formal and corporate notion of **nikokirio** adopts in practice a more female-centred character. This occurs under the shaping influence of matrifocal uterine ties which unite independent households into autonomous éclaves of domestic and economic cooperation. These essentially female centred **ikoyenies** are units of competition for prestige. In this capacity they divide the geographical community of the **yitonia** into opposed camps, characterized by an intensive, internal feeling of solidarity and related to one another with antagonistic, divisive attitudes.[5] Indeed, the moral unity of the matrifocal network of kinswomen is extended outwards as an attitude of distrust and even hostility to

female outsiders with no root in the local society. Despite instances of instrumental reciprocity between unrelated households the female neighbourhood reminds one of an 'atomistic' society.[6]

The moral unity of the male coffeeshop stands in marked contrast to the fragmentation of the female neighbourhood. All exclusively male relations, ranging from the friendships of the heart and the open **parea** to the more hierarchical arrangements of competitive drinking are premised on a single idea: that adult men are eligible to participate in the expressive avenues of undifferentiated manhood and share the symbolic ingredients of masculinity. Ideally, men habit a community of male sentiment. Through the idiom of ritualized commensality the male boundary of local society opens. **Kerasma** blends distinct male identities to the very extreme: it ideally unites those who are separated by the local boundary. Once he receives **kerasma** the outsider is recognized and unilaterally placed; after he achieves the right to treat he is firmly based within the local boundary.

The practices of the coffeeshop and the application of **kerasma**, as the core element of a strategy of incorporating male outsiders in the traditional exercises of male generosity towards **xeni**, the **filoxenia**, characterizes the male collectivity as an "open community".[7] In the last analysis, as we saw in the chapter IX, the open nature of the male collectivity relies on a set of values arranged around the notion of **filotimo**.

Material divisions and the very antagonism that is based on material consideration are exorcized from the male expressive realm. The relevance of commensal relations for the organization of production or distribution, for the making of avenues of cooperation, and for the constitution of the local economy is minimal. In particular alcoholic commensality has an anti-economic, non-corporate

profile. Thus male friendship cannot and does not close the gap that female uterine kinship has left wide open. The inability of the male "anti-structure" to mitigate the atomism of the female-centred structure leaves us with a problem: what is the space between the family and the nation based on?

In between the female core and the male boundary, the female uterine kinship which divides and the male coffeeshop commensality which unites, lies the field of economic and religious ritual processes which by definition involve the locality. It is here that one can look for the institutional arrangements that mitigate division and operationalize unity at the local level. It is further at this level that one can best capture the dialectic between the fundamentally formal and corporate entities of the conjugal household on the one hand, the church and the state on the other.

Let us start from the economic exploitation of privately owned resources, mainly land. Family labour and paid labour provide the basis of the olive growing economy. Most of the harvest is done by conjugal units, often involving an offspring who helps. Big landowners and renters of land employ the **daifas**, the harvest group of labourers (see chapter I). Because labour rather than land is the scarce factor of production, once the labour unit is formed it can easily find the optimum amount of olive groves for exploitation. Three or four **daifades** of considerable size (between 5 and 9 men and women) operate in the agricultural district of Skamnia. The need for cooperation occurs when the frost throws most of the olives off the trees. Then households which are linked with uterine ties may join their efforts to do **sinalamma**: they form a larger harvest team which alternates in each others olive grove till the picking of olives returns to a more normal rhythm. These exchanges of labour are strictly bilateral and based on short term reciprocity. Resources

other than labour are not pooled together. Each **nikokirio** is supposed to be self-sufficient in agricultural utensils or hire the services of a specialized prouner or plougher for a particular job.

An equally atomized labour process characterizes fishing. Since the 1960s, fishermen have stopped joining their efforts in a fishing venture called **litsa**, which involved the whole collectivity under the leadership of the more skilled and experienced man. When fishing reaches its peak, at the beginning of the **trata** (seine) season in October, the caiques take turns at a particular **kalada**, fishing spot, on the basis of who comes first. Boats are owned either by individual men or small groups of agnatic relatives, never shared or borrowed to unrelated men.

While in fishing the raw produce is ready for the market, where it is channelled via a kinship based network of distribution, this cannot be so in the olive growing sector. Two-thirds of the olives are processed by the state controlled **Eleourgikos Sineterismos** (Olive Processing Cooperative). The rest go to a private factory. The cooperative is theoretically governed by its members who elect a council and ideally participate in profits, while in practice decisions are taken by an appointed director and a small group of salaried officers who operate under the supervision of the Agricultural Bank. Financially it depends on the state from which it gets the necessary loans for the renewal of machinery or the extension of its services. Under very recent (1981) legislation the cooperative undertook the administration of short-term loans, thus replacing the bank in one of its most essential functions. Yet even more important is the fact that the **sineterismos** has the right to assemble on behalf of the so-called **kratiki sigentrosi**, state-controlled collection, the locally available supplies of olive oil at a price that is fixed and guaranteed by the state. Thus the

sineterismos is in fact an economic institution through which the state controls the financing of the labour process, the transformation of the agricultural produce into a commodity and the channelling of olive oil into the market.

Men or women who represent landowning households are eligible to participate. The number of **meridia**, shares which each **nikokiris** possesses depends on the amount of land he owns. The financial backing that the **sineterismos** enjoys makes it the most powerful economic institution in village economy and the most modern and effective outlet to the market. This is the attractive side. On the other hand, the householders who channel their produce via the Cooperative have their annual payments against outstanding loans deducted from the monetary value of their marketed olive oil. Even further, members are in principle not allowed to sell part of their olives elsewhere. In other words members are bound to the **sineterismos** and via this to the state. **Nikokirei** participate properly in this scheme. Men with a coffeeshop orientation tend to bypass the binding arrangements by exploiting alternative avenues such as the private factory and private or informal and apparently illegal networks of distribution. What should be stressed here is that the state via the control of financing and distribution creates this centripetal tendency which unites the otherwise non-coordinated, non-cooperating households into an economic whole focusing on the locality.

The same pattern is observed in the administration of communally owned resources and the offering of communally arranged services. This concerns the corporate profile of the local society as a **kinotita**, commune governed by a **kinotiko simvoulio**, communal council which comprises a **proedros**, president and four **simvouli**, councillors, all elected every four years. Under the administrative profile of a

kinotita the local society owns and controls economically valuable resources. These include extensive **anikta**, pasture land, roads and pathways, as well as buildings and public spaces within the village settlement such as the building that houses the **kinotita**, public baths and lavatory, the **iatrio** (dispensery), warehouse buildings or the fountains and the village square. The **kinotita** takes care of and maintains these resources and grants the rights over use to particular individuals.

Twenty years ago the **kinotita** used to require a two days labour contribution from the head of each economically active household for the repair of agricultural pathways and the making of new **kalderimia** (cobbled roads). Today villagers contribute the monetary equivalent of two days wages. In exceptional tasks such as the building of the communal library or the new dispensery villagers are asked to make their contribution or volunteer for work and the **kinotita** coordinates the project. The **kinotita** either hires or grants freely rights to access to particular resources like pasture or water. For example, it determines each householder's turn and size of participation in the **nimpetia**, the watering of olive groves and vegetable gardens during the summer. Each year the **agrofilakas** (rural policeman) in coordination with the **kinotita** issues a catalogue mentioning the specific time and period for which a particular **nikokiris** will be allowed to divert the local water artery into his landholding. Equally free is access to communal pasture: each villager is allowed to graze a specific number of animals for a given period of time. If he exceeds his quota he has to pay a set fee per animal.

Just twenty years ago the doctor was basically subsidized by the community. Before the war this was equally true for the teacher and the priest. Today these are civil servant jobs. However, the community is still responsible for appointing and paying the

goatherd, a young boy who takes the villagers' domestic goats to graze in the communal pasture all day long; or the **skoupidiaris**, a man who twice a week loads the litter from each house on his mule and takes it to a nearby site where it is burned; or the grave-digger who is occasionally used for other manual jobs at the service of the community. These "offices" are usually acquired through an annual auction. For example, the man who bids the lowest salary for performing the service of collecting the litter is awarded the post.[8]

Religious ritual is another context for the proliferation of interpersonal and interhousehold ties. A set of ritual reciprocities occurs in marriage and betrothal, baptism or funeral or namedays. First, the household undertakes the organizational responsibility of a religious ceremony that usually takes place in the church. Then, it is visited at home by the rest of the community. The honoured household has the obligation to reciprocate these visits. On big name days it is customary for groups of people to "pass" from all the houses that celebrate. The celebrating **spiti** is thought of as **anikto**, open. Every fellow villager has the right to enter and enjoy the hospitality of its residents. This ritual inversion of the principal tendency of the **nikokiria** to look inwards and to aim at self-sufficiency and the opening of the domestic boundary is a very important step in the constitution of the religious community, called **enoria**, parish as a horizontal association of households.

In the annual **paniyiri**, when the village celebrates the name day of its patron saint, at the Sunday morning mass and in the big **eortes**, festivals of the orthodox Christian Calendar that reaches its climax in Easter, the pattern of reciprocities changes. The church becomes the focus of the ritual activity and receives visits by representatives of individual households. The religious following

takes the shape of a proper group, the congregation which at the occasion of the village's name-day festival adopts a semi-corporate profile. During the Holy Week, the congregation as a religious procession encircles twice the geographical unit of the vilage. It "visits" each successive **yitonia**, where a stop is made and a part of the mass is conducted. On Good Friday, and in the course of the **Epitafios** (funeral procession), the congregation follows a clockwise direction, while the opposite anti-clockwise movement is followed on Easter Sunday, **Pascha**. A religious boundary which includes the locality, the people as well as the building structures and spaces is drawn.

In these activities the responsibility of organization lies in the hands of the **ecclessiastiko simvoulio** (ecclessiastical council). This council provides a more solid framework for the running of the socio-economic affairs of the **enoria**. It consists of five members who are appointed after consultation. It is a traditionally important avenue for exercising influence in village affairs, and it involves men as heads of households. However, today its significance is restricted: within its jurisdiction is the administration of the local church finances and the organization of festivities.

So far we have distinguished three forms of intra-communal cooperation and joint administration: the **kinotita**, the **sineterismos** and the **enoria**. All three of them rely on institutional frameworks that either the church or the state support and maintain. Their primarily formal and corporate profile is manifested in the form of their administration: in principle they are governed by three distinct councils. What makes men eligible for the office of **simvoulos** (councilor) in the cooperative or the parish and less in the "community" is the status of the **nikokiris**. In all three cases then, the formal and corporate constitution of the locality takes the

form of a horizontal alliance of households.

These institutions have a dual structure. They are governed from within the local society, yet they are contextualized as well as fixed outside the locality. They present a participatory, contractual and informal face to the interior; yet they have another side which is jurally fixed, inflexible and impersonal as well as directly related to the state. In effect villagers' association with the communal institutions brings them into direct contact with the state.

3. The Senses of Belonging to the Locality: Chorio and Kinotita

Now, we will turn to consider the metaphors of locality. These will be discussed in the context of other symbols which relate locality to class, kinship or commensality, and which contribute to the making of the cultural boundary at the local level.

[9] The gloss **chorio**, literally translated as village and etymologically deriving from the Byzantine Greek **chorion**, which is a diminutive for **choros**, space (Andriotes, 1983, 427) refers to the geographical sense of locality. The "village" symbolizes a point on the map, **ena meros**, a place or **ena topo**, a land, a locality which is very specific in that it bears a name and is often steeped, **patiete** by its neighbours. This core meaning of the notion "village" remains culturally inactive as far as it is not associated to symbols which refer to the nature of social life in this particular geographical spot. The "village" is linked to two primary images of the local society. The one derives from the field of consanguineal kinship and is best captured in the statement: **edo imaste oli sigenis**, here we are all relatives, or **edo imaste mia ikoyenia**, here we are one

family. The other is associated with the domain of commensal friendship and is reflected in the assertion **edo imaste oli isi**, here we are all equal. Let us consider these two images of villageness separately.

According to the first image membership of the locality derives from birth and in this capacity it acquires the properties of a kinship relation. The local society as an eponymous **chorio** is thought to be the mother of her children, i.e. of the villagers who stay in the locality as well as those who migrated. The village is metaphorically portrayed as a womb: **o Stratos ine apo tin Skamnia**, Stratos comes from Skamnia. The image of the "village" as a "family" or a single kinship unit relies on a "degenealogized" version of kinship.[10]

Yet this apparently simple and homogenous image of villageness as a relationship of birth is in fact more complex since it is internally stratified by the application of a kinship as well as a geographical criterion (see table 13). Thus we can distinguish a number of particular sub-categories denoting local identity such as **veros Skamniotis**, real Skamniotis, Skamniotis, **chorianos** or **sinchorianos**, from the same village, **sintopitis**, literally from the same place, before we reach the extreme case of **xenos**.

Table 13

The Terms of Reference of "Villageness" and the Conditions of Their Use

Term	Skamnia being the place of origin	Skamnia being the place of birth	Skamnia being the place of residence
1. **veros Skamniotis**	Yes	Yes	(Yes)
2. **Skamniotis**	-	Yes	(Yes)
3. **chorianos sinchorianos** e.g. **Athineos**	(Yes)	Yes	-
4. **sintopitis** "from another village"	-	-	Yes (post-marital residence)
5. **xenos**	-	-	Yes (temporary residence)

The concept of "Skamniotis" derives from a reference to the geographical site with the name Skamnia. All those who were born in this place have the right to identify with it. However certain men seem to hold this right more than others, while yet others are in danger of losing it altogether. Skamniotes are divided into the **verous**, pure ones and the rest. The "pure" ones are those who are genealogically linked to the surnamed groups of **dopii**, locals in juxtaposition to the refugees who came to Skamnia in 1922. On the other hand, members of the local society who emmigrate to Germany or Australia or migrate even temporarily to Athens or another urban centre are still considered as **sinchoriani**, i.e. as coming from the same village as the Skamniotes, yet they are identified with their new place of residence. Thus when they visit the village for their summer vacations they are called **Athinei** (from Athens),

Afstrali (from Australia) or **Yermani** (from Germany). In the very city in which they live these men and women are self-characterized as Skamniotes.

Next come men who are affinally related to the village i.e. they were born elsewhere and reside in Skamnia, usually because they are married to a Skamniotisa. These men are put in the categories of **sinchorianos** or **sintopitis**, a classification which is usually qualified by the use of a nickname denoting the exact place of origin. The idea of **xenos** in principle includes, from the point of view of the locality, all those who do not have a kinship tie to the village. However in this category one finds a considerably big group of men who **to chorio tous gnorizi**, are known by the village by their name. This category includes the postman, an official of the bank who participates in gambling sessions in the village or even the anthropologist. Those who bear a name in the village without organically relating to it are thus inside of an otherwise elastic boundary. Because in principle the **xenos** can be turned into a Skamniotis, as I was often reminded by my drinking companions.

The expression of villageness in the kinship idiom is reinforced by the use of the kinship terms **thios** (uncle) and **xadelfos** (cousin) as generalized terms of address within the local society. These terms denote generational hierarchy or identity respectively. The term **(e)x-adelfos** characteristically synopsizes the nature of this symbolic extension of kinship to cover the whole community. As they use to say in Skamnia **to ema den svini**, the blood is not erased outside the domestic boundary. This is associated with a historically strong preference for village endogamy.[11]

Through the symbolic identification of 'village' to 'family' the values that sanction relations within the "family" are projected into the space of the locality. For example it is frequently stated that

"we all know here what everybody else is", yet the law of silence governs the passing of information from within the community to third parties. An insider is morally obliged not to disclose damaging information on a fellow villager to an outsider. Ideally, **omonia** (peace), and **katanoisi** (understanding) should prevail in the exchanges between **choriani**.

The moral unity of the "village" is not allowed to be jeopardized by internal strife. In the big family that the village is the continuous presence of a conflict that poisons the spirit of peace and harmony that ideally governs relations between fellow villagers cannot be tolerated. As we saw the exile of those found guilty pacifies the heated spirits and gradually heals the wounds. Indeed, a very small number of men **den milionte**, are not on speaking terms within the village.

For women the symbol "village" = "family", has less relevance than it has for men. This is due to the narrower identification of women with the locality. Women's local identity focuses on the complex of houses that are linked by the matrifocal, consanguineal network of ties and extends to reach the boundaries of a particular neighbourhood. Women from other villages who are married to a Skamniotis and reside in Skamnia are not regarded as **sinchorianes** nor are they referred to with reference to the place of their origin. Instead they are conceived of as **xenes** and, as we saw in the second part, **xediantropes**. Women in juxtaposition to men do not extend the address term **xadelfi** to non-recognized relatives and they rarely use the kinship term **thia** (auntie) to address unrelated women who are senior in status or age. Women tend to be more reserved in applying the idiom of kinship to any other set of relations, being that of the locality itself or just a neighbourhood.

Now we can turn to the commensal and egalitarian idiom of

villageness: the identification of the village to a society of equal men. The commensal idiom is more important than the kinship one for the expression of local identity especially among men of plebeian status. The **chorio** participates in the exclusively male, egalitarian, latitudinarian, open properties of commensality. It is considered as an open collectivity that emerges from the projection of the **parea** of the drinking friends on the social space of the locality. The expression that two men **kanoun chorio** refers to the most broad, general way that two men can relate, while the opposite implies a non-correspondence of character or feelings. On the moral plane commensality and kinship overlap as idioms of locality. However the image of an egalitarian world relying on the potential of identical, masculine feelings stands, as we saw in the last chapter, for an "anti-structure" and thus it is more readily available to be used in an apparently political discourse.

Through the commensal idiom the locality adopts the attributes of an individual male person. Most important of all it retains its distinct flavour of morality, the widely publicized **Skamniotiko filotimo.** This in its turn sanctions a kind of local character and personality which becomes clearer as we approach the local boundary and the locality is juxtaposed to its neighbours. Local attributes are apparently held by individual members who exhibit them in interacting within the village as well as in their contact with outsiders. Skamniotes are regarded as **filoxeni**, hospitable, **gledzedes**, with a festive spirit, **aristokrates**, aristocrats with **xekourastes yinekes**, women who are not tired because allegedly they do not have to work hard in the fields. Their neighbours, on the other hand, present traits of character that juxtapose them to Skamniotes and prove the moral superiority of Skamnia. Nearby Aryiniotes are considered as **ziliarides ke mimitiki**, jealous and

imitative, **dichasmeni**, divided according to their political allegiances, with **tiranismenes yinekes**, women who work painfully in the fields. More distant Kliotes are reknown for their women: the expression **kliotika gamimena** implies the libertarian sexual ethics of women. Kapiotes are thought of as **zitiani**, beggars and **kalivites**, living in huts! - both marks of their extreme poverty. Even more distant Mantamadiotes are considered **afiloxeni**, a term that straight forwardly juxtaposes them to the Skamniotes.

The portrayal of the locality as an individual personality is often associated to a kind of cultural reification of Skamnia into the **chorio** with a capital c, into a substance that permeates local practices and forms of expression. The locality is the subject of a cultural idiosyncracy that embraces diverse forms of human activity ranging from cooking to speaking. Here we can selectively list the **Skamniotika ithi ke ethima**, the mores and customs of Skamnia such as, for example, on marriage or dowry, the **Skamniotiki dopiolalia**, local dialect, the **Skamniotiko glendi**, festivity or even the **Skamniotiko baklava**, Skamniotiko almond-and-honey cake! **I istoria tou choriou**, the history of the village is a more abstract property of the commensal image of the locality, a kind of extrapolation from the more narrow terains of male friendship and the **parea**. The anthropologist is instrumental in the realization of this aspect of local identity. This image of the locality as a unique cultural substance is held more from without the local society by Skamniotes migrants who use it as a cultural raw material to assert their identity in an alien context. At this level, then, locality emerges as an ethnicity of a lower degree.[12]

The images of the locality we have considered so far present a common characteristic: they all partake of the same moral code of diffuse solidarity that arises from the sharing of biological or

symbolically masculine substance and which is metaphorically extended to involve all those who are found within the boundaries of the locality. The last symbol of locality we will consider here has a more ambivalent character. The image of the locality as a **kinotita** (community) derives from the field of interpersonal relations as well as it is supported by jural and corporate arrangements which today provide the vertebral column of the local society. This symbol is part of the institutional realities exclusively organized by the code of the law.[13]

The notion of **kinotita** belongs to the same galaxy of cultural forms with the Greek notion of **nikokirio.** Its historical genealogy leads us back to the nineteenth century notion of **kino**, common, public or **dimogerontia**, elder's council.[14] I will not expand on the historical antecedents of "community". In the course of the nineteenth century the leading group of the big landowners and merchants in collaboration usually with the ecclessiastical authorities advanced the ideology of the common interest and institutionalized reciprocity.[15] This institutional framework performed economic and political functions and linked local society to the external market, the Ottoman central administration and the orthodox church.[16] The local elite led this process which served its class interests. Small peasants and landless labourers were incorporated to this system through the force of economic persuasion as well as moral judgement. The latter relied on the notions of **ipochreosi** and **kino simfero** which even in our days permeate the existing jural bonds and sanction marriage.

Today the notion of **kinotita** represents the legally valid, public persona of the local society. It still involves these historically meaningful demonstrations of common interest. However, it primarily refers to an administrative model and framework of legal

rules for the running of the local society.

The notion of **kinotita** is demarcated from that of **chorio**. Let us take for example the name of the locality. As a **chorio** the local society is known to be Skamnia (or Skamia). This term pays respect to a phonological tradition and in this capacity it can be classified as a term of **dimotiki** (vernacular). Its etymology is debatable and provides the very core of discussions on local history. Indeed, it is a popular framework for speculation of what was happening in the locality centuries ago. The **kinotita**, on the other hand, is known as Sikaminea, a gloss often found in maps as well as in administrative or formal histories. This term is written rather than spoken and partakes of a grammatical tradition aiming to postulate the cultural continuity between modern and classical Greece. It is a term of the **katharevousa**, formal, pure language and was attributed to the village after it was incorporated into the Greek state.[17] This term ends all speculation about etymology since it has an undisputable root: **siko**, fig and thus provides us with the central element of a definite, formal view of local history which is often ignored by the inhabitants of the village.

The juxtaposition of the two terms is particularly explicit in the current realities they refer to.[18] The "community" governs the "village". For example the agricultural pheriphery or the waters are are the "village"; yet, the turn of watering the fields or the collection of every household's litter is arranged by the "community". The "village" possesses. The "village" goes down to its particular subjects, who **kanoun chorio**, or even share traits of individual personal character with the collectivity. On the other hand the "community" appears to be, in the last analysis, deprived of any inter-subjectivity when it is rigidly identified with a civil servant, the **grammatikos** (secretary). This is the person who

formally links the "community" to the state, and in most respects runs the "community". The **grammatikos** holds an office and power awarded to him from the outside. He is further a **xenos** and a **dimosios ipalilos** (civil servant) with a safe and comparatively huge salary. He is as well thought of as what we may call a technocrat: ideally he is the local expert on application style, on **chartosima**, stamps put on the application, on loans and compensations and pensions, on securities and welfare benefits. The **grammatikos vastai ta kitapia**, holds the 'books' and has the power to intepret them.

Both notions, **chorio** and **kinotita**, however, can become identified with the rule of a single person. Despite the fact that the politically responsible organ of the "community" is the **kinotiko simvoulio**, it is the **grammatikos** who **milai san kinotita**, speaks on behalf of it, while the president of the communal council is most usually referred to by insiders as **proedros tou choriou**, president of the village. The identification of the **grammatikos** with the "community" and the **proedros** with the 'village' invites a reflection on the very source of their corresponding basis of power: the state, on the one hand, and the collectivity of **choriani**, on the other. It is very interesting that it is often women who undertake the tasks which involve dealing with the "community" and the **grammatikos**. This may involve the filling in of application forms, certificates of birth, marriage, or death, or even the arrangement of loans or compensation. In these cases women appear as being forced to leave their houses and **pane stin kinotita**, go to the 'community'. This is almost a violent interaction with the public space. Men on the other hand, as we shall see, often adopt a more confrontationalist attitude towards the "community", while avoiding being subjected to the authority of the **grammatikos**.

The **kinotita** is further identified with a particular

geographical spot and building within the local settlement, in which one expects to find the **grammatikos**. No communal activities take place here. In this two floor house there is a room which is available for offering hospitality to visitors. However, this is used only by men who come to work for a wage in construction projects which are organized by the district authorities. Proper **xeni** of any status who do not relate to the state are not accommodated there.

The ground that separates the two notions is not always steep and difficult to cross. The notion of **kinotita** is occasionally enlarged to refer to the political camp that holds the majority and actually governs. It is further thought of as the institutional setting in which the relations between the locality and the state or between different localities are negotiated and settled. This is particularly true in the case we examine. Skamnia and Skala are two separate "villages" which participate in the same "community". This is a source of uncomfortable feelings for Skaliotes who often openly dispute the administrative supremacy of their neighbours.

Each village has a claim to its own political and administrative representation. Many Skamniotes think that the corporate profile of the locality should reflect the local political identity and be in principle subject to the political manoeuvring decided upon by the collectivity. This attitude is well demonstrated in purely indigenous forms of corporations, the **silogi**, associations. Two examples are available, one from Skamnia and one from Skala. **Silogos Skamnioton**, the Association of Skamniotes, involves all men and women who originate from Skamnia, yet live outside the locality and the island itself.[19] It is based in Athens, governed by an elected council and it organizes annual assemblies. Its main purpose is the support and preservation of the **Skamniotiko pnevma**, Skamnia's spirit in the alien environment of the urban centres in which the Skamniotes



23. **Chorio** : the male collectivity in the village square.



24. **Kinotita** : the communal council in action.

have settled. It further promotes the **alilegii**, mutual assistance between the Skamniotes both at home and abroad. For this purpose it publishes a bi-monthly news-sheet, the "**Skamia**", it organizes annual festivals in Athens and in the village, as well as excursions and cultural events such as exhibitions or film shows. Its activity is often directed back to the village. The **silogos** is the prime benefactor of the village since its members financially support schemes that promote the welfare of the locality such as the building of the new dispensary or the making of the "communal" library. Being closer to the seat of national government, the **silogos** can assist the **chorio** when it pursues its financial and other claims. And even further the **silogos** is active in influencing politically the public opinion of the **chorio**. Members of the **silogos** retain their voting rights in the locality. They have, therefore, to visit the village at both local and national elections in order to vote; thus, they can participate in the on-going political debate. The **Athinei**, as the Skamniotes migrants in Athens are called, is the most influential pressure group in local politics. Their politics as a group tend to be at the left side of the spectrum. However, their real political contribution is the re-importation of the "village" specific spirit and values back into the locality, with the addition of a more explicit political gloss. The arrangement of **laikes sinelefsis**, popular assemblies is a good example. The migrants seem to stand closer to all that the symbol of the "village" implies. Thus the corporate status of their association reinforces the more inter-subjective aspects of the "village", vis a vis the purely corporational status of the 'community'.

The **Politistikos Silogos**, cultural association in Skala is an equivalent scheme yet employed in exactly the opposite direction. The **silogos** represents the outcome of the political and cultural

awareness of the third generation of Skaliotes refugees. Here the search for the "spirit" of the locality and its more explicit articulation is pursued from within the **chorio** itself. In this case, however, the **silogos** provides a corporate basis to a collectivity in its opposition to another collectivity that allegedly monopolizes the available political and economic resources and subsumes not to say dismisses its cultural history and heritage. Here the **silogos** is the rough mould and model from which eventually a **kinotita** may emerge. Thus the **kinotita** does not appear as a super-imposed political superstructure over the moral collectivity of the village but as the outcome and climax of an indigenous development, the upgrading of a collectivity into a unit with distinct administrative and political status.

The last two examples show that the semantic domains of "village" and "community" overlap. The institutional manifestation of the locality is thought to consolidate local identity and provides the setting for the juxtaposition of localities in equal terms. As we shall see, however, the antagonism between certain categories of men and the state limits the raprochment between "village" and "community" and turns their semantic separation into symbolic, political opposition.

4. The 'Village' Versus the 'Community': The Political Appropriation of Notions of Villageness

In chapter VIII we distinguished the family men from the men of the coffeeshop. Here I will add how these two categories of men perceive the increasing presence of the state and react to state-sponsored institutions and agents. This is necessary if we

want to understand the varying and often conflicting political interpretations of current notions of locality.

For men of the latter category the state and its personnel, **dimosii ipalili** represent the modern, current heirs of a political and economic power formerly held by the local **afentika.** The civil servant allegedly has an easy going, relaxed and secure, comfortable desk-job in juxtaposition to the **tiranida**, tyranny and **vasana**, sufferings of the peasant who has to struggle hard and under difficult circumstances to earn his living. He has a steady and guaranteed salary when the peasants' income relies on the caprice of the weather and the great reluctance of the state to compensate for eventual losses or misfortunes. Yet more than anything else, the contrast of the **agrotis**, peasant and **choriatis**, villager to the **dimosios ipalilos** finds its fullest expression on the moral plane. The latter is committed to an institution which is thought to exploit as well as be indifferent to the problems of the peasant. Even further, he is considered to be part of the urban cultural landscape that apparently threatens traditional values. The civil servants personify the immoral order of money: this is why they are **kalpides**, insincere, untrustworthy men who specialize in tricks taking advantage of their education and superior skills, as well as **afilotimi**, lacking the values of individual personal worth and **faghanes** (literally translated as guzzlers) i.e. greedy and exploitative. Holding the top position in their scale of immorality is the official of the Agricultural Bank; totally exempted from all these negative evaluations is the teacher of the local elementary school. Ambiguity surrounds civil servants who originate from as well as function in the village, yet abstain because of their special position from normal coffeeshop life. On the other hand, agricultural extension workers or **yeoponi**, agronomists who work in

the District Agricultural Office or even the bank and who cultivate their ties of commensality to the village are welcomed as exceptions to the general rule.

Nikokirei have a more tolerant view of the state, which they consider an essential ingredient of a more just, in comparison to the past, as well as efficient and modern social order. Men from this category have been active in inviting the intervention of the the Agricultural Bank to counteract the dominant economic influence of the big merchants and landowners. The foundation of the **sineterismos** in the 1930s was part of this process. For the **nikokirei** the morality of the law is part of the morality of the household. The notion of **ipochreosi** binds householders to both state and household. **Nikokirei** are considered as **nomotayis**, paying respect to the law and ready to satisfy its requirements: they are proud of repaying their loans regularly and not owing to the bank, or applying the agronomist's recommendations to improve the quality and quantity of their crop. In general they hold a more accommodating attitude which the state represents. In fact they see their social attachment to the civil servants who work in the village as an important step in social mobility. It is usually **nikokirei** men who are attached to the local teacher or the visiting agronomist: they form relations in which each party holds an equal footing.

The two categories of men appear as competing **parataxis**, camps which consistently since 1974 provide the basis of the two **psiphodeltia**, ballot papers. The "plebeian" camp is superior in numbers and politically dominant. It more openly identifies with aspects of the political ideology of the communist left. It comprises mostly yet not exclusively voters of the two communist parties who scored together 65% of the local vote in the 1977 national parliamentary elections. The **nikokirei** camp mostly consists

of voters from the other parties. Its political heterogeneity does not preclude a considerable feeling of solidarity and affinity among its members, who usually keep a lower politico-ideological profile.

During the two years of fieldwork topics such as the construction of an agricultural road, which is necessary if the harvest is to be transferred to the local processing factory by car, the **kini ekthlipsi**, joint processing of olives in the cooperative, the making of local lavatories or incidences of **katapatisis**, tresspassing into communal territory became the focus of debate among the **choriani**.

Behind this rather diverse agenda of debate it is agreed that lies one fundamental issue: whether or not the representatives of individual households and the owners of pieces of land can subsume their individual **simfero** to the **kino kalo**, common good that apparently the institutional avenues of **kinotita** and **sineterismos** promote. Men from both categories agree about the antagonistic and divisive effects of **simfero**. The disjunction and disunity brought about by the confrontation of individual material interests cannot be further moderated by the otherwise insulated from all instrumental reciprocity, ritual protocol of **raki** commensality. Everybody sees, then, that the achievement of a "common interest" is a Sisiphian process, often jeopardized by the blank refusal of a single party.[20]

The two categories of men differ in the strategy they adopt in order to come to terms with this problem. **Nikokirei** often diagnose the benefits that can accrue to them if they join their energies and material resources. Yet the understanding of the economic rationality, not to say the necessity of the cooperative ventures in most cases is not sufficient to bring them together. This is why the **nikokirei** are more ready to ask for the intervention and institutional contribution of the state. The officers of the

Nomarchia (prefecture), the judges and the agricultural extension workers are trusted because they are thought to be the men with the technical skills, the impartiality and the will to harmonize the competing interests. Most important of all, these men who function under the aegis of the state can and do use the code of law and its institutional weaponry to enforce the spirit of corporation as well as communal cooperation.

Even further, **nikokirei** have a greater ease in employing lawyers and applying aspects of the legal weaponry and especially the mechanisms of **minisi**, sueing and litigation. The option of asking for external arbitration in the regulation of interpersonal relations remains open since they attach no moral stigma to these liaisons with the state and its institutions. In this respect **nikokirei** men often appear as the receivers from within the local society of an idiosyncratic state paternalism and the local promoters of the values of the law.

Men of the coffeeshop adopt an attitude of apathy not to say absenteeism towards activities which are explicitly shaped by the code of the law and which they cannot colour in the shades of male expressiveness. In cases in which sentiment and interest mix, as occasionally happens, and the competition leading to alienation overides the atmosphere of commensal cordiality and sympathy which ideally characterizes the interaction between equal men, then they avoid asking for external arbitration or mediation, preferring a more passive attitude of "wait and see". In general they fully identify with the symbol of locality that stresses moral unity versus corporate identity, autonomy versus subsumption. The notion of **chorio** as a collectivity of equal men informs their political activity thus turning from a metaphor of locality into a major symbol of political action, and providing an excellent example of the

political relevance of cultural localism.

If we examine certain cases of arbitration or mediation by state officials in the settlement of communal or interpersonal conflict, the political interpretation of the cultural forms of villageness will become clear. These cases focus on the distinct aspects of the legal process **minisi** - trial - **pini**, penalty which according to the code of the law resolves the conflict arising from the antagonism of self-interests. What is at stake is the degree of acceptance of the legal process and the social arrangements that are thought as indigenous alternatives.

Skamniotes have difficulties with the court system and the judicial procedures, irrespective of whether they stand closer to **kefi** or **simfero**. This attitude which as we said reaches the form of antipathy and oppositions, varies according to the stages of the legal process. The tendency is to resort with greater ease to the **minisi** than to the court itself, while they tend to avoid the completion of the process. The jural sanction, **pini** imposed by the judge divides the contestants into the party who "wins" the trial because he is on the side of the law and the party who "loses" because he is judged to be on the other side. **Pini** symbolizes, then, a boundary which despite the fact that it is phrased in accordance with the code of the law, lacks the moral authority which is usually carried by divisions coming out of interpersonal contest.

Violence is not morally stigmatized if it is phrased according to the code of **filotimo** and face to face contest. Yet there should be really good reasons for one to resort to this extreme means of settling differences. During my fieldwork an attempt violently to settle a dispute was taken to court. One of the protagonists is Stratis Paleologos, 42 years old, married to a **xeni** with two children. Stratis is known to the village, as a rather difficult and

blunt character. To demonstrate his rude manners they often bring the example of the divorce which his former wife got on the basis of maltreatment. He originates from a plebeian family, owns almost no land and works occasionally as **karvouniaris**, charcoal burner. However his main occupation is to hold **agogia**, carrying loads with his small three-wheeled truck. Stratis often enters into arguments with **chorianous** who use their un-licenced **agrotika**, rural cars to carry the olives of friends freely or for a fee. Vasilis who owns an **agrotiko** and transferred packets of olives was threatened by Stratis not to do it again. The two men had an argument. A couple of days later Vasilis brought his **kouniados** and his **batzanakis** and "cornered" his opponent outside one of the coffeeshops. As the verbal exchange "heated", Stratis took out a screwdriver allegedly in order to defend himself. The incident did not go further, yet the two parties exchanged **minisis** for threat of violence. It so happened that the witnesses brought by each man belonged respectively to each of the village "camps". Before the hearing of the case the two sides looked on rather cordial terms. Later, in front of the judge they made a statement that they **simvivasthikan**, compromised, and the **minisis** were withdrawn.

The same day a case of **katapatisi** (tresspassing) that involved Skamniotes was also heard in the court. Two **nikokirei** asked the rural policeman to **minisi** the owners of goats and sheep who trespassed on their holdings. When the hearing of the case started the two parties declared a compromise.

In both cases the compromise took place outside the court and within the coffeeshop. The parties involved exploited the mechanism of sueing in order to strengthen their position of negotiation. Yet when their case was to be assessed by an outside body they just cancelled the litigation process, thus depriving the judge of the

right to evaluate a matter otherwise internal to the moral community. Referring to court procedures Skamniotes say that **afta ta pragmata den ine yia to chorio**, these things are not for the village. The person who sues and who asks for the regulation of an interpersonal relation by the law is liable to be accused of moral default and lack of **filotimo**. The values of agonistic egalitarianism, that may legitimize physical contest as a means of resolving a dispute, appear to be incompatible with the code of law.

Sueing, however, retains a certain attraction when it is applied to an outsider or it is used to expose the state itself! The tension between "villagers" and civil servants often turns into hostility and open conflict. This is the case with the **gramatikos** of the "community" who was sued twice. In one of these instances, the suit took the form of a **katagelia**, complaint to his supervisors in the District Office of Lesbos for not executing his duties properly. In another incident, the **irinodikis** (judge for civil matters) intervened and arbitrated in a dispute about the use of water from a stream between a local and a **xenos** who had resided in Skala for 15 year and who had not established any social tie to the community since then. In the above cases the code of law via the jural process reinforced an already existing boundary. This is why the completion of the litigation proceedings was tolerated. On the other hand, when the dispute concerns exclusively insiders, the legal process becomes part of a confrontation that remains interpersonal in nature and in this capacity touches without crossing the moral boundary of the locality.

The same restrictions are not in force when the state itself initiates a legal process. This is for example the case when the **chorofilakas**, gendarme from the nearby headvillage took some of the prominent **tzogadorous** of the village to court for illegal gambling. As we saw, being brought to court by the police as well as the

imposed fine are considered as material proofs of gambling record and in this capacity symbols of prestige. The person who is taken to court and found guilty is considered as a protagonist in the exposure of the moral boundary that separates law from commensality.

The avoidance of the means which the law provides for the settlement of disputes is one aspect of the interaction of the local society with the state. Another is the adoption of certain legal and mainly political functions, which, in principle, belong in the state's area of jurisdiction, by the moral collectivity itself. These indigenous forms of arbitration and political decision lack an explicit jural justification or backing, yet they are rather popular as political means that stand closer to the spirit of the coffeeshop collectivity. From the outside they resemble experimental forms of direct democracy. They usually focus on open debate and decision by vote on issues which involve the local society as a whole. Let us consider some examples.

I will start with a case which was regarded as important as well as long standing and which is typical because it involves a dispute between neighbouring villages over the local boundary itself. Skamnia shares a border with Kliou and Yelia at its eastern and southern side. The area they border consists mainly of "communal" pastures which are mainly exploited by the professional shephards of these villages. Until the 1960s the boundary was secured by the relatively symmetrical pressure that the shepards of each village exherted on their neighbours. However, in recent years the number of animals owned by Skamniotes declined. As an effect Kliotes and Yelayotes started to systematically trespass into Skamnia's land to feed their arithmetically superior animals. This disturbance of ecological equilibrium annoyed some Skamniotes **ktimaties** (land holders) who either owned land in this disputed area or who started

experiencing the trespassing of Skamniotika sheep, which, because of the pressure of their neighbours, were forced to **chamilosoun**, move to the lower parts where there are olive groves. Some of the 'good' **nikokirei** among those affected asked the **agrofilakas** to sue the trespassers. The response of the dominant camp in the "communal council" was rather unusual. The "president" arranged for an **anikto kinotiko simvoulio**, open communal council. This was a public meeting in which he invited all **chorianous** plus the presidents of the involved villages and the trespassers themselves. The president's view was that new borders should be "cut" and that everybody present **desmevete apo to filotino tou na ta sevasti**, is bound by one's own **filotimo** to respect them. Some of the **nikokirei** present insisted that the absent trespassers should be sued by the "community". The president, however, was adamant in his refusal to sign such a document. **To filotimo mou den to epitrepi, pos tha vgo na antikriso ta yiro choria**, my **filotimo** does not allow it, how will I go out to face the nearby villages. In the last analysis the moral dismissal of the tresspassers is a stronger penalty than the fine imposed by the judge. Otherwise **tha dropiasthi to chorio**, the 'village' will be ashamed.

The president stands for the "village". In the commensal idiom the big man represents the local society in its dealing with the neighbours. Stelaras considers the "village" to be an extension and part of his male self, the far end of his male person. As a big man he synopsises all the aspects of Skamnia's character. His sense of honour is the best example of the **Skamniotiko filotimo.** This can be an alternative to law criterion for settling disputes. On the other hand, his **fimi** (fame) equals the reputation of the local society and is tested in the territory of face to face interaction, which corresponds geographically to most of Northern Lesbos. By being the

proedros he insures that the collectivity's character does not deviate from his own.

Through this idiom of direct representation and the "opening" of the political process, the pattern of relations between the neighbouring communities and their members is arranged in accordance with the code and the values of interpersonal, face to face relations. Thus the state as a supra-communal mediator is bypassed. This strategy rests on the direct assumption of certain political functions by the coffeeshop. Indeed, the site of male commensality is upgraded into an alternative to the **kinotita** context in which local politics are conducted. For example the "plebeian" camp employs the coffeeshop as a privileged seat of discussion on communal topics, thus inviting the reaction of the "secretary" of the communal council who protests against these alleged deviations from the **kanonismos** (rules). The "president" employs the coffeeshop as the basis of the political community in his dealing with the state officials. When the **nomarchis** or local politicians of the party in government visit Skamnia, the "president" conceives it as a reciprocation of his visit to ministries, where he petitions on behalf of the village. Thus he does not go out of the village to meet the high status visitor but expects him in the coffeeshop in order to offer him **filoxenia**. The state visits the "village": commensality ingests a tone of moral symmetry into this problematic relation.

This commensal populism which focuses on the idea of the "village" as a collectivity organized around the coffeeshop occasionally takes the form of plebiscite politics. Indeed decisions on issues that are of secondary significance for the state yet can provide the focus of a heated political argument and reaction within the local community are surrendered to be decided in the context of

the idiosyncratic, indigenous political process. **Dakos** (dacus olei) is an insect which destroys the olives. The district officials who are responsible for agricultural production on the island organize the annual spraying of the olive groves with pesticide either by plane or by teams of men who spray each landholding individually. Because of an ongoing argument on the side effects of aerial spraying the district officers passed the jurisdiction of deciding on the method of spraying to the "community". Both camps agreed that the best way to proceed is by the direct, open vote of all men who own land or animals and were directly effected. The camp of the **nikokirei** adopted the opinion of the district officers that the aerial spraying is a safe method and voted "yes". The other camp, however, reacted on a number of points. First, the technical language and the outside authority backing the "yes" argument increased their suspicion that something else lay behind it. If **kalpia** (lie) is an attribute of the civil servant then one cannot trust the opinion of the state officials, even in technical matters. Even further, aerial spraying is totally organized by the agricultural office of the prefecture in Mytilene while land based spraying is done by local men who are paid a wage. Thus aerial spraying meant the loss of seasonal jobs for the community. Examples of bees dying and sheep getting ill in neighbouring villages were mentioned to support the empirical foundations of a counter-argument. Thus, the direct vote on a purely technical issue, which in principle should have been decided by the responsible expert agronomists, quickly turned into a plebiscite on the standing and the general credibility of the state and its people.

In the preceding examples one can easily follow the tension between the two available, local frameworks of doing politics and the devaluation of the role of the **kinotina** from a terrain of political

synthesis which is supervised by the state to a unit that jurally sanctions decisions taken elsewhere. The dependence of the local political process on the avenues of the coffeeshop, the rather novel stress on **demokratikes diadikasies**, democratic procedures and **sinelefsis tou choriou**, village assemblies, the emphasis on the **psifos** (vote) as a symbol of the indigenous and personal character of political activity, contribute to the making of the political profile of the **chorio** and its emergence as a political inter-subjectivity and as a pressure-group that is aimed towards and against the state. Although there is a marked absence of populist metaphors and references to the notion of **laos** (people), the politicization of local identity provides the context for the ideological awareness of a group of agricultural labourers, small peasants, and some traditional **nikokirei** who are historically mobilized towards the politics of the left. The notion of **chorio**, then, as a political collectivity of equal men, which tends to exclude and even oppose the new **afentika** adopts an almost class-specific content.[21]

Notes to Chapter X

1. The geographical image of locality is a succession of concentric circles. The square is at the centre and then the neighbourhoods, the gardens and vineyards and, at the outer margin, the olive groves and open fields follow.

2. See Brandes, 1975.

3. For this kind of analysis see Strathern, 1982; Cohen, 1982, 1985. Schneider's (1979) analysis of the symbolic configurations of community in American culture is another influence on this chapter.

4. See Cohen, 1982, 14.

5. This comes close to the Sarakatsani case. Campbell (1974, 23) argues that "the exclussive solidarity and isolation of the family group ... tends to prevent any widely based cooperation within the community".

6. Anthropologists have classified communities as 'open' and 'closed' (Wolf, 1957); 'corporate' and 'non-corporate' (Wolf, op. cit.); or 'atomistic' and 'holistic' (Galt, 1973).

7. This seems to be typical of Aegean Greek society. See Dubisch, 1972.

8. As the owner of extensive resources and provider of important services local society adopts the profile of the "closed, corporate peasant community" (Wolf, op. cit.). A classic Southern European example is the Castilian corporate village (Freeman, 1970, 27-63).

9. The analytic strategy rests on the assumption that notions of belonging do not automatically reflect the social forms and experiences of participation. It further aims to avoid the "unwarranted equation between 'village' and 'community'" (Strathern, op. cit., 249).

10. For degenealogised kinship as a metaphor of community see Bloch, 1981. Bloch (op. cit., 8) in particular brings the example of the undifferentiated kinship community of the shared tomb that contrasts hierarchical relations within the domestic group. The potential of symbolic kinship for equality as well as for hierarchy is of lesser significance in Skamnia since the image of the egalitarian community derives primarily from commensality. See also Caraveli, 1985.

11. This tendency was eased by the administration of names. 'Surnames' were manipulated in such a way as to conceal the existence of consanguineal ties that from the church's point of view represented an obstacle to marriage.

12. The making of the sense of locality out of an authentic substance that is often characterized as **istoria**, history, **ethimo**, custom or **lektiko idioma** reminds one of the cultural foundations of ethnic identity. Indeed, here I treat locality as a grade lower to ethnicity. See Glazer and Moynihan, 1975.

13. Here I rely on a distinction made by Schneider (1969) between 'the order of law' and 'the order of nature'.

14. See Papataxiarchis, in press.

15. The close linkage between the historical process of class differentiation and the application of 'community' symbolism has been registered in the English case. Newby (1977, 52) notes that "the traditional English landowning class placed an ideological gloss on their monopoly of power within the locality through the concept of 'community'". Strathern (op. cit., 249) argues that village is a key concept and "that it is to be understood as a product of class thinking".

16. These include the collection of taxes for the Ottoman authorities or revenue for the church, the channelling of agricultural produce to the market or the political organization under the millet system.

17. See Herzfeld, 1982.

18. In a very interesting paper Meertens (1975, 67) distinguishes between two models of community in Spain. In Northern Spain where local communities confronted external powers he notes the existence of the so called 'corporate community'. In Southern Spain and Andalusia class divisions in the locality permeated the perception of the pueblo as community and as plebs opposed to the rich. Also see Pitt-Rivers, 1971 and Gilmore, 1976.

19. For the role of **topikos silogos** in the maintenance of local identity in Greece see Kenna, 1983.

20. For the divisive effects of self interest on the community see du Boulay, 1974, 169-200.

21. Gilmore (op. cit.) argues that deep class cleavages support the formation of a strong sense of belonging to the locality and seem to coincide with the lack of clientelistic networks.

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