

Greeks In Australia



100 Years of History

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MARIA HILL CAN BE CONTACTED AT Mariahill@UNSWalumni.com

Please visit our online version of the thesis for audio interviews and higher res photos:

<http://www.cybernaut.com.au/greeksinoz/>



Maria Costadopoulos-Hill

1978

Any correspondence can be sent to the following email address :

mariahill@UNSWalumni.com

Alternatively you could email my brother on his email address :

greeksinoz@cybernaut.com.au

About the Author

"I was born in Athens, Greece on the 14th January, 1956. At the age of 3, I came to Australia with my parents. My father was an industrial chemist and my mother was a housewife. I was the eldest of 2 children.

While growing up in Australia I felt a great sense of confusion about who I was and where I belonged. In retrospect I realized, but not at the time, that this confusion was caused by mainstream Australian culture which ignored the existence of migrants. While purporting to welcome migrants into the wider Australian community, the Australian Government gave contradictory messages, on the one hand wanting migrants to become part of Australian society while at the same time rejecting them for not being Anglo- Celtic and Protestants. This dichotomy was what created the confusion I felt about my identity.

To find answers to my problem I decided that as part of my Honors degree in History I would focus on understanding how Greek families in Australia who arrived before the Second World War adapted and changed as a result of migrating to Australia and where their children and grandchildren fitted into this huge continent.

Questions such as "Did they remain in ethnic ghettos or were they socially mobile?" were explored.

In the final analysis I discerned the formation by the third generation of a distinct and unique identity:

"The Greek-Australian identity" vibrant, alive and just as valid and important as the Anglo- Celtic Australian identity for the development of a distinctly Australian NATIONAL identity.

A Landmark Thesis of 66,000 words I did not find all the answers but I was able to make a significant contribution to research in family studies, oral history and immigration. This thesis written in 1978 was a 'leader' in the field of both oral history and ethnic family studies in Australia. It was written at a time when there was no Institute of Family Studies in Australia and neither was there an Oral History Association in existence. These organizations did not come into being in Australia until many years later. Therefore the oral history methodology used had to be developed primarily by the author. The only user guidelines available for Oral history were from folklorists. Furthermore understanding and documenting family life was in its infancy in Australia. Monographs existed but not many.

Thanks: I would like to thank my husband Stuart J. Hill who reproduce the photographs for my thesis and drew all the maps. I would also like to thank my brother Nectarios Costadopoulos ,Phillip Kazanis, Magdalene Fong and Devi Nyar for the many hundreds of hours that they put into preparing my thesis for publication on the World Wide Web, as part of their Master course in Information Systems , Engineering at the University of Technology Sydney.

Digitisation Project Information

<http://www.cybernaut.com.au/greeksinoz/>

This web site, "Greeks in Australia" was produced by [Nectar Costadopoulos](#), Magdalene Fong, [Phillip Kazanis](#) and Devi Nyar as part of coursework completed for the Masters in Information Systems Engineering Degree at the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Technology, Sydney.

It is based upon an oral history thesis written by Maria Costadopoulos-Hill at the University of NSW in 1979.

The following outlines project scope:

- 66,000 words (in original typewriter state/not digitised)
- 60 black and white photographs
- 9 hours of audio cassette interviews in both Greek and English

In the pre-production phase, we established that we needed to address the following three issues by utilising the current hypermedia technologies available to us (SGML, HTML, Java, RealAudio):

- to translate the original thesis into an electronic format available to a global audience, hence our choice of using the World Wide Web as the publishing medium
- to make the audio cassette interviews accessible (there were originally 15 interviews conducted, however due to tape degradation over a 20 year period, we were only able to make 9 accessible via this site)
- to make the main concepts in the thesis easily accessible via facilities such as the look-ahead and a key word search engine

Breakdown of Production Schedule and Individual Responsibilities:

project analysis and design

digitisation of raw materials including 150 pages of typewriter text, 60 black and white photographs and 9 hours of audio cassette interviews.

[Nectar Costadopoulos](#)

[Magdalene Fong](#)

capturing information in SGML format, structuring electronic text, configuring automation of HTML pages

[Phillip Kazanis](#)

[Devi Nyar](#)

user interface design, creation of overall metaphor/look and feel of site, navigational mechanisms, editing and styling of photographic and audio content.

[Nectar Costadopoulos](#)

[Magdalene Fong](#)

content management, uniform formatting of text, cross-checking and proof-reading the digitised text against original paper version, concept mapping for look-ahead facility.

[Nectar Costadopoulos](#)

[Phillip Kazanis](#)

web programming, implementation of site in HTML format using Java navigational controls such as look-ahead facilities and secondary windows, automation of content from SGML into HTML pages for representation on the web.

[Phillip Kazanis](#)

debugging and testing, solving SGML, HTML and Java usability problems, previewing the site on various browsers including Netscape Navigator Version 3.0, Netscape Communicator Version 4.0, Microsoft Explorer Version 3.0 and 4.0 across various platforms including PCs, Macintosh and UNIX and using various modems.

[Nectar Costadopoulos](#)

[Phillip Kazanis](#)

INTRODUCTION: ORAL HISTORY AND IMMIGRATION

INTRODUCTION

The thesis has examined the 'charges and continuities' within the Kytherian and Castellorizan family over three generations in Australia. It has documented their lives and has presented 'images' of the Greek family that have not been known before.

The first generation, the early Kytherian and Castellorizan settlers arrived as young unmarried men' worked hard for many years, acquired their own cafes and fish-shops and then settled down and raised a family. Although first generation Kytherian and Castellorizan family life varied due to their different places of settlement, both groups of people still maintained the traditional Greek family patterns in Australia. The first generation parents laid the foundation of 'Greekness'. They inculcated within their children an awareness that they belonged to a distinct culture group of people which would be dissipated and destroyed if intermarriage occurred. This awareness was instilled into their children not out of loyalty to Greece but out of loyalty to the family.

Although the second generation Kytherian Greeks attempted to retain a certain between the different generations of Greeks by making their children aware of their Greek background and by warning them of the dangers of intermarriage as they had been warned, they also wrought major structural changes to Greek family life. The second generation took Greek family upbringing and adapted it to fit the Australian and form a completely new subculture which was neither Greek nor Australian but a strange mixture of both. The new Greek-Australian family that emerged had distinctive features which were not present in mainland Greece and were a product of changes within the Australian environment such as industrialisation urbanisation. The character of the new Greek-Australian family that emerged was also determined by changes in occupation and class from one generation to the next. The upbringing, the racism and the prejudice experienced by the second generation coupled with the above factors determined the nature of the new family that emerged.

Even with the third generation, 'loyalty to the family' and endogamous marriages were still very important aspects. Endogamy was supported by the third generation out of inherent loyalty to the Greek family and to their grandparents who were important formative influences in their lives. Although there were continuities from one generation to the next, changes had also occurred between the second and third generation in regard to attitudes toward education and career and attitudes towards Greek morality. The third generation were different from their parents. They were middle class children, born into middle class families and were totally detached from the initial migration experience. Their only contact with Greek culture was through their grandparents who were a major formative influence were not a result of the movement away from the core of the Greek culture but were caused by the different class position of the third generation. Thus 'ethnicity' is far from a sufficient explanation of changes within the Greek family in Australia. Other factors have played an important role in these changes.

Oral History captures... the vast penumbra of doubt; the extraordinary untidiness and

ambiguity of life, above all the mystery of human personality...

B. Ostry.



Castellorizan Brotherhood picnic' Clarke Island: 1948.

(click on photo to enlarge)

'The Illusion of Understanding: Making the Ambiguous Intelligible,' Oral History Review, 1977, p9.

This thesis seeks to fill some of the gaps which exist in the study of the family life of immigrants in Australia. Charles Price writing in 1963 identified this need in Southern Europeans in Australia:

" Indeed the whole matter of southern European family life in Australia, and the extent to which the family customs and loyalty of each particular group survived amongst the second and third generation, requires considerably more research "

(1)

Studies that have dealt with migrant family life seem to have concentrated on first generation post-war migrants and their family dislocation. (2) They have not looked at the Greek family in Australia over a long period of time in order to see the changes and continuities that have occurred. If one is to look seriously at concepts such as 'assimilation' or 'integration' or 'cultural change' or whatever label one may choose to attach to the process by which an ethnic group changes and affects change in Australia, (3) one must

look at immigrant families over a long period of time. It is totally unrealistic to assume that change can occur within one generation. "Cultural change' is a slow process and cannot occur immediately. In order to examine the extent to which family customs and loyalty' survived and whether cultural change has occurred, the thesis will attempt to examine the Greek family over three generations in Australia. It will examine the life of the first generation' immigrants: the early settlers who came from mainland Greece and the islands. (4) It will discuss the type of life they led in Australian the early 1900s, 20s, 30s and 40s. It will examine how they settled, organised and survived, married and brought up a family. It will also look at the 'second generation'; the children of the early immigrants, who were born in Australia; and how their upbringing coupled with other influences within Australian society determined the family that was to later emerge. Finally the 'third generation', consisting of the grandchildren of the first generation or the children of the second generation, will also be

examined to determine what aspects of Greek culture they have retained and the changes that have occurred between the second and third generation. Although the thesis has focussed on

Research Issues

the evolution and change of the Greek family in Australia, it has also sought to document Greek family life: their recreation, ideas about Australia and Australians, to examine exactly what life was like for migrants living in Australia before the second World War to "...capture...the extraordinary untidiness and ambiguity of life, above all the mystery of human personality..." (5) and by so doing make the 'ambiguous' in life intelligible.

Researchers (6) have assumed and commented on the importance of the 'family' and its effect on the course of migration and settlement but have not sought to document it effectively. Suzanne Ziegler after conducting 87 interviews of Italian born young adults living in Toronto commented: "The importance of the family as an emotional support system, while generally assumed, is not well documented, although the emotional centrality of the family in migration is a dominant motif in descriptions given by young Italian immigrants of their experience". (7)

This thesis will seek to display the importance and centrality of the family in the actions and attitude of the first generation immigrants and their children and grandchildren. Although other issues are important in the history of immigrants in Australia, such as social and economic mobility, changes in occupation, political involvement and affiliation, these become subordinate to the importance of the family in the lives of Greek immigrants in Australia. By regarding the family as the unit of analysis one acquires a better understanding of why first generation immigrants strove desperately for financial security their children for educational advancement and their grandchildren's complacency. "...The strength of family authority, and the prevalence of wider family loyalties had so much to do with chain migration with the choice of occupations with the decision on where to settle".

In particular the thesis will concentrate on a study of pre-war Kytherian and Castellorizan Greeks' their children and grandchildren and will compare and contrast the family life of ,other these groups of people who settled in Australia during a similar time and in a greater number than the rest of the Greeks who migrated to Australia.

before World War II. European migration before the second World War was relatively slight compared with British, (9) and until the last quarter of the nineteenth century settlers from southern Europe were relatively insignificant. North-west and north-eastern Europeans (11) dominated nineteenth century migration from Europe to Australia. (12) However, between 1891 and 1940 the situation changed as nearly 50,000 southern Europeans arrived, an increase from eight to seventy-five per cent during this fifty year period. Pre-war southern European immigrants received no governmental assistance. Over 90 per cent came to their new land under the system of 'chain migration'. (14) The term 'chain migration' reaches back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when hundreds of migrants were entering the United States each year.

" Officials watching this great movement speedily became aware that one of the major factors involved was a letter to the home folks written by an enthusiastic settler and containing glowing descriptions of wages and conditions in the New World " (15)

These letters which were sent home induced many immigrants to sell their property, mortgage their belongings so they could acquire the fares to come to Australia. Many of the first generation Kytherian and Castellorizan immigrants who were interviewed came to Australia as a result of this process. They had heard from an uncle returning to the island for a visit, or from friends of opportunities available in Australia. But the early Greek immigrants found it difficult to find a passage to Australia because

Southern Europeans

by the time the ships reached Egypt they were filled with British SO some went to France to find a berth or even stowed away so they could come.

Of the 50,000 southern Europeans who came to Australia before the Second World War 10,260 of these were Greeks, and 2,200 were from the island of Kythera and 1,293 from the island of Castellorizan. Greek settlement before the war was small and emanated from certain parts of Greece making the Greek community in Australia close-knit and relatively homogeneous, The process of 'chain migration' meant that early settlers were encouraging and in many cases sponsoring people from the same part of Greece. Greek migration to Australia did not represent sent a broad cross-section of the Greek population. Therefore we cannot talk of pre-war Greeks as a whole but of Greeks from a relatively small number of islands ports and inland districts, where there were marked differences in dialect, traditions and social customs. (16) Thus in an effort to avoid making gross generalisations the thesis has concentrated specifically on Kytherian and Castellorizan Greeks, rather than attempt to coal with pre-war Greeks in general. These two islands along with the island of Ithaca provided 42 per cent of Greek male settlers before the war. (17) In reference to these early Greek settlers , Gillian Bottomley in her study of Greeks in Sydney had this to say:

" Some of the elder settlers are now extremely wealthy; several are undoubtedly millionaires. They have developed life styles in keeping with their wealth, living in opulent home sin exclusive suburbs, dressing elegantly, and endowing their children with the benefits of wealth, such as expensive education, financial backing for professional sons, generous wedding settlements for daughters. These are the people who can support and guide the well established brotherhoods and pan-Hellenic organisations. Normally, they have minimal contact with the new arrivals who represent the lower strata of the Greek population, and whose life style contrasts accordingly with that of their wealthy compatriots. " (19)

The historical study of the Castellorizan and Kytherian Greeks who formed the upper strata of the Greek community in

Australia, has been based predominantly oral history interviews. Oral history is a 'new' method in history which involves the recording of a section of the oral tradition known as "personal reminiscence" by a historian -interviewer. Some of its advocates maintain that oral history is nothing new but the oldest type of history' and trace its origins back to Herodotus. (20) However the method which involves the electronic recording of information on tape has more recent antecedents. 'Oral history' method dates back to 1942 when historian Allan Nevins formally used it to describe the history project he had established at Columbia university for the collection of new historical documentation for historians and other researchers in the future. Nevins conceived of the idea in the late 1930s while attempting to

conduct his research for a biography of Grover Cleveland and his associates most of whom had died without leaving historians a legacy of any kind. Purely from an academic viewpoint, the historian wonders why could not men in public life, most of whom would never write their memoirs simply talk to an informed interviewer for the sake of history? They could be encouraged to speak candidly by having the right to check their remarks for accuracy and determine whether the material could be made public during their lifetime or several years after their death. (21) Although Neuenhaus formally used the term in 1948, he did not invent it. The term itself was coined by a dissolute member of the Greenwich Village literati named Joe Gould. According to a New Yorker profile of 1942, Gould was thought to have been writing "An Oral History of Our Time" in school exercise books.

"As he described the oral history consisted of talk he had heard and had considered meaningful and had taken either verbatim or summarized from a remark overheard in the street to the conversation of a roomful of people lasting for hours... he once said to a detractor. 'It's only things I heard people say, but maybe I have a peculiar ability- maybe I can understand the significance of what people say, maybe I can read its inner meaning...'" (22)

Interviewing Techniques

There is nothing which is particularly 'historical' about oral history interviewing techniques. They are the same as those used in Sociology, Social Anthropology, Folklore and in any discipline involved with the collecting and assessing of oral evidence. The difference between these disciplines lies in the essential purpose of their interviews. A Folklorist for example has been considered an Oral historian to the extent that he deals with the past and is concerned with preserving cultural survivals. The Folklorist may gather up along with folk material an immense amount of social history: "stories about life in the old days" but that is not his primary concern. (23) Folklore is not just another source of history but is a discipline and a study in its own right. "It is one of the main forms developed for expressing human emotion, fantasies and dreams throughout history and its study helps us understand mankind's creative activities, to interpret man to man." (24) In oral history interviewing the purpose is to 'unearth' or 'rediscover' "...new documentation-even oral documentation that already exists..." (25) Thus although other disciplines are concerned with collecting oral evidence, what they are doing is not 'oral history'. They are using the same means 'oral interviewing techniques' towards a different end.

The use of oral history sources is "...of inestimable aid to the historian in certain areas of the past where contemporary historians to research areas such as immigrant history, studies of the family and feminism." (26) In the field of family history, for example, internal patterns of behavior and relationships are generally inaccessible without oral evidence." (27)

However many historians have looked upon oral history and oral history sources with a slightly dubious eye. Oral history has been viewed as "instant history". The collecting of oral evidence has been seen as an easy option- painless history - and has given rise to a crop of books that could not conceivably be classified as history at all, and in one or two instances not even the material for history. (28) As a result of this and also because oral sources carry with them intrinsic problems which make the checking evidence rather difficult, not impossible at times' oral history method has been largely avoided by the majority of historians. Of course not all oral evidence is impossible to check it depends on what sort of information one is collecting. If for example the historian is collecting basic demographic

data, such as year of marriage, number of children, year of arrival in Australia and so on then this type of information which Krupinski calls (29) 'hard data' can easily be verified. But when one moves from the realm of concrete facts to the arena of ideas then one has to contend with different problems. The history of ideas, people's attitudes and perceptions about themselves which oral history is particularly adept at capturing, though useful and necessary, is considerably harder to verify and quantify in any conventional way. Historians should therefore be aware of the defects of this type of source material. Such things as the failure on the part of inexperienced interviewers as a result of ineffective techniques; the defective memories of the interviewees; the occasional efforts of individuals to confuse dates, events and names; the lack of ready reference to documentary material; the tendency to exaggerate, the inability of any individual to know the whole story of any event in which he was involved. (30)

Furthermore, when compared to written memoirs oral memoirs are likely to be rambling, poorly organised, and difficult to use. They are also likely to be done pretty much off the top of the interviewee's head without the benefit of long reflection or the extensive checking of documents. This means that factual inaccuracies will likely be more numerous, chronology will be reversed names and events will be confused; the human memory is an imperfect instrument. (31)

But does this mean that written memoirs or written sources are any more reliable or "truthful"? Some historians would maintain that oral history "cannot rank with an authentic diary, with a contemporary stock report, or with an eye witness account transcribed on the day of the event. But it is probably ranked above contemporary hearsay - evidence." (32) However, written sources are not impervious to subjectivity and biases. Some historians seem to think that as soon as sources are written down they become fact. This is because there is strong prejudice within the society against the 'spoken word'. "Members of literate societies find it difficult to shed the prejudice of contempt for the spoken word... (33) But it is only the middle class in that society which leave any written records. The working classes and immigrants who are part of them do not function with the aid of the written word. Thus, any researcher/ historian who wants to conduct research in these areas will need to rely on the spoken word'. He will need to rely on people's reminiscences of the past and will have to "...unlearn this prejudice (against the spoken word)...in order to rediscover the full wonder of words: the shades of meaning they convey to those who ponder them". (34)

Regardless of this, oral history has been perceived by some as little more than an expensive fishing expedition. It has been considered a 'waste of time' because of its inherent subjective and partisan qualities. (35) Paul Thompson, a leader in Oral History method

in England and the founder of the Oral History Association stresses that

" social statistics...no more represent absolute facts than newspaper reports, private letters, or published biographies. Like recorded interview material, they all represent, either from individual 'endpoints' or aggregated, the social perception of facts; and are all in addition subject to social pressures from the context in which they are obtained. With these forms of evidence, what we receive is social meaning and it is this which must be evaluated. " (36)

Thus the techniques of oral history should not be considered inferior but should carry the same weight as the use of conventional documentary sources. (37)

Admittedly the historian who deals with oral sources will find it harder to reach the "truth" but what the historian is generally trying to do is to arrive at some approximation to the ultimate historical truth. "And here the historian using oral tradition finds himself on exactly the same level as historians using any other kind of historical source material. No doubt he will arrive at a lower degree of probability than would otherwise be obtained, but that does not rule out the fact that what he is doing is valid and that it is history. (38) Given that oral history sources have various limitations and that many times they deal with a person entire)' at the level of his own ability to perceive and articulate them are still tests which are available to verify their authenticity. "The assumption that 'Oral Tradition'... is somehow impervious to many of the factors which historians usually take into account of in critical assessment of sources is false". (39) There are obvious safeguards to be observed. There is the need to cross-check and to allow for personal prejudices, romantic memories, special interests, lack of direct involvement, exaggeration and so on. But the most vital point that one must realize when looking at a historical study based on oral history sources is that "there are no absolute rules to indicate the reliability of oral evidence, any more than

First, Second & Third Generations

that of other historical sources...searching for internal consistency, cross-checking details from other sources, weighing evidence against a wider context are just the same as for other sources. All are fallible and subject to bias. (40) With these points about oral history methodology kept in mind, thirty-three history interviews were conducted of the first, second and third generation of Kytherian and Castellorizan Greeks.

CATEGORICAL GROUP	FIRST GENERATION		SECOND GENERATION		THIRD GENERATION	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
No. of people interviewed	8	5	7	4	2	4
Percentage	65%	40%	58%	32%	16%	33%
Age range (approximate)	19-88	8-88				
Range of birth in Greece	1912-1938	1947-1958				

First, Second & Third Generations

(click on photo to enlarge)

After the oral history interviews were taped, an excessive amount of time was required to transcribe and translate them verbatim before they were ready to be used. The interviews which were conducted ranged in time from 45 minutes to two hours, but on the average they were 90 minute interviews. Ninety minutes of tape required 16 to 20 hours of solid work to transcribe. Transcriptions had to be done carefully to ensure that the person interviewed would not be misquoted; as a word left out or heard and transcribed incorrectly could change the meaning of a whole person's account. As the interviews are primary documents it was important that this did not occur. Transcription of tapes therefore required a large amount of concentration and could not be done for long intervals. This means that the processing of the oral history tapes was very slow. Translations of tape from Greek to English required even more time and a ninety minute interview usually took 32 hours to translate. Eight of the eleven first generation interviews were translated from Greek to English. (41) Although, the

oral history interviewing is very interesting, the processing of the oral history tapes is very time-consuming and tedious.

Besides the oral history interviews, family portraits and albums were collected from the people interviewed. The photographs date back to the early 1900s and early 1920s and depict an aspect of Australia's which would not have been known and seen before. The photographs add, extra dimension to the oral history interviews. They are pictorial primary documents of Greek immigrant life in Australia. Apart from the photographs collected from the Kytherian and Castellorizan people interviewed the thesis contains photographs of Greek, mainly Kytherian, Oyster saloons, Refreshment rooms and tea rooms in existence around 1916 in Sydney and the N.S.W country towns. Some of these photographs come from a book, published in Greek in 1916 in Sydney by a Kytherian named John Comino who was then the president of the Greek community of N.S.W. and Queensland. (42)

Apart from the photographs contained within the thesis, the people interviewed for the study of the Greek finally in Australia were not selected with any random sampling in mind. The only criterion used was that the people be of Kytherian or Castellorizan descent. This approach was adopted because a study of the family is such a personal and sensitive area to research that many people do not want to disclose personal information to a researcher regardless of whether that researcher is of Greek or Anglo-Saxon descent. Thus one is fortunate enough just to find people who are prepared to speak on the subject. Thus the lifestyle and attitudes reflected by the entire Kytherian and Castellorizan images of Greek family life in Australia which had not been known. The conclusions presented on Greek family life in Australia which had not been known. The conclusions present on Greek family life in Australia are rather than a definite analysis of Greek-Australian family life. A study of thirty three people, no matter how intensive cannot hope to cover the area sufficiently.

The people interviewed were asked questions covering all aspects of their life. The interviews were very extensive. However they focussed particularly on the family. The people interviewed

were asked questions related to four general areas. The first section dealt with their parents background, their background, how they came to Australia, why and by what means. The second section dealt with their pre-marital life. Life in their family of procreation was discussed, their relationship with their parents, family intimacy or lack of it, their adolescence and their education. The third section of the interview covered their conjugal family, role expectations between husband and wife which was particularly pertinent to the second and third generation and most importantly they were asked about upbringing and attitude towards children. Although these were the general areas discussed, the interviews varied from general on to generation and from one person to the next. Thus the interviews had to be relatively open-ended and loosely structured. (examples of oral history interviews from the three generations are contained in Appendix 1. The rest of the interviews are held by the writer.) During the course of the interviews, what became obvious was that neat systematic analysis of Greek-Australian life was virtually impossible and unrealistic. The oral history interview is an interpersonal relationship which involves a high degree of sensitivity, empathy and understanding on the part of the interviewer. An understanding that there is a point beyond which a scholar cannot go. A historian who uses oral history method for obtaining information cannot expect to have all his questions answered.


Remarkably the people being interviewed for this historical study of Kytherian and Castellorizan family life in Australia were

prepared to offer a lot of personal information on the condition that their names do not appear in the study. Hence the names presented

in this thesis are fictitious. They have been contrived by the writer and bear no relation to anyone in the Greek community who may happen to possess them. The people's desire for secrecy was understandable given the nature of the research. They offered a lot of very useful information which they did not want made public. The writer was at an advantage being of Greek origin for a lot of information was given, it was not possible for information to be obtained on all issues under discussion. Amongst the first generation, and the second generation of the 1930s and 1940s, the question of 'morality' and 'sexual mores' were particularly sensitive issues which could not be pursued with many. While the third generation was very candid about their personal attitudes to morality.

Some of the early Kytherian and Castellorizan settlers who were interviewed were prepared to discuss their early single life and their attempts to establish themselves in business in pre-war Australia, but were not as willing to discuss the organisation of their family life. Grandmothers in particular, seemed generally disinclined to discuss personal details about their married children's family life as this would be considered disloyal. A general discussion of the hardship encountered during the early years in the cafes and fish shops was instead favored. Some people did not feel comfortable about criticizing or even offering an opinion about the Australian family and culture. Instead they attempted to give the impression of totally accepting the Australian way of life. In general, the people being interviewed were naturally concerned with giving a positive image of themselves, their family life and their children. The main thing which became evident through the course of the oral history interviews was that many of the people interviewed had taken a lot of things for granted within the Greek culture and had never sought to examine them. Some had never thought about the question asked and could not answer them. Some people were very articulate about experience within their life, their family and their culture, others were not. Thus although a lot of interesting information on the Greek family life in Australia was collected it is far from complete. Nevertheless, these omissions in evidence also tell us a great deal about the type of people being interviewed.

When one looks at the secondary sources available on the Greek family in Australia, similar omissions are evident. The studies that exist on the Greek family center on a discussion of first generation post-war migrants and their family dislocation and problems. (44) They discuss the way first generation migrant families are affected as they are transplanted from a rural to urban environment: "the change of role and role expectations which result in conflict within the family and may, together with economic, language and other problems, give rise to a number of psychological crises and endanger the welfare



Store Owned by Cordato
Brothers who from Kythera in
1901. Casino N.S.W. 1916.



(click on photo to enlarge)



Greek Baptism Casino
N.S.W. 1916 showing the
Cordato Family, Casino
N.S.W. 1916.

(click on photo to enlarge)

WWII Migration

of the family as a whole and the mental and physical health of its individual members". (45) However the pre war Greek family did not buffer from these crises. They struggled but nevertheless led an harmonious family existence. Charles Price who wrote the definite study of pre-war southern European settlers in Australia explained that "an appreciable number of immigrants to Australia did not arrive green from their homes in southern Europe but already had experience of life in other countries. (46) Such groups as the Kytherian Greeks had traveled extensively throughout United States, Egypt, South Africa and Australia. The Castellorizan had also traveled before arriving in Australia, mainly to Egypt. He maintains that these people may have been better placed to cope with new conditions and adapt themselves successfully to Australian conditions. (47) The Bulletin presenting a series of articles on the newly evolving heterogeneous Australian family in 1976 took Price's possible explanation about Pre-war migrants and presented it as fact in the article on the Greek family in Australia. The article on the Greeks attempted to explain away the difference between pre- and post war Greek migrant life by attributing it to the personality of pre-war migrants themselves.

" The reason for the contrasting experiences of migration is simply that post-war assisted migrants have come from a slightly different background from the individualistic islanders who began the Greek settlement of Australia before 1940... is not a subjective statement: Dr Price has figures to prove it... According to Price, one fifth of all Greek settlers before World War Two had prior experience of living in other countries pre-war Greeks, in fact, we happily absorbed because they had the requisite cosmopolitan background to do. " (48)

The study of the family life of Castellorizan and Kytherian Greeks has shown that the early settlers were far from cosmopolitan if anything they were insular, inward-moving and very restrictive. The lack of conflict and dislocation within their families and their economic

success can be more attributed to conditions prevalent in

pre-war Australia rather than their well traveled background. The pre-war Kytherian and Castellorizan immigrants did not suffer from the crises experienced by post-war Greek migrants mainly because they came to a "different" Australia, a country which was not highly industrialized and urbanized. (49) Furthermore the Kytherians and Castellorizans came as young unmarried settlers and were able to learn the language quickly. (50) The pre-war Kytherians and Castellorizans formed part of migration chains which led to communities of self-employed businessmen- cafe owners, restaurateurs, farmers and fishermen, as that was the work the original settlers set out to do, and that was the only type of employment available. These occupations afforded them the opportunity to buy their own home and business, get married and support a wife and children comfortably. There was no necessity for anyone to work outside the family in factory employment. Thus the original family the immigrants brought out with them was not drastically disrupted. The post-war chains that have proliferated since Greek assisted migration began in 1952 led in the first place to the factory processline- because that is what Australia wanted migrants to do and it is these families that have experienced severe family dislocation and conflict. (51)

Apart from the of many studies of pre-war Greek family life in Australia, there are also no studies of three generations of Greeks in Australia to examine the development of the Greek family over a long period of time. However in America, three generational studies of the Greek family are available. These studies examining the evolution of the Greek family in America have also stressed the importance of the family in immigrant history. Nicholas Tavuchis in his study of the "Family and Mobility Among Greek-Americans", (52) stressed the importance the family and intergenerational ties (53) and

The Family

intergenerational (54) ties amongst the second generation Greek-Americans residing in the New Jersey-New York area. This study found that relationships based on blood and marriage in urban environment were vigorous and durable. Pressures from kinship loyalties were accepted as legitimate and binding, brought gratification, emotional security and a sense of identity and solidarity. A keen appreciation was recorded of the values the first generation brought out with them from Greece such as respect for hard work deferred gratification belief in social mobility, and prestige to the family by achievement. Helen Capanidou- Lauquier's study in 1961 of "Cultural Change Among Three Generations of Greeks" in the South Western city of San Antonio Texas, found in her interviews of 27 families that

" The family and the Greek Orthodox Church are the two institutions primarily responsible for preserving Greek culture into the third generation. All Greek families expect their children to marry within the Greek group and the Greek Orthodox Church. As long as this expectation prevails certain aspects of the culture pertaining to religion and the family will probably be transmitted to future generations. " (55)

Although this Australian study of the three generations of Kytherian and Castellorizan Greeks did not have identical findings, the importance of the family and endogamy was evident even till the third generation. Professor George Kourvetaris' chapter on "The Greek American Family" which is also an analysis of the Greek family over three generations in America

found that "For the Greek immigrant as for other late immigrant groups, religion and family became the differentiating ethnic institutions that set them apart from the early northwestern European immigrant groups". (57)

By using American research on Greek immigration the thesis has attempted to place Australian immigration, particularly Greek immigration in Australia into a wider 'world context'. Charles Price also notes the value of using research done on immigrant groups in America. "These countries have many social institutions and activities similar to those of Australia, so that comparison helps to set the Australian experience in a more general context". (58) This way the researcher does not fall into

the trap of interpreting the characteristics of Greek migration as unique to Australia, that is totally a product of the Australian experience. George Kourvetaris in a review of Michael Tsounis' chapter on "Greek Communities in Australia" (59), criticizes him for failing to look at research done on the Greeks in America.

" If the author had bothered to read some of the writings on the Greeks and other immigrants to North America (United States particularly), he would find that similar problems of adjustment and cultural conflict were observed in the formative years among Greek immigrants to the United States. " (60)

Furthermore, the thesis has attempted to place the Greek family in a broader context by not only looking at studies done on the Greek family in America but by examining the changes within what may be loosely called the 'Australian' family. (61) However studies on the Australian family are very few. Elkins' classic monograph "Marriage and the Family in Australia", published in 1957 has not been superseded. (62) In the absence of sufficient studies of the Australian family, information was gained in regard to attitudes and morality within the pre-war Australian families through discussions with people living at the time.

One comes up with similar problems when trying to locate studies on the Greek family in Greece. The studies that do exist in English and that are available in Australia have been used. Although Panos Bardis and C. Safilios-Rothschild supplied sufficient information on the rural and urban family in Greece respectively, these studies may be considered slightly out of date. Bardis did his research in the 1950s on the rural Greek family (63), and Safilios-Rothschild most recent study on the urban Greek family in

Athens was done during 1970-71. (64) Even though changes in the family may have occurred within the last few years in Athens and rural Greece, they would not have been extensive enough to warrant a reappraisal of the existing literature on the Greek family. (65) Studies of the changes in family life on the island have been non-existent and recent information on the developments and continuities on the island of Kythera and Castellorizo has been obtained from the people interviewed.

Thus by placing the Greek family in Australia in a broader context and not treating it as though it existed in a vacuum the thesis has avoided explaining cultural change and behavior of ethnic groups totally in terms of ethnicity'. Dr Jean I. Martin at a seminar/workshop on "Immigration Policies and Research for the 1980s", voiced alarm at the "...glibness of cultural explanations of behavior... which says that people behave like this because they are Greeks, Italians or Lebanese or something-then are Greeks, Italians or Lebanese or something-then you've explained behavior? You've explained nothing at all! You're just pushing the explanation one step further". (66).

GREEK FAMILY LIFE IN N.S.W. 1900-1945: LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF 'GREEKNESS'

Introduction

" My own mother! Who knows what tears she sheds each day and night, as I have done for my Alky? Perhaps even more grievous. I have lost my child, but she has lost us all, daughter, grandchildren, son-in-law; and the last and greatest joy that all parents look forward to: that they be blessed to enjoy their grandchildren in the family surroundings of their own offspring. " [\(0\)](#)

Vasso Kalamaras,

Other Earth



(click on photo to enlarge)

Double Castellorizan wedding of brother and sister Jack and Evelyn Dioktidi held on the 9th of November 1930 in Sydney. Many of the people pictured are the descendants of Castellorizan patriot Father Theodosi Simonidis who lowered the Turkish flag and raised the Greek flag during the 1914/18 war when the Turks were still occupying the island, and was involved in many attempts to liberate the island.

The family tradition which the early Greeks brought out with them to Australia was:

" patriarchal and authoritarian. Women had a low status. Boys and girls were not allowed to associate freely. Marriage was usually arranged, and the dowry system was dominant. Mixed marriages were almost non-existent. The engagement and wedding ceremonies were of a religious nature. Birth rates were very high and divorce almost absent. " [\(1\)](#)

In addition to the conjugal family unit, there were uncles, aunts and sometimes cousins, who often held joint property. Children were very important as they were links in the chain of the generations and grandparents as well as elderly uncles and aunts had authority over them. They were taught respect and courtesy for all older people, especially for teachers and priests. [\(2\)](#) Furthermore, the

Greekness

family was the center of recreation, but the whole community celebrated holidays and festivals. Leisure time was spent in the home amongst the members of the extended family. (3) Although, as Charles Price points out, there was some variation in the structure of the Greek family, 'nuclear versus extended', (4) from one region to the next, there appears to have been little disagreement over the basic constituents of the Greek family ethos. Panos Bardis explains that:

" This family was influenced very much by the rural nature of the country, a conservative and authoritarian church, political instability, illiteracy, as peculiar bilingualism, the Kafeneion, (5) and poor transportation and communication facilities." (6)

Regardless of the influences which molded the Greek peasant family, its tight-knit and circumscribed nature produced in the early pre-war Greeks an awareness or consciousness of belonging to a particular 'folk culture'. This awareness which one may call 'Greekness' was in turn perpetuated in their children who were born in Australia. This was done throughout the family, the main socializing agent and the keystone of Greek culture, in a desire to inculcate a loyalty not to a Greek national culture, nor to Greece Per se or even to a Greek regional or local culture, but in an effort to create a sense of 'continuity' between the different generations of Greeks in Australia and to produce a loyalty to the Greek family.

Pre-war Greek migration to Australia consisted predominately of young unattached Greek male settlers. Thus family migration was not an important aspect of early Greek settlement in Australia. Nevertheless, the small Greek community which existed in Sydney had developed into a type of surrogate family which quickly befriended newly arrived Greek settlers, offered them food and shelter until they were able to locate either work or relatives. This patronage was offered by well-established Kytherians to their newer compatriots from the same island. Presumably the same familial relationships existed between the

Castellorizans & Kytherians

Greeks from the other regions of Greece, but one cannot be sure. Castellorizans, the other island group which seemed to predominate in early Greek settlement in Australia, did not work on an identical basis to the Kytherians. Instead, newly arrived Castellorizans were usually met in Sydney by relatives and taken quickly away. Nevertheless the Castellorizans all had a close, tight-knit community which offered support to the most recent arrivals from the island. Relationships between the people of each island group were very close, much closer in fact than had existed on the actual islands.

The migration experience at the turn of the century proved to be a binding force within each regional group and aided the cohesion within the Greek community in general. Having received a substantial amount of support from their particular island group, reminiscent of the type of relationships that existed within a Greek extended family, the early Kytherian and Castellorizan Greeks then sought to establish a family of their own. Both groups of people married very late in their lives after achieving what they considered reasonable financial success in order to comfortably support a wife and children.

The family life of Kytherians and Castellorizans varied radically due to their respective places of settlement. The Kytherians after giving established themselves in Sydney spread,

very early in the century throughout the New South Wales country towns, while the Castellorizians who first established in Perth, moved slowly around Australia preferring to settle in cities. Those who settled in Sydney were very mobile within the city itself. Their respective family life was dictated by the nature of the environment within which they lived. Kytherians living in country towns were very much excluded from Greek activity and their children were inevitably allowed to interact with British-Australian children; while Castellorizians having organised Greek community around them, particularly in the suburb of Paddington where most of the island group lived in the 1920's, 30's and 40's, with their own church, led a much more insular existence detached from the wider Australian community. Their children's social activities were strictly supervised and organised around the Castollorizian brotherhood functions, family picnics and church social activities. However this does not imply that the Kytherians were any more prepared than the Castellorizians to allow their children to assimilate into the Australian community, for when their children became of a marriageable age they were quickly taken away and transplanted into a secure well-established Kytherian community in Sydney in an effect to prevent intermarriage. The Castellorizians were even more severe in the protection of their children. They removed their daughters from high-school as soon as they reached first year, and placed them inside the family home until a suitable marriage could be arranged. Furthermore the girls were prevented from working outside the family home or even in the family business as this was considered to be a disgrace to the family. The Castellorizians insularity and obsessive desire to protect their daughters and preserve within their children the essential constituents of Greek familial tradition was partly due to the seclusion of women which they came but was exacerbated by the xenophobic and anti-foreign attitudes of the Australian population, particularly in the cities, in the 1920's , 30's and 40's.

There was very strong anti-southern European sentiment within Australian society before and even after the Second World War. Furthermore the hostility was not restricted to cities alone but was also evident in the country-side. The 'anti-dago' riots which occurred at Boulder-Kalgorlie in 1934 represents one of the most serious examples of anti-foreign sentiment exhibited in a country town. Violence broke out when a group of British-Australian miners looted European shops burning five Italian, Greek and Slav hotels or clubs to the ground. (7) This is not to suggest that response to southern Europeans were always hostile, they varied from place to place. Nevertheless, Australia in the early 1900's was an intensely British society, both in population and in tradition, (8) It was an insular society which demanded 'Anglo-conformity'. (9) There was a fear of anyone whose behavior, appearance and dress varied from the

Anti-Foreign Attitudes

dominant Anglo-Saxon model. At the 1933 census, 99.3 per cent of the population in New South Wales were listed as "British". (10) Like the small Greek community in Australia, Australian society in the 1930's represented a relatively homogeneous population, in culture, and "without pronounced economic or regional variation". (11)

" Sydney was small and its customs were those of 'home' - England... Australians had not developed any kind of response in dealing with non-Anglo-Saxon peoples, and the southern European immigrants were pushed into their own ethnic worlds. " (12)

There was certainly strong racism directed against southern Europeans which sprang partly

from the "desire to maintain the British identity". [\(13\)](#) According to Price, Australia has rarely voiced anything but Anglo-conformist opinions, of the necessity for newcomers to fit in with 'our British heritage'. [\(14\)](#) Even as late as 1971 one finds P. Lynch, then Minister for Immigration, stating that

" ... all our migration and social policies... are clearly and firmly based on the belief that all Australians want Australia to be an essentially cohesive society without self-perpetuating enclaves and undigested minorities. " [\(15\)](#)

'Alien Labour

Amongst the southern Europeans who arrived before the war, the Greeks were described as the "least popular foreigners in Australia", by a Melbourne geographer writing in the early thirties. [\(16\)](#) In a report concerned with 'Alien Labour' commissioned in 1924 by the Labour Government in North Queensland, Commissioner Thomas Arthur Ferry stated that

" The Greek residents of North Queensland are generally of an undesirable type, and do not make good settlers....Their admission to Queensland can be of no possible benefit to the country. " [\(17\)](#)

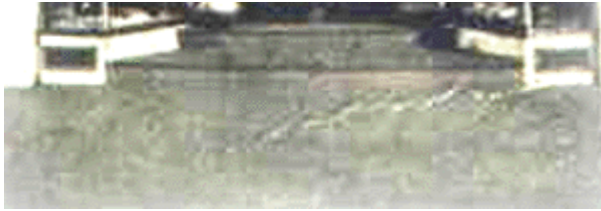
In the report Ferry was referring to Greek settlers mainly from Kythera, Castellorizo, Lesbos, Chios and Athens who had established restaurants throughout Queensland and New South Wales, and in reference to these people he concluded that

"socially and economically this type of immigrant is a menace to the community in which he settles and it would be for the benefit of the State if his entrance were altogether prohibited. " [\(18\)](#)

Four years later, in 1928, the Premier of Western Australia in a speech in parliament referred to the Greeks as that 'Fish and Chip Crowd'. [\(19\)](#) During the same year the newspaper Truth, foremost in promoting anti-southern European sentiments, made statements such as 'the muddy stream flows to Australia from Greece, Malta and the Levant'. [\(20\)](#)



Entrance of Exotic Café, by
Constintine Tsiros for Sparta.
Brisabane 1916



(click on photo to enlarge)



Luxurious Interior of Tsiros.
Brisbane Café

(click on photo to enlarge)



A view of the Mineral Fountain
Contained in the Café.

(click on photo to enlarge)



Another aspect of Tsiros huge
establishment

(click on photo to enlarge)

Huge amount of Greek staff
employed in Greek
Restaurant Tsiros 1916





(click on photo to enlarge)



Another view of the Entrance
of the exotic Café

(click on photo to enlarge)

Greek Refugees

Regardless of local British-Australian attitudes towards the Greeks, by 1911 the total Greek-born population of New South Wales had reached 822, [\(21\)](#) and some 400 of these were Kytherian born residents. [\(22\)](#)

" By 1920-22 due to major political upheavals caused when the Turks defeated the Greek army of invasion and then retaliated by exterminating or putting to flight Greek families who had been settled in Asia Minor for many generations, [\(23\)](#)

Australia received many of the one and a half million Greek refugees. "

Also at this time the American restrictive immigration policies channeled Greek immigration from the United States to Australia and the Greek-born population of New South Wales increased from 3,654 at the census of 1921 to 8,329 at the census of 1933. Between 1890-1940, 10,260 Greeks settled in Australia. Of the 10,000 Greek arrivals 2,200 came from the island of Kythera, 1,290 from the island of Castellorizo and 860 came from the island of Ithaca. Altogether these three islands provide 42 per cent of the Greek male

settlers in Australia during the period 1890-1920. (26) Although there were restrictions imposed on southern European immigration at various times: 1916, 1924, 1928-34, they did not affect migration from Kythera and Castellorizo. This was because the majority of Kytherians and Castellorizans had arrived before 1920 and by 1929 had virtually completed their main migration, so that by the 1940's they had firmly established settlement chains and were well established in Cafes and small business. Thus they represented the older, wealthier segment of the Greek community. By 1947 the total inhabitants of Kythera had fallen to about two-thirds of the number there in the 1860's. (27) At the same time in New South Wales the Kytherian population totaled somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000

Ionian Islands

of whom half or more were adult male settlers and the remainder wives and children born in Greece or second and third generation persons born in Australia. (28) In 1976, the population of Kythera was estimated at 3,350 and there are at present approximately 38,000 persons of Kytherian descent living in New South Wales alone. (29)

Kythera, part of the Ionian island group, is situated opposite the southern-most point of the Peloponnesse. Kythera along with most of the Ionian islands had been subjected to different kinds of pressures with the Norman, Venetian and British occupations.

By 1860 with the slow liberation of most of the Greek states from Ottoman rule, Kythera was incorporated in the southern Peloponessian monarchy of Argolis and subsequently of Attica. (31) In Kythera the system of inheritance, where the land is subdivided into small cultivation plots between the male children after the father's death, has resulted in "restricted areas of fertility... separated from each other by broken mountainous country often highly unsuitable for roads and railways". (32) This situation caused the migration of many young Kytherian men at the turn of the century. The island was also part of a local exchange economy involved in very little international trade. Thus the island did not have the resources to support the population causing many to seek employment overseas. Mainland Greece was suffering from different problems which affected the Ionian islands as well as other parts of Greece in the early twentieth century. In the 1860's and 1870's phyloxera had destroyed many French vineyards and Greek peasants took advantage of the shortage of wine by pulling down century old olive groves and planting vines.

However, when the French vigneron found a phyloxera-resistant stock at the end of the century French wines again dominated the market and many Greek peasant found themselves in severe economic difficulties. (34) This agricultural disaster coupled with the cost of the military excursions against the Turks, and a recession in

Europe in the 1890's brought about by a disastrous drop in the price of currants in European markets precipitated the "exodus of more than a quarter of a million migrants to the United States alone between 1906 and 1914. (36)

Castellorizo presented problems of a different nature from both Kythera and mainland Greece. Castellorizo, a small island of only four square miles, part of the group of island called the Dodecanese, tucked away under the Turkish shelf - a potential time-bomb was always in danger of being attacked. The population of Castellorizo was drastically reduced

" from some 10,000 in 1908 to 2,000 or so in 1917, primarily because the Turkish Government imposed severe restrictions on the islanders' commercial

activities in 1908 and followed this up by shelling the town from the mainland during the war in 1916; during these years numerous Castellorizans moved to America, Egypt and eventually Australia, and when less troubled conditions prevailed they were too well settled to return. " (36)

From 1920 onwards the island was under Italian occupation and it was not until 1947 that the island was liberated and incorporated into the Greek state. Even after conditions had settled down in the 1920's, emigration continued to reduce the population from 2,700 in 1922 to 600 in 1947. (37). Now there are approximately 100 people left on Castellorizo and many thousand descendants in Australia. (38)

Given the history of the island it is not surprising to find that early Castellorizan settlement in Australia has its origins in the conflict with the Turks. Apparently, the first-known Castellorizan pioneer Athanasios August fled from the island after attacking some hated Turkish official, came to Australia as a seaman in the mid-eighties, worked for a while in several states, and returned to Castellorizo in 1896. (39) In 1898 he came back to Australia with

Darwin

a friend, settled in Perth and encouraged others to join them. By the outbreak of World War I there were close to a hundred Castellorizan men in Perth itself, mainly engaged in general labor, fruit-shops and restaurants. (40)

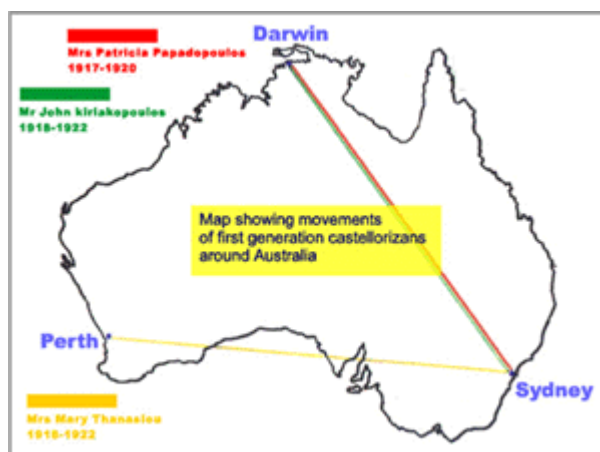
The four Castellorizan families who have been interviewed for the study, also fled the island like their fore-father Athanasios August to avoid Turkish hegemony and bloody reprisals. 'Mrs. Mary Thanasios', age 80, who arrived in Perth in 1918 at the age of 20 to meet up with her brother, remembers quite vividly the events which caused her to leave the island in fear. She explains the Turks had attempted

" ... to come to take the island, bombing. We were bombed and we fled to the mountains. When things quieter, then I left. I came to Port Said and from there I came to Western Australia. I went to Singapore and from there we got a boat... " (41)

'Mrs. Patricia Papadopoulos', 84, who arrived in Darwin in 1917 at the age of 23 to join her husband, left the island under similar circumstances. She still remembers fleeing up into the mountains during the First World War to survive the Turkish bombing. (42)

Unfortunately 'Mrs. Thanasios's' and 'Mrs. Papadopoulos' husbands are both deceased. Therefore information on their exodus from the island was not available. The third person interviewed, 'John Kiriakopoulos' was only nine when he arrived in Darwin in 1918 with his mother and two brothers to join his father who was "working for that time at the meatworks making the bully beef to serve to the soldiers". (43)

It appears that Darwin was a very busy port just before the First World War and many Castellorizans instead of going to Perth went straight to Darwin from the Mediterranean via Egypt and Singapore. The Federal Government had decided to promote the development of the Northern Territory with the extension of railways out from Darwin, by organizing a contract with the British firm of



Map showing the movements of the first generation Castellorizans around Australia

(click on photo to enlarge)

Western Australia

Vestes involving the construction of large meat-processing factory and by the enlargement of the Darwin wharves. [\(44\)](#)

" By 1917 there were two hundred or so Castellorizans in the Territory, most of them employed as laborers not he railways and as building laborers at the new meatworks and wharves; a few, however, were occupied in carpentering, wharf-laboring and catering. " [\(45\)](#)

However by 1918-19 the availability of work had diminished, and many of the Castellorizans left and moved to principal settlements in Western Australia. Many also moved direct to Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. Included in this exodus from Darwin to Sydney was 'John Kiriakopoulos' family. His family arrived in Sydney in 1922 on a boat with twenty or thirty other Castellorizans families.

According to 'John' their departure was caused by the closing down of the meatworks in Darwin, where his father had worked.

From 1923 the Castellorizans colony in Sydney had begun to grow rapidly and had started attracting large numbers of Castellorizans direct from the Mediterranean. One of these people was 'Nick Diakopoulos' who came directly to Sydney in 1923, at the age of 22 to work in his eldest brother's restaurant in Goulburn Street, Ultimo. 'Nick' explained that he had left Castellorizo at the age of twelve to work in Egypt because

" ...war had been declared 1914/15. Food was not available in Castellorizo, work was not available in Castellorizo so I said I would leave too and try my luck. " [\(46\)](#)

But when he returned to the island four years later the same conditions prevailed; so he stayed in Castellorizo for four years before deciding to come to Australia "for a better life". [\(47\)](#)

Kytherian shop started in



1912 in Taree N.S.W. by John and George Cassimati. These two brother came to Australia in 1908

(click on photo to enlarge)



A store owned by Kytherian Michael Katsoulas at Bellingen N..S.W. 1916

(click on photo to enlarge)

Kytherian Harry Krithari came to Australia in 1907 Bellina N.S.W. 1916 he bought the store in 1909



(click on photo to enlarge)

The Greek Orthodox Community

While the Castellorizans were creating pioneer settlements and migratin chains in Western Australia, the Kytherians were securely establishing themselves in the Eastern states. The foundation fo the Kytherian community in Australia has been attributed to one Athanasios Comino who arrived on a sailing ship after having heard about Australia from John Melitas, who had arrived in the country during the gold-rushes and had returned spreading the news about Australia.

Initially Comino worked as an unskilled labourer in Sydney. Apparently hsi initiatin into the fish anmigrationrade resulted from an accidental visit to a fish shop in Oxford Street, Darlinghurst owned by a Welshman. Having seen how easily the welshman prepared and cooked the fish he decided to start a business of his own and some time in 1878 he opened a small fish shop at 36 Oxford Street. (48) From this shop Comino branched out into the supplying of oysters and fish and latter became known as the 'Oyster King'. (49) During the 1880's Comino brought out his brothers, they in turn brought out their friends and by 1911 the Kytherian colony in New South Wales had some 400 people "70 per cent of whom were either controlling or working in oyster bars, fish shops and restaurants". (50) Thus by 1923 when the Castellorizans were moving from Darwin and the western states into Sydney, and the Castellorizan settlement in Sydney was just beginning to grow; the Kytherians had virtually monopolized the Cafe, and Oyster Saloon business in Sydney and throughout the New South Wales country town.

The four Kytherian families who have been interviewed did not leave Kythera to flee from political persecution. Like the 'Oyster King' himself, they had heard stories from friends and relatives of Australia's abundant wealth and numerous opportunities "... gold was so plentiful they could shovel it and you could be wealthy very quickly..." (51) so they came seeking a better life.

The earliest arrival from the group of people interviewed was Mr. Bill Demos age 81, who had come to Sydney in 1912 when he was only a young boy of fifteen. His wife Maria, twelve years his junior, recalls the circumstances which forced Bill, a promising student to migrate.

" He was the first in the family. There was three boys and their father was a builder and was making a reasonable amount of money. My husband had not finished the intermediate but his father wanted to educate him, to make him a doctor. But in the meantime he fell from a scaffold and hurt himself and in one week he died. (My husband)... was the first in the family. He wasn't going to leave. What was his mother to do?... She wrote to a 'Koumbaro' (52) they had here, and told him what had happened and he thought it would be better since he was young to come here. He brought him here. And the first job he got was for

eight or nine shillings - and half of it he sent to his mother. " (53)

Familial obligation and loyalty to the family were the reasons for Bill Demos' migration but other factors induced his friend George Londos to migrate. George now 82, a very alert and intelligent man, arrived in Sydney in 1913 at age of seventeen, only a year after Bill. George had been induced to come to Australia by his uncle who had paid a return visit to the island:

" ... you go to Australia whatever you do in Greece you'll never be able to earn a decent living; he said, you go to Australia and within a few years you'll be on top! I said to him, 'how do you mean on top?'. He said, 'you'll be learning the language in a short time, and then you'll be able to start working for someone at a very very nice wage'; at the time the wages that he told me was half a sovereign a week and for five years you'll be working for wages and after five years if you're a good economist you'll be able to start business of your own. Well I said to myself I better tell me father about it and if he can send me to Australia, I'll go to Australia. " (54)

Kytherian Women

The few Kytherian women who came to Australia, did not come to work as post-war Greek migrant women had done, but to join their brothers who had established themselves in the New South Wales country towns. Thus Mrs. Demos 69, came to Australia in 1928 to join her brothers in June. She explains that she was brought out to keep a female cousin company on the ship to Australia "... the truth is that I didn't want to come..." (55) Katy Adams age 60, arrived in Australia in 1935 to join her brothers also in the small town of Dorigo, N.S.W. Her feelings about migration were identical to Maria Demos for she explains "I didn't want to come because I was young but my mother sent me so I could have better life". (56)

Aphrodite Mavros, a post-war migrant from the island of Lesbos in the Aegean sea, who married a Kytherian settler was also sent by her mother to Australia presumably 'for a better life'. She arrived in 1951 at the age of 29 to stay with her uncle and his family in Brighton-le-Sands, but she explains that she was unhappy about her decision to migrate:

" .I was 'xeni' (57) here, I didn't know anyone, I didn't go anywhere, I was kept inside and the circumstances were such that it was very difficult for me because in Greece when you are with your parents, your brothers and sisters you have another life, in Greece life is different and here in Australia life is different. I had been very upset and worried, I missed my parents, I missed everyone and I had to get myself settled and go to my own house because no matter how much... you are... my uncle, I didn't know him, he was my mother's brother. My aunt again I didn't know her, they had the children. I was like a stranger inside the house, I couldn't ... Somewhere I had to settle to set up my own house. " (58)

Although her uncle had a shop she was never required to work within it. She proudly asserted that "...Anything I did, I did it inside the house" (59) for it was considered down-grading for Greek women to work outside the home. Therefore the purpose behind her arrival

Lyons Government

in Australia was so she could be given the opportunity 'to set up her own house', to be provided with a husband selected by her uncle. Like Aphrodite Mavors, most Kytherian women were brought out by their brothers as prospective brides, thereby their sisters were provided for without the necessity of supplying a dowry which would have been required on the Island and in mainland Greece. Mr. Arthur Mavros 66, who arrived in Australia in 1936 at the age of 24, slightly older than most of his compatriots, had come because

" It was the tide then - everyone was talking about Australia: 'lovely country, good place'. I had one brother - older than me here, and he brought me out... "

(60)

Arthur Mavors was right, the tide had certainly turned towards Australia in 1936, for the economic conditions in the country had started to improve and letters home once again made Australia 'lucky' country; an appealing place to settle. Furthermore in 1936 the Lyons government having seen the improvement in economic conditions decided to reduce the harsh restrictions which had been imposed on southern European migration during the Depression.

Thus they reduced the landing money required by immigrants from 200 pounds to 50 pounds and failed to reintroduce quotas. Nevertheless migration policies did not really affect southern European migration to Australia. It was the prevailing economic conditions in the county of settlement itself and the letters sent home, which controlled the level of migration. Hence between 1937-39, 900 Greeks were arriving in Australia per annum (61) a vast improvement from the Depression years 1929-30, when departures were exceeding arrivals. (62)

The two Castellorizans Nick Diakopoulos and John Kiriakopoulos and the three Kytherian men, Bill Demos, George Londos and Arthur Mavros all married and had families of their own. However this did not occur until very late in their lives. Pre-war migration to Australia was very much a migration of young men, who were either single, or left their wives back in their country of origin.

Nevertheless the early existence of young Greek male settlers was not without some kind of familial structure. The small Kytherian community which existed in Sydney, at the turn of the century was tight-knit and very supportive. It functioned as a substitute family, supplying the type of assistance that would have otherwise been offered by the extended family on Kythera. Thus young Kytherians such as George Londos were offered food and shelter until they could find work or locate their particular relatives who had promised them work upon their arrival in their respective country towns.

George Londos explained how this familial structure operated:

" The average Greek at the time in Sydney when they heard a boat arrived from Europe, they'd go to the boat to find whose arrived, they knew we couldn't speak English, they knew we were destitute but they were only too pleased to meet us and give us shelter. One of these was Nicolas Aroni who had a restaurant in Circular Quay, Sydney, and he was only too pleased to accept any migrant especially boy that they were coming in with no knowledge of anything

and shelter, such as meals, bed and try his best to find work and one of these migrants was me... " [\(63\)](#)

George Londos was not only given accommodation for two or three nights upon arrival in Australia in 1913 by Nicholas Aroni "... a Kytherian who was entertaining every migrant that was coming off the ship" [\(64\)](#) but also "... an employee of another Greek took me to the railway station, he got my fare which I paid back to him after working and he told some of the passengers in the carriage, 'this young boy is going to Lockhart, would you be good enough when he reaches the station to tell him to get out, there'll be someone else waiting to take him to the shop...". [\(65\)](#) Thus he was safely sent to his uncle's shop in Lockhart, N.S.W. Bill Demos who had arrived a year earlier, in 1912, had received similar support.

He was met and looked after for a few days by another Kytherian Con Andronicos. He explained that Andronicos "had a lodging house on top of their restaurant and I stayed in one the rooms there". [\(66\)](#)



Kytherians Minas and Manual Kosmas and John Andronicos where some of the earliest settlers and like their fellow countrymen would entertain some of the newer Kytherian settlers. The picture depicts a store of the Kytherian cafes in N.S.W. country towns with goods

(click on photo to enlarge)



Nicholas Aroni came to Australia from Kytheria in 1902. Aroni was well know for his hospitality to new Kytherian arricvals Sydney 1916

(click on photo to enlarge)



Oyster Saloon owned by Stamattelou in 1916. Store situated in main street in Sydney



(click on photo to enlarge)

Long Hours & Low wages

He was also put on a train and sent to his brother's godfather's place in Muswellbrook, N.S.W. A slightly different reception was given to Arthur Mavros who arrived in 1936. He was met by a representative of his brother, a Kytherian by the name of Geogopoulos, who took him to the Athenian restaurant in Elizabeth Street for lunch and then escorted him to his brother's place in Collarenebri, N.S.W. This type of support system was not purely humanitarian, it also served a purpose for the people who were prepared to offer the help. These people were also in need of staff to help man their restaurants or knew of other compatriots who needed similar assistance.

Nevertheless, employment opportunities for the early Greeks were limited. They were virtually forced to work for other Greeks in their Cafes, Oyster Saloons, Tea and Refreshment rooms. Pre-war Australia was predominantly a rural economy,

" ... a primary producer of meat and wool, and industry throughout the entire country employed only 28 per cent of the male workforce... a somewhat stagnant economy limited the number of construction and unskilled factory jobs suitable for unskilled, non-English speaking immigrants... " [\(67\)](#)

Apart from the unsuitability of particular jobs for immigrants, Australian society was not exactly enamoured of southern Europeans, particularly the dark Mediterranean types who were prepared to work for longer hours and lower wages. Thus they were successfully kept out of unionized labor. This situation forced Kytherians to conglomerate in the catering and retail trade therefore

" by the turn of the century many newcomers found the inner city somewhat over-crowded with oyster bars and fish restaurants and with the assistance of friends already established, began to move into the suburbs of Sydney and into the country towns of New South Wales and southern Queensland. " [\(68\)](#)

Therefore assistance to young Kytherians did not stop after their arrival in Australia but continued throughout their careers in the New South Wales country towns. Charles Price explains that

Kytherian café owner with his staff. Tenterfield N.S.W. 1922



(click on photo to enlarge)



Kytherian café, Tenterfield
N.S.W. 1937/38

(click on photo to enlarge)

" the Kytherian had, what she has called a 'system of business promotion' a procedure whereby many newcomers started as assistant cooks, waiters and counter-boys in an established restaurateur shop, and counter-boys in an established restaurant shop, and then moved on after a few years to their own little business in some other town, then gradually passed on from town to town, each time obtaining a larger and more prosperous business; finally many of them moved back to Sydney as men of means and substance... ' " [\(69\)](#)

The Athenian Cafe

This pattern was followed by Bill Demos, George Londos and Arthus Mavros before they were married. They all moved extensively between the New South Wales country towns and Sydney. Their movements throughout the state have been plotted on the map on page 46.

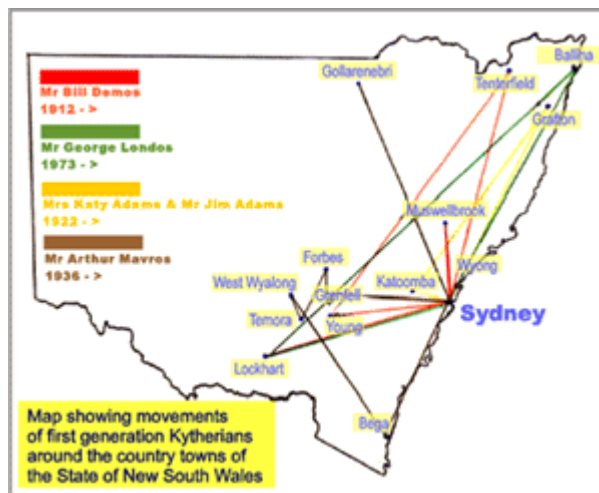
Apart from their high rate of mobility and their involvement in retail trade, what their career also displays, is the all-embracing nature of the Kfetherian familial system of mutual support.

They were provided with jobs by a central Greek Kafeneion or Cafe where most Greeks converged to drink, talk, play cards and primarily find out where employment was available. It was a type of informal Greek welfare structure which took care of the employment as well as the social welfare needs of the Kytherians and the Greek community in general. This Cafe,

situated in Castlereagh Street was called the 'Athenian Cafe' and in 1917 it was owned by a Kytherian called 'Geogopoulos'. (70)

Even though young Kytherians were offered employment through the Greek Kafeneion and help[ed] to enter the retail trade, the support they received went beyond a simple business arrangement. Hence one of Arthur Mavros' employers after going bankrupt felt concerned about Arthur's future and made sure that he was taken care of by providing him with a job in another town.

" He said to me 'Sorry Arthur, as you can see there is no work and you have to stop', I said, 'Alright'. He said don't worry I have a friend up at Forbes'. " (71)



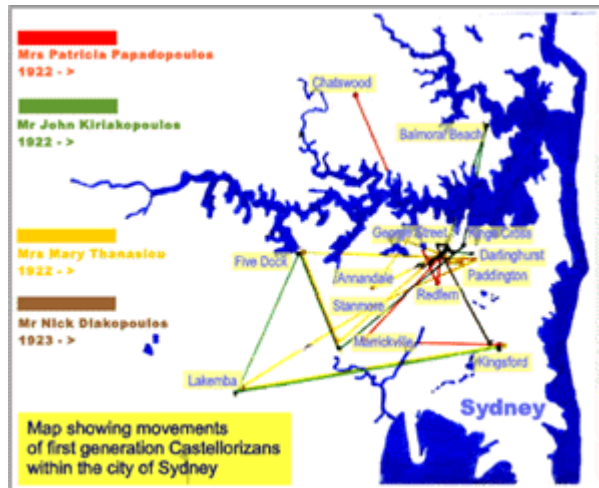
Map showing the movements first generation of Kytherians around the country towns of N.S.W.

(click on photo to enlarge)

Kytherians supported each other in every possible way. They were like one large family. Every Kytherian knew each other throughout Sydney and the country towns and when passing through a particular town they would inform each other of the business opportunities available at the various country towns. Bill Demos explained that "a friend of mine came through Young and told me there was a business going in Tenterfield and I went with him and bought it, he became my partner". (72)

The Castellorizans on the other hand, did not have such as 'overt' and all-encompassing network of support, even though they also relied on the Greek Kafeneion or Cafe in Sydney as a means of locating employment. They were also very mobile like the young Kytherians, but only within Sydney itself as can be witnessed from the map on page 48. However they did not need the type of support system developed by the Kytherians for their newer arrivals from the same island. (73) This was because during the 1920's the Castellorizans had moved around Australia and had started establishing themselves in Sydney, (74) thus when newly arrived Castellorizans came they were met by relatives waiting for them in Sydney and taken straight to their shop in one of the inner city suburbs. The Castellorizans started establishing themselves in business in Sydney in a very similar manner to the Kytherians. They started working for relatives in Sydney for a few months then moving on to work as waiters in other Greek Cafes. This was done for a couple of years before buying their own business. However they were able to establish themselves in their own business far more quickly than the Kytherians, because unlike the country towns, the wages in Sydney were higher. Regardless of this they still needed the 'support' of the Castellorizan community but for slightly different reasons. The Castellorizans working in the city in the 1920's, 30's and

40's were always subject to British-Australian hostility.



Map showing the movements of the first generation Castellorizians within the city of Sydney

(click on photo to enlarge)

Australian Hostility

'Bill Andrews', a 57 year old Castellorizan man born in Australia, relates the stories told to him by his father who was working in Sydney in the 1920's; particularly at 'Woodwards' Cafe, a restaurant in King Street, Sydney, between Pitt and Castlereigh Street, owned by an Ithacan named Kouvaras, (75) where many Castellorizans worked in the early 1900's:

" there was a great and very high degree of prejudice... and they would always have a chair leg underneath the counter for fear of being attacked because it was the common thing on a Friday or Saturday night, the Australians to go up and have their fill of beer and go up to the Greek or 'Dago shop', as you realize they were referred to those days, order the best of everything and then walk out and wouldn't want to pay, and if they were challenged they were just as likely to beat up the owner so they always have to have underneath something. " (76)

Thus the early Greeks in general were literally forced to look at each other in a familial way not only in order to protect themselves against Australian hostility, but also because they did not have any family in Australia to offer them moral and economic support and none to offer them employment apart from the Greek community "... you weren't allowed to work in a factory. And when you went and asked for work they would ask you: 'Are you and English citizen', I said 'no' and they said, 'Sorry but I can't give you work'... It was because were foreigners". (77)

" 'John Kiriakopoulos', a 69 year old Castellorizan explains that: the only time Greeks... got jobs in the factories or anywhere in Australian was when the Second World War broke out and the Australian people were at war... but they would not do that previously. They would not take foreigners. If they did take foreigners, there would be a strike. " (78)

Furthermore, the Kytherians were forced to look after the Kytherians for as 'Arthur Mavros' explains, although there were Greeks from other parts of Greece such as Akrata, Tripoli and

Sparta in the country towns "... it had to be a Kytherian shop for us to go and get work, elsewhere they did not easily want us, it had to be from the same place... the Kytherians supported the Kytherians... ". [\(79\)](#)



The Frilingos Brothers with their staff café owners Brisbane 1916

(click on photo to enlarge)



Chris Statgiou arrived from Athens in 1907 he set up a café in Manly Sydney 1912

(click on photo to enlarge)

George Andronicus, the son of the original Andronicos settlers who set up a chocolate and coffee retail shop at 197 George Street, where they would frequently entertain Kytherian arrivals; effectively displays the regional loyalties that existed and still exist amongst the Greeks in Australia.

" All the milk bars and cafes in N.S.W. country towns eemed to be run by Kytherians', says George today. 'They used to ring up with an order for coffee or olive oil or something and my father would just hear the name and say OK, he's all right, and tell me to give them credit without anything in writing. The man was from Kithira and that was enough. Other people he might tell me to be careful about; there's a certain amount of ill-feeling between people from particular different areas of Greece. But always when he told me to be careful I would find out later on he was right, that man did indeed need watching. From memory IO don't think one of the Kithirians he regarded as a good risk ever let us down'. "

[\(80\)](#)

Thus Greeks had brought with them their regional and local loyalties resulting in each group looking after their own kind.

After having received support from their respective island group in establishing themselves in small business either in Sydney or in the New South Wales country towns, the Kytherian

and Castellorizan Greeks decided to start a family of their own. However this was only contemplated after they had settled in a place permanently and after having achieved what they considered reasonable financial success. 'Bill Demos', a Kytherian, was fifteen when he arrived in Australia in 1912 and there-five when he decided to marry. He had been working for twenty years in the country towns of New South Wales and within Sydney itself and had amassed a considerable amount of money within that period; but it was not until 1932, exactly twenty years after arrival in Australia, he decided to get married:

" ... at that time, 1932, I had a ticket in the State lottery and I won first prize with another fella, it was 5,000 pounds then and I won 2,500 pounds, my share. Then I decided to get married because I had enough money to establish myself and I went to June... " [\(81\)](#)

'In-group' marriages

There was a long interval between their arrival in Australia and their incorporation into their own family unit. This was caused by the nature of the employment, which required them to be mobile, to move around from place to place, by their desire to accumulate as much as possible in order to offer their family the financial security that they had been deprived of on the island of origin, and by the lack of available women to marry in the early stages of settlement. Thus both Kytherian and Castellorizan men married late in their lives when they were well into middle age and usually to women who were at least fifteen to twenty years their junior.

During the early years of settlement in Australia (1900-1921) more Kytherians married British-Australian women (42.3 per cent) than women from their own island group (38.5 per cent) [\(82\)](#) or other Greek women (19.2 per cent), ^{*83} while Castellorizans have a much higher rate of 'in-group' marriages, that is, marriage within their own regional group than the Kytherians (66.7 per cent: 38.5 per cent). [\(84\)](#) Furthermore when the Castellorizans did marry outside their own group, unlike the Kytherians they married other Greeks rather than British Australian women. (^{*5}) Apparently intermarriage between Castellorizans and British-Australians remained low throughout 1901-56. [\(86\)](#) Nevertheless, both Kytherian and Castellorizan men were marrying other Greeks at the same rate. [\(87\)](#)

Charles Price maintains that these marriage records suggest;

" ... so far as males were concerned, the Kytherian district group was losing its coherence more rapidly than the Castellorizan group and was being assimilated not so much to the Greek Folk community as to British-Australian society in general. " [\(88\)](#)

At the turn of the century there were very few Kytherian women available. The statistics do not imply that the Kytherian community



(click on photo to enlarge)



The Dorrigo Hotel Kytherian
owned 1924

(click on photo to enlarge)

Austrian women married
Kytherian dressed in a Greek
national costume Kytheria
1939



(click on photo to enlarge)

was losing its coherence and was any more prepared to assimilate than the Castellorizans but simply that there were not Kytherian women available and they were forced to compromise, by either marrying other Greeks or British-Australian women. Furthermore, it was usually the British-Australian women who became assimilated into the Kytherian community rather than the other way around. These women became the most staunch supporters of 'Hellenism' insisting that their children marry other Greeks. (89) 'Intermarriage' may be the greatest test of assimilation as Price and scholars have maintained, (90) but surely it depends upon the circumstances under which intermarriage has taken place. All things being equal, Kytherians preferred to marry Kytherian women. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that in 1922-42 when women and children were coming from Kythera, intermarriage with British-Australians became less acceptable (16.0) and marriage within their own group increased (74.0). (91) While the Castellorizans "maintained a high proportion of in-group marriage for fifty years or so of their sojourn in Australia..." (92) because they were either married before arrival to Australia and had their wives brought out later, or had brides sent out to them or went back to Castellorizo to select a wife.

'Nick Diakopoulos', a Castellorizan who arrived in Australia in 1923, went back to Castellorizo at the end of 1928, at which time he had made sufficient money to support a wife.

" When I had the fish shop in Crown Street, I had a good business. The wages were three and a half pounds and I'd made twenty to twenty-five. I made a little money, then I wanted to go and see my father who was sick, and in the meantime get married there. Here there were a lot of Greek girls but I didn't like to get married here. " (93)

Nevertheless Kytherian men had other methods of meeting Kytherian women, and in 1922-1942 the Kytherian women started arriving in Australia, Kytherian men usually found out

about them through 'travelling salesmen'. These salesmen would travel extensively throughout the country towns, selling whole-sale goods to the small businesses as well as informing the respective owners of possible marriage partners. 'Bill Demos' explains the circumstances under which he 'found' himself a wife,

" A commercial traveler, he was a Yugoslav, ... no a Serbia, used to come round, and where there were young Greeks who wanted to marry, he wanted to find wives for them and he... And he told me, there was a girl in June, 'who would suit you'... " [\(94\)](#)

Although Kytherian women began arriving in the 1920's they had never come to Australia in large numbers, thus 'Bill' was prepared, even though he had never met his wife, to travel all the way from Tenterfield to June, speak to her brothers, suggest marriage first and then meet the bride.

" I arrived at the shop, there were two brothers there working, and I met them and told them my intentions, they said, 'alright', they were willing for their sister to get married and 'Maria' was willing to marry me. " [\(95\)](#)

After marriage had occurred and a family begun, life for the pre-war Kytherian settlers changed from highly mobile existence, a life of wandering from place to place, to a settled life in a country town for an extended period of time, usually of twenty years or more. Thus the four Kytherian families interviewed settled in the country towns of Tenterfield, Grafton, Wyong and Bega for many years before finally retiring in Sydney. With the beginning of married life Castellorizans settled in established Greek suburbs, usually in Darlinghurst and Paddington where most of the Castellorizans lived in the 1920's, 30's and 40's. There they had at their disposal a Greek Church, which also started running a Greek school in the early 1930's for the young Castellorizans and Greeks in general.

Family life

The family life of Kytherians and Castellorizans radically differed. The Kytherians 'stuck' in the New South Wales country towns, with no Greek Church, no Kytherian Brotherhood and with no supportive Greek organisations in general, led a very lonely existence. However they never seem to have experienced the racism inflicted upon Castellorizan Greeks in the city.

" The Australians regard not only the Greeks, but all foreigners as very low class and not equal with them. But in the towns where you mixed with farmers, they were good people and I liked Tenterfield, I like it very much... " [\(96\)](#)

There were too few Greeks in a country town to constitute a threat to the local inhabitants and they were usually too well established and respected within the town. The Kytherians were very pleased with the attitudes of the local towns people. They constantly stressed their friendliness and warmth.

" The town was a very good town! The Australians were very good people! They never ridiculed, they never laughed at me if I said a word incorrectly. They

helped me, they helped me very much... " (97)

Although the townspeople were friendly and continually invited the Kytherian families to social functions, they would not go, apart from an occasional wedding. They felt out of place, alien in British-Australian society.

" In the town it is lonely, you understand the, but you don't feel... how can I tell you... you don't enjoy yourself as you would enjoy yourself in a Greek circle... At dances and other social functions, you felt you were different, a foreigner, their treatment of you was alright, but you felt out of place. You couldn't be one with them... " (98)

Social life for the Greek families in the country towns was very restricted, particularly for the women, who preferred to either remain inside the home or help their husband in the cafe. The Kytherian women did not feel confident enough to form close friendships with the other women in the town. 'Aphrodite Mavros' explains their predicament.



A Greek café owner
preparing wood for use in the
Kitchen Bega N.S.W. Circa
1950s

(click on photo to enlarge)



Greek café Bega N.S.W.
Circa 1950s



(click on photo to enlarge)

Australian Organisations

" My English was poor. these people were 'politismeni' (99) they were educated, and I would sit there like some sort of... and not be able to speak, they would ask me and I wouldn't be able to speak to them as one should. Well you can't... . Therefore I withdrew myself for twenty years, I didn't have friends. And I didn't have friends for that reason... " [\(100\)](#)

The men on the other hand, were members of Rotary, Masons, the Chamber of Commerce, they played bowls and generally mixed extensively within the town and the wider Australian community. Most of the Kytherian men seemed to have become very highly respected within the town itself.

" With my forty years in Wyong as businessman, I was twice President of the Chamber of Commerce of the District, President of the Parents and Citizens Association and in politics, I was the Treasurer of one of the political parties... Liberal, and naturally I had some prestige. When I sold out and retired in Sydney, three or four prominent people asked me why I wouldn't stay in the town and put up for the council of the local shire municipality, I refused definitely... You always get someone who does things against you especially when you're Greek, you've got to stay behind and let them do it... " [\(101\)](#)

The Castellorizans never experienced such acceptance from the Australian community in the cities, particularly from such conservative institutions, but neither did they ever want to participate in Australian organisations. Unlike the Kytherians they had the option of being involved in the Greek Church, the Castellorizan Brotherhood and the Greek Community in general.

Apart from the Kytherian men's involvement in the town's affairs, in general there was not much time for recreation in a country town, where the local Greek cafe was open until all hours of the night. "Here family life is different... there is the business, and you are decided to the business and you are closed in to the business and you don't know anything else apart from work and home... " [\(102\)](#)

Kytherian Children

Some Kytherians would close their shop on Sundays but this was not the general practice. Nevertheless even those who did close their shop found that they had nothing to do apart from interact with the only other Greek family in town. "We closed it one day a week. Every Sunday it is closed but what could you do. We played tennis in the yard with our daughter. We visited each other... " [\(103\)](#) In country towns such as Grafton where there were five Greek families in 1938, four of which were Kytherian, entertainment was possible. "As families, we went for picnics every Sunday, every second Sunday, and we spent many

enjoyable days". [\(104\)](#) Thus if there were other Greek families in the town they could socialize, if not, they would spend the time amongst themselves, making the Kytherian family even more inward moving, insular and self-supporting.

" The children went to school... They didn't go out at night. We had become a very close family from little children and they understood my position and they were always with me. They didn't leave to wander with Australians at night. They had friends... But when they had dances, balls and so forth my children didn't go because they knew that I didn't go so they would stay with me... " [\(105\)](#)

Recreation centered around the family unit, and although the children were allowed to mix with British-Australian children they were still controlled. Children were allowed out with British-Australian friends but only on a restricted basis and under certain conditions.

" We told him, 'you can got out but at 10 o'clock you have to back in the house'. If he was late and came at 10.15 or 11 o'clock, his mother would reprimand him severely and she could have even hit him and given him a slap across the face. " [\(106\)](#)

In general Kytherian children participated in the wider Australian community. The children were usually sent to the local Church of England Church as it felt "... it was better for them to learn something instead of learning nothing. My four children went to Sunday School because neither did we have a priest nor a Greek Church, and that way they learnt what it means to have a religion, 'faith'".

[\(107\)](#)



(click on photo to enlarge)

Café owned by two partners, Apostolis Valsamis from the island of Samos, who arrived in Australia 29th of June 1912: and John Kellelos and Linos who were born in Pirieus Athens and came to Australia December 1910. In 1915 the two men met and went into partnership buying the café at 39 Burke Street Melbourne

The Alexandria tea rooms: 1916 in Melbourne where owned by John E. Alexandratos who was born in Ithaca in 1881 and came to Melbourne Australia in 1904



(click on photo to enlarge)

local boys, they were permitted to be involved in the social activities conducted by the Church.

" My second daughter was in the Choir of the Church of England and played the organ in the Church of England. She had joined the Theatre group and was in the Fellowship of the Church of England. Not that they led a secluded life altogether but to go out with Australian boys, they did not... " [\(108\)](#)

While the Castellorizan children were protected against any influences such as 'English scripture classes' that might turn them away from 'Greekness'. 'Bill Andrews', 57, a Castellorizan child born in Australia in 1921, explains that during the early 1930's in Sydney "... there weren't' no Greek schools at the time, there was a fear of our parent that we would be... if we went to religious instruction like a Sunday school that they would turn us against the Greek Orthodox religion. When we were in primary school and high school they insisted that we were not to go to the religious classes which were one session a week... [\(109\)](#)

Compared to Castellorizan parents, Kytherians in general appeared quite liberal in regard to their children's upbringing, but in actual fact they had no choice.

Although a Greek community did not exist within the country towns, the children were not allowed to forget their Greek background. They were constantly made aware of the fact that they constituted a distinct group of people. This awareness was instilled in them through the Greek family which did not lose its importance even within the context of an Australian country town. The children were taught Greek and it was the only language spoken at home.

" They learnt from babies... they always spoke to me in Greek inside the house... Even up till now, an English word, you don't hear inside the house except between themselves of course. " [\(110\)](#)

Furthermore, the children were made to feel that it was expected of them to marry a Greek. "From a young girl we imbued her with the idea that she had to love the Greeks". [\(111\)](#) In the advice the children were given the importance of the family as evident.

There was emphasis placed upon marrying a Greek, not only because,

Australian and Greek customs and traditions would not blend, and "They might not be happy in such a marriage", (112) but also in an effort to keep the extended family together by retaining a common language and heritage. "Many a Greek and I don't care where she is from, only marry a Greek". (113) However the children were never in danger of 'intermarrying' with British-Australians, for as soon as they became of a marriageable age, they were quickly taken away from town and placed securely in the established Greek community in Sydney.

" Well I decided because the children had grown up. And for the children there was no future in the town... I had to put them into university and it didn't suit me to stay and work in the shop and have the children by themselves here. And secondly, I liked to come down to communicate with Greek families because I didn't want my children to get mixed up with Australian girls in the town. You would say to me the Australians aren't... ? No, I don't mean that... But the issue for me is... I've got the 'Greek' in me, that is the way I was born and that is the way I go... " (114)

Castellorizan family life constituted a completely different way of life from Kytherians. The Castellorizans definitely did not have pleasant things to say about British-Australian society.

'Mrs. Papadopoulos', 84, explains that "... around 1920, 1921, if I saw you in the tram I couldn't speak to you, I just could signal... ", (115) otherwise, 'Nick Diakopoulos', 69, a Castellorizan points out "... they used to abuse you and call you 'dago', 'Why don't you speak English you dago' - 'Speak English!'" (116) The Castellorizans were left very bitter, yet resilient, as a result of the disdain exhibited by the Australian population in the city for the southern Europeans and particularly the Greeks. 'Patricia Papadopoulos', one of their oldest representatives describes the life of the early Castellorizans in Sydney in the 1920's:

" It was terrible, they regarded the Greeks as nothing. A zero. People would wake up in the morning at 4 o'clock - take a knife so they could clean fish at the markets to get a couple of shillings and then return selling fish in the streets to make their daily bread and contempt was exhibited towards them by the Australians. " (117)

The Greek Community

Nevertheless the Castellorizans had developed their own system of support against British-Australian hostility. They had an organized Greek Community, which was "formed in 1898 by no more than 200-300 Greeks (most of whom were males)", (118) they had a Greek Cathedral, the Santa Sophia, in Dowling Street, Darlinghurst, the 'heart' of the Castellorizan community in Sydney in the 1920's, 30's and 40's, which was built with the assistance of Orthodox Syrians. (119) In fact in the 1930's and early 40's, these were two Greek Churches in Sydney, and a resident Metropolitan. (120)

Between 1924-1926 the Castellorizan and Kytherian Brotherhoods had formed in Sydney. Also in 1926, there were several pan-Hellenic associations (the pan-Hellenic Union and the Hellenic Club). (121)

'In addition to coffee houses and clubs, there were two Sydney based newspapers, Greek

National Vema and Hellenic Herald'. (122) Thus the Castellorizan community in Sydney had many Greek organisations to rely upon. These organisations provided moral support, a sense of solidarity and identity amongst the Greeks in Sydney and were supportive institutions for the Greek family. Most importantly, these organisations provided Castellorizan Greeks with social functions where they could take their children and instill in them a sense of 'Greek peoplehood' and a loyalty to the Greek family.

In the Castellorizans' reminiscences of their 'social life' in Sydney before the Second World War, there is no mention of the existence of an Australian society. They had no contact with Australians at all, apart from the customers who came into their shops. Castellorizan life centered around the family, their relatives, the Castellorizan Brotherhood and the Greek Church, particularly the 'Santa Sophia', which was regarded informally as the 'Castellorizan' Church. While the 'Holy Trinity' in Redfern, the other Greek Church became known as the 'Kytherian' Church in the early 30's and 40's.

Within the Castellorizan family, the children's and the parent's social life had become one. The children were not allowed out without their parents. The girls in particular were not allowed to leave the house unchaperoned whereas they boys were given much greater freedom.



Holy Trinity 1916 which was regarded as the Kytherian Church

(click on photo to enlarge)

Greek school class in the 1930s at the Santa Sofia where the Castellozians attended. Many of the children pictured are now grandparents



(click on photo to enlarge)

Virginity

" My mother was extremely strict', says Castellorizan 'Bill Andrews', '... she was to the extreme with my sister, we went for example to a dancing studio, to learn Ballroom dancing and there was my brother, myself and my first cousin, and we went there in the late 1930's and we persuaded my mum to let my sister come with us, and which she did, but two or three people said to her 'look Poureria, do you let your daughter go to the dance?' and that was it, she immediately stopped her even coming out with us to a dance because people would talk. " [\(123\)](#)

The parents would seldom go out without their children, as family life was geared towards the participation of the entire family life was geared towards the participation of the entire family in all events. Going 'visiting' to see relatives was an important social activity.

" Visiting or offering hospitality to visitors is a favorite form of recreation. During these visits the women may offer a choice of preserves on a platter, together with glasses of cold water and a number of teaspoons... To refuse will offend the housewife who takes pride in her culinary skill. " [\(124\)](#)

Another activity based on family involvement was 'going to church'. For the event, people would "put on their best clothes, and after Mass meet their friends and talk over the news of the community". [\(125\)](#) Sunday we went out on picnics as a family or to brotherhood picnics", [\(126\)](#) constituted the social life of the Castellorizan Greeks.

The Castellorizan family practiced the severe seclusion of women. Young Castellorizan girls were not allowed out unless escorted, because family honor rested upon the daughter's virginity.

" In many districts of Greece, southern Italy, and southern Spain there was a general opinion that a man and woman left alone together would inevitably make love. (127) Consequently unmarried girls were not allowed out unless strictly chaperoned, nor might an unaccompanied married woman walk or talk with any man not her husband; in like manner women were permitted to do certain jobs on the family property but were not allowed, unless well chaperoned, to find employment in farms, shops or factories belonging to other people. " [\(128\)](#)

The same applied to young Castellorizan girls in Australia. thus once they reached first year high-school they were taken out of school and placed in the family home, where they could be supervised and protected from any immoral influences within Australian society. For the

very same reasons they were not allowed to work outside the home, as this activity would be frowned upon by the small Castellorizan community in Sydney and the particular family would be disgraced. "

" Well its almost degrading in those days, I remember lots of girls being criticized when they took up jobs in offices and that type of thing... " [\(129\)](#)

A popular Castellorizan poem of the 1920's conveys the extent of the seclusion of women on the island:

" In 1900, in the year twenty-six the Lord sought to destroy us, Girls that you could not even see at the window sills Now you see them in the lanes and inside the tents. " [\(130\)](#)

The poem was referring to the earthquake that rocked Castellorizo in 1926, when it was still under Italian occupation. Many people died and the Italians were forced to send food and provisions to the island, but the interesting point about the poem is, that it displays the severity of women's seclusion. On the island, around the 1920's and early 30's girls would only be allowed out of the house every Easter: "One Easter the girls would go out. Every Easter we would go out, and we would sing all the Easter songs and we would go to dances, and there, so some man would see you". [\(131\)](#)

The same thing again applied in Australia, Castellorizan girls were taken to Castellorizan brotherhood dances, picnics, family weddings by the family so they could be seen in order for offers to be made for their hand in marriage. Otherwise a marriage would be arranged as soon as possible by the family thus it was considered unnecessary for young Castellorizan girls to work.

" There weren't jobs like there are now for women. But there was no necessity. They got married young, 18 years old, they were married. " [\(132\)](#)

In 1900, in the year twenty-six the Lord sought to destroy us, girls that you could not even see at the window sills. Now you see them in the lanes and inside the tents. [\(130\)](#)

Young Castellorizan boys had different responsibilities from the girls in the family. They were required to work in the family business after school and upon leaving school as well. 'Patricia Papadopoulos' a Castellorizan woman who arrived in Australia in 1917, recalls how responsible her young boys were in the family business.

" ... And my family because from childhood they noticed me working, they helped me, I'd like to show you a picture of my son 'Jimmy' who at the age of 5 was washing the shop floor. That was the way children were then... " [\(133\)](#)

Furthermore, Castellorizan children were virtually 'drilled' into an acceptance of 'Greekness'. They were all sent to Greek school, and made to attend the Greek Church regularly and were requested to speak Greek at home constantly. Castellorizan parents insisted

'... upon preserving their ethnic institutions, particularly those pertaining to religion, language, endogamous marriage, and a close-knit family... they tried to socialize their children into the traditional Greek mores and folkways... they attempted to convince them of the 'mystique' of the Greek ancestry, warned them against the dangers of intermarriage, and made an effort to instill in them a sense of ethnic consciousness and 'peoplehood.' (134)

THE EMERGENCE OF THE GREEK-AUSTRALIAN FAMILY 1930s-1960s: THE CREATION OF SOMETHING NEW.



A second generation Castelorizian boy, 1927 dressed in a traditional dress by his mother. The photograph was sent to his grandparents in Castelorizo. The dual identity of second generation Castelorizian born in Australia is captured by this photograph.

(click on photo to enlarge)

Introduction

" Dispassionately, Achapi remembered sitting down with Maria on he potato sacks forever peeling, Mumma bending down under the counter and throwing the fish in batter into the basket an down into the fat while Pappa watched the fat rising like the bubbles above his diving suit, grey and slow, and tried not to cough. It was lonely even in that close family unit with Mumma and Pappa only a few feet away. They were always too busy cooking and preparing, then sleeping while Pavlos sat upstairs with his school books, never protesting he wanted play because he knew, he had always known that something was expected of him. Kerry Walsh CIRIGO KYTHERA) A Novel. " [\(Q\)](#)

In the preceding chapter the life of the early Greek arrivals has been discussed. The original

Kytherian and Castellorizan settlers came to Australia as young men seeking better economic opportunities, possibly adventure and political sylum from the constant Turkish invasions and bombings of the island of Castellorizo. In order to survive they needed a well-organised and supportive Greek community. Thus they developed a system of business promotion and patronage that resembled the extended kinship system that existed on their respective islands of origin. Once married the early settlers brought up their children in Australia in accordance with the family practice back on the island. However the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents did not retain the traditional Greek family structure. The 'Greek-Australian' family that emerged in the last 1950's, 60's and 70's did not resemble the Greek family in Greece either on the mainland or the islands. It had distinctive features which were not evident in Greece. These features were developed in Australia and were partly a product of the charges that Australian society had undergone after the Second World War with rapid industrialization and urbanization. (1) The insular and restrictive, predominately British society that existed before

the war was altered, not only in character but also in composition with the advent of large-scale migration to Australia. "This change in ethnic composition arose from the fact that, of nearly two-million settlers who arrived between 1947 and 1966, over 60% were non-British... The sheer size of the post-war influx has effected lasting changes in Australian society". (2) The society became more flexible, attitudes and ideas about women and women's employment changed though not drastically. The changes which occurred affected to a large extent the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan families. Apart from the influences within the society, the change in status from working to middle class which occurred from the first to the second generation also affected the nature of the new Greek-Australian family and also accounts partly for its features. The childhood experiences of the second generation growing up in Australia also determined the character of the new 'Greek family' and it is their perceptions in particular which offer a fuller understanding of the evolution and change of the Greek family in Australia.

The children of the Kytherians and Castellorizans have an acute and intense perception of what life was like growing up in a Greek family within an Australian environment. Their discussion of their own upbringing adds an extra dimension to the story of Kytherian and Castellorizan family life in Australia. They were the ones who vividly saw the disparity between the Anglo-Saxon and Greek life-styles, not their parents. Hence the vision of Greek family life in Australia, presented by the parents in the preceding chapter, does not convey the 'starkness' of the migration experience, as it was perceived by the children of the early immigrants. The parents had not been exposed to two world views from childhood. They had come out with a secure image of what constituted Greek family life and were not forced to question it.

Rural Environment

Life presented few contradictions or ambiguities for them. It was simple and obvious: the Greek family would function and survive in Australia as it had in Greece, and the children would be brought up according to the Greek family tradition, without and changes. The parents were able to retain this secure image and implement it because Pre-war Australia was congenial to and did not impinge upon the Greek peasant family. The Kytherian and Castellorizan Greeks had come from a rural environment to a predominately rural economy (3) which had not as yet experienced large scale industrialisation and urbanisation which was to later challenge and devide the traditional roles within the post-war Greek family in Australia. Thus for the pre-war Kytherian and Castellorizan parents there was no necessity for adaptation nor was it ever contemplated. The parents were in a different position from their

children, for they had accepted the fact that they were 'foreigners', they know that they might not be totally accepted, or that they might not be accepted at all and had resigned themselves to the situation. If the host society showed friendliness and warmth, it would be appreciated and accepted, if not, then this would also be reconciled. They could not afford the time to stop and worry about being 'liked' or accepted, their main concern was to give their children the economic security that they had been deprived of in their own country. 'Steven Adams', a twenty-six year old Greek Australian of Kytherian descent born in Grafton, NSW, explains their position.

" ...They came out here, they couldn't ask any fundamental questions..they didn't have to ask the meaning of life ...the meaning was quite clear to them, that they had to work very hard and better themselves for their kids...which they did very successfully and they took it out on their kids in the sense of the whole family thing...they tried to transpose a frozen version of Greek morality and mores, ofcourse it doesn't work and it does confuse the kids...they've always got this DUALITY between their outside life and their home life, which is always very different...they've given sets of PRESCRIPTIONS by their parents instead of guides... " (4)

Prejudice

The children had multiple pressures placed upon them. Unlike the parents, the children did not have a passive acceptance of their lot. They were born in Australia and resented not being accepted as equals and could not easily reconcile their position, particularly the Castellorizan children who grew up in the migrant suburbs in the city in late 1930's and 40's. These children were exposed to prejudice in the schools, subject to assaults in the streets, and also experienced the racism directed against their parents (such as smashing of their shop windows) and were unable to find employment in the late 1930's and 40's because a Greek name meant instant refusal. Furthermore the children had to also cope with the duality involved in being part of two cultures which were totally different.

" I think we Australian born Greeks had double traumas - we were trying to live in two worlds which were completely different, and I think we had more hang ups and more conflict growing up because of that than if we either in Greece, living there, or being Australian - growing up the Australian way of life. But when you're in the middle of two worlds I think it's very difficult... " (5)

They had to undertake dual roles: one of being a Greek child in a Greek family and fulfilling their obligations to the 'family' and the other of surviving and succeeding within the wider Australian society. A.W. Green studying some Greek-American students in a New England college, commented extensively p.n. the mental problems of the second generation.

" ... they are cut off from home ties in a somewhat alien world which regards them as 'inferior', at the same time parents are pushing them to 'succeed', a striving which is regarded by the parents as a means of improving familial status, but which increasingly for the Greek students becomes a hope for improving individual status. Out of this complex crisis the damaged self-conception, which is the psychological mark of the marginal man. " (6)

Whether the second generation children suffered from a damaged self-conception as a result of the pressures placed upon them is debatable, however that they were confronted with two opposing world views, one which was familial and the other individual is indisputable. Western, Anglo-Saxon society is based on the concept of 'individualism' where man has become an autonomous being and society exists for the fulfillment of the individual. However the Western concept of individualism becomes irrelevant and quite meaningless in

Family Obligations

traditional Greek society which stresses the importance of loyalty to a group and where the very person exists only because of these groups.

" ... Self-definition is in terms of group relatedness and not as an individual; existence as an individual separate from these groups is inconceivable. Nothing demonstrates more dramatically the absence of the notion of an autonomous individual than the absence of a word in Greek for privacy. The frequently heard statements of pity regarding individuals benefit of family and/or for in the village reflect the belief that such a person is incomplete. " (7)

In Greek society a person does not possess an identity of his own which is separate from his family. "Who and what one is, is answered by referring to one's position within membership groups. Who am I. will elicit a response stating family, clan, village and specific status within these groups". (8)

Furthermore, in Western society, what an individual will be and do is not PRESCRIPTIVE, but is determined by the individual for himself. Whereas in Greek society, "self-worth is judged by the person and by others in terms of how well the PRESCRIBED obligations and loyalties are fulfilled, and self-fulfillment is attained by performing well the assigned role within the membership groups". (10)

The Kytherian and Castellorizan children were therefore compelled by virtue of their culture to fulfill the obligations to their family otherwise they would inflict 'shame' on themselves and their family.

'In Greek culture, shame is the psychological device employed to ensure conformity, and shame is the emotion a person's transgressions engender in him. A Greek is not responsible to himself, but to the group of which he is an integral part. And shame is the psychological penalty for behavior inappropriate vis-a-vis the group'. (11) Hence there was a lot of pressure for young Kytherian and Castellorizan children to conform to Greek traditional norms and family organisation. Thus Castellorizan girls were not allowed out otherwise the family would be shamed in the eyes of the community. The community exerted a lot of control over the behavior of the family members for if they deviated they would suffer the 'ridicule' of the small Greek community in Sydney. 'Ridicule' like 'shame' (entrap) is a closely

related socializing device where "adults, group relatedness and group identification is reinforced by evaluating actions in terms of whether they will bring 'ridicule' (rezilepsun) upon the individual and hence the entire group". (12) While the psychological device employed by Western society ensure conformity to ethical standards, 'individual guilt' is a personal feeling independent of external social sanctions. (13)

Thus Kytherian and Castellorizan children were faced with different world views, which

constantly presented a series of contradictions and ambiguities. American studies of second generation Greeks suggest that the situation which the children of the immigrants faced inevitably leads to 'conflict' within the family.

" ... with the oncoming of the second generation (the immigrants' children), the highly ethnocentric, traditional, and folk-oriented outlook of the first generation subculture was challenged. Culture conflict between parents and children was inevitable. Yinger referred to this phenomenon as 'contraculture.' (14)

Yet 'conflict' is not evident within the Kytherian and Castellorizan families who were interviewed. The second generation Castellorizan children grew up in an excessively strict family environment, yet in their reminiscences of their childhood and upbringing 'conflict' with their parents is not mentioned. Admittedly they tended to romanticize their upbringing to a certain extent and remembered what they now consider to be the good points in their upbringing. 'Peter Politis' born to Castellorizan parents, I can only remember good things about it and that is why I love it". (15) Participation in large-scale family picnics conducted in the 1930's and 40's are looked back upon and praised by the second generation but at the time they were probably a bit resentful of being forced to attend them.

Anxiety over not being allowed out is mentioned but not any conflict between children and parents, as a result of it. Nevertheless the Greek family as a result of the children's exposure to two cultures, but that this conflict produced what American sociologists have called the "marginal man" is an individual who "through migration, education, marriage, or some other influence leaves a social group or culture without making a satisfactory adjustment to another, finds himself

Hybrid Culture

on the margin of each but member of neither". (16) Robert E. Park describes the "marginal man" as "a cultural hybrid, a man living and sharing intimately in the cultural life and tradition of two peoples/... which are never completely interpenetrated and fused". (17)

The American study dealt with second generation migrants at a particular point in time. The oral history interviews of the Kytherian and Castellorizan second generation generation in Australia have shown that a fusion had definitely occurred and they would consider themselves to be a member of both cultures. The second generation Greek families had taken elements from the Greek and Australian familial traditions and had incorporated them into their own family and in the upbringing and had incorporated them into their own family and in the upbringing of their children. thus a synthesis had occurred between the Anglo-Saxon and Greek familial traditions forming a 'hybrid culture',. George Kourvetaris in his three-generational study of the Greek family in America also identifies the existence of a 'hybridculture' amongst the second generation Greek American but maintains that the second and later generations of Greek Americans, challenged the importance of the family. (18) The second generation Kytherian and Castellorizans did not challenge the Greek family and Greek culture and tradition, they changed and modified the Greek family but it did not cease to be an important institution in the second generation and beyond. What occurred by the second generation is the creation of a completely new subculture within the wider Australian society, a Greek-Australian culture which accommodated the two cultural traditions. This new subculture allowed for the retention of 'Greekness' and the survival of the close-knit family network. Glazer and Moynihan investigating ethnic groups in New York city in the early 1960's documented the creation of this new subculture. They observed that

" ... as (ethnic) groups were transformed by influences in American society, stripped of their original attributes, they were recreated as something NEW, but still as identifiable groups. Concretely, persons think of themselves as members of that group, with that name, they are thought of by others as members of that group with that name; and most significantly, they are linked to other members of the group by NEW attributes that the original immigrants would never have recognized as identifying their group, but which nevertheless serve to mark them off, by more than simply name and association, in the third generation and beyond. " [\(19\)](#)

The new Greek American family that emerged certainly did have new attributes which the first generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents would not have dreamed would have occurred but nevertheless accepted.

Greek Orthodox religion and Greek language were no longer the main distinguishing features of the Greek family, with the emergence of the second generation family, major changes had been wrought upon Greek family tradition. Greek morality and authority had been changed. The daughters were no longer withdrawn from school from an early age and protected as they had been in the 1930's and 40's, instead the girls were allowed to date freely like their Australian counterparts, their marriage was no longer arranged by the parents but were similar to Australian patterns of courtship and marriage where the children chose their future spouse on the basis of romantic love. The second generation parents had been influenced by the Australian society within which they had been born and raised and felt that "there's nothing wrong with these aspects of the Australian way of life. I didn't agree with everything. Then on the other hand I could see there's nothing wrong with these particular aspects of Greek life". [\(20\)](#) Changes in family life had also occurred in Greece but these changes were very few and limited and only occurred in the metropolitan areas not the rural villages and islands.

Although changes were introduced into Greek family life by the second generation, continuities between the different generations of Greek in Australia also existed. The second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan children maintained aspects of Greek family life such as respect for elders, the belief that parents should be looked after by their children and not placed in an old people's home, attendance at the Greek Easter service and preservation of the Greek wedding engagement and christening ceremonies and naming of the eldest son after the husband's father. However the most important thing the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents wanted to inculcate within their children was an awareness of their Greek background and heritage: "... they went to Greek Sunday school, they realized what their background was and it gave them a sense of belonging and I was very pleased about that... they're aware from where they came and what being Greek means to their grandparents. I want them to know that I think that's very important". [\(21\)](#)



Cremorne Tea Gardens
owned by Theodor Politis who
came from the island Leukas to
Australia in 1901. He set up
the Tea Gardens in the
Melbourne of St Kilda 1916



(click on photo to enlarge)



(click on photo to enlarge)

The café pictured was owned by Mr. Antoniou Levakatsas born on Ithica in 1863. The café was in Melbourne where Mr. Levakatsas was the president of the Greek community in 1916



Paris café Melbourne 1916
also owned by Anonitou
Levakatsas

(click on photo to enlarge)

Their insistence on endogamy - that their children should marry Australian born Greeks was done not out of loyalty to Greece, but out of loyalty to the grandparents, so as to create 'links' and keep the extended family together. Nevertheless, the second generation Greek-Australian parents no longer thought of themselves totally as Greeks but as Australian born Greeks, who respected their Greek culture and tradition but simultaneously felt that they could live in no other country but Australia. "Basically, I love the fact that I'm born here, because I think Australia is the best country in the world, even though I haven't been overseas". [\(22\)](#)

Unpleasant Memories

Regardless of their allegiance to Australia, the second generation had experienced prejudice and rejection which affected their attitudes and to a certain extent determined the nature of the 'Greek-Australian' family that emerged. The Castellorizan second generation growing up during the 1930's and 40's had unpleasant memories of childhood: of having to leave school early to work in the family business in an inner city slum, a ghetto environment where they were deprived of any pride in their Greek heritage. 'Peter Politis', a 50 year old second generation Castellorizan born in Sydney in 1928 captures the sentiments of the young Castellorizan children of that era.

" ... we lived in a hell-hole in Redfern with a very poor standard of Australian around us... we were very glad to get out of there, Redfern was a very tough area then - before the war, right through the Depression, and Europeans were

not very liked in Australia at that stage - tolerated that's about all. " (23)

Southern Europeans were certainly not well liked before the war and the Castellorizan children growing up in the city were particularly vulnerable to abuse. The Castellorizan boys especially who were allowed more liberty than the Castellorizan girls were quite frequently the subject of assaults by neighborhood mobs who found the Greek children convenient scape-goats. "... those days were very rough, each suburb have a mob... when the mob felt like taking it out on somebody they used to take it out on the Greeks, me and me mate came in again". (24)

In the schools from the late 1930's even up till the early 1950's, there were very few Greek children and those who were there experienced rejection

" ... when we were in primary school the children used to ridicule us and call us aboriginal, because our skin was darker, not that we spoke a different language, we were a bit different from them... " (25)

As a result of this sort of experience the Australian born second generation sent their children intentionally to schools with a high migrant population even though many could afford to send them to private schools.

" We've sent them to... Kensington Public School... on purpose, my reasons were that they would mix in with other children who are from Australian educated parents but Greek grandparents. Also there are a lot of new Australian children there, they are hearing the language constantly even at school, and it makes them feel that they are not outsiders by going to Greek school... " (26)

The second generation Castellorizan children experienced many bad moments and they felt the effects of prejudice even more intensely than their parents. Thus it is no wonder that they wanted to spare their children the pain involved in such encounters.

'Peter Politis', a second generation Castellorizan explains that the fish-shop his parents had in the 30's and 40's in Redfern had the front window smashed every six months. (27) 'Peter' remembers vividly the environment he grew up in and the many episodes he witnessed as a child growing up in a Greek household in Australia. 'Peter's' mother, was a very physically strong woman because she had grown up on a farm on the top of the mountains in Castellorizo" and they were tougher than men". She could pick up a "140, 150 pound bag of potatoes, put it her shoulder and walk away with it". (28)

Even as late as the forties in Australia, the Greek shop still had to have a leg from a chair underneath the counter for protection and 'Peter's' mother because of her strength,

" used to be the Sockeroo, she used to close the door and underneath the counter she used to have a leg of a chair, and what she used to do to those fellas was unbelievable, she used to split heads, left right and center... because they'd threaten Dad with violence... these were drunks, no reason at all, walk into the shop, ask for things for nothing, when they wouldn't get it then they'd come

around the counter and cause trouble but I remember one incident there, I suppose... er... I was thirteen or fourteen years old at the time and this two man came into the shop using filthy language, very abusive to Dad, just drunk, calling us Dagoes... So with this particular incident this woman came out with all the abuse in the world and my mother came out and gave her a shove to push her out of the shop, she got up and started swearing at Mum, again Mum pushed her out of the shop, Mum couldn't speak English, just one or two words like Hello and Goodbye, so couldn't get anywhere with her so she grabbed hold of her long hair, took her outside and outside of our place was a telegraph pole and she cracked her skull and she lifted her up again and the ambulance came and took her away. But that woman where she got back because she only used to live down the street, every time she'd pass and see my mother 'hello Mrs. Con, how are you Mrs. Con, lovely day Mrs. Con' and that is a fact, we had some very bad items there and we were glad to get out of there out of Redfern. " (29)

The young Castellorizan children seeing their parents involved in such unpleasant circumstances felt compelled to succeed financially and quickly move out of these inner city migrant suburbs in Sydney into middle class areas. They became strongly committed to social mobility, which they achieved within a generation. Mobility occurred not only as a result of experiencing prejudice but in an effort to increase familial status. The second generation Castellorizans had the 'means' of achieving social mobility. They constituted a 'shop-keeper class', independent businessmen who were able to achieve through hard work and long hours the resources to move. Whereas the post-war Greek migrants who were simply 'workers' in factories were not in a position to do so. The second generation felt that the prejudice directly against southern Europeans before the war was a result of economic envy,

" ...I suppose there wasn't a lot of work then even for the Australians at the time and they resented somebody else coming along and doing perhaps a little better than they both the situation is that the Greek especially, was prepared to work 90 perhaps 100 hours a week, whereas the Australian wasn't prepared to do that... " (30)

Although economic concerns partly explain the resentment displayed, it does not totally explain the magnitude of the Australian reaction towards the immigrants. Australia before World War II was an insular society, which had not as yet experienced diverse customs and ideas and was very fearful of anyone who was different. The prejudice reflected "the dislike of many British-Australians for persons whose economic activities cut very little across their own but whose way of life was different". (31) The second World War produced some changes in the attitudes of the Australian population, but how widespread these changes were is not known. Many of the early Castellorizans felt that after the War there was indeed a change in the Australian attitudes towards them. Australia could no longer remain totally isolated from the rest of the world:

" ...the Australians went overseas, they saw a bit of Europe, the Americans came over here and they saw them and they realized that Australia is not the only nation in the world, other places exist which are more educated... we were promoted

between 1930 and after the War from 'Dago, bloody dagos', we became 'New Australians'. And now we are 'old Australians'... " (32)

There is a bitterness in the description of the change given by the first generation of Castellorizan migrants. They were resentful of the country's refusal to acknowledge the validity of other cultures.

It appears that they were also aware the political implication of the change in the epithets for the immigrants. Nevertheless it was generally felt at the time that Greece's effort in the Second World War and the Australian and Greek troops fighting together in Crete created a sense of unity and respect between the two countries.

'Bill Andrews' a second generation Castellorizan who fought in the Second World War was slightly more generous in his description of the change in Australian attitudes as a result of the War:

" ...there was a change... a very gradual change but the very big crux came during the War when after Italy joined the AXIS forces and they were taking country after country and they came down through Albania and Yugoslavia and then the next thing they thought they were going to walk over Greece and Greece held them off with their pea rifles virtually they pushed them back and back and the Australians realized there was a big difference between the Greeks and Italians, then there was a big admiration for them and then when they fought valiantly with the Australians in Greece and Crete and all the stories came back how the Australians were being treated by the Creeks. A lot of the prejudice diminished hull: there even to this day, there is still prejudice I know there are times I feel, but nowhere near the same degrees. " (33)

Regardless of the change that had taken place in Australian attitudes towards migrants as a result of the War, the Castellorizan children before the War had to contend not only with discrimination in their outside lives but they also had to maintain a dual identity. They had to conform to the strictures of Greek society as well as attempt to succeed in the wider Australian community. Although the young Castellorizans were forced to conform to a life-style which was restrictive and tightly-controlled, they did not rebel against their parents. They accepted their parents definition of Greek family life.

" ...we grew up in an environment, sure, we argued with, our parents, we gave our point of view - but we never over went against them. If Mum and Dad said 'no' you can't go there, that was it. We accepted it. " (34)

There were disagreements but there was no hostility or conflict within the family between the children and their parents, even though the young Castellorizan boys tended to be rebellious whenever dowries and 'proxies' or arranged marriages were mentioned. Marriage was arranged by proxy in those days and was an activity conducted by the parents and did not involve the children. It was the custom during that period for Greek families with eligible daughter to make an offer of money for particular young men, in effect pay a dowry to the groom. This was done with the services of a 'proxenitra' or matchmaker, usually a relative, who would act as a liaison between the two families and take care of all the business

arrangements. Although the Castellorizan boys laughingly proclaimed that they were "a good catch" (35) for "...everyone got a dowry in those days. There was one girl giving me a thousand pounds. I had some very nice offers", (36) they still veered away and refused to be involved in any arranged marriages. They were beginning to be influenced by the Anglo-Saxon ethos of 'falling in love and choosing your own wife'.

"...I wasn't married till I was 36. The reason was if Mum opened her mouth on a proxy I'd just walk out. I was just not interested... I wouldn't ask, I'd just walk straight out. I just wanted to get to know a girl, to meet her, to understand a girl and like her for herself." (37)



(click on photo to enlarge)

In 1941 the N.S.W. government declared 'Greek Day' celebrations in honor of the heroism displayed by the Greek nation in warding off the NAZI invasion of the country during the second world war. The celebration was aimed at raising money for the Australian war effort.



(click on photo to enlarge)

During the Greek Day celebrations, the N.S.W. government allowed official marches to take place through the streets of Sydney with young Greek men in their national Greek costume. In the picture there is a young Castellorizian girl offering her help for the Day in George Street in Sydney 1941.



The appeal of the Greek day celebrations reached the N.S.W. country towns and many of the Kytherian families contributed to the appeal. Pictured here are the Greek families in Tenterfield N.S.W. participated in the Days celebrations.

(click on photo to enlarge)

'Proxy' Weddings

Most of the second generation Castellorizan men who were interviewed married at a slightly older age. and had chosen their own wife, without their parents being aware of it. They had seen their future wives either at a Greek Christening or wedding and had managed to steal a moment with them alone to ask them to get married before going through with the formal proxy arrangement.

Thus 'Jimmy Papadopoulos' having only seen his future wife once before and meeting her again outside the Sydney fish markets asked her to get married. If she agreed he would arrange for a proxy to take place without the parents knowing that they had discussed it amongst themselves: "He asked me on the quiet, everything was on the quiet. He said 'would you marry me if we do the necessary proxy things'". [\(38\)](#)

After the proxy had taken place, the second generation Castellorizan couple growing up in Australia in the 1940's were forced for the sake of the parents to go through with the traditional Castellorizan engagement and pre-wedding rituals. Although they did not have to follow the rituals completely they still had to participate in the fundamental events. They participated in a religious engagement ceremony 'aravones', where the 'nifi', bride meets the 'gambro' groom, supposedly for the first time. After the engagement they had the 'krevati' or bed-ceremony where they show the girl's 'prika'/dowry. After the 'krevati' they have the 'savatovratho', the Saturday night before the wedding where they 'kapnisi'/smoke or burn insense over the wedding clothes and they wish the couple good luck. Then they had the 'Kiriaki proi'/ Sunday morning when they 'stolisi'/adorn the 'nifi'/ bride and they dress her for the church ceremony. [\(40\)](#)

" Mrs. Vanessa Politis, a second generation Castellorizan woman commenting on the Castellorizan wedding rituals she participated in explains that's the way we had to have it... They organised everything, really we didn't have a choice... I don't like 'Krevatia' and I don't like the celebration of the night before... When my daughter gets married I don't think she'll have either. " [\(41\)](#)

Arranged marriages were widespread amongst the Castellorizan community before the Second World War, for contact between the sexes was not acceptable and social life was strictly supervised. Young Castellorizan girls in particular were not allowed anywhere without a

Pre-Marital Sex

family member and then usually only with the patents. Mrs. 'Michelle Kiriakopoulos' a Greek-Australian of Castellorizan descent born in Perth, in 1921, exclaimed:

" It was just like being in a goal... You weren't allowed go here, you weren't allowed to go there. If you saw a boy in the street, you weren't allowed to talk to him... mother would have slit my throat! " [\(42\)](#)

It was in this one area that the young Castellorizan girls were hostile. This was the part of their upbringing they resented the most and which caused them much inner turmoil but they nevertheless accepted it.

"...we weren't allowed out, and if girlfriends used to ask, we just used to say 'we can't go out with you, we've got a steady boyfriend' and they used to believe it, you know never used to like to say I'm not allowed to go out." (43)

Not only were Castellorizan girls not allowed out but were also forbidden to work outside the family home, and were usually, but not always, excluded from working in the family business. Mrs. 'Stacy Mavromatis', a Castellorizan woman born in Sydney explained "I finished (school) in third year... I wasn't allowed to go into a career - I was allowed to go to Sydney Technical college where I learnt dressmaking, I never worked... I had to stay home and help". (44)

Even though Castellorizan girls were severely secluded in pre-war Australia, Australian society before the Second World War was not an open and liberal-minded community. British-Australian girls although allowed to date and work in the city in shops, were also supervised by their parents, but of course, not to the same degree as the Castellorizan girls. Pre-war Australia was still very much a rural society, which did not condone pre-marital sex, and woman who had children outside marriage were branded as immoral. Young British-Australian children could not leave home and live in a flat as this act would have been condemned by the society. Children remained at home until they were married. The Castellorizan parents were scared during the war to allow their daughters to continue attending high school because of the arrival of the Americans "...there was the war and you couldn't allow the children to continue (school) because there were the Americans and you were afraid at night to let the children...". (45) But the Australian parents were also concerned about protecting their young girls from the Americans, and many girls were advised to catch transportation into Sydney rather than to walk to work because of fear about the Americans with money in their pockets and only one thing on their minds. (46)

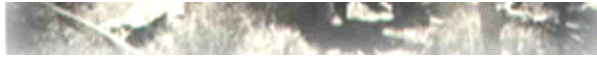


Kytheria café in Bega N.S.W.
Circa 1950s

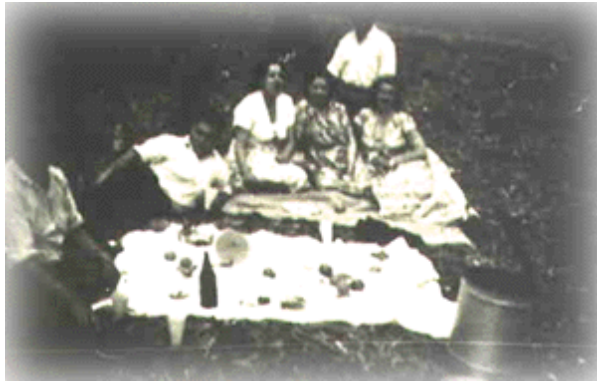
(click on photo to enlarge)



Entertainment in country town was limited for the Kytherians but families often went on picnics between themselves. Bega N.S.W. 1950s



(click on photo to enlarge)



Kytherian picnic in Bega
N.S.W. Circa 1950s.

(click on photo to enlarge)

Furthermore, although Castellorizan girls were not allowed to work outside the family, there were not many jobs available for women in pre-war Australia, especially since the country had undergone a Depression. The British-Australian women, particularly the ones who lived on farms were forced to stay and help on the farm and look after the family for employment was difficult to find elsewhere, and it was not thought correct for a young girl to leave her family to go to the city. [\(47\)](#)

Apart from the nature of pre-war Australian society the surprising aspect of the young Castellorizan women's attitude to their upbringing was that although they were strictly supervised and resented being so; they looked back romantically and admired the type of family social activity they were forced to attend. "...Dad was the type that made sure we had enough things going for us, some days we'd go to the beach all the families and all the cousins, big groups and truly we'd have a marvelous time, I can't see that happening now". [\(48\)](#) The first generation parents had made sure that they did not feel the need to look outside the family for entertainment.

The second generation Castellorizan men also looked back upon the large-scale family picnics with a favorable eye. But in general the young Castellorizan boys veered away from such family gatherings and mainly spent the early years of their lives dating British-Australian girls. However this did not stop them from occasionally attending Castellorizan brotherhood dances, Baptisms, and weddings where they were sure to see the available young Castellorizan girls chaperoned by their parents.

" ...those days, you'd go to a wedding and you'd be on one side of Paddington Town Hall and family was on another and you'd see a lass you'd like to dance with and you'd get up and walk towards her and you'd see the mother whisper and you'd ask the mother 'epitrepete'? (Is she permitted?) and if the mother said 'yes' then you'd put your tail between your legs and walk back so that was the relationship those days as far as boy/girl situation was concerned. But I joined the order of AHEPA about 25 years ago... and I was very active in it. I got involved organising balls and conventions etc and when they formed the Ladies Auxiliary, 'Litsa' was one of the foundation officers of it and I got to know her through the order of AHEPA... " [\(49\)](#)



Greek Staff Ball: 6th of April
1940 at the Mark Foyes ball
room

(click on photo to enlarge)

The AHEPA Organisation

However 'Litsa' was not Castellorizan for second generation Castellorizan girls in the late 1930's, 40's and 50's were not allowed to join any of the Greek-Australian organisations such as AHEPA (the Australian Hellenic Educational Progressive Association) which had formed in 1935. (50) AHEPA was patterned after its American namesake, founded in 1922 as a reaction against the nativist and anti-foreign attitudes that prevailed in America during the pre-war years. The organisation was formed in Atlanta, Georgia where the Ku Klux Klan was active and the need for action urgent. Greek-American businessmen who felt the menace of anti-foreign opposition banded together for self-protection.

" It appealed to those who were climbing the economic ladder of success and represented a form of social recognition to those who craved it. AHEPA represented Americanism in a decade when many were anxious to shake off traces of foreignness and become identified with the American community. " (51)

In Australia the organisation was supported by similar people "country shopkeepers in N.S.W. and Queensland", (52) and was first established in Scone, N.S.W. The Australian AHEPANS had similar aims and objectives, "to bridge the gap between Americans and Greeks" (53) and the organisation was formed for similar reasons as its American counterpart. Australian society was also overrun by severe xenophobic sentiments before the Second World War. Irrespective of the origin of the organisation, it appealed to many of the pre-war second generation because its proceedings were conducted in English. (54) The Sydney AHEPA was made up of, apart from the first generation Greeks, second generation Kytherian boys and girls and Castellorizan boys.

Although Castellorizan boys were given the liberty to socialize freely and involve themselves in organisations such as AHEPA, they also had obligations to the family. The boys were forced to work in the family business out of respect and loyalty to their family. Thus they were encouraged to leave school at an early age usually in first year high school or at the latest after completing the intermediate so they could help in the shop. While still at school and during the school holidays the boys were expected to work in the shop to relieve their parents but this was not a popular activity.

" I hated the school holidays because I worked, we all worked very hard

because unless we all pulled together, we had no machines for peeling potatoes in those days we did everything ourselves, nowadays everything comes prepared - we peeled and cut potatoes by hand, we cleaned all our own fish, cooked our own prawns and lobsters - we worked very hard. " [\(55\)](#)

Pre-war Castellorizan family resembled a pre-industrial family, where all the work was done in the home amongst the extended family members. Greek agriculture was primitive, poor and inadequate. Consequently, the Greek rural family was forced to struggle as a unit. [\(56\)](#)

" In the fields there is always work, not only for parents and adult children, but also for little boys and girls. Children, therefore, especially boys are desirable, since they are potential workers and economic assets. In general, the family is characterised by collective economic activities and all the well known features that are typical in rural cultures. " [\(57\)](#)

The Castellorizan boys were not usually encouraged to attain professional careers. Instead they were drilled into achieving financial security through working in the family business with their parents.

" ...all Dad could see was for Con to finish his age at school, to bring him in the shop and this was the kind of thought of my parents, and we weren't encouraged in school at all, not at all... " [\(58\)](#)

Many of the young Castellorizan children resented being deprived of an education, "...I suppose if I was to resent my parents it would be for this but then again you can't blame them because I don't think they were brought up to understand this kind of thing any better themselves... " [\(59\)](#) and they emphasized its importance and advantages to their children, the third generation, who were encouraged to pursue professional careers.

" We wanted them to have an education - that's the one thing we stressed upon them... because I didn't have an education and this is what held me back for years - Just getting a good job. " [\(60\)](#)



Castolorizian café in George Street Sydney 1938

(click on photo to enlarge)



Castolorizian family picnic in 1938 at the National Park

(click on photo to enlarge)

Educational Advancement

This was not the only reason the second generation parents stressed educational advancement to their children, it was also to increase the status of the family, not the nuclear but the extended family. "...One nephew is a doctor, another one is in the police force etc. We haven't got a lawyer in the family, that's why we are thinking of making my son one, so we can have all our bills free". (61) Apart from the second generation Castellorizian boys who worked in their parent's business, there were others who attempted to find work outside, in Australian firms and businesses. However in the late 1930's outside employment was virtually impossible to find because a Greek name meant instant refusal.

" I wasn't a brilliant student at school, at that time I was referred to as above, I started from November applying for jobs and I wasn't even getting a reply from the Sydney Morning Herald, I spent days writing out my references because they'd asked for copies of them and each week I'd also write to a bank and an insurance company and I never got one reply whatsoever. And I met this Australian person once and he said 'Bill', well I wasn't called 'Bill' then, 'why don't you change your name'... my name was 'Evangelos Andropoulos'... I looked up the dictionary... and right there was 'Bill Andrews' and lo and behold... I was getting replies to my applications for jobs. And I remember this clearly as anything... Once the 'Bill Andrews', the replies came in, I'd walk into the office and as soon as I did, I could see the reaction, they'd say no way... they'd say we'll let you know and you'd never hear from them again. " (62)

Even though the second generation Castellorizian children were discriminated against in employment they still identified within themselves a dual loyalty, an allegiance to a curiously distinct sub-culture which was neither Greek nor Australian but a strange mixture of both.

" I would say I'm Greek but I would say I'm Australian born... I think it means we're proud of our heritage, very proud of our heritage, I haven't been to Greece yet, I would love to go, but then again I don't think we could live there... " (63)

Most of the second generation were aware that they were different but they were not conscious of constituting a completely new and different culture from their parents, yet they were able to define it rather effectively.

" ...we get on much better with Australian-born Greeks than... the Greeks that just come out here, we get on alright with them of course but there's not as much in common... the same with the Australian friends but the Australian-born Greeks are the ones that we more in common with. " [\(64\)](#)

said Australian-born Castellorizan Mrs. 'Vanessa Politis'. The whole issue is not that the Castellorizan children who were born in Australia were becoming more Australian or less Greek hence 'assimilating', to use the popular pseudo-scientific term, but that they had adapted Greek

Kytherian vs Castellorizans

culture and traditions to suit the Australian environment. They were a "new hybrid Australian" who was just as committed to Australia as the British-Australian. Mrs. 'Stacy Mavromatis' a Castellorizan woman born in Sydney before the war explained that "Well actually deep down I'm Greek I was born in Australia - and...I'm very proud of my heritage." However she passionately exclaimed that

" This is my country - this is where I was born - where I was raised - wherever I wander, wherever I roam... went to Greece I felt that somewhere I belonged - but this is where I really belong - this is where my roots are... " [\(66\)](#)

The second generation Kytherian children had a completely different upbringing from the Castellorizan children. The Kytherian children born and bred in the New South Wales country towns experienced an acceptance which had not been felt by the young city born Castellorizans. The Kytherian children developed a secure self-image in the country towns where the threat of foreigners was not as immediate and where their father was usually highly respected.

" ...the Greek families that were in the town were fairly well respected. And my father was highly respected in that town. He had been there many years. I never ever in my childhood or later on ever struck any prejudice. You know I was never called a dago or anything like that... " [\(67\)](#)

Furthermore, the Kytherian children had what appeared to be a more liberal upbringing compared to the young Castellorizans. However they were still¹ imbued with a feeling of 'Greekness'. The Kytherian first generation parents were equally concerned with making their children aware of their Greek heritage and background and this was done very effectively within the family.

" ...I remember my mother used to come at bedtime and give me (Greek) lessons before going to bed at night and I had an exercise book and I had a text book of some sort... I was taught to do Greek dances by my mother. I was taught to play the piano...and my mother would buy Greek sheet music ...the national anthem. " [\(68\)](#)

The Kytherian children were made to feel 'Greek' by their parent, not the towns-people nor

the other British-Australian children. Whereas the Castellorizan children in Sydney were made aware of the fact that they were Greek not only by their family but also by the prejudice displayed by the wider Australian society. Kytherian 'Alexandra Coronias' born in Tenterfield, N.S.W. in 1934 describes how she became aware of her Greek background.

" ...I felt Greek because my parents made me feel Greek not because the townspeople did. In that I wasn't allowed the same freedom that my friends had. I could go to Sunday school and church which I did - all the churches in fact but I went to the Anglican Sunday school and in fact I was confirmed in the Church of England Church. But I was not allowed to go to Sunday School Picnics. I was allowed to invite my friends home to play and they all used to come and play because we had a big garden and it was in the center of town and everything was all quite comfortable but I was not allowed to go to their place to play. I could invite my friends home to have meals but I wasn't allowed to go to their place to have a meal or to stay overnight. " [\(69\)](#)

Although Kytherian second generation children were inculcated with the concept of being 'Greek' in a less obvious way from the Castellorizan children, it was still equally effective.

Furthermore, unlike the Castellorizan children, the Kytherians were not usually required to work in the family business, though some did. The shop usually had sufficient staff in the 1930's and 40's not to necessitate the assistance of the entire family. Thus while the Castellorizan children were required to stop school early to help in the shop the Kytherian children were pushed into professional careers and the importance of educational advancement was constantly stressed to them "...we were forced to study, forced to do well at school," explained Kytherian 'David Mavros' born in Bega, N.S.W. in 1953, "...we had the pressure on us that if we didn't do well, well you know all hell would break loose, and also the fact was pushed on us that they don't want us to end up like our parents were..." [\(70\)](#)

Although Kytherian children were allowed to participate in church activity in the country towns they were not allowed to socialize at night with their friends. The girls in particular were not allowed out to dances with their British-Australian girlfriends. 33 year old Kytherian 'Helen Kiriakos' born in Grafton, N.S.W. explained

" ...I think I had a strict upbringing because of my Greek background, we weren't allowed to do what our Australian friends were doing... By the time I left Grafton I was in my teens, 15 and my friends were all going to dances by themselves and I was never allowed. Whatever I did was supervised properly... " [\(71\)](#)



Kytherian Christening
Lockhart N.S.W. 1933

(click on photo to enlarge)



The staff of a café Tenterfield
N.S.W. have a picnic
1937-1938

(click on photo to enlarge)

In the early years the Kytherian children, like the Castellorizan had to participate in family picnics which they also enjoyed. 'Alexandra Coronias' discussing the family picnics she participated in at Tenterfield, N.S.W. in the late 1930's and early 40's explained that...there must have been at least four families. Perhaps five. The children of those families were older. I was the youngest. We would go on picnics. Lovely picnics. Out of town by a creek. We'd take a portable record player and play Greek records. I always heard Greek music. My mother loved Greek music. We'd play Greek records on this portable record player And it was very enjoyable! I loved it! At the age of eleven 'Alexandra Coronias' enjoyed the family activities but she would have started resenting them if she was still in the country town during her teenage years. In Sydney the Castellorizan children could at least go with their parents to brotherhood dances and picnics where they could meet other young people. However as soon as Kytherian children completed their schooling in the country towns they were brought down to Sydney. Once in Sydney their entire social life radically changed. They were encouraged to participate in the Greek church, attend Greek school if possible and mix with other Kytherians in the Greek social organisation which had formed. The parents did not restrict or control their children's activity in Sydney as they had done in the country town. Both Kytherian boys and girls were allowed out in groups particularly to attend the functions of the Greek social organisations such as AHEPA. Gillian Bottomley in her study of second generation Greeks in Sydney described these organisations as "useful as a kind of marriage market". (72) She explained that,

" In this setting, young people maximize the possibility of falling in love with someone who will also fulfil the requirements of a similar ethnic background, a shared religion and an equivalent socio-economic status. " (73)

The Kytherian parents insisted that their children restrict their social life to a Greek circle in an effort to ensure that they marry a Greek. Thus they were encouraged to join these organisations for the parents had come down for "...the Greekness of ,llene, that was the reason...they would have had three daughters in an Australian environment and I think, really they would have liked us in a Greek environment... ". (74) However the parents not only wanted their children to marry a Greek but a Kytherian. One young Kytherian exclaimed that his parents and relatives had been very resentful of him marrying a Greek girl from the Peloponnesse.

He explains that this was because the Kytherian parents having been very successful as businessmen wanted their children to keep the money within the Kytherian community, (75) for the Kytherians represented and represent the Greek moneyed elite in post-war Australia. Apart from the emphasis on retaining money within one particular group in society, the young man's comment also displays the regionalism which pervades the Greek community in Australia and also throughout Greece. Besides the Kytherian community, regionalism is also evident within the other groups of Greeks in Australia. The Castellorizan parents also felt the same way, and preferred if not demanded that their second generation children marry other Greeks who were descended from the same island. If they did not, then the non-Castellorizan wife or husband would experience a subtle form of rejection from the community. One second generation Greek woman married to a second generation Castellorizan man commented

" I feel... although its not quite open how they feel towards you, some of the older Casie (76) generation still tend to make you feel as if you're a 'xeni' (foreigner)... When I got engaged to 'Bill' we went to visit a family... relations of 'Bill's' yet they couldn't come to the engagement. I walked in, the introduction was made, and the old lady, the grandmother turned around and said to 'Bill' 'Oh well it doesn't matter. You didn't marry a Casie but she looks like a Casie.' Well that made me feel dreadful,...and over the years you hear them say, 'Oh who did so and so marry?', Oh he married a 'xeni'...Even though the woman may be Greek...She's referred to as a 'xeni'...we've been married twenty years now...but... I still get the feeling at times that they don't really consider me a Casie. I'm still a 'xeni' (foreigner)... they consider me Greek, but they don't make you feel, 'yes, you are completely one of them.' " (77)

A first generation Greek woman who had married a first generation Kytherian man also experienced similar rejection from the Kytherian community and had this to say,

" Usually the Kytherians have one failing, very bad failing due to naivete, it is not only here but they have it on their island when they marry someone from another village, from inside of Kythera...they would say that he married a 'xeni' because he didn't marry someone from the same village. " (78)

In pre-war Australia, especially before the 1920's, and 30's when there were very few available Kytherian women, the Kytherian community did not like but nevertheless accepted, the Kytherian men who married British-Australian women, for it was understood that they had no choice. But



The Olympic club formed at Sydney University 1952.

(click on photo to enlarge)

Sydney University in 1952

later when the second generation of Kytherians became of marriageable age and there were a lot of second generation professional people available, it was considered unthinkable if not insulting for Kytherian children to marry outside their community. (79) For the first generation Kytherian parents were "proud if their daughter marries a Kytherian boy or if their son marries a Kytherian girl. They are like that, they do like it... ". (80) The Kytherian children were also well-aware of what was expected of them,

" ...I knew that they'd expect me to - number one. But number two, I also, because...I didn't want to hurt them. So that really I kept my social life to a Greek circle because I didn't want to hurt them. And I knew it would hurt them if I rebelled against them. " (81)

Thus to please their parents and to limit any possible conflict the young Kytherians joined organisations such as AEPA. The young Kytherian boys and girls who were at university formed themselves into an organisation with other Greek students at Sydney University in 1952, which became known as the 'Olympic Club'. It has originally formed as a sports club but extended its activities to cover the production of Greek plays and other such cultural activities. The young Kytherians who were part of these organisations were allowed to go out in groups but never alone.

" ...we met a lot of people there all our own age and I think from then on of course and at Kytherian brotherhood functions we ended up being... a group of kids and we used to do things together, go to shows together, we'd go to the movies together, whatever we did we didn't think of doing by ourselves, we'd think of doing it all together... " (82)

Apart from being allowed to socialize outside the immediate family circle with their Greek friends, the Kytherian children, also had to attend the Kytherian Brotherhood dances with their parents.

" 1961/2/3/4/... You'd go to a dance with the family. You'd meet whoever you

wanted to, you'd dance all night and you'd go home and it was a lot of good fun. I had a lot of good times there. " (83)

Many marriages resulted amongst the second generation Kytherians through attendance of these organisations and brotherhood dances for the Kytherian children did not have to undergo the arranged marriages inflicted upon the Castellorizan children. They were able to choose their partner from the limited groups they socialized with.

" I met 'George' at a party...and then a couple of weeks later I saw him at a Kytherian dance hanging up a Greek flag, because his father was president or vice-president of the Kytherian brotherhood in those days. And I met him and we were introduced, that was the first time I met him at a Greek function. " (84)

Although Kytherian children were encouraged to meet Greek boys and girls they were not allowed to date by themselves, they had to be escorted wherever they went by some relative and preferably they were expected to go out in a group. "...when I met-my husband we had to go everywhere with a chaperone - my sisters used to have to come with us everywhere we went and they did - wherever we went they came with us..." (85)

Thus the second generation Kytherian children's social life was totally Greek and was expected to be so by their parents, while their everyday life was Australian. They participated in two worlds simultaneously which did not seem to clash but instead existed side by side.

" My home life was more Greek. Mum would speak to us in Greek and we would answer in English but we could speak Greek to her. But everyday life was more Australian. When I started working I was in Sydney,' said Kytherian 'Helen Kiriakos' born in Grafton, N.S.W. in 1945, '...I worked for a doctor in 1970-72. He said to me, 'You're Australian during the week but weekends you're Greek'. That's exactly how my life was; because I'd go to work 9-5 with Australian people and my way of life was Australian but my social life was all Greek. I would mix with Greek people, mainly people with the same background as I - Australian born with Greek parents and of course I had much more in common with them..." (86)

Like the Castellorizans, the Kytherian children felt more comfortable with Australian born Greeks like themselves and like the Castellorizans they could perceive the dual nature of their existence.

" I think I'm Greek in my heart and in my outlook in my nature, in my disposition... I'm very successful at being an Australian... in day to day its 'how are you mate and good mate and let's go and have a beer mate...' I think on the outside I'm Australian and on the inside I'm Greek... ...it's impossible become totally Australian. I think you have to cut up a lot of your self ...You've got a lot more responsibilities as a Greek, than an Australian, both to yourself and your family...and nor can you be 100% Greek. How can you be 100% Greek if you live in Australia? You can't..." (87)

Responsibility towards the 'family' becomes the distinguishing feature between a Greek and Australian child. Australian children also have responsibilities to their families but these are of a different nature. Australian children are not expected to look after their parents in their old age and have them cohabit with them. They have the option of placing their parents in an old people's home whereas it would be considered unthinkable for a Greek child of any generation to do this.

Although Kytherian children and Castellorizan children had a completely different upbringing, when they married they formed a similar family which combined a Greek and Anglo-Saxon way of life. The most important thing both sets of parents emphasized to their children was 'family loyalty', which usually entailed marrying someone with a similar background, social class and culture. Charles Price comments that, "...assimilation normally takes place most quickly where there is intermarriage between immigrant and native stock; yet it is because southern Europeans have endeavored to maintain their ancient family customs that intermarriage has often been resisted and assimilation slowed down". (88) Intermarriage may hasten assimilation, however the assimilation that takes place may be towards the immigrants' culture rather than the native stock or both. Assimilation has been taken to mean the 'desire of one historic culture to dominate all other' (89). Gordon in "Assimilation in American Life" uses the term to mean a philosophy of assimilation which "demanded the complete renunciation of the immigrants' ancestral culture in favor of the behavior and values of the Anglo Saxon core group". (90) Consequently many people prefer to think in terms of integration rather than assimilation, 'a process whereby two or more ethnic groups adapt themselves so well that they can accept and value each other's contribution to their common political social life. It is a state where various ethnic groups integrate but 'maintain their separate ethnic cultures indefinitely. However, 'acculturation' or cultural change is a more appropriate concept to discuss.

Regardless of the dilemma over semantics, 'intermarriage' is not necessary for cultural change to take place, neither does a close cohesive, tight-knit family unit retard cultural change or acculturation. Instead a cohesive close-knit family has been found to facilitate cultural change. (92) This seems to have been made evident by the emergence within the second generation of Kytherian and Castellorizan of distinct subculture which is a mixture of both Greek and Anglo-Saxon cultural traditions, without intermarriage having taken place. Vlachos also identifies the emergence of this new hybrid culture in America. (93)

Greek Language

Within the now Greek-Australian family that had emerged in the late 1940's, 50's and early 60's, Greek language could not be preserved and maintained. Although the second generation attempted to send their children to Greek afternoon school or obtain a private teacher in the early years of their children's lives they could not insist as their parents had, that their children should learn to speak Greek. 'Peter Politis', a second generation born in Sydney in 1928 explains that "...my mother did keep telling us, every time he vent to speak English in the house, she would say she was not learning to speak English so that we would learn to speak Greek and she would get very upset if we spoke English in the house and I think to a degree would speak Greek fluently, my brother, sisters and I..." (94) English was the language spoken in the homes of the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents, and under those circumstances they could not compel their children, the third generation to learn the Greek language, since they did not have to use it to communicate to their parents.

'When we were young we knew we had to speak Greek because Mum and Dad's English

was limited. But our children, as they get older, it was the big joke, because they knew we could speak English, so you'd get comments like, "Don't be silly Mum, you can speak English." (95)

The language therefore could not be preserved onto the third generation. However the grandparents were the ones that maintained the continuation of the language to a certain extent because the third generation, their grandchildren, were forced to learn at least a limited amount of Greek to communicate with the early Kytherian and Castellorizan immigrants. "So the only Greek they eventually started to speak was when they used to visit their grandparents..." (96)

The Greek Orthodox religion which was strongly introduced to the second generation could not be continued on to their children, the third generation. The liturgy in the Greek Orthodox church had been difficult enough for the second generation parents to follow without trying to introduce it to their children. (97) Mrs. 'Litsa Andrews' 43, who was born in Sydney in 1935 explains the predicament of the second generation when attending the Greek Orthodox church.

Greek Orthodoxy

"...Well I never understood it. ...Oh yes I used to go to church with my mother regularly... I couldn't understand it. Alright I can understand the ordinary speaking Greek, but I couldn't understand the service, which, of course is more difficult now with my own children." (98)

The Greek liturgy was conducted in Byzantine Greek and was not understood even by the early first generation immigrants themselves. Second generation Castellorizan 'Peter Politis' explains that he did not understand the liturgy but "...as a matter of fact I don't think they did either because they weren't educated, they knew when to stand up, sit down, like the rest of us". (99) However to the early Castellorizans who had ready access to the Greek church in Sydney, to attend the Greek Orthodox service was akin to supporting the Greek culture, for Greek culture and Greek Orthodox religion were intertwined. It was in support of their own identity and the Greek family that they patronized the Greek church. Panos Bardis explains

"Perhaps no other force has exercised a greater influence on the Greek family than the Eastern Greek Orthodox Church. One of the main reasons why the Greek Church has been very influential is the fact that Greece has been occupied by Turkey from 1453 to 1821. During those four centuries of slavery, the only institution that managed not only to survive, but also to maintain part of the Hellenic civilization, was the Church. It is no wonder, therefore, that Greek Orthodoxy and Greek nationalism are almost inseparable. Indeed, Greek nationalism is Greek Orthodox nationalism; and the Orthodox Church of Greece is a national Orthodox church." (100)

Furthermore, the loyalty shown by the early Greek immigrants to the Greek Orthodox church, irrespective of whether they understood the liturgy or not, lay also in the fact that they had lived in rural communities, in mainland Greece and on the islands where the church had been the main if not the only, source of social control, and where the church literally dictated the nature of the rural Greek family. (101)

" The church has not looked upon divorce and remarriage with favor. Marriage is considered as a sacrament and is practically indissoluble. Freedom in the area of premarital contact between the two sexes has been limited by the community priest. Emphasis on physical beauty - wearing make-up and the like - has been discouraged in rural areas. " [\(102\)](#)

Thus to the early Castellorizan and Kytherian immigrants support of the Greek Orthodox Church was very important. Yet to their children, the second generation, the same degree of emotional commitment could not be found. Their children were born and bred in Australia thus they were also part of another culture which did not have the same nationalist attitudes about the church. Although strong emotional attachment to the Greek church was not evident amongst the second generation who were interviewed, there were some Castellorizan children in particular who had been taken regc2arly to the church by their parents and who had enjoyed involvement in church activity. "...I rather enjoyed it, so much so my brother today helped to build the St.Michaels Church, North Sydney and has been till now the president of the St. Michael's church committee..." [\(103\)](#)

However the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents did not avidly stress attendance of the Greek church to their children. Some of the second generation Kytherian parents who could never attend a Greek Sunday school or church in the New South Wales country towns, sent their children to Greek scripture classes and Greek Church to please the grandparents and to give the children an awareness of their background, but attendance declined as the children became older. (104) Other Kytherian and Castellorizan second generation parents sent their children to English scripture classes so the children could understand. 'Bill Andrews', 57, a Greek-Australian of Castellorizan descent born in Sydney in 1921 explains

" ... I feel it's a great pity as far as my children are concerned because to go to Greek Church and stand because the others stand up and cross yourself because they crossed themselves and not understand the fully, whole situation, it doesn't give the inner satisfaction, when you go to an Australian service and you understand everything that is being spoken to you. " [\(105\)](#)

Despite the fact that 'Bill.' had been highly involved with the Greek church in his young r days, in the 1930's and 40's, as a regular altar boy at the Santa Sophia church in South Dowling Street, Darlingllurst, he felt it was hypocrisy in regard to his own children to take them to Greek Orthodox Church or insist that they attend a service which they

would not understand. But for the first generation Castellorizan parents complete understanding of the service was not important, an understanding of the liturgy of the high church was not necessary. They had a down to earth, everyday knowledge of Greek Orthodox religion - a 'faith in their church and the 'saints' days which they observed, which was all that was necessary for spiritual satisfaction - as well as a feeling of solidarity, identity and a sense of belonging to a distinct group of people. George Kourvetaris examining the first generation Greek immigrant family in America explains,

" The average Greek, both in Greece proper and in America, does not perceive his church and/or religion in institutional/ Organisational terns. A parish priest is

closer to the Greek immigrant than the hierarchical structure of the church. A Greek church is a personalized extended family system of relationships interwoven with such events of the life cycle as birth, baptisms, weddings and religious and national holidays. " (106)

Even though the second generation Castellorizan parents no longer attended Greek Church regularly as they had done in their younger days and neither did their children, the third generation, they still felt that when it came to marriage, their children could not be totally happy unless they married a Greek because the religion would be the same. It did not seem to matter whether or not their children or they practiced the Greek Orthodox religion. They were born into it and it W2S as Kourvetaris explains part of their 'life-cycle.

" ...I'd like to see her get married to a Greek boy because our food is the same our religion is the same - we have a lot more in common... do get (the religion! cropping up, we have our Christmas service, our Easter service, our Engagements, Weddings and our Christenings and its very much part of us, says Australian-born Castellorizan 'Peter Politis'. " (107)

Therefore the second generation parents expected their children to attend Greek weddings, Christening and Engagement celebrations with their families. The second generation 'Greek-Australian' family observed Greek Easter service. They expected their children also to observe Greek nameday celebrations, especially their grandparents name-day: to respect elders, particularly their grandparents and the children were also named after the grandparents out of respect for the family. The second

generation parents inculcated within their children the belief that the parents have to be looked after and not placed in an old people's home. In so doing the second generation parents created within their children an awareness of their background and heritage but '...the Greek language itself is dying out and the religion is hard to keep up because the children don't know the language and they find church very hard...' (108) Thus rigorous church attendance was not an important factor in the upbringing of the third generation. Religious observation was no longer an activity conducted by the family but became the personal concern of the individual, resembling closely the Western ideal of religion. While back in Kythera, religious observation and the Greek Orthodox church still maintained a high control within the family. On a trip to Kythera in 1976 Australian born Mrs. 'Helen Kiriakos' observed that

'...Their faith was very strong... and I think a religion brings a family close. A strong fact like that. For instance this boy wanted to go to university, in all, so many were picked and they listened to the radio this particular night, she prayed to 'Meteriotissa' (a particular icon of Virgin Mary), that she would walk from her house to Patika, the Monastery, which isn't close, a fair distance. And I think 9 o'clock at night... the names go through and his name was on it. And not only did she walk bare-footed to the monastery but so did her son. You wouldn't get an 18 year old boy to walk from their home, bare-footed, no roads, mainly dirt tracks, to give thanks...their faith brought that family close. My family is close... but we don't have anything like a religion to bring us together.' (109)

The second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan family radically changed the Greek family the early immigrants had brought out with them. The second generation allowed their

children to date freely and strongly encouraged them to pursue professional careers irrespective of their sex. [\(110\)](#)

" I wanted them both to have education behind them, I wanted them both to have a good time and really don't miss out on things I missed out because really I don't think it was a good thing, even though my parents believed in it. " [\(111\)](#)

The second generation greatly changed the upbringing of the girls. The Castellorizan girls were no longer secluded, and taken out from school at an early age as they had been in the 1940's and kept inside the house, neither were the young Kytherian girls only allowed out in groups with young Greeks. The girls were allowed to date whomever they pleased and to socialize widely. Mrs. 'Vanessa Politis' second generation Castellorizan mother explains:

" ...Veronica, she goes out everywhere, I've given her a lot more freedom, as soon as she turned, a bit younger than 17, she was allowed to go out with boys, she's got a lot more freedom, she goes to discos, and she goes out with her friends all the time, a lot more freedom, more like an Australian really. " [\(112\)](#)

The second generation Castellorizan and Kytherian parents gave their children the freedom that they had been denied when they were younger, the freedom to 'date' which was part of the Anglo-Saxon family tradition. "...I begrudge the way I was, you still resent the fact to a certain extent - you had no freedom at all when you were younger..." (113)

Although changes have also occurred in the family in Greece, they have been very few and limited. The greatest changes in family life have occurred in the metropolitan areas.

" There marriage is less frequently arranged by the parents than it is in rural communities'. Young people, even girls, are beginning to enjoy more freedom. Of course, dating is not completely encouraged by adults, but contact between girls and boys are constantly increasing through beach parties, dances and other similar activities. Actual dating in the American sense of the word, is very rare and usually takes place without the knowledge of the parents of the dating partners. In small rural communities, one may safely assert, dating is still practically non-existent. " [\(114\)](#)

While in Australia, the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents not only condoned dating but also encouraged their children to bring their friends home for the parents to meet, something that would have been considered unthinkable by the first generation parents and would have been regarded as a slight to family honor as well as totally disrespectful behavior in regard to the parents. This behavior was in

accordance with the Australian family ethos and totally unacceptable to the first generation parents. The only time that a girl or boy was brought home was when he/she became a son's or daughter's fiancée. One first generation parent exclaimed

" ...even though 'David', so many years, he never brought me his girl to the house, as his girlfriend but he brought her as fiancée... But the Australian men come and

go with their girlfriends... we have taught our children to respect us... " [\(115\)](#)

Third generation Kytherian and Castellorizan children were not only allowed to bring their date home but also to interact and mix with British-Australian children, unlike their second generation parents. However, there was still an emphasis on marrying an Australian born Greek.

" ...I think, well I prefer for them, even now, to be quite honest to marry Greek, even though I wouldn't stop them from going out with an Australian boy, she has been out, but I do encourage - I just think traditions, religion that's all, nothing else, not that I would be very upset if she did meet and marry an Australian boy, I wouldn't but I'd prefer it because you haven't got religion problems, you haven't got even though they don't speak Greek, but you still, you've still got, there is something in us... " [\(116\)](#)

Mrs. 'Vanessa Politis' found it difficult to express in concrete terms her reason for supporting endogamous marriages, mainly because she was referring to something quite abstract. She maintained that "there is something in us" and was referring to an 'awareness' that she and her children belong to a distinct group of people and are part of a Greek family, which would be dissipated and divided if the children married outside the culture. It is an intrinsic loyalty to the family, to keep here family together, by having a common background which motivated here desire for endogamous marriages. Some second generation are even more avid or less diplomatic in their condemnation of intermarriage. Mrs. 'Katerina Papadopoulos', a second generation of Castellorizan descent, born in 1931 in Sydney exclaims

" ...I'm very prejudiced, I don't approve! I don't approve!.. If there is a mixed marriage the children will suffer because they will be torn between definite wills because the mother will be say Australian or Greek and the father Greek or Australian and the children grow up either hating one side or the other and it just happens... They resent one or the other, they never consider themselves the other side, they consider themselves Australian more so, that's it, they're Australian, consequently they think like Australians and they lose their Greek identity... " [\(117\)](#)

The second generation parents felt threatened by what they and their parents before them perceived to be the Australian family ethos, loose family ties, no family traditions. Thus losing of 'Greek identity' or 'Greekness' meant losing one's loyalty to the family, one's closeness and becoming like the Australians

" ...They haven't got the closeness we have... The Australians have no relatives! - They have relatives but they don't want to know them! Once they're out, become first cousins, they're not relatives anymore - they don't class them as relatives. You think my god! Where's your background, them as relatives. You think my god! Where's your background, where's your this, where's your that, there is nothing! " [\(118\)](#)

The parents wanted their children to maintain the close-knit nature of the Greek family. They

wanted their children to consolidate the Greek family by marrying an Australian born Greek, expand the family and make it large and homogeneous. 'David Mavros', a second generation Kytherian born in Bega, N.S.W. in 1953, explains this concept

" ...the emphasis in the Greek family is that the in-laws are expected to get on well with each other and to see each other quite regularly, it is like an acquisition to the family, the in-laws, whereas in the Australian way of life I don't think that is the case... " [\(119\)](#)

Apart from this desire for continuity and the emphasis on endogamous marriages, a change in Greek morality and authority had occurred within the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan family. There was a change in the authoritarian structure of the Greek family. Wife's were no longer required to stay at home and not offer any opinions concerning family decisions. One second generation Castellorizan woman explained how the second generation Greek family in Australia operates.

" ...I can go to work... I can go to wherever I want to... I like to be independent. I like to have my own money, I like to buy if I want to buy something... I don't like the old way, I don't know what it's like over there now, but the woman been at home, relying on their husbands to supply them with, to tell them what to do. I don't like that way of life at all, you know, the men go out and the women stay at home and this business, I couldn't tolerate that!... I feel that women aren't stupid, they're smart as men... my husband helps when I'm home, I go out and work, he comes and gives me a hand he doesn't just sit down and demand everything, nothing like that, but then again he doesn't get in the ironing either, he just helps out... " [\(120\)](#)

The second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan family was influenced by changing social trends within the Australian middle classes. In the second generation family the husband was no longer the patriarchal figure, neither was he necessarily the sole provider of the family. He also assisted in some of the household duties and the wife became a partner and companion. She was also allowed to socialize independently of her husband within the second generation family, whereas her mother living in Australia in the 1920's and 1930's was not. It had not been acceptable within the first generation Greek family in Australia for the wife to go out by herself without being accompanied by her husband, whereas it was perfectly acceptable for the husband to do so. Thus the Kytherian women in Australian country towns were limited from socializing by lack of confidence in speaking English, but were quite prepared to stay at home and look after their families because that was their traditional role. In Athens, it is still not acceptable for a wife to go out without the company of her husband, especially at night. [\(121\)](#)

Although there have been changes within the urban Greek family in Athens, these changes have been limited and have only occurred amongst the Athenian upper and middle classes. Constantina Safilios-Rothschild in her study of 250 married couples in Athens in 1964, concluded that

" In urban Greece, the more educated the husband, the less he is domineering... The authority of the Greek husband is maximum among those with lowest social

status and minimum among those with highest social status... " (122)

In a later study she found that apart from class the length of residence in Athens, was also an important factor in determining the changes within the urban Greek family. In a study she conducted of 100 Athenian couples from January 1970 - April 1971, to examine whether Greek couples had liberated themselves from "the stereotypic sex-linked values and beliefs restricting the range of socially acceptable options for men and women", she found that

" ...A relatively higher degree of 'liberation' can be observed in Athens where according to the 1970 census; 29% of the Greek population lives at present. This relative 'liberation', however, is not uniform throughout all social classes and does not equally affect all life sectors. Upper and middle class Athenians can be expected to be more 'liberated' than working and lower class Athenians who have recently come to Athens from rural areas and are still largely influenced by the traditional sex stereotypes. Also, Athenian men and women may be quite 'liberated' in one life sector, only a little liberated in another, and almost entirely traditional in still other life sectors. " (124)

Despite the fact that Athenian men and women were found to be liberated in terms of careers available for women, when it came to women working after marriage, Athenian husbands thought that a married woman should not work because "her place is in the home" or "it is a shame for the man if the wife works" or because "she cannot take care then of the children" or because "she would then get very tired." (125) "Only 28% of the husbands approved of work for married women." (126) With the exception of college educated professional women, Athenian women in general had only occasionally and in case of financial emergency, the option to work open to them. (127)

'Liberation' is an upper-middle and middle class phenomenon, not only in Greece but also in Australia. The early pre-war Kytherian and Castellorizan migrants who came from rural communities, and the post-war Greek migrants, as well as the Australian working classes were and are still largely controlled by the stereotyped attitudes towards women. Australian working class women still have to conform to female stereotype roles. It is only the Australian middle classes who are beginning to be influenced by the ideas permeating the society such as 'equality between the sexes'. The second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan families in Australia have also been influenced by these ideas, for they also represent middle class Australian families with middle class aspirations. Therefore changes within the Greek family in Australia cannot be totally explained in terms of ethnicity; moving away from the core of Greek culture with each succeeding generation; or due to the change in the class position of the Greek family from one generation to the next.

Although there have been studies done on mainland Greece, studies of social change in the Greek islands are non-existent. However, information in relation to changes within the family and society on Castellorizo

Italian Occupation

and Kythera has been obtained from the families who were interviewed. Of course these observations were not made by qualified sociologists and social historians, nevertheless in the absence of any studies, they serve as useful though rough guides of the changes and

continuity within the Greek family on the islands.

Slow changes appear to have been occurring on the small island of Castellorizo from the 1930's onwards. The Italians who had occupied the island from 1920 onwards, had brought over some Singer sewing machines in the 1930's and had begun to encourage young girls to attend classes to learn how to embroider on the new machines. People were going to Athens in the 1930's and returning with news of new songs and dances and society was beginning to change and broaden on the island. It was becoming a little less restrictive. [\(128\)](#) In 1978, the girls on the island of Castellorizo were working in retail shops or going to Rhodes, a near-by island in the Aegean to find employment, if none was available at home. Castellorizo only had one factory in 1978 which made hand-woven carpets and only employed a maximum of six girls. Apart from the carpet factory there were "only three restaurants... there is also gift shops and a few grocery shops." [\(129\)](#) Even though the Castellorizans had changed their attitude in regard to women's working outside the home, there was still evidence of women's seclusion. 'Spiro and Diane Diakopoulos', Australian born Greeks of Castellorizan descent, on a visit to the island in 1978 exclaimed

" Girls are still not allowed in the streets, unless there are one of two little shops, unless they're actually working in there. They still go to school till they're twelve and they leave and they go to Rhodes and they get work in the shops there... "

[\(130\)](#)

Although the single women are now allowed to work on the island, they are still not given any freedom to socialize. Ioanna Lambiri found that the same thing had occurred in the small town of Megara, 34 miles from Athens with 15,000 inhabitants, where she conducted her study in the 1950's on the effects of industrialisation and its relationship to the emancipation of women. One third of the women of Megara between the ages of 16-29 entered industrial employment in the 1950's. Ioanna Lambiri found that although women were able to work, this factor in itself did not

result in their liberation. "Many of the factory women did not make full use of the new opportunities for leading a freer life because of the restraining influences of the family, which proved a powerful mechanism of social control." [\(131\)](#) The Greek rural family adapted readily to industrialisation although initially there was a strong reaction from the men who felt their position had been displaced as a result of women's employment, which also occurred with the post-war Greek family in Australia. "The father would-be accused of being unable to support his family, the brother - who traditionally is supposed to protect the honor of his sister - might be embroiled in a tragic situation if his sister met strange men at the factory, and the neighbors kept saying that a girl who went to such work would become a prostitute." [\(132\)](#)

Thus the introduction of factory work to the Megarians resulted in 'name-calling' and branding of women who worked as immoral. Although 'name-calling' would appear to be a harmless side-effect, in a small rural society which used 'shame' as a form of social control - it would have been strongly felt by the families who had young girls working.

Nevertheless, the families coped with this hostile reaction and the young girls acquired a certain amount of independence through money such as the ability to supply their own dowries, dress well and increase the status of the family because they did not break moral codes and tradition. "...the family was such a guiding, constraining influence that factory work by women enhanced rather than disturbed the status quo." [\(133\)](#) and [\(134\)](#)

On the island of Kythera there have been no major social changes and family life has not altered greatly since the turn of the twentieth century. There have been a few new acquisitions and renovations done to the island due to overseas currency and patronage. There is a modern two storey old people's home, an ambulance service, a hospital. However, the old people left on the island refuse to make use of the old people's home. "We've got an old people's home there but nobody wants to go to it, because they don't want people to think they have to be looked after... They feel they will lose face by going to an old people's home, they think their family has given up on them." (135) Thus attitudes have remained

Modernisation

the same and modernization has not occurred on Kythera. Kythera still has a local exchange economy where people go to the village of 'Potamos' to trade their wares. "We went to the village", says Australian born Mrs. 'Helen Kiriakos', "on a visit to Kythera in 1976, to the bazaar that's on every Sunday... the bazaar... is their highlight. The social occasion on the island... You see them getting up early in the morning, loading their donkeys and riding to the bazaar." (136) 'David Mavros', a second generation Kytherian born in Bega, N.S.W. in 1953, on a visit to the island in 1976, compared the family life in Kythera to the Greek family in Athens and the Greek family in Australia and had this to say.

" Well they're much more strict than what they were in Athens and in Australia... they were quite naïve of a lot of what's going on in Athens and also they think that their sort of attitudes are carried on in Athens and are quite surprised to hear otherwise. " (137)

Information on new developments and ideas circulating in Athens have not reached the island for many of the young people have left and only occasionally returned with news from the city. The only people left are old and many have never left the island.

" A lot of those people on the island, I don't think have ever left the island. You tell them stories they don't believe... an aunt of a friend of mine's... well in her eighties, when I tell her that a man went to the moon, she says, 'you're making it up, don't tell me things like that, you're just making it up' " (138)

Thus the family in most rural communities and on mainland Greece and in the islands has "resisted change for many years. Its relative stability has been caused primarily by geographical isolation, which is due to Greece's poor transportation and communication facilities." (139) Even though changes were occurring in urban Greece, they had not occurred as fast and were not of the same magnitude as the ones taking place in Australia. This was partly because some of the Greek residents had come from rural areas and had continued to follow their traditional family patterns in the city. Also social change within the Greek family in Greece had been retarded by the absence of a well developed industry.

Before World War II, of 3,150,000 working people, only 22% were employed in industry. (140) Industrialisation was hindered because Greece lacked a strong domestic market, efficient transportation, coal and other raw materials necessary for industrialisation. (141)

Economic

disorganization, dominant in Greece due to the wars, repeated revolutions and the refugee

problem had affected the family considerably. "Before World War II, the average Greek family had an annual income of \$200. Its diet according to an UNRRA Report, was one of the lowest in Europe, and the war made it worse." [\(142\)](#) The Greek family had also suffered from the indifference of political authorities as a result of modern Greece's political instability. [\(143\)](#) Furthermore lack of education has kept the Greek family, especially in rural communities, from efficient agricultural production, child training and birth control. [\(144\)](#) The isolation of the rural Greek family on mainland Greece and on the islands has been especially marked.

The Greek-Australians 1950's-1970's A Question of Identity

Introduction

" He regarded himself as an Australian and as a Greek. There were no dividing lines. Had he been Greek alone, he would have returned to the country of his birth as soon as he was able. Had he been solely Australian, he would have disregarded his inherent sense of family loyalty and married Carol. Kerry Walsh Cirigo (Kythera) A Novel. " [\(0\)](#)



(click on photo to enlarge)

" So read the program of the 25th anniversary ball 1978. The emblem of the Greek Association was the olympian Hestia. The goddess of Hestia as its goddess represented personal security and happiness and the sacred duty of hospitality. In 1951 when the generation of Kytherian mothers and Castellorizians concerned with instilling within their children, the third generation a sense of Greek conscience and peoplehood and assuring that the children married Greeks by involving them organisations."> The Greek Young Matrons Association was formed in 1951 by a small group of young Greek Matrons

'Identity', 'endogamy' and 'family loyalty' are the most important issues within the third generation. The early Kytherian and Castellorizan immigrants laid the foundations of 'Greekness'. They inculcated within their children, the second generation, an awareness of their Greek heritage and background, not out of loyalty to Greece, but of loyalty to the family. The second generation combined their Greek background with Australian middle-class aspirations and ideas in regard to family organisation, attitudes towards women and most importantly, upbringing of children. In so doing the second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents created something 'new'; a distinctive 'Greek-Australian' subculture whose characteristics were not evident in Greece. Although the second generation wrought major structural changes within the traditional Greek family their parents had brought out with them, they still insisted on continuity from one generation to the next. They were not able to retain the Greek language and the Greek religion but they still promoted the idea of endogamy to their children, the third generation were detached from the initial migration experience. "Unlike the first and second generation, members of the third generation, are not preoccupied with ethnic prejudice and discrimination." [\(1\)](#) Born into middle and

upper-middle class families, they no longer had a memory of struggle for resources and financial security like their parents. Their contact with Greek culture and

Identity

tradition was largely through their grandparents who encouraged the third generation to join Greek organisations, attend Greek church and marry endogamously. The grandparents were a major formative influence in the lives of the third generation. They were the preservers of Greek tradition amongst the different generations of Greeks within Australia.

'Identity' was an important aspect in the lives of the third generation. The third generation were not particularly aware of themselves as 'Greeks' for they had not been required to live in two distinct worlds like their parents. The second generation Kytherian and Castellorizan parents were conscious of the dual nature of the existence, however their children, the third generation could not divide the two cultures. The Anglo-Saxon and Greek culture had cemented together and become one. "I don't distinguish the two things. I mean it's all part of the one thing... Do I feel particularly Greek? No, it's just part of life, I mean it's not separate..." (2) explained an eighteen year old third generation Kytherian girl. The third generation felt this way because they had not been expected to speak 'Greek' at home like their parents, nor did they lead a totally Greek social life.

" I'm more Australian than a Greek... 'cause I've been born here and my parents were, my ways have been changed a bit to Australian... I'm third generation, so I'm not really into the real Castellorizans or the real Greeks from Greece, you know, I'm more with the Australian born Greeks or Australians. I've been brought up with Australians. With Dad, he was speaking Greek at home, they were all Greek at home and Greek friends came over and Greek young people, that's the circle he grew up in. " (3)

In America, George Kourvetaris observed that "the third generation Greek Americans think primarily as Americans and expect to be treated as such." (4) The Greek-Australian third generation have similar expectations. However, although they identify to a certain extent with the Australian culture, they are still aware of their (unspoken) obligations towards the Greek family.

Education

Apart from the issue of identity, the third generation were different from their second generation parents in many other ways, particularly in regard to education. Their distance from the original migrant experience made the third generation more complacent and less ambitious than their parents. The third generation Kytherian and Castellorizan children who were interviewed were not adamant about joining the professions. They were mainly spurred towards educational advancement by their parents who emphasized the benefits of self-employment to their children. 'Jeffrey Andrews', a fifteen year old third generation Castellorizan, born in Sydney in 1963 and who is still attending high-school, oscillates between different positions about his future: from a desire to leave school in fourth form to a position where he is prepared to become a tradesman. Now he maintains that he wants to "...go into commerce, business management or work in a company; if you're an accountant you can go higher... I could open up my own business or company." (5) Meanwhile 'Jeffrey's' sister was quite happy to finish school in fourth form and become a secretary, to her parents'

disappointment.

Fifteen year old, third generation Kytherian 'Maria Coronias', unlike 'Jeffrey', attended a private school and explained

"...my father wants me to follow in his footsteps and be an optometrist, and work hard and go to university and take over his job and everything, mum is sort of pushing it because dad wants it and I feel I sort of have to do what he wants... I want to be a sports teacher. But that's been strongly advised against because when you get old you'll be like that, and it's just a 9-5 job and the income is nowhere near as good, and things like that." (6)

Her sister 'Suzanne Coronaia', eighteen, has just finished sixth form and would be content like her sister to become a teacher. She explains she would like to become either a "Kindergarten teacher or an air-hostess". However, "dad would like me to go to university, I've applied but I don't think I'll go, I wouldn't work, I don't think I'll do well enough work if I went." (7) On the other hand, third generation, eighteen year old Castellorizan 'Theo Politis' agreed with his parents' suggestions for further education and explains that "...they've promoted the idea to be good in my mind but I would like to go on to further education, so maybe it's got something to do with that..." (8) While his sister, twenty-one year



Greek Picnic: Brisbane 1916

(click on photo to enlarge)



Greek shop owned by
Kytherian George Sklavos:
1916 Brisbane

(click on photo to enlarge)

old 'Veronica Politis', like 'Jeffrey's' sister, finished fourth year high school and became a secretary. This initially disappointed her parents, "but after a while they accepted the idea, actually with my result, it wasn't that good, I only had ordinary pass marks and my mother

knew I wasn't... actually I'm lazy, I didn't like to study, so they accepted it." (9) 'Irene Pandos', twenty-five, a third generation Castellorizan, was the only person married out of the third generation children who were interviewed. 'Irene' was a town-planner and was an extremely ambitious and career orientated young woman which was quite unusual amongst the third generation who were interviewed.

The impetus for advancement witnessed within the second generation was not displayed by their children. The second generation had a different upbringing from their children. Theodore Saloutos discussing the second generation in America who reached maturity between he first and the Second World War, explains,

" The early years in the lives of children born of immigrant parents were hardly joyous ones, for they were exposed to the realities of life at a tender age. They heard parents and their friends tell of their hardships in Greece and the early years in the United States, the unemployment, discrimination and difficulties with the language. They were told in clear and often blunt language that their principal purpose in life was not to have fun, but to work, take advantage of the opportunities denied their parents, assume responsibilities, make a success of themselves..." (10)

The second generation in Australia growing up at the same time, had similar experiences to their American counterparts; and they made sure that their children did not experience the hardship they had to undergo as children growing up in a Geek family in Australia. One second generation Castellorizan parent born in Sydney in 1926 explained,

" ...when I was a kid we had nothing, not a penny - we used to get a penny, we used to scrub a whole shop, a whole house to get a penny and go and buy a penny of broken biscuits. When I got married I said no way are my children ever going to see this - I'm going to give my kids, I don't care if I'm broke, everything they want. " (11)

Third Generation

The third generation were not deprived of an education but were encouraged to pursue a professional career if they so wished; neither were they deprived of material goods; hence they did not strive particularly for educational advancement or financial security as their parents had. Their parents tried desperately to 'push' them towards professional careers in the hope of attaining higher status for the family but this was very difficult with children who had not experienced 'struggle'. The second generation parents had a level of maturity and perception of their own situation as a result of being exposed to hardship and responsibility from an early age which was not equaled by their third generation children who had been protected. (12)



(click on photo to enlarge)



Kytherian store at Woodburn

(click on photo to enlarge)



Kytherian store at Woodburn

(click on photo to enlarge)

American Third Generation

The second generation parents had made life easier for their children. One third generation Castellorizan girl born in Sydney in 1957 explains "they had a harder life, we have it easier, my parents have worked hard for us, made it a lot easier for us". [\(13\)](#)

The third generation Kytherian and Castellorizan children strongly resembled the children of the middle-class Australian parents. In America however the situation was different in regard to educational advancement amongst third generation Greeks. G. Kourvetaris found that

" Both education and professional achievement are highly valued among members of the third generation. In an empirical and comparative study of six ethnic groups, it was found (Rosen, 1959; 47-60) that a high level of aspiration and

achievement exists among members of third generation Greeks." (14)

The difference between the Australian and American third generation can be partly explained by the fact that the third generation Kourvetaris is referring to is an earlier generation which reached maturity in the 1940's. Furthermore the difference can be attributed mainly to the difference in attitude to education in the American and the Australian culture. In America there is a lot of pressure on children to attend a college if not a university after graduating from high school whereas the same attitude does not prevail in Australia, if anything there is a strong anti-intellectual trend within the society. While within the Greek community in Australia amongst the first generation it is considered very prestigious for children to attend university; but this attitude does not extend to the third generation.

Apart from attitudes towards education, the Australian and American third generation Greeks also differ in other areas. George Kourvetaris points out that in America "...one finds little or no interest among members of the third generation in maintaining the ethnic institutional aspects of Greek culture such as language, family traditions, and endogamous marriages." (15) But these findings do not apply to Australia, at least not in regard to the people interviewed for this historical study of the Greek family in Australia. Although many of the third generation had

Family Traditions

not learnt the Greek language, they regretted not having done so and wanted their children to learn it. One third generation Castellorizan boy born in Sydney in 1960 explains that if he has children: "I wouldn't mind them learning the Greek language because I've regretted that I haven't learnt it when I was young." (16)

Many of the third generation felt that it was useful having a second language and have attempted to learn Greek in their later years by taking a modern Greek course at the Institute of Languages at the University of N.S.W. A young third generation Castellorizan girl explains that "I can't speak Greek very well... I can understand it more than I can speak it... That's why I went to the Institute of Languages to learn." (17)

Also in regard to 'family traditions' the third generation of Greek-Australians differed from their American counterparts. In Australian Greek 'family tradition' the third generation are maintained by the grandparents. They become of major importance to the third generation. Culture and Greek traditions are retained for the sake of the grandparents. Many of the third generation attended Greek church though "always with my grandparents... I used to go to Sunday school and Greek Church every Sunday". (18) Some even went as far as saying that even if they married an Australian they would still go to church "I think I'd go Christmas with my grandparents and say Easter just for them." (19) The third generation Kytherian and Castellorizans had close contact and high regard for their grandparents and made an effort to visit them regularly independent of their parents. "Well lately, since I've been on holidays I see them three times a week, maybe four times a week... I enjoy their company and they enjoy my company and they're good people." (20)

Greek Young Matrons' Association

The grandparents exerted a strong control over the third generation and usually influenced them into becoming involved in Greek organisations and activities such as the sports groups for youth, organised by the Castellorizan club, activities for youth conducted by the Kytherian

organisation and especially in organisations such as AHEPA and the Greek Young Matrons' Association. One young third generation Kytherian girl born in Sydney in 1960, 'Suzanne Coronias' admitted that "...well sometimes I don't want to go but my grandparents encourage me to go and mum". (21) The second generation parents also strongly encourage their children to attend these organisations because "...it would please my grandparents." (22)

The involvement of the third generation in these organisations pleased the grandparents and parents because it meant that the third generation were socializing within a Greek circle and might meet possible Greek marriage partners. The formation of the Greek Young Matrons' Association in particular was an overt attempt by second generation parents to ensure that their children married Australian born Greeks like themselves by providing them with an organisation which would offer social activities and cultural events in which young Greek people could participate. (23) The Greek Young Matrons' Association organised

" ...a number of children's concerts, performed in the Greek language ...significantly inspiring the children to take an interest in their cultural heritage. At the same time debates were organised in which many of the teenagers participated. " (24)

The association also has an annual Ball at which young Greek girls of the second and third generation can make their debut and become known, and possibly seen and selected by an appropriate Greek Australian male. The organisation is mainly made up of upper middle and middle class Kytherian second generation women as well as second generation Greeks from other parts of Greece.

Participation in this organisation meant that their children would not only marry an Australian born Greek but probably a person from a similar social class.

Although both the Kytherian and Castellorizan third generation children had close contact with their grandparents and attended some Greek functions for the sake of their grandparents and parents, they also differed between themselves. The third generation Castellorizan children whose parents had experienced prejudice and status and made up the Australian middle and lower middle classes; tended to be concerned and more aware of ethnicity and Greek culture. Whereas the third generation Kytherian children whose parents had been brought up in the New South Wales country towns, where they had been usually accepted by the local towns people, and one or the other of the second generation Kytherian parents had a university education and constituted the upper middle and middle classes in Australia; were usually less concerned by 'Greekness' and things Greek. The third generation Kytherian children noticed the difference in attitude between themselves and the other children who attended the social functions of organisations such as AHEPA. (25)

" ...the kids there that we meet consider themselves very Greek... everything they do you know like everything is done very 'Greekly'... they feel strongly about Greece, like somebody was talking about Greece, 'Oh yes, Greece, it is the best country in the world, it is beautiful, it's wonderful, we should all live there', and things like that... I think we have got much more of an Australian life style in our lives than theirs, theirs is much more Greek than ours. " (26)

G Kourvetaris found in his study of three generations of Greeks in America that "The more assimilated a member in the third generation, the higher his socio-economic status," (27)

which also would apply in Australia. However it seems that it is not just 'assimilation' which causes changes in attitude amongst the third generation but also their membership of a particular class which influences their behaviour and causes them to be less preoccupied with ethnicity.

" As a rule, members of the third generation have incorporated the value, attitudes and norms of the American middle and upper middle class subcultures. Social class is more important to them than ethnicity. " (28)

Even though the third generation Kytherian and Castellorizan children differed in their degree of commitment to Greek culture, both groups of third generation children supported endogamy. It was their 'inherent sense of family loyalty' which made both Kytherian and Castellorizan third generation favor marrying a Greek. Like the second generation who had "the advantages of having a wife of the same faith, capable of conversing in the native tongue of the parents and discharging her true duties to the family" emphasized by their first generation parent told them and "warned of the dangers of mixed marriage, the loss of... Hellenic identity..." (29) the third generation also had the problems involved in intermarriage stressed to them by their second generation parents. One young third generation Castellorizan boy aged fifteen explained

" ...I think it helps in a way if you marry a Greek girl because as Dad was saying before... it's complications sometimes later on... If you've got to love a Catholic in a Catholic Church, but you've always wanted to marry in a Greek church... and when it comes to going to functions and that... when you've involved with Greek people, Greek speaking people, it's a bit hard for the person to, you know, sort of get into the conversation when they can't speak... " (30)

Although the third generation maintain that it is preferable to marry a person of Greek origin for the sake of the family "you have something in common with a Greek girl, there's more for marriage, there's more chances of it being a success... common background and common interests" (31) unlike their parents they were not adamant about it and added "I'd marry whatever guy appeals to me... I'll probably will marry a Greek... I'd like to, but I'm not just going to go after guy just because he's Greek, whatever, if a guy comes to me and is a nice Australian guy..." (32) Like their second generation fathers before them, the third generation children were influenced by the Australian or western romantic tradition where a person marries because of love but whether they would ultimately marry outside their culture is a separate issue.

The only person who was married amongst the third generation who were interviewed as 'Irene Pandos', twenty-five years old, a third generation Greek Australian, a town planner; described the type of life she was leading when she was younger and single as 'Australian' and who "used to bring home Chinese, Jewish, Australian boys, whomever I liked at the time;" (33) married a second generation Kytherian boy. Although she led an 'Australian' single life, once married, she maintained,

" ...I would say I'm quite prejudiced, I don't really think that intermarriages should occur if someone wants to keep their culture because each time I've seen it happen, the Greek always loses his, the Australian never comes into the Greek

culture... My cousins who have got one parent Greek and one parent Australian are not Greek, they don't think like Greeks, they don't act like us, they don't regard themselves as Greek, that is the most important thing. " (34)

It appears that once married the third generation regress and adopt the traditional Greek attitudes or they maintain a certain continuity in attitude with their grandparents, depending on the way one looks at it. However 'Irene Pandos' response may be atypical of the third generations' attitude but until further research has been conducted amongst a large group of married third generation couples one cannot be sure. George Kourvetaris, in a study of "Patterns of Generational Subculture and Intermarriage of the Greeks in the United States" has made some tentative propositions such as "there is more intermarriage in the middle and upper middle class third generation Greek Americans than among upper or lower extremes of an ethnic stratification system." (35) One cannot be sure if the same applies to Australia since no statistics exist on intermarriage amongst the third generation however the proposition is an interesting one and should at least be considered.

Apart from the existence of 'continuities' such as preference for endogamy between the different generations of Greeks in Australia there have also been major structural changes between the second and third generation particularly in regard to Greek morality. Many third generation Greek girls no longer feel compelled to remain virgins in order for a marriage to take place; but maintain that sexual relations are permissible as long as love is present and marriage is to follow. (36) A third generation Castellorizan girl born in Sydney in 1957 describes the type of morality which prevails amongst the third generation in the late 1970's -

Sexual Relations

" I feel that if a girl loves a boy and she's gone out with him for a while, it, I don't know, I'll just say it would be okay to have intercourse, but then if he loves her he should really want... but then they might not be prepared financially and they might not be able to afford to get married. You don't sleep with every Tom, Dick and Harry. " (37)

But the third generation Greek men are not as 'liberated' as the Greek women in regard to Greek morality. This difference between third generation girls and boys is not unusual for it is also found in the wider Australian community. Although many middle class Australian women have changed their attitude to morality, many of the middle class Australian men still feel the same way as many of the young third generation Greek boys who assert that,

" If a woman is a virgin or not before she is married, well, it shouldn't make a great deal of difference but if she is cheap, well you know... well if she plays around with a lot of men... Personally, I'd like to marry a virgin... because it is a sign that a girl has not been around with other men. " (38)

Thus by the third generation there is the formation of a distinct and definite 'Greek Australian' subculture where Greek and Anglo Saxon life styles have merged so thoroughly that they cannot be divided in the mind of the third generation. Besides this cultural merger there has also been a desire for endogamy amongst the third generation, out of inherent loyalty to the Greek family and particularly to their grandparent who were very important influences in their

lives. Although continuities existed, changes have also been wrought between the second and third generation I regard to attitudes toward education and career and attitudes toward Greek morality. These changes have not been caused by a movement away from the core of Greek culture from one generation to the next but mainly by the influence of class position upon the children of the second generation.



Greek Picnic Lismore N.S.W.
1916

(click on photo to enlarge)

Images of the Greek Family in Australia 1900's-1970's

Introduction

The thesis has examined the 'continuities and changes' that have occurred in Greek family life in Australia. It has placed the Greek family in an Australian context in an effort not to isolate it and treat the Greek family as though it existed in a vacuum divorced from Australian society. In so doing, the thesis has also documented an aspect of Australian immigration history which was previously unknown.

The first generation, the early Kytherian and Castellorizan migrants came to Australia to flee political persecution, starvation and possibly to find adventure. They came as very young men with the inducement of relatives and friends who spoke of Australia's wonderful opportunities. There was no government assistance to south Europeans before the war and they came as a result of a process referred to as 'chain migration'.

Upon arrival in Australia they found an organised and supportive Greek community which was able to offer them food and shelter. The Kytherian community in particular, functioned on a familial basis. Thus although family life was not a part of early settlement in Australia there were other supportive organisations which functioned as substitutes until the early Kytherian and Castellorizan settlers formed their own families. The early settlers laid the foundations of 'Greekness', they inculcated within their children, the second generation, an awareness of their Greek heritage and culture, not so much out of loyalty for the family.

The first generation Kytherians who spent the greater part of their lives in the country where the threat of migrants was less immediate, tended to introduce Greek culture to their children in a less obvious and more subtle way. They were less evangelical in their desire to retain the Greek culture within their children. Nevertheless they were still equally concerned with making them aware of themselves as Greeks, and as belonging to a distinct group of people whose culture would be dissipated and divided if intermarriage took place. They were not any more prepared to assimilate than the Castellorizans who were very severe in the introduction of 'Hellenism' to their children. The Castellorizan parents living in the city,

Castellorizian insularity

where anti-foreign sentiment prevailed, were determined to shield their children from any immoral and dangerous influences within the Australian community. The daughters in particular, were severely restricted. This was partly due to the severe seclusion of women practiced on the island of Castellorizo but was exacerbated by the anti-southern European sentiments displayed by the British Australian society before the Second World War. One is not suggesting of course, that Castellorizan insularity and restrictive attitudes towards the daughters was totally a product of Australian hostility. Their desire to perpetuate the culture and style within their own ethnic group was not a reaction to Australian prejudice towards southern Europeans but a desire to mix with people who had similar customs and beliefs to themselves. However, one can assume that if an ethnic group feel their culture threatened, they are likely to be intent on preserving it.

The Castellorizan parents were not preoccupied with being accepted as equal by the

Australian community nor did they dwell on the anti-southern sentiment. They were far too concerned with achieving some measure of economic success in their new country. However the prejudice in the late 1930's and the 1940's did affect their second generation children who were born in Australia and resented not being accepted as equals. The prejudice they saw and experienced growing up in Greek families in inner city migrant suburbs made the second generation strongly committed to social mobility. Their childhood and upbringing and the influences within the Australian society at the time strongly influenced the nature of the second generation Greek family that was later to emerge.

Traditional Family

When the second generation married, they formed a family which was a synthesis of the Greek and Anglo Saxon norms. The second generation changed the traditional Greek family that their parents brought out with them. They had wrought major structural changes in the traditional family structure. Greek language and Greek Orthodox religion were no longer the distinguishing features of the Greek Australian family that emerged in the late 40's, 50's and 60's. Greek morality and authority had been changed. The man was no longer the sole decision maker, the wife was no longer secluded but was at liberty to work if she so wished and to socialize independently of her husband. The features of the new Greek Australian family were not evident in Greece, though changes had occurred in the urban center, they had been limited and few.

Second Generation

The features of the new Greek Australian family were partly determined by influences within the Australian environment such as industrialisation and urbanisation which greatly changed the character of Australian society after the Second World War, and was also determined by the changes in class status from the first to the second generation. A similar observation was made by George Kourvetaris while examining mobility patterns of first and second generation Greeks in Chicago,

" as one moves from the first generation of Greek immigrants to that of the American born second generation, one finds a change in status which reflects the status system of the large American society. " (1)

Although there were changes in the second generation families in Australia which reflected the values of the Australian middle classes, there were also continuities such as a desire to keep the extended family together by making sure that their children marry endogenously. Although the second generation, after having experienced a strict upbringing, could not insist that their children maintain contact within a totally Greek circle of friends, they did encourage them to join the Greek Australian organisations in order for them to meet Greek friends.

Third Generation

The third generation was also influenced by their parents in regard to endogamous marriage. They retained some contact with Greek culture mainly through their grandparents, however they were far too detached from the initial migrant experiences to be motivated in the same way as their parents. They were middle class children with middle class concerns. They had not had to experience 'struggle' like their parents. Thus they did not have the same emotional commitment to 'education' and achievement. The second generation parents felt that educational advancement would give their children the status they were denied.

The difference which existed between the second and third generation in regard to education, career and Greek morality were not a result of a movement away from the core of Greek culture but a result of class changes in the third generation.

Thus changes in the Greek family in Australia cannot be totally explained in terms of 'ethnicity'. Instead, all influences must be examined if cultural change within an immigrant group is to be understood.

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