

# SOJOURNING INTO THE FIELD: REFLECTIONS ON A RESEARCHER'S EXPERIENCES IN MAKING LOCAL-GLOBAL CONNECTIONS AMONG WOMEN IN KYTHERIAN GREEK COMMUNITIES\*

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## INTRODUCTION

**F**or the past six years I have been engaged in a study of the construction of ethnicity among women whose heritage can be traced to the Greek island of Kythera. I have interviewed 95 women of such heritage living in Australia, Greece and the United States, and have written a number of accounts of my work and presented papers on it at various professional conferences in the United States and Greece.

In these presentations, my explanation of the methodology I used is brief. It typically goes as follows: "In this paper, I focus upon the reconstruction of ethnic national identity in the three places. The paper is based upon a study of women of Kytherian heritage. For the study, I conducted intensive interviews of 95 women of such heritage ranging in age from 22 to 95 years. From 1990 to 1994, I interviewed 16 women living in Greece, 44 living in Australia and 35 living in America. I also engaged in participant observation of Kytherian-sponsored events in Sydney, Australia, Baltimore, Maryland, and on the island itself" (Demos 1995, p. 3).

In preparation for the book I will write, I have begun the task of sifting through my data: the audio tapes, transcriptions and written accounts of interviews as well as fieldnotes, maps, photographs, census material and ethnic organizational documents. As I do, I recall names, faces and events, and I think about my methodology.

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The substance of knowledge cannot be separated from the questions raised (Wrong 1970) and the methods used to produce it. I see that in reviewing my data. In my earlier studies of the retention of ethnic language and ethnicity among members of two Greek Orthodox parishes, I used the survey design as a strategy for collecting data. In these studies, I had developed some highly refined hypotheses with designated dependent and independent variables. The research problems were such that selection of the survey design and the quantitative analysis implied by such a design were logical.

When I began my study of Kytherian Greek women, I decided I wanted to learn how women produce ethnicity in different places in the world, and that I wanted to understand this work from the perspective of the women themselves. I knew that for such an understanding to take place I had to go into "the field." In deciding what I wanted to discover, I made a decision about the way in which I would go about seeking information.

My presentation today is about that aspect of methodology which typically never appears in print — that part which becomes invisible, but is nevertheless essential to the production of knowledge. It is about how I began my study of the construction of ethnicity among women of varying ages living in three different parts of the world, and how I obtained knowledge of their work. It is, also, an account of the researcher as sojourner.

Just as the substance of knowledge is connected to questions raised and methods used, it is also connected to the role taken on by the researcher in the process of knowledge production. I argue that the "sojourner" is one such role.

In the Oxford English Dictionary, the term "sojourning" is defined first and primarily as "the action or fact of staying temporarily in a place" (1989, p. 946); the major entries following the word "sojourner" are first, "one who sojourns; a temporary resident," and second, "a guest or lodger; a visitor" (Oxford English Dictionary 1989, p. 945); and the first meaning of the term "sojourn" is "to make a temporary stay in a place; to remain or reside for a time" (Oxford English Dictionary 1989, p. 945).

Sociologically, the concept of "sojourner" along with the idea of "marginality" is linked to that of Georg Simmel's "stranger." Although he did not refer to them explicitly in his six-page essay on the stranger, Simmel did provide a basis for work on the concepts of the marginal individual and the sojourner.

Much of the work on the idea has centered on Simmel's analysis of the stranger as "the person who comes today and stays tomorrow. He is so to speak, the potential wanderer although he has not moved on, he has not overcome the freedom of going and coming" (1964, p. 402). Robert Park (Levine 1977) cited Simmel's concept of the stranger as the basis for his conceptualization of the "marginal man," a term used to discuss the difficulties experienced by immigrants who feel "caught" between the culture they had learned in their native land and the culture of their new home.

Although several sociologists, including Stonequist (1936), have argued that Park's conceptualization of the "marginal man" is distinct from that of Simmel's conceptualization of the "stranger," the former term is used so frequently in studies of race and ethnic relations that it has continued to be associated with that of the stranger.

In his 1952 article on Chinese laundry men in Chicago, Siu (1952) developed the concept of the "sojourner" as a type of stranger in a parallel relationship to that of the

marginal individual. For Siu, "the essential characteristic of the sojourner is that he clings to the culture of his own ethnic group as in contrast to the cultural complex of the marginal man. Psychologically, he is unwilling to organize himself as a permanent resident in the country of his sojourn. When he does, he becomes a marginal man" (1952, p. 34).

In his analysis of the various ways in which Simmel's concept of the stranger has been faithfully or unfaithfully applied, Levine notes that Margaret Mary Wood's study of the stranger "drew freely on Simmel, but adopted a definition that was clearly differentiated from Simmel's" (1977). For Wood the stranger may come today and stay tomorrow as in Simmel's usage of the term or, in her usage, "go tomorrow." Noting that Wood's analysis reveals Simmel's stranger as "a special type," Levine (1977) develops a typology of the stranger and includes the concepts of the sojourner and the marginal individual as types.

The utility of the "marginality" concept is evidenced by the great number of times it appears in the sociological literature. In addition to its use in understanding the situation of second-generation Americans caught between the culture of their parents and that of the dominant society (Stonequist 1935), it is useful as a position from which to produce knowledge.

In the work of such black feminist intellectuals as bell hooks (1984) and Patricia Hill Collins (1986), the point repeatedly made is that knowledge produced by individuals on the margin is quite different from that produced by those in the center of academia. Collins describes the black feminist intellectual as a marginal individual, an "outsider within." She is a person who, while not in the white world in the sense that white intellectuals are, has considerable knowledge of this world. Referring to Simmel's work on the stranger, Collins argues that this knowledge is different from and more objective than that of white intellectual insiders.

Since Siu's development of the concept of sojourner, the term has been used in the work of several other scholars, including that of Edna Bonacich (1973), Anna Karpathakis (1993) and Li-ching L. Wang (1991), to describe the situation of those immigrants who, despite their intentions to return to their native lands, stay indefinitely away from them in the foreign country.

Although there appears to be no direct reference to the idea of researcher as sojourner in the literature, the basis of such a conceptualization can be found in Dennison Nash's essay (1963) on the ethnologist as stranger. Nash argues "that the ethnologist in the field is a stranger, that he faces the problem of adapting to this role, and that the objectivity of his field report will, through the mechanisms of perception and cognition, reflect the nature of his adaptation" (1963, p. 150). Using Levine's typology, it is clear that Nash's stranger is a sojourner, a type of stranger, and consequently that Nash's argument about the relationship between the objectivity of a field report and the adaptation of the ethnologist as stranger to the field can be more specifically conceptualized in terms of the adaptation of the ethnologist as sojourner.

## TWO STORIES

In line with this discussion I begin my account of the researcher as sojourner with two stories. The first story takes place in Brisbane, Australia, in 1990. My husband, Fred, and I were living in Sydney that year and we were both on the faculty of the St.

George Campus of the University of New South Wales. I was there on an exchange to teach sociology. The Australian Sociological Association meetings were in Brisbane that December, and Fred and I planned to attend them. I had interviewed a number of women of Kytherian Greek heritage living in Sydney for my study of the construction of ethnicity, and I had asked one of my interviewees for names of other women living in Brisbane.

It was quite hot that summer in Sydney and even hotter to the north. The dormitory where we stayed was not air conditioned. The day we arrived I went down to the reception room and made a call to one of the women on my list. I told Matina that I was a sociologist from the United States, I was of Kytherian Greek heritage, I was conducting a study of women of such heritage and her cousin had given me her name as a possible interviewee.<sup>1</sup> Matina agreed to an interview and suggested having it in a cafe in downtown Brisbane. She asked me to meet her on the corner of a street from which we would then walk to the cafe.

The following day I took the bus to the designated street. Within a few minutes of arriving there, a dark-haired woman of about 25 years of age approached me. Matina informed me that her father had driven her to the interview and that she had just gotten out of the car across the street. She said she had told Con, a friend of the family who had been painting her house, what I "was doing" and that he was very interested in speaking to me. He had come with her father and was in the car. Would I mind riding around with them for a few minutes and talking with him before we began the interview? I, of course, agreed.

Matina and I climbed into the back seat of the sedan, her father and a man of about 65 occupying the front seat. Con turned around to greet me, his missing tooth quite prominent, and proceeded to tell me in a rush of words that he had been born in Kythera, that his father, who had been living in Australia, had sent money for his mother and him to come to Australia when he was about 12 years old and that his mother had died in 1959. His family came from the village of Christoforianika, the village of my maternal grandmother, and while some of the people in the village had migrated to Australia, others had gone to the United States. His mother had a photograph of some people from America, which he had left hanging on the wall after his mother's death. He was curious about the people in it; perhaps I could identify them? He believed they were from Baltimore, where I grew up.

Matina's father suggested stopping the car and getting out in a nearby park where I could inspect the photograph that Con had brought with him. We stood there in the heat, flies humming in our faces, while Con extracted it, yellowed and tattered with age, from a large manilla envelope. I examined the photograph and told Con, "This is my mother, this is my aunt, this is my grandmother, this is my grandfather, this is my great-grandmother and this is my great-grandfather."

Here I stood looking at this stranger, a man of about 5'5" with white unruly hair — his cut-offs, knees and calves splotted with the white paint he had just been using — who had this photograph with which I had grown up. It had sat on a bureau in my grandmother's house, and I had studied it from the time I was a child. These people were from another era. My mother and aunt, stocky in build and not at all as they ever appeared to me in my lifetime. Even my grandmother, so young. What was he doing with this?

When I visited Con and his sister the following day, we were able to piece together the history of the document. Con knew that his mother had been baptized by one of the women in the photograph. When people began leaving the island of Kythera, his mother's godmother went to the United States. I knew that my grandmother had made the arrangements for the professional photograph, for in her role as woman of the house she had paid attention to the documentation of family events and transitions. She had been responsible for bringing her own mother to the United States to join her father who had been living here on his own for a number of years. My grandmother had to have been younger than Con's mother. Thus, my great-grandmother had to have been the godmother of Con's mother, and my grandmother had to have sent his mother the photograph.

My next story takes place in Athens, Greece. I had already interviewed 44 women of Kytherian Greek heritage living in Australia and 35 living in the United States. I had come to Greece to complete the interview part of my study with women living on the island of Kythera. Fred and I had decided to forego the 12-hour ferry boat trip and made reservations to arrive in Kythera by flying dolphin. We were having our midday meal outdoors in a restaurant in the Plaka, the old town part of Athens where tourists and Athenians flocked to frequent the gold, leather, ceramic and trinket shops. It was May and we were well shaded by the canvas awnings stretched above our heads. We were talking, and I strained to keep my mind on the conversation and not on the two women seated at the table next to us. They were Australian, for the younger woman, who was about 45 years old, had that distinct "Aussie" accent. The older woman I knew instantly had to be the younger one's grandmother. She was about 80 years old. Finally, unable to contain myself any longer, I interrupted them and asked, "Are you traveling from Australia?" Yes, they were; they were grandmother and granddaughter. I then asked the older woman if she had been born in Greece. She said yes, and I proceeded to tell them that I had been in Australia and that I had been interviewing women of Kytherian heritage there. The older woman looked carefully at me and said, "My dear, you interviewed me." And yes, once she said that I recognized her and recalled the interview quite well. I could picture her in her apartment in one of the nicest shires in the Sydney metropolitan area. I remembered the family photographs placed on end tables and shelves throughout her living room and I remembered her serving me the obligatory sweet required of the traditional Greek woman of the house, the "nikokepa."

These two experiences are vivid ones for me. The one occurred in 1990 and the other in 1993. As I go through my data I continually reflect upon them, searching for their meaning. They are of personal relevance, and they also say something about scientific research.

### SCIENCE, SOCIOLOGY AND THE HUMANITIES

Embedded in the field of sociology from its emergence in the nineteenth century is a tension pertaining to the production of knowledge. In the first part of the history of this field, the tension was focused upon the nature of sociology as a science. Is sociology a positivist social science, no different from the natural sciences, or is it a social science defined as distinct from the natural sciences? Two early and contrasting responses to this question are found in the works of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber.



In line with the positivist position taken by Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim defined a "social fact" as . . . "every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint: or again, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations" (1966, p. 13).

Because the human social world is subjectively knowable, Max Weber (Wrong 1970), by contrast, held that sociology as a social science is distinctly different from the natural sciences. As opposed to the ahistorical approach of the natural sciences in discovering "laws of nature," Weber advocated the use of the comparative historical method in identifying trends in social life. In addition, he encouraged the use of "verstehen," explicitly defined as a subjective operation, in coming to an understanding of the motivation for social action.

In more recent times the tension between the two conceptualizations of sociology has been most often defined as a difference between quantitative "hard science" methods or qualitative "soft science" ones. Quantitative methodology with its assumptions of a natural order tested against a probabilistic model was hegemonous in sociology until the late 1960s (Jones 1993). From the late 1960s, as a result of the various critiques of the field coming from people on the margins (for example, women, people of color and scholars of working-class origin), the use of qualitative methods in understanding social life has grown and now forms a body of methodological research that can easily be distinguished from quantitative methodology.

Outside the field of sociology and particularly since the publication of Thomas Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962, a challenge to positivist explanations of the production of knowledge has been directed even to the natural sciences. Particularly disputed is the claim to objectivity made in the name of science. As we come to the end of the century and the millennium, the tension within sociology has shifted. The emergence of post-structural and post-modern theory within the humanities and their spread to the social sciences has meant that the difference between sociology and the natural sciences is of less concern than is the difference between sociology and the humanities. The question increasingly raised is how the work of a sociologist using these relatively new approaches to knowledge differs from that of a scholar in the humanities. Critical to the definition of a social science has been the claim to objectivity; this claim has been of relatively little concern to the humanities. Rather, attention has focused upon the nature of subjectivity.

#### SOJOURNING INTO THE FIELD

My study of the construction of ethnicity by women in communities around the world is not amenable to quantitative analysis. From its inception the study has had a qualitative subjective character. It has its most direct roots in the international sociological conference I attended in Albufeira, Portugal. I had been there to deliver my paper on changes in the study of black family life. I was talking to a sociologist from Australia and telling him my other work involved studies of Greek ethnicity in the United States and Greece. He said there were a number of Greek ethnics in Australia and that a good many of them came from the island of Kythera. This drew my attention at once. I had been to Greece several times by then, but never to Kythera, the place from which my maternal grandparents migrated. As I thought of this omission, I

fantasized about conducting a study of people of Kytherian heritage living in the United States, Australia and Greece. This was 1986.

I visited Kythera for the first time in late spring, 1988. There I learned that chain migration was very much a part of the lives of the people on the island. Every family on Kythera has had at least one member migrate to the United States or, more likely, to Australia, because other Kytherians had gone to these places. Many Kytherians lived for years in Australia and then repatriated to Greece. There are, however, more people of Kytherian heritage living in Australia than there are left on the island.

In December 1988 shortly before Christmas, I was cleaning up my office and going through all the mail I had been ignoring for those last hectic weeks of the fall quarter. I came across a memo from the chair of the Division of Education on our campus telling about an exchange teaching opportunity in Sydney, Australia. I brought it home and mentioned it to Fred, who was quite enthusiastic about the opportunity. I then started formulating my plan. My co-editor, Marcia Texler Segal, and I were in one of the many last stages of editing the ethnic women book, and it seemed to me that an international study of ethnic women would extend my own research program quite nicely.

I would do the study I fantasized about in Albufeira, and I would focus upon women. The Australian opportunity would make the study possible. I had been to Greece a number of times and had even conducted a study of internal migration there; therefore, I believed that there would be no problem in gathering data on Kythera; and because I grew up in Baltimore, knew people of Kytherian heritage there and had attended Kytherian Brotherhood events as a child and adolescent, I also believed the American part of the study was quite workable.

The Australian connection would greatly enhance my understanding of the effect of place upon the construction of ethnicity. The data I gathered from Australia, the United States and Greece would mean that I would be able to contribute significantly to the literature on the intersection of ethnicity and gender in differing social contexts.

In preparing to conduct research in Australia, I began looking for people who could provide me entry into the Kytherian community there. Before my stay in Australia, I learned from the sociologist I met in Albufeira not only that a number of people of Kytherian heritage lived there, but also that a Kytherian Brotherhood existed. I remembered from my adolescence in Baltimore that every so many years, old Mrs. Cominos would pack her things, wave good-bye to her four adult children and fly to Australia, where she would visit with her sister for several months. My grandmother had relatives there, too. I knew this because of the many times I had asked her to relate the story about her marriage to my grandfather. Nana was in an arranged marriage. She was 18 years old when her grandmother approached her in Kythera and told her that it was time to marry and that there was a potential husband for her in Australia and another in America. It was my grandmother's choice. She would relate that she enthusiastically responded, "America." My grandmother had lived in the United States as a child and had attended elementary school in this country before her father returned with her to Kythera. She loved this country and was proud to have become a naturalized American. Every Christmas she sent a greeting card to the president. A Republican, she had done this as a patriotic non-partisan American at least from the time that Franklin Roosevelt was in office. But I digress.

In telling her story, my grandmother would make it clear that she had chosen America, but that she, and we, had relatives in Australia. I had neither asked her the specifics of the relatives who lived there nor paid strict attention, for I was more caught up with the idea of formulating a marriage decision based on the place of residence of a stranger and potential spouse.

My grandmother had developed Alzheimer's Disease and was in a nursing home when I prepared to leave for Australia. It had become too late to learn who our Australian relatives were. She was unable to tell me. Nana died at the age of 90 during the year I was away.

I turned for help to my maternal relatives, all of whom were of Kytherian heritage, and was able to obtain one concrete lead. The daughter of my mother's paternal first cousin gave me the name, phone number and address of her mother's maternal first cousin who lived in Sydney. Thus, taking advantage of my own position in the chain of people migrating from Kythera, I obtained a link to the field.

Fred, my stepson, Caleb and I arrived in Australia on July 4 at the beginning of a very chilly and damp winter. The first few months were full of the confusion that is characteristic of adapting to a new context, and for me, the anxiety over how to begin my study. During this time, I learned I had made some erroneous assumptions about Australia. A major one had to do with travel within the country. I had assumed transportation costs were equivalent to those in the United States, and we would be able to travel to Canberra, Brisbane, the Barrier Reef, Melbourne, Tasmania and Perth. I learned that transportation and lodging was quite a bit more, and that it was less expensive for Australians to vacation in Disneyland, Las Vegas and Thailand than it was for them to take a trip from Sydney to Perth. Fred and I visited Canberra, Brisbane and a Barrier Reef resort. We also explored Sydney and the major towns and parks in the Sydney metropolitan area. We simply could afford no more travel than that.

More fortunately, we also learned that although the largest population of Greek ethnics reside in Melbourne, most Greek ethnics of Kytherian heritage live in Sydney and in the towns up the coast toward Brisbane. I began teaching within a few weeks of our arrival and made the acquaintance of two people on the St. George faculty and staff who were of Kytherian heritage.

I knew that I would be able to get to know more people of Kytherian heritage and also better adapt to Australian life by becoming involved in a Greek Orthodox parish. I discovered there were at least 15 Greek Orthodox churches in the Sydney metropolitan area. I called the archdiocese for a recommendation, and the following Sunday made the first of many trips to St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Bondi. The trip involved taking a train to Central Station in the middle of Sydney, where I would change to another train that would make a stop in Bondi within walking distance of the church. Once on the first train, the entire trip would take about forty-five minutes.

I began attending Sunday church services and the coffee social afterward. Within a month I had made the acquaintance of several members of the congregation and had become part of a group who sat together at the same table for the social hour. Fred started accompanying me, and this Sunday morning ritual became an important part of our life in Australia. We became acquainted with the priest and his family as well as a number of parishioners. Over the year we accepted invitations for dinner and



lunch in people's homes, and we had people over to our house. In the course of becoming part of this community, I also made the acquaintance of and became friends with people of Kytherian heritage.

In late September, just short of three months of our arrival in Australia, I called the number my cousin had given me. Theo Poulos answered the phone, and I explained that I was from the United States and a cousin of his wife's cousin and that I was interested in studying the Kytherians in Australia. Theo gave Berel the phone and I repeated my introduction. Berel became excited and told me that the Kytherian Ball was to take place that Saturday. Fred and I must go. That would be an excellent opportunity to meet other Kytherians, and the earliest opportunity the Pouloses would get to meet us. We, along with their daughter, son and daughter-in-law, would be their guests. We should meet at the ball in the Sheraton-Wentworth, one of the most elegant hotels in Sydney.

By the time of the ball we had become quite familiar with the train system, in part because neither of us ever mastered right-hand driving to the point of driving beyond the mile or so to the grocery store. So Saturday night, with me wearing a trench coat to cover up my puffy skirt, we walked in the drizzling rain to the station five blocks from the house and took the train to the ball.

When we arrived I looked for Berel out of the 500 or so people in attendance and spotted her from the golden dress she said she would be wearing. She greeted us, introduced us to her family and then took me around to introduce me to several women who were officers in the Kytherian Brotherhood. That night through Berel I made some of my most important contacts with people in the Kytherian community in Sydney. In addition, because of Berel's invitation, I was able to participate in the most important Kytherian function of the year, the annual Kytherian Ball.

#### DATA AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

By 1991 I had returned from Australia with 44 taped interviews of Kytherian ethnic women. In 1993 I was awarded a University of Minnesota Bush Sabbatical leave to complete my data collection, transcribe the interviews and write a rough draft of a book, *The Construction of Ethnicity Among Greek Ethnic Women in an International Context*.

At this point in time I have realized most of my fantasy. I have traveled from Morris, Minnesota, to Australia and Greece as well as my childhood home in Baltimore. I have found that arranged marriages among those of Kytherian heritage are a thing of the past in all three places, disappearing in the United States before World War II and in Australia and Greece in the late 1950s. I have found that women in all three places are involved in the construction of ethnicity in the home by instructing children on their Kytherian heritage, taking them to Kytherian events, collecting money from family members for Kytherian fundraisers and traveling with their children and grandchildren back to the island so that they can see their ancestral home. They are also involved in the construction of ethnicity in the community. Kytherian women hold major offices in the Kytherian Brotherhoods in Baltimore and Sydney. On Kythera, at least in one small town, women hold the majority of offices. In addition, I have found that Kytherians in all three places consider themselves to be family people and homebodies as opposed to club-goers and partiers. They tend to think of

themselves as quieter, better educated, more refined and less likely to waste money than Greek ethnics from other parts of Greece.

I learned that there are differences among the three places in the construction of ethnicity. Prior to World War II the Kytherian village provided the model of ethnicity for each place. The war brought changes: In Greece, the reconstruction of ethnicity has meant a shift from a Kytherian identity that is village-oriented to one that is nationally oriented. The occupation, resistance movement and civil war meant that Kytherian women living in Greece during and immediately after World War II had more in common with non-Kytherian Greeks living in other parts of Greece than they did with Kytherians living in America and Australia.

In the United States where the 1950s saw the rise of the "organization man" and corporate America as well as the emergence of the Greek Orthodox Church as a dominant and central institution in the Greek community, women of Kytherian Greek heritage have constructed an ethnicity that transcends regional boundaries and strengthens American identity. The Kytherian Brotherhood in Baltimore, presided over by a woman of approximately 40 years of age, has only one event a year: a luncheon. But the women of Kytherian heritage are quite active in a number of other Greek ethnic organizations. In Australia, where many people of Kytherian Greek heritage continue to be involved in family businesses and the "dinky-die" Australian is still considered to be one of British heritage, Kytherians have constructed an ethnicity that accentuates their regional roots and differentiates them from other Greek ethnics. The Kytherian Brotherhood has a building for the many activities it sponsors throughout the year; the annual ball provides a venue for the social debut of Kytherian daughters who opt to go through the eight-week preparation.

The interviews I conducted are the most important source of my knowledge of Kytherian Greek women. When I began the study I knew no women of Kytherian heritage living in Australia. When I started to get to know the two Kytherians on the St. George campus, I felt I could tell them what I was doing, interest them in the study and ask them for names of potential interviewees. My contact with Berel was another place of entry into the Kytherian community. I told the women to whom I was introduced about my study, asked if I could interview them and asked them for names of other potential interviewees. In this way I developed my snowball sample.

### **THE RESEARCHER AS SOJOURNER AND CONSTRUCTOR OF KNOWLEDGE**

My research began with a sojourn. As a sojourner I was a temporary resident living in Sydney. In that role, I went through several stages: I was first a complete stranger, a clear outsider who had little knowledge of the Kytherian community. As a sojourner with the passing of time, I obtained entry into the community by telling about myself and presenting myself in part as an insider, a woman of Kytherian heritage. Once I was received I became a guest, a stranger to whom good will is extended.

Getting back to the two stories: It is an incredible experience to go halfway around the world and have a stranger show you a photograph of your mother and maternal relations. I had the feeling, as I had so many times when I was interviewing women, that I was looking into my own face as well as that of a stranger's.

Greece has a population of nearly 10 million people, and the population of the Athens metropolitan area is one third of that. Nearly a million tourists come into Greece each year. How did I happen to sit next to two women of Kytherian heritage and start talking to them?

Kuhn (1970) has argued that the production of scientific knowledge often proceeds in highly irregular ways. The advancement of knowledge frequently happens when a scientist in the process of an investigation makes a chance discovery. The sojourner, knowing much less than those who permanently reside in an area, must be open to discovery. I did not know what I would find when I set out to interview Matina that hot day in Brisbane. Nor did I know that Fred and I were about to take seats in Athens next to two women from Australia of Kytherian heritage. Was this pure serendipity? I think not; chance discoveries involve a discoverer, a real-life human being observing and interpreting. I believe that I had enough interviews behind me of Kytherian Greeks living in Australia to be sensitized to the clues that made me stop and test the hypothesis I had developed.

What I discovered from the photograph as well as the formal interviews was that from the turn of the century, when Kytherians first started to emigrate to Australia and America, Kytherians maintained contact not only with people on the island, but also with people around the world. Some of those ties were lost with the passing of the immigrant generation, as almost occurred in my own family history, but many have been maintained into the second and succeeding generations of migration. Old Mrs. Cominos died several years ago, but her children and even grandchildren have met and socialized with the children and grandchildren of her sister who lives in Katoomba, right outside of Sydney.

In the course of conducting this research, as sojourner I have become both subject and object of my study. It is difficult to separate my autobiography from my research. My sojourn into the field involved me as a human being in need of physical and socio-emotional support. I could not go into the field without having a meal. At the same time, I could not have a meal and close myself off from the social context in which I fulfilled my bodily need. On a socio-emotional level, I could not as a human being remain completely detached from my objects of analysis. My life as a sojourner has been inseparable from my life as a researcher, and in the course of my study I have observed the construction of ethnicity among women of Kytherian heritage while at the same time I have participated in that construction.

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#### NOTE

1. The name "Matina" is a pseudonym to protect the confidentiality of this subject. Pseudonyms have been used throughout this paper to refer to interviewees and others who are part of the Kytherian community. Exceptions to this practice in this paper include reference to my stepson, Caleb Peterson, my husband, Fred Peterson and my co-editor, Marcia Texler Segal. In addition, I referred to my grandmother as "Nana," the term used in this text.



*Kytherian Greeks in Baltimore, Maryland (clockwise beginning with woman standing on left side of the photograph): "my mother, my grandmother, my grandfather, my aunt, my great-grandfather and my great-grandmother."*

#### NOTE

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*Kytherian Greeks in Brisbane, Australia (left to right): I am holding the photograph of Kytherian Greeks in Baltimore, Maryland, Con's sister and Con).*

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