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Migration from Limnos to Australia:

Re-discovering Identity, Belonging and 'Home'

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A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2018

School of Historical and Philosophical Studies

Faculty of Arts

University of Melbourne

Produced on archival quality paper

In memory of my late parents – Madama and Agathos Afentoulis, whose migration story inspired this research enquiry. For this, I thank them.

Abstract

Post-World-War Two mass migration had a significant impact on the Greek population and on the nation's social and economic infrastructure; for small islands such as Limnos (commonly known as *Lemnos* in the English-speaking world*)* the consequences were often momentous. During the 1950s-1970s*,* many Limnian islanders left for Australia, a nation then at the height of its post-war economic recovery. This thesis explores the intergenerational migration experiences of this community by interrogating emerging themes that arise in the oral histories of three different cohorts: the first-generation, or foundational immigrants; the second-generation, or those born in Australian or who arrived as young children; and those who stayed on the island. The critical focus is on identity construction and belonging and the dynamics of return visits to the ancestral homeland. Specifically, the thesis explores an emerging pattern of return visits to the parental homeland since the mid-1990s by descendants of migrants, which I argue is a form of identity consolidation among the second-generation.

Drawing on original interviews conducted for this thesis, I outline the history of Limnos, analyse relevant historiography and then focus on the framing of personal experiences and cross-generational themes of belonging, identity, the significance and meaning of 'home' and ancestral roots. These are considered in the context of evolving transnational relationships and the re-connection of those who chose to settle in Australia with, those who have remained on the island. As the first scholarly research project about migration from this island community, this thesis provides a unique exploration of multi-dimensional themes that connect 'those who have left and those who stayed'. It thus fills a distinct gap in Greek-Limnian migrant historiography and adds to the literature on Australian migration and oral history.

Declaration

To certify that:

i) The thesis comprises only original work towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

ii) Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used, and

iii) The thesis is fewer than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, abbreviations, glossary of terms and appendices.

Melissa Afentoulis

Acknowledgements

My research journey began with the strong encouragement of two wonderful people – Professor John Power and his dynamic wife and partner, Dr Ann Morrow. They have been on-going supporters of my project.

Sincere thanks to both my supervisors. I could not have hoped for better, more informed, knowledgeable and brilliant academics for my supervision. Professor Joy Damousi demonstrated faith in me at the outset, as I was making my connection back to university after more than ten years and a long career in the workforce. Joy gave me the space to learn, explore and develop my ideas and would come in as required to keep me on track and in the right direction. Her research experience and personal affinity to migration history gave me confidence and the drive to pursue the topic smartly and comprehensively. Associate Professor Sara Wills was always supportive and gave me timely advice at pivotal points, as needed.

To the many people who willingly told me their stories and in some cases because of the research, confronted issues and challenges in reflecting about identity, belonging, and the ancestral home during the interviews. I am indebted to your generosity, honesty and partnership in the interview process. Your experiences and memories contributed to some amazing insights and revelations which have enriched my thesis. From the third group – those Limnians who stayed, your honesty and engagement were essential in producing complex and textured storylines. Several participants have regrettably passed away during the project. Rest in peace: Giorgos, Marika and Nikos. A special thanks to my brother George for sharing with me his invaluable connections with the Limnian community and his wealth of knowledge about Limnians in Australia.

The undertaking of a PhD. involves many people and a long and arduous period in one's life and career. There are many individuals, friends and acquaintances who actively and repeatedly gave me their encouragement, support, constructive guidance and affirmation, usually at a time when I needed it most. They are too many to mention by name. But I thank you and acknowledge your support. One friend that stands out is Professor Joseph Lo Bianco. His bubbly personality, warmth and acute understanding of my research topic, even before I had fully understood it myself, gave me confidence and pointed me to several references that greatly assisted me in my research. Many thanks to my immediate family who intuitively believed in me and in their quiet ways gave me the support I needed. To my husband Joseph

Caputo, our two sons, Alessandro and Michael and daughter-in-law Tanya and my beautiful granddaughters, Mai Clara and Vi Allegra, thank you for being in my life. Thanks to my PhD. colleagues and the lasting friendships I have made with Andrea Cleland, Sue Silberberg, Susan Reidy, Anh Phuong Nguyen, Heather Winter and others. Finally, I wish to acknowledge my colleague and friend, Juliana Charpantidou who greatly assisted me with the adaptation and typing of Greek text used in the thesis.

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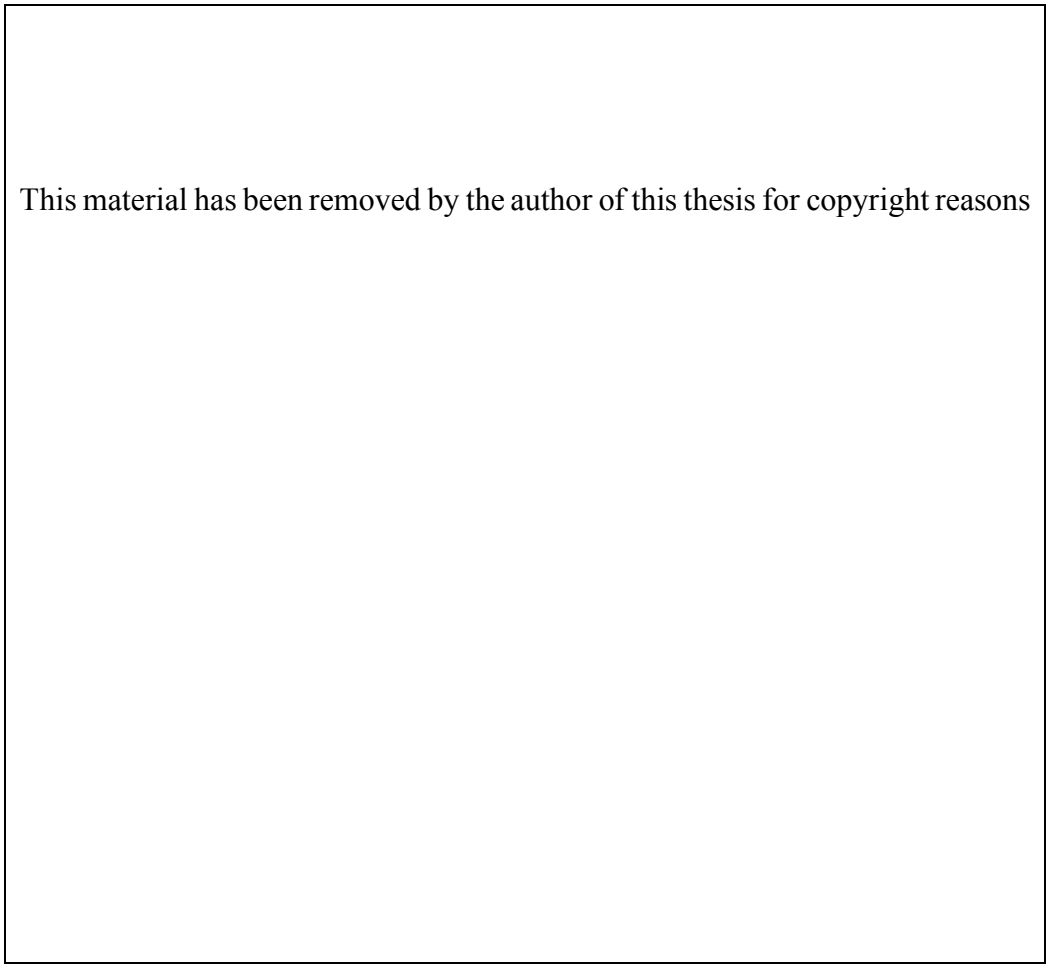
Maps

Map 1: Map of Greece, showing location of Limnos.

Source: Former website of the Lemnian Community of Victoria – *Hepheastus.*

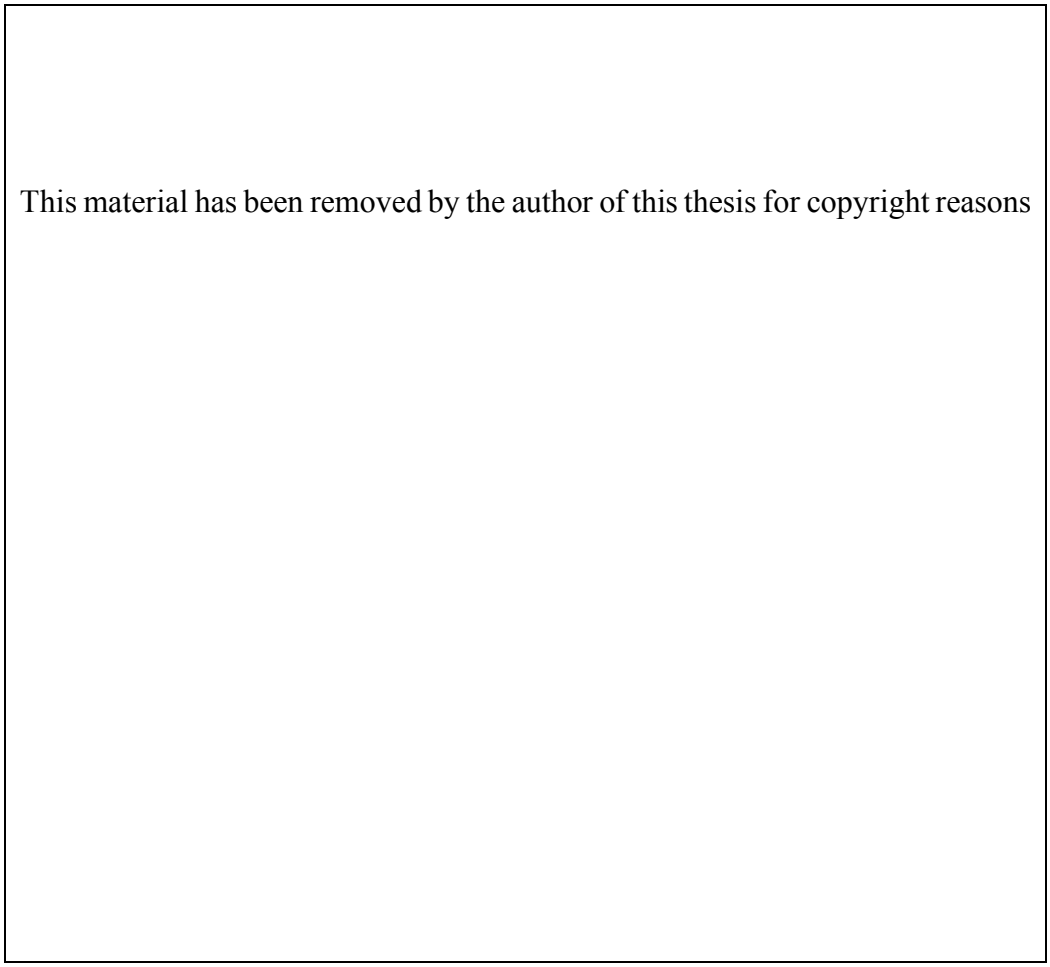
Map 2: Map of contemporaryLimnos.

Source: Former website of the Lemnian Community of Victoria – *Hepheastus.*



Map 3: The expansion of an independent Greek State - 1832 – 1947.

Source: Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece, Second Edition,* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 42.



Map 4: The patterns of refugee settlement during the inter-war period in Greece.

Source: Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece, Second Edition,* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002),105.

Glossary of Greek Words and Expressions[†]

αδελφότητες (adelphotites)	A term used for fraternal societies or associations (formal and informal), established usually by men as a network to support a formative community. These associations formed and re-formed, taking on more formal structures as leadership evolved and awareness about legal and constitutional requirements took shape.
αυστραλέζα (afstraleza)	A term used to denote migrant women who had settled in Australia, an identity that wasinterpreted asdemeaning, less than or a parody on one's Greek identity.
'αυτή είναι η ζωή' (afti eine ei zoi)	An expression of 'that's life'.
αγύριστο ταξίδι (agiristo taxidi)	A metaphorical reference to 'a trip of no return'.
βόλτα (volta)	A common reference to the Sunday afternoon ritual of walks by people, usually in clusters and a social event.
γιαγιά (yiayia)	Grandmother or grandma.
γιορτές (yiortes)	Festivities that are linked to religious events and other keynote celebrations on the calendar.
'είμαστε ξένοι εδώ, είμαστε ξένοι εκεί'(imaste xenoi edo / eimaste xenoi eki)	An expression or term that captures alienation in both countries taken from the quote, 'we are strangers here, we are foreigners there'.
Ελληνισμός (Ellinismos)	A term that reinforces a link to Greekness.

[†] Some of these words/terms are not always easily translatable, hence translation is fashioned to capture, as best as possible, the intended meaning based on context and my understanding of regional and spoken Greek.

ερήμωσαν (erimosan)	A word that characterises the villages and neighbourhoods that became deserted. It captures the isolation and desolation of villages after mass migration, felt by those that stayed.
έθνος (ethnos)	A term that designates nation.
εξέλιξη (exelixi)	Designates societal evolution and economic development or progress.
επικοινωνία (epikinonia)	Communication and the ability to 'speak the same language' in actual or symbolic terms.
ηθη και έθιμα (ithei ke ethima)	Customs and traditions.
η νοσταλγία (i nostalgia)	A term that captures a feeling of nostalgia.
θαλασσινός (thalassinos)	A reference to people who made their living at sea.
θέαμα (theama)	A spectacle.
θρηνούσαν (thrinousan)	Characterises a mournful lamentation or dirge describing in this case the spectacle of departure when youth were leaving their families behind due to migration.
καφενείο (kafenio)	Local coffee shop, patronised mostly by men of the village.
καλά παιδιά (kala paidia)	'They are good kids', referring to their children.
κατοχή (katochi)	Foreign occupation, specifically by Germany during the second world war.
κατώγι (katogi)	Refers to the lowest flour of a house, usually used for storing and keeping animals.
Κεφαλοχώρι (kefalohori/ megalohori)	Terms used to designate large villages, usually with a population of one thousand plus.

κεχαγιάς/κεχαγιάδες (kehayia/ *plural* kehayiades)	A Limnian term that designates status for those herdsmen who had a large flock of sheep and goats and usually employed shepherds as extra labour.
κοπάδια (kopadia)	Flocks of sheep or goats.
κουμπάρος (koumbaro)	Godfather or best man at the wedding.
λευκό χρυσάφι (lefko chrysafi)	*White Gold,* A term designated to high quality cotton crops when production was at its peak in the 1950-60s.
Λήμνος (Lemnos / Limnos)	The Greek word for the island of Limnos, translated as Lemnos in the English-speaking world.
λημνία γη (Limnea ghee)	A term that designates a type of soil found in the north-east of the island, known to possess therapeutic elements, since classical times.
λίρες (lires)	A reference to gold coins, valued against the English pound, which had become the trading currency during the war and German occupation when the Greek drachma had lost its value.
μάντρες (mandres)	The term used for farm-houses where animals were corralled and the location for cheese-making. Families would often re-locate there in the summer months when crops peaked and farm work engaged all the family.
μερίσματα (merismata)	A term used to designate plots of agricultural land that was leased under crop-sharing arrangements.
μέσον (meson)	A term that indicates a form of bribery, used to obtain favour, usually from authorities.
μικρόβιο (microvio)	A metaphorical term equated to a micro-organism that spreads.

'μικρός παράδεισος' (mikros paradisos)	An expression that captures an idyllic symbol of a *small paradise and* characterises a state of being.
παούλο (baoulo)	Glory box.
νοικοκυριό (nikokirio)	Characterises the domestic household attributed to women as the keepers. In anthropological literature this represented a positive attribute and status for women in traditional Greece.
ξένος / ξένοι (xenos/xeni)	Foreigners or strangers often perceived as outsiders of the host society.
ξενιτιά (xeniteia)	Foreign land.
παναγιά (panaghia)	Reference to the Virgin Mary.
πατρίδα / πατρίδες (patrida/ *plural* patrides)	One of the commonly used terms for homeland. The literal translation denotes fatherland.
πατρικό (patriko)	The term used to designate the house that is usually passed on along gender lines from mother to daughter, a Limnian tradition.
πατριώτες (patriotes)	A term, invested with multiple and nuanced meanings in the Greek language. It is applied to show inclusiveness – 'you are one of us', 'you have retained your Greekness', as well as your local heritage and sense of identity, 'you are part of us and you have returned'. The interpretation, is inclusive and affirming.
πατριώτης (patriotis)	The term refers to someone who is seen to belong and is connected to the homeland often seen as a compatriot.
πατροπαράδοτα (patro-paradota)	Ancestral and cultural customs passed on cross-generationally that have remained intact.

περίπτερο (periptero)	A kiosk that sells various daily items.
προδοσία (prodosia)	An alleged betrayal.
προίκα (proika)	Dowry granted to women in a marriage proposal.
πρόσκληση (prosklisi)	Sponsorship of individuals for migration (usually family members).
προξενιό (proxenio)	A practice of arranged marriage, common in Greek society before the Family Law Act, introduced in the mid - 1970s that slowly changed this practice.
προξενήτρα (proxenitria)	An elder or designated person involved in match-making practices.
ρόδινο σκόληξ/σκουλήκι (rodino skolix)	A pink/red worm, possibly *bollworm,* that attacks cotton plants affecting the quality of the cotton.
συνοικισμοί (sinikismi)	Refugee settlements, introduced in Limnos from 1923 when Greece and Turkey agreed to the population exchanges which required many parts of Greece to accommodate refugees of Greek origin, from Asia Minor.
'την άγνωστη πατρίδα' (tin agnosti patrida)	The unknown land to which young and inexperienced migrants were going to.
της παναγιάς (*tis panagias*)	Refers to the day of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary which is celebrated in Greece, on the 15th August each year.
το χωριό μου (to horio mou)	My village.
το νησί μου (to nisi mou)	My island-home.
το σπίτι μου (to spiti mou)	My home.
τουρκοκρατία (tourkokratia)	A commonly used generic term that designates the four hundred years plus, of Ottoman rule of Greece.

φάκελος (fakelos)	Files and security records held by police.
φούρνος (fournos)	Outdoor oven often shared with neighbours.
φράγμα (fragma)	Man-made reservoir built for irrigation.
*χωρι*ό (horio)	A village.
χωριανός / χωριανοί Horianos/ *plural* horiani)	Designates those who come from the same village or villages.
ωραία χρόνια (orea hronia)	Captures the '*good years'* as a state of mind.

Abbreviations

ABS	**A**ustralian **B**ureau of **S**tatistics
ANZAC	**A**ustralian and **N**ew **Z**ealand **A**rmy **C**orps
ΔΕΜΕ /DEME	**Δ**ιακυβερνητική **Ε**πιτροπή για **Μ**ετανάστευση των **Ε**υρωπαίων (**D**iakivernitiki **E**pitropi yia **M**etanastefsi ton **E**uropeon; **I**ntergovernmental **C**ommittee for **E**uropean **M**igration, ICEM)
EAM / GNLF	**Ε**θνικόν **Α**πελευθερωτικόν **Μ**έτωπο (***E**thnikon **A**peleftherotikon **M**etopon*; **G**reek **N**ational **L**iberation **F**ront).

Where ever I go I am always here

Limnos (Translation)

A body tattoo that captures and conveys unique feelings and the love of Limnos as the ancestral homeland expressed in Chapter Five. (Courtesy of Nektarios, interviewed 23 September 2014).

Introduction

'There was this μικρόβιο [like a spreading virus] to go to Australia but no-one knew where they were going…there were tears and joy…but mainly tears.'[1]

When my father left for Australia, in August 1955, I was just nineteen-months old. He left my mother and an older sibling, George, in the village of Kontias, on the Greek island of Limnos (known as *Lemnos*, in the English-speaking world).[2] He was seeking his opportunity to 'make money' and return to his family. He left soon after the harvest and the most revered annual religious festivals, *της Παναγιάς* (tis Panagias), the day of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The timing of his departure, just after this festival, is characteristic of a traditional rural, farming culture focused on concluding the year's harvest and other seasonal activities that provide food for the family in the winter and all year around. These events, integrated in a farmer's calendar, culminate in cultural festivities that peak on the island in late summer. The agrarian crop-sharing farming model bound most farmers in traditional societies to a land that often did not belong to them but facilitated the maintenance of the family's survival.

Like many immigrants, my father had not intended to settle permanently in Australia. His goal was to return, with a greater capacity to buy land, continue to be a farmer and provide better for his family. My family's circumstances are not unusual for post-war rural Greece. Most narrators in my research have emphasised similar themes throughout their stories. The 1950s was the start of mass migration from this island and Greece more generally, just several years after the end of the savage Greek Civil War (1944 - 49) and the German occupation during the Second World War. As a factory worker in Melbourne, though my father worked long hours, overtime and took on

[1] Interview with Stamatia (Toula), 30 May 2014.

[2] See Map 1 and 2, p. *ix* and *x* in the Thesis.

additional work in lieu of his holiday entitlements, he found himself unable to meet his goal. With the assistance of a World Council of Churches travel loan, the family joined him in Melbourne eight years later in June 1963. After all that time, perhaps he had begun to change his mind about returning permanently to his 'island home'. This was an issue that was never talked about while he was alive.

This dissertation is not about my story but undeniably my experience of migration has been an influence that has guided me towards this enquiry. The decision of my parents to emigrate and then settle in Australia has influenced my own life trajectory, growing up as a child of immigrants. The research endeavour, though a project inspired by my family background, was however, influenced by my observation of a generational change in return visitors to the ancestral island of Limnos, set in the North-East Aegean Sea. These observations ignited my curiosity: rather than just the Greece-born returning 'home', Australian born and established adults were increasingly visiting this ancestral island, on a frequent basis. Why was this happening? What did it say about how identity forms and reforms for descendants of migrants, and what were the implications for their sense of belonging across different sites and spaces? What was behind their emotional attachment to the ancestral home, and what are the implications for migration studies and historiography if we examine movements cross-generationally? Previously, only the first-generation immigrants - the 'foundational migrants'- had been making purposeful return visits. They would return for short visits to see their parents and extended family, assess the social conditions of the homeland for a possible return and to rekindle their own connection and yearning for their birthplace.[3] But, since the late 1990s, the profile of people who returned regularly on visits changed increasingly towards the second-generation, the children of migrants, who 'came home' and joined those other foundational immigrants who were now self-funded retirees or pensioners settled in Australia. How has this trend affected and changed the local community that never left and in what ways have return visits impacted their equilibrium over time? This observed phenomenon raises questions about identity construction in the diaspora and reformation

[3] Terms used by narrators to refer to homeland in Greek include *πατρίδα* (fatherland/homeland*), το νησί μου* (my island)*, το* χωριό *μου* (my village)*, το σπίτι μου* (my home).

of identity and belonging by children of immigrants who have grown up in Australia and, importantly, challenges the concept of 'home' as being stable and static. To what extent is the evident pattern of return visits[4] to the parental homeland a phenomenon that reflects identity consolidation for second-generation immigrants in Australia? How do dual identities for multiple generations who have re-acquainted themselves with the parental home reconstruct and shape their sense of belonging in a transnational world? These are neglected areas of research, only recently beginning to emerge as areas of scholarly inquiry.

Conceptualising Migration

The migrant experience has been investigated and theorised in many ways through various disciplines. Until recently, however, most research has focussed on settlement within the host country. In the past, social theorists, political analysts and politicians have viewed migration in structural terms, predominantly as a social and economic phenomenon.[5] Hence research focused mainly on how well (or not) immigrants were settling within the receiving state, narrowly assessing how effective migration had been for the receiving nation. In the fields of sociology and education in particular, the focus was on how well immigrants were assimilating and integrating within the fabric of

[4] The term -return visits- is usually applicable to the first generation and Greece-born children arriving with their parents, when they return to the homeland. The issue of 'return' in relation to the second-generation, born in Australia, maybe considered somewhat of an oxymoron, as they are not in fact returning because they had never left, unlike their immigrant parents. My rationale for applying this term universally for everyone in this Thesis, is influenced by the migration framework that I have adopted. It incorporates experiences as continuing, generational and lifelong migration journeys, including the 'return' to an ancestral home in this framework. The interpretation allows for 'consciousness of ethnic authenticity', a concept used by Barber, Tamsin Barber, "Achieving Ethnic Authenticity through 'return' visits to Vietnam: Paradoxes of class and gender among the British-born Vietnamese." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43, 6 (2017): 920, as well as the possibility of experiencing 'multiple identities'. See Zlatko Skrbis, Loretta Baldassar and Scott Poynting, "Introduction – Negotiating Belonging: Migration and Generations." Journal of Intercultural Studies 28, 3 (2007): 261.

[5] Hew Roberts, ed. *Australia's Immigration Policy* (Australia: University of Western Australia Press, 1972), Foreword, vii – ix; James Jupp and Marie Kabala, eds., *The Politics of Australian Immigration* (Canberra: Australian Government Public Service, 1993); S. Castles et al., *Mistaken Identity: Multiculturalism and the Demise of Nationalism in Australia* (Sydney: Pluto Press, 1990), p.43. Jean I. Martin, *The Migrant Presence - Australian Responses 1947 – 1977* (Hornsby, NSW: Allen & Unwin Australia, 1978)*;* Andrew Markus, *Building a New Community: Immigration and the Victorian Economy* (NSW: Allen & Unwin Australia, 2001), 26; John Murphy, *Imagining the Fifties: Private Sentiment and Political Culture in Menzies' Australia* (Sydney: Pluto Press, 2000).

society.[6] Various measures and indicators were devised to assess settlement 'success', as successful migration was measured by the extent to which a migrant repressed past experiences to 'negate a key aspect of the migrant's identity and self.'[7] This social and political perspective had its foundations in assimilationist theories and, in Australia, in the context of the long-standing White Australia policy with its roots in Federation.[8] Only in the 1970s did the Whitlam Labor Government introduce non-racial criteria for the selection of immigrants and refugees.[9]

Australia's post-war migration generally,[10] as well as migration specifically from Greece, has been conceptualised and researched and debated extensively. Many studies of Greek communities[11] by academics of Greek as well as non-Greek origin, have

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[6] Jerzy J. Smolicz, "Integration, Assimilation and the Education of Migrant Children," in *Australia's Immigration Policy*, ed. Hew Roberts, (Australia: University of Western Australia Press, 1972), p. 51; James Jupp, ed., *The Challenge of Diversity: Policy Options for a Multicultural Australia* (Canberra, Australia: AGPS Press, 1989); Georgina Tsolidis, *Educating Voula: NESB Girls and Education Project 1984-1985* (Victoria: MACMME, Ministry of Education, 1986).

[7] Joy Damousi, '"We are Humans Beings, and have a Past": The "Adjustment" of migrants and the Australian Assimilation Policies of the 1950s." *Australian Journal of Politics and History* Vol. 59, 4 (2013): 516.

[8] Gwenda Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*. Melbourne: Scribe Publications 2005.

[9] Andrew Jakubowicz and Christine Ho, eds, *For Those Who've Come Across the Seas* (North Melbourne, Victoria: Australian Scholarly Publishing Pty Ltd, 2013), *Preface, xii*.

[10] Martin, *The Migrant Presence;* Castles et al., *Mistaken Identity*; Stephen Castles, Ellie Vasta, and Derya Ozkul, "The International Dynamics of Migration Processes and Their Consequences for All Australian Government Migration Policies." (New South Wales: University of Sydney, 2012), 1-52; Andrew Markus, *Building a New Community: Immigration and the Victorian Economy* (Australia, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2001); James Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, second edition, (Port Melbourne, Victoria: Cambridge University Press, 2007); James Jupp, *Immigration* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1991); Jupp and Kabala, *The Politics of Australian Immigration*; Jock Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land: Australia's Post-war Immigration*, second edition (Leichhardt, NSW: Pluto Press Australia, 1991); Jakubowicz, and Ho, *For Those Who've Come Across the Seas*; Janis Wilton and Richard Bosworth, *Old Worlds and New Australia: The Post-war Migrant Experience* (Australia: Penguin Books Australia, 1984).

[11] Dominique Francois. De Stoop, *The Greeks of Melbourne* (Melbourne: Transnational, 1996); Hugh Gilchrist, *Australians and Greeks*. *Vol. 3* (Broadway: Halstead Press, 2004); Yiannis Dimitreas, *Transplanting the Agora: Hellenic Settlement in Australia* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1998); Anastasios M. Tamis, and Efrosini Gavaki, *From Migrants to Citizens: Greek Migration in Australia and Canada* (Melbourne, Australia: Inkprint Publishing, 2002); Anastasios Myrodis Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Gillian Bottomley, *After the Odyssey - a Study of Greek Australians* (St Lucia, Queensland: Queensland University Press, 1979); Gillian Bottomley, *From Another Place: Migration and the Politics of Culture* (Cambridge, England; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992); John N. Yiannakis, *Odysseus in the Golden West - Greek Migration, Settlement*

analysed and explained the influence of the nation state, emphasising the construction of 'Greekness' abroad as the dominant conceptual framework. Identification and community formation in the diaspora - how it has been preserved and has meaning for various groups - has been a key focus.[12] But such analyses are both insufficient and perhaps outdated. A different approach is needed to interpret and explain the migration experience, its depth, complexity and longevity, particularly because Australia's post-war migrant population is now aging, and because of the emergence of second and third generation perspectives. Hence, I explore aspects of identity and belonging within an inter-generational and historical context. What also distinguishes this research endeavour is the focus on post-war islander migration, in the context of a strong ethno-regional island identity that fosters durability and flexibility. The thesis aims to understand how this transforms inter-generationally on foreign soil. The other distinctive feature of this study is its scope: the fact that it examines a transnational perspective, with a focus on return visits and the interface between those who migrated and those who never left. This is an area that has received comparatively little academic attention. With this backdrop, therefore, the research explores patterns and profiles of return and their significance, through an examination of islander migration experiences in a Limnian case study. Issues of identity consolidation, belonging and home and the interactions and relationships between parallel generations (in Greece and Australia) are examined using a transnational framework. The focus in this case study is about the changing, evolving and transformatory aspects of diasporic identity across generations.

The Limnians, a post-war Greek immigrant island community that settled in Australia are a relatively small and un-researched migrant group. Scholarly work on Greek islanders in Australia, though sparse, has focussed largely on earlier immigrants that arrived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and in the inter-war years,

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and Adaptation in Western Australia Since 1947 (Waterford, Western Australia: API Network Books, 2009); Reginald Appleyard, "The Greeks of Australia: A New Diasporic Hellenism." In *Greece on the Road to Democracy: From the Junta to PASOK 1974-1986*, ed. Speros Vryonis Jr. (New York: Orpheus Publishing Inc, 1991), 373-84; Reginald Appleyard, et al., *Black Night, White Day: Greece-born Women in Australia - A Longitudinal Study - 1964-2007* (Rydalmere, New South Wales: Avago Books, 2015).

[11] Venetia Evergeti, "Living and Caring Between Two Cultures." *Community, Work and Family* Vol. 9, No. 3 (August 2006): 350.

with case studies from the Ionian Islands, such as Ithaki and Kythira and from the Dodecanese islands, such as Kalimnos and Kastelorizo.[13] The significantly different and more complex post-war mass migration of islanders occurred in different historical circumstances, when Australia was growing economically, and at the same time grappling with rapid social change and post-war trauma, compounded by a search for national identity and sense of nationhood. Thus, although there are significant island communities settled in Australia, to date, there is scant migration historiography or scholarly research about post-war island migration groups. This is a gap that this thesis aims to fill by providing a case study of Limnians.

War and Post-war mass migration decimated Greece's population and affected its social and economic infrastructure, with impacts on small islands such as the island of Limnos. Events escalated in the mid-fifties, resulted in Greece's devastated economy and social structures more broadly, with a climate of post-war trauma, poverty, lack of jobs and lack of opportunities for many people, especially those in rural and remote, 'peripheral' island areas. Pettifer describes the economic and social consequences for Greece as 'rural depopulation' due to:

> The collapse of the traditional village way of life in some places – mass migration to the cities [particularly to Athens] and political exile in distant lands.[14]

Interviews conducted for this thesis underline the fact that young men and women looking for opportunities depleted the villages and towns of Limnos in unprecedented numbers. As Doumanis notes of Greek migrants to Australia in general, 'they came to find work, build capital and raise families. Theirs was a search for normalcy.'[15] This

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[13] Vassiliki Chryssanthopoulou, "The Construction of Ethnic Identity among the Castellorizian Greeks of Perth" (D. Phil., University of Oxford, 1993); Vassiliki Chrysanthopoulou, "Gender, Work and Ethnic Ideology: Castellorizian Greeks in Perth Australia." *Greek Review of Social Research,* 110A Special Issue, (2003): 107-140; John N. Yiannakis, *Megisti in the Antipodes: Castellorizian Migration and Settlement to Western Australia, 1890-1990* (Carlisle, WA: Hesperian Press, 1996). Michael Francis Christie, *From the Islands -Working Papers,* Vol. 1, 2 and 3 (Clayton, Victoria: Monash University, 1986).

[14] James Pettifer, *The Greeks, The Land and People Since the War,* (England: Penguin Books, 1994), 6.

[15] Nicholas Doumanis, "The Greeks in Australia." in *The Greek Diaspora in the Twentieth Century*, ed., Richard Clogg. (Great Britain: MacMillan Press Ltd, 1999), 58-59.

sentiment aptly reflects the Limnian experience, explored more extensively in Chapter One and further illuminated in Chapter Three. Limnian islanders arrived as immigrants to many parts of Australia in the post war period of 1950s to 1970s. Authoritative recorded data is not available to verify regional or local areas of origin because migration records include national origin only. However, though contested, anecdotal evidence from within the community estimates the size of Limnians arriving in Australia during this period, to have been near ten thousand people, perhaps more. They settled mainly in the urban cities of Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, with fewer numbers drawn to Tasmania and Canberra, due to existing connections. Quite a few families initially settled in rural and county towns, such as Bendigo and Kyneton in Victoria, and other regional centres around the country, again largely because of earlier arrivals that settled in these regional areas. This extraordinary period of post-war mass migration from Greece to Australia provides a key background to the phenomena investigated in this thesis. This period frames an island diaspora and creates the circumstances for return and the dynamic between the first and second-generation immigrants from Limnos, as well as their interface with those who remained on the island. The thesis constructs a distinctive examination of the island's geo-political history and its rural setting that informs the context for migration, which in turn created a distinctive Limnian diasporic identity characterised by its sustainability, durability and transformation on foreign soil whilst preserving the essence of island identity, inter-generationally.

Greek islander migration and settlement occurred during a period of great social transformation in Australia. This is my starting point as I seek to locate my study within an inter-disciplinary body of literature. The exploration of individual narrative themes that draw on three distinct perspectives helps to illuminate a multi-faceted and cross-generational, dynamic process and positions my research findings in a broader context. New insights will add to the existing body of scholarly historiographical work and enrich other disciplines. While Chapter Two provides a more comprehensive overview of literature in the field of Greek migration studies, in this Introduction, I highlight four key fields in which this thesis intervenes: the ethno-regional identity of islanders, gender and migration, migration and transnationalism and the most recent research field, second-

generation transnationalism. My thesis draws on insights and on-going research in each of these fields and aims to inform their further development.

The Significance of Ethno-Regional Identity for Islanders

The consideration of ethno-regional boundaries that apply to islanders is a key pursuit in this study and provides a unique contribution to Australia's migration history. The importance of ethnicity as 'a resource to be mobilised in circumstances of marginality, alienation and social discrimination'[16] is emphasised as a factor that largely assisted migration settlement. Vasta concludes that 'ethnicity is both a response to social and political marginalisation and a re-shaping of traditions which are reinforced by migrant collectivities [sic] and the symbolic dimensions of community.'[17] The focus on ethnicity in the research literature has been largely defined in terms of nation state. The theme of identity, or 'identification'[18] has also been linked, largely, to the country of origin and predominantly therefore to the nation state. This approach fails to consider what is often a subtle aspect of identity that is more strongly connected to the locality or region as part of belonging. This characteristic is particularly significant for islander communities whose physical geography combined with a rural village setting, historically isolated from national authorities and central government, emerges in this study as a dominant feature in the characterisation of belonging and affinity to place. However, a regional and locality-based identity has been largely missing in migration and identity research. Whilst there are only a few other studies on the Greek-Australian diaspora with a focus on regional identity groups,[19] regional identity has been dominant in Greek ethnographic and

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[16] Hurriyet Babacan, "Immigration, Nation State and Belonging," in *Migration, Belonging and the Nation State,* eds Alperhan Babacan and Supriya Singh (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 23.

[17] Ellie Vasta, "Multiculturalism and Ethnic Identity: The Relationship between Racism and Resistance." Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology 29, 2 (1993), 223.

[18] Gill Bottomley, "Identification: Ethnicity, Gender and Culture", *Journal of Intercultural Studies,*18, 1 (1997):42.

[19] Anastasios M. Tamis, *The History of Immigration of Pontian Greeks in Australia,* (Melbourne: Pontiaki Estia, 1989; John N. Yiannakis, *Megisti in the Antipodes: Castellorizian Migration and Settlement to Western Australia, 1890-1990*. (Carlisle, WA: Hesperian Press, 1996); John N. Yiannakis, *Odysseus in the Golden West - Greek Migration, Settlement and Adaptation in Western Australia since 1947*, (Waterford, Western Australia: API Network Books, 2009); Ann-Maree Dawson, "Women of Deryneia, in Cyprus and

folkloric studies concerning specific island and rural communities of Greece.[20] These studies act to define peculiar traits and practices that highlight the significance and meaning of 'ethno-regionality'. This type of identification also commonly prevails in self-identification amongst urban dwellers in Greece, whose roots are still defined as significantly regional, even today.

In Australia, the concept of ethno-regional identity was developed in Chryssanthopoulou's body of work on migration of earlier communities from Kastellorizo of the Dodecanese island group, who settled largely in Perth, Western Australia, and from Kythera, part of the Ionian group of islands, who settled predominantly in Sydney, New South Wales. These groups settled into geographically defined locations in Australia. Chryssanthopoulou's research in relation to identity has resonance with my work. In two case studies, she applies a historical perspective, as she examines several characteristics - similarities and differences - in the ways respective identities are organised. She discusses values, practices and ideologies that inform the respective identity constructions, using the concept of 'ethnic ideology.' With the Kastellorizians, Chryssanthopoulou focuses on values and attitudes surrounding work and gender roles, in their interrelationship. With the Kytherians, she focuses on the values of cooperation, collectivism and the upholding of 'name and honour' as distinctive and identifiable features. Chryssanthopoulou's definition of *ethno-regional* identity refers to:

> the individual and/or collective sense of identity and belonging felt by Greek-Australians that derives from their attachment – socio-economic or symbolic

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Melbourne: Ethnographic and Historical Perspectives on Social Change, Transnationalism and Women's Agency" (Ph.D., La Trobe University, 2011); Chryssanthopoulou, "The Construction of Ethnic Identity."

[20] Eleftherios P. Alexakis, *Identities and Alterities: Symbols, Kinship, Community in Greece and the* Balkans, (Athens: Dodoni,2001; Myriel Dimen and Ernestine Friedl, *Regional Variation in Modern Greece and Cyprus: Towards a Perspective on the Ethnography of Greece*, *Vol.268*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1976); Michael Herzfeld, *The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan Mountain Village*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press: 1985); Roger Just, *A Greek Island Cosmos: Kinship and Community on Meganisi,* (Oxford: James Currey and Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2000).

> or both – to the particular region within or even outside Greece…where they themselves or their families originate.[21]

This, she argues, represents a distinct quality of communities. Ethno-regionalism reflects the importance of a history of regional origin and its durability as 'collective self-identification' and identification by others, unique, particularly to islanders and their rural identities, which then becomes the basis of the formation of a distinct diaspora identity outside the Greek nation-state. Ethno-regional identity is described by Chryssanthopoulou as, 'below that of national identity, in regard both to the nation of origin and the nation of reception.'[22]

Chryssanthopoulou also argues that the 'multitude of ethno-regional organisations and their off-shoots constitute an important part of Greek ethnic communities in Australia but do not compete with their broader Greek ethnic identities.'[23] They in fact co-exist, as people's bonds and attachments, are structured differently. The formation, shaping and strength of regional identity for Limnians emerges prominently in the historical scoping of the island's geo-political and social history documented in Chapter One. The vitality of a Limnian identity has emerged strongly in the first-generation narrative, particularly with male narrators. Their strong identification with Limnos, the village setting and the rural nature of life (strongly reflected in folk music and lyrics too), acts to maintain a connection that is stronger than the nation state identity of 'Greekness'. The significance of regional identity becomes more evident in the emerging narrative and analysis of narrated themes discussed in Chapters Three and Four. Ethno-regional identity, for men and women immigrants settled in Australia, emerges as strength and a significant attribute in their settlement that resonates inter-generationally. The narrative shows that it bolsters the first-generation's capacity to survive the trauma of settlement and signifies how the construction of identity and sense of belonging in the second-generation develops and captures their interest, as they start making return visits to the ancestral island. This aspect

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[21] Vassiliki Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender and Ethno-Regional Identity among Greek Australians: Intersections", in *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives: Labor, Community and Identity in Greek Migrations*, ed. Evangelia Tastsoglou, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 202.

[22] Ibid., 202.

[23] Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender and Ethno-Regional Identity", 202.

of the findings, reiterates Chryssanthopoulou's research with other islanders and provides insight into migration historiography that is also affirmed by the Limnian case study.

Women and Migration

Australia's immigration policy in relation to Greek migration was for a long time, gender biased towards young males, and reflected the labour needs of the country. Until 1961, seventy-eight percent of Greek immigrants were male.[24] Consequentially, communities and government authorities soon began to realise that the resulting gender imbalance would become both socially and economically problematic. The Greek government, though reluctant to support the migration of women for a long time, was persuaded to allow the departure of women to Australia, which peaked in the mid-1970s. This pathway for Limnian women to migrate to Australia was a historical event for the island of Limnos. The decision led to significant sponsorship and family re-unification that resulted in the establishment of a cohesive Limnian community in the diaspora.

Women's history and experiences in migration have rarely been reflected adequately in scholarly research. Mainstream migration literature 'has been slow to appreciate the significance of gender.'[25] Although references have sometimes been made about women as wives, sisters or partners, their own voices have often been silent or relegated to the research periphery. Although studies began to emerge in the 1980s and 1990s, women continue to be marginalised within migration discourse 'with few of their stories recorded or recognised.'[26] Tastsoglou makes the point that 'women provide a unique entry point in the analysis of issues that might have been left unexplored otherwise.'[27] Several women scholars, however, have established the importance of gender and migration in various studies that authenticate the roles played by women in

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[24] Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia,* 48.

[25] Evangelia Tastsoglou and Alexandra Dobrowolsky, eds, *Women, Migration and Citizenship: Making Local, National and Transnational Connections* (Aldershot, Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2006), 18.

[26] Reginald Appleyard, Anna Amera and John Yiannakis, *Black Night, White Day, Greece-born Women in Australia: A Longitudinal Study, 1964-2007* (Rydalsmere, New South Wales: Avago Books, 2015), 1.

[27] Evangelia Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender, and Diasporic Lives: Labor, Community and Identity in Greek Migrations*, eds, (Lanham, MD and Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2009), 2.

families, communities and cultural identity formation and maintenance in the diaspora.[28] Tastsoglou emphasises that 'women's agency in labour, community and identity formation/negotiation'[29] has been neglected or undervalued for a long time. The focus of this research is to situate women's lives within their social context, both before and after migration, and to conceptualise the complexity, ambiguity and change that migration has brought to women's lives. Were they free agents in the decisions to leave their homeland and what role did they play in pursuing to construct their lives in the diaspora? What personal resources, skills and attributes did women immigrants draw upon and redeploy during their settlement in Australia? What contributions were they able to make in their multiple roles to establish families, communities and wealth creation that justified a blind faith in seeking 'a better life'? Finally, how important was women's role as 'gatekeepers' in culture maintenance, transmission and the creation of a unique diasporic identity for their descendants? These issues become the underlying focus of women's narrative in the telling of their stories and will help to address the questions raised in this research. The analysis in Chapter Four addresses these questions in the context of the multiple identities and roles that are distinctive to migrant women. Research literature, as well as the oral narrative, highlights that migrant women's experiences were difficult and that the environment at work, in domestic roles and community life were often complex and testing. Leaving Limnos for *'την άγνωστη πατρίδα'* (an unknown land) was an emotionally charged experience for women, not only for those who left, but also for those who stayed behind. The interviews conducted for this research, however, demonstrate that migration for women brought more than heart-ache, loss and struggle. Their stories show that they were also trailblazers and pro-active, resourceful women, with the tenacity to re-build their lives and those of their families, while retaining their inherited regional culture and

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[28] Floya Anthias and Gabriella Lazaridis, *Gender and Migration in Southern Europe,*(New York: Berg, 2000); Bottomley and de Lepervanche, *Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia*; Chryssanthopoulou, "The Construction of Ethnic Identity,"; Vassiliki Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender, Work and Ethnic Ideology: Castellorizian Greeks in Perth Australia" in The *Greek Review of Social Research* Vol.110A, Special Issue (2003): 107-140; Tastsoglou and Maratou-Alipranti, "Gender and International Migration: Conceptual, Substantive and Methodological Issues." *The Greek Review of Social Research,* Vol. 110A, Special Issue (2003): 5-22; Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation,* (London, New Delhi: Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 1997).

[29] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender, and Diasporic Lives*, 5.

values, stemming from their rural backgrounds which they reconstructed in the diaspora. Women's stories point to a rich tapestry of lived lives and a sense of personal liberation and empowerment as they created financial capability through wages earned, and the autonomy to parent their children and preserve language, religious and cultural practices and hence mediate the transmission of what Anthias calls the 'cultural stuff' within the family. [30] While the narrative is also fraught with trauma that is culturally and socially located, women's testimony indicates a transition from a place of trauma to one of resilience, strength and autonomy. Their stories indicate that they took momentous strides within the constraints of their environment.

Transnationalism

The notion of transnationalism has 'become an almost taken-for-granted notion in migration studies.'[31] Bottomley, an Australian anthropologist and pioneer researcher on Greek migration and settlement, first set the benchmark in her seminal work on Greeks in Sydney in 1992, when she proclaimed that an understanding of the migrant experience must account for the connections with the homeland. [32] She concluded that 'international migration can create international people who identify with kin, friends and fellow emigrants virtually across the world.'[33] She stated then, that 'sociological studies of ethnic minorities often miss the significance of continuing interaction between homelands and countries of emigration.'[34] By implication, Bottomley further contends that, to have a greater insight into Australian Greeks, requires a comparative framework that includes the homeland in order to grasp 'some of the intersections of gender relations and cultural practices.'[35] Since the publication of Bottomley's research, a growing body of work in

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[30] Floya Anthias, *Ethnicity, Class, Gender and Migration: Greek Cypriots in Britain* (England: Avebury Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1992), 92.

[31] Susanne Wessendorf, *Second-Generation Transnationalism and Roots Migration: Cross –Border Lives*, (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), 10.

[32] Gillian Bottomley, *From Another Place: Migration and the Politics of Culture*. (Cambridge, England and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992),4.

[33] Ibid., 4.

[34] Ibid., 4.

[35] Ibid., 14.

sociology and anthropology has focused on migration as an on-going experience. The work of Baldassar has helped to reveal the nexus between the homeland and the host-land in a transnational framework[36] and provides a deeper understanding of migration, identity construction and the significance of transnational ties across generations. Baldassar's conceptualisation of 'migrancy' is a useful lens from which to interpret issues of belonging and meanings of home, and the inter-connections with those who remained in the homeland. The term migrancy is defined as:

> a set of processes that extend beyond settlement to incorporate the continuing connections between home and host countries over time, including those of the subsequent generations.[37]

Historically, Greek migrants have had a strong yearning for the homeland, whether real or imagined. Women were often instrumental in the maintenance of transnational ties to family and kin. In what Di Leonardo calls 'kin work'[38], women maintained relationships, via letters and occasional expensive phone calls, and they were the primary instigators of trips to visit home. Women remained emotionally attached to family and home in the ancestral land and, as my research shows, women experienced guilt and regret for 'abandoning' parents and family, to migrate or to follow husbands to Australia.

Transnationalism as a field of enquiry, though relatively recent, brings an epistemological understanding of the field that is complex.[39] What constitutes a

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[36] Nicholas Harney and Loretta Baldassar, "Tracking Transnationalism: migrancy and its futures", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies.* 33(2) (2007): 189-198; Loretta Baldassar and Ros Pesman, *From Paesani to Global Italians: Veneto migrants in Australia*, (Crawley, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 2005); Loretta Baldassar, *Visits Home: Migration experiences between Italy and Australia*, (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2001).

[37] Loretta Baldasar, "Transnational families and aged care: the mobility of care and the migrancy of ageing." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33 (2) (2007): 294.

[38] Micaela Di Leonardo, "The female world of cards and holidays: women, families and the work of kinship." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* 12 (3) (1987): 442.

[39] Paul Kennedy and Victor Roudometof, "Transnationalism in a global age," in *Communities across Borders: New Immigrants and Transnational Cultures*, eds. Paul Kennedy and Victor Roudometof, (London: Routledge, 2002),1-26; Linda G. Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Cristina Szanton-Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Post-colonial Predicaments and Deterritorialised Nation-states*, (Langhorne, Pennsylvania: Gordon and Breach, 1994); Alejandro Portes, "The debates and significance of immigrant transnationalism." *Global Networks,* 1 (3), (2001):181-193.

transnational community is murky and contested.[40] Basch's working definition identifies a process whereby immigrants maintain 'multi-stranded social relations'[41] with their country of origin and the new place of settlement, through social, religious, political and economic connections. Transnationalism involves multiple ties across nation-states.[42] These include informal ties such as contacts maintained by kin and more formal ones such as business and institutional links and those that may exist in different degrees. Lee uses the term 'indirect transnationalism'[43] to account for the indirect ties that people maintain with the homeland. These indirect ties are particularly evident in the early years of settlement for Limnians and have manifested in the form of community fund-raising for philanthropic projects such as donations to churches in the villages and low-cost infrastructure, renovations or the provision of specific purpose financial aid. Indirect transnationalism is a legitimate part of migrancy as many migrants cannot avoid the transnational spaces that their families occupy.[44] For the first-generation migrants, indirect transnationalism also served the purpose of maintaining an aspiration to return home (real or imagined) and intuitively addressed the lived 'guilt' of departure and sense of family abandonment, experienced particularly by women as evidenced in Chapter Four.

Transnationalism requires an 'interconnectedness across borders,'[45] and such interconnectedness is shaped by time as well as space. Levitt et al note that it is difficult to capture aspects of transnational lives, as they 'tend to be more subjective, involving

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[40] Alejandro Portes Luis E. Guarnizo and Patricia Landolt, "The study of transnationalism: pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field. "*Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22 (2), (1999): 219; Michael Smith and Luis E. Guarnizo, eds. *Transnationalism from Below*. (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1998).

[41] Basch et al, *Nations Unbound*, 7.

[42] Steven Vertovec, "Conceiving and researching transnationalism." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2) (1999):447.

[43] Helen Lee, "'Second generation' Tongan transnationalism: hope for the future?" *Asia Pacific Viewpoint.* 45 (2) (2004):236.

[44] Cecilia Menjivar, "Living in two worlds? Guatemalan-origin children in the United States and emerging transnationalism." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 28 (3) (2002):531-552.

[45] Peggy Levitt and Mary Waters, eds, *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation (*New York: Russell Sage Foundation*,* 2002), 6.

imagination, invention and emotions that are deeply felt but not overtly expressed.'[46] The emotional link of people to place, seen in the second-generation's attachment to their parents' homeland is often ignored. The testimony of second-generation Limnians (Chapter Five and Six) reflects not only their attachment to their parents' homeland but a reshaping of an attachment to the island more broadly. An emotional dimension is integral to other active ties[47] in the exploration of identity and belonging for the children of immigrants and future generations. The significance of the social and cultural context into which Greek children are raised may facilitate the next generation's embrace of a transnational life and the maintenance of links with the parental homeland.[48] This issue is a key theme in the second-generation narrative and is the focus of Chapters Six and Seven.

Second Generation Transnationalism

Bourgeoning scholarship in the field of second-generation transnationalism is evident across America and Europe and has more recently emerged in Australia. The field reveals analytical contestation and epistemological paradigm shifts, which are very pertinent to my research direction. Definitional terms as Lee and others show[49], continue to challenge the research community. Vasta insists that 'there is no agreed formula for an exact definition' of the term, 'second-generation'[50]. The definition of second-generation in

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[46] Peggy Levitt, Josh De Wind and Steven Vertovec, "International perspectives on transnational migration: an introduction." *International Migration Review* 37 (3) (2003):571.

[47] Loretta Baldassar, "Missing kin and longing to be together: emotions and the construction of co-presence in transnational relationships." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 29 (3) (2008): 247-266; Zlatko Skrbis, "Transnational families: theorising migration, emotions and belonging." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28 (3) (2008): 231-246.

[48] Dimitra Giorgas, "Transnationalism and Identity Among Second Generation Greek-Australians," in *Ties to the Homeland,* ed. Helen Lee (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 66.

[49] Helen Lee, *Ties to the Homeland: Second Generation Transnationalism,* ed., (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 7-8; Gillian Bottomley, "Identity, Difference and Inequalities: Gender, Ethnicity and Class in Australia," in *Australian National Identity,* ed. Charles A. Price (Canberra: Australian National University, 1991), 99; Siew-Ean Khoo et.al., *Second Generation Australians,* (Canberra: Australian Centre for Population Research and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, 2002), *vi*; Kallithea Bellou, "Identity and Difference, First and Second Generation Greeks in Australia. In *Greeks in English Speaking Countries: Conference Proceedings of the First International Seminar,* eds. Speros Vryonis Jr. et al (Melbourne: Hellenic Studies Forum Inc., 1993), 227.

[50] Ellie Vasta (1992) "Second Generation" in *Australia's Italians: Culture and Community in a Changing Society,* eds, Castles S., C Alcorso, G. Rando and E. Vasta (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1992), 155.

migration literature has evolved and is sometimes contentious, confusing and inconsistent in its usage and varies within each discipline. I have adopted what Yiu refers to as the 'liberal usage of the term,'[51] which I believe is more of an integrated term, gleaned from the literature and represents the Australian reality most accurately. My use of the term begins with Vasta's definition, 'those people born in Australia with [one or both] overseas-born parents, as well as those who arrived in Australia during infancy or early childhood,'[52] but my adopted definition, incorporates as well, what some American researchers refer to as the 'classic 1.5 generation'.[53] This combined definition reflects the profile of second-generation narrators who are part of my study. However, for other researchers,[54] a definition of immigrants who arrived before the age of adolescence,[55] included in the 1.5 generation, has raised legitimate concerns. Researchers enunciate these groups as distinct socio-demographic groups arguing that, 'birthplace – in the host country versus abroad – and the specific age at immigration are important factors in determining the transnationality of the second-generation.'[56] Definitional issues are not an exact science, as Bottomley poses in her research with Greeks in Sydney.[57] This issue, highlighted in other publications, raises the question: should we apply the term 'second-generation Greeks' or 'first-generation Australians' for those born in Australia, for

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[51] Jessica Yiu, "Theorising Second-generation Transnationalism: Practice versus process", Paper presented at the 104th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association in San Francisco, California, on 7-11 August 2009: 2.

[52] Vasta "Second Generation", 155.

[53] Rumbaut, Rubén G. "Ages, Life Stages and Generational Cohorts: Decomposing the Immigrant First and Second Generations in the United States." *International Migration Review* 38, no. 3 (2004): 1167.

[54] Michael Jones-Correa, "The Study of Transnationalism Among the Children of Immigrants: Where We Are and Where We Should Be Headed," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second-Generation*, eds. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage, 2002), 221-241.

[55] Philip Kasnitz, Mary C. Waters, John H. Mollenkopf and Marih Anil, "Transnationalism and the Children of Immigrants in Contemporary New York," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second-Generation*, eds. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage, 2002), 96-122; Rubén Rumbaut, "Severed or Sustained Attachments? Language, Identity and Imagined Communities in the Post-Immigrant Generation," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Live of the Second-Generation*, eds. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage, 2002), 43-122; Robert C. Smith, *Mexican New York: The Transnational Lives of New Immigrants* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2006).

[56] Jessica Yiu, "Theorizing second-generation transnationalism", 3.

[57] Bottomley, *After the Odyssey;* Bottomley, *From Another Place.*

instance? [58] Clearly, there are boundary issues that can lead to exclusion and marginalisation, themes discussed in several of the chapters. My adopted definition is within the realm of these contentions.

Second-generation transnationalism has been theorized in divergent and different ways. Yiu poses the following key epistemological question for migration research that resonates in my work:

> Is the maintenance of homeland ties a relic of the migration experience in which only immigrants partake, or does it transcend the generational boundary to affect the lives of the children of immigrants as well? 59

Her analysis divides the literature into two different approaches that assist in navigating the conceptualisation of transnationalism, pertinent to a discussion about the second-generation. The protagonists of the 'practice approach'[60] are interested in what is measurable, such as 'activities that require regular and sustained contacts over time across national borders for their implementation.'[61] Proponents of transnationalism as a 'process approach'[62] are more interested in conceptualising:

> the lived experiences of transnationalism among immigrant offspring…and how the lives of the second-generation are shaped by, to a large degree, their parents' ongoing homeland involvement as well as their own ties, whether real or imagined, to the 'home' society.[63]

The 'practice-process' distinction indicates different theoretical perspectives, hence varying the methodological orientations. My research aligns more closely with the 'process approach' that is reflected in the work of contributors to *The Changing Face of*

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[58] Skrbis, Baldassar and Poynting, "Introduction – Negotiating Belonging," 263.

[59] Jessica Yiu, "Theorising second-generation transnationalism: Practice versus process", Paper presented at the 104th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association in San Francisco, California, on 7-11 August 2009: 2.

[60] Portes, Guarnico and Landolt, "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise,"217-37.

[61] Ibid., 219.

[62] Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly* 68(1) (1995): 48-63; Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society." *International Migration Review* 38(145) (2004): 595-629.

[63] Jessica Yiu, "Theorizing Second-Generation Transnationalism", 5.

Home.[64] The emphasis on how children of immigrants construct their identities resonates closely with the second-generation themes discussed in Chapters Five to Seven.

I have highlighted the four key fields above to enrich and strengthen my argument about the multi-faceted contribution that this research aspires to achieve. The section below enunciates the methodological approach of oral history that supports the method I've chosen, in looking at these areas.

Methodology

This project seeks to make a specific contribution to the broad field of migration historiography and inter-disciplinary research. It relies on oral testimony[65] as the key source of primary historical data, in the absence of other archival and documentary sources of evidence and is dedicated to post-war Limnian migration settlement in Australia. Thomson stresses that, 'oral evidence provides an essential record of the hidden history of migration,'[66] as 'the migrant's own story is likely to be unrecorded or ill-documented.'[67] In this research, oral history is used to explore untold stories of first-generation Limnian immigrants and examines the intergenerational dynamics of migration and the transnational relationships of parallel generations and the connections to people of the remote Aegean island.

Thomson further argues that personal testimony can reveal 'the complex weave of factors and influences which contribute to migration and the processes of information exchange and negotiation within families and social networks' not easily found elsewhere.[68] Other oral historians have shown, in addition, the complexity of the actual migration process

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[64] Levitt and Waters, *The Changing Face of Home*, 9.

[65] Interviews were conducted in accordance with the University's Human Research Ethics Committee Standards and Ethics Approval for Human Participants – Standard project (Ethics ID: 1339450), granted on 21st May 2013.

[66] Alistair Thomson, "Oral History and Migration Studies, *"Oral History,* 27:1 (1999): 26.

[67] Ibid., 26.

[68] Thomson, "Oral History," 28.

that can reveal itself in oral testimony[69] that is not readily found through other sources. A review of international literature reveals a number of critical developments or paradigm shifts that have consolidated oral history to its current status as a credible methodology in historical research.[70] Oral history has become a tool to explore as Wilton says, 'complex identities and heritages…and how the impact of immigration and cultural dislocation has effects which resound down the generations.'[71]

As argued by Hamilton and Shopes, oral history is an 'established form for actively making memories'[72] that 'is at the heart, a deeply social practice connecting past and present.'[73] It aims to understand and interpret not only what people remember, but also why people remember and what is behind people's recollections.[74]

The focus on oral history as the research method and as a conceptual tool helps to frame the research and offers an innovative and appropriate approach to studying an essentially un-researched and little-known island migration community that settled in Australia. The methodological strengths of oral history are evident in the stories. In the context of existing multi-disciplinary migration literature, the exploration of individual narratives adds to our knowledge of islander migration and provides insight into historiography and

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[69] Merlyn Jones, "Welsh Immigrants in the Cities of North West England, 1890-1930: Some Oral Testimony", *Oral History,* 9:2 (1981):34.

[70] These include, 'the post-second-world-war renaissance of memory as a source for "people's history", the development from the 1970s of "post-positivist" approaches to memory and subjectivity, a transformation in perceptions about the role of the oral historian as interviewer and analyst from the late 1980s, and the digital revolution of the late 1990s and early 2000s.'See Alistair Thomson, "Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History," *Oral History Review,* 34:1 (2006): 50.

[71] Janis Wilton, "Generations of Journeys' in *Speaking to Immigrants: Oral Testimony and the History of Australian Migration (Visible Immigrants: Six),* eds*.,* A. James Hammerton and Eric Richards (Canberra: ANU, 2002), 149.

[72] Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes, "Introduction – Building Partnerships between Oral History and Memory Studies," in *Oral History and Public Memories,* eds, Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), *viii.*

[73] Ibid., *viii.*

[74] Luisa Passerini, *Fascism in Popular Memory: The Cultural Experience of the Turin Working Class,*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Ronald J. Grele, *Envelopes of Sound:The Art of Oral History ,* 2d ed. (New York: Praeger, 1991); Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990); Alessandro Portelli, " The Death of Luigi Trastulli: Memory and the Event," in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

diaspora studies. This case study thus, builds on what Huyssen notes in relation to diasporic memories: that, '[a]s opposed to national memory, diasporic memory remains seriously understudied.'[75]

Multi-disciplinary research and scholarship has re-cast our view of migration into a different light. Thomson defines migration as 'the physical passage, from one place to another, as only one event within the migratory experience which spans old and new worlds and which continues throughout the life of the migrant and into subsequent generations.'[76] Baldassar draws on her collection of 'migration and visit histories'[77] to posit the view that 'migration is not simply about departure and establishing one's home in a new country. It is also about ties to the old homeland and the influence of this attachment on the development of ethnic identity in the new homeland.'[78] She develops a conceptual framework for a transnational perspective of migration based on the work of Basch and others, who define it as 'the process by which migrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.'[79] Baldassar's analysis transforms the way we view the migration experience, identity and sense of belonging by seeing migration 'not simply as a finite act or relocation but as a continuous cultural process.'[80] This conceptual framework is part of an interdisciplinary approach in migration studies that has been useful in conceptualising the methodological approach used in this research. It brings together a critical synthesis of ideas and complementary approaches to provide for the interpretation and understanding of the

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[75] Andreas Huyssen, "Diaspora and Nation: Migration in Other Pasts." *New German Critique* 88 (2003): 149.

[76] Alistair Thomson, "Oral History and Migration Studies, *"Oral History,* 27:1 (1999): 24.

[77] Her research includes members of 20 families in San Fior, Northern Italy and other Italo-Australian migrants from this region including second generation.

[78] Loretta Baldassar, "Home and Away: Migration, the Return Visit and 'Transnational' Identity", in *Home, Displacement and Belonging, Communal/Plural 5,* edited by Ien Ang and Michael Symonds, (Kingswood, N.S.W.: Research Centre in Intercommunal Studies, University of Western Sydney, Nepean, 1997), 69.

[79] Linda G. Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, *Nations Unbound: Transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments and de-territorialized nation-states,* (Pennsylvania: Gordon & Breach, 1994), 7.

[80] Baldassar, "Home and Away," 88.

articulated experiences found in participant narratives. It is not intended to be comprehensive in its coverage as it seeks to locate the specificity of these experiences. In this way, it challenges the invisibility of people's stories and helps to highlight areas for future research.

An added dimension to this research is the value of limited experiential observation that I have brought to this project with my own 'pilgrimages' back to the island. However, methodologically, the inclusion of more ethnographic material would have needed the use of a systematic fieldwork and participant observation by the researcher, over time, which was precluded due to limitations of time, costs methodological contruction which is restricted to oral history. Nevertheless, the 'insider' perspective of monitoring and observing patterns of intergenerational returns by others over the many years, of being present and within place on the island and in Australia over a period of several decades, provides added depth and richness to the content analysis in my research. I have also been connected, formally and informally with many networks within the Australian Limnian diasporic community. A quasi 'ethnographic' experience of being immersed daily across multi-sited landscapes, both in Limnos and in Australia has provided me with insight and understanding of the community being studied. Conceptually this perspective has informed my decision to interview narrators across multiple sites. Drawing on experiential ethnography, as I've called it, has many strengths and benefits to the research endeavour. It has been relatively easy to locate narrators, build trust in sharing their stories and importantly, as a bi-lingual woman be able to communicate with my informants in their preferred language, Greek or English or both. Having some prior knowledge of this community's multi-sited 'place and space' has enabled me to access a diverse group of narrators for this project. A combination of oral narrative and ethnographic perspective provides me with a robust approach in the research process, data collection and analysis.

Nevertheless, a key methodological question that has presented itself with some of the narrators has been the issue of privacy and anonymity. Due to perceived sensitivities and to guard against identification, even though pre-interview consent was readily forthcoming among most of my interviews, pseudonyms have been used when requested. This has enabled me to draw on sensitive themes that emerged from the rich narrative, while protecting a person's identity within a close-knit community setting. In this way I

have also managed to preserve important oral narratives derived from the stories of an aging community of foundational Limnian immigrants.

Narrator Profiles

There are three distinct groups of narrators in this research.[81] The aim has been to capture a range and diversity of experiences, gender and generational profiles within the total group and sub-groups. Participants were selected using the existing Limnian networks in Melbourne, Sydney and Limnos, as well as Facebook site postings, the 'snowball' method, where consenting adults suggested other potential nominees together with the age-old method of 'word of mouth'. Several participants were interviewed in Limnos during their return visits. It was never the intention of the researcher to seek a fully representative group, hence the findings are on-the-whole not generalizable, nor comprehensive or universal. The result however, has achieved diversity in age, gender, origin and migration sites, longevity and representativeness of experience within each cohort, which enables a range of themes to emerge and contribute to the analysis. The first-generation group of narrators were foundational post-war Limnian migrants that arrived in Australia during the 1950s to 1970s. This group was found to reside in three settlement cities of Australia – Melbourne, Sydney and Hobart. Limited time and resources prevented me from travelling to other geographic locations such as Adelaide, Canberra and regional towns, but the richness and consistency in the settlement experience and background of my narrators, provided adequate content to conduct a robust analysis of themes. The group profiles were also broadly representative of those that left for Australia. The first-generation cohort was typically young (13 to 25 years of age), single and from large families when they emigrated. Most narrators had at least a level of primary education (three narrators had lower high school education) and were

[81] Thrity-eight participants were nterviewed by the researcher between 2013 -2014: 13 were first-generation Limnians; 15 were second-generation and 10 were those who stayed on the Island. Interviews were held in Greek or English and in some cases both languages were used. Real names have been used with consent, except where designated differently. Interviews were semi-structured and wide-ranging, scoping consistent areas of enquiry (see Appendix 2), typically between ninety minutes and three hours in length. Most interviews were subsequently wholly transcribed and/or translated by me into English or key themes summarised directly from the recordings, for analysis and discussion within the dedicated theme chapters. All recordings are with the author.

from families connected exclusively to the land or, in part, occupied as artisans, shopkeepers or other trades. All interviews with the first-generation were conducted in Greek. These interviews were translated by the researcher and transcribed in whole or as summary themes for analysis. Although in Australia for many decades, the capacity of interviewees to communicate thoughts, memories and feelings was best done in Greek, their original language. This option gave them control over their expression and more confidence and agency in the interview process. For the interviewees, what emerged was that their Australian-born children and grandchildren were also consistently enamoured by the village and the island, due to return visits. The second-generation includes those born in Australia as well as those who arrived with their families as young children (from babies to 12 years of age), or who arrived later with one parent and siblings to be re-united usually with their father, who had made the journey earlier. Their parents were farmers predominantly, with less than a quarter of narrators having parents with trade and artisan skills that brought them to Australia. The third group interviewed were those who never left the island permanently or for any extensive period with few exceptions. This cohort has lived through the pre- and post-mass migration years in Limnos and ranged between sixty and ninety years of age. Several members of this cohort had experienced the pre- and post-war years on the island, as well as civil war, refugee resettlement on the island and post-war mass migration. Individualised bio-data and profile summaries in the three cohorts of participating narrators can be found in Appendix 1. Other aspects of the research method, including ethics approval are included in Appendix 2.

Thesis Structure

As Baldassar highlights, the uniqueness of the concept of 'migrancy' makes visible the primacy of the ongoing, continuous journey of migrant communities. It is a journey that shapes identities and is shaped by the connection, ongoing or re-established, between the host-land and homeland,[82] that bridges many generations and can resurface in unexpected ways. 'Migrancy is not simply about geographical movement but cultural continuity,

[82] Loretta Baldassar, "Transnational Families and Aged Care: The Mobility of Care and the Migrancy of Ageing." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* Vol.33, No. 2, (March 2007): 294.

discontinuity and transmutation.'[83] The significance of this research is in its potential to add to this insight and the way we view the migration experience. Chapter One and Two are about context, historiography and conceptual and methodological frameworks that enable the researcher to locate and interpret emerging themes from the narrative and to capture the voices of the narrators within a historically social, cultural and political context.

Limnos, a little studied and not well-known (outside Greece) Aegean island, has a distinctive geo-political character that has shaped its history, particularly, in the twentieth century. This is the focus of Chapter One. Pivotal historical events shaped the character of this island and a whole generation that opted to transform their lives outside their homeland. The island's migration legacy, in the various phases and the ongoing experience with departure and return are crucial to understanding a people's sense of belonging which is linked to the uniqueness of an island identity, one that pertains to both those who left and those who stayed. This island identity and its legacy in various phases, including the ongoing experience of departure and return and people's resilience, as a result, is crucial to understanding a sense of belonging that is linked to an accumulated social and cultural capital that spans generations.

Chapter Two focuses on migration historiography that positions Greek migration to Australia within the socio-political context of Australia's immigration history and examines settlement and community formation outside the homeland through the prism of a distinct form of identity, implicit in the term *Ελληνισμός* (Greekness), which as Tastsoglou argues is not 'essentialised' and should be examined within a framework of 'historical, political and material contexts.'[84] This backdrop provides the reader with a starting point for understanding both the longevity and durability of Greek diasporic identity. But, in this chapter, I depart significantly from this line of thought as I proceed to examine an alternative viewpoint of ethno-regional identity (defined in the chapter) which is posited as a cogent influence in the forging and on-going preservation of

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[83] Baldassar, "The Return Visit as Pilgrimage,"129.

[84] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender, and Diasporic Lives*, 5.

identification for Limnians living in Australia. In addition, key aspects of migrant settlement reviewed in this chapter provide entry points for the interpretation and analysis of inter-generational themes that are pivotal to an understanding of the migration experience for this island community. The conceptual and methodological function of oral history, my primary research method, is extensively developed in this chapter, both in its historical evolution, its function in migration history and its extensiveness, in capturing history through the stories of ordinary lives.

Chapter Three concentrates on the narrative of first-generation, foundational migrants who made an unprecedented migration journeys, in large numbers, to Australia from the Greek island. The emerging themes about separation and departure, the longevity of the emotional experience as well as the resistance to assimilation, the durability and resilience of people to survive, re-settle and adapt their lives in a country they had not immediately adopted as their 'home', adds to the on-going migration story. Their stories have as a backdrop, the importance of a closely bound community immersed with a strong regional island identity and unique geo-political history that is steeped in the island's rural and regional traditions. It is in this narrative that ethno-regional identity manifests as a key issue that differentiates their experience, emerging with subtlety and nuance to reveal a powerful narrative of identity and belonging that, it is argued, crosses generations and continues to affect lives, even when the place of settlement is consolidated.

Feminist research provides evidence that women and men experience migration differently.[85] Chapter Four corroborates the evidence that women's approach to migration is different. Limnian women were reluctant to leave mainly for social reasons, though once they found themselves in Australia, women were the backbone in the construction of family, culture and traditions for Limnians in a foreign country. Many women demonstrated agency and strength in the re-building of lives by drawing on the social capital of a traditional background that equipped them for survival. Women provided the

[85] Debra L. DeLaet, "Introduction: The Invisibility of Women in Scholarship on International Migration" in *Gender and Migration*, eds, Gregory A. Kelson and Debra L. DeLaet (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 2.

'safety-net', particularly for children and the next generation. They were instrumental in the creation of a diasporic identity. Familial kinship and their ethno-regional community were the pillars of their social and cultural backgrounds. These factors contributed to the strength and internal confidence to replicate and reaffirm an identity in the new country.

Chapter Five is about the theme of identity and subjective feelings of belonging and place, examined through the voices and reflections expressed in the narrative of adult second-generation Limnians. A clear shift in perception about identity and place is evident in the stories of many of the participants, influenced by their progression into adulthood and the experience of return visits as adults and in some cases as parents of the next generation. The clarity for some and the identity confusion for others in their earlier years, was often determined externally and influenced by their social environment. For several women and men, further education became a focus for expanding their horizons from the narrowness of place and the limits of the family and the community boundaries that provided them with the opportunity for identity re-evaluation and transformation. Family and community in the early years, however, was their haven, as they struggled for place in a contested social order. Growing up in an Australian setting was not always easy and was often at variance with their home life. Once other possibilities began to emerge, through further education and work, or through sheer rebelliousness against the family norms, some young women and young men established an Australian identity and sense of belonging. For many, the experience of 'return' was the significant factor in reframing and consolidating their identity and reconciling their sense of belonging as adults; for others however, it acted to unhinge what they had thought was stable and constant. An overarching theme that emerged was the significance of the return visit and how this experience impacted and reframed their sense of belonging and place. For narrators, this led to an identity transformation that was experienced in either ephemeral or enduring ways.

In Chapter Six, identity transformation framed by the optic of transnationalism situates the role of return visits to the ancestral homeland as pivotal in the experiences of the second-generation. An intergenerational comparative analysis of experiences of 'home' and regular return visits reveals both differences and connections to ancestral identity and belonging. This often results in powerful meanings, linking identity and place in the diaspora. Whilst the significance of returning for the first and second-generation

differs in motivation, dynamics and specificity. Ultimately both generations, in returning, share a Limnian ancestral identity, which is both inherited and constructed.

Chapter Seven draws on the narrative of those Limnians that built their lives on the island, and encompasses their reflections on relationships with generations of immigrants who have been returning on visits to the island. It examines migration through the prism of transnationalism and draws on significant contemporary research that has contributed towards a better understanding of the complexity, longevity and multi-dimensional nature of migration and second-generation transnationalism. The interface of migrants who return with those who have stayed behind, otherwise referred to as 'those-who-never-left', is another facet of the migration experience together with an inter-generational continuity that uniquely frames and characterises transnational dynamics. In this chapter, I explore the relationships and connections that occur between those that stayed and migrants who are returning to the island as visitors. The differences and ambiguities that emerge are rarely examined in transnational research and more generally in migration research. The significance of ancestral property, such as the ancestral family home, emerges obliquely in this chapter. It manifests both as a symbol of belonging as well as a reflection of alienation, as seen by different actors. The nexus reveals a real disparity in identification and change among those-who-left and those-who-stayed: a process that is irreconcilable and a consequence of the migration experience and interaction with different 'worlds'. With the second-generation narrative, different themes dominate. As the creators of their own transnational 'field', the second-generation, with renewed pride for ancestral roots and heritage, have built on this to create their own transnational identity and history. Many of them continue to return and consolidate the significance of the ancestral home in different ways and with different meanings. Their journey, which has agency and is not pre-determined or defined solely by factors that influenced their parents, forges a legacy and becomes part of a continuous, island history.

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In all theme chapters, aspects of identity and belonging and sense of place emerge as unique experiences with different meanings for each of the three research cohorts. The themes emanate through interviews to reveal new and untold perspectives about the complex and multi-faceted islander migration. The emerging themes provide perspectives

on the long-term nature of migration on people's lives that spans several generations. The examination of issues from the first and second-generation post-war migrants is further enriched by perspectives from those-that-never-left who, because of mass migration, continued to construct their lives and an island society to which intergenerational migrants can return, re-connect and re-establish on-going relationships in a transnational world. These perspectives add new insights and contribute to Australia's migration historiography.

Chapter 1 Limnos - An Island and its History

> *'Now that I leave, let me bid farewell to this place…Goodbye Lemnos, my island, in the midst of the sea;' (The words of Philoctetes from the play titled "Philoctetes" by Sophocles)* [1]

Migration has been a vital legacy for the people of Limnos. As I have noted elsewhere,[2] it has become a significant aspect of their island history and of the stories of the local population. There are many anecdotes and recounted stories told on the island about local families who have become the 'new breed' of land owners obtained with the wealth accumulated from the proceeds of migration journeys to far-away places, often linked to specific social, economic or political events. Since the late nineteenth century, Limnian men have resorted to migration during 'hard times'. For some, it has simply been about seeking adventure and chasing the elusive dream of 'wealth and riches'. Kanarakis notes for example, that the first recorded Greek settler to arrive in 1842, at the South Australian colony went by the name of George Tramountanas (later adopting the anglicised surname of *North*) and that he may have descended from the island of Limnos.[3] He depicts this man, who has since been acclaimed and memorialised as the first Greek to settle in South Australia, thus:

> In fact, the place of origin of this family name is the north Aegean island of Lemnos…and there are still Tramountanas families living there…An ancestral love for the sea – that age-old characteristic of the Greek people, especially of the islanders – was sown in his heart from an early age…George Tramountanas

[1] Leonidas N. Giangakis and Christoforos L. Gerondoudis, *Το νησί της Λήμνου: Μυθολογία – Προϊστορία – Ιστορία – Καλές Τέχνες* (*To Nisi tis Limnou: (Mythologia – Pro-istoria – Istoria - Kales Tehnes; The Island of Lemnos: Mythology – Prehistory – History –Fine Arts),* (Johannesburg, RSA: Rhondas Publishing House, 1990), 124.

[2] Melissa Afentoulis and Andrea Cleland, "Diaspora at the Crossroads: Two Regional Communities in Australia" in *Discovering Diasporas: A Multidisciplinary Approach,* eds. Tine Vinkemans and Natasha Miletic (Oxford, United Kingdom: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2015), 37-48, The Discovery and Recognition Hub, 'Diasporas', last modified May 2016. http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the interface/

[3] George Kanarakis, *In the Wake of Odysseus: Portraits of Greek Settlers in Australia,* (Melbourne: RMIT University Publishing, 1997), 15.

> enthusiastically and energetically set out to build a new life there, becoming the first Greek to settle in the province of South Australia, as it was then named.[4]

In 1912, soon after liberation from Ottoman rule, a newspaper report cited by Tsotroudis[5] tells of the wave of mass migration to America. The article laments, with sadness, the potential devastation and neglect of the land caused by migration. These sentiments reflect a strong societal connection of people to the land and its productiveness and conveys fears about abandonment by people leaving *en masse* and the ramifications for this island community. In the 1930s, Limnian men left again for America, the British and French colonies such as Algiers, Morocco and Egypt, travelling as far as Latin America. According to local historians as well as some narrators, these 'adventurers' were usually time limited travellers, but, for those who dared to try, they became permanent settlers in some cases.[6] Those that returned, after many years, often became the largest and wealthiest land owners, creating a new, modern elite and social class in the post-Ottoman era that continued over several generations. They built the largest and most prestigious houses in the villages and main centres, many of which have survived as symbols of such wealth. Such buildings, still visible today, are part of local folklore and stand as a testament to migration.

Ironically, very few descendants now reside in Limnos, though some would return for summer holidays, while others have since sold their family landholdings and only rarely return to the island. As I frequently return to the island, I see many of the magnificent mansions that have remained vacant, while others have been redeveloped into tourist accommodation. There are also stories, recounted in the interviews, about people whose wealth was short lived following the currency crash towards the end of the

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[4] Ibid., 15-16.

[5] Aristedis Tsotroudis, *Λήμνος 1912 – 2012: Εκατό χρόνια ελευθερίας και προόδου (Limnos 1912 - 2012: Ekato Chronia Eleftherias Ke Proodou; Limnos 1912 - 2012: One Hundred Years of Freedom and Progress),* (Lemnos, Greece: Alexandros D. Giotakos and Co, 2012), 90.

[6] Kostas Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), (Athens, Greece: LEGATO, 1998; Paul interviewed 26 June 2013.

war and the German occupation (1941- 44), leaving families with 'useless' currency notes which no longer had much value.[7]

To understand aspects of this history and the context of migration in the post-war years, this chapter provides a brief historical overview of Limnos that focuses primarily on the modern, post-Ottoman era. It considers events that began with the island's independence at the beginning of the twentieth century that position the role of migration within a geo-political and economic context, and it argues that there were key contributors to the post-war, mass exodus of people to countries like Australia and other parts of the world.

Limnos: Anemoessa - The Isle of Winds [8]

The modern history of Limnos begins with independence from Ottoman rule, an event attributed to the naval forces captained by Admiral Kountouriotis, famed for the liberation of the island in a 'bloodless' coup on the 8 October 1912.[9] This event is part of Greece's longer history of struggle for national identity and its cumulative formation as a modern Greek state which had its current borders resolved as late as 1947[10]. Available research literature on Limnos, generally, is sparse and relies substantially on oral sources. Oral story-telling is a key feature of agrarian societies, sharing stories across generations as a common method of 'history making'. Most available literature about Limnos has been written by educated, lay historians, with a passion for the island and its history and local events. They display a strong sense of duty to capture events before oral sources become

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[7] Stelios, Interviewed 9 July 2013.

[8] The term *Anemoessa*, is used by Homer in his references to the god Hephaestus who landed on the windy island of Limnos. It comes from the ancient Greek word, *Anemos* which means wind. See Spyridonos A. Paximadas, *Λήμνια Γη – Το πρώτο παγκόσμιο πρότυπο φαρμακευτικό προϊόν* (*Limnia Ghee – to proto pangosmio protypo farmakeftiko proion*; *Limnian Soil – the first pharmaceutical prototype global product)*, Second Edition, (Athens, Greece: Ellinika Gramata, 2015), 18.

[9] Kostas Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), (Athens, Greece: LEGATO, 1998), 63; Ioannis Mbitos, "Το Νησί της Λήμνου: Η Ιστορία και η Στρατηγική της Αξία" (*To Nisi tis Limnou: I Istoria ke I Stratigiki tis Axia; The Island of Limnos: Its History and Strategic Value)*, In *Λήμνος Φιλτάτη, Δήμος Μυρινaίων, Πρακτικά του 1ου Συνεδρίου Δημάρχων του Αιγαίου, Μύρινα Λήμνου 21-24 Αυγούστου 1992. (Limnos Filtati,* Proceedings of the First Conference of Aegean Mayors, 21-24 August 1992), 197-203. (Athens: Charalambou Emmanuel, 1994), 200.

[10] See Map 3, p. *xi* in Thesis.

extinct and have shown an appreciation of history's importance to current and future generations. They must be credited for their efforts and contribution by establishing a point of departure for future historical researchers, especially because archival documents were apparently destroyed or not consistently kept in the early century and during the ottoman era. This further reinforces the importance of an oral history tradition as a fundamental form of story-telling and as a significant mode of reconstructing the past, which draws on people's voices that rely on memory. Kontellis, a community historian and former school teacher, observes that little documentation and records about life on the island survived post-independence from its rulers. As he says, in a written history of his native village of Portianou:

> Our national events did not allow the existence of written sources about local history and life of past peoples to be preserved and so, the only sources are the memories of some elderly people that death has forgotten and a few remaining school and church records.[11]

Limnos holds a strategic geo-political position in the north-east Aegean Sea and is one of the largest of the North-Eastern Aegean group of islands in modern Greece. Situated some fifty kilometres from the opening of the Dardanelles or The Straits, the island experienced over four hundred years of Ottoman sovereignty.[12] Its territorial status as part of the Greek nation state, however, was not resolved until well after the end of World War One, when a number of conventions were negotiated by foreign stakeholders in the early years of the twentieth century.[13] For centuries, the Straits had been a major

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[11] Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), 9. Note all quotations from Greek Text have been translated by the researcher.

[12]. Greece had been under Ottoman rule since 1478. A revolt for liberation commenced in 1821 in the region of the Peloponnese. Central Greece and the Peloponnese became independent in 1832. It took a further eighty or so years for the liberation of this island in 1912, along with other parts of Greece. See Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece, Second Edition,* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 42.

[13] During the First World War the 'Straits Question' became exceptionally critical and the closing of the Straits by Turkey, in 1914, led to appalling casualties for the western allied forces in WW1. (See Domna Dontas, *Greece and Turkey: The Regime of the Straits, Lemnos and Samothrace,* (Athens: G. C. Eleftheroudakis S.A., 1987), 149. Several processes to establish international guarantees to enable free passage through the Straits to the ships of all nations resulted in several treaties and conventions: Treaty of Sevres (1920); Convention of Lausanne (1923) and the Convention of Montreux (1936). The last convention cleared the way for the remilitarisation of Lemnos, though this has been contested by modern Turkey, thereby enabling Lemnos to be a 'zone of surveillance' (p. 145).

gateway to the Far East for trade and war, during classical as well as modern times, and influenced 'the balance of power in the Near East and on the general situation in the Mediterranean.'[14] This ancient island is linked to classical antiquity, intertwined in mythology, ancient history and early civilizations as well as conquests and many periods of occupation throughout modern history.[15] Its land mass is approximately 477 square kilometres, with a population of some 16,992 people, as per the 2011 Census collected by the National Statistical Service of Greece.[16] The island's characteristically hilly landscape is punctuated with some fertile valleys, rugged coastline, interspersed with sandy beaches. It has a shoreline of some 260 kilometres due to its unusual shape.

The historical events that serve to contextualise the island's migration history are summarised in this section. Whilst it is not my purpose to reiterate these in detail, an overview of these key defining events is important in understanding how they contributed and impacted this agrarian, subsistence economy and its people. They link implicitly to the story of migration, particularly mass migration since the early 1950s.

Limnos in the First World War and Gallipoli (1913-1918)

During the period of the Balkan wars which threatened the balance of power in the Aegean, the geography of the island influenced developments in the conflict that ensued and its role in naval operations was considerable.[17] In 1914 the British naval forces were first to be stationed inside Moudros Bay (a naturally formed, large and deep bay on the south-central part of the island) which became the naval base for the allied forces prior to the launch of the Gallipoli campaign.[18] In 1915 'thousands of servicemen of the allied

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[14] Dontas, *Greece and Turkey: The Regime of the Straits*, 149.

[15] Giorgos Konstantellis, *Λήμνος – Ιστορική και Πολιτιστική Κληρονομιά* (*Limnos - Istoriki Kai Politistiki Klironomia*; Limnos – Historic and Social Heritage). (Limnos, Greece: Epikoinonia, 2010).

[16] Data provided in 2014, by the Mayor's office, Municipality of Limnos, based on the National Statistical Service of Greece, Census, 2011.

[17] Eleni Gardika Katsiadaki, "Η Λήμνος και το Αιγαίο στους Βαλκανικούς Πολέμους" (I *Limnos kai to Aegeo stous Balkanikous Polemous;* Limnos and the Aegean in the Balkan Wars.), in *Λήμνος Φιλτάτη, Δήμος Μυριναίων, Πρακτικά του 1ου Συνεδρίου Δημάρχων του Αιγαίου, Μύρινα Λήμνου 21-24 Αυγούστου 1992; Proceedings of the First Conference of Aegean Mayors, 21-24 August 1992*),103-116. (Athens: Charalambou Emmanuel, 1994), 104.

[18] Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), 71.

forces (British, French Canadian, Australian and New Zealanders) established bases and set up their tents at the foothills of Moudros Bay'[19] and along the shores, as far as the eastern side near the villages of Sarpi (modern day Kalithea) and Portianou. The location of Limnos in the North-East Aegean Sea served another unique role in the Gallipoli campaign as it became the 'recuperative place'[20] for injured and weary soldiers of these, as well as the final resting place for 1,232, including 148 Australians interred at the two Commonwealth War Graves on Limnos.[21]

Some local Limnians, viewed this part of history with ambivalence. Tsotroudis, a local community historian published a book on these events (that was also later translated into English).[22] In a conversation with me, he observed that some Limnians, initially saw the stationed allied troops as 'occupiers' of the island,[23] though of course, as he writes, 'Eleftherios Venizelos, hoping for the capture of the Dardanelles would assist in the country's future territorial claims, gave his consent to the use of Lemnos as a naval base.'[24] He believes that the Limnian people did not have a say in this decision which was apparently negotiated directly with the national government. The sudden influx of many thousands of allied troops on the island, before the commencement of the Gallipoli campaign was a shock to the rural community[25] and impacted its livelihood due to the

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[19] Ibid., 71

[20] Ioannis Mbitos, "Το Νησί της Λήμνου: Η Ιστορία και η Στρατηγική της Αξία" (*To Nisi tis Limnou: I Istoria ke I Stratigiki tis Axia; The Island of Limnos: Its History and Strategic Value)*, 200.

[21] Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee Inc. Fact Sheet. Available from http://lemnosgallipolicc.blogspot.com.au/p/anzac-history-on-lemnos.html; [26 November 2014].

[22] Aristedis J. Tsotroudis. *Η Εκστρατεία της Καλλίπολης: Λήμνος και ANZAC (I Ekstratia tis Kallipolis: Limnos and ANZAC; The Gallipolli Campaign: Lemnos and ANZACS*), Athens: self-published, 2015.

[23] This recorded conversation took place in Limnos, 27 May 2014. Record of interview in possession of the researcher.

[24] Aristidis J. Tsotroudis. *The Gallipolli Campaign: Lemnos and ANZACS.* Athens: A.J. Tsotroudis, 2015, 32.

[25] In the two months to October 1915, 57,000 sick and 37,000 wounded were evacuated from the beaches of Gallipoli to the Allied hospitals set up in Limnos.

Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee Inc. Fact Sheet. Available from http://lemnosgallipolicc.blogspot.com.au/p/anzac-history-on-lemnos.html; [11 December 2014].

demand on its limited resources – produce, land use and labour- which diverted resources away from the community towards the needs of the Allied forces.[26] The sudden presence of foreign military personnel and medical staff of the makeshift hospitals exposed the local people to new social dynamics which they, as an isolated agrarian island community, had not experienced before. The social impact and dislocation for islanders did however provide some short term economic benefits for traders from the nearby villages as well as limited access to health services. The *κεφαλοχώρι* (a large principal village) of Moudros, with a natural bay entrance and port, facilitated its significant economic development and civic status due to the presence of the Allied Forces. Essentially, 'it led to the creation of a specific civic model that functioned to meet the needs of the thousands of soldiers and sailors.'[27] These war experiences instigated the traumas and fears cemented in the psyche of Limnians and re-emerged with future conflicts that embroiled Greece.

The Post - Asia Minor 'Catastrophe' (1922) and Refugee Re-settlement

Clogg states that, 'some 1,100,000 Greek refugees moved to the kingdom of [Greece] as a consequence of the catastrophe'[28] in Asia Minor. More precisely, Close puts those figures to 1,300,000 – 1,4,000,000 during the 1913-23 years as 'Greeks arrive from what is now Turkey, most of them expelled by the armies of Kemal Ataturk in the "Asia Minor Cathestrophe" of 1922.'[29] The pattern of refugee settlement around Greece is visually illustrated in a map which appears in Clogg's book.[30] The population of refugees with largely agrarian backgrounds who went to Limnos was estimated to be close to five

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[26] Greek civilians provided transportation support, porter assistance for loading and unloading, billeting and local produce sold to the Allies. Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee Inc. Fact Sheet. Available from http://lemnosgallipolicc.blogspot.com.au/p/anzac-history-on-lemnos.html; [11 December 2014].

[27] Sotiris Chtouris and Christos Mbakalis, "Κοινωνική και Παραγωγική Δομή" (*Kinoniki kai Paragogiki Domi; Social and Productive Structures*), in *Μουσικά Σταυροδρόμια στο Αιγαίο, Λήμνος, 19ος -21ος Αιώνας (Mousika Stavrodromia sto Aegeo: Limnos, 19th-21st Century)*, edited by Sotiris Chtouris and Dimitris Papageorgiou, 51-198. (Athens: Ion, 2009), 89.

[28] Clogg, A Concise History of Greece, 99.

[29] David H. Close, *Greece Since 1945: Politics, Economy and Society*, (London, New York: Longman, 2002), 2.

[30] Clogg, *A Concise History of* Greece, 105. Also replicated in Map 4, p. *xii* in Thesis.

thousand people,[31] which in relation to the island's local population at the time, of about twenty-five thousand people,[32] signified a massive and sudden influx of people competing for limited land resources and work to survive.

Significantly, two newly established villages were created for the two largest translocated arrival communities with a common origin. The rest were scattered within villages and in smaller *Συνοικισμοί* (settlement quarters) at the outskirts of existing villages, throughout the island. The government, through a re-settlement body, appropriated pockets of land, assisted with the construction of small 'one room' houses and provided other assistance towards the resettlement of refugees. The land appropriation by government created tensions and bad feelings on the part of the local population. The arrival of refugees to Limnos, like other parts of Greece, was marred by resentment and 'bad feeling' shown by local people towards them, especially those who were landless themselves and felt that their livelihood was threatened even further by being in direct competition with the new arrivals.[33] Similarly, for the refugees, as oral testimony gathered by Tsimouris highlights, the large numbers of refugees in relation to the local population and the inadequate and alleged corrupt practices of the resettlement services contributed to the refugees themselves feeling like *ξένοι* (foreign undesirables) and not accepted by the local islanders.[34] Consequently, for the decades that followed, this malevolence influenced their sense of not belonging and led to a ghettoising of communities living separate and insular lives, unable or unwilling to integrate within the wider community even though they considered themselves as Greeks. Anecdotally and through the oral testimony gathered by Tsimouris in his research,[35] it is however acknowledged that the Asia Minor refugees that settled in Limnos brought with them

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[31] Giorgos Tsimouris, *"*Οι Πρόσφυγες του 1922*"*, (*I Prosfiges tou 1922; The Refugees of 1922*), in *Μουσικά Σταυροδρόμια στο Αιγαίο: Λήμνος 19ος – 21ος αιώνας* (*Mousika Stavrodromia Sto Aegeo: Limnos, 19th – 21st Century; Musical Crossroads in the Aegean: Lemnos, 19th – 21st Century*) edited by Sotiris Chtouris and Dimitris Papageorgiou, 199-234, (Athens: Ion, 2009), 199.

[32] Ibid., 199.

[33] Ibid., 203

[34] Ibid., 215-16

[35] Ibid., 219

notable skills in farming and viticulture, cooking, fishing and deep-sea diving, as well as construction and building skills. It is widely recognised that these communities not only established and thrived, adding value to the social and economic fabric of the island, but they also brought a rich cultural heritage and many strengths to this society that have continued until today.[36] Nevertheless, many second-generation Asia Minor descendants were again swept up, as part of the mass migration waves to Australia.

The German Occupation of Limnos (1941-1944)

Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 was the catalyst for the commencement of the Second World War. In April 1941 Limnos was occupied (*κατοχή*) by the German Army, an occupation that ended in October 1944. Clogg defines the decade of the 1940s as the 'darkest in Greece's independent history.'[37] Thus Greece was 'politically as well as economically in ruins at the time of liberation.'[38] In October 1940, the men of Limnos were conscripted for the battles in Northern Greece.[39] A second conscription followed a month later, hence depleting the agricultural production capacity of the island. Kontellis describes how the 'citizens began to live the deprivation and impoverished existence'[40] that was to follow in the next few months and years of occupation. He states:

> The problem of securing the daily consumables became more and more difficult and the replacement of worn out clothes problematic. As time passed, those who were lacking, started to be seen in makeshift clothes, usually made from domestically woven cloth and storage bags, with wooden 'clogs' or sandals cut out from vehicle tyres or they walked around bare-footed.[41]

The daily living conditions were exacerbated by several factors, consistently reported in the oral histories I have gathered. These include the conscription of males, which meant that agricultural activity was abandoned with food production curtailed, and

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[36] In fact, in the 2014 municipal government election results, on the record, show the elected position of Mayor was won by the first person of an Asia Minor background, to become the Mayor of Limnos.

[37] Clogg, *A Concise History*, 142.

[38] Close, *Greece Since 1945*, 12.

[39] Aristedis J. Tsotroudis, *Η Γερμανική Κατοχή της Λήμνου* (*I Germaniki Katochi Tis Limnou*; *The German Occupation of Limnos*), (Lemnos, Greece: Alexandros Giotakos, 2011), 23.

[40] Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), 105.

[41] Ibid., 105. Translation by author.

families having to rely on their existing stock of consumables which were rapidly being depleted. The German occupiers instituted the expectation that each household, based on available local 'intelligence' about each farming family's levels of production in storage, was required to contribute commensurate quotas to the food requirements of regiments, thus depriving families of basic food and supplies at a time when they were not actively cultivating the land.

Landless villagers who did not have food stocks because they relied on farming jobs to provide them with their supplies in lieu of money, were affected the hardest during the occupation. Young people (girls and boys) and many women were recruited by the Germans into unpaid labour in the army kitchens, labour units for breaking up rocks into rough road surface material (a common role for young people), digging of tunnels and so on. Oral testimony also reveals that in many villages, entire houses, particularly those un-occupied, holiday mansions owned by wealthy former emigres, school buildings and other community facilities were confiscated for the use of army headquarters and for personnel, during the occupation. In some villages, the upstairs rooms of big houses, previously the family sleeping quarters, were segregated and appropriated to German army personnel, thereby limiting the space and privacy for everyday living within households.[42] This situation further escalated the sense of insecurity, powerlessness and fear, felt by people in the villages during the occupation, particularly the female households whose male family members had been conscripted by the Greek army for the war effort. Kontellis further describes how 'skinny, pale, ragged people, barefooted with swollen feet would be frequently seen in the streets.'[43] Tsotroudis concludes that, 'during the three and a half years of German occupation, many Limnians were exiled, imprisoned, executed or died in German camps.'[44] The German occupiers left Limnos in October 1944.

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[42] Maria, interviewed 17 June 2013.

[43] Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), 107.

[44] Tsotroudis, *Η Γερμανική Κατοχή της Λήμνου* (*I Germaniki Katochi Tis Limnou*; *The German Occupation of Limnos*), 79.

The Greek Civil War and Resistance in Limnos (1943- 1949)

The issue of the civil war and its impact on the island people is inadequately documented or silent in the literature. Anecdotally it is known that Limnos was largely in support of the government forces during the civil war and the government of the day in Greece. Hence any resistance movement in Limnos would have had to be covert and largely invisible. However, in comparison to the tragic events of the civil war throughout Greece, Limnos survived many of the atrocities committed elsewhere. Clogg describes this period thus:

> [T]he ferocity of the savagely fought civil war was to prolong the agonies of the occupation until the end of the decade. Moreover, the atrocities committed by both sides assumed an added dimension of horror in that they were inflicted by Greek upon Greek.[45]

Tsotroudis contends that the first sign of resistance on the island was noted in 1942 in the village of Moudros.[46] The harbour-master was caught using the port communications system to convey information to the western allies. He was subsequently eliminated. However, the Greek National Liberation Front, Εθνικόν Απελευθερωτικόν Μέτωπο (*EAM*), which had significant prominence in many parts of Greece during the Civil War, manifested itself in Limnos in 1943 and took shape with the establishment of a small leadership group, with members in many villages and Moudros as its strongest base.[47] It is unclear as to its strength, support and level of activity but, notably, some of my narrators, either dismissed the probability of there being any organised resistance in Limnos compared to other parts of Greece, or they were reluctant to talk about this period's events, except in relation to poverty and deprivation. This reluctance to engage with these historical events was both intriguing and understandable, in the light of their experiences, allegiances and fears due to the events on the mainland at the time. It was noted by some of the narrators, that people who were known communists or 'leftists', for example, had already been deported by authorities or imprisoned off the island which

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[45] Clogg, *A Concise History*, 142.

[46] Tsotroudis, *Η Γερμανική Κατοχή της Λήμνου* (*I Germaniki Katochi Tis Limnou*; *The German Occupation of Limnos*), 79.

[47] Ibid., 79.

confirms the findings of Tsotroudis, cited above. The oral testimony of several descendants reinforced the experience that some people had already been socially ostracised, shunned and stigmatized within island society for their political beliefs. They were indeed affected during this period and together with their families suffered major deprivations, including loss of the limited opportunities to make use of their trade and other skills for the survival of their families. Oral testimony reveals that during post war emigration, some people were shunned and suffered discrimination twice over because of security measures that resulted in some citizens having a *Φάκελο* (file and security records held by police). This made it very difficult for many to obtain the required authorizations for emigration, when this had become an option after the war in the 1950s. Children's testimony reveals that some people had no other recourse but to use *Μέσον* (influence from authoritative individuals), often involving bribery, to obtain their papers for departure.[48]

The above summary of key historical signposts of the first half of the twentieth century and the various internal and external influences during the initial years of Greece's national consolidation and reconstruction shows how the cumulative social, economic and political events impacted upon the people of Limnos, as well as throughout Greece. As people began to perceive that their contribution to the war effort did not yield any benefits and that they would never be beneficiaries for their sacrifices and efforts for their nation, they began to view migration as both inevitable and necessary.

Society, Culture and the Island Economy

"*Τουρκοκρατία"* or Turkish rule 'had a profound influence in shaping the evolution of Greek society.'[49] Clogg talks about the isolation of Greece, during Ottoman rule, from several influential historical movements that had a resounding influence in Europe, including the Renaissance, the Reformation, the seventeenth-century scientific revolution, the Enlightenment and the French and Industrial Revolutions, that so

[48] Errikos, interviewed 10 June 2014.

[49] Clogg, *A Concise History*, 3.

transformed Western Europe.'[50] Similarly, the long period of Ottoman rule in Limnos both shaped and determined the nature and structure of Limnian society for generations, and in some ways defined its relationship to modernity. The residing Muslim occupiers on the island were always a significant minority, in terms of numbers, throughout the centuries, as substantiated by numerous visiting nineteenth century anthropologists and local historians.[51] As far back as the mid-nineteenth century, Conze, a German anthropologist who visited the island recorded in his writings that:

> Agrarian work is done exclusively by Christians, because the Turkish farmers were only 200 and the rest of the Turks and land-owners leave the Christian workers to cultivate their land.[52]

Gerontoudis confirms that the occupiers instead exercised civil service duties or were involved in transportation or worked as blacksmiths,[53] an exclusively Muslim trade, leaving the local Christians to toil the land for their own survival and the benefit of the land-holders. The practice continued into the late nineteenth century, with émigrés to Egypt and other twentieth century emigrants who became land owners but often lived in other parts of the world. The phenomenon of *μερίσματα* (crop-sharing) was common practice. It involved landowners, who contracted their land holdings and *μάντρες* (farms and animal shelters) annually to *κεχαγιάδες* (local farmers and animal herdsmen) for a fifty per cent share of production, regardless of the results each year.[54]

The modernisation of social systems, the economy and physical infrastructure, began slowly in the early twentieth century after the wars and the population exchanges, which after 1922 superimposed a sudden and significant population influx of resettled

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[50] Ibid., 3.

[51] B. Tourptsoglou-Stefanidou, *Ταξιδιωτικά και Γεωγραφικά Κείμενα για τη νήσο Λήμνο -15ο με 20ο Αιώνα* (*Taksidiotika Ke Geographika Keimena Yia Ti Niso Limnos - 15th to 20th Aiona;* Journeys and Geographic Texts about the Island of Limnos), (Thessaloniki: APO Research Section, Polytechnic School, 1986). Citation in Chtouris and Papageorgiou, *Μουσικά Σταυροδρόμια στο Αιγαίο, Λήμνος, 19ος -21ος Αιώνας, (Mousika Stavrodromia Sto Aegeo: Limnos, 19th - 21st Aionas;* Musical Crossroads in the Aegean: Lemnos, 19th – 21st Century*), (*Athens: Ion, 2009), 52.

[52] Ibid.,53.

[53] Leonidas N. Gerontoudis, *Λήμνος: Ιστορία – Διάλεκτοι, Λαογραφία*, (*Limnos: Istoria - Dialekti - Laografia; Limnos Island: History-Dialectic-Folklore*). (Athens: Publisher unspecified,1971), 52.

[54] Paul (Paleologos), interviewed 26 June 2013; this story was reiterated by several other interviewees.

Asia Minor refugees on the island,[55] as well as in Greece more generally, with profound effects. The social and economic facets of life on the island, its social structures and the wealth differentials, became even more pronounced. Agriculture continued to remain dominant in the economy, using the traditional farming methods and contractual arrangements that applied well before the twentieth century.[56] Trade and fishing practices became more established together with the introduction of public services, banking and other new social infrastructure with the nascence of civil society and the Modern Greek State. The 'well-off' of an earlier migration phase - ex-patriots of Egypt, African countries, America and other destinations - introduced a new class dimension and maintained their social position and gentrified class status.[57] Migration to other countries continued into the early twentieth century, but the United States began tightening its entry criteria significantly in the early 1920s,[58] making it difficult to migrate to America during this period. The capacity of the Greek State to finance the much-needed infrastructure projects on the island during early to mid-century was very weak and limited the scope and potential of progress. The Limnian diaspora of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had played a significant role in reconstruction, a fact recognised in the writings of local historians,[59] for providing financial support towards key infrastructure projects, including schools and hospitals which were of great benefit to the countryside and towns alike. The construction of roads, for instance facilitated more efficient transport, trade and an improved inter-linking of villages, the main trading centres and the capital. However, the

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[55] Sotiris Chtouris and Christos Mbakalis, "Κοινωνική και Παραγωγική Δομή" (*Kinoniki kai Paragogiki Domi;* Social and Productive Structures), in *Μουσικά Σταυροδρόμια στο Αιγαίο, Λήμνος, 19ος -21ος Αιώνας, (Mousika Stavrodromia Sto Aegeo: Limnos, 19th - 21st Aionas; Musical Crossroads in the Aegean: Lemnos, 19th – 21st Century)*, edited by Sotiris Chtouris and Dimitris Papageorgiou, (Athens: Ion, 2009), 51.

[56] Ibid., 92.

[57] Ibid., 92

[58] Lila Leondidou, *Πόλεις της Σιωπής: Εργατικός Εποικισμός της Αθήνας και του Πειραιά, 1909-1940, (Polis Tis Siopis: Ergatikos Epikismos Tis Athinas Kai Tou Peirea, 1909-1940; The City of Silence: Worker Settlements of Athens and Peireas*). (Athens: Politistiko Technologiko Idrima ETBA, 2001), 151.

[59] Ibid.93; L. N. Gerondoudis, *Limnos Island: History – Dialectic - Folklore*, (Athens: Unknown Publisher, 1971), 124.

national electricity provider did not reach the island until the 1960s, bringing it then, truly, into the twentieth century.[60]

Rural Limnos – Social and Cultural Roots

In the 1950s, as a predominantly pastoral island community, agriculture and shepherding of goats and sheep was the key to survival, even when pastoralism in Greece and rural subsistence were suffering a slow decline. This setting continued to define people's regional identity and community. Even those who operated small neighbourhood businesses based on inherited family trade skills (passed on from grandfather to father to son), such as shoe repairing and tailoring, were engaged in agriculture to supplement their needs, linking them to a collective agrarian identity that continues today. The communal social structure was kinship based with a strong connection to the land and was faith based and elder based in its value systems. The structure of belonging was gendered, and defined more by the family name, familial land ownership and size of the *κοπάδια* (animal herds). A masculine social structure operated within a tight-knit community of village life. Anthropological research in recent decades situated in Greek villages[61] has been predominantly focused on gender and role differentiation and marriage in the context of conjugal procreation as the major ethnographic discourse. This is seen in combination with kinship patterns which vary in accordance with the type of marital residence involved, the role and structure of families and the *Νοικοκυριό* (household) as an economic unit. According to Loizos and Papataxiarchis, the supremacy of marriage in Greece was in the value of having children and the perpetuation of the family name and

[60] Myrina (*Kastro),* the island's capital had electricity through a private provider from the early 1930s, whereas, for Moudros and Plati a similar enterprise through the local authority, with the help of an American ex-patriot funding the machinery equipment in 1950s, enabled power generation for these two localities. See Chtouris and Mbakalis, "Κοινωνική και Παραγωγική Δομή" (*Kinoniki kai Paragogiki Domi*; Social and Productive Structures), 95.

[61] Muriel Dimen, " Servants and Sentries – Women, Power and Social Reproduction in Kriovrisi,*" Journal of Modern Greek Studies,* 1:1 (1983): 225-242; Renée Hirschon, "The Transformation of Female Sexuality," in *Defining Females: The Nature of Women in Society,* (Ed), Shirley Ardener, (London: Croom Helm, 1978):66-85; Juliet du Boulay, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974); John Kennedy Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage: A study of institutions and moral values in a Greek mountain community,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); Ernestine Friedl, *Vassilika: A Village in Modern Greece,* (New York, Holt: Rienhart and Winston, 1962).

therefore of 'self'.[62] They argue that 'marriage is also an event with economic and political implications and has been influenced by both church and state'[63] and the nikokirio is significant in 'regulating a marriage'.[64] In Greek village life, the domestic model of gender and the interplay with the concept of *νοικοκυριό* (household) represents the structured role definitions and expectations of men and women in all aspects of social life as well as proscribing what are the public and private domains for men and women. These findings resonate with the Limnian rural context of this period. People were connected through marriage and kinship, localised either within the village or with people from the neighbouring areas. Rarely was there a wedding with a member from a distant village as this would be deemed as marrying a *ξένο* (an outsider), which would challenge the accepted community norm. Exogamy was therefore not a common practice in 'the traditional family of the past.'[65] Rather, the communal and cultural fabric of the locale was on display during ritualised activities such as weekly bread making by women using a shared *φούρνο* (domestic wood oven), seasonal harvesting by farmers, women's preservation of produce from one year to the next, men's gatherings at the *καφενείο* (local coffee house or gathering place for men) along with other social gatherings celebrated around a saint's day or religious festivals, weddings, christenings and burials.[66]

Life centred on survival, and maintaining the cultural and value systems inherited and lived over many generations. The island's unique history and geography contributed to an 'isolationist' and introspective self-view in the context of an evolving and modernising Greek Nation State. It also contributed to a tendency not to trust official authority, reflecting a sense of *προδοσία* (being sold out) by external forces, both foreign and national. This phenomenon is characterised by anthropologist and ethnographer

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[62] Peter Loizos and Euthymios Papataxiarchis, ed, *Contested Identities: Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press: 1991), 120.

[63] Ibid., 6.

[64] Ibid. 6.

[65] Kostas Mylonas et al., "Greece", in *Families across Cultures: A 30- Nation Psychological Study*, eds. James Georgas and Ype H. Poortinga (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 346.

[66] These are my observations and experiences as a child living in Limnos. They are also drawn from family story-telling over many years.

Michael Herzfeld as 'cultural intimacy – the recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality.'[67] Limnian men in particular, defined their manhood by the term *κεχαγιά* (goat and sheep herdsman), a vocation that has been adapted culturally into local folklore, island song lyrics and dance, a practice that exists today. But as the national narrative aspired for modernity, the term also carried negative connotations, cast as a stereotype as backward, thus confirming their subordinate status as rural workers rather than land owners. Due to distance and isolation, many traditions and cultural and religious practices that emanate from such a background have survived, and have been instrumental in keeping the community intact. The spirit of Limnians as a people has always been strongly linked to their background and 'place' as an island, bounded by social context and geography.[68] Chryssanthopoulou's concept of 'ethno-regional identity' is highly applicable, a term that defines, in the Australian context, the:

> [I]ndividual and /or collective sense of identity and belonging felt by Greek Australians that derives from their attachment – socio-economic or symbolic or both – to the particular region within, or even outside Greece.[69]

This definition aptly describes the sense of attachment felt also by Limnians in the diaspora. Emerging values have arisen and are often connected through marriage, *προίκα* (dowry) and kinship, localised either within the village or with people from the neighbouring areas and include a strong agrarian identity that has been perpetuated in migration and symbolises Herzfeld's cultural intimacy, particularly with first generation Limnian men in the diaspora.

Family – the economic unit of survival

In rural communities, the family as an economic unit was vital for survival. Boys as young as eight years of age were expected to help with many of the daily farming duties. Jim

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[67] Michael Herzfeld, *The Body Impolitic: Artisans and Artifice in the Global Hierarchy of Value, (*Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 205-210.

[68] Afentoulis and Cleland, "Diaspora at the Crossroads", 7.

[69] Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender and Ethno-Regional Identity among Greek Australians, 202.

was 13 years old when he arrived in Australia in 1955 on his own. He was the oldest male of seven children born to an agricultural family. He says:

> I started helping on the farm at the age of eight. School was less important. We had to do whatever we had to do [on the farm] … We'd go home at night. Same thing every day ...seven days a week… we had no other choice…Everyone lived in the same way…that was the way people were living… (Jim, aged 73 years).[70]

Niki, one of four siblings, was seventeen when she arrived in Melbourne on her own. She expressed her feelings unreservedly:

> I didn't care about leaving, I was sick and tired of working in the cotton fields – weeding, picking and so on, it was very hard work…Panagiotis and I worked these fields (Niki, aged 68 years).[71]

Her brother, Panagiotis, would till the land with a horse. He was a couple of years older than his sister. Niki added that she was:

> Twelve or thirteen years old and very small and skinny. I was about forty kilos. I would plant the seeds, weed, hoe, water and collect the cotton. Our fields have water from a well for irrigation which made them very productive, irrigated fields would produce top quality cotton. The others just relied on God's hand…[72]

A productive family unit, as 'a kind of corporate enterprise'[73] with all family members contributing, was a central core value in a traditional agricultural family. The importance of education was often relegated to being less valuable in comparison to the productive participation in working the land. Large families and the strength of the extended family, the role and recognition of grandparents within the hierarchy of family, the village neighbourhood and community were all 'part and parcel' in the microcosm of a well-connected and integrated rural society.

Women – an essential part of the economic unit

Whilst the traditional structure was largely based on designated gender roles, casting women in the domestic and private domain and men in the public domain, in agricultural

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[70] Interview with Jim, 2 June 2013.

[71] Interview with Niki, 25 June 2013.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Gillian Bottomley, "A World Divided? Studies of Gender Relations in Modern Greece," *MANKIND,* 16: 3 (1986): 186.

communities,[74] women also had duties outside the home as an intrinsic part of the agricultural context along with many other members of the family. Cavounidis describes the family as 'the main economic cell of Greek society.'[75] Women, particularly, were economically active as 'domestic producers' in agriculture. In a substantial historiography of the music and folkloric life of Limnos, the authors re-iterate the point that 'agricultural work and animal husbandry was a family affair.'[76] In fact they assert that women were the major contributors of labour during the productive seasons in various ways, in addition to children of a certain age.[77] Compulsory drafting of men into the Greek army during the wars (early 1900s and 1940s) took them away from work on the land and from their families for substantial periods of time. Women were left to continue to manage the agricultural demands as best they could, and relied on whatever resources were available to them. Women in this context were resilient, hard-working, resourceful and reliant on the available family and kinship structure for support. Women were not only an essential part of the family unit on the domestic front as well as in agricultural production, within the family home, but they were also, producers of fabric and clothing which they transformed from the domestic raw materials such as cotton, silk and wool, into usable clothing and household goods, as well as for their daughters' dowries. They essentially ran small textile operations in the home to provide for their families as well as to supplement family earnings through needlework, textiles and various other traditional crafts which were done during the quieter winter months.

The role and purpose of the institution of marriage and the dowry have strong economic functions in traditional communities that generate social norms and practices in social life and often become perpetuated over generations. It is both an economic and social means 'to regulate the property relations between parents and daughters and

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[74] Jill Dubisch, ed, *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 11.

[75] Jennifer Cavounidis, "Capitalist Development and Women's Work in Greece", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies,* 1,2 (1983): 323.

[76] Chtouris and Mbakalis, 'Social and Productive Structure,' 102.

[77] Ibid., 102

between husband and wife on the basis of the rules which emanate from the institution of the dowry.'[78] Thus in Greek society and on Limnos, the institution of the dowry drew its strength from 'its economic function within the institution of marriage and from its social function as a powerful status symbol.'[79]

Island Living – 'A blessing and a curse'

Before the end of Ottoman rule, with a population of about 25,000,[80] most people, as stated earlier, were primary producers in a subsistence economy that had not changed for centuries. They were involved predominantly in the production of grain and farming of animals both for the benefit of their Ottoman rulers, who were the primary land owners and their own survival. Stories in folklore tell us that Limnos at the time was extremely productive, particularly as a wheat growing island and that, much of the wheat produced would be grown for the Ottoman Empire. Subsistence farming and crop-sharing goes back to the Ottoman era.

Many locals say that the geographic position of Limnos has been both 'a blessing and a curse.' As noted above its geographic location was always significant strategically. During the early years of the twentieth century and the inter-war years, the island was deemed important when external forces fought or struggled for land or sea sovereignty and territorial appropriations amongst the dominant powers in the region. In more recent times, evidence that there are natural resources in the area again has revitalised the interest of various groups towards these territories, placing the island in a precarious and

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[78] Jane Lambiri-Dimaki, "Dowry in Modern Greece: An Institution at the Crossroads Between Persistence and Decline," in *The Marriage Bargain: Women and Dowries in European History,* ed. Mariona A. Kaplan (USA: The Haworth Press, Inc., 1985), 168.

[79] Ibid.,177.

[80] Gardika-Katsiadaki, "Η Λήμνος και το Αιγαίο στους Βαλκανικούς Πολέμους" (I *Limnos kai to Aegeo stous Balkanikous Polemous*; "Limnos and the Aegean in the Balkan Wars"), 103. Whereas, Chtouris and Mbakalis, in "*Κοινωνική και Παραγωγική Δομή",* (*Kinoniki kai Paragogiki Domi;* Social and Productive Structures), 51, talk about an indicative population of approximately 30,000 at the turn of the century, whereas in 1910-11, it is reduced to 26,378, potentially explained by the Muslim exodus at the eve of the Island's liberation from Ottoman rule.

sometimes threatening and dangerous situation well outside its control.[81] When things were stable and the interests of world politics shifted, the island of Limnos was left to its own devices economically, agriculturally and socially by the central powers of government and public authorities as well as external forces. The distance and geographic isolation from the mainland gave it the status of a 'peripheral island' a status that has impacted on its ability to gain economic and development resources. Transportation routes (by air or sea) have commonly been neglected even in contemporary times and so has its infrastructure development, except where military interests were at stake. Limnos was developed as a military base since its re-militarisation status was granted in the inter-war years.[82] For the Greek state, Limnos was often only seen to be important as a militarily strategic island. Significant investment was made during critical periods as various other political manoeuvres and alliances were forming in the region.

Its people continued living in small hamlets and villages across the island, as they had traditionally done for centuries, worked the land and relied largely on the forces of nature. Kontellis outlines that 'a dry climate enabled the cultivation of grain crops, a range of legumes, sesame seeds, cotton, grapes and vineyards and almonds.'[83] The production of honey and cheese, using sheep and goat's milk, and fishing ensured that there was usually something available on the island for both domestic use as well as bartering between families and the community generally. Tobacco farming, an enhanced agricultural activity, was almost exclusively undertaken by Asia Minor refugees, particularly those living in the villages of the north-east corner of the island.[84] However, in the mid-thirties, the cultivation of tobacco was suddenly abolished, most likely due to external factors such as the nationalisation of the tobacco industry, global changes in the markets and the redirection of national priorities. This event had severe consequences

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[81] Mbitos, "Το νησί της Λήμνου: Η Ιστορία και η Στρατηγική της Αξία" (*To Nisi tis Limnou: I Istoria ke I Stratigiki tis Axia; "*The Island of Limnos: Its History and Strategic Value"), 202.

[82] Dontas, *Greece and Turkey: The Regime of the Straits, 145.*

[83] Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), 23.

[84] Tsotroudis, *Λήμνος 1912 – 2012: Εκατό χρόνια ελευθερίας και προόδου (Limnos 1912 - 2012: Ekato Chronia Eleftherias Ke Proodou; Limnos 1912 - 2012: One Hundred Years of Freedom and Progress),* 198.

upon the livelihood of many people, especially the refugees who were skilled and reliant on this type of farming.[85]

In *Limnos 1912-2012: A Hundred Years of Freedom and Progress,* Tsotroudis offers a chronological review of fifty years (1915-1964) of newspaper stories covered by the eponymous Limnos based newspaper.[86] He documents, through these chronicles, observations and trends in the development and progress of Limnos, providing a rare social and economic insight. For example, he chronicles the various evolutionary adaptations of the agrarian economy and the waves of different produce coming into existence that were largely driven by external forces, that traces the impact on the economy at each phase.

Another successful agricultural event was the cultivation of cotton which boomed in Limnos particularly during the mid-1930s to the early 1960s. Tragaras, writer, poet and local historian, writes that, 'from the early 1950s a truly revolutionary, pioneering event in the agricultural economy of the island'[87] began and that was the unprecedented, extensive and systematic cultivation of cotton. Cultivation of the aptly named *λευκό χρυσάφι* (white gold) [88] started in the early twentieth century, initially for domestic purposes using the traditionally known farming methods. It was thought of as both a blessing and a curse. Post-war mechanization largely replaced the traditional agricultural and farming methods that changed rural production in an unparalleled way. The hard-earned savings of farmers from many parts of the island went into the purchase of machinery. According to Tragaras, many farmers borrowed and went into debt in order

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[85] Ibid., 270

[86] Ibid., 77-406.

[87] Stavros Tragaras, ed. *Πνευματικές Εκδηλώσεις του Συλλόγου Ατσικιωτών Λήμνου* (*Pnevmatikes Ekdilosis tou Syllogou Atsikioton Limnou; Social and Intellectual Events Undertaken by the Association of Atsikioton, Limnos*), (Athens, Nea Philadelphia: Agiarmolas Publishing, 2008), 38.

[88] *The 'White Gold'* metaphor has been borrowed by Tragaras from the title of the book by a significant local writer and story-teller who weaves reality, history and imagination together, to capture essential aspects of life on the island of Limnos, including cotton production which transformed farming fortunes. See Evangelia Mpoutloukou–Brettaki, *Ο «Λευκός Χρυσός» της Λήμνου και Άλλες Ιστορίες* (*O Lefkos Chrisos tis Limnou kai alles Istories;* The "White Gold" of Limnos and Other Stories), (Athens: Self-published, 2003).

to acquire this technology.[89] Throughout Limnos, machinery powered by diesel began to replace manual methods of farming, new wells were being dug out for the precious underground water sources and, as Tragaras also notes, new and strange words began to enter the lexicon of farming communities for the first time, reflecting machinery parts and functions that were unknown previously.[90] This development gave the farming community and landholders an enormous production boost as cotton had become a sought- after natural fibre in demand worldwide, and Limnos had become renowned for its quality cotton, only second to the famous Egyptian cotton crops which were deemed world standard. In fact, during the decade of the 1950s and early 1960s, cotton production was overwhelmingly the best agricultural product in the economy. Another significant historical event that occurred at the time was the establishment of the first farmer's co-operative in 1956 in the north-east village of Atsiki, which was a great innovation and the prelude to future coordination and agricultural management of crops. Tragaras, a passionate proponent of Limnian tradition, culture and history describes this phenomenon thus:

> The cotton of Limnos, the magic plant of over a thousand uses, was top quality, the longest and the most resistant fibre in Greece. From the beginning of the decade of the 50s, the Limnians were involved in their own rural revolution.[91]

Unfortunately, this effort did not augur well for the longer term. After less than two successful decades, the industry collapsed due to a combination of factors. One of the primary reasons, attributed by local lore was the fast and growing expansion of cotton farming in other parts of Greece such as central Thessaly and Macedonia as they had large expanses of land and could farm much more efficiently and extensively in the 1960s, resulting in lower prices. Other associated factors included the rising costs of petrol,[92] particularly due to distance and transport limitations of the island, as well as other farming costs which made growing cotton economically unviable. Local Limnians believe that

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[89] Ibid., 39.

[90] Ibid., 39

[91] Ibid., 40.

[92] Ibid., 40

there was no government support to farmers from this island at the time.[93] The sudden outbreak of a plant disease referred to as the *ρόδινο σκουλήκι / σκόληξ* (red worm) and land over-use decimated the industry by the mid-1960s. Newspaper clippings and oral testimony gathered by Tragaras substantiates the link between the demise of the cotton industry and the parallel and extensive emigration of young people and families particularly during this decade. These events again illuminate the allegory of 'a blessing and a curse'. My own interviews provide similar stories and consistently confirm the contribution of the demise of the cotton industry as a key economic and historical instigator for mass migration, along with other parallel reasons. Such external events could not but impact and influence this relatively isolated but naturally endowed island, galvanising people's imaginings of migration, yet again, as both a blessing and a curse.

The agricultural and economic fluctuations provide valuable insight into this fledgling agrarian economy and its vulnerabilities. The oral testimony of post-war immigrants in this study, who were primarily from the agrarian class, confirms a story of lives affected by forces that they did not always understand. External events that impacted upon families and the Limnos economy were substantially outside their control and were sometimes significantly misunderstood and found to be perplexing for many of them as well.

The Great Migration Wave

As stated earlier, the experience of migration for Limnians has been an important legacy since the late nineteenth century. The Greek-Limnian diaspora of Alexandria, for example, has been significant because of a strong bond to the homeland that influenced major philanthropic contributions and the significant wealth and property ownership which is still visible today. The conspicuousness of neo-classical buildings constructed in the capital and several villages of origin, as well as the significant large agricultural land holdings acquired by entrepreneurial and successful migrants, remain discernible

[93] Ibid., 40

symbols of the success of a generation.[94] Soon after the German occupation some people again, with great reluctance so soon after their lived experiences under the occupiers, went to Germany as guest workers. Kontellis recounts a moving observation in this translated paragraph that reflects circumstances in his village:

> Consequently, the road to *ξενιτιά* (a foreign land), was unavoidable, because by securing a job in a foreign land, the capacity of individuals to secure an economic future for themselves and their families meant hope for their children's future. They ignored the bitter past, drowned their pain and migrated to Germany.[95]

After the Second World War, Greece's military and security forces approximated a quarter of a million by 1949.[96] Though American aid was vital to economic recovery, 'it was administered as part of a strategy for rehabilitation od western Europe.'[97] Clogg contends that 'much of the American aid that in Western Europe was being devoted to economic development was channelled into military objectives'in Greece.[98] As he says:

> It soon became apparent that the primary objective of post-civil war governments was the containment of communism, on both the domestic and international planes, rather than any serious effort to reform or restructure society.[99]

This legacy impacted many parts of Greece and the situation in Limnos at the time. The political and economic efforts of subsequent governments on mainland Greece was possibly 'too little, too late' for the small population of Limnos. Greece's post-war economic development had its centre-piece in 'bricks and mortar' and 'between 1961 and 1980 no less than 65 per cent of investment was in construction, much of it in the form of housing for rapidly growing urban populations.'[100] The flight from the countryside to urban centres (which began during the civil war) escalated in the post-war period. This

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[94] Chtouris and Mbakalis, "Κοινωνική και Παραγωγική Δομή", (*Kinoniki kai Paragogiki Domi;* Social and Productive Structures), 163, 165, 167, 169, 170.

[95] Kontellis, *Το Πορτιανού της Λήμνου* (*To Portianou tis Limnou*; *Portianou of Limnos*), 115.

[96] Clogg, *A Concise History*, 143.

[97] Close, *Greece Since 1945*, 44.

[98] Clogg, *A Concise History*, 143.

[99] Ibid., 143.

[100] Ibid., 145.

resulted in a 'reversal of the proportions of the urban and rural populations, from 38 and 48 per cent to 53 and 35 per cent respectively'[101] in the period of 1951 and 1971. The post-war Papagos government reforms that seemed to apply to urban cities did not in fact translate those benefits into agriculture, particularly for agrarian islands such as Limnos. The village communities continued to participate in a range of inefficient agricultural activities, using the existing farming methods, which in the main enabled families to survive. The events of war and the German occupation highlighted what can happen in a rural context when the continuity of farming is disrupted by human intervention, which is also compounded by the uncertain risks of natural causes in a rural environment. Hence the poverty and significant deprivation experienced by most people especially during the 1940s left a legacy about the precariousness of a vulnerable economy which remained forever present.

Following foreign occupation and the ravages of war, the humble citizens of Limnos were left feeling bitter, disappointed and with a lack of future options, particularly amongst younger people and returned soldiers. It was becoming obvious that the rural means and opportunities available to the next generation were very limited. Large families, small and historically scattered land holdings, the lack of agricultural infrastructure, water and irrigation means, policies and price structures, left many people feeling disempowered, without agency and struggling to make a living. They were disillusioned especially after years of fighting in wars, experiencing occupation and witnessing the aftermath. Most large farms and cultivatable land was owned by either the Greek Archdioceses and their monasteries or a minority of land holders from an earlier generation of émigrés who had returned in the inter war period. Most of their properties were available as lease holdings and were contracted under crop-sharing arrangements. The typical annual contract arrangements were inequitable in many cases and always advantaged the land owner over the people who worked the land – those who chased the goats and sheep, tilled the land and grew the crops. They would find themselves 'short-changed' at the end of the crop season often with inadequate resources to support and

[101] Ibid., 146.

maintain their families and secure their future progress. Research evidence, while scare, confirms[102] oral testimony that the relationship was exploitative and was characterised as inequitable. Others, usually large landless families, had to survive on seasonal labour and subsistence lives and were particularly affected by these circumstances.

With the post-war economy of Greece continuing to rely on external aid, emigrant remittances and earnings from other sources such as maritime labour for shipping companies,[103] mass migration from many parts of Greece became inevitable, as Close and others[104] re-iterate:

> For the sizeable proportion of the population living among mountains or on small islands, there was little hope of economic improvemet save by migration to cities or abroad.[105]

Limnos was part of this trend. A lack of prospects for the younger generation of men and women due to lack of job opportunities inevitably led to mass migration and the rapid de-population of the villages of Limnos during the critical post war decades of the 1950s to 1970s. The urbanisation of cities like Athens and Thessaloniki and other regional towns in Greece with better employment prospects resulted in subsequent internal migration to these urban and semi-urban centres, particularly from the seventies onwards, which further impacted the declining population of this island. The local eponymous newspaper, reported that the island's population was estimated to be at 30,000 people in 1949.[106] The National Statistical Service of Greece shows the more precise population

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[102] Chtouris and Mbakalis, "Κοινωνική και Παραγωγική Δομή", (*Kinoniki kai Paragogiki Domi;* Social and Productive Structures), 62.

[103] Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, 146.

[104] Seraphim Seferiades, "Small rural ownership, subsistence agriculture, and peasant protest in interwar Greece: the agrarian question recast", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 17, no. 2 (October 1999), 292.

[105] Close, *Greece Since 1945,* 4.

[106] Tsotroudis, *Λήμνος 1912 – 2012: Εκατό χρόνια ελευθερίας και προόδου (Limnos 1912 - 2012: Ekato Chronia Eleftherias Ke Proodou; Limnos 1912 - 2012: One Hundred Years of Freedom and Progress),* 325.

figure to be at 28,865 at the 1951 statistical count,[107] which had fallen to 15,721 by 1981[108], which may be attributed to both internal and external migration occurring during this thirty-year period. The same newspaper also proclaimed that by 1949 there were already an estimated 15,000 Limnians in the diaspora.[109] The spiralling population decline had a significant impact on the island's economic viability and social stability at the end of this momentous epoch.

The largest ever wave of migration from Limnos to Australia, between the1950s to 1970s, is estimated to have been in the thousands.[110] Perhaps half the population of Limnos migrated during this period, either externally to countries such as Australia, or internally to more prosperous regions and cities and large towns within Greece. Whilst data on migration to Australia from the island are not readily available, secondary research, oral histories and ethnographic evidence confirms the profile of Limnian immigrants to Australia, as largely single males during the 1950s, single women from 1956 and family unification groups from the late 1950s and 1960s. Most men had low levels of education and were sometimes illiterate and unskilled, and usually from agrarian backgrounds, though there were some exceptions. Young women were mainly primary school educated, a few having some secondary schooling and many with training in dress making and some in hairdressing. The majority had been involved in domestic work within the family and in agriculture. Most research participants had never left the island

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[107] Georgeos Giangakis, *Νησιολόγιο των Κατοικούμενων Ελληνικών Νησιών, 1940-1991, Η πληθυσμιακή και η σποραδική ανάκαμψη, η συνεχιζόμενη ερήμωση εθνικώς κρίσιμων χώρων (Nisiologio Ton Katikoumenon Ellinikon Nision, 1940-1991; Population Census Records of the Greek Islands, 1940-1991 and Trend Analysis of Improvements and Population Decline*). (Angistri, Greece: E.E. Neophitos, 1995), 27.

[108] Ibid., 27.

[109] Tsotroudis, *Λήμνος 1912 – 2012: Εκατό χρόνια ελευθερίας και προόδου (Limnos 1912 - 2012: Ekato Chronia Eleftherias Ke Proodou; Limnos 1912 - 2012: One Hundred Years of Freedom and Progress),* 326.

[110] Recorded data are not available either at departure or arrival points that specify the regional or locality of origin of migrants. The Australian Bureau of Statistics and Census data and the immigration data in the Australian National Archives only record nationality or country of origin. It is not unusual that municipal authorities in Greece were unable to provide departure data as they were never kept by the authorities in Greece. Shipping records held in the Australian National Archives that may stipulate region or locality of each arriving immigrant to Australia by ship can only be accessed if the family name is known and this would be an extraordinary task to undertake requiring a lot of resources and initiative to achieve.

until emigration. Some individuals from families that were ‘asset rich’ in terms of land ownership, due to the rewards of prior family migration under similar circumstances, also decided to emigrate. They settled across most Australian states, with the largest numbers being attracted to the cities of Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide.

Thus, on the strength of available historical evidence about the social, economic and migration history of this Aegean island, combined with oral testimony, the emerging picture is of a Greek island that, like the wind, has been pushed and pulled and swayed by events, politics and the influences of largely external forces for generations. The resilience of the Limnian people has been evident throughout the various periods and ‘wind cycles’, an apt metaphor for the island’s history, that again, conjures up the term, *anemoessa*. Survival needs have shaped the character of this island’s people over many centuries. Those who had opted for the path of leaving, whether through external migration to other parts of the world or through internal migration within Greece, have never abandoned the idea of an ‘island home’, real or imagined, a theme explored in this research project.

Post-migration Limnos

The social and economic transformation of Limnos has been on-going, progressing over a long time, with an impetus for change driven often by external forces and opportunities that were created in the context of consequential events, not unlike the contemporary financial disasters and an economic recession that has gripped the country for just over ten years. Mass migration for instance was one such event with unprecedented consequences. Twenty years of post–war mass migration (external and internal) left villages depleted of youth, labour resources, skills and productive capacity. Over time, a lot of land use for cultivation was either abandoned or reduced significantly. Hundreds of houses in most villages were suddenly left vacant or occupied solely by elderly parents whose capacity to maintain these properties, significantly diminished. Migration created new opportunities for younger people left behind and the newer generations. Land reform, significant infrastructure projects and the reinforced militarisation of the island transformed and modernised many aspects of the rural environment. Significant roadwork projects undertaken and resourced initially by the armed forces positioned on the island from the 1960s, added to mobility and completely transformed the island’s internal

connections and transportation capacity. Farming became more viable and productive in an environment of fewer farmers competing for more available land. Subsequent agricultural reforms, the introduction of subsidies to farmers, a state sponsored health and welfare system and rural pensions substantially contributed to an evolving modernisation of the island. Whereas in the initial years before some of the reforms took place, migrants of the Limnian diaspora had continued to contribute through financial remittances, helping to support the remaining family members, extended family and ageing parents.

The expansion of education facilities, tourism and the building industry towards the end of the twentieth century led to a significant transformation from a purely agricultural economy to a much more diversified economy in trades, tourism and health and social services. The advent of digital communication and technology finally brought the island into a global environment which benefited many aspects of the economy and has facilitated social progress and development. Tourism investment in large hotels (especially in Myrina, Plati and the North-east island region), which began in the 1990s, was aided significantly by this phenomenon in more recent years.[111] The construction of a major airport with international carrier run-ways, originally intended to serve the needs of military personnel and public servants and their mobility, was another significant development that contributed to the expansion of tourism and the island's social and economic advancement. Though outside the scope of this thesis, anecdotal evidence is emerging that the island's progress is now hampered by the economic depression, impacting particularly, the younger generation and its capacity to remain and survive on the island. Migration and re-migration are potential prospects for this generation and is a conversation widely held in contemporary times.

Migrants to Australia originally left with the intention of returning to their homeland within a few years to re-build their agricultural operations and initiate business ventures with their savings. Such imaginings lingered on for a long time and emerge as a

[111] Chtouris and Mbakalis, "Κοινωνική και Παραγωγική Δομή", (*Kinoniki kai Paragogiki Domi*; Social and Productive Structures), 159.

constant theme in the oral testimony discussed in other chapters. However, very few returned to re-settle, and those who tried often found themselves unable to negotiate the new and changing environment. A small number of families did return in the late1970s, though several of these families, have told me that they are mostly regretful for their decisions to remain in Greece, particularly in the context of recent years when Greece's social, political and economic life has been so fraught with challenges. Some of the returnees even went back to Australia again, finding re-settlement in their homeland too difficult. Others have attempted to send their young adult children back to Australia for further education and employment.

The observed pattern of frequent visits to the homeland by Limnian immigrants, now long-term settlers in Australia, has influenced the undertaking of this research project. During the first decades of migration, people tended to visit 'home' out of obligation to family as well as for their own nostalgia and longing. Once they had reconciled not to return to Limnos permanently, many undertook a progressive refurbishment and re-building of their ancestral homes that enabled them to visit on a relatively frequent basis, especially upon retirement from work in Australia. A new pattern of return by the next generation also began to occur in the 1990s. Today, the villages are remarkably transformed by these initiatives. Panagiotis, 73 years of age at the time of interview, recalls his village when he returned in 1980 thus:

> When I climbed the hill of Agios Thanasis (local church and a vantage point and vista overlooking most of the village) I saw that sixty percent of the roofs were old and dilapidated…I thought, "was this, my village?" But thanks god, this became better. The houses are being restored and the village is even better. I feel a sense of pride in my village. [112]

Panagiotis initially migrated to Melbourne in 1965 and later returned to Greece as a successful business man, with his young family to explore the feasibility of permanent resettlement. He subsequently found this very difficult to do and reconciled to remain in Australia. He now spends six months in Greece and the rest of the year in Melbourne. He

[112] Interview with Panagiotis, 23 May 2014.

is one of many who have opted for this 'dual life' balance, with his adult children visiting the island frequently, having formed a significant attachment.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of pivotal historical events that have shaped a whole generation of people who opted to transform their lives through migration. Equally the events influenced and shaped the lives of those who remained on the island following the tumultuous period of the mass exodus of almost half of the island's population through external and internal migration. The legacy in the various phases and the ongoing experience with departure and return is crucial to understanding this island's diaspora. Their sense of belonging is linked to a unique island identity that has influenced both those who left and those who stayed, as well as future generations. The social, cultural and economic context of this rural, traditional community viewed through the geo-political frame illustrates a dramatic cycle of migration after the Second World War and is a key contextual consideration in this research project. The dissertation theme chapters that follow affirm and build on these contextualising events that characterise those who migrated and settled in Australia. The research further links those influences to the formation of the Limnian community in the host-land, its evolving diasporic identity and people's sense of belonging across generations. Their lived experiences and island history, combined with a strong sense of ethno-regional identity and island connection, are key influencers in their migration journey and the construction of a diasporic identity. In the next chapter, the thesis examines the historiography of migration more generally and the evolution of Greek post-war mass migration within the social and political context of Australia's immigration policy and how arrivals went about their establishment in a new country and the obstacles and opportunities that facilitated their success (or otherwise). In the final section of Chapter Two, an overview of oral history literature explicates how oral history, its application as a conceptual tool and method, pertains to history and migration research.

Chapter 2 Migration Historiography and Oral History

> *'Migration…a metaphor for the complex forces which are integral to the radical transformation of modernity.'*[1]

> *'Oral history, by offering an alternative to a dominant narrative of migration, can serve as a form of shock therapy…deconstructing [sic] ethnic stereotypes and reshaping…[sic] perceptions of both history and contemporary social life.'*[2]

This chapter examines, the Greek diaspora and its formation in the context of Australia's pre- and post-war immigration policies. It notes that the experiences of immigrants are often missing in historiography, and that this limits our understanding of diasporic groups, such as the island community of Limnos. Tamis defines *Hellenic Diaspora* as 'those Greeks, who despite their temporary or permanent expatriation to foreign lands for any reason, continue to maintain cultural, political, economic or social relations with their country of ancestry and descent.'[3] In fact, he estimates that there are between four and four and a half million Greeks residing outside the boundaries of Greece and Cyprus.[4] Others have claimed that this number globally could be closer to seven million.[5] Greeks began to arrive in Australia from the late 1880s followed by chain migration[6] from the

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[1] Nikos Papastergiadis, *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalisation, Deterritorialization and Hybridity*, (Massachusetts, USA: Polity and Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2000), 2.

[2] Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes, eds, *Oral History and Public Memories*, 226.

[3] Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia*, 7.

[4] Ibid., 7.

[5] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives*, 8.

[6] Defined as 'a movement of immigrants who come to join and live and work with their more established relatives, friends and compatriots who sponsor them…' See Michael Tsounis, "The History of Australia's Greeks: Some Signposts and Issues" in *Afstraliotes Hellenes: Greeks in Australia*, eds, A. Kapardis and A. Tamis (Australia: River Seine Press, 1988), 17.

islands of Kythira, Ithaki and Kastellorizo. Tamis notes that 'other important sources of emigration were the islands of Samos, Lemnos, Crete, Lefkada, Cefalonia and the Dodecanese.'[7] Consequently, Greek community institutions began to form in several states with Tsounis describing their formation as significant 'signposts in [Greek migrant] history…'[8] However, it was the mass migration during the period 1952-1974 that led to the largest emigration of Greek citizens to a range of destinations around the world, including Australia. Tastsoglou describes the exodus, particularly from rural areas, to be 'in parallel with peaking immigration toward countries with well-developed secondary sectors or resource-rich economies.'[9] This event resulted from the cumulative economic devastation of several wars in the first half of the twentieth century and the social and political turbulence following the Second World War and Greece's Civil War (1944-49). Instability in Greece followed through to the seven-year military dictatorship that ended in 1974. Almost one in six members of the Greek population left in the period 1945-1974.[10]

Greek Migration and Australia's Immigration History

During the first half of the twentieth century, Australia's immigration policies were restrictive and racist.[11] The *Immigration Restriction Act of 1901*, known as the White Australia Policy, restricted immigration from Asia, Middle East, the Pacific Islands and Southern Europe based on racial criteria. During the 1920s and throughout the 1930s, the Australian government's immigration policies restricted entry for people of non-Anglo

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[7] Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia*, 33.

[8] Tsounis, "The History of Australia's Greeks," 14.

[9] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives,* 8.

[10] Rosetos Fakiolas and Russell King, "Emigration, Return, Immigration: A Review and Evaluation of Greece's Postwar Experience of International Migration." International Journal of Population Geography, 2 (1996): 172.

[11] Castles et al., *Mistaken Identity*; James Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The story of Australian immigration* , (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land*; Chiara De Lazzari and Bruno Mascitelli, "Migrant "Assimilation" in Australia: The Adult Migrant English Program from 1947 Until 1971,".in *The European Diaspora in Australia: An Interdisciplinary Perspective,* eds, Bruno Mascitelli, Sonia Mycak and Gerardo Papalia (UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 190-207.

Celtic background and favoured English-speaking immigrants. Immigration restrictions were also specifically aimed at reducing the intake of southern Europeans, including Cypriots.[12] The White Australia policy was abolished in 1973, under a Labor Government, having been substantially modified in the previous decade. Until this time, government policies on immigration continued to be ethnocentric and assimilationist. An early 1950s Department of Immigration circular explicitly demonstrates this reality. It states:

> As a means of curtailing the entry of the less desirable types … it has been decided that, as a rule, non-British Europeans and Cypriots over the age of sixteen years seeking to enter Australia for residence shall be required to pass a literacy test … Failure to pass the test shall entail rejection for admission as a general rule. Where the head of the family fails to pass the test any member of his family … should normally be rejected[13]

The literacy test, however, could be in any European language, and this depended, as consistently reported, on the discretion of immigration officers.[14] An oral history of migration officers, which included the testimony of those based in Athens in the 1950s, highlights the ambivalence displayed by some migration officers and manner in which they behaved towards applicants during the selection process, as evidenced in the following testimony regarding the cursory English test:

> There was one chap in Greece, a selection officer, who would reject people at the drop of a hat. He thought up a trick question which was disgraceful. He would point to the ceiling and ask, 'what colour is the floor?'[15]

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[12] Gary Freeman and James Jupp, eds, *Nations of Immigrants: Australia, the United States, and International Migration*, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1992), 4.

[13] National Archives of Australia: Department of Immigration (NAA: C3939/2, 1955/25/75049), New South Wales Branch; C3939, Correspondence files, single number series with 'N' (New South Wales) prefix. 1952-1977; N1955/25/75049, Immigration-Literacy test for Non-British Europeans and Cypriots, 1952-1959.

[14] Dimitreas, *Transplanting the Agora*, 142; National Archives of Australia: Attorney-General's Department (NAA: A1559, 1901/17) Central Office; A1559, Assent Copies of Acts of Parliament. 1901-1901/17, Act - Immigration Restriction Act, 1901-1901; David Pope and Peter Shergold, *ASEAN-Australian Immigration and the Demise of 'White Australia',* (Canberra and Kuala Lumpur: ASEAN-Australia Joint Research Project,1985).

[15] Harry Martin, *Angels and Arrogant Gods: Migration officers and migrants reminisce 1945-85*, (Australia: Australian Government Publishing Service and Globe Press Pty Ltd, 1989), 70.

Thus, Australia's evolving immigration policy, from 'White Australia' and assimilation (1901-1960s) to multiculturalism (1973-2000s), is the symbolic historical backdrop for interpreting and understanding the migration experience.

Post-war migration to Australia was indeed facilitated by the country's dual policy objectives. Firstly, it was the perceived need for security due to its small population, captured in the populist cry of "populate or perish" following Japan's attack on Darwin in 1942. The post-war need for reconstruction and the economy's need to drive manufacturing and infrastructure development and growth was the second critical reason for immigration, thus attracting much needed migrant labour, aided by the ideology of assimilation policies. Australia's active role and foundational member status on the *Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration* (ICEM), established in 1952, led to the establishment of the first Australian Immigration Office in Athens in April 1952.[16] These events were indicative of a significant Government immigration policy shift towards European migration which coincided with Greece's post-war massive unemployment and cumulative social, political and economic devastation. The ICEM facilitated 'assisted' and 'non-assisted' migration which resulted ultimately in 'the transplantation of over 250,000 Greek migrants from 1952 to 1974' to Australia.[17] This magnitude included those Greeks who came from other parts of the world.[18] About 60,000 returned to Greece during the period 1947 to 1979,[19] though De Stoop cites slightly different figures, noting that by 1995 'it is estimated that at least 30,000 Greek-Australians had returned to Greece to live permanently or semi-permanently.'[20] Many re-

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[16] Ioannis Limnios–Sekeris, "Η Μετανάστευση των Ελλήνων στην Αυστραλία κατά τις Πρώτες Μεταπολεμικές Δεκαετίες" *(I Metanastefsi ton Ellinon stin Australia kata tis Protes Metapolemikes Dekaeties;* "Greek Migration to Australia in the Post-World War Years."), (MA, University of Crete, 2013), 69.

[17] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives,* 12.

[18] Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia*, 47.

[19] Reginald Appleyard, "The Greeks in Australia: A New Diasporic Hellenism", in *Greece on the Road to Democracy: from Junta to PASOK, 1974-1986*, ed. Speros Vryonis Jr. (New York: Orpheus Publishing Inc, 1991), 374.

[20] Domenique Francois De Stoop, *The Greeks of Melbourne*, (Melbourne: Transnational Publishing Company, 1996), 30.

emigrated once they had realised that they could not re-establish themselves or their families in the homeland.

Australia's high labour demands in the manufacturing sector and the need for unskilled or semi-skilled workers provided opportunities for southern European immigrants, including Greeks. The first organised migration program from Greece to Australia, with incentives to encourage limited and assisted migration, was The Single Men from Rural Areas and Unskilled Workers Program that began as an indentured labour scheme to provide unskilled labour for government infrastructure projects. It targeted single men, initially from rural areas and unskilled workers. During 1953 –1954, four thousand men were included in this program from various parts of Greece. The eligibility and selection criteria were indeed stringent and adhered to Australia's White Australia policy.[21] Two-year contracts had to be signed upon acceptance of an offer, agreeing to go and work wherever allocated by government authorities. Under this scheme, travel costs were fully covered by the program and enabled many poor Greek citizens to migrate at a time of great need. With the success of the program and the unprecedented economic and labour force needs of Australia's post-war reconstruction, ICEM extended the program more widely from 1954, thereby increasing the immigration numbers substantially. During the decade of 1953-1963, ICEM assisted 13,327 Greeks as indentured workers.[22] However, ICEM stopped recruiting in 1957 and again at other times in the early sixties due to economic downturns globally and locally. Australia's increasing unemployment during such times, as well as the opposition from different sectors of the community, especially trade unions fearful of the loss of jobs to newly arrived immigrants, were significant factors that inextricably aligned migration policy to the economic environment. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, changes in migration numbers reflects the parallel state of the economy in Australia.[23] Only about a third of

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[21] Limnios – Sekeris, "Η Μετανάστευση των Ελλήνων στην Αυστραλία κατά τις Πρώτες Μεταπολεμικές Δεκαετίες" *(I Metanastefsi ton Ellinon stin Australia kata tis Protes Metapolemikes Dekaeties;* "Greek Migration to Australia in the Post-World War Years."), 70-71.

[22] Ibid., 75.

[23] Ibid., 76.

Greek immigrants were 'assisted' under the ICEM program.[24] The majority were 'independent' migrants who were sponsored by family members or compatriots and assisted in their settlement through the community without reliance on the programs offered by the Australian Government. This was substantially the case with Limnian immigrants.

ICEM's Single Women's Program began in 1954 when Australia, on the back of the Canadian model, was involved in the selection of 64 single women for domestic service. The program was extended in 1956 and also commenced in 1957 for New Zealand.[25] Following this 'experiment', the Single Women's Program was incorporated under the newly established joint committee of ICEM and the Greek Department of Labour, and from 1956 was to oversee a range of migration training programs that targeted women in the 21-35 age range, who were single, widows and separated women without children, literate, deemed poor and with parental consent who were able to migrate.[26] The candidates received training, free of cost, in using electrical and other domestic appliances, basic food preparation, personal hygiene and manners as well as lessons in rudimentary English. They were also provided with an orientation program to do with life in Australia. By 1967, a total of 6,780 single women had been assisted to migrate under these various ICEM training schemes and by 1973, 8,763 Greek women who completed the program had emigrated to Australia.[27] ICEM research shows that 63% of women were from villages, 10% from islands and 27% from cities, and that between 1961 and 1965, the numbers of assisted women exceeded those of men.[28] The success of

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[24] In the period 1947-1972 only 72,449 of the total of about 214,304 Greek immigrants received government assistance, the rest were sponsored. See Dimitreas, *Transplanting the Agora*, 158.

[25] Limnios – Sekeris, "Η Μετανάστευση των Ελλήνων στην Αυστραλία κατά τις Πρώτες Μεταπολεμικές Δεκαετίες" *(I Metanastefsi ton Ellinon stin Australia kata tis Protes Metapolemikes Dekaeties;* "Greek Migration to Australia in the Post-World War Years."), 78.

[26] Ibid., 79.

[27] C. Alexandraki, "Services rendered by ICM to Migrant and Refugee Women" *International Migration*, 19 (1981): 225-240.

[28] Limnios – Sekeris, "Η Μετανάστευση των Ελλήνων στην Αυστραλία κατά τις Πρώτες Μεταπολεμικές Δεκαετίες" *(I Metanastefsi ton Ellinon stin Australia kata tis Protes Metapolemikes Dekaeties;* "Greek Migration to Australia in the Post-World War Years."), 82.

this program was closely related to the lack of gender balance in Australia generally and as mentioned earlier, within the Greek community in particular. This problem was identified from as early as 1955 and featured in both the Australian and Greek community press. In 1955, Thesseas Marmaras,[29] himself a Limnian immigrant and businessman, influential community leader and philanthropist, was authorised by the Honourable Harold Holt, MP and then Minister for Immigration and National Affairs, to visit Greece and request the Greek government to permit the immigration of single women to Australia. With some effort, he was able to convince the Greek government to grant permission initially for six young single women, to be escorted by him to leave for Australia.[30] But, according to Tamis, it was not until 1961 that the unrestricted immigration of women really began.[31]

A joint program between the World Council of Churches (WCC) and ICEM operated a parallel loan scheme for over ten years between 1952 – 1967 to provide financial assistance for potential immigrants who would be sponsored by family and kin. This program provided personal loans to cover travel costs through the *Revolving Fund*, as it was called, to which ICEM, WCC and other philanthropic institutions made financial contributions. The research of Limnios-Sekeris shows that in the period 1953 to 1965 a total of 33,767 Greek persons were assisted under this scheme.[32] Close to 6,000 nominated 'dependents and family re-union' persons were also assisted. Many eligible Limnian men and women and families were assisted with travel loans during this period of mass migration. By the 1996 Census, Greek-born settlers could be found in every state and territory of Australia, although 'the numerically largest concentrations were in the States of Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia,'[33] constituting over ninety percent of

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[29] *Neos Kosmos,* 22 November 2012, p. 23, "Our Epic Journey of Migration, Theseas Marmaras: A top personality amongst our expatriots." Marmaras was born in the small village of Repanidi, on the north-east part of Limnos and sponsored by his older brother, Thanasis, arrived in Australia in 1922 at the age of twelve.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Anastasios M. Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia*, 51.

[32] Limnios – Sekeris, "Greek Migration to Australia in Post Second World War Years), 84.

[33] Tamis and Gavaki, *From Migrants to Citizens*, 139.

the total population of Greek-born migrants residing in these three states. Thus, the inextricable link between policy and programs was demonstrated.

The Greek Diaspora – Forming and Reforming Influences

The establishment and formation of Greek diasporic communities and their institutions in Australia is well documented in Greek historiography. The 2011 Australian Census indicates that, there were 378,300 people of Greek ancestry in Australia, with Greek as one of the top 10 languages spoken at home.[34] What is of interest and a focus in this research is the long-term survival of the Greek community, even though community formation and re-formation is a complex and evolving dynamic. At its heart is the strength of what Greeks refer to as *Έθνος*'[35] which Bottomley contends, does not reflect the Greeks of today in Greece, but is central to a Greek identity in the diaspora.[36] It is about 'the persistence of Greek consciousness'[37] as the basis of community life, regardless of the longevity of the migration experience. Doumanis says:

> As with other ethnic minorities which resisted the pressure to assimilate, the Greeks form an 'imagined community' of a kind whose traditions were invented in Greece, but which have since been re-invented by the immigrant community.[38]

This phenomenon is re-iterated by other scholars of Greek migration history. Vryonis talks about several characteristics that define a 'profound historical reality'[39] that becomes institutionalised in emigration. 'These characteristics/institutions of the Greek diaspora have been constant in the long centuries of Greek immigration,'[40] defining the Greek

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[34] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 first published 21 June 2012, http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/CO-59?opendocument&navpos=620 [Viewed 2 February 2014].

[35] Doumanis, "The Greeks in Australia." 79.

[36] Bottomley, *From Another Place,* 1992, 14

[37] Ibid., 79.

[38] Ibid., 79.

[39] Speros Vryonis Jr., "Greeks in English Speaking Countries of the New World: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: Some Introductory Remarks" in *Greeks in English Speaking Countries: Proceedings of the First International Seminar, Melbourne, 27-30 March 1992,* (Melbourne: Hellenic Studies Forum Inc, 1993), 15.

[40] Ibid., 15.

emigrant as belonging to a larger culture and nation, united by language, religion, and a recognised historical past. Diaspora therefore 'is linked in our minds with the lives of those who hail from one place yet live in another.'[41] The Greek community's formation in Australia has been cumulative, evolutionary and reliant on what Vryonis refers to as 'a kind of leadership that was based on the historical and political legacy of the homeland.[42]

The group formation of communities within the broader Greek community varied, depending on the destination of its 'pioneer settlers' who started the migration journey, as well as the location of employment and in particular, the location of manufacturing jobs. Regional communities, such as the Limnians, quickly established associations and *αδελφότητες* (fraternal societies) which acted to support newly arrived immigrants with practical, social and cultural needs. Community organisations and social networks played a key role in maintaining their distinctiveness. Bottomley's early research found that community social networks 'sustained a social environment based on kinship, friendship, shared experience and mutual understanding.'[43] These networks were also important, as they maintained and enabled a commitment to the Greek diasporic identity. Tsolidis argues that a shared sense of *Ελληνισμός* (Greekness) results from the inter-connectedness of individual, family and the Greek community itself.[44] Giorgas goes even further as she argues that 'through close familial ties and other primary networks…second generation Greeks have a sense of belonging and security.'[45] In contrast, the distinctive place-based ethno-regional identity, a unique feature of islanders in particular, has not only been a vital community strength for the first-generation of Limnian immigrants but has also influenced the re-discovery and consolidation of identity and connection with the

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[41] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives,* 21.

[42] Speros Vryonis Jr., "Greeks in English Speaking Countries," 17.

[43] Bottomley, *After the Odyssey*, 129.

[44] Georgina Tsolidis, "Greek-Australian Families", in *Families and Cultural Diversity in Australia,* ed. Robyn Hartley (St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin/AIFS, 1995), 124-26, 128.

[45] Giorgas, "Transnationalism and Identity Among Second Generation Greek-Australians," 58.

ancestral home for the second and future generations of Limnians in the diaspora. This vital a vital aspect of my research.

Other features to emerge from the literature that have influenced the shaping of diasporic identity are explored to shed light on the dynamics of migration more broadly. Elucidating these elements, in conjunction with the emerging themes from oral testimonies gathered for this thesis, provides a window into the breadth and complexity of the migration experience, which is illuminated in the chapters that follow.A key characteristic for many migrant communities in Australia, applicable also to Greeks, was their natural rejection of assimilation policies,[46] a dominant ideology that influenced immigration policy for a long time and prevailed until the early 1970s. The basis of such an ideology, was that migrants would conform to the socio-economic conditions and the prevailing cultural ideology of Australian society, derived from both official sources and public opinion. Dimitreas succinctly captures the lived experience and response to this ideology as follows:

> Living within a network of friends and compatriots and sharing with them a common social and cultural life was important in a society which still wanted to keep migrants firmly in their place by tacitly imposing segregation, via an uncompromising adherence to the dominant British-Australian culture[47]

Vasta also argues that immigrants resisted the pressures of assimilation that manifested 'due to the numerous forms of exclusion and marginalisation through institutional and informal racism.'[48] She argues that they did so by:

> [G]uarding and speaking their own languages in their homes at least, by forming their own socio-political clubs and continuing to use their own "cultural baggage" to deal with the new environment. Migrants redefined their past and made it work for them in their new socio-political contexts.[49]

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[46] Doumanis, "The Greeks in Australia." 79.

[47] Dimitreas, *Transplanting the Agora*, 177.

[48] Vasta, "Multiculturalism and Ethnic Identity," 210.

[49] Ibid., 210.

Vasta concludes that ethnic identity and 'ethnic identity' politics were formed within a racist context of assimilation. Bottomley further argues that, 'the resources of "Greekness" have offered Greek-Australians a positive sense of identity in the face of the negative pressures towards assimilation.[50] For many immigrants and women, to hold on to certain traditions may have provided them with cultural continuity and confidence to cope with alienation and racism as 'a means of maintaining dignity in the face of exclusion.'[51]

Whilst racism was not obvious or explicit in the narrative, as interviewees were inclined to leave the unpleasant past behind them, implicit and referential comments and silences, together with my observations during interviews, confirm a sense of 'otherness' and exclusion which was counterbalanced by the strong familial and kinship context that was replicated in Australia and evolved from a communally lived experience prior to migration. This response became a key survival mechanism and is further developed in Chapters Three and Four that follow. The importance of ethnicity as a resource emerged as a factor that assisted migration settlement. Wong refers to two different strands of thought concerning ethnicity in Australia.[52] One highlights 'descent or common origin, as the potentially binding force for people,'[53] and the other is epitomised by Martin's view of ethnicity as 'interest groups' that regards ethnicity as a social construction that can vary over time and according to circumstance. [54] Ethnicity may manifest as a strong element of self-identification. Tsolidis suggests that 'ethnicity is commonly linked to shared factors which bind a group of people together and give them a sense of belonging [but]…ethnic identification also relates to understandings of *not* belonging.'[55] What

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[50] Bottomley, *From Another Place*, 9.

[51] Ann-Maree Dawson, "Transnational Flows and Generational Disjunctures: Concepts of "Homeland" Among Melbourne Greek Cypriots," in *Ties to the Homeland: Second Generation Transnationalism*, ed. Helen Lee (United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 78.

[52] Loong Wong, "Ethnicity, the State and the Public Agenda." in *Society, State and Politics in Australia,* ed. Michael Muetzelfeldt, (Leichhardt, NSW: Pluto Press, 1992), 303.

[53] Robyn Hartley, ed. *Families and Cultural Diversity in Australia,* (Australia: Allen and Unwin, 1995), 3.

[54] Ibid., 3.

[55] Tsolidis, "Greek-Australian Families", 124.

follows from this is that 'what provides people with a sense of belonging to each other is their sense of not belonging to the mainstream.'[56] A 'sense of difference', according to Tsolidis, has potentially positive connotations of resistance and agency, 'rather than an image of outsiders who wallow in their helplessness.'[57] Bottomley and de Lepervanche and others also remind us that focusing on ethnic groups and ethnicity alone fails to take into account class, gender and structural inequalities.[58] As Anthias argues, 'ethnicity cross-cuts gender and class divisions but at the same time involves the positing of a similarity (on the inside) and a difference (from the outside) that seeks to transcend these divisions.'[59]

The formation of *αδελφότητες* (fraternal societies)[60] formed principally around regional identity and church communities, whilst outside the scope of this research, is adequately covered by several authors and Greek historians,[61] who demonstrate how community organisation and 'community capital' enabled Greeks to co-exist in their new environment which was not always friendly. Dimitreas says that, 'the process of settlement and attainment of social mobility…has been long and hard'[62] for the Greeks, as with most migrant groups. However, they are now increasingly spread throughout the existing social stratification within Australian society. Policy changes during the early 1970s and the distinct period of multiculturalism were significant social policy developments that facilitated the social inclusion of migrant communities. Though

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[56] Ibid., 125

[57] Ibid., 125

[58] Gillian Bottomley, "Women on the Move: Migration and Feminism," in Gillian Bottomley and Marie M. de Lepervanche, eds. *Ethnicity Class and Gender in Australia*, (Sydney and Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1984),98-108; Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, "Contextualising Feminism: Gender, Ethnic and Class Divisions." *Feminist Review* 15 (Winter) (1983): 62-75; Anthias, *Ethnicity, Class, Gender and Migration*.

[59] Anthias, *Ethnicity, Class, Gender and Migration*, 29.

[60] 'Over 1,000 regional brotherhoods and associations reflecting local or regional origin were formed by the post WWII immigrants based on pre-war models of organisational structure of the Greek communities around Australia. See Tamis and Gavakis, *From Migrants to Citizens,* 98.

[61] Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia*; Dimitreas, *Transplanting the Agora*; Doumanis, "The Greeks in Australia"; Michael Tsounis, "The Greek Communities in Australia." (PhD., University of Adelaide, 1971).

[62] Dimitreas, *Transplanting the Agora*, 252.

policies of multiculturalism since the early 1970s have been contested, as each prevailing government sought to re-define its meaning and focus,[63] nevertheless, as Vasta contends, multiculturalism 'has helped migrants find a platform through which to participate and to struggle over' their sense of identity in a new land.[64] The social policy impacts manifest in the oral narrative of Limnians in this research and the first and second-generation experiences articulated in Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six.

Migration and Gender

Studies show that female migration 'is neither driven exactly by the same determinants as male migration nor do women experience migration in precisely the same way as men.'[65] Until the mid-1950s, women immigrants to Australia were few and far between and were mainly wives with their children rather than single or unmarried, independent immigrants. In 1952, nearly eighty per cent of the Greek migrant population were males.[66] Once the Greek government had relented to pressure to allow women 'unrestricted' emigration, the entry of thousands of women during the 1960s 'resulted in an increase of marriages and a permanent change in the structure and shape of the community.'[67] By 1974, sixty-five percent of women in the labour force were married.[68] Pre-war, with over

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[63] Vasta, "Multiculturalism and Ethnic Identity," 209-225. For more extensive readings and thorough analysis on the content and changes which have occurred in multicultural policy in Australia, see, Andrew Jakubowicz, Michael Morrissey and Joanne Palser, *Ethnicity, Class and Social Policy in Australia,* Social Welfare Research Centre Report, No.46. (Sydney: Social Welfare Research Centre, UNSW, 1984); Castles et al., *Mistaken Identity*; Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land*; Marie M. de Lepervanche, "Holding it all Together: Multiculturalism, Nationalism and the State in Australia", *XII World Congress of Sociology*, Madrid, 1990; Jenny Martin, "Multiculturalism and Feminism", in Gill Bottomley, Marie M. de Lepervanche, and Jeannie Martin, eds. *Intersexions - Gender, Class, Culture and Ethnicity*, (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991), 110-131.

[64] Vasta, "Multiculturalism and Ethnic Identity", 223.

[65] Debra L. DeLaet, "Introduction: The Invisibility of Women in Scholarship on International Migration," in *Gender and Immigration,* ed. G.A. Kelson and D.L. DeLaet, (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 2.

[66] Tamis and Gavaki, *From Migrants to Citizens*, 96.

[67] Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia*, 51.

[68] Tsolidis, "Greek-Australian Families," 133.nd cleland

seventy percent of Greek born males working in the catering industry,[69] 'wives, daughters and sisters often helped run these businesses, generally without pay but often with a good deal of independence,'[70] reflecting pre-industrial, Mediterranean societies in urban and agricultural settings, where families worked as economic units and women were essential within the social structure. However, in post-war industrial Australia, in 1982, 24.8 per cent of the total labour force were immigrant women,[71] and the workforce was segmented along ethnicity and gender lines.[72] A 1975 study shows that fifty-six per cent of Greek born women worked as labourers, in production or as process workers. Many of these women were employed in the clothing and textile industries and the metal trades, whose workforce participation was much higher than that of Australian born women.[73] Correspondingly, women were over-represented in the unemployment figures and suffered from economic hardship and often resorted to outwork in the home with exploitative pay rates, no security and no control over working conditions.[74] The majority of immigrant workers were married with young children, creating what Martin referred to as 'a tension between production and social reproduction'[75] which was compounded by the social and cultural expectations of being mothers and wives, strong values carried forward from their homeland or *habitus.*'[76]

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[69] Gill Bottomley, "Mediterranean Women in Australia: An Overview," Multicultural Australia Papers: Occasional Paper, presented to the Symposium of Mediterranean Women's Organisations, Delphi, Greece, April 5-8, 1984, 1.

[70] Ibid., 1.

[71] Ecumenical Migration Centre Melbourne, "Migrant Workforce Fact Sheet" (Table 2.3), in *Migration Action*, Supplement to Vol. VI, No.2, (1982): 4. The Centre for Urban Research and Action report, "But I wouldn't want my wife to work here," cited in this supplement, stresses how important migrant women were, at the time, to the manufacturing, wholesale and retail industries in the post-war years; 85% of migrants working in the clothing industry were women and over 50% in the leatherwork and boot industry comprised migrant women workers.

[72] Bottomley, "Mediterranean Women in Australia", 2.

[73] Katy Richmond, "Women in the Workforce," *La Trobe University Sociology Paper,* 2, (1973): 42.

[74] Denise Cusack and John Dodd, "Outwork: An Alternative Mode of Employment? A study of the conditions and perceptions of outworkers in the clothing industry." (Melbourne, VIC: Centre for Urban Research and Action,1978), 1-58.

[75] Jeannie Martin, "Non-English-Speaking Women" in *Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia,* ed. Gillian Bottomley and Maree de Lepervanche (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1984), 113.

[76] Pierre Bourdieu in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, tr. Richard Nice, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977). The term was adapted and used by Bottomley to describe the context

In her research on Greek-Australian families, Tsolidis emphasises that 'the family becomes a focal point for linguistic and cultural maintenance and dissemination'[77] and in the diaspora, women – mothers and grandmothers- play significant roles in this endeavour. Chryssanthopoulou reinforces this point in her work on ethno-regional communities, when she reiterates the point that:

> Transmission of ethnic identity to children takes place chiefly as an exchange between mothers and children, therefore motherhood emerges as a key symbol of ethnicity and an area in which women's power is conceptualised, expressed and contested.[78]

The importance of gender in migration and the constitution of Greek migrant and ethnic communities and identities have been established in various studies.[79] Furthermore, 'women's agency in labour, community and identity formation/negotiation' is profound, although, as Tastsoglou points out, this has been understudied and undervalued in scholarship for a long time[80]. Vasta concludes from her research of Italian migrant women that:

> [W]hat needs to be remembered in any analysis of migrant women is that they occupy multiple subject positions. In other words, they do not have a single identity, but multiple identities.[81]

In this thesis, the theme of women's multiple roles in the Limnian diaspora clearly emerges in the testimony of first and second-generation women immigrants and is the focus of Chapter Four.

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of understanding 'culture' as 'an objective relation between practices and situation that produces meaning through categories of perception…that are themselves socially produced.' Bottomley, *From Another Place*, 13.

[77] Tsolidis, "Greek-Australian Families", 139.

[78] Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender and Ethno-Regional Identity among Greek Australians" 216.

[79] Anthias and Lazaridis, *Gender and Migration in Southern Europe*; Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender, Work and Ethnic Ideology, 107-140; Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation,* (London, New Delhi: Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 1997).

[80] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives,* 2.

[81] Ellie Vasta, "Gender, Class and Ethnic Relations: The domestic and work experiences of Italian migrant women in Australia", in *Intersexions - Gender, Class, Culture and Ethnicity,* eds, Gill Bottomley, Marie M. de Lepervanche, and Jeannie Martin, (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991), 177.

Oral History in Migration Research – A Methodology

As highlighted in the Introduction, the importance of using oral history to provide different perspectives on the past and to allow different voices to be heard is at the crux of Wilton's review of Australian migration studies,[82] which provide a range of community histories about seemingly 'unknown' and perhaps misunderstood communities.[83] Others such as Giese, highlight that oral history can offer 'authentic insights into different perceptions of Australia.'[84] Oral history has grown to incorporate the sharing of insights which emerge across disciplinary boundaries to reflect aspects of the migration experience, without disempowering the story-tellers.

Oral history has served to uncover historical evidence where there has been none, as well as challenged, for example, documentary evidence and its interpretation and the representation of changing policies on immigrant memories.[85] Changes away from assimilationist policies to multiculturalism, for example, affected the way some people chose to view their own experiences, and often enabled communities to represent themselves. There have been empowering histories that highlight the strength, resilience and rich nature of their own narrative conducted in the participants own terms, especially involving small, identifiable community groups and women.[86] Such examples of oral history re-affirm the dilemma for a historian. Morag Loh reflects on the issue as one 'not of ethics as one of sensitivity: historians and writers need to be aware and take into

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[82] Janis Wilton, "Generations of Journeys' in *Speaking to Immigrants: Oral Testimony and the History of Australian Migration (Visible Immigrants: Six),* eds*,* A. James Hammerton and Eric Richards (Canberra: ANU, 2002), 151.

[83] Morag Loh and Wendy Lowenstein, *The Immigrants,* (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1977), Lesleyanne Hawthorne (ed.) *Refugee: The Vietnamese Experience* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1982), Diana Giese (ed.) *Astronauts, Lost Souls and Dragons: Voices of Today's Chinese Australians in Conversation with Diana Giese* (Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1997); Will Davies and Andrea Del Bosco (eds), *Tales from a Suitcase: The Afghan Experience,* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2001).

[84] Giese, 'Astronauts, Lost Souls and Dragons': 290.

[85] Kay Saunders, 'Discovering the Subversive and the Saboteur,' OHAA Journal, 13 (1991): 10.

[86] Karobi Mukherjee, "Recording the Unspoken: Asian Indian Women in Australia." *The Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, 14 (1992): 51.

account, the perceptions and needs of their participants.'[87] Often this is a fine balance and forms an operating principle in oral history research.

Oral history has been used successfully and innovatively to record and capture representations of the migrant experience, memories and strong links to homeland. Two examples of note include Alexakis and Janiszewski on the Greeks,[88] and Giese on the Vietnamese community.[89] Both projects serve to portray images and stories about communities on their own terms. They act to educate and inform the wider community, but importantly also, they serve as historiographical markers for the descendants of these migration groups. Such projects have helped integrate the stories and images into the mainstream by incorporating migrant communities into the 'Australian historical mosaic.'[90] Alexakis and Janiszewski capture the theme of belonging and attachment to place in *Images of Home* particularly with their focus on those who 'journeyed to the antipodes, and for any number of reasons, decided to return to Greece.'[91] They highlight the connection of the migration experience, identity formation and the resulting relationship with 'their country of origin that can never be the same again.'[92] Particular events, locations and artefacts can be explored for their meanings, significance and symbolism. Oral history has been used to explore such meanings. Sluga's work on Bonegilla as a symbol of 'migrant dreaming' is a significant contribution;[93] Sara Wills' use of migration memorabilia to bring out 'the voices that echo around objects' is an

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[87] A Letter from Morag Loh to Janis Wilton, 22 April 1991, cited in Janis Wilton, 'Remembering Racism', *Journal of OHAA,* 13, (1991): 37.

[88] Effy Alexakis and Leonard Janiszewski, *Images of Home* (Sydney, Hale and Iremonger, 1995).

[89] Diana Giese and Cuong Phu Le, 'Vietnamese Community in Australia: Oral History Project', *OHAA Journal,* 23 (2001), 36-39.

[90] Effy Alexakis and Leonard Janiszewski, *In Their Own Image – Greek Australians,* (Sydney, Hale and Iremonger, 1998), 8.

[91] Alexakis and Janiszewski, *Images of Home*, 7.

[92] Ibid., 7.

[93] Glenda Sluga, 'The Migrant Dreaming', *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* 8:2(1987), 40-49, and Glenda Sluga, *Bonegilla: 'A Place of no Hope'* (Melbourne University History Monograph, 1988).

innovative way to reveal stories.[94] As she says, with reference to a box made for her great grandmother, 'Flora's box is really a prop or tool I use to get inside the box of family memory.[95] Though the use of objects does not form a key part of my research, it is significant that some women interviewees were keen to show me objects such as photographs and hand crafts which held for them, special memories and significance many decades after their migration journey had taken place.

The practice of oral history has also been shaped by the more recent phenomenon of migrant descendant generations seeking to interpret their own lives and sense of belonging and connection with their family stories. Wilton argues that 'the previous silences about their forebears' experiences are being broken by the growth of ethnic community studies.'[96] Oral history used in this way helps 'descendants reflect on their own lives and seek to understand where and how they belong, and the ways in which the family migration stories and links to countries other than Australia have helped to shape their senses of belonging (and not belonging).'[97] As in this study, such use of oral history is directly relevant in understanding second-generation identity and the role of return visits in people's lives. The issue of identity is portrayed from another perspective by Damousi in relation to post-war Greek immigrants. In her most recent book, she provides a rare, in-depth analysis of the ways that war memories shape immigrant identity and the challenge of negotiating integration within the host society. Damousi explores how the second generation inherit their family stories.[98] Through case studies, in an earlier

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[94] Sara Wills, "Flora's Box: Empty Spaces, Memory and Migration", Conference Paper presented at the 'History and The Meaning of Things', Seminar Series on History and Material Culture, Melbourne Museum, September 10, 2003.

[95] Ibid., 5.

[96] Janis Wilton, "Generations of Journeys" in, *Speaking to Immigrants,* eds, AJ Hammerton and E Richards, *Visible Immigrant Series,* ANU, 2002), 153.

[97] Ibid., 153.

[98] Joy Damousi, *Memory and Migration in the Shadow of War: Australia's Greek Immigrants after World War II and the Greek Civil War* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 6-7.

publication, Damousi argues that post-war Australia did not comfortably accommodate such narratives.[99] As she says:

> The assimilation policy which framed migration objectives…did not allow for recognition of the immigrant's past. The discourse of the nation-state was premised on a denial of past connections to home and indeed a repression of these memories.[100]

Damousi's second-generation immigrant case studies illustrate how 'war stories were the central framing narrative of what was defined as Greek identity'[101] and more generally, their sense of 'Greekness'. Her conclusion is that 'these historical war stories return through the next generation – a legacy of the past which is forever present',[102] and remain unresolved to manifest in complex ways in the next generation's sense of self.

The role of memory in oral history, revealed in different ways, is an important theme to be examined in this research as memory plays 'an integral part in how individuals and societies construct their identity.'[103] It has been acknowledged that:

> Memory, in all its forms, physical, psychological, cultural, and familial, plays a crucial role within the context of migration, immigration, re-settlement, and diasporas, for memory provides continuity to the dislocations of individuals and social identity…[104]

Glynn and Kleist affirm that 'there has been little work done to assess fundamental issues relating to belonging, such as how migrants identify with a society that has markedly different histories and memories from their own.'[105] Damousi argues that 'personal narrative and identity, constantly remade in relation to events of the present, and the

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[99] Joy Damousi, "Legacies of War and Migration", in *Migration and Insecurity {electronic resource}: Citizenship and social inclusion in a transnational era,* eds, Niklaus Steiner, Robert Mason and Anna Hayes, (New York: Routledge, 2013): 31-47.

[100] Ibid., 37.

[101] Ibid., 43.

[102] Ibid., 46.

[103] Julia Creet and Andreas Kitzmann, eds. *Memory and Migration, Multidisciplinary Approaches to Memory Studies* (Toronto Buffalo London: University of Toronto Press, 2011), *Preface.*

[104] Ibid., 3.

[105] Irial Glynn and J. Olaf Kleist, *History, Memory and Migration: Perceptions of the Past and the Politics of* Incorporation, (Uk and US: Palgrave Macmillan,2012), 5.

ordering of disparate pasts into a flowing story',[106] is a vital theme that emerges from migration and memory literature. Certainly, the importance of the speaker or *rememberer* to events retold and remembered is germane to an oral history method and is well demonstrated in much oral history literature.[107]

Oral history has shared common elements with feminism in its development and as Bornat and Diamond proclaim 'women's history and oral history grew up together.'[108] The strength of this connection has been not only to influence the ascendency of migrant women's oral history, but also the framing of 'women as subjects and as actors in the creation of their own histories.'[109] Nonetheless, although oral histories have sometimes highlighted the particular experiences of women migrants and 'the gendered nature of the migration experience,'[110] usually migration stories have tended to be focussed on men. Women's stories have often remained on the sidelines, even though as oral sources they are an 'untapped archive of those omitted from the existing historical record.'[111] Issues of migration and gender form the basis of Chapter Four. This is an effort to redress this imbalance by drawing on women's oral testimony pre- and post- migration. The connection of memory, narrative and trauma is captured by Nguyen as 'a means of bringing the past alive and an imaginative way of dealing with loss.'[112] Nguyen shows how the use of women's narrative can contribute to the collective process of remembering and illustrates that, for the Vietnamese women that she interviews, 'memory is a creative

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[106] Joy Damousi, *Memory and Migration,* 8.

[107] See A. James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson, *Ten Pound Poms: Australia's Invisible Migrants: A life History of Post-war British Emigration to Australia* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Alistair Thomson, *Moving Stories: an intimate history of four women across two countries* (Kensington,, N.S.W.: University of New South Wales Press, 2011); Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson eds, *The Oral History Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006); Penny Summerfield, "Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews." *Cultural and Social History* 1 (2004): 65-93.

[108] Joanna Bornat and Hanna Diamond, "Women's History and Oral History: developments and debates", *Women's History Review,* 16,1 (2007): 19.

[109] Ibid., 20.

[110] Alistair Thomson, "Oral History and Migration Studies, *Oral History,* 27:1 (1999): 29.

[111] Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton, "Memory and History in Twenty-first Century Australia: A survey of the field." *Memory Studies,* 6(3) (2013): 371.

[112] Nathalie Huynh Chau Nguyen, *Memory Is Another Country – Women of the Vietnamese Diaspora,* (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, ABC-CLIO, 2009). 5.

process that allows them to identify not only past traumas but also the strengths that have enabled them to reconstruct their lives in another country.'[113] Nguyen challenges their 'perceived silence' through her use of oral history that evocatively transmits powerful stories of loss, war, trauma and escape as well as resettlement. Though in a different context, some of these themes resonate with the narrative of Limnian women when confronting their new and foreboding environment. During their early years of arrival, they sought to create new lives in their adopted country and had to negotiate such issues as gender relations, identity and belonging. For the untold story of the diasporic Limnian community of Australia, with a relatively unknown, unexplored and undocumented past, oral history potentially produces authentic and complex stories of migration settlement. These are stories that capture the transformation of identities and transnational relationships which, as Baldassar contends, is not only about 'the migrants and their descendants in diaspora settings, but also the family and townspeople in the sending areas.'[114]

Summary

The first section of this chapter positioned Greek migration to Australia within the socio-political context of Australia's immigration history and examined settlement and community formation outside the homeland through the prism of a distinct form of identity that is implicit in the term *Ελληνισμός* (Greekness). This backdrop provided the starting point for understanding both the longevity and durability of Greek diasporic identity. However, I depart significantly from this line of thought as I proceed to argue in the body of this dissertation, that, for the Limnian islander community, the influences of ethno-regional identity had greater significance on how they see themselves and their identification as Limnians outside the homeland. In the chapters that follow, this concept is applied to what is distinctive for these islanders in migration. Key aspects of migrant settlement reviewed in this chapter provide entry points for the interpretation and analysis of inter-generational themes that emerge in the narrative of different generations, pivotal

[113] Ibid., 7.

[114] Loretta Baldassar, *Visits home*, 322.

to the understanding of the migration experience of this island community. Oral history's ability to tap into the internal world, to reflect and bring out the past in people's lives is a key strength. A review of oral history as a research methodology, and its application as a conceptual tool, acts to position the historical context of the interviews conducted with the three groups of narrators, and to situate the emerging themes into a cohesive story. Though challenging, this method allows us, as Wilton says, 'to contemplate how to combine the power of these personal stories with the challenges embedded in an analytic use of oral history,'[115] and so to discover the ongoing impact of migration across generations. Significantly, oral history contributes to the placing of migration history into the mainstream of historical scholarship rather than remaining on the sidelines.

[115] Janis Wilton, "Generations of Journeys," 169.

Chapter 3 '*For a Better Life'* – In the New Country

> *'Migrants, perhaps more than many people, are made by their memories of their birthplace, their homeland, those left behind…'*[1]

Memories of departure, as evidenced in the narratives of this study's research interviewees, are often so indelibly marked in people's psyche. Scenes are similarly described and consistently imbued with emotional tones and feelings and, in some cases, with actual tears and pain in their eyes as they articulate their stories. These events are recalled by men and women, now in their seventies, eighties and even early nineties. Haralambos (aged 74), one of nine children arrived in Australia in 1963 at the age of twenty-three. He joined his older brother in Sydney and was subsequently followed by each of the remaining seven siblings and ultimately his widowed mother:

> There were many bus loads leaving…there were tears, everybody was with a handkerchief, soaked…going to Australia was a living death, no one knew where and how far it was. Our parents thought that, they would never see us again.[2]

In this chapter I explore post-war Limnian migration to Australia through personal stories and oral narratives from immigrants who settled in the two largest settlement cities of Melbourne and Sydney, during the period 1950s – 1970s. One narrator settled in regional Tasmania. My aim in this chapter is to paint a historical picture of the Limnian community as migrants to Australia through the interpretation of themes from oral testimony and by drawing on other scholarly work. In so doing, my goal is to fill a gap in

[1] Mary Chamberlain and Selma Leydesdorff, "Transnational Families: Memories and Narratives. *Global Networks, Special Issue 4/3* (2004): 228.

[2] Interview with Haralambos, 19 May 2014.

historiography.[3] In this quest, through oral history, I explore untold stories, including the intergenerational dynamics of migration and the transnational relationships of generations with different connections to the remote Aegean island of Limnos. The chapter aims also to reflect and present migration experiences of the first-generation before they disapprear. The chapter draws on unmediated personal stories, with a direct telling of their experiences to reflect a community's settlement in Australia. The testimony of those interviewed describes the circumstances from which they left, how and why they left, the fears, sacrifices, joys, and regrets, feelings, reflections and nostalgia about the events that led to their departure. I examine specific factors that assisted people in their journey, the formative issues of ancestral character, history and tradition and how this may have influenced their settlement in a new country. The gender context and the resilience of women in work and in establishing families, functioning within existing social structures on foreign soil, is an important theme in the analysis. Women's lives in migration, in the context of contemporary Australian society, clearly resonates as they speak about the challenges and hardships encountered in their multiple roles. The role of women in settlement will be further explored in more depth, in Chapter Four.

Generational Memory: Settlement Years in Australia

Migration to a foreign land is not new for Limnians. For some, it has been an inter-generational experience. In fact, many of the narrators have direct experience, with men from their families leaving the island and migrating in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to America and the British and French colonies for example. This migration was usually time limited, sometimes long, but they would usually return with savings to the homeland. Paul[4] who is now over 80 years of age, living in Melbourne with his wife Afroditi is an example. His father, who died at the age of forty-eight when Paul was four years old, had migrated to America in the early twentieth century and returned to Limnos to marry and re-settle. His father, according to Paul, had made 'a lot of money'

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[3] Penelope Panagiotopoulos – Valasis, *The Lemnians in Sydney: The First Generation,* (Sydney Australia: Ronny Press P/L, 2005). This is the only self-published, known collection of stories on first generation Limnians in Sydney and Australia.

[4] Interview with Paul, 26 June 2013.

and had invested in buying land for cultivation and agriculture. For others who had returned from America, with their substantial savings held in local banks or at home, their monetary wealth had de-valued to such an extent that they became poor again at the height of the German occupation of Greece (1941-44). Such events contributed further to the cycle of migration in families and are indeed legendary. As Stelios (aged 72), who lives in Melbourne recalls:

> My father was a shop keeper; I use to help him after school… when the war (and German occupation) came his savings from that period, which he kept in the *μπαούλο* (glory box) soon became worthless.[5]

The Early 1950s Australia

In Australia, the pre-war, fledgling Limnian community, small in numbers, was engaged in informal networks of predominantly young male arrivals that came to various parts of the country during the first half of the twentieth century. Limnian mass migration of initially young, single men began in earnest in the early 1950s. They began to arrive largely as sponsored immigrants[6] after the end of the Second World War and Greece's Civil War (1949). As stated earlier (Chapter One), the social and economic circumstances of the island immediately after several decades of war and instability left families poorer, disheartened and uncertain about the future. In the early 1950s, restricted migration to Australia was possible through a limited government scheme of sponsored and indentured workers. More generally, sponsorship through family kinship by those who had already arrived in Australia was possible and more common. Costs, however, were prohibitive and as there were no immigration authorities based in Greece, the whole process of applying was indeed difficult for individuals in remote areas and complex for all concerned. America was a preferred destination for many, due to a sense of historical familiarity with migration to this country. Those who had family or other connections in

[5] Interview with Stelios, 9 July 2013.

[6] Sponsorship entailed an invitation, *Πρόσκληση,* by a family member, usually an uncle or godfather or other kinship relations and was a common mode for chain migration from Limnos, initially for single men and later for women and family re-unification. The sponsor was required to establish a *bone fide* relationship to the applicant and to make a commitment to provide assistance initially with accommodation, housing and employment. Sponsorship applied to independent immigrants who were not eligible for *Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration* (ICEM) programs and assistance that began in 1952.

America actively sought to arrange sponsorship for their young people, usually the eldest son to join an uncle or *κουμπάρο* (godfather*)* or a family friend and compatriot who was prepared to sponsor them. However, America's restrictive immigration program during this period often resulted in significant delays or made it difficult for new applicants who did not fit the government priorities to be accepted. Nikos (aged 78), who arrived in Australia in 1951 at the age of sixteen, is a case example. He told me:

> There was no migration then, it was hard, you needed a sponsor, you needed to pay your fare, as well as the costs to go to Athens for processing. All this was costly; we did not have money for these things. I had applied to migrate to America. An uncle had agreed to sponsor me but this was taking too long.[7]

There were several imperatives for migration of young men, other than the individual prospects of improving their own economic circumstances, though this was a paramount issue. Young men, usually the eldest sons, were selected from within their family group to migrate for two other reasons. One was the financial hardship for families, which threatened their ability to marry-off younger daughters without a dowry. In the 1950s the dowry system throughout Greece imposed a lot of pressure on families. The dominance of matrifocal communities, where 'property and names are transferred through gendered lines'[8] that operated for generations in Limnos, meant that the family needed to provide at a minimum a residential house for the future couple to live in, as well as land and other assets, if they were available, to raise the status of the prospective marital union. The Greek Civil Code (article 1406) defined dowry as 'the property which the wife or somebody else on her behalf gives to the husband in order to alleviate the burdens of marriage.'[9] A dowry agreement was a written contractual document signed by the bride's father and the future groom. This economic imperative became an additional and difficult pressure on families after the devastation of war. Older brothers were expected to assist the parents to raise funds for this purpose. Several interview participants have emphasised this point, including Nikos who said:

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[7] Interview with Nikos, 25 June 2013.

[8] Loizos and Papataxiarchis, *Contested Identities*, 10.

[9] Lambiri-Dimaki, "Dowry in Modern Greece", 166.

> There was also a need… my mother's house had been pulled down by the Germans to be used as part of a repairs workshop. I had two sisters and they needed *προίκα* (a dowry) in order to get married.[10]

The political uncertainty in Greece at the time added to the fear of future conflicts and, as national service was compulsory, families were understandably anxious about their sons being conscripted into the army. This fear was particularly valid in the light of recent experiences, where many adult male family members had served in several consecutive wars during the last five preceding decades. Migration was therefore seen as a solution for young men and their families. Nikos further accentuates the fear of conscription as follows:

> My father wrote to my godfather in Australia… he could see that economically things were bad, unemployment and there was a civil war. Also, when I was to turn eighteen I had to do national service. Then I would not be allowed to migrate.[11]

As was the pattern, Nikos, sponsored by his godfather, had to quickly find ways to survive upon arrival in Australia. He would have to rely on his own capabilities as a sixteen-year-old, with initial guidance from his godfather's family. As he explains:

> Like everyone else, I was anxious about the unknown. There were not many migrants at that stage, I stayed with my godfather for three months and then I went to live at his mother's house…we rented…there were 3-4 young Limnian lads, single tenants. I found a job within fifteen days…my godfather introduced me to a café owner in the city.[12]

During the 1950s many young men sponsored to Australia through the kinship network were under eighteen years of age. Jim (aged 74), was sponsored by a distant 'relative' who anecdotally was said to have been responsible for bringing out at least a hundred Limnian men to Australia. Two of those men, were Jim's uncles. He was just thirteen years old, the oldest of seven children, including two girls, when he left by boat for Australia in 1955. Jim initially shared a room with his two uncles in Brunswick (a suburb in Melbourne's inner north), sharing the one bed with his paternal uncle, until his

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[10] Interview with Nikos, 25 June 2013.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

uncles bought a house nearby. He later rented a shared room from them, together with two other newly arrived compatriots. This example highlights the effectiveness of the kinship circle. He went on to say:

> This was a hard time…arriving during the Christmas/summer period. Factories were closed…when they opened I went around asking for work. People could see I was very young and they were asking for my passport. I spoke no English.[13]

After four months Jim got a job at a small restaurant as a 'kitchen hand'. He earned three and a half pounds, worked six days a week and twelve-hour days. Later he became a truck driver and then a butcher and is now a cattle farmer. Jim's story is not unique and was variously repeated by several other immigrants of the same generation. Another interviewee, Stelios was fourteen years of age when his father's *Κουμπάρο* (best man) agreed to sponsor him in 1955. His father, a shopkeeper, had himself migrated in the 1930s and had lost all his savings during the currency 'crash' in the period of the German occupation. Stelios recalled his distress upon arrival:

> I did not know what I was getting into…then. When I was here, I'm sorry to say that I cried a few times at night…but I was too proud to write to my parents that I wanted to go back… [14]

In the early post-war years, the 'White Australia' policy and emphasis on assimilation dominated the social discourse and there is strong evidence that often, immigrants encountered hostility and discrimination.[15] Nevertheless, these young men, with the help and guidance of kinship and strong community backing, managed to build a life in their adopted country.

Women began arriving in Australia in the mid to late 1950s. Some of the narrators talked about their involvement with ICEM programs. In the case of women, research indicates that only ten per cent of single women from the islands participated in the ICEM training scheme. Many rural women from Limnos would not have had the resources to

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[13] Interview with Jim, 2 June 2013.

[14] Interview with Stelios, 9 July 2013.

[15] Ellie Vasta, "Migration and Migration Research in Australia." in *International Migration and the Social Sciences*, edited by Ellie Vasta and Vasoodeven Vuddamalay, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 18.

travel to Athens for this program and were likely to be prevented by family to participate, due to cultural barriers in undertaking such programs as they would have to travel unaccompanied to Athens. They were also needed for domestic and agricultural work to help the family unit. All women interviewed in this study, talked about being sponsored as single women by family members, usually brothers or uncles and many in their testimony referred to having to reimburse travel loans, such as those offered by government lending schemes or they borrowed from siblings or other family members.

Interviews revealed the de-population of many villages right across the island as massive and a major turning point for those who stayed behind. One family that was a beneficiary of what appears to be part of the ICEM assisted scheme was Sophia's family.[16] They arrived at Port Melbourne on the *Star of the Sea* after a thirty-day sea journey. A family of five with the oldest brother only seven years old, they were due to go to Bonegilla migrant camp, an option usually reserved for assisted or indentured migrants, without sponsors. As Sophia recalls, it was due to good fortune that her father was assisted to obtain a job at the Melbourne Railways to start work immediately, due to the intervention of the well-known compatriot, Theseas Marmaras,[17] who could circumvent the process and prevent the family from going to the camp. For the first six months, Sophia's family stayed in a single room at a boarding house in East Melbourne, but the seven-year old brother had to go and live with another Limnian family as the room was not large enough to accommodate the whole family. Sophia (aged 64) recalls the experience:

> We would go to a family friend's house in St Kilda every day to cook and wash and so on…my parents paid two pounds a week for this room at the rooming house.[18]

After six months, her father and a cousin jointly bought a house in Collingwood enabling the family to live together. Her parents and the two girls shared one room and the brother

[16] Interview with Sophia, 21 May 2014.

[17] See earlier footnote with a reference to the *Neos Kosmos* article dated 22 November 2012.

[18] Interview with Sophia, 21 May 2014.

shared a room with a single male tenant. Each vacant room was sub-let for many years and as Sophia remembers:

> every available space was occupied…a *πατριώτη* (compatriot) said to her father, "eh! Thanasi, the living room is too big, my wife and child are coming soon, let's partition this room and make it into two…" and they did[19]

Paul comes from a family of immigrants whose ancestors owned extensive parcels of land and farming property.[20] He was himself a trained shoemaker and a talented fiddle player in demand both in his village and other parts of the island, as live music bands were very popular forms entertainment after the war. Like many others, he chose to leave for Australia. He had left his family behind, expecting to work hard, save and return to the island with improved financial means, like his father had done previously. He remained in Melbourne for about six years, and did indeed work long hours in unskilled work, with multiple shifts, to accumulate savings. He said he did not like it in Australia. It was his 'single-mindedness' that kept him there. Though he described his life in Greece positively and in his opinion 'complete', he said that he came 'for a better life and future.' He recounted the experience of departure thus:

> In those days, everyone left or was leaving…every week bus loads would take people to the ship to leave for Australia. Kontias (his village) had a population of around 2,500 people. It was a vibrant *κεφαλοχώρι* (large village) before the mass exodus. I was impressed by stories that men were making lots of money…I wanted to do the same. The buses would leave with the *μπαούλα* (glory boxes) on top, every day there was a boat from Myrina to Piraeus. There were tears, there were flowers… (tears were streaming down his face as he recounted these scenes). This exit kept on happening until half the village emptied …I wanted to go and see…if it was good I would bring my family too… [21]

This kind of narrative resonates with many other interviews. The goal of returning was profound and very real at the time. Paul did return to the island in the early 1970s and found that Greece and Limnos had significantly changed. Politically, the Greek Military Junta (1967-74) were in power. Economically, agriculture was not doing well

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Interview with Paul, 26 June 2013.

[21] Ibid.

and as an example, the former productivity of cotton farming in Limnos at its heights in the early 1960s, was in great decline. He recounts with emotion that:

> The fields were no longer productive…even though I invested in drilling wells for irrigation the land was becoming less productive. It had been over-used…[22]

Paul subsequently returned to Australia together with his family. He and his wife are now retired, and the family is separated again with their only son, Yiannis, who now lives with his family in Switzerland.

Maria (aged 80) came to Australia under the ICEM assisted passage scheme to join her brother and his wife:

> I didn't like the first day. I went to live at a house down the street (from her brother's) and shared a room with a female relative. There were many tears.[23]

She had reconciled to the prospect of travelling to Australia alone. She was one of five children whose father died when she was only four years of age, leaving them land-less and with very few options. The older siblings worked at whatever jobs were available at the time. She says with conviction:

> There was no work, where were we going to work if there were no jobs. I was twenty-three years old. My brother was in Australia already. I decided to join him. I did not have a father, just my mother with five children.[24]

Her first day in Australia was traumatic. She found the 'wooden houses with corrugated roofs' strange and the weather was a shock to her. Her brother was renting a room in a house where all the rooms were fully occupied. She found herself unwittingly, having to share with another female relative at a house down the street. Everyone left for work in the morning and she was left on her own. Her first job was at a hat factory, but she couldn't keep up the pace of work and was dismissed. She was then taken to the Rosella fruit processing factory. She was selected from a queue of women for the assembly line, but as she says, 'this was seasonal work for two weeks only, on the assembly line sorting

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[24] Ibid.

out the skin off the tomatoes.'[25] Maria then replaced her sister-in-law (who became pregnant and had to stop work) at a belt making factory and worked there until her own pregnancy. Language and communication was a key issue for Maria as for most immigrant women at the time. She recounts the story of being sent to the milk bar to buy a bottle of soft drink and recalls her embarrassment as she was rehearsing the phrase while she was walking down the street, so she wouldn't forget what to say to the shop keeper.

Such immigrant stories highlight several imperatives for migration to Australia and the circumstances under which people had left during the 1950s and early 1960s. Poverty, lack of confidence for a better future in their homeland and cultural pressures on male siblings to assist in the provision of a dowry for their sisters were key factors influencing their decision to migrate. A lack of certainty about the social and political future, fear of future conflicts permeated young men's consciousness and their families' sense of insecurity from a prospect of war and further instability. Until the mid-1950s, Government programs were largely inaccessible to many prospective emigrants from Limnos. Young men dominated the numbers by sponsorship and later some of these young men would in turn sponsor other siblings and their sisters and fiancés, which opened the way for young women to join the migration wave.

Sites of settlement in Australia

It is widely recognised amongst the Limnian community leaders and their associations that most of the Limnian immigrants settled primarily in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia, with only small numbers in Tasmania and the ACT (Canberra). The largest settlement was in the city of Melbourne, though some went into the smaller Victorian regional centres and country towns such as Bendigo, Kyneton, Ararat and small locations outside of Warrnambool, because of family and kinship connections and work opportunities in cafes and other hospitality and service sectors. Oral testimony shows that, the experiences of settlement in terms of initial housing, employment, schooling and childcare, as well as cultural and social life, did not differ significantly across the different

[25] Ibid.

Australian states. I have interviewed migrants who settled and now live in Sydney, Melbourne and Tasmania. There are only a few amongst the narrators whose point of arrival was at a different state to where they live now. Indentured workers, however, who arrived in small numbers in the early 1950s were required to go wherever they were needed, including remote parts of Australia, in sugar cane and other farms and infrastructure projects. They later gravitated to the larger cities where migrants tended to settle. Short stories collected by Panagiotopoulos-Valasis affirm this fact. The story of Haralampos Kantarias, who left Limnos in 1954 at the age of twenty under ICEM (ΔΕΜΕ) assistance, describes his experience with the Indentured Workers Scheme. His first destination was the Bonegilla migrant camp before he was sent to a North Queensland farm to cut sugar cane.[26] Nevertheless, most Limnians initially joined family members or compatriots in the inner suburbs and industrial areas where factories and large manufacturing companies operated, which was where other Greek arrivals tended to settle. The initial location of settlement was usually determined by sponsoring relatives and friends, which houses had spare rooms for rental and where the jobs were likely to be found.

Rural life and self-employment

A significant number of Limnians found themselves settling in rural towns, after arriving in Australia, either because that was where their sponsors were living and working or because they were enticed with employment opportunities with or through their sponsors, often to work long hours in lowly paid jobs. Several interviewees referred to the fact that they themselves or family members had moved to rural and regional sites for work and self-employment in smaller, family operated enterprises such as cafés, milk bars and 'mixed businesses' or fast food shops. Toula[27] migrated to join her fiancé who was in business with his brother in a small Tasmanian country town outside Hobart. Both wives of the two men worked long hours and seven days a week, in the business. Whilst she acknowledged the financial rewards and success of the business partnership, she was

[26] Panagiotopoulos – Valasis, *The Lemnians of Sydney*, 76-78.

[27] Interview with Toula, 30 May 2014.

recalled and emphasised the social and linguistic isolation that she experienced both as a new bride and later as a mother of small children. Others however, recalled the social benefits associated with a close network of Limnian families in the surrounding towns, usually from the same village.[28] Pantelis (aged 73), at the age of eleven years, re-united with his father in Ballarat, Victoria, in 1957 together with the rest of the family. He talked about the north west Victorian towns of Ballarat, Horsham, Bendigo, Enmore, Maryborough, Warracknabeal, Colac, Kyneton and others, that had attracted a substantial number of Limnian families in the 1950s due to the combination of kinship networks and the 'café and take away' food outlets run by earlier settlers. He talked about close 'regional' networks and the Sunday drives to visit them:

> There were a lot of families from Tsimandria, they were *χωριανοί* (of the same village) …my father had bought a car; we would get in the car on week-ends and travel to the various towns, Horsham, Bendigo, Colac, to visit some of these *πατριώτες* (compatriots…[29]

Niki recalled that her older brother and his uncle were working in Seymour (a rural town in Northern Victoria), away from their families.[30] Those that had operated family businesses in rural towns had often been assisted by compatriots and sponsors, as they had arrived much earlier and had settled in those rural and regional centres. They then sponsored extended family members to join them in their enterprises and tended to remain for many years. This model of self-employment, particularly in the food sector, is a key feature with the Limnian community and is mirrored in the work of Alexakis and Janiszewski who have examined Greek settlement in rural Australia. They have written extensively about the Greeks in cafés and milk bars,[31] especially in rural settings, highlighting the role Greeks have played in generating change within Australian popular culture. They emphasise the 'status of the Greek café as a social hub of the Australian country town (particularly in the eastern States) from the early 1900s through to the late

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[28] Interview with Pantelis, 13 December 2013.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Interview with Niki, 25 June 2013.

[31] Effy Alexakis and Leonard Janiszewski, *Greek Cafés and Milk Bars of Australia* (Canberra, ACT: Halstead Press, 2007).

1960s.[32] However, while their recorded interviews capture the positive role of these 'institutions' and the popular cultural landscape of rural Australian towns, they also reflect 'socio-cultural dislocations.' Their research puts a spotlight on how many interviewees 'have generally perceived themselves to be 'in' Australia, but not 'of' it.[33] Although they ascribe rural communities to be imbued with 'a sense of community', for the most part Greek café families were a socially and racially marginalised group – a fringe community, existing along the outer social perimeter of the host society.[34] This is a telling observation and reflects a common allusion in the narrative that is expressed in several of my interviews with first generation Limnians in this study.

Community Formation – *A Strength*

The establishment of community associations with the help of volunteers provided a coordinated meeting point for new arrivals, framed by mutual reliance and interdependence particularly in the practical areas of housing, employment and information sharing networks. Social and cultural activities enabled the community to congregate and interact together at regular functions and events. In the state of Victoria, a fraternal society, The Lemnian Fraternity of Melbourne - *Hephaestus*[35] was the first established in Australia in 1939. It was structured on a constitutional framework that was used by other emerging Greek settler community organisations. Similar Limnian bodies were later established in other States as the community grew with mass migration. Such an organisational structure enabled Limnian immigrants to join as members, giving them the capacity to have a site of belonging and identification which had cultural and linguistic

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[32] Effy Alexakis and Leonard Janiszewski, "Telling Tales of Australia's Country Greek Cafés: A project insight." *The Oral History Association of Australian Journal* 34 (2012): 3.

[33] Ibid. 3.

[34] Alexakis and Janiszewski, *Greek Cafés and Milk Bars of Australia*, 9.

[35] Hephaestus was the god of fire, volcanoes and metallurgy in the Greek classics. In Greek mythology, he was flung by Zeus onto the ancient island of Limnos, deemed to be a holy and therapeutic land referred to as *Λημνία Γη* (a type of soil) that was assumed to have medicinal potency for many ailments. Hephaestus was revered for his contribution to metallurgy skills in the region of Greece in antiquity. Source: Spyridonos A. Paximadas, *Λήμνια Γη – Το πρώτο παγκόσμιο πρότυπο φαρμακευτικό προϊόν* (*Limnia Ghee – to proto pangosmio protypo farmakeftiko proion*; *Limnian Soil – the first global pharmaceutical prototype product*), 18.

familiarity. These community associations have continued to exist sometimes with changes in nomenclature, in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Canberra, into the twenty-first century. Though they have retained the support from their members, numbers are declining as the community is ageing. Generational renewal is presently difficult to achieve as it is not forthcoming from the descendant generations. Some organisations have significant debts whilst others (such as in Victoria), have substantial assets. These institutions will be confronted with the need to decide on the disposal of their assets sometime in the future, unless the younger generations are given the authority and capability to transform the future directions of the organisations to reflect different and changing needs. The Pan-Lemnian Federation of Australia was formed in 1982. According to its statement of intention, this organisation seeks to express in its objectives a focus on 'maintaining a friendship connection amongst Limnians, Australia-wide and the retention and preservation of their unique culture and traditions for future Limnian generations in the Australia diaspora.'[36] This federation of associations acts to coordinate, on behalf of its member associations, annual gatherings and other collective events nationwide and liaises, on behalf of the Limnian diaspora, with authorities in Greece.[37] This body, reliant on the membership of all associations, is similarly in need of renewal, to be able to refresh and fulfil its worthy aspirations in the maintenance of its diasporic identity within the Australian context and connection to place in the homeland.

The island people's bond to heritage and compatriotism, complemented by a strong family and kinship-based structure is closely linked to geography and the bounded nature of island life, an apparent characteristic with other islander migrant communities. It has been a vital factor in galvanising many of the positive elements of community settlement and characterises aspects of migration settlement that is echoed in research about other island communities in Australia.[38] But there are also differences. Unlike earlier island

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[36] This Statement is enshrined in the constitution of the Pan-Lemnian Federation of Australia, 1982.

[37] *The Centenary for the Independence of Lemnos*: *1912-2012*, printed leaflet publication compiled for the commemoration event, 8th October 2012.

[38] John Yiannakis, *Megisti in the Antipodes: Castellorizian Migration and Settlement in W.A. 1890-1990* (Carlisle; Western Australia: Hesperian Press, 1996); Vasiliki Chrysanthopoulou, "The Kytherian Diaspora: Its Role in the Formation of the Kytherian Community and Identity within the Context of

settlers, Limnians arrived in greater numbers and had adopted multiple settlement sites in city suburbs and towns across Australia that in some cases were densely occupied. Regional island identities, often linked to the localised place of origin, reflected the centrality of village of origin and identification which seemed to endure and strengthen in migration, regardless of where the geographic groups settled. During the early years, associations formed to reflect the dominant village groups that settled in different parts of Australia.

Other inter-war islander migrant groups tended to settle in one place (city or town), and build a community organisation around the whole islander community. This was facilitated by single sites of settlement. For instance, the Kastellorizians settled largely in Perth, Western Australia, and the Kalymnians settled mainly in Sydney. The Ithacans, the earliest established islander community in Australia with over one hundred years of settlement, remained predominantly in Melbourne, Victoria, where they continue to maintain strong leadership and community infrastructure and presence within the Greek community. Chryssanthopoulou, in her extensive work on the Kastellorizians, underlines the importance of an ethno-regional identity that exists in parallel to the broader Greek national one. She argues that:

> The creation and resilience despite transformations of Castellorizian ethnic identity in Australia is largely due to the existence of a strong ethnic ideology. It is this ideology that defines the boundaries of the Castellorizian group and of Castellorizian ethnicity…[39]

The importance of locality of origin, defined by village boundaries, an ethno-regional Limnian identity that was replicated across multi-sites of settlement, emerges as dominant, unique and sustainable for an islander settlement group living in the diaspora. Chryssanthopoulou's thesis on the 'durability of ethno-regional identity', developed in her work on two island communities,[40] resonates with interviews for this thesis. The

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Globalisation", in *8th International Panionian Conference.* Society of Kytherian Studies, Kythera, 2006; Chrysanthopoulou, "Gender, Work and Ethnic Ideology", 107-140.

[39] Vasiliki Chrysanthopoulou, "Gender, Work and Ethnic Ideology", 135.

[40] Vasiliki Chrysanthopoulou, "Gender and Ethno-Regional Identity among Greek Australians", 197.

concept of ethno-regional identity in the context of island identity, covered in Chapter Two, reflects similar themes in this thesis.

Members of the Limnian community conservatively estimate that there are about twenty thousand first, second and third generation Limnians in Australia. This unsubstantiated figure is possibly larger, but, in the absence of records at departure and arrival locations that specify the region or locality of origin in addition to national origin, it is difficult to accurately quantify the size of this community today. Poor record-keeping by existing community associations further inhibits the accuracy of information, hence the reliance on anecdotal evidence. The profile of the community is made more complex by the fact that recent generations who are becoming more integrated within the wider Australian society, and an increase in cross-cultural marriages, further complicates the sense of size and diversity of this diasporic island community. Nonetheless, through the evidence gathered in this study, Limnian families inter-generationally, continue to remain, relatively close-knit. As a community, they have retained a strong and on-going island identity which is reflected at the personal, familial and community level. The emotional, social, cultural and linguistic dimensions of the first-generation community, it seems, have acted to provide cultural resilience and a significant settlement milieu for individuals and families. This has enabled them to adapt, using as a reference point the familial, collective and communal characteristics of the 'village' setting. Grinberg and Grinberg refer to the struggle of an immigrant for self-preservation,[41] and argue that shared backgrounds and experiences before migration act to create a unique bond, enabling most new arrivals to co-exist within the new and unfamiliar context. They say that 'the immigrant…needs to hold onto various elements of his native environment…representing different aspects of his native land.'[42] In addition, for Limnians at least, through a shared community identity, background and available support, individuals have demonstrated the capacity to deal with such emotional issues as divided loyalties and guilt about leaving their families back home, experienced more

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[41] Leon Grinberg and Rebeca Grinberg, *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 129.

[42] Ibid., 129.

poignantly by women. In early settlement, the presence of an identifiable community environment acted to facilitate regular communication with their homeland by obtaining more regular news from home through the frequency of new arrivals bringing the latest news and 'word of mouth' messages from home. Just as the images of departure have been elucidated as shared and communal experiences, strongly felt and lived by the entire village, so too was the arrival of newer immigrants at ports of arrival in the 'host-land', manifesting as a shared, community event. Many compatriots who had arrived earlier would be there at the ports, waiting to greet the new wave of arrivals and search for news and information about the families left behind, events in their village and the progress of agricultural production which was part of what defined them as island farmers and *κεχαγιάδες* (herdsmen). These key aspects of their former lives were reinforced in much valued memories that became symbols of belonging and identity that were often, implicitly challenged by the host society which was perceived as unfamiliar, unwelcoming and sometimes hostile for them.

Family Kinship and Hard Work

Oral testimony in this research illuminates the strength of the Limnian identity within the family and kinship circle, as well as in the communal domain, that is reinforced constantly. For example, at the point of departure, extended family kinship and compatriot links were significant in aiding the ability for young single men (and later single women) to migrate. Limnians who had arrived during earlier migration phases would provide sponsorship and a commitment to the authorities that they would support their nominees upon arrival. Jim's case highlights this phenomenon.[43] Due to his age of thirteen, he was required to have a nominated adult companion on the journey, charged with the role of supervising him until arrival. Once he arrived, his sponsoring uncle and other relatives provided him with accommodation, assistance in finding work and guidance and support, more generally. The extended family was essentially his safety net. As he said:

[43] Interview with Jim, 2 June 2013.

> My uncle supported me until I got a job. I shared a room with my two uncles and later, when they bought a house I could rent a room from them which I shared with two other new arrivals… [44]

There were of course, unrequited expectations and unfulfilled promises from family members too. The experience of Stelios, with his paternal uncle who was his sponsor illustrates this when he said, 'my uncle had pledged to send me to school…but then he said I had to learn English first…I did not know what I was getting into then...'[45]His case demonstrates that the circumstances upon arrival were not always compatible with the aspirations and commitments given earlier during the migration endeavour. Often young men had to find their own way in a strange land where they didn't speak the language, understand the social and employment context or the wider culture of their new country. Stelios would overcome many challenges by sheer determination, hard work and fear of shame, should he fail. He quickly got a job and later enrolled himself at technical night school to complete an electronics course. The training gave him a path to a successful career as a self-employed electronics repairer, with the advent of television and other electronic domestic goods that had become available and in demand at the time:

> It was hard… lucky I had a job, I had made some friends – they were older Limnians and I liked being with them and they looked after me…I will never forget them.[46]

Oral testimony clearly and consistently conveys that Limnians who came to Australia were keen to work hard and achieve a level of economic stability and success, given the circumstances from which they came. This was a major motivator in taking the drastic step to migrate in the first place. The 1950s to early 1960s was a 'boom' period in Australia's post war economic and reconstruction history,[47] influencing the growth in immigration although, the 'size of the components and the relevant criteria for immigrant selection change[d] frequently, in response to various circumstances.'[48] Migrant men and

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Interview with Stelios, 9 July 2013.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Jupp, *Immigration*, 102; Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land*, 100.

[48] Maria Kabala, "Introduction," in *The Politics of Australian Immigration*, 6.

women were tenacious in finding work and had the drive and flexibility to respond to the demands of potential employers. They knew that they had little choice and limited negotiation power, but they were also disciplined and determined in their quest to survive and prosper. Those who had connections in the hospitality area, such as cafés, shops, restaurants and food markets for example, gravitated to join their relatives, friends and compatriots into those spheres of work, gradually establishing their own self operated family businesses. Many young men moved to isolated regional towns if that gave them an opportunity to get a job.

Haralambos recalls the ease of finding work thus:

> Then, in Australia there was always work, they would beg you…I remember, when I had finished my night shift roster at the glass factory, I was walking past a building site. Somebody yelled out, "do you want work?" he told me if you want work you must start now…I took that job and continued the night shift job too. I preferred the building industry rather than the factory…they paid good money too…I never had trouble getting a job... [49]

Other testimonies reinforced this point repeatedly. The expansion of the manufacturing sector at the time provided unskilled work for young men and women. The experience of Paul illustrates this point. He joined his married sister in Melbourne and within two days of arriving he had a job at GoodRidge-Dunlop, a tyre manufacturing plant. He recalls events thus:

> I started walking with another friend along Camp Road… we did not bother with transport, we had no cars, but as we were walking, not sure where the factories were, we were offered a lift…it happened to be a senior employee of the GoodRidge tyre plant. When we told him where we were heading, we only knew a few works in English, he gave us a card and told us to go there and show this card…I got a job the next day. I worked hard to impress the boss, I took overtime and became the best at my job… when I told them I was going back to Greece they insisted that I should go back there to work if I came back to Australia.[50]

Paul did in fact go back to the same company several years later when he returned to resettle in Australia with his family. He was indeed welcomed back by his former employer and after many years of working there, he reluctantly retired from this company.

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[49] Interview with Haralambos, 19 May 2014.

[50] Interview with Paul, 26 June 2013

Most Limnians found work in a wide range of manufacturing plants. Testimony revealed that they worked hard and developed a reputation as, good and reliable workers. Women seemed to gravitate, though not exclusively, to the food processing and textile areas. In Melbourne and Sydney, a lot of the manufacturing industries were in the inner suburbs which became the initial areas where newly arrived people settled. The proximity of jobs and a Greek community presence, including relatives and Limnian friends, were key drivers during initial settlement. Men and women actively found work and worked diligently. Fearful of losing their jobs, they worked above the required standard and were not reluctant to work overtime and week-end shifts. They were clear in their minds as to why they came to Australia and they had the energy and the drive to succeed. Anthoula (aged 90), found work through her network of Limnian acquaintances and *χωριανοί* (of her village). The strength of the community connections and networks enabled people, through word of mouth to obtain work and to be amongst people they knew. As she says:

> Sometimes it was seasonal work, like Rosella…there were many migrants there and Greeks…that was my first job. Later, again thanks to my *χωριανοί* (of the same village) I got a job in a clothing factory…they could see I was an experienced dress maker… I had no trouble getting jobs.[51]

Niki had a large extended family that had migrated sometime earlier. Her maternal uncle became her guardian. She moved into an established family network that had settled within proximity to each other in the inner-southern suburbs of Melbourne. She recalls that:

> After two days of arriving, I went to work in a knitwear factory, a job found through a contact of another relative. I had a lot of relatives here - my mother's siblings, my oldest brother and some relatives from dad's side…My brother worked in Seymour with one of our uncles. We lived in Windsor. I earned eight pounds in 1964 as I was less than twenty-one. My brother and I lived off my wage and we sent his wage to our parents in Greece. My father was ill. I also had to make repayments for my fare loan…we could not make any savings.[52]

The type of family and social networks to which immigrants arrived or became connected with, would largely determine their sphere of work, habitation and overall

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[51] Interview with Anthoula (not her real name), 13 June 2013.

[52] Interview with Niki, 25 June 2013.

success. If their connections were with factory workers, it was likely that they would gravitate upon arrival to the manufacturing industries and production plants, at least in the initial stages of settlement. Quite a lot of Limnians ended up working within the hospitality and services industries, many had quickly advanced to owning and running small family businesses and became self-employed. This pattern was replicated in other states where industry was expanding in similar ways to Melbourne. Nikos, Stelios, Jim and Niki and her husband quickly gravitated to self-employment within the food and services industries after having been drawn into jobs in these sectors. In Niki's case, this occurred soon after her marriage. She met her husband through Limnian friends. When they got married, the couple went to live in a rented room in shared housing until, as she says:

> We bought a milk bar business and lived there. In the beginning, we used milk crates for chairs and table. We both worked in the shop and had three boys. We stayed there for eight years. When the kids started school, we bought a supermarket jointly with my two brothers. I would go there by train to work during school hours. We've worked continuously all these years…[53]

Nikos, Stelios and Jim, all adolescents upon arrival, similarly ventured into self-employment after the initial years of youth, working for others in cafes, restaurants, fruit shops and other similar food and service industries. Both Nikos and Jim later collaborated with their respective relatives in various businesses such as milk bars and butcher shops, respectively. They were determined to work hard and achieve their goals. Otherwise they felt that they had little else to show for their 'leap of faith' in leaving the familiar homeland for an uncertain and unknown future. They tapped into the ties of village, family and community identification, all common features of small, rural identities. Their ties continued and influenced the way they proceeded to construct their lives in Australia.

Resilience and Interdependence

The oral narrative of foundational Limnian immigrants reflects several critical adaptive factors that are interconnected and were of assistance during the tumultuous years of early settlement. Numerous barriers and forms of exclusion and marginalisation were the

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[53] Ibid.

consequence of institutional and informal racism in Australia's history when assimilation was a dominant ideology. Leaving their homeland as young, naïve men and women, without 'worldly' experience and with very limited skills, they managed to navigate many new paths. Resilience, tenacity and drive emerge as dominant characteristics. Once in Australia, interdependence was part of an essential safety net. Whilst family and kin influenced the decision to migrate, relatives, godparents and marriage sponsors and other compatriots outside the family network became key supporters both during the anxious journey and upon arrival. Family and kin became the 'protectors' and surrogates in the practical issues of housing, work, information and even their moral practices. In some cases, they were supported materially, though in other cases, it was the available social, cultural and emotional support that was imperative. Young women relied on the family circle to provide much needed familial and protective environments. These relationships then became replicated as young people got married and needed a *κουμπάρο* (best man) to witness a marriage or to act as godparents to the next generation of children. Shared housing was a practical way that people lived. Within one household, numerous individuals as well as newly-wed couples shared the domestic facilities and available rooms. This was both functional and practical and provided a re-constructed communal environment. Friendships, networks and entrepreneurial opportunities blossomed and help was available to find work, better housing and to build a stronger sense of social connection.

Women relied on domestic circles which were facilitated and enhanced by their housing arrangements, creating supportive women's groups, such as those that had existed for women within the village context. The familiarity of this setting reduced isolation and provided a significant sense of safety and security for them. The suburb where they went to live was strongly connected with where they would initially commence work. This was particularly the case for young single men whose sponsors were in rural and regional centres outside the urban cities and suburbs. A large part of the contemporary Limnian community continues to be self-employed or in business because of such beginnings. In many cases, their descendants have followed a similar path. Often members of an extended family would end up pooling their combined resources to be able to go into business together, which again re-created the communal family arrangements of their homeland. Small, rural identities continued to be reinforced and survive.

Interdependence was reiterated, echoed and reinforced in second-generation narrative, confirming the strength of bond and trust that was vital in the survival of the community, its practices and its continuity. The living and working arrangements acted to safeguard the social and cultural community that they created. Afternoon Greek schools and the Orthodox Church on Sundays were common rituals in the lives of many families. Most of the social and recreational time would be spent with the extended family and compatriots, at each other's houses, around the dinner table and at communal excursions and functions. Many second-generation respondents vividly recalled their growing up years with memories of how their families would regularly join the wider circle of the Limnian community at organised picnics, trips and dinner dances.[54] Recreational events and gatherings were used for people to connect and to be together within a familiar environment, use of their own language and to find matrimonial opportunities and marriage partners.[55]

Women in migration faced many challenges but managed to re-construct their domestic environments and establish their families in the urban cities, drawing on their resilience and relying on the interdependence that thrived within the community. Language, culture and faith were integral to succeeding in their economic goals. These rural women had inner strength and resilience that was shaped by their pastoral backgrounds, beliefs and ethics. Their 'tools of survival' were strongly embedded in their experience of village life and family and island history. Whilst gender roles may have determined the delineation of public and private spaces that were gender based in the village context, migration empowered and enabled many women to influence their futures. The narrative shows that young women immigrants were taking responsibility for their own lives. Somewhat constrained by tradition, gender roles and societal expectations, these women, went beyond this framework or worked within it to create a different future. Like the men, they took on many jobs that were available to them. They accepted the basic accommodation and living conditions available to them. Women were

[54] Fotoula, interviewed 10 August 2013.

[55] Pantelis (Peter), interviewed 13 December 2013.

instrumental in establishing new families and their own *Νοικοκυριό (*household) in an environment that was unfamiliar and sometimes intimidating to them. Whilst often, not a matter of independent choice, marriage invariably became their 'best' option. As they created new families, they diligently combined their competing roles as mothers, wives and working women. They established cultural norms in the absence of their immediate family circle. The consistent theme emerging from the narrative was their preparedness to work hard, to create their new reality. Their personal needs, long term aspirations and dreams were circumvented by the need to work hard and achieve what was possible for economic security and stability.

Women's testimony reveals that, their role was central in building families in the new environment and helped to create stability and a focus for men and women to survive and in most cases flourish, economically and socially over time and to build strong foundations for the next generation. Preserving an intact culture within the family by living essentially within the familial norms, practices and values of a familiar village system emerged as a key and consistent theme in their narrative that emanated from historical resilience. The question that arises is whether there were gender differences in the way men and women adapted. This issue will be examined more extensively in Chapter Four. Indeed, some women's testimony did disclose the hardship, anxiety and struggle to cope with the complex demands and inflexibility of their work, family and child caring requirements. Whilst their traditional, rural background provided them with inner strength, together with their organisational abilities, self-sacrifice may have been the cost. Women were often reluctant to extensively discuss in any depth or in a recorded setting, aspects of their psychological and sexual world, experienced particularly in the early years of settlement. Forgetting or minimizing the recollection of difficult memories may well have been a survival strategy.

Reforming Identity? – Reflections, Yearnings and Conundrums

The first generation of foundational Limnians in Australia, are now elderly, retired and with established lives and generational families. They are enjoying their 'twilight' years, connected to their offspring and most have grand-children. A significant number remain involved with the social activities of Limnian associations as well as other community groups available, usually within the wider Greek community. They have in most cases

completed their 'productive' working lives and, in the main, are assisting their children with the upbringing of the next generation - their grand-children - a tangible way to support and maintain the continuity of family in the diaspora. They are also however, contributing to the perpetuation and extension of their island culture, customs and language, in a similar way to what their ancestors would have done for them had they remained in Greece. This generation of retirees often travel back to their *πατρίδα* (homeland), their village and birthplace. Usually, on a bi-annual 'secular pilgrimage', they return to their ancestral home during Greece's spring or summer months. Their ancestral home has been significantly renovated by them over the years and for those who did not have an ancestral home because traditionally the parental house was gifted to a female sibling, they have either built a new house if they had the means to do so or they visit less frequently and stay with relatives and friends. For this foundational generation, the parental house represents the link and connection to their childhood and symbolises much more than just their place of birth or the 'bricks and mortar' of physical shelter. It has become the focus of their imaginary world, which has anchored their existence and life in Australia. The ancestral home gains further significance and has helped to galvanise the next generation's sense of place and connection with the parental homeland, a theme to be explored in Chapter Five.

Sometimes, older people will evoke an imagined reality about the past which may not be consistent with what happened. But the narrators in the interviews re-lived their memories and felt them intensively as they spoke with emotion and sometimes, sadness and grief about events long ago. Some remembered in vivid and sensory detail and others expressed an aching sensation for 'home'- real or imagined. Haralambos, interviewed while in his village in Limnos, was asked how he feels when he is back and why it is that he is drawn back to his homeland. He replied, almost in a subdued tone thus:

> When all your childhood memories come back to you when you are here [in Limnos] you feel you are reborn…when you return, you are re-energised…I like to sit on this veranda [house in his village] and watch my surroundings…I

> can't explain why…I just feel complete…mesmerised by these surroundings…for me Limnos is a *μικρός παράδεισος* (a small paradise).[56]

The intimate relationship with such psychological and physical topography evident in this narrative, relates to Delaney's point that 'geography is invested with meaning.'[57] Significantly, Baldassar found that her San Fioresi research informants also spoke about their return 'as a form of cultural renewal.'[58] She uses the concept of a visited secular shrine, a metaphor for the home-town which elicits for them a sense of 'ethnic renewal and rebirth.' However, there are also ambivalent feelings. Haralambos talked about some of the negative aspects of identification of him by others which he expressed emotionally by saying 'when someone might call me *ξένος* (stranger)…it depresses me…why should they…[59]

Katerina, aged 72 years at the time of interview, talked about 'home' as both in the village and in Australia. About the ancestral house she says reflectively 'my house is my roots…we had bad times and good times…I'm happy when I come.[60] Whereas Panagiotis, aged 73 years at interview, talked about two homes when he said 'when I'm here (Limnos) I belong here, when I'm there (Australia) I belong there…[61] On the other hand, Costantine, aged 75 years at interview, who has been returning to Limnos annually for many years, is perplexed about where he might belong:

> I don't know where I belong…two homes, two *πατρίδες* (homelands)…there's a saying, "the saddest person is the one who has known two *patrides*", I like it here (Limnos) but I like it there (Australia). When I'm here I want to be there…when I'm there, I want to be here.[62]

Most men interviewed said that for many years they nurtured the desire to return to the homeland one day. They had not committed emotionally to the permanency of their

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[56] Interview with Haralambos in Limnos, 19 May 2014.

[57] Carol Delaney, ""The Hajj": Sacred and Secular." *American Ethnologist* 17, No. 3 (August 1990): 517.

[58] Baldassar, "The Return Visit as Pilgrimage," 143.

[59] Haralambos, interviewed 19 May 2014.

[60] Interview with Katerina in Limnos, 20 May 2014.

[61] Interview with Panagiotis in Limnos, 23 May 2014.

[62] Interview with Constantine in Limnos, 19 May 2014.

adopted home in Australia. For many, it took them years to achieve this reconciliation, and they needed to ensure that language, culture and faith were preserved, valued and practiced amongst their children and families so as not to jeopardise this idealised aspiration to return home permanently one day. Overwhelmingly, however, most respondents now felt reconciled to life in Australia. This response is consistently supported in a collection of short stories of sixty-six first generation Limnians who settled in Sydney, New South Wales, between the late 1930s and 1960s.[63] Most of these individuals appeared to have resolved this issue positively. Nonetheless, in this research, the responses are richly diverse and experientially loaded; and for some there are unresolved feelings, some of which are gender-based. However, the emotions are often related to memories of home as remembered, with emphasis on childhood and the yearnings of youth in recalling their early adolescent years. Jim, now aged 73, has vivid recollections of his youth. He was only thirteen when he left for Australia. What he said was enlightening 'you don't forget the place you were born…I never forget the place I was born…my heart is where I was born…my feelings are about home...[64] When asked to reflect upon where he feels he belongs now – Limnos or Australia, his response was immediate:

> As much as I would like to say yes, but unfortunately…we are Greeks but Australians, I don't think I could go back to live in Greece but I am Greek. I belong in Australia…I like my Greek background…but I'm in Australia. Australia is my home…where we will leave our last breath.[65]

Jim's reply reveals a common theme about the ambiguous feelings of belonging and identity that this generation of migrants have experienced and may still harbour. Jim yearns to go back to his 'spiritual home' but his life and responsibilities are in Australia. He has a strong sense of ethno-regional and locality-based identification, which emerges as a dominant feature in the way he self-identified as he spoke. Interestingly, he often drew upon the national identification as a Greek in the way that he spoke to distinguish

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[63]Penelope Panagiotopoulos-Valasis, *The Lemnians of Sydney*.

[64] Interview with Jim, 13 June 2013.

[65] Ibid.

himself from others in the Australian context. For Jim, 'Limnian' and 'Greek' had synonymous meanings in the context of the 'other' in the Australian setting. Maria (aged 83) recalled her youth vividly and with pathos and spoke, it seemed, as if she was re-living those memories again in the here and now, as if they were in the present. She told me that she often dreams and, in her dreams, she repeatedly re-lives her youth, especially now that she has time on her hands:

> I think about and miss my experiences as a young girl…the games, the festivals, going around to other villages, walking there and back, boys and girls together, singing, joking…when I'm in bed at night or sitting here on my own…it's like a movie these memories… *η νοσταλγία* (the nostalgia) does not go away… *ωραία χρόνια* (good years) … it does not disappear, the nostalgia…[66]

The nostalgia and yearning about the past are potent feelings and part of Maria's memories. But she also sees her life in perspective and is realistic when she says:

> We suffered here [Australia]…the early years were hard…but I have loved Australia, it gave us work, it helped us, where were we going to get a job? Here we had difficulties, we suffered but we did well. I regretted migrating because I left my mother, but I did not regret migrating…I found a better life here. We had work. From this perspective, it's been good… but I missed on other things…wherever you are born, it's all so much sweeter, better, I miss that, I still miss the life I had, the occasions…[67]

Memories of the past are intermingled with feelings of sometimes divided loyalties to 'home' on their return visits. On these visits, a sense of legitimacy and belonging to their birthplace may be challenged by feelings of not belonging and the attitude of those who were left behind. Returnees can be made to feel like *ξένος* or stranger, in a foreign land. In this respect, the sense of displacement they lived and experienced in Australia is mirrored again for them upon return. Thus 'home', once the site for family reunion, following scattered destinations was experienced differently to what they expected upon return. Many felt like strangers in the homeland - *ξένοι* - all over again. However, the strength of feeling about their regional identity as Limnians had remained a constant for them, amid change.

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[66] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[67] Ibid.

Summary

This chapter has drawn out the themes that have emerged from the oral narrative of the first-generation, foundational migrants, who were part of an unprecedented mass migration movement to Australia from the Greek island of Limnos. Their testimony adds to our limited knowledge of islander migration in the context of Australia's post-war reconstruction and the prevailing migration policies and programs that facilitated the movement of people. This oral testimony paints a historical canvas that brings to life events and experiences in post-war Australia, and it weaves a coherent story that sheds light on factors that assisted people in migration settlement. Emerging themes include issues regarding separation and departure, the longevity of the emotional experience, resistance to assimilation, the durability and resilience of people as they re-settle and adapt in a new country not immediately adopted as 'home'. These themes add to the on-going story of migration and our understanding of the Limnian experience. The importance of a close community and a strong island identity with a unique geo-political history, steeped in the island's rural and regional traditions, was covered extensively in Chapter One and complements a transnational migration story. The strength of the experience of departure and resettlement that emerges in this chapter is central to understanding migration. But, for Limnian islanders, the significance of their ethno-regional identity that subtly emerges in the narrative and is conceptually delineated in Chapter Two reinforces this theme. Additionally, the continuity of familiar, mutual, social and cultural practices helped to counter-balance social alienation and a lived sense of not belonging within a society whose narrative at the time was about 'sameness' not 'difference', reflecting a society that was ambivalent about migration. The function of memory and how it constructs reality and sustains people emerges also as a key theme. In the next chapter the thesis explores the significance of women as the backbone to re-constructed families, cultures and Limnian traditions in a foreign country.

Chapter 4 *'Multiple Identities'*-Women's Lives in Migration

> *'Generally, migrant women are invisible and under-researched. Their goals, expectations and experiences subsumed by those of men. There has been little mention of female diversity in the migration narrative. Greek immigrant women have been treated no differently.'*[1]

Vasta positions migrant women in Australia as having 'multiple identities'[2] given the multiple roles that they've had to undertake in their new environment. The theme of women's multiple identities has application and resonance in the narrative depicting Limnian women's lives and will be explored in this chapter. Through their testimonies the reader will appreciate that these women too occupy 'multiple subject positions' as we hear their stories and metaphorically travel with them from the homeland on their migration journeys of change, adaptation and transformation. The chapter aims to situate women's lives within a social environment, before and after migration, that helps to conceptualise the complexity, ambiguity and change that emerges in the oral testimonies about their departure from home as well as the ensuing lives constructed in the diaspora.

Locating Limnian Women – *An Ethnographic Context*

In the 1950s, when women began migrating to Australia, Greece was a traditional and economically under-developed society, especially in the villages and islands such as Limnos. Women's roles and status were largely socially defined, fixed and established across generations. Whilst there is a gap in research about Limnian women, the role and structure of families and the concept of *νοικοκυριό* (domestic household) and family as an economic unit are evident in the available anthropological research into rural villages of Greece, covered in Chapter Two. What is the relevance of this research and the

[1] Appleyard, Amera and Yiannakis, *Black Night, White Day*, 1.

[2] Vasta, "Gender, Class and Ethnic Relations", 177.

ethnographic concepts to immigrant women's lives? The embedded nature of culture and tradition from which Limnian women originated is instructive in interpreting and understanding their narrative and the influences upon them in migration. This backdrop is a useful prism for viewing the ways that they went about constructing their lives in Australia and in making the significant transition from a rural village to a modern, western, urban and industrial setting during Australian's peak period of economic development. In Greek village life, the domestic model of gender and its interplay with the *νοικοκυριό* (household) presented structured role definitions and expectations for men and women in all aspects of social life, proscribing both public and private domains. These dominant influences upon women's lives before migration are strongly reflected in the beliefs and testimony of both men and women immigrants arriving in the post war years to Australia. From a historical context, we see the significance of marriage and child bearing, incorporated in the social structure of rural villages, as a building block for the social survival of families and community. The value of marriage and having many children to contribute to the economic unit, striving for a productive rural life has been echoed in the testimony of both sexes, often articulated as the value of labour in juxtaposition with the value of education in rural communities.

Similarly, in Australia, marriage of single women was viewed as a high priority and the establishment of the *νοικοκυριό* in a foreign land became a metaphor for successful settlement. It was the primary goal for women, along with material success and the acquisition of a new modern family home and children, all of which represented tangible success, stability and security in the new environment. Their feelings about belonging were always ambivalent, changing and sometimes tumultuous as their new and strange social setting seemed at odds with the familiar values of past lives. The underlying social experiences of life in rural communities over many generations had been entrenched in their psyche. Inevitably their *habitus*[3] accompanied them on their migration journey and is reflected in their stories, influencing how they went about their resettlement and

[3] Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*.

establishment of new lives. They brought within them, fortitude and strength but were also vulnerable in a new context.

Limnos, is a largely matrifocal community with a 'matrilateral bias that characterises kinship.'[4] A dowry system which involves a house built near the woman's family (the natal home) in the form of *προίκα* (dowry) is common. The role and purpose of the institution of marriage and dowry both have strong economic functions in traditional communities that generate social norms and practices perpetuated over generations. Thus, in Greek society generally, as well as Limnos, the institution of the dowry draws its strength from 'its economic function within the institution of marriage and from its social function as a powerful status symbol.'[5] A woman's dowry (or lack of), therefore, was one of the definable factors that led to migration and was repeated frequently in the narrative. The theme of dowry resonates overtly in most men's testimony in relation to factors influencing their decisions to migrate and was expressed as a family expectation bestowed upon women which became a masculine duty and responsibility towards female siblings, particularly in the absence of a father or his economic incapacity to fulfil such a social contract.

The role of women in migration can therefore be viewed from a societal and structural perspective that precedes them and influences the way that they navigated a new social reality after their departure from the homeland. But the new reality can also bring its own contradictions, challenges and adaptive demands that are present in the modern world to which they are transplanted and a host country where old rules are replaced by new ones. Migration potentially freed men from their anticipated gender role of providing a dowry for their sisters or daughters, at least directly, but they still felt the moral obligation to make remittances to the family left behind. Sponsoring their remaining sisters to join them in Australia, helped to mitigate the dowry obligation but, in many cases, still required them to ensure that their female family members were found adequate marriage partners, often through an arranged marriage. This social aspect that

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[4]Loizos and Papataxiarchis, *Contested Identities*, 9.

[5] Lambiri-Dimaki, *The Dowry in Modern Greece,* 177.

was prevalent in Greece and Limnos in particular, shows the tangible nature of change in everyday life as a lived phenomenon for males and females in migration that guided some of the changes in attempting to create a new, modern life in a new setting. Women's testimony throughout the thesis, illustrates that migration, to some extent, served to catapult women from the shackles of culture and tradition, potentially emancipating them in their new social context, or at least it gave them new, unimaginable opportunities and a new canvas for a different life.

But is this true? What does women's narrative tell us? Their reality highlights contradictions and challenges for migrating men and women in their attempt to reconcile cultural values with the new-found social reality. Significantly, marriage remained a priority for the young men and women settling in Australia, but the constraints of dowry did not feature as the primary concern. The narrative shows that migration for women had a liberating influence and provided the cornerstone for transforming their lived reality to some extent. Couples could move forward, largely unaffected by some values, enabling them to build their future with only the few resources they had between them. They built their lives relying on their youth, health and their shared productive capacity in a more equitable context of their own making. At the same time, familiar cultural values percolated in the background and informed their moral and social compass. This phenomenon, along with other factors, contributed to the shaping of the Limnian diaspora. In this respect, as Doumanis argues, it has similarities to other Greek migrants, where a new community forms and is reinvented in the diaspora from the inherited ancestral traditions. This is what Doumanis, following Benedict Anderson's well-known phrase, describes as the Greek 'imagined community'[6], which is created by a common history, experience or culture of a group and is also about how that community is attached to places, imagined or real.[7] For many women, their new lives enabled them to become agents of their own destiny and creativity.

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[6] Doumanis, "The Greeks in Australia." 79.

[7] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference." *Cultural Anthropology* 7 (1) (1992): 10.

Women's Migration Journey

Leaving Limnos for 'an unknown land' was an emotionally charged experience, particularly for women, not only for those who left, but also for those who stayed behind. Generally, married women were reluctant to leave. They felt 'divided loyalties' to husband on the one hand, who in some cases was already in Australia, and concurrently towards their ageing parents, who would be left behind without the expected support of a daughter to care for them. It was traditionally expected that daughters would become the carers for their parents in old age and ill-health. This was the incorporated and dominant social and cultural value of the matrilateral model of kinship practiced on the island. Despina (aged 65) captures this tension as she speaks about departure at the age of seven with her mother to join her father already in Australia:

> The whole *χωριό* (village) was down at the port of Moudros... a big boat, everyone was crying before we got on board. I picked up the vibes…my mother kept on delaying our departure…leaving her parents behind. Apparently, it was the same for her mother-in-law. The husbands were putting pressure upon them to depart. It was harder for the women. My parents would say later, that they had to leave, to help the extended family that was left behind. [8]

Women also felt the loss of the extended family much more than men. They lost a sense of community and the self-confidence that a nurturing kinship circle provided them in the domestic domain of village life. Mass migration was a significant event, especially for small island communities. The sudden loss of people in large numbers from a village had massive ramifications for a tightknit community and the local economy. Toula, the oldest of four sisters, described it as a contagion 'this urge to leave': 'there was this *μικρόβιο* [like a spreading virus] to go to Australia but no-one knew where they were going.'[9] At the age of eighteen, marriage was arranged for her by proxy, between the two families on the island, to a man from the same village who had migrated earlier to Tasmania. The *προξενήτρα* (matchmaker) approached her parents with the proposal and they accepted on her behalf because they knew the family of the potential groom. In traditional communities, decisions to marry were made by the two families, with the

[8] Interview with Despina, 12 August 2013.

[9] Interview with Toula, 30 May 2014.

father as the decision maker or eldest brother if the father was deceased.[10] Toula recalls that she had the engagement celebration at her parents' house in the absence of the groom already in Australia. She described the poignant departure scenes in the village as 'frenetic'. There was 'joy and lots of tears' as the community gathered to farewell those who were leaving. Hers was a *κεφαλοχώρι* (a large village) which was rapidly depleting as the buses continued to come whenever there was a boat due to leave the island. In the oral testimony accounts, the events of departure were profoundly felt, were emotional and vividly remembered by informants as they recounted their lived memory and experiences. But the pain and trauma of these events were also shared by the neighbours, the extended families and the whole village community. Everyone had family or neighbours who were leaving or had left. Consequently, migration impacted the entire community.

Katerina recalls with tears in her eyes, her own memories of her father on the night before leaving and describes the scenes thus:

> There were lots of people at our house…everyone went to send-off people…the tears, what tears was that…I remember my mother pulling her hair and saying, "where are you going my child" … there was a lot of sadness, I remember these scenes…[11]

She described her mother as a woman, who ordinarily was a 'hard disciplinarian', but recalls only her mother's emotional agony on the day of her departure. Katerina could hardly speak when she mentioned her attachment and fondness for her father, who she described as a very 'silent' man, trying to control his emotions on the eve of her departure. Panagiotis conveys these scenes as 'mourning behaviour,' an event like death, widely shared and experienced by the entire village community as 'the buses and people went around with flowers saying good-bye. It is a communal event…it was hard for the parents especially.'[12] Sentiments of departure and loss were also a common, recurring theme in the collected short stories of over sixty Limnian men and women who had settled in Sydney, compiled by Panagiotopoulos-Valasis, herself a Limnian migrant child and

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[10] Mylonas et al., "Greece", 346.

[11] Interview with Katerina, 20 May 2014.

[12] Interview with Panagiotis, 23 May 2014.

narrator in this research. Eleftheria is one of her informants and mother of another narrator in this research. Her husband was already in Australia, before the rest of the family joined him, she says:

> I felt very sad when I was leaving Lemnos, because I knew that I was leaving my mother behind, all by herself. But I had no choice; I had to migrate to far away Australia, to secure a better life for my children (Eleftheria, unknown age).[13]

But there's another view. Young men, articulated memories that were quite optimistic. There were fears about the unknown destination as well as joy and hope about the future. Not knowing exactly what life would be like, some people saw migration as an opportunity to do well and had positive aspirations, especially young males. Though many young women too, were positive and optimistic about their futures, driven by their youth and the desire for a 'better life.'

Women's Agency in Settlement

The following vignettes selected from the narrative characterise women's experiences and highlight the early years of settlement. Most women left Greece in the early 1960s either as assisted or independently sponsored migrants. A smaller number of Limnian women had migrated in the 1950s as sponsored immigrants, usually assisted by relatives and kin from their own village. Some were wives, arriving with the family to join their husbands who had left earlier. Others, like Toula, were betrothed or formally matched through *προξενιό* (arranged marriage) for marriage to their future husband, already in Australia. Two of my informants who arrived in the mid-1950s were single women. In the early years, young single women usually found the adjustment difficult even though they were usually received by relatives who would become their parental surrogates and protectors. For Anthoula, who was a skilled and experienced dressmaker, the first few years were very difficult:

> Life was hard…you could not get food that you were used to…we used dripping to cook…olive oil was like medicine…I couldn't eat… no Greek coffee (as a dressmaker, coffee was a ritual), no hot water…we had to wash with cold water. I did not do domestic chores back home. I had to look after

[13] Eleftheria Rizoglou, in Panagiotopoulos-Valasis, *The Lemnians of Sydney*, 74.

> my hands for dress making…I was not used to housework… I was well treated, pampered by my aunty then… [14]

She was persuaded by her brother, to migrate to Australia after hearing that it was a good place to get work and 'make money.' She left her village at Christmas 1955, at the age of thirty-two, on the *Flamignia* and arrived at Port Melbourne in January 1956 after nearly thirty days at sea. Even though she had established herself as a reputable dressmaker in Limnos, she recalls that she was not able to earn enough money there, relying on village locals for work and was unable to save. Marriage options on the island, in her view, were very limited as she did not want to marry a farmer. The prospect of making 'good' money attracted her. Her brother enticed her to join him in South Australia, where he had obtained a job at the new General Motors car plant in Adelaide. Upon arrival, she was gravely disappointed. There was no work for her in Adelaide and she was rapidly spending the small amount of money that her father had given her. Anthoula soon moved to Melbourne and went to live in a shared house with other Limnian compatriots. They helped her find work in a factory, which ultimately made her decision to migrate worthwhile. She had no difficulty finding factory jobs in Melbourne. In many ways, Anthoula was an unusual risk taker and a courageous woman for her time. She demonstrated confidence, and an ambitious streak, in her decision to leave an established but confined village lifestyle where she had family support, a community, and reliable work, exercising a viable vocation as a skilled dressmaker. Seeking to alter her circumstances Anthoula exercised her agency in leaving and though her future was uncertain, she acted to create 'a better life.' In Melbourne, she became a factory worker during a period when there was ample work available and set about establishing her life in a new country. Anthoula, through a match-making proposal, was married within a year and before too long she and her husband went into a shared purchase of a house, together with her husband's relatives. Later, the couple independently bought another house within the same suburb, after the co-owners decided to sell the first house. Both husband and wife continued to work and save, as the focus of life for them, like many immigrants, was one of survival and to provide security for their family. When Anthoula became pregnant

[14] Interview with Anthoula, 14 June 2013.

she had to give up work as maternity leave was not available to women working in manufacturing industries in the 1950s in Australia.

The circumstances for Maria,[15] however, were somewhat different. She was the youngest of five siblings, with a widowed mother who was left landless after her husband's death from chronic illness. The family's accumulated wealth from her father's own migration journey to America as a young man had evaporated with the onset of war and the banking crisis and so the family experienced significant poverty, especially during the German occupation in the early 1940s. After the war, she too exercised her agency and made the decision to migrate against the wishes of her mother and siblings. She left for Australia on New Year's Eve in 1957 and arrived at Station Pier in Port Melbourne in January 1958 on the *Castel Felice*. She settled in Brunswick and soon got a job as a machinist in a factory, followed by other factory jobs. Most jobs were in Brunswick (an inner, industrial Melbourne suburb) but she also travelled as far as Toorak (some ten kilometres, involving several forms of transport) to make belts for women's dresses.

Niki left Limnos in 1964 at the age of seventeen. She was one of four siblings. Her father was a reputable stonemason in the village and always had work. He provided a reliable income to his family, working this dangerous trade. The family also had land to cultivate. Niki talked about working in the fields with one of her brothers, cultivating cotton, though she had completed a dress-making apprenticeship and had a potential vocation. She was happy to go to Australia. As she says:

> I didn't care about leaving, I was sick and tired of working in the cotton fields – weeding, picking and so on, it was very hard work…Panagiotis and I worked these fields from seven in the morning till sunset.[16]

Her brother, Panagiotis, a couple of years younger than his sister, would plough the land using a horse. How was the decision made to migrate? Who decided? Was it Niki's decision alone? It's unlikely, given her age. Yet she agreed to go. She was happy to go. Her personal agency worked in tandem with her family's decision, wanting her to have

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[15] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[16] Interview with Niki, 25 June 2013.

'a better life.' It was a family decision for a better future for all of them. It was a decision that started the chain of migration for the whole family as they all ultimately joined her in Australia, including her parents. Throughout the interview niki displayed optimism about her decision to migrate. It was a 'liberating' move for her. She adapted in the transition from working in the fields to factory work, given her zeal to improve her life prospects and cooperated with her older brother for them both to live off her wages of eight pounds a week as well as paying off her travel costs. His wages would then be sent to the rest of the family in Limnos who needed their support.

Katerina, one of five siblings, arrived in Australia in 1961 at the age of eighteen years as an independent migrant, sponsored by her older brother and settled in Sydney. She began re-paying her brother for part of her fares once she started working. Her father had contributed the other half towards her travel costs. Did young women and girls have choices in these circumstances? Katerina acknowledged the difficulties families faced. This is how she frames her situation and her choices:

> Life was a bit difficult for us…we thought we'd find things easier…for a better life. We were five brothers and sisters…my father worked hard, we all did, but… my father asked me, "Did I want to go?" …well, if my brother wants me to go, I will go… I was married in one year after migrating. [17]

The case studies selected involve young, single Limnian women immigrants who were sponsored by their older brothers, which was a common practice. Sisters were normally expected to provide support and domestic help for their immigrant brothers, a traditionally expected women's role, as her agency was mediated by social norms and expectations. In other circumstances, women were sponsored by some uncle, godparents or other kin. In these situations, the sponsors became the male protectors and were often very strict and felt responsible for the reputation and family honour of young women. The interdependence amongst siblings and other relatives in migration was often temporary and not long lasting.

During the transition period, young immigrant marriages were rapidly occurring within the Limnian community and more widely in Greek migrant communities.

[17] Interview with Katerina, 20 May 2014.

Settlement in Australia whilst often seen as novel and exciting had its challenges. Shared housing was the basic form of shelter particularly during the Australia of the 1950s and 1960s. This was in fact common, as it helped reduce the cost of housing at a time when factory wages were relatively low and the need to save and support family in Greece was an added imperative. The weekly cost of rooms varied from one to three pounds, depending on how many people were sharing a room. The houses were usually owned by other more established settlers. Renting rooms was a way to earn extra income which contributed to pay-off a loan for the house, as well as providing affordable accommodation for the more recent arrivals. This inter-dependency was a common practice and part of a symbiotic mutuality that resulted in meeting needs and providing maximum benefit. All the rooms were rented, and all share tenants had to roster for the use of domestic facilities - kitchen, bathroom and laundry. Not a lot was said specifically about these circumstances, but women often implied that the sharing of facilities sometimes strained relationships during 'peak' times when everyone had to cook after work or use the other domestic facilities. Nevertheless, this mode of habitation typically afforded the benefit of promoting strong networks and long lasting, critical and valued relationships. Practical assistance in finding jobs, often within the same industry or employer were common. Newly arrived young women were taken under the guidance of relatives and compatriots to work at the same factory and were shown how to navigate public transport and ways to get to work. The housing arrangements provided new arrivals with social and cultural support and a shared language, particularly necessary for women who were more socially isolated than men. Men had the advantage of their gender which enabled them to mediate the public social environment that was more restricted for women. In this way, women could re-construct a communal environment domestically, readily available through extensive familial and kinship relationships, facilitated by communal habitation. Single women were often assigned to share a room with another woman, possibly from the same village or extended family in a household usually comprised of other Limnians. This often assisted with their integration. They quickly established the imaginary 'village' setting, out of which other social networks would evolve. A significant difference for women was that they had to be married off quickly to give them social status, and to transfer responsibility away from the assigned family member and protector to the future husband, thereby preserving 'family honour' and

preventing 'family shame', key tenets of traditional family values that mattered. Maria is a case example. Within months of her arrival Maria was married. As she recalls:

> In May, I met my future husband by *Προξενιό*. I was not ready for marriage, but he insisted, and I could see that my brother's wife was jealous [of the fraternal bond] and caused friction for the couple. I reluctantly agreed to marry.[18]

Women, more than men, felt a profound isolation from the immediate matriarchal family. They had to rely on other women to deal with such new experiences as pregnancy, child rearing and depression without the traditional extended family environment of their previously lived experience. Women's narrative reinforces the difficulties that early immigrants experienced in adapting to a new environment, especially women who arrived during the 1950s and early 1960s. Until the mid-1950s, most Limnian immigrants were men so there was very little established social infrastructure conducive to women's needs. The established *αδελφότητες* (fraternal societies) in the major states of settlement were, male oriented and largely excluded women. There was no physical venue that was suitable for women to come together during the early years. Organised dinner dances were held at various hired venues, relying on the goodwill and volunteerism in which women were involved. Their roles were usually as wives, who undertook the domestic chores to do with food and other preparations, while men were involved in other capacities including committee and leadership roles. Receptions and social events provided a vital social outlet for women and men within the cultural community, at a time when the wider community seemed closed to them. As Fortier states about the Italian immigrants that settled in Britain, 'they had to work hard to create communal spaces of belonging based on the perceived *reproduction* of traditions.'[19] Women in Australia were not included on committees and other decision-making structures until the late1980s and beyond. As the size of the community grew with the influx of a lot more immigrant men

[18] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[19] Anne-Marie Fortier, *Migrant Belongings: Memory, Space, Identity*, (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000), 1.

and women, this situation began to slowly change. The purchase of community facilities[20] enabled this community to have an identifiable, physical venue for multiple programs and events that catered for the important needs of the community.

Whilst migration entailed hardship, deprivation and 'loss of self' during the early years of arrival to Australia, women's narrative almost uniformly affirms the need to enter the workforce soon after arrival as a pressing priority. In most cases their accommodation had already been arranged by their sponsors. Earning a wage, a relatively new experience, and learning to navigate the arena of unskilled labour in factories and workshops was fundamental to their survival and perceived 'success', which signalled a new start and path to independence, self-reliance and autonomy. Though difficult initially, it was the first step to creating a normalising life in a new and unfamiliar environment. During the late 1950s and some of the 1960s, when the economy was thriving, people rarely talked about difficulties in getting work. The narrative, for both women and men was consistently about the practical things that they needed to do to ground themselves to establish a new 'normal' life. Women just seemed to want to 'get on with it.' They may have had slightly different imperatives, such as earning enough money to save or to send remittances back home, to their parents and other family members, who still relied on them. Though, most young women and men, aspired to set up a family home of their own. The transition from rural labour to working in factories did not enter their consciousness, as they already knew that migration entailed hard work and limited choices. The prevailing mental state of immigrants, in the early years, was one of doing 'what everyone else was doing' to survive, prosper and to establish a level of security. For most migrant women, work in factories was their only option. The new experience of having wages in their hands each week was mesmerising. It became the antidote to the mental shock of living in alienating and misunderstood circumstances, where they did not understand the language or the people and the often hostile and unfriendly society into which they were

[20] In Victoria, the Lemnian Brotherhood of Melbourne purchased its first building in 1974 in Middle Park, Melbourne. Others followed in other states, some years later.

transplanted. They learnt the basics to get to work, to do the shopping and visit their relatives and compatriots on the weekends.

Maria's initial impressions described the strangeness of the physical environment she encountered, refering to 'the wooden houses, corrugated roofs and the weather.[21] Australia's physical surroundings and urban context was initially seen as mysterious and unfamiliar. On her inability to communicate, she recounts the poignant event when she was sent to the milk bar to buy a bottle of soft drink, remembering her embarrassment as she recited the rehearsed sentence all the way to the shop, 'I was rehearsing the phrase all the way, "please give me one bottle coca cola."'[22]

Though these examples may seem trivial, especially now, for Maria at the time, they were indicative of the fears, dislocation and social disorientation that women especially experienced during the initial 'roller coaster' time of arrival in Australia. Maria continues with this metaphor:

> There were many tears…It was emotional… from all the crying in my life, I had buckets of tears…but now they [pointing to her eyes] have dried up![23]

Other women spoke more furtively, in passing, almost embarrassed after all these years about the tears that were shed in their early years of arrival. Anthoula,[24] whose personal agency led her to migrate independently to Australia, tended to want to minimise the tears that she cried when initially she could not find work in Adelaide as her father's money was quickly running out. Shame was not an uncommon feeling to be expressed by women, in one way or another, and in some cases young men too, as they found the initial experience not as they had hoped and expected. But for all narrators, these feelings had finality as they realised their lack of choice in their circumstances. However, they went on to make the best out of what, at the time, felt an enormous burden placed upon them.

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[21] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Anthoula, interviewed 14 June 2013.

Whilst there is no objective, available data to substantiate this proposition, 'ethnographic' evidence from over fifty years of 'insider' observation within the community, personal family life, as well as anecdotal story-telling, underlies an apparent entrepreneurial streak amongst Limnian immigrants. Like many other island migrant communities in Australia, young men initially learned the 'food trade' by working in cafes, milk bars and fruit shops, soon after arrival, in the already established businesses of earlier migrants, in both cities as well as in rural towns and centres. The propensity for self-employment, common in the pre-war years amongst islanders followed on in the post war, mass migration years amongst Limnian families, who swiftly entered self-employment and business enterprises, especially once women began to arrive. Some thirty percent of the female respondents in this research either themselves or through their families, became involved in private enterprises and self-employment several years after their arrival, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. What kind of entrepreneurial involvement did the women engage in and what was the significance of these ventures on women's lives? What ramifications did self-employment have upon their family relationships and their children as they were growing up?

A few years after marrying Nick, a factory worker himself, Anthoula could see other relatives and friends around her moving out of unskilled factory labour and buying-up suburban and neighbourhood milk bars and 'mixed usinesses', as they were called at the time. It was in the late 1960s, before supermarkets and the emergence of shopping centres. Anthoula left her factory job, while her husband continued his external factory employment, and began to run a milk bar in an inner Melbourne suburb. They had purchased the building as well as the business. Anthoula had learned very little English and had never operated such a 'small business' before. She was determined to do what others were doing and wanted to succeed. Anthoula's decision brought out her entrepreneurial, striving nature that evolved within an environment of limited choices. She placed herself in a position of actor, demonstrating personal agency in new circumstances and taking control of her life. Previously, balancing factory work and child care requirements had become insurmountable, for Anthoula. Her need to work and the struggle with inadequate care provided to her son, resulted in her quitting her job. This was a common theme in women's narrative because they were forced to rely on often inexperienced, newly arrived, younger women, who themselves needed a job to survive

but lacked experience with children. Such circumstances created a lot of anxiety and fear for young mothers about their children's wellbeing. Many young newly arrived women had little choice but to take on the role as 'child minders' for the children of family members, neighbours and compatriots, because at various periods of economic downturns, factory work was becoming difficult to find, jobs were lost and new arrivals were at risk of becoming unemployable. In many cases working women did not have any other choice but to continue working even with unsatisfactory child care available for their children. Earlier, when Anthoula and her husband had bought their first house together, she set about renting rooms and providing domestic services to her single male tenants while they went to work, thus enabling her to be home to care for her young children and continue to earn a decent income. As she recalls:

> I was earning about twelve pounds from the tenants…this was better than the factory wages, I would keep the rooms tidy and I could look after my son…I was young, and my feet were going then [an expression about having energy and vitality]. [25]

Anthoula resumed work outside the home only after her two children started school. When the family moved into the milk bar business in November 1967, it was her ten-year old son who spoke English that helped her to learn the business during the summer school holidays. She, like others, relied on their young children to operate a milk bar. By the time her son resumed school in February the following year, Anthoula had learnt the business, expanded her trade, diversified her stock and developed a good reputation in the local community. These enterprises operated seven days a week, and all year around. They involved long hours daily, and significant financial risks for the families and reliance on the mobilisation of the whole family around these ventures. Alexakis and Janiszewski found in their research that self-employment options were:

> providing a regular, reasonable income, potential material improvement, independence, maintenance of the family unit and requiring only limited

[25] Interview with Anthoula, 14 June 2013.

> education and knowledge of English… many Greeks undertook work in fish shops, restaurants, fruit shops, fish-and-chip shops, milk bars and cafes.[26]

Niki and her husband bought a milk bar/mixed business soon after their marriage and they both worked in the business. It was a seven day a week job, but it enabled Niki to have her three sons and work without needing external child care. The seven-day-a-week nature of work in milk bars meant that, as there was little opportunity to have holidays, personal and family recreation, and the use of consumables were considerably cheaper for families as they were bought at wholesale prices, these enterprises became a 'forced' way of saving money. This type of small family business was an attractive option for immigrants, especially suited to women, providing them with, not only a livelihood but a way to escape the constraints of factory labour giving them the flexibility to bring up their young children. Small family enterprises mobilised all family members into a productive role around the business, re-creating the family as the 'economic cell' in a new social setting. They replicated what Cavounidis described, within the context of Greek society,[27] a model, both familiar and compatible with these women's prior experience. Several respondents who were the children of immigrants also talked about 'being forced' to help the family in the milk bar before and after school.

It is commonly accepted that, in countries with in-coming migration, a business in the food and services industry is mostly family run, relying on the cheap labour and skills of women assisting the family. As with migrant communities in Australia, women's labour within these settings was 'the cornerstone of the ethnic economy.'[28] Women in migration have often undertaken supportive roles in family businesses, without overt recognition or acknowledgement. They have borne a lot of the work burden, in addition to domestic and care work, as described by several narrators in this study. Toula, who was betrothed to a man already in Australia, migrated to Tasmania to join her future

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[26] Effie Alexakis and Leonard Janiszewski, *In Their Own Image: Greek Australians,* Gallery 2: The Capital Theatre Milk Bar, available from <http://www.austhistmuseum.mq.edu.au/greek/gallery2.htm > [26 May 2015].

[27] Cavounidis, "Capitalist Development and Women's Work in Greece", 323.

[28] Anthias, *Ethnicity, Class, Gender and Migration*, 3.

husband. She found herself entering an established business partnership between her husband and his brother and family. She describes the role of women in her family as 'passive' participants, working in the business without other opportunities and without autonomy. As a young, bright high school educated woman, Toula found it reasonably easy to learn English. She essentially enmeshed herself in the family business. She described this experience thus:

> we worked hard together…difficult years…life was hard…there was no time to do things, it was seven days a week…long hours, we couldn't go out…I did not drive, we were in a country town, then I had my son…continuous work…we did well with the business…the hardest was when the children came, we didn't have my mother to help…we did everything ourselves [referring to women in this situation].[29]

For Toula, things improved when her family went to live in the city of Hobart, where there was a small Greek community, an Orthodox Church and a Greek school for the children. She was then able to reconnect again within a Greek community setting which she had missed profoundly, while living in a small, socially isolating and unfamiliar country town and working long hours in the extended family business. Though migrant women's enterprising activities have remained largely invisible for researchers for a long time and evidence of formal ownership and active participation in decision making processes is scarce, the migrant woman as an entrepreneur has however, become increasingly visible and evident in more recent years.[30]

What emerges from women's stories is their tenacity to deal with an environment that was not always of their choosing but at the same time women were often pro-active actors within the sites they occupied and constructively contributed, with initiative, sometimes as equals, to improve their lives and those of their new families. In migration, most women adapted and learned new skills as well as exercising personal agency as actors and creators of new and evolving life opportunities. Like Anthoula, they

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[29] Interview with Toula, 30 May 2014.

[30] Floya Anthias and Nishi Mehta, "The Intersection between Gender, the Family and Self-employment: The Family as a Resource." *International Review of Sociology* 13:1 (2003): 105-116; Ursula Apitzsch and Maria Kontos, "Self-employment, Gender and Migration – Introduction." *International Review of Sociology* 13:1 (2003): 67-76; Sallie Westwood and Parminder Bhachu, *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy and Gender Relations* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

demonstrated entrepreneurial skills, took risks and worked hard under difficult circumstances, often with very little English skills and without maternal or family support and assistance, especially during the child rearing years. Since the 1970s, family reunion, offered migrants new opportunities to be re-united with parents and extended family.[31] This provided children with grandparents and mothers with elders for support and practical assistance, which was both timely and invaluable for working women.

Women were often reluctant to discuss personal and psychological issues openly, but these were subtly alluded to in some interviews when discussing physical health matters and issues of cumulative stress as they adapted, often in silence, in their new environments without a recognisable circle of support. The consequential realities were not too far below the surface of experience and emotions. They were part of the unspoken, unmentionable actualities in hidden and suppressed memories that can only be surmised from tone, voice and implicit references, body language and innuendo during the interviews. Being able to uncover such 'hidden histories' is a major strength of oral history as a research methodology that is rarely available elsewhere in other primary sources. But this process needs time and trust-building. Pertinent references to personal difficulties for women were sometimes revealed outside the recorded interview context and cannot be disclosed in the analysis as it would be unethical to use the specific information.

Setting up Families in a 'New World'

As discussed in Chapter Two, youthful Limnian immigrants began to arrive in greater numbers in the1950s and initially they were predominantly single men. Young women began to arrive in the early 1960s, although, young wives with children had sometimes joined their husbands in the early 1950s. The predominant community value of marriage in the first instance and people marrying from within their region remained influentially strong. In the absence of quantifiable data for substantiation, we rely on anecdotal evidence and community links which confirm that there were only a few exogamous

[31] Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land*, 270.

marriages during the early decades of mass migration. Traditional practices reinforced the desirable behaviour and social imperative for Limnians to marry Limnians and if possible, women or men from their own or surrounding local villages. Nevertheless, several narrators had married outside of the regional context as people were inevitably mixing with other Greeks at the workplace, at church and other social institutions. Often, existing connections between families led to negotiations for *προξενιό* (arranged marriage). The role of *προξενήτρα* (matchmaker), though undocumented, was a unique vocation and informally practiced in pre-and post-war Greece, especially in rural towns and villages. In Australia, this practice is also undocumented, though women's testimony and anecdotal evidence tells us that this role was assumed during the post-arrival era, by trusted community elders and senior family members.[32] Many first generation informants in this study, who arrived in Australia as single women and men, talked about their arranged marriages, with older relatives or trusted elders, compatriots and friends acting as the facilitators or as 'de-facto' matchmakers. The demand for church weddings in the mid to late 1950s was overwhelming. Some couples were forced to marry on weekdays, as there were very few Greek Orthodox Churches in Australia in the early migration years and the demand for religious ceremonies was very high. Maria recounts her experience in 1958, thus:

> It was hard to find a church because there were a lot of weddings going on. We finally decided on a Friday, after work. We rented a room at my husband's cousin's house.[33]

Women, generally, tended not to want to elaborate in any detail about subjects such as marriage and wedding events. They were 'matter of fact' about marriage and the events leading up to the wedding. I can only deduce from non-verbal expressions and their feelings about having left family behind that this may explain such response. Nuanced in the lack of overt expression about such a momentous occasion was, it seems, that the choice was often not theirs to make, and in some cases, there was an element of coercion

[32] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[33] Ibid.

and pressure to accept decisions, a situation confirmed by several narrators.[34] Often it was the brothers, replacing the father's role or uncles and the extended family who initiated the process of match-making, followed by wedding plans for arranged marriages. Women were the 'minor' actors in these situations, particularly those women who migrated to Australia in the early1950s. In later years, the active role of vibrant Limnian community associations became an established platform for connecting people, through the increased number of social and recreational events and gatherings and contributed, perhaps inadvertently, to the choices that young men and women were making and their decisions on the selection of marriage partners. The endogamous unions that largely prevailed acted to maintain homogeneity and the strong regional bias and characteristic of island traditions. In many instances, the durability and dominance of the prevailing social and ethno-cultural norms were instrumental in these choices and effectively prevailed over several decades into the next generation. The prevailing value of family formation though remained a dominant factor in migrant women's lives. As a cultural value, it seemingly gave young women social status and the opportunity to create and build their own identity and stability in a new country, a sense of permanence and children of their own. However, the contradictions and tensions in gender terms contributed incrementally to bring about changes over time, as the community organised, matured and moved on with time and the effects of modernity.

Most men interviewed, would talk about their desire and plan to return to the homeland. But, in most cases, this wish became only an imaginary aspiration, eclipsing their desire to return home within the mythical period of five years. Women on the other hand, did not usually articulate a desire to return, in the same way. For them, the 'imaginary home' was more about loss of family relationships, memories and feelings of guilt about those people left behind, especially their parents and grandparents with whom they were strongly bonded and connected. Women grieved about this loss for a long time and sometimes until well after the death of their parents, for instance. Men, on the other hand, were essentially 'stuck' to the idea of recreating their lives, close to the land again,

[34] Several interviews in my possession, overtly express the pressure felt by women about marriage.

back in the homeland, using their created or mythically accumulated wealth through migration. Along a similar pattern to the pre-war migration of males to other countries, they aspired to replicate the imagery of successful 'Americani'[35] as the ambition and symbol for their own migrant vision. Often, they referred to those of earlier migration generations who had returned wealthy from their sojourns and had become prominent land owners back on the island. Women's narrative though, reflected a more pragmatic approach to building their symbolic foundations which started with the purchase of a house in Australia. All interviewees had acquired their first house within a period of twelve to eighteen months, some even earlier. With both husband and wife working and saving vigilantly, purchasing the first house became an achievable goal that symbolised both success as well as a sense of 'rooted-ness', security and a type of belonging. Women were critical financial managers domestically, restricting spending on themselves or on family holidays and other 'frivolous' activity to achieve the purchase of a house. In fact, this was a commonly shared goal usually held by husband and wife and represented a unifier in their migration journey and marriage union. The objective of acquiring their own house was commonly spoken about by both men and women, though the symbolism for women was emotional and more powerful in seeking to re-establish an identity, that perhaps they felt was lost.

First generation women narrators described that, whether they continued to work in the factory or the neighbourhood milk bars, they worked hard and constantly juggled their multiple roles,[36] sometimes precariously as they strived to survive, create and succeed in their new lives and families in Australia. For those women who continued working in factories, life was tougher as they struggled to earn as much as was possible, while at the same time attend to the domestic work, the care of their children and dealing with the anxiety to find suitable and reliable child minding for their pre-schoolers. During the 1950s and 1960s, most migrant women's labour was in the clothing and manufacturing

[35] Commonly used term for those migrants who appeared to have been financially successful and displaying material wealth upon return.

[36] All women interviewed highlighted this point in different ways that pertained to their individual circumstances.

industries where wages were low and conditions hard, as evidenced in women's testimony and existing research.[37] Several second- generation narrators often recalled that their parents, who usually worked in factories or in trade areas, needed to work long hours.[38] For men, predominantly involved in the manufacturing and building industries, working overtime was required by employers which gave them extra earning capacity.[39] Women, on the other hand, could earn additional money by bringing extra work home. Women would do the 'finishing' work at their own sewing machines at home, in their own time, which in fact encroached into family time and domestic work.[40] Younger informants talked about their childhood memories of absent parents, their own need for self-sufficiency and the assumption of domestic chores at a young age, as well as helping their mothers with the work on the garments at home, detailed in Chapter Five.

Women's narrative generally, highlights the burden of multiple roles and the difficulties of coping with them on their own. Especially in the early years, Maria missed her mother obsessively and spoke about her with strong emotion and tears in her eyes. She recalled the time of her first pregnancy, when her waters had broken and said, 'we did not know what was happening and we were too frightened to ask.'[41] She and her husband walked for two to three kilometres from their house, caught the tram and walked a further one kilometre to the Melbourne Royal Women's Hospital, thereby saving money on a taxi. She had a premature birth and described her experiences and fears and the difficulties she had with language and communication while in hospital. She relied on other young women within the household for advice and support and those women in her extended family and community who already had children. Maria talked about the period when she would juggle work, family and young children with great strain and little available support. When her children went to school she resumed work in various factories. She described the stresses and difficulties in balancing work demands and the

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[37] Cusack and Dodd, "Outwork: An alternative mode of employment?", 1-58.

[38] Interview with Elizabeth, 31 October 2014.

[39] Interview with Andrew, 11 March 2014.

[40] Interview with Nikolas, 20 June 2014.

[41] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

needs of her children with sadness and resignation. She would wake up her children early every morning, to prepare them before she had to leave for work. Her children were eight and four years old at the time. Lack of English for communication and rigid working hours put a lot of stress on her health until she became very ill from physical exhaustion. She spoke with pathos, as she described those years:

> Those were the worst years of my life! I cried constantly and wished I was back with my mother – isolation, no language, no immediate family network.[42]

Maria related her frustrating experiences with doctors who gave her different diagnoses and conflicting medication. However, as she could not understand them she relied on her eight-year old daughter to act as interpreter for her. These experiences were common for women and resulted in further isolation, loss of confidence, dependency and disempowerment and a complete lack of agency in relation to their bodies as well as their mental health. But Maria, in discussing these experiences concluded philosophically with, 'αυτή είναι η ζωή (that's life!)'[43], a response that characterises the resilience and tenacity of immigrants of that generation. Other women spoke about their coping efforts in maintaining a level of earnings by working, as well as dealing with the challenges of care provision for their pre-school children. Some stayed home to care for their children and like Anthoula, rented out any spare rooms to single immigrants, while others resorted to caring for other working women's children, as well as their own, a solution of sorts, to competing demands. Others, like Niki, went to work in the family business and once her children commenced school she regulated her working hours in the family business with the pick-up of her children from school. Katerina on the other hand, took as tenants an Australian couple on the condition that the woman would look after her children, so that she would resume factory work. Women created solutions to continue to be domestic producers of income to supplement their husband's wages and in most cases, pay off debts such as a loan, unpaid fares or provision of remittances to continue to support family members back home.

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[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

Women's role as 'gatekeepers' of Greek culture, language and identity[44] is frequently reiterated in numerous research findings on the Greek diaspora as family and gender become important factors in ethnic/cultural maintenance and transmission,[45] intertwined with women's role as creators of family and social reproduction. Ultimately 'women are the bearers, keepers and symbolic signifiers of ethnic identity'[46] compounding the multiple roles that immigrant women endure. The children of migrants recalled the pressure to attend Greek school for example, when their non-Greek school friends had the freedom to join other neighbourhood children to kick the football or play other games. These memories reinforced the need by parents to see their children retain the Greek language and culture by being forced to attend Greek lessons after school or to enrol in one of the Greek private day schools. But as Nikolaos (aged 41) recalls:

> …they wanted me to remain Greek…and it worked…I now see positives and negatives…the language, church, the spiritual side…but I'm not religious…but I … we, missed out on experiencing different cultures…all the kids were of Greek background….[47]

Once women had created their own home and family, life transformed for them in some ways, with the re-establishment of 'self', autonomy and personal agency, within the social confines and cultural parameters of the times. Whilst they continued to work hard, fulfil the cultural expectations and deal with the challenges of multiple roles with limited support, women's stories point to a sense of personal liberation and empowerment as they retained financial capability through their wages and the autonomy to parent their children

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[44] Efrosini Gavaki, "The Greeks in Canada: Immigration, Socio-Economic Mobility and Ethnic Identity", in *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives: Labor, Community and Identity in Greek Migrations,* ed. Evangelia Tastsoglou (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 121.

[45] Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender and Ethno-Regional Identity among Greek-Australians", 208; Maria Kontos, "Greek Migrant Women in Germany: Strategies of Autonomy in Diaspora," in *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives: Labor, Community and Identity in Greek Migrations,* ed. Evangelia Tastsoglou (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 44; Venetia Evergeti, "Living and Caring Between Two Cultures." *Community, Work and Family Vol.* 9, No. 3 (2006): 347-366; Tsolidis, "Greek-Australian Families," 133; Richard D. Alba, *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 164-206.

[46] Anthias, *Ethnicity, Class, Gender and Migration*, 93.

[47] Interview with Nikolaos, 20 June 2014.

and preserve language, religious and cultural practices and mediate the transmission of what Anthias calls the 'cultural stuff' within the family.[48]

Gender and Diasporic Lives

The life trajectory of migrant women of the 1950s and 1960s generally, and Limnian women immigrants specifically, have many common characteristics. They left their destabilised *πατρίδα* (homeland) after war, poverty and destruction, some with measured optimism and personal agency, others with very few options but to follow their siblings, compatriots or kin on the '*αγύριστο ταξίδι'* (unknown journey/ 'a trip of no return') to Australia. As social actors, some women contested and subverted the rigid prescriptions of an essentially patriarchal context, where only men seek adventure and opportunities to recreate their lives. For women, migration's dual purpose provided 'the need for a more liberated life and at the same time the need to stabilize the family by migrating.'[49] Women's narrative reveals their adaptiveness to unskilled factory work during Australia's economic prosperity and the transition, from a rural to an urban setting and a changing identity. The narrative also highlights that, not-withstanding the challenges, this period also provided opportunities to women with relatively low education and skill levels to push their boundaries and to become more autonomous. With the abundance of work and the resulting flow of wages, women began to gain confidence and optimism about their migration decisions and felt a greater sense of self-determination, commonly reflected in the narrative. But, as the narrative also reveals, Limnian women's enthusiasm was nonetheless tempered by the pressures of their multiple roles once they started establishing their families, without the associated extended family support that they would have enjoyed, had they remained in a village setting. The downturns in the economy and the hiatus in unskilled jobs during various periods in the 1960s and 1970s detrimentally impacted migrant labour and affected the manufacturing and clothing industries which employed migrant women workers.

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[48] Anthias, *Ethnicity, Class, Gender and Migration*, 92.

[49] Kontos, "Greek Migrant Women in Germany, 34.

An increased erosion of work availability, accompanied by a rise in unemployment during those years, intensely affected migrant populations and resulted in the distinct marginalisation of migrant women in the labour market. For many women in the clothing industry for instance, one means of income maintenance was, to work from home as 'outworkers', placing themselves in the more precarious position of both income and job insecurity as well as the vulnerability of an unregulated market environment. Whether by chance or intention many families during those years, made the shift to self-employment into small neighbourhood businesses, as some of the women's testimony has revealed about milk bars and the provisions of domestic help to others and child care, exposing women to new challenges and opportunities as well as a lot more stress resulting in associated health and wellbeing impacts. For some entrepreneurial women, the subjective meaning of self-employment in relation to their personal development away from factories and the balancing of multiple roles (child-care work as mothers with other family commitments) was seen by them as positive and in some ways liberating, especially in the context of their previous status as factory workers. In self-employment, they had more flexibility to pursue their family values and employ their 'cultural symbols' which for Limnian women (and men) derived from their regional traditions and histories, that are individually and collectively transmitted to future generations. Nevertheless, what is immeasurable and difficult to countenance overtly, is the psychic cost and the effects of significant dislocation, hardship and agony in striving to create their diasporic lives. Though women's narrative has many layers of meaning and is largely unmediated, it has often been difficult for them to express sensitive issues overtly in dialogue. These remain covert, inaccessible and part of the forgetting and hidden trauma of their lives.

Community life, like family life, was gendered. Several male narrators highlighted their active roles in community affairs over many years, including involvement in Limnian community associations with only a few, holding executive and leadership positions. A couple of women talked about having an active role within a community organisation though largely as an extension of the formal roles assumed by their husbands or fathers. Penelope, for instance, was encouraged by her father, a long-time treasurer of the Limnian association in Sydney, to take on the role of secretary. Her enthusiasm, education and pride in her heritage resulted in her remaining on the committee in various roles for nearly twenty years:

> I became involved with the Limnian association when my children had finished high school…when I didn't feel I was taking time away from them…anyhow we were all involved, my husband and my boys were involved when we had the balls and so on…it was a family affair. I was the president of the Ladies Committee for about twelve years. Then I was asked by the first generation Limnians to go onto the main committee which was all men. They needed someone who knew the English language, could write in English … I became the secretary which I have done for nearly twenty years. I feel I have something to contribute to my country, my island but I would gladly hand it on to someone younger…[50]

Women's presence in community affairs generally though, was largely invisible and hidden. At best, they acted in supportive roles, usually behind the scenes, for the benefit of their male family members. In fact, women became involved in a support capacity only in the latter years when various social, cultural and sports programs and targeted initiatives began to blossom due to the availability of infrastructure within associations. These initiatives were facilitated by the acquisition of property enabling various programs to evolve. The Australian government's multicultural policy framework and access and equity programs that featured in the 1990s provided limited opportunities to support ethnic communities. In some states, programs were later supported by small government grants for the isolated and ageing people in the community. As the need for social support and care for the ageing and isolated community members became evident, women began to be incorporated in community organisations through the establishment of Women's Clubs. They operated separate sub-committees within the parent organisation, run exclusively by women. While women continued their largely 'silent' roles in community affairs and community leadership, they were not perceived as a threat to men. The community organisations created social roles for women, especially as they began to leave paid work and were finding themselves relatively isolated at home. Women's involvement led to recognition of the changing needs of the community. The care and support role that women brought into the organisations together with their organisational skills became recognised by the all-male committees and were accepted as being compatible with male expectations of women, so long as their positions were not threatened. Interestingly, there is only one rare exception where a woman had become the

[50] Interview with Penelope, 11, March 2014.

president of an association in Victoria in the new millennium, more than sixty years after its establishment.[51] This highly unusual event in the Limnian diasporic community in Australia is remarkable.

Women nevertheless, continue to be involved on their terms and increasingly remain influential in various other organisational capacities, supporting social, cultural and recreational objectives. Women have continued to find ways to be instrumental in their endeavour to contribute to their communities and to transmit to future generations the 'cultural stuff' of their ethno-regional identities in the context of home and the community. As recognised by other scholars, women of the diaspora have always managed to find many and diverse ways to deal with and realise their Greek [and localised] identity within a diasporic context.[52] Though gender is embedded in their experience and the difficulties that they faced, they also act to alleviate negative conditions and obstacles and to create a better life for themselves, their families and their communities.

Reclaiming Identity and Belonging: *Recreating Lives*

The memory of homeland for Limnian women settled in Australia is based on their experiences of living their childhoods and early young lives in the village before migration. These precious memories, expressed in narrative that is often vivid, powerful and emotionally overwhelming, articulates this 'past' life and its significance in their present lives. Their expression of home is not only as a nostalgic space but relates to the 'lived experience of locality'.[53] It is a part of their self-identity which keeps them grounded and lucid. Moving recollections during the interviews have helped them to re-

[51] The Lemnian Community of Victoria Limited is on the public record to indicate that Malama (Marlene) Varvaras was declared President at a 2011 committee meeting. She continued to remain in this position until the election of 2018.

[52] Tastsoglou, *Women, Gender and Diasporic Lives, ix.* Insertion in square brackets is my emphasis and arises from my findings.

[53] Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting identities,* (London, New York: Routledge, 1996), 192.

create these moments and events, though many acknowledged that who they are now has significantly changed. As Maria articulates:

> I remember my life, …we were happy…the village had life…on Sundays, the girls and boys went for *bόλτα* (walks in the main village street)…it didn't matter that we didn't have money, we might have suffered hunger sometimes but it didn't matter… we were happy…now that I'm old and without my husband, it's like a movie…my memories…my life as a young girl…I replay it like a film when I'm in bed or sitting on the couch, the nostalgia doesn't go away.[54]

A defining feature of women's stories is the sense of loss and disjuncture with 'that life'. Whilst their memories seem to sustain them into old age, with attempts to reflect their 'homeland imaginaries', life in Australia as they describe it, is often discordant and at odds with those memories. Katerina ponders thus:

> When we meet in Sydney, all of us, women who were my childhood friends, we come together and remember that life…In Australia we had good times but we also had bad times…[55]

But, for those who occasionally returned to the homeland for extended periods, they talk about dual homes and upon reflection, a lack of belonging in one or both. Katerina captures this aspect, thus:

> It bothers me that they call me *αυστραλέζα* …I don't like it, it makes feel that I don't belong, I'm made to feel *ξένη*…but I was born here…when I'm in Australia, I don't mind being called *αυστραλέζα*…because I've spent so many years of my life there…I feel closer to the others who return, because we share common experiences…they are more approachable…[56]

Concepts of home in transnational communities often include the physical, emotional, ideological and social spaces that people occupy.[57] But it is an 'ever changing concept which takes on various meanings in different times and locations, a space/time

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[54] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[55] Interview with Katerina, 20 May 2014

[56] Ibid.

[57] Diane L. Wolf, "There's no place like "home": Emotional transnationalism and the struggles of second generation Filipinos," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation,* ed. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 257; Nicole Constable, "At Home but Not at Home: Filipina narratives of ambivalent returns." *Cultural Anthropology* 14 (2) (1999): 207.

continuum.'[58] In women's stories, the images and vibrancy communicated in their story-telling, emanates a real sense of loss, never to be reclaimed, even when they return to visit the homeland. Why is that? What might this tell us about their internal world and their sense of the 'here and elsewhere,'[59] or 'the belongings that…a group, a people cobble together from the past and the present.'[60] The nostalgia of what is lost remains a powerful trope that was particularly strong in women's narrative. But it is more than nostalgia. It is part of the connection with their homeland through their memories, even though, as Bottomley argues, it is a 'kind of "fixing" of time'[61] which has perpetuated memories. Women's identity has changed with migration and it is only when they've returned to the village several times that this realisation crystallises for many of them. Katerina talks about this realisation thus:

> [I}n Australia, at the beginning we were called "wogs" … When I go to Limnos…they call me *αυστραλέζα*…I don't like that…where do I belong?[62]

This kind of identity split has emerged strongly with several narrators who were primary school children when they arrived in Australia with their families (Chapter Five). Whilst they were brought up with a strong sense of being Greek and Limnian, they were often perplexed when others, upon return to Limnos as adults, referred to them as *ξένοι* (outsiders), as described by Sophia and Penelope, both immigrant children of the 1950s and early 1960s respectively. Penelope expressed this intuition thus:

> When I'm there I feel very strong, as a strong Greek- Limnian character, but the people there make you feel like a foreigner, they call us *ξένοι*… not in my face but we hear it.[63]

Penelope explains this on two grounds. First, that the locals are insulated and untraveled and secondly, there are migrants who 'left with nothing' and when they come back, they

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[58] Ann-Maree Dawson, "Transnational Flows and Generational Disjunctures," 73.

[59] Bouvet, Eric, Sonia Floriani and Diana Cavuoto Glenn, eds, *Imagining Home: Migrants and the Search for a New Belonging* (South Australia: Wakefield Press, 2011), 5.

[60] Elspeth Probyn, *Outside Belongings* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), 68.

[61] Bottomley, *From Another Place*, 162.

[62] Interview with Katerina, 20 May 2014.

[63] Interview with Penelope, 11 March 2014.

tended to want to flaunt their material success, thereby contributing to a caricature of migrants. Sophia, born in the village of Kontias who, when in Limnos resides in her husband's village of Romanou, expressed her strong resentment thus:

> at first, I was the *αυστραλέζα*…its annoying…I didn't like it…there was one local chap who insisted on calling me that…it used to upset me…I would think, hang on, my parents left Kontias and came over to Australia, how could they raise an *αυστραλέζα* when they were more Greek than those here? One day, when there was a dance (in the village) and a traditional island song was playing…I was the *αυστραλέζα* that got up to dance, none of the local women did that…they didn't know how to…I went up to him and said, "who is more Limnian, me the *αυστραλέζα*?" I'm Limnian![64]

She was only a child when her family arrived in Australia in the 1950s, but she goes back to the island annually with her husband for several months. Sophia rationalises her sense of identity thus:

> Limnos, the place I was born, place of my grandparents…the time I'm here I belong, but home is in Australia but I'm a Greek-Australian…I'm a Greek of two places…it's normal for me…it's who I am.[65]

While Sophia describes herself as a woman with two lives, she sees it as 'normal' because she and her husband have been living this way for a long time. Interestingly, Sophia and her husband are very strongly connected to the Limnian community both in Australia and Limnos. They continue to identify themselves strongly as Greeks and Limnians too.

Floriani's research with post-war Calabrians settling in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s may be instructive here. Her theoretical notion of 'homelessness' is used to examine the effect of migration in the shaping of individual biographies which, often manifest in three different typologies for overcoming their sense of homelessness. She contends that women, especially those who migrated in adulthood, showed 'a passive surrender to a quite unconscious sense of homelessness'[66] because they did not have a voice in the decision to migrate. This is not unlike Katerina's choice. She was young,

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[64] Interview with Sophia, 21 May 2014.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Sonia Floriani, "The Homeless Self: Migrants, Space-time and Biographical Strategies," in *Imagining Home: Migrants and the Search for a New Belonging*, eds. Diana Glen, Eric Bouvet, and Sonia Floriani (South Australia: Wakefield Press, 2011), 70.

naïve and held respect for the views of her male elders and in her specific case, her father and older brother. Her story-line and experiences coincide with Floriani's description of women who 'maintain crystallised, pre-migratory habits, atmospheres, uses and rituals.'[67] This way of living had the effect of insulating women from:

> [The] awareness of not belonging to the context in which they have been spending their life day to day… Calabrian women have more or less consciously surrendered to inhabiting a home located in the space-time that was premigratory here and now and, even though it has objectively become the elsewhere.[68]

There is however a significant difference, even in Katerina's life trajectory, who, unlike the Calabrian women in Floriani's research, she and others did in fact go into the community to work in factories. They did engage with the outside world, though in a limited way, but they too lived largely sheltered, insular lives within their regional homeland community. The feeling of not belonging, the 'here and elsewhere' of home, is both an underlying theme as well as a realisation, particularly as they struggled to reconcile their existence both here and there. Toula describes her sense of dual homes thus:

> I can't explain it…when I'm here [meaning in Limnos] I am made to feel *ξένη* (a stranger), the *αυστραλέζα* (the Australian), the outsider, but I don't feel *ξένη* because I come here regularly…my ancestral home is here; when I return to Australia, at the airport they say "welcome home"…nobody says that when you arrive in Greece…after fifty years in Australia, with my children and their children, my home is there…how can I explain it…I don't know how to explain it to be honest…[69]

Listening to women's reflections about their migration decisions and in the context of their contemporary lives, some forty to sixty years since departure, women seem in hindsight to be much more reconciled to their lives and achievements through migration. They are matter-of-fact and pragmatic in their thinking. They highlight the benefits achieved for their children in education as well as career success and other achievements. They reflected on the joys of having grandchildren in Australia and their active roles in

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[67] Ibid., 78.

[68] Ibid., 78.

[69] Interview with Toula, 30 May 2014.

contributing to language and culture maintenance across generations. These achievements are proudly enunciated in their testimony and express a highly valued reconciliation with their present lives and the country they have adopted as home. The following narrative articulates this observation:

> [O]ur children, both of them, have benefited from our migration…they were educated…they are *καλά παιδιά* (good children) I am proud of my children and grandchildren…very much, very much, and it pleases me that they love my *πατρίδα* (homeland), my daughter has fallen in love with the homeland and they have been going every year…and the grandchildren too…they began to renovate the ancestral home…my birth house… [70]

> No, no, no…I have not regretted my decision, why should I? There were hard times in the beginning, yes, but the other years were good, I have *καλά παιδιά* (good children), lots of grandchildren and now they are getting married…the family is growing…who knows what my life would have been like…I've bought my burial ground, next to Niko (husband who died several years ago).[71]

> I have not regretted my decision…I'm very happy…there's lots of positives…I have good children…we worked hard…unfortunately we failed financially and lost our assets (in later years) but there's no regret…my kids feel Australian…and they remain connected with extended family and so do I, I too grew up here (Niki was 17 years of age when she arrived), I would like to go back for a holiday, but only if our finances allow…I will need to be cautious, I'm a pensioner, I don't want to waste money… [72]

Men on the other hand, framed their expectations with the 'ideology of return' and emphasised more readily the economic and monetary achievements in their narrative, though they too expressed pride and satisfaction, about the achievements of their children and grandchildren that's attributed to a perceived sense of success due to their migration.

Summary

Women were the backbone of the re-construction of family, culture and traditions for Limnians in a foreign country. As they exercised their will and agency to economically better themselves and others within the family, women provided a 'safety-net', particularly for children and the next generation and have been instrumental in the creation of a diasporic Limnian identity. Familial kinship and their ethno-regional

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[70] Interview with Maria, 17 June 2013.

[71] Interview with Anthoula, 14 June 2013.

[72] Interview with Niki, 25 June 2013.

community were the pillars, preserving their social and cultural backgrounds. At one level, these factors manifested in the strength and internal confidence of women to replicate and reaffirm their identity in the new country. Nonetheless, even after several decades had passed since migration, many women continued to nurture poignant feelings of nostalgia, loss and grief for leaving their homeland, that has not totally gone away and needs to be acknowledged. Ongoing feelings of guilt and abandonment of family members, though subsided have evidently remained. The strength of connection with home, real or imagined, appears to have shadowed them in their on-going journey of life in migration. The loss of aged parents, extended family members and even village neighbourhoods have interestingly only slightly diminished in their minds (and hearts) and seem to remain alive, strong and vibrant. As they too have now aged, they reminisced about a lifetime ago and the lived experience which had shaped them. Significantly, their background helped to equip them with the strength and endurance to live another life in a new country and to salvage their inner self, largely intact.

Chapter 5 Identity, Belonging and Place

> *'There can be few terms so densely laden with passionately conflicting meanings than "home". The site of immense longing and bitter rejection, the condition of "being at home" can be a state to be overcome for some and yet to be realised by others.'*[1]

In this chapter, themes of identity, subjective feelings of belonging and place are examined through the voices and reflections of the second-generation. The significance of belonging and place are examined in the first section with an emphasis on factors that influenced this generation's 'identification trajectory', probing the role of return visits to the parental homeland in early adulthood and how that has influenced their sense of place in the diaspora. Important experiences and memories of growing up are also explored in the context of the safety net provided to them by family and community during early childhood years, which include the external environment such as school and neighbourhood as they were growing up in 1960s – 70s Australia. How do they remember their experiences? What role did gender play as they traversed and mediated an environment of rapid social change in Australia? Several themes emerged that impact upon adult identity and individual self-discovery. Interestingly, their parenting trajectory in relation to cultural continuity with their own children, through patterns of return visits to the ancestral home, also emerges as significant. The exploration of potential themes for the third-generation, while beyond the scope of this research project, may be of interest for future work. The proposition, introduced earlier in the dissertation, that migration is a complex and on-going experience that crosses inter-generational boundaries and sites is again tested and gains momentum in the narrative of the second-generation.

[1] Ien Ang and Michael Symonds, eds., *Home, Displacement and Belonging*. Communal/Plural Vol. 5 (Kingswood, NSW: Research Centre in Intercommunal Studies, UWS Nepean, 1997), *v*.

Belonging and Place – *Why It's Important*

The phenomenon of migration is not only about the movement of people but also about their identifications and connection to place.[2] Living across borders, migrants have often sought to maintain ties to more than one home. This experience is an 'inheritance' for descendant generations, through family story-telling and the evolving connections fostered through the broader extended family and particularly the grandparents who became part of the many extended households in Australia since the early seventies.[3] Migration stories as Christou found:

> [C]an become narrated insights into the depths of the meanings attached to specific experiences [that] can reveal…alternative understandings of individual and collective identities that transcend static notions of bounded affiliations to nation states.[4]

In the narrative of second-generation respondents, this view is again verified and has further evolved with social media and the adaptability and ease of communication modes now available to descendant generations. As evidenced in this research, generational groups are not homogeneous and often have different socio-historical contexts that define and influence their experiential trajectories. Other recent studies have confirmed that 'generational differences affect the process of identity construction.'[5] Some second-generation informants, born in Australia or who arrived at a very young age, experienced a largely unambiguous sense of belonging and place in Australia as they were growing up.

Many had a clear sense of being Greek of Limnian origin. They were surrounded by family stories and an evolving narrative about the ancestral homeland, told by their parents and extended family members. These stories were frequently discussed around

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[2] Anastasia Christou, *Narratives of Place, Culture and Identity: Second-Generation Greek Americans Return 'Home'* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 15.

[3] Changes in the Australian Immigration Policy in 1970s introduced the Family Reunion category, that facilitated re-unification with grandparents and other designated family members. See Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land*, 270.

[4] Christou, *Narratives of Place, Culture and Identity*, 16.

[5] Ann-Maree Dawson, "Women of Deryneia," 208.

the table every time families would meet at each other's homes. But, as children at the time, these stories held little significance or connection to their immediate reality. These stories seemed to them to be exclusively a part of their parents' imaginings. Spiros narrates this reality evocatively. He was six years old when he, along with his family, migrated to Melbourne in 1960. His recollections of his boyhood years in Australia were, like most other male informants, focused on aspects of school, family life and neighbourhood friendships. Though he had considered himself to be an 'Australian' during these years, he would never visit the homes of his non-Greek friends. He belonged to a large extended family who always insisted that he should speak to them in Greek. As he lived in a suburb where a lot of Limnians had settled, he was always surrounded by the wider Limnian community in a kind of re-constructed village context. Like many others, Spiros (aged 61) was aware of the centrality and prevalence of family stories and that reminiscing about the village was a vital part of life in his childhood home environment. He would constantly be exposed to stories about life before migration and the latest news from the *πατρίδα* (homeland):

> I used to hear family members, uncles and aunts reminisce about Kontias, the village, my birthplace; the village, was constantly in the background, they didn't tell me that it was a rural, country setting, they were basically farmers working the land; I used to hear stories that they would pay too much rent, they used to give half their produce to the person that owned the land, they used to deliver payments, not so much in money but in so many cheeses, buckets of grain; these things did not mean anything to me. These are the stuff that stuck in my mind…[6]

At the age of twenty, Spiros returned to Greece for the first time on a student group tour, visiting many Greek landmark sights. He recalls this extensive trip with other students thus:

> It was a wonderful trip…it was a real turning point for me. I realised what Greece was really all about…Although I'd hear stories about Limnos, I didn't hear stories about Greece. That to me was an eye opener; it was an education and a half! Not only did I see some interesting and amazing things, I got interested in Greek and Hellenic culture and I started reading more widely and

[6] Interview with Spiros, 16 May 2014.

> in depth. I made a lot of friends on that particular trip… others, who were kids of migrants.[7]

For Spiros, visiting Greece and then Limnos for the first time was an illuminating experience. This is how he describes the impact of the trip:

> Another way to describe that first trip was that, I was no longer an Anglo-Saxon or an English speaking Australian; I became a Greek person on my first trip, I realised there is something different about me…this is Greece and I like being Greek…before that, I didn't have any Greek in me because I grew up in Australia from the age of six…I was finding that the Greeks and the Greek culture and the ancient ruins that I saw was something… this is good, this is better than, this is good to be part of that civilization…to belong to that heritage…and my Greek improved immensely…I was an Australian until then…[8]

Consequently, Spiros now describes himself as a *Hellene*[9] (Greek) rather than a Limnian. Interestingly, though, as he now visits Greece, it is particularly Limnos and his house and land, an ancestral inheritance, that draws him there on a frequent basis. The rediscovery of one's cultural identity, which had been latent until the first return trip as an adult, is a compelling theme, particularly common to young men. In her analysis of Italian-Australian migrants, Baldassar theorises the return visit as part of the migration process and concludes that 'the return visit becomes the arena in which ethnic identities and connections to place are constructed and transformed.'[10] The first return visit was, for some, a turning point in resolving identity ambiguities. Baldassar refers to this as a 'transformatory rite-of-passage brought by the ties to one's ancestral past.'[11]

Spiros' story and the experience of his return to Greece as a young adult, who knew very little about the country's history and landscapes, is similarly conveyed by several

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[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] The term 'Hellenic' is often used to characterise Greeks in the Diaspora, who despite their temporary or permanent expatriation to foreign lands for any reason, are seen to maintain cultural, political, economic or social relations with their country of ancestry and descent. See Anastasios M. Tamis, *The Greeks in Australia*, 7.

[10] Baldassar, "The Return Visit as Pilgrimage," 127.

[11] Ibid., 156.

other male informants. Andrew (aged 56) talked about his first experience with a different emphasis. His first trip to Greece was also part of a student group tour:

> That first trip… was a cultural awakening…I saw Greece for the first time, I thought "wow!" … this is my culture, this is where we come from, there was a lot of joy, a big awakening…but for me it was going to Limnos, when I went on my own, arriving in Limnos with just a suitcase to see my grandmother for the first time, that was the shock; she was blind, she greeted me as if I was my father…she just wouldn't do enough for me, through her I saw our family tree for a moment…I saw my father in my grandmother, it was a beautiful thing! It was the people that mattered to me, the amusement I got from their lives, their habits. I didn't associate anything with my life (Andrew aged 56 years).[12]

It was not until the third trip to Limnos that Andrew and his family decided to regularly visit this island. As he says:

> [T]he third time… that's when the pattern started. The emotion was not that important, it was the physicality of the place and of course the emotion was underneath, but I didn't know what that was. But we wanted to go there, I wanted to go there. The emotions are somewhere underneath…somewhere.[13]

Until the return trips, both Spiros and Andrew were seemingly very secure in their 'Australian' identity and sense of place. Whilst during their growing up years, they were surrounded by their family stories of village life and their island heritage, they were in fact disconnected to these stories and the physical place and time of the events and memories that they heard about around the table.

The social sciences often locate the concept of 'belonging' as pivotal in immigrant integration and cultural diversity. Scholars also argue about an inseparable connection between belonging and migration generations.[14] The issue of belonging is 'complex, sometimes ill-defined and generally, it is a set of processes that are central to the way in which human relationships are conducted.'[15] It is not a static phenomenon as illustrated by the experiences captured in the narrative of Spiros and others in this study. The return to the ancestral homeland has been described as a 'breakthrough' moment by several other

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[12] Interview with Andrew, 11 March 2014.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Skrbis, Baldassar and Poynting, "Introduction – Negotiating Belonging," 262.

[15] Ibid., 261

informants in this study. The ancestral home in its physicality, represents, for many, a turning point in terms of their sense of connection and belonging to place. The physical presence of the house that they often heard about in family stories, solidified and manifested as a tangible reality, to contribute to a felt sense of connection and continuity. For all participants, the emotional link to past generations, especially grandparents that they had never met before, as in Andrew's case, was overwhelming. Their ancestral history and family stories about lived experiences, which they would hear about in the background as children growing up, suddenly emerged as real and vivid, linking them to the past and therefore connecting them in the present. New and reconstructed experiences of belonging to another place were suddenly kindled and emerged as being significant for them as well. New thoughts, feelings and sensations occupied the minds of respondents as young people. Visiting the parental home on his first day of arrival in the village, and seeing this previously special and lived space fall into disrepair, and be used as a chicken coup by neighbours, produced an emotional and possessive response from Spiros thus:

> [T]hat was the first time I realised why people left for Australia, why they emigrated…they left to better themselves but I think really they left to better their children…to make a better life for their children…it would have been very, very difficult for them, for people like my father…and I would not allow chickens to run through this house; my mother inherited a house not a chicken coup…I had childhood memories of that house, that's where I was born and it was the house that my photograph was taken (as a child), on the front steps. I decided then, that I would do something about it... [16]

The significance of place, as articulated by Spiros and his renewed connection to the ancestral home, resonated with several other informants in the study. Relph deals with such issues of identity of place as fundamental notions of identity in everyday life and argues that:

> Identity is founded both in the individual person or object and in the culture to which they belong…it is not just the identity *of* a place that is important, but also the identity that a person or group has *with* that place, in particular whether they are experiencing it as an insider or as an outsider (italics in the original).[17]

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[16] Interview with Spiros, 16 May 2014.

[17] Edward C. Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976), 45. Also see Christou, *Narratives of Place, Culture and Identity*, 35.

Ancestral property, especially the maternal house inherited inter-generationally, usually by women, evolved as a powerful and ongoing metaphor for belonging and connection to the island, the village and the relationships with the local people that developed. The inheritance trajectory began the process of building relationships and knowledge about the ancestral place. Several respondents had previously lacked a real attachment to the parental house, save that it represented parental history, which until then did not seem to be intrinsically linked to them. Over time, an evolving attachment to place developed that progressively transformed into a form of belonging, which was bound-up with the past and was now re-claimed as part of an on-going identity that continues to influence the future. For Spiros, there were other embedded memory senses that were revived for him upon return. The significance of smells and nature re-awakened his memory of childhood and his sense of belonging to place, in the most unusual way. Images of small birds and animals flowed back to him in different contexts as he was walking through the ancestral house and village of his birth place. He recalled his childhood in the village of Kontias, through images and smells, describing them thus:

> I remember the smell of the flowers, and the noise of cicadas in the summer time. I used to pick flowers in the summertime and put them on the bee hives, I think I was feeding them, because I knew they liked flowers…*Some people grazed sheep, I used to graze bees*!!! (This sentence with exclamations is translated from Greek to reflect the humour of the situation).[18]

Other memories were linked to the rural everyday life and work that his parents and others were engaged in prior to migration. The connection with the ancestral home generates powerful memories and emotions that were suppressed but not dampened, regardless of the site in which these memories were voiced. Baldassar argues that there's a relationship between identity and what she calls 'migrancy'[19] which she analyses through a transnational lens. She argues that:

> Migrancy is not simply about geographical movement but cultural continuity, discontinuity and transmutation. The social construction of identity and in

[18] Interview with Spiros, 16 May 2014.

[19] Baldassar, "The Return Visit as Pilgrimage," 127.

> particular, the constructs of 'family', 'community' and 'identity', are profoundly affected by migrancy.[20]

In her analysis of Italian-Australian migrants, Baldassar theorises the return visit as part of the migration process that leads to identity transformation for the second-generation, 'a rite-of-passage brought about by the ties to one's ancestral past developed on the return.'[21] The narrative in this study resonates with Baldassar's findings.

Nektarios,[22] known as Nick in Australia, was born in Melbourne in 1971, and is now a policeman and married to a non-Greek Australian. He was raised within a Limnian family and community with similar experiences to many other males in this cohort. The family lived and worked in the inner suburbs of Melbourne. They began in Carlton and later moved to Reservoir (a north-east, inner-middle suburb of Melbourne). He spoke no English when he began school. He returns to the ancestral village in Limnos on a regular basis and stays at the maternal house. He describes his return as a 'reconnection to the ancestral homeland' and is categorical about his Greek-Australian identity even though he recognises that he was born in Australia. He feels pride and continues to learn about the history and culture of his homeland through the on-going connection that he has established. Nektarios acknowledged the reinforcement of values and morals that were passed on to him by his parents as he was growing up. He is one of a few second-generation men to continue to be actively involved in Limnian community affairs as a member of the committee of the surviving Society of Kontias - St. Dimitrios.[23] He returned with his family to Limnos a couple of times as a youngster. When Nick was in his early twenties, he went back independently and began to make friends with local people. He has continued his regular return trips which now include his non-Greek wife, as they have both built strong connections with family and friends on the island. Nektarios

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[20] Ibid., 129.

[21] Ibid, 156.

[22] Interview with Nektarios, 23 September 2014.

[23] This fraternal association established in Victoria, was named after the main church cathedral in the village of Kontias, a former *megalohori* (mega-village) from which a lot of people migrated after the War. Other smaller fraternal societies had sprung up in the early years, both in cities and regional centres where Limnians had settled. Most of these are now defunct due to many factors including sustainability and the mobility of people in the last few decades.

(aged 43) describes the significance of the relationships formed with the locals and the 'wave of friendship building' after his first visit thus:

> [I]t was almost like a wave …it just spread…I prided myself that I would rather interact with the locals instead of the other visiting Australians… 'cause I can interact with them at any time in Australia…I remember on the last night I was bawling my eyes out…because I was leaving the next day… I look back and thought, before I got to Limnos, I would return to Greece in about ten years; after Limnos, I wanted to come back tomorrow if I could... [24]

Nektarios values his friendships with the people and the authentic lifestyle that the island represents for him. When asked why he goes back, he was unequivocal:

> [I]t's the friends, I've made some terrific friends there, the lifestyle is good, I've travelled quite extensively around the world but you are not as relaxed as you are in Limnos; it comes down to the people, that connection you have with the people…over the years I've built up some amazing friends…[25]

He acknowledged the connection to his parents' ancestral history and home as a further link in his passion for Limnos as well as his own childhood stories when he returned with his family as a youngster on two occasions:

> [H]earing about their stories…remembering as I was chasing the chickens…where mum and dad grew up, where they used to go, what they use to eat; before I started going to Limnos I just had an image of fields, but I could put pictures to it now; I probably feel more Greek when I'm there, I speak more Greek…I feel more Limnian than Greek, everyone knows my name. It's a place that I belong…my melancholy starts a couple of days before I leave Limnos.[26]

Nektarios portrays unusually passionate feelings and strong emotions about the significance of belonging in Limnos as characterised in a photograph of a tattoo on his chest of the island with a quotation in Greek, close to his heart (See p. xxii, before the Introduction). As an expression of his feelings, it translates thus: '*Where ever I go I am always here, Limnos'*. This evocative imagery and emblem reflects the depth of his emotional attachment. He feels close to his friends in Greece, which he says are more significant than his friends in Australia. It takes him several days or weeks to overcome

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[24] Interview with Nektarios, 23 September 2014.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

his yearnings when he is back in Australia. These feelings are both physical and emotional at the same time. As he says, 'I know that when I get off the plane in Limnos, I'm home.'[27] Clearly, for Nektarios, Limnos has become his emotional and metaphorical home, even though he acknowledges that Melbourne is his real home –it's where his work is, as well as his other friends and the other social and community connections that he has built up over a long time. Baldassar frames this dynamic as a 'complicated web of social relations that develop out of regular return visits [revealing that] migrants draw upon and create fluid and multiple identities grounded both in their old and in their new homelands.'[28]

Sonia's story about belonging is distinctively different to other narrations. After graduating as a secondary school teacher of classical history, she moved to the Central Coast of New South Wales following her marriage. It was the location at which her husband had grown up and where his Kalimnian[29] immigrant family had settled to become chicken farmers. In the 1980s her first casual teaching position was at, as she describes, a 'largely homogeneous and mono-cultural' secondary school. Sonia (aged 55) recalls the advice that her husband's family gave her, which was to anglicise her surname to minimise racist slurs about her identity and to increase her chances of obtaining a long term, secure position at the school. This stark reality emerges as she recalls this experience:

> Until then I had no sense of being the other, I was part of a group, I had married this nice Greek boy and I moved up to where his family were…Michael and his family told me to change my name, as a casual teacher, …they did not want me to deal with the racism (which they had experienced), they didn't want the kids to say, "what kind of a name was that!!" I became Mrs Gerrard (anglicised surname) …I couldn't deal with that. As soon as they offered me the position I again became Mrs G …. (Her married name which also begins with "G" is not disclosed for privacy reasons). For that little bit of time I felt totally displaced because, not only was I in a place that was not accepting of who I was, I was in a place that was prejudiced and I was putting myself in front of people (the students) who may have been rude because I was different, and I

[27] Ibid.

[28] Loretta Baldassar, "Home and Away," 88.

[29] The island of Kalimnos is in the Dodecanese group of islands. It has a strong migration history to Australia since the early Twentieth Century and a dominant ethno-regional identity that has survived. Most of the islanders had settled and remain strong in New South Wales and specifically, Sydney.

> didn't want to deal with that. For twenty-five years at that school, I never spoke about being Greek …I did not want to be judged.[30]

During this period Sonia felt like she was living only a part of her life as a teacher because she feared discrimination and exclusion. Nevertheless, she now feels that she is an Australian, but acknowledges that her identity has been precarious and volatile. She did not disclose her Greek identity with the school community for more than twenty years due to a perceived environment in which she feared stereotyping especially from her peers. It was her way of 'getting on' within this environment. While her perceived identity seemed to change by her move to the Central Coast, she did however emphasise that her 'Greekness is still important.'

In more recent years, Sonia has created opportunities through her school and community activities, as a history teacher, to positively assert many aspects of her Greekness, using her knowledge of classical and ancient Greek history, for which she is now recognised in the school community. Sonia's first return trip to Limnos, as an adolescent with her parents, was described as a positive and affirming experience. Like many other narrators, she enjoyed the reconnection with the extended family, such as grandparents and cousins, who until then did not have significance or relevance in her life. Sonia talked about her family heritage through the physicality of the ancestral home in Limnos:

> We feel like we have a responsibility now. My mum has sort of given me the key to the house, so as an adult, you are responsible for your past and you know, the house is part of who my family are and it's my Granma's, it's your heritage, it's a heritage that I want to hang on to…and I'm going to keep going back if I can…if we didn't have a place to go to, we would probably think twice about visiting as frequently…[31]

For Sonia, this heritage is an affirmation of her cultural background which she recognises as a distinctive part of her identity. However, she has also acknowledged that she had to deny some aspects of herself for over two decades because she was afraid of being ostracised and made to feel that she did not belong in 'that part of Australia'. In reclaiming

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[30] Interview with Sonia, 12 March 2014.

[31] Ibid.

this aspect of her identity, Sonia confers to the ancestral home greater significance, which, as a parent of the next generation she recognises and values in terms of continuity and perpetuity.

As a young adult and half way through her post-graduate studies, Elizabeth made her first 'return' trip to Limnos. There, she met her mother's extended family for the first time and witnessed the maternal ancestral village and her mother's dilapidated ancestral house that had not been lived in since her grandparents joined her family in Australia. On this trip, Elizabeth (aged 53) had represented her family at a paternal cousin's wedding in Florina, Northern Greece and later visited her father's ancestral home and met his extensive family for the first time. As she recalls:

> It was very significant…I'm meeting them all for the very first time, especially my father's side which is much bigger…I loved it, I did not want to come back (to Australia). I told my dad I didn't want to come home…it was new, hearing that and being steeped into it 24/7, the language, the culture, I just embraced it, I took to it like fish to water, experiencing things for the first time…you hear about it but now you're living it. [In Limnos] I remember going through my grandparents' derelict place and found this amazing canvas painting of my grandfather. I took that with me and now my mother has it framed…I remember walking through the *Χωράφια* (paddocks and fields) and I remember thinking, wow this is where my mother comes from...experiencing the background, the richness …I had a very strong connection, it took me by surprise. [32]

For Elizabeth, the first return trip epitomised the rupture in her self-identification. It was a surprising event, 'spiritual, a soulful connection…it pulled me.'[33] Is how Elizabeth described it. But in the end, Limnos on its own was not enough for her to retain an on-going connection. The first return trip represented for Elizabeth a meaningful reconnecting experience but, it was the nation state that pulled Elizabeth back, on numerous occasions, reinforcing her Greekness and her combined and 'mixed' identity - her father's Florinian background and her mother's Limnian identity. Nevertheless, Elizabeth's attitude to Greece remains volatile, changeable and precarious. At the time of the interview, the significance of Greece was no longer a strong part of her current identity.

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[32] Interview with Elizabeth, 31 October 2014.

[33] Ibid.

Despina W's adult experience was significantly different. She engaged positively at Teacher's College (now part of Melbourne University) and asserted unambiguously that she had felt no discrimination or perception of difference. During her commerce studies in the 1980s she was not aware of any other students of migrant backgrounds and certainly none with a Greek background, except for her cousin who was one year ahead of her, also studying to be a secondary school teacher. Her sense of belonging in Australia is unequivocal. She relates this to the fact that she was 'born and grew up in this country' and has all her primary family in Australia. Despina W (aged 56) indicated that she had always felt more Australian than Greek. During the early part of her narration she held an attitude to the ancestral homeland that was circumspect and reflected a degree of detachment. She knew she had an ancestral home in Limnos which she viewed as the house that belonged to her parents and felt that it was part of their history, not hers. She did not claim this as her own history or belonging and did not see it as part of her identity. Despina W, at the time, had not connected herself to the physicality of a cultural reality. As she explains:

> In 1983 when we went there, [I thought] "oh yes, this is where my mother was born, in this house, my father was from this [other] village" and we stayed with his sister when we were there…and it was nice to see the cousins because my father always spoke about the rele's (Australian vernacular for 'relatives') in Greece. But that was it…in 1995 we went as a family…but I wasn't sure at the time. [34]

For Despina W, Greece at that stage was 'just a place to visit'. She felt no connection to Limnos. It was a destination, but Melbourne was her 'home' where family, work and friends were based and that was home for her. She stressed that, at the time:

> Limnos was not home. It took time for that to become home. It became home when Tony (her Australian husband) said that he wanted to fix the house in Karpasi (the ancestral village).[35]

The matrifocal system of inheritance operating in Limnos for centuries resulted in Despina W becoming the future inheritor of the ancestral house. It was passed on from her grandmother, to her mother and then to her. Her husband's enthusiasm for Limnos

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[34] Interview with Despina W., 19 August 2013.

[35] Ibid.

had led them to the decision to renovate the house once customary ownership was granted to them. She went along with the decision but initially it was her 'foreign' husband who was the instigator of the project, not her, as she recalls:

> [I]t was Tony who was passionate…he recognised that this house was part of my heritage and he was shaping my re-connection …it became stronger for me, probably in the last five years…we started the process in 2000, and that's how it began…we kept on adding and extending…Tony's connection to Limnos was revealed. His grandfather was an ANZAC and he went to Limnos in 1915…that was the connection to place for Tony.[36]

Events and return trips have meant that Despina W has had to understand more about her Greek heritage and culture. She has had to re-construct her connection with Limnos. She frames it in this way:

> I did not have that immersion before…it stopped when I was eighteen…I did not want to go to the Limnian Club things…I pushed all that away. I didn't see my cousins for years. I only reconnected with my cousins from Australia in Limnos. I had broken away…I had got my independence. I didn't feel connected until I started reconnecting with my cousin in Limnos. He was the person who was in-charge of the renovations…we felt wanted; they opened their arms to us, they were our other family.[37]

Despina W had in fact strengthened her family connections in Limnos but this did not initially impact on her sense of belonging. Her strong sense of being an Australian was not diminished because of this ancestral discovery, even after going back regularly for over ten years:

> I sometimes feel Limnian because I am part of that community when I'm there, but I don't feel that I have to go to the Limnian club in Melbourne for example to continue that…I still see myself to be an Australian-Greek…I don't feel the connection that I have with Greece is the same as with the feeling I have with Australia…I feel more Australian because this is where I have grown up, this is what I know best or better…I'm Greek because I am of Greek heritage, of Greek parentage, I go to Greece and I have a Greek passport…but that's an end to a means to be able to stay longer in Greece…I still feel myself as an Australian first…I've always felt that...[38]

Interestingly, at the beginning of our discussion, Despina W identified herself as Greek-Australian. During the interview, she used the term interchangeably, sometimes

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid

placing 'Greek' first and sometimes 'Australian'. However, she concluded confidently that her identity is Australian-Greek, having carefully reflected on this issue during the interview. Her sense of Greekness, however, is categorically defined as an ethno-regional identity. In the context of her experience, Limnos is Greece. She has not experienced the wider nation state of Greece. For Despina W, Limnos was primarily a holiday destination but now it is also bestowed with other experiential meanings:

> [F]or me, Greece is Limnos… So, I have a holiday house in Limnos, I have a holiday house in Point Lonsdale (a beach town in Victoria) too…the difference is that in Limnos there's also the people who are there, there is a sense of belonging in Limnos…I know my community there …the connection with Limnos has changed for me…over the years. I have become part of the culture in Limnos.[39]

The connection with the ancestral home, for Despina W, has led to the development of sustainable relationships with significant people - her relatives and new friends. But the physicality of the ancestral home has been increasingly invested with further meaning. Her maternal home links Despina W and her family with her mother's past and the generations that precede her. In fact, Despina W and her family, through the frequent returns and the house renovations and extensions, have re-shaped and substantially changed their overall sense of identity and meaning, transforming the house and thus a sense of belonging for present and future generations. Her family's transformation of this ancient house is a rich metaphor for a transformed and enriched identity. Inadvertently and over time, they have reshaped their sense of belonging to place. Consequently, Despina's identity trajectory has been instrumental in reformulating not only her own ancestral connection to homeland but also that of her descendants - her Australian born son and daughter. Her revitalised identity and connection with her predecessors has resulted in a new way of belonging. Greece's dual citizenship provision has been another enabling factor that has enhanced the tangible connection to Greece for her Australian born family, as well. Giorgas regards the option of dual citizenship available to the Greek-

[39] Ibid.

Australian diaspora, as a factor that adds to 'a considerable degree of resilience in their identity as Greeks.'[40] Her empirical research concluded that:

> [T]he social and cultural context in which the second-generation Greeks have been raised has been significant in ensuring formation of a Greek identity and the likelihood of second generation Greeks embracing a transnational life by maintaining connections to their parents' homeland.[41]

The myriad pathways that enable this 'identification' destination for second-generation Limnans are, in some cases, closely linked to the physicality of home represented in the form of ancestral and inherited property. Non-existent relationships with people in the homeland, as well as an inherited ethno-regional identity that has been perpetuated through their parents, either real or imagined, has forged for many Limnians, a continuous and long-lasting connection into the future. In some cases, this reality had remained latent for many years, only to re-emerge at different life-stages and significant life events. Aspects of one's identity that seemed previously either irrelevant, incidental or for a given time, not vested with any special significance or value, were invariably awakened, re-assessed and reclaimed. For many interviewees, their 'hyphenated' identities were comfortably reconciled as they referred with ease to both the immigration country as well as their parental homeland as home. The evolutionary events and rupture in some cases, that follow from return visits, for the second-generation, have also become critical in enriching many aspects of identity and belonging for the third-generation through their parent's life trajectory which has bestowed a kind of 'inheritance' upon them. These 'rites of passage' have been characterised by scholars as 'double cultural competences'[42] or 'double vision.'[43] In the process, the second-generation attain 'cultural knowledge, the experience of which enables them to develop their own discourse on migration and national identity.'[44]

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[40] Giorgas, "Transnationalism and Identity Among Second Generation Greek-Australians," 53.

[41] Ibid., 66.

[42] Vasta, "Multicultural and Ethnic Identity," 220.

[43] Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 199.

[44] Loretta Baldassar, "Home and Away", 86.

Memories of the Early Years –*Themes and Narratives*

Growing up in Australia was consistently described as a 'happy time' by respondents. This phenomenon may reflect children's capacity for greater adaptability to new environments, compared to their parents. It may also be attributed to the dominant values, behaviours and influences that generally prevailed at home, acting to insulate and protect children from the external environment. Parallel to these memories is an emerging story of hard work, perseverance and self-sufficiency that defines the context for working class immigrant households that infused the psyche of the next generation as they were growing up. Narrations included childhood recollections of self-reliance and, in many cases, of taking on domestic and support roles for the benefit of the family unit, particularly in the case of working parents. Such a parental expectation reflected the parent's own family experiences and up-bringing in the homeland. These were defining memories that often shaped the dominant values of the next generation.

Children that had arrived with their parents in the mid to late-fifties described primary school positively, but noted that there were very few, if any, other children of Greek background at school or in their neighbourhoods at the time, which reinforces the migration patterns described in Chapter Two. Sophia (aged 64), who was four when she arrived in Melbourne in 1954 with her family, recalls:

> In the fifties, there were not many Greek children…when we were older, the whole street was of different backgrounds…we all played together. We had a great time. I was just a kid…not a migrant kid.[45]

This compares markedly with the children growing up in the sixties and early seventies. John and Nikolaos, both born in Australia in the early to mid-1970s, grew up in the immigrant dominated suburbs of Oakleigh and Fitzroy in Melbourne. Their reflections on this period are remembered differently to the children of earlier migration waves. John (aged 36) describes a relatively homogeneous environment at school:

[45] Interview with Sophia, 21 May 2014.

> Eighty per cent of kids at school were Greek…very Greek…all my friends were Greek, I had a few Italian friends, but it was a smooth ride in primary school. We didn't have to try and fit in...[46]

The adolescent years of the second-generation were remembered differently, depending on gender and the socio-demographic context in which they lived. The experience of not speaking any English when starting school was not unusual, even by those born in Australia and was reflected vividly in their recollections. Despina W recalls her first day at school thus:

> I can recall when I was young, I was definitely from a migrant background…especially at the age of six…I could not speak English because my mother spoke to me in Greek…when I went to primary school I could not speak English at all![47]

Penelope (aged 65), who was twelve when she and her mother joined her father in Sydney in 1961, had adapted relatively well at school, helped by her being humble and obedient in her new school environment. She experienced many initial problems with language which in hindsight made her laugh. She recalls the incident when she was accused of stealing someone's lunch:

> I saw this box with bags in it and all the kids going there and picking out a bag and taking it, so I thought these were for free like the milk, so one day I went and looked inside those bags and took out something that I liked…the next day, the teacher called me in front of the class and called a Greek boy to interpret; he said "the teacher said you took someone's lunch" and I said no, I didn't take anyone's lunch. When it was explained, it was very embarrassing …I felt backward… I was ignorant of the ways….[48]

These experiences contextualise an early migration period that reflects the social position of immigrant children at school and their resilience notwithstanding questions of language and linguistic confidence.

By the time families were established and children were ready to commence primary school, many Limnians had bought their own house using their savings and borrowings, either from the bank or family members and friends. The value of home

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[46] Interview with John, 16 September 2013.

[47] Interview with Despina W., 19 August 2013.

[48] Interview with Penelope, 11 March 2014.

ownership was part of the narrative of migrant success, which gave them a feeling of security and stability from which to build a family and a new life. The prevalent topic and recollection in the narrations was of parents who consistently worked long hours with children, having to look after themselves. Despina W recalls that at the age of nine:

> My mum was working … I had a little brother, four years younger, when she and dad would go off to work, before we left for school. He and I would get ready, I'd give him his breakfast and get him ready, I think our lunches were already made, we'd walk to the bus stop, hop on the bus, drop my brother to his grade and then I'd go to my grade.[49]

Andrew, recalls his father working 'all the time' as he was a good carpenter and was seemingly almost always inundated with work. He recalls that 'we roamed the streets on week-ends with independence and freedom. The parents were working hard…we would just look after ourselves.'[50] When his father was working seven days a week on the Sydney Opera House project, he remembers his family going into the botanical gardens on Sundays and waiting until his father finished work so that he and his siblings could be together and play with him.

Errikos[51] was four years old when he arrived in Australia in 1954, with his mother and older sister. His father, a skilled carpenter had arrived in Australia earlier under a government sponsorship scheme and worked as an indentured labourer at the New South Wales Burrinjuck Dam project, where he earned enough money to buy a house in Sydney for the family in time for their arrival, eighteen months later. As Errikos was growing up, both parents worked long hours, looking for security after a difficult life of hardship and poverty. His father was a child of refugees who had settled in Limnos from Tenedos[52] in the early 1990s. In Australia, his mother would bring unfinished garments home and involved his sister to help her after school with the finishing of these garments for extra

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[49] Interview with Despina W., 19 August 2013.

[50] Interview with Andrew, 11 March 2014.

[51] Interview with Errikos, 10 June 2014.

[52] The island of Tenedos and Imvros, situated at the strategic opening of the Dardanelles or Straits, were forfeited by Greece and awarded to Turkey in 1914, as part of the Turkish – Greek territorial agreement on the straits that resulted in the Lausanne treaty of July 1923. The islands of Limnos and Samothrace remained with Greece. See Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 120; Dontas, *Greece and Turkey: The Regime of the Straits*, 72.

income. Errikos would cook for himself and his siblings whilst the parents were working. He evokes a sense of growing up with the expression: 'we were latchkey kids.'[53] It underlies an independent self-sufficiency, atypical of children in his age group. The phrase depicts and characterises the stories of many second-generation informants whose parents worked long hours and overtime, predominantly in unskilled employment that mitigated their ability to be home before and after school hours. The term signifies a key theme and acts as a metaphor for immigrant children growing up in Australia in the late fifties and sixties. Where possible, they relied on other family members, neighbours as well as older siblings or else they were left to their own devices.

Elizabeth, born in Melbourne, in 1961, recalled childhood memories of her parents as 'always working.' Her mother was a factory worker whilst her father, after an initial period of factory work began selling household linen and homewares door-to-door, that later led him to open his own store. At the same time, she recalls the family changing houses regularly because her father was also involved in buying and selling property. Consequently, she had changed several schools and lived in multiple suburbs. As the first of four children, she remembers being looked after by a neighbour. When her brother was born, her parents brought out the maternal grandparents to look after the children. As a child Elizabeth recalls the grandmother, whom she adored, as her 'most significant adult figure,' rather than her own mother who was always out working.[54]

Nikolaos,[55] born in Melbourne in 1973 remembers a happy childhood. He experienced a childhood with lots of freedom as both his parents worked long hours. He enjoyed neighbourhood sports and games played after school while his parents were at work. His maternal grandmother was brought to Australia to look after the children, while the parents worked. She remains a positive memory and beloved figure in his life. This common sentiment towards grandparents emerges as a strong narrative theme. The family

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[53] Andrew uses this term with the following meaning: A *Latchkey child* describes the event of a child who returns from school to an empty home because his or her parent or parents are away at work, or a child who is often left without parental supervision. See en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latchkey kid.

[54] Interview with Elizabeth, 31 October 2014.

[55] Interview with Nikolaos, 20 June 2014.

reunion category of Australia's immigration policy, facilitated the re-establishment of extended families in immigrant communities. Grandparents were a vital extension to family and were often relied on to look after children and provide support in the running of domestic households. Grandparents became the emotional bridge in the continuity of culture and language for children and represented a significant link to heritage and ancestry for the second-generation. Grandparents were commonly the story tellers in Greek and Limnian families and so contributed to nurturing a connection to the homeland for future generations.

The second-generation remembered and talked about their situations using terms like 'independence' and 'freedom' but they also carried unusual burdens of responsibility in acting to support family functioning and stability. At the age of nine, Despina W[56], was expected to be responsible for her five-year old brother at home and at school while her mother was at work. Nikolaos and others helped their mothers with the outwork garments so that they could meet work targets and achieve better overall earnings. Despina S,[57] as the oldest daughter in the family, spoke about being thrust into domestic housework at the age of eight, to help her family before and after school. She recalls having to fill 'the outdoor copper' to heat the water for the washing and do the cooking for the family. As she reflects with resignation: 'we adhered to the family rules…we were a team…I was not allowed to do what others could do…many tears…many arguments…I did not get my way.[58] In this context, children needed to have a strong sense of self-reliance as well as a feeling of obligation and camaraderie and to work in the best interests of family. Interviews consistently revealed this theme of having to contribute to households, a tenet of traditional, rural families and parental upbringing with expectations that were replicated in the diaspora.

The family was largely taken for granted by children as they were growing up, but clearly the family also acted as their safety net and provided them with security and

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[56] Interview with Despina W, 19 August 2013.

[57] Interview with Despina S, 12 August 2013.

[58] Ibid.

intimacy as well as freedom and independence. Peter's assertion, 'I fended for myself, not over indulged,'[59] succinctly reflects this reality for children of the late 1950s and early 1960s, who had either arrived with their families or were born in Australia in that period. The immediate family which often included grandparents, the large extended family networks and a circle of compatriot friends with shared experiences, were a vital support system in the Limnian migrant community. This socio-cultural and ethno-regional context benefited the next generation considerably and reflects the supportive environment into which they were growing up. Narrators recalled their childhood with the regular and consistent week-end visits to the homes of family members and other compatriots, providing them the opportunity to mingle with numerous cousins and share common experiences and challenges of school and the neighbourhood which acted to maintain their links. The celebrated *γιορτές* (religious events) and name days 'were great big parties' with lots of shared food and refreshments along with familiar cultural customs, dancing, story-telling and other expressions of a unique regional Limnian identity. Such ruminations, remembered nostalgically by all generations, epitomised an entrenched Limnian social identity, cossetted by the first generation. Such a background implicitly influenced the emergence of a more hybrid identity which later manifested in the descendant generation and contributed to a unique expression of belonging and place. Fotoula's story epitomises this compact and even insular lifestyle, at the time, for the Limnian community. She was born in Melbourne in 1961 and she remembers her childhood fondly. Fotoula (aged 53) had a large extended family which lived nearby in the Greek dominated part of Melbourne's inner south area of Prahran and surrounding suburbs. The iconic Astor cinema, remembered fondly for its Greek movies, became a Greek entertainment hub on Saturdays for Greeks generally as well as Limnians who lived in the surrounding suburbs. Friday night was the trip to the Prahran market (set in the inner central suburb of Melbourne), where families procured the week's food supplies and interacted with other Limnians and Greek stall-keepers. As she recalls:

[59] Interview with Peter K., 5 April 2014.

> We were brought up as a Greek family, spent a lot of time with extended family, growing up amongst the Limnian community, picnics, dances… I spoke as much Greek as I could….[60]

Insiders / Outsiders: The Second-Generation Growing Up

As they were growing up, post-war children of immigrants have had to negotiate the complex dynamics of Australia's evolving nationhood and to navigate a society that was still trying to come to grips with nation building where race, ethnicity and difference were contested. A contestation of boundaries in redefining what it means to be Australian manifested in a felt status of *insider/outsider* experiences. The narrative of many second-generation respondents underlies a potent feeling of confusion about living two lives – at home and outside the home. The perception of being an outsider was a subtle but common theme threaded throughout many narrations. How it was expressed however varied, depending on gender and other factors such as the arrival period, sites of residence and type of schools attended. Girls born overseas but growing up in Australia in the late 1950s and 1960s seemed to have absorbed their outsider status by trying to fit in and to 'do the right thing' within their social context. Girls were restricted socially as Sophia (aged 65) recalls:

> My father was strict…we feared him…after the age of twelve, we were only allowed to mix with other Limnians…we were not allowed to go out on our own…later I could be accompanied by my younger brother to go to community events.[61]

Generally, girls tended not to mix with Anglo-Australians outside school, endeavoured to be good students, keep a low profile and compensate their sense of 'otherness' by mixing with other migrant girls of various nationalities and ethnicities. At school, friendship circles were predominantly with other migrant girls because, as Elizabeth highlighted, 'they were safe…I could not get into trouble with them…and it was easy to be accepted.'[62] Most Greek fathers were strict towards their daughters, very protective and would not allow them to go out 'like other Australians.' In many cases,

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[60] Interview with Fotoula, 10 August 2013.

[61] Interview with Sophia, 21 May 2014.

[62] Interview with Elizabeth, 31 October 2014.

they were not allowed to visit their friends and rarely had their friends visiting them at home. Many respondents recalled mixing more freely outside their designated ethnic boundaries but were still restricted from socialising together outside school. Their social circle as children and adolescents, in most cases, revolved largely around family and the Limnian community. These experiences set them apart and further reinforced their 'otherness' throughout their adolescent years. Their perceived insider/outsider status persisted with their cultural difference or perceived xenophobia. However, children and young people were, nevertheless, resilient and adaptive as many of the interviewees demonstrated. Despina W recalls engaging socially extremely well and, in the latter years of high school, with students from diverse backgrounds. Outside school however she was constantly restricted and had to accept being chaperoned by her father to social or recreational events and outings, such as the cinema. An exception to the experience of many other informants, she participated in sport, drama and other school activities within school boundaries. She did not feel particularly excluded and went on to become a teacher and university lecturer. However, she vividly recalled an unforgettable event that has remained entrenched in her memory. As she recalls:

> [M]y year twelve teacher… my English teacher, at parent teacher night, told my mum, "Oh, Mrs K. you must be aware that children from migrant parents, of migrant background, don't do well in English". I felt terrible and I was angry. She connected being migrant with not being very good! That stayed with me…I'll never forget that...[63]

The incident reflects the largely failed assimilationist policies, which Tsolidis believes had by the early seventies infiltrated the education arena, reinforcing views amongst educators that 'ethnic minority girls' lack of educational success was explained in cultural terms.[64]

Tsolidis contends that the 'inclusionary / exclusionary boundaries between the ethnic minorities and majority,'[65] particularly with gender as a powerful element, was a dominant contemporary ideology. This statement and the extensive research work done

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[63] Interview with Despina W, 19 August 2013.

[64] Tsolidis, "Theorising Ethnicity in Australian Feminism" 35.

[65] Ibid., 32.

by Tsolidis, an educator in the field, helps to contextualise a demeaning and traumatic experience felt by Despina W, whose teacher's comments have remained for her, an indelible memory into adulthood and perhaps, as she reflected, had shaped her determination to succeed and to prove the teacher wrong. Boys on the other hand, emphasised their awareness of difference, particularly in high school, by taking advantage of group solidarity by being part of 'gangs', especially in schools where they were represented in high numbers. Sometimes they resorted to a physical defence by retaliation, when challenged or threatened by other boys who used derogatory name calling, insults and bullying. Most male narrators tended to minimise their negative experiences of growing up in this regard. Whereas Nikolaos (aged 41) hints at a dynamic of potential discord:

> I grew up with a lot of ethnic kids…I remember there were gangs, terms like *wogs* being used…ethnics were the dominant group…there was tension, we were the dominant group, there was a mindset - it was uncool to be a wog.[66]

By comparison, John's school experience was as an 'insider'. He felt in control of his environment at school because of the solidarity with other students like him. For John, growing up in the seventies seemed to have been much easier and his experiences are qualitatively different. John for example could play soccer with pride, reinforcing his sense of Greekness, at a time in Australia's history when Australian Rules football typified the dominant sports culture. John lived in an area and within a school community where Greeks and migrants were more generally the norm. The difference of five years in age between John and Nikolaos conjures up a different set of school and community dynamics. Nikolaos was more attuned to subtle differences and tensions during his school years, even though he describes the dominance of migrant peers in relation to the Anglo-Australian students. The term 'wog' prevailed as a negative signifier and was frequently mentioned by male respondents. For Nikolaos, attending Greek afternoon school was a tension with his parents, as for many other respondents. It took them away from neighbourhood sports and games which represented, to them, positive ways of fitting within Australian society. The insider-outsider predicament, belonging and not

[66] Interview with Nikolaos, 20 June 2014.

belonging, is a strongly reflected theme in the narrative, though it varies depending on site and timeframe of settlement.

Andrew, who was born in Limnos, came to Australia with his family in 1961 when he was two years old. Andrew's story is interesting as it exposes a different set of secondary school experiences. His family initially settled in the inner Sydney suburbs where most immigrant groups first settled. The local high school represented the same profile of students to the primary school as it was in the locality of first settlement for migrant families and so he was comfortable in that setting. Andrew's experiences changed significantly, however, when the family moved in the early 1970s to an outer suburb of Sydney, which he describes as a more 'Anglo' populated suburb and therefore very different to his experience in the inner suburbs:

> After the first year in high school, my father had bought a shop in the southern suburbs of Sydney, in Riverwood…it was far from what we were used to…we moved in fact, from an area of total multicultural, like a melting pot…to a place where we were the absolute minority, where it was absolutely one hundred per cent Australian… [67]

Andrew's world subsequently changed from being within a comfortable and familiar school environment with 'insider' status, in a culturally diverse school community, to suddenly feeling as an 'outsider', experiencing an 'otherness' which he had not experienced before. In the new setting, at a 'middle class' public high school, amongst a significantly homogeneous socio-cultural group, he felt not only that he did not belong, but he also felt vulnerable. He experienced and reacted with fury to this setting and the bullying that he experienced. Andrew's story illustrates the insider-outsider dimension within a school community environment that threatened his identity, 'comfort-zone' and sense of belonging:

> It was a bit of a shock…there was only one other boy of Greek background and two Singaporean girls, everybody else was Australian. It was a bit of a shock, not having your little group around you to make you feel safe…being on your own, there was no safety. I was picked on a bit, as were the other kids of different backgrounds. It was very uncomfortable for me for a couple of years. I was the subject of bullying; my sense of identity was…that's where it

[67] Interview with Andrew, 11 March 2014.

> all came to the fore. I thought, you know I don't want to be the "odd man out" … I blamed my parents...[68]

The theme of belonging and not belonging was particularly evident in the narrative of respondents who as children lived in suburbs and attended schools in areas where migrants were a scattered few. Contrasting experiences at school have affected the ways in which identity was perceived and performed at different times in their lives. But it was also influenced by family stories and the role played by family narratives in the way homeland and cultural identities were imagined. Sonia's story of growing up in Sydney describes a more common migrant girl's trajectory of belonging. She arrived in Australia with her parents when she was just twelve months old, in 1961. They settled in the inner suburbs of Sydney:

> I went to Tempe Primary School and it was a multicultural school and we were just normal kids, just getting on and there was no difference amongst the kids, we were homogenous, we were all from different backgrounds, it was part of our life. Then I went to Canterbury Girls, it was similar. My friends were Italian, Greek, Australian…it was just who we were… [69]

Sonia's story accentuates the difference for girls growing up in the 1960s. Parents were protective and strict on girls but for her and her peers this was the norm. It was a shared experience that did not seem to negatively affect their sense of who they were. They were insulated from feelings of exclusion, as she says:

> It was just who we were, we were Australian Europeans, we just did our own thing…our parents did not let us go out, we did things behind our parent's backs, they were so strict! My father never let me go on any school trip…as soon as I was a teenager it was like, "you are not going anywhere", and there were others in my predicament. Up until the end of high school, the Greek part of my life was just the Greek part of my life...[70]

So, whilst Sonia and her peers were cognizant of difference in the context of the 'Australian' girls, her peer group's solidarity had the felt result of normalising their 'difference'. Her Greek identity was part of who she was, and she felt she belonged within this group, making it easier for her to rationalise her experiences as the status quo. Like

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Interview with Sonia, 12 March 2014.

[70] Ibid.

many other narrators, Sonia and her contemporaries had the extended family to cushion any doubt about her otherness as she was growing up. As she re-iterates 'the extended family was always part of my life in childhood…uncles and aunties were always part of my life.'[71] Many girls managed to negotiate their independence by being assertive. Others went about their independence without parental consent. Yet others agreed to accept the rules that strict fathers imposed upon them. But, later as young adults, feelings of belonging and not belonging were for some fluid, changing, sometimes confusing and evolving over time.

Identity Ambiguities - '*Who are we?*'

A consistent theme in the second-generation narrative is the effort to experience belonging that respondents had to go through as children growing up in the post-war years. Most narrators referred to an awareness of derogatory name calling as a backdrop, such as 'wog' for example, referring to their status of being children of migrants that accentuated their difference. But they attempted to resist being labelled as the 'other' and wanted to be 'like everyone else'. The acquired awareness of difference within mainstream society was counterbalanced, however, by an incontestable sense of belonging to a strong Greek and Limnian community, as they were growing up. For many, this was sufficient, at least until the adolescent years. Several informants talked about identity ambiguities which they experienced during their late teens and as they were moving into adulthood. Elizabeth reflects on her feelings of not belonging as a 'moving feast'. Over the years, she had tended to move in and out of 'belonging camps'. Whilst at times, on her return trips, she thought she 'had adopted' an imaginary concept of Greece. She recalls arriving in Limnos to visit her parents, when she told her father: 'here I am nourished and fulfilled.' While this was how she felt about Greece at that time, at our interview, Greece did not seem so important anymore. 'Maybe spiritually I've got disconnected', she said. Yet, she continues also to defend her Greek identity and adamantly refers to herself as Greek-Australian. She concluded with this ambiguous

[71] Ibid.

statement 'I'm a hybrid…I love the person I am when I'm in Greece…when I return, I shrink…I have to tame myself to the Anglo ways.'[72]

Andrew, who for decades has been returning to Limnos with his family each summer and stays in the ancestral house, his mother's *προίκα* (dowry), talked about the uncertainties of belonging in terms of 'otherness' thus:

> We are always the other, there is the sense of that…we all feel that, we try not to discuss it but I believe we all feel that and I don't like to be the other and I've always been the other and it's not an enjoyable feeling you know…this is an expression that they, the older generation use: *" είμαστε ξένοι εδώ, είμαστε ξένοι εκεί"* (we are foreigners here and we are strangers there), they lived it harder than us…because they were the real others, living it.[73]

Andrew is pragmatic about his identity and had dissociated all emotional connotations when he reflected on why he frequently returns to his ancestral home:

> When I'm there (Limnos), I'm living a life, it's just living a life…I'm happy in the environment that I'm in, I don't care that I've got a life somewhere else…and when I'm back, you have to spend a whole week jetlagged…it's not a good experience, it's winter and you miss the environment that you just left…you're depressed…I don't know what I'm missing…I'm missing the physicality of it all, but I feel a loss for a couple of weeks…But I can't tell you what that loss is… I think it's more than the physicality of it.[74]

Although Andrew had experienced a 'common' migrant child's identity trajectory living in Sydney, his attitude to the homeland is both dispassionate and unusual in comparison to other interviewees. He is comfortably reconciled about his identity as an Australian and is mindful that in a Greek community setting, he does not hesitate to introduce himself either as a Greek or Greek-Australian. He expressed pride in his cultural identification. Nonetheless, he is reticent to expose his emotions about the ancestral home, perhaps because he had not yet understood his feelings and emotions at the time of interview. Alternatively, and this is my supposition, it may not matter to him, but participation in oral history sometimes can provide an individual with a new realm of intellectual,

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[72] Interview with Elizabeth, 31 October 2014.

[73] Interview with Andrew, 11 March 2014.

[74] Ibid.

analytical and emotional reflection that in time can enrich one's understanding of complex and challenging events that underlie one's experiences.

Sonia's frankness about her confusion is also very telling. She acknowledges that the settlement process for immigrants in Australia entailed degrees of assimilation. As she says:

> We had to assimilate you know, we had to assimilate in Australia, we had to assimilate… we had to do things the Australian way and my parents did everything the Australian way, they fit in, yes they assimilated but they had their friends and their family and that's how they survived…lived two parallel worlds, I did that even in high school, I've been doing that…yes, yes…so you ask the question, "so who are you?"[75]

When asked this question, Sonia showed reluctance, she hesitated, avoided the answer and finally replied:

> I don't know…I'm a teacher…people at school see me as Greek; am I Australian? I'm an Australian citizen and I'm very proud of my Greek heritage…is that enough? I don't know the answer…is there anyone else in this situation?[76]

As I remained on this theme and after re-assuring her that there are others who are unsure about their identity, Sonia relaxed and continued:

> You know it's been awkward for me in Limnos, in the village, because I don't feel like I'm a part of them; but I do love it there and it is part of my heritage and I'm getting to know it…and may love it, maybe…[77]

Sonia does not conceptualise her identity in any way as 'Limnian' or some other combination. She says she feels Australian but then immediately contradicts herself:

> I can't be an Australian because, you know I've got the Greek cultural heritage that supports me and that's so important to me, extremely important to me so, yes, I'm Greek but I haven't, for the last thirty-five years, I haven't sort of done a lot of Greek things…that's probably why we've been going back to Greece, this is why it's so important to go back and get grounded and hear the stories.[78]

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[75] Interview with Sonia, 12 March 2014.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Ibid.

Sonia's narrative is intriguing because she attributes her 'identity confusion' to having lived outside a culturally diverse environment since moving to the Central Coast of New South Wales. Whilst this experience may have affected her sense of who she is at times, she is at the same time clear about that part of her identity which she calls Australian. Sonia links that part of her identity to who she is now:

> I know my value in Australia…I've been educated as an Australian, I've been teaching Australian kids and I'm doing a great job at it so I am an Australian first and foremost, that's my validation.[79]

For some respondents such as Spiros and Elizabeth,[80] the first trip back to Greece, was a rupture in different ways, permanently destabilising the comfort zone of belonging and place, which had until then defined them. For others, the experience of return was more challenging.[81] Whilst affirming their ancestral connection to the parental home, it also had the effect of magnifying the conundrum of the dual experience of being *ξένος* (a stranger), in similar ways that the foundational immigrants had found when they had returned to the ancestral home. The outsider status experienced as they were growing up in Australia appears to have re-emerged, as they reconciled with a newly found sense of belonging to the ancestral homeland. For some respondents, the return somehow completed an 'identity jigsaw', making them feel more connected to a previously rejected ancestral homeland. What is fascinating to me is that the event occurred at different life-stages, such as retirement (in the case of Spiros) or once family responsibilities had changed (in the case of Peter) or when the third-generation adult children began to display positive responses towards the ancestral homeland and seeking to go there, as in the case of Despina W.

For those who had accompanied their parents on the migration journey as young children, in the fifties and early-sixties, the feelings of not belonging here or there were not completely resolved in the return. Peter was eight years old when he arrived in Australia in 1958 with his mother and three other siblings to be re-united with his father

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[79] Ibid.

[80] Interview with Spiros, 16 May 2014; interview with Elizabeth, 31 October 2014.

[81] Interview with Peter, 5 April 2014.

who had migrated to Australia in 1956. Peter is a tertiary educated, practicing accountant in Melbourne who deals mostly with Greek clients. He has a clear awareness and some knowledge of the history of Limnos and has an affinity with Limnos as his birthplace. Nevertheless, he finds it difficult to explain or understand why that is so. He identifies much more as Greek and he feels Greek; he chooses to speak in Greek with his wife at home because he believes it helps them to communicate better with the subtleties of language. When he goes back to Greece, Peter (aged 65) feels that, as he says:

> I have *returned* (his emphasis) to Greece, not that I visited Greece. But by the same token, I also feel good when I'm entering Tullamarine airport and saying, "I'm back home," it's a surreal feeling…a feeling, very hard to explain.[82]

Emotionally Peter asserts that he is Greek but intellectually his identity is clearly Australian. He referred to the ANZAC cemeteries as a metaphor for his 'dual' identity:

> Every time I visit Limnos I make sure I visit those cemeteries. You go through the inscriptions on the tombstones and see names like Williams and O'Brian, apart from the eerie feelings…about a useless war, it also gives you some sort of feeling that you belong to two countries. Telling you this… gets me goose bumps…that history reinforces for me the two homes.[83]

The affinity that Peter derives from a shared and connected history between Limnos and Australia due to the history of the ANZACs, provides him with a sense of pride that makes his identity meaningful. Nevertheless, he is mindful of his seemingly irreconcilable status of dual identity that he has inherited:

> When we go there (Limnos) we are regarded as Australian, when we come back here (Australia) we are regarded as Greeks. That's probably about *our* (emphasis) generation…not our kids…[84]

Limnos for Peter is part of his history and heritage that conjures up nostalgia, but it is not his identity and 'precursor' for returning. It is a choice he makes because over the years he has learnt to appreciate the island's many qualities, which become reinforced for him with each return visit he makes.

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[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

Summary

The adult narrative of the second-generation Limnian cohort reflects primarily a sense of confidence about their present identity. Elucidated in their stories, there appears to be a clear shift in perception about identity and place for many of the participants, with their progression into adulthood and the experience of return visits as adults and in some cases as parents of the next generation. The clarity for some and the identity confusion for others in their earlier years was very much externally determined and influenced by their social environment. For several women and men, further education became a focus for expanding their horizons from the limits of the family and the community boundaries and provided the opportunity for identity re-evaluation and transformation. Family and community was their haven in the early years as they struggled for place in a contested social order. Growing up in an Australian setting was not always easy and was often at variance with their home life. For many, who grew up in the inner-city suburbs within culturally diverse neighbourhoods, this was their 'protective' context as children. Once other possibilities began to emerge, through further education and work, or through sheer rebelliousness they managed to establish a consolidated Australian identity and belonging. But the transition was felt and experienced differentially. When they began to make return trips to their ancestral home, they again confronted other dimensions and experiences about their identification. For many second-generation informants, the experience of 'return' was a significant factor in reconciling their sense of belonging as adults.

These experiences were expressed as unique journeys. They were not universal or consistently similar, though there were some similarities. They manifested differently, depending on personal histories, family experiences and the social and community context of their lives. However, the overarching theme that has emerged in the narrative has been the significance of the return visit. This experience impacted and reframed their sense of belonging and place, resulting in identity transformation that was, for some, ephemeral, and enduring for others.

Chapter 6 Home, Return Visits and *'Dual Lives'*

> *'Home … is a place, a site in which we live. But more than this, home is also an idea and an imaginary that is imbued with feelings… Home is hence a complex and multi-layered geographical concept…home is: a place/site, a set of feelings/cultural meanings, and the relations between the two.'*[1]

As established in the previous chapter, the overarching theme to emerge from the second-generation narrative is the significance of the first 'return visit' to the ancestral home and how this experience has sometimes reframed a person's sense of belonging and place. In some situations, this experience resulted in a rupture of feelings, as well as identity challenges and transformation that are either transitory, or enduring, thereby impacting and altering one's identity and sense of self. In this chapter the experience of return visits is explored from a different lens to consider what constitutes 'home', and to capture the ways that the homeland is experienced beyond the initial visit by each generation and how these experiences might differ inter-generationally. Important questions have been raised in research on home and transnational migration that challenge the stable origin of home and its 'fixity and singularity'[2]. Blunt and Dowling suggest that:

> [I]deas of home are relational across space and time, are often shaped by memories of past homes as well as dreams of future homes and bring together both material and imaginative geographies of residence and belonging, departure and return. Transnational homes are thus shaped by ideas and experiences of location and dislocation, place and displacement, as people migrate for a variety of reasons and feel both at home and not at home in a wide range of circumstances.[3]

The recurring theme of 'dual lives' that reverberates consistently in the narrative of both generations, as noted in Chapters Three to Five, will also be explored in this

[1] Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling, *Home,* (New York & London: Routledge, 2006), 2-3.

[2] Ibid., 198.

[3] Ibid., 198.

chapter as a defining multi-generational experience. How each generation consolidates their status in this regard influences our understanding of an ever-changing diasporic identity that is dynamic, reforming and sustainable in its longevity and future. In unravelling these themes, I seek to understand the concept, experiences and ramifications of 'dual lives' that emerges in the testimony of narrators and to project the positive and negative connotations for identity. This theme leads directly into the next chapter which is about migration and transnationalism, using different frameworks and approaches for understanding migration across borders.

Diasporic Meanings of Home

The term 'home' has been a constant reference throughout this study, articulated by both the first and second-generation groups and is invested with different meanings. Whilst the concept is central in diasporic identity, the meanings and values that have emerged in the narrative of each generation is located within the realm of their different experiences of migration, time and place. As Walter argues, diaspora is:

> [A] spatial concept…with a more 'open' symbolic spatiality, which combines the separate locations of origin, travel and settlement into a 'third space'…This notion of diaspora expects the two forms of consciousness to be held at the same time.'[4]

The first-generation respondents have used the term *πατρίδα* to denote the national homeland, as well as the regional birthplace as their belonging. In the context of place, physical and imaginary, home is connected to their memories of a place as it was lived and experienced in the past. It provides a historical legitimacy that enables them to feel, as Burrell says, 'a powerful sense of rightful attachment to the land itself, ensuring that the homeland becomes almost overburdened with the emotional imagery of belonging.'[5] For those immigrants, home epitomises 'that complex mix of the physical and tangible

[4] Bronwen Walter, *Outsiders Inside: Whiteness, place and Irish women* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 8-9.

[5] Kathy Burrell, *Moving Lives: Narratives of Nation and Migration amongst Europeans in Post-War Britain,* (Hampshire, England & Burlington, VT, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 102.

and the emotional and imagined.'[6] These may be feelings of belonging, desire and intimacy. They are also intrinsically spatial. 'Home is thus a *spatial imaginary*: a set of intersecting and variable ideas and feelings, which are related to context, and which construct places, extend across spaces, scales, and connect places.'[7] Such dynamism and variability in ways that home is experienced is manifested, as Walter points out as, '"at home" in the area of settlement while retaining significant identification outside it.'[8]

In the second-generation, the idea of home is frequently negotiated at each stage of their lives and experiences. It is informed largely by the external environment. Through their return visits they can construct and re-imagine its significance, without the burden of their history, unlike their parents. Like creative artists, they can discover new meanings of home with each return visit, as free agents. They make the choice in taking ownership and consolidating, or not, one or multiple homes as part of their identification. Nonetheless, the significance of returning to the homeland for the first and second-generation informants, though different, is shown to be an overwhelmingly powerful way to link many aspects of 'who they are' and their place in the diaspora. As Walter conveys:

> Instead of a linear journey of migration from 'outside' to permanent settlement 'inside', accompanied by assimilation from identities of origin to those of destination, this notion of diaspora expects the two forms of consciousness to be held at the same time. The concept thus explicitly dislodges many kinds of binary notions: migrant/settler, insider/outsider, home/away…migrants and their descendants are connected by both/ and ties to their countries of origin and settlement.[9]

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[6] Ibid., 103.

[7] Blunt and Dowling, *Home*, 2.

[8] Walter, *Outsiders Inside*, 206.

[9] Ibid., 9.

The Significance of Returning – the first-generation

As evidenced in the testimony of first-generation immigrants in Chapter Three, men more than women lived a powerful yearning, almost daily, for the 'return home' which for years many had nurtured a mental plan to return permanently, one day, to their homeland. Although many first-generation narrators continued to believe in a return to the homeland during the initial years, they knew nevertheless that their primary goal in migration was to establish themselves in work, a home and to make savings. This was, after all, their rationale for migration to a foreign land. They continued to nurture the desire to return 'home' and clung to the idea of belonging there, not here, and continued to hold on to that belief for a long time. This phenomenon is well documented for other migration communities.[10] One narrator talked about his attempt to re-settle in Greece with his young family. The palpable desire to return and re-settle back in the homeland for Panagiotis[11] was evidenced by his action in returning to Limnos with his young family. Panagiotis first made the decision to leave for Australia in 1965 as a young man but returned with his new family to trial repatriation back to Greece during his first return in 1980. The return to his *πατρίδα* (homeland) and the opportunity to be close to his siblings was always dominant in his aspirations for 'home'. However, his efforts to establish himself in Greece were short-lived. He was disappointed, due to the many difficulties he encountered in pursuing the set-up of a business in Greece, even though he had substantial business experience in Australia. He resolved to return permanently, after making the mental shift to make Australia his primary home. As a successful businessman in Melbourne, Panagiotis established a second home in his island village and now divides his time across two homes, like many other narrators in this study. This is not a rare event, as people who retire with adequate resources have resolved to finance two physical homes. Like others, Panagiotis could create balance, reconciling a life with 'dual homes'. This decision has

[10] Stephanie Lindsay Thompson, *Australia Through Italian Eyes: A Study of Settlers Returning from Australia to Italy* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1980); See also Baldassar, 1997, 1998, 2001, 2005; Susanne Wessendorf, ""Roots Migrants": Transnationalism and "Return" among Second-Generation Italians in Switzerland." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* Vol.33 Issue 7 (2007): 1083-1102.

[11] Interview with Panagiotis, 23 May 2014.

enabled his now adult children to remain fully connected with his homeland and the extended family in Greece.

For most other Limnians, as time passed, and their families were established, they had reconciled to the fact that they had settled permanently in the new country. For many, the critical first few return visits home that had stoked their aspiration for a permanent return had the decisive effect of reconciling them in the consolidation of the 'new home' permanently in Australia. A range of factors influenced these decisions: the length of absence, the changes in family composition in the homeland with parents dying and siblings moving to other parts of Greece, or to other parts of the world, including Australia. Significantly, the social, economic and political changes that had occurred in Greece itself since the period of mass migration became glaringly obvious to them. Greece's military coup that gripped the nation from 1967-1974 again created feelings of uncertainty and insecurity. This political and social calamity in the late sixties coincided with Australia's economic downturn which had affected many Greek migrants. However, with the democratisation of Greece again, it became the trigger to accomplish their 'dream' to return to Greece permanently. However, many, who had returned, were forced to re-patriate again due to fear, insecurity and a sense of powerlessness felt, in the home country, following so many changes.

Con (Kostas), who arrived in Australia in 1971, was determined to stay in Australia for only five years, a declaration similarly uttered by many other narrators. He too, wanted to make enough money and return to Limnos to establish his own small business. That had been his plan and purpose for migration. But this did not eventuate, and he too had reconciled to make Australia his permanent home. After his first return visit to see his parents and introduce his new wife to them, some six years after his departure, he began a series of frequent returns, usually in the summer time. He found it hard to explain his love of the island but was both passionate and emotional when asked about this topic. Con does not possess a physical ancestral house. He donated some of his ancestral land to a nephew to build a house for his family in Androni (a small village adjoining the island capital). When Con returns to Limnos he lives in this beloved village. He has constructed a small place on family land to enable him to continue his regular sojourns back to his ancestral village, which he manages to do every couple of years, usually, without his wife, who is from another part of Greece. Meanwhile he continues an active role as the long-

standing President of the Lemnian Community Association in Sydney, New South Wales. This role, he says represents his on-going connection to the island and his heritage.

When Lakis[12] returned to his village for the first time in 1973, he was surprised by its beauty which was 'beyond his expectations and memories'. He observed positive changes, was moved by the memories of his beloved village, recollections of friendships and the physicality of the island, all of which contributed to numerous returns. As he recalled, 'it is never forgotten!'[13] However, as he reminisced, he was cognizant of the fact that with time and age he felt more distant physically and spatially from his homeland. Nonetheless, he described the significance of Limnos as, providing continuity in his life. From 1957 to 2001, Lakis had dedicated himself to the fraternal organisation of 'Hephaestus', the Limnian Community Association of Melbourne, Victoria. He joined the Committee of the association and played an active leadership role throughout those years. He described this commitment as his way of maintaining a connection with the homeland and the people who had migrated to Australia. When he returns every few years, Lakis likes to walk the familiar paths, mix with the locals and ex-patriots and continues to be passionate about his ancestral home of Limnos, real or idealised. Significantly, unlike most other informants, he noted a stronger Hellenistic affinity to the Greek nation and did not confine himself to only a regional island identity. His leadership and representative roles had brought him into contact with Greek authorities and a wider transnational audience. His broader outlook may also be explained by him having had a level of secondary education before leaving Greece and therefore a broader perspective on national identity, even though his regional connection and passion for Limnos has been strong in his narrative.[14]

With the frequency of return visits, most first-generation narrators have also highlighted tensions and unresolved feelings about home, particularly for those who had a limited primary education and little exposure beyond the island. Haralambos (aged 76)

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[12] Interview with Lakis, 9 July 2013.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

returned to Limnos for the first time some fifteen years after his departure. He hoped that the trip would assist his wife in her recuperation from an illness. Remarkably, this trip became the springboard for a long series of returns for the couple. His now adult children also commenced a pattern of returns with their own families during the summer, a reality that makes him proud and personally affirmed. Haralambos has always been nostalgic about his birthplace. Limnos for him represents his 'small paradise'[15] as he describes it. 'I like to sit on this veranda (where the interview took place) and look at this village. I can't get enough of this view.'[16] Ironically, in the context of an objective socio-economic reality in Greece, both then and now, it's an idealised view of home to which he attributes a romanticised meaning of place. As he talked, he greatly exaggerated the island's past capabilities in such a way that they were at variance with the reality of his own experience that led to the migration of an entire family (nine siblings and his mother), and the historical analysis presented in Chapter One. For Haralambos (aged 76), however, the return trips foster his connection to an idealised home which sits in juxtaposition with a perceived sense of not belonging because, as he says, the locals sometimes refer to him as *ξένος* (foreigner) which he rejects with great emotion. He communicates this conundrum forcefully as he says:

> When he calls me *ξένος* I don't like it, it depresses me…it makes me feel, a loss of belonging… it challenges my sense of identity and connection to this place. I was born here, I grew up here, I served my military service, it challenges who I am…I'm not the other…how dare he…In Australia we were referred to as wogs…ok there, we were foreigners.[17]

Like Haralambos, Con (aged 73) also expressed bitterness and resentment about such perceived attitudes, seemingly displayed by some locals towards him, which destabilises his claim to the island as home. He poses the question bitterly: 'Why? wasn't I born here? I have many memories, where I spent my childhood, my youth.'[18] These views are, however, disputed by others. Toula migrated to Australia to marry a man by

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[15] Interview with Haralambos, 19 May 2014.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Interview with Con, 10 March 2014.

προξενιό (arranged marriage) who had left earlier for the state of Tasmania. Her first return to Limnos, eight years later, was with her new family to visit her husband's ill father. She felt immense joy to be reunited with her parents and siblings who had remained in the village. Later she began to return on a regular basis. Her frequent returns sustained her and have entrenched the feeling of belonging to the island and to the ancestral home. She felt comfortable and accepting of her roots and confidently expressed a sense of entitlement in coming back. Toula (aged 72) continues to share great pride about the island, in comparison to other parts of Greece. She feels that she has two homes but has reconciled that her Hobart home is primary. She does not allow the subtle references, made by locals that label her as an '*αυστραλέζα*' to daunt her. She is confident and proud to belong to both places. She dismisses the alienating comments made by locals towards her, and is adamant that her feelings of belonging to this place cannot be easily taken away from her:

> The island, I love a lot…when I hear people talking about other islands, I think our island is the best…It has a lot of things (she proceeds to list them); It's my place, it's my *πατρίδα* (homeland), I'm very proud to be Limnian! That is why I defend it…But as I get older, I don't know how often I can come now that my mother has passed away.[19]

For Katerina on the other hand, the return experience was different. She returned twenty-two years later, for the first time, to visit her mother who was of ill-health. She never had a chance to see her beloved father again as he had died before her return. Katerina was overwhelmed in seeing a neglected ancestral home and the lack of facilities to which she and her family had become accustomed in Australia. Nonetheless, each time she arrives at her village she experiences an 'inner happiness'. She feels a sense of freedom and attempts to interact with the locals as if she never left. But she too expressed feelings of being offended when locals referred to her as an '*αυστραλέζα*'. This, for her, reveals that she is the 'other' in her ancestral homeland. She interprets and makes sense of this as alienation from her *πατρίδα* (ancestral homeland), as it mitigates her claim to the place of her birth, her childhood and life as a young woman. She sensed that her 'laboured' migration experiences went unrecognised and were misunderstood and

[19] Interview with Toula, 30 May 2014.

unappreciated as she sought recognition, an affirmation and a part of her sense of belonging. It's as if this part of her life is invalidated and nullified, as if her claim of place and home is denied and rejected by those who stayed behind. This is how she narrates that experience and her own ambivalence:

> I don't like it…I think that they think that I am *ξένη* (a stranger), but I was born here, I left when I was eighteen, I went there and worked, I suffered and I came back…this makes me feel that I don't belong…But it is true that I feel more comfortable with the other ex-patriots who come here too. I don't mind being called '*αυστραλέζα*' in Australia, even though we were called 'wogs' there in the first years.[20]

The perception of being deemed *ξένη / ξένος* (foreigner or stranger) is a theme that has emerged powerfully and was repeatedly attributed to those 'who were left behind' in Limnos. As previously discussed the 'otherness' experienced by migrants in the host country is reflected inversely in the ancestral home upon return, which is most hurtful.

The nostalgia and yearning about the homeland reflected in the first-generation narrative can be characterised for some, as misunderstood and 'unrequited' in the return. They mourn the lack of recognition and appreciation about their harsh and difficult life as immigrants, which they believe only they and their fellow-immigrants have properly understood and appreciated. The chasm and perceived lack of understanding and sensitivity between those-who-left and those-who-stayed is significant. It captures a de-valuing feeling of hurt and rejection rather than affirmation, recognition and rightful status that is passionately craved. Significantly, and not withstanding some of these ambiguities, all informants have persisted in returning to the ancestral home as often as possible. They have constructed strategies to withstand the negative perceptions with feelings of perseverance and doggedness and a degree of assertiveness, echoed in an underlying dynamic of tension that rarely came to the surface, but it is reflected in the way they perceive themselves in the context of others. Nevertheless, those who had property and resources undertook to make improvements to ancestral houses, to make them comfortable and liveable as a gesture of defiance perhaps, or an act of re-claiming their heritage and sense of place in the ancestral homeland. They have begun to take pride

[20] Interview with Katerina, 20 May 2014.

in seeing their adult children and grand-children travelling to the ancestral home as they showcase their prosperity and the families that they have created in the diaspora. Hence, in some ways, the first generation Limnian immigrants who became Australians have resolved their return ambiguities by enabling the return of their descendants to the ancestral homeland, facilitating the cultural bridge that links the identity of migrant generations within a transnational continuum.

The Significance of Returning – the second-generation

The 'return' trajectory of second-generation interviewees is surprisingly diverse and significantly different to the previous generation, both in motivation, dynamics and specificity. Their parents' generation shared an actual connection with place due to memories of childhood and actual experiences in their youth and as young adults living in the homeland. They had left a footprint of an early part of their lives spent in the *πατρίδα*. They had left behind elderly parents and other family members, loved ones, friends and memories that had constituted their 'world' until departure. The constructed imaginary of home was nurtured and maintained within that context and the reality that, over many years, they had struggled to adapt in a new land. Whereas, the second-generation, as discussed in Chapter Five, returned to the ancestral home as independent adults, unburdened by a prior history with this land. Unlike the parental generation, in most cases, the second-generation held no nostalgia or emotional 'baggage' attached to the ancestral home, prior to their first trip, especially for those born in Australia. There were elements of connection due to the familiarity with language, often spoken at home, usually in regional dialectic tones, and the passionate choruses of family stories as a backdrop, for those who cared to pay attention. There was also a prevailing, amorphous sense of 'Greekness' resulting from family cultural practices such as church attendance and other cultural events. In Australia, the power of the 'Greek' label that was attributed to them in school and the wider community would foster an awareness that they were seen to be different from 'mainstream' society. However, the significance of returning to the ancestral homeland for the second-generation was consistently expressed as a discovery, a re-awakening and in some cases a challenging and ambiguous experience

that had led to a re-definition of their own identity. Social psychology research[21] lends strength to the connection of personal experiences and interpretation of those experiences, in relation to the development of self and one's life story. The narrative of both Sonia[22] and Andrew[23] illuminates this well. They both moved from inclusive, extended family networks in inner Sydney, a migrant area in the 1960s, due to the relocation of their families to the more homogeneous outer Sydney suburbs. They both experienced traumatic events with the relocation that led to a negation of self in the context of a cultural identity. Sonia describes this critical period when she began her first relief teacher role thus:

> I never spoke that I was Greek. It's only the last five [years]…there was stereotyping…I have encountered this during my [teaching] career from staff, never from children, so I thought, I'm not going to risk this, so I thought I'd just teach…but it was like I was not living a whole life…that I was living a part life, my teaching career, I was educating people but I was not sharing my personal life, I feared that I would be discriminated against, that's it in a nutshell.[24]

Andrew refers to a 'shocking' experience of change from the inner Sydney suburb of Tempe to Riverwood and the 'middle class' high school to which his parents sent him. He talked about being bullied and, in his words, he felt he was 'the odd man out'. His 'enlightenment' came when he first visited Greece as a young adult and suddenly realised that he had a Greek identity. For both informants, the latent rediscovery of an ancestral heritage, after having lived within a social setting that essentially placed them in a situation of being in denial about who they were, was considerable. Their stories illustrate, in different ways, how this reality crystallised for them in the telling of their stories. The astounding finding of an 'inner self' instigated a process of positive affirmation of their heritage and belonging that resulted in a more complex, nuanced and holistic sense of cultural identity, that helped them to re-define it. The ancestral background for Andrew

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[21] Kate C. McLean, Monisha Pasupathis and Jennifer L. Pals, "Selves Creating Stories Creating Selves: A Process Model of Self-Development." *Personality and Social Psychology Review, Vol. 11 No.3,* (August 2007): 262-278.

[22] Interview with Sonia, 12 March 2014.

[23] Interview with Andrew, 11 March 2014.

[24] Interview with Sonia, 12 March 2014.

and Sonia had never been fully integrated or understood as part of their actual identification and connection to home as they were growing up in Australia.

For some respondents, who had accompanied their parents in the migration journey in the fifties and early-sixties as young children (under 12 years), referred to as the 1.5 generation,[25] feelings of not belonging, here or there, were not completely resolved in the return. Peter captures this feeling when he says, in a slightly philosophical tone: 'it's the feeling of [our] generation'.[26] And indeed this statement may well capture the experience of the 'in-between' generation to which he belongs. This diasporic phenomenon is similarly characterised in other migration research literature. In an analysis of literature by several Greek-American women writers who have articulated their experiences of return in their writings, Kindinger explores the ideas of belonging and diaspora and how these themes are represented. She highlights the telling of personal journeys 'back' to the ancestral homeland, to show how 'they negotiate identity and place in the Greek diaspora.'[27] Her narrators highlight a representation of the process of belonging to an ancestral place such as Greece, in which they perceive and are perceived as 'both familiar (*dópia*, or native) and foreign (*xéni*).'[28] Kindinger's analysis shows that identity and place in the Greek diaspora is negotiated, as evidenced in the experience of second-generation narrators in this study. She defines diaspora 'not as a passive condition…but as a dynamic practice that reflects, but also shapes people's dispersion(s) across the world.'[29]

For several respondents, the experience of return has indeed been a double-edged sword, like their parents' generation. However, the feeling of pride about the ancestral home was expressed repeatedly and was an overwhelming feature of the second-generation's testimony. Most informants experienced a pattern of numerous return visits and the construction of on-going relationships, connections and re-connections with

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[25] Rumbaut, "Ages, Life Stages and Generational Cohorts," 1167.

[26] Interview with Peter., 5 April 2014.

[27] Evangelia Kindinger, "Of *Dópia* and *Xéni:* Strategies of belonging in Greek-American Return Narratives." *Journal of Mediterranean Studies,* 20:2 (2011): 391.

[28] Ibid., 389.

[29] Ibid., 390.

relatives and new friends during their island visits. Some respondents emphasised how, for the first time, they had gained an increased knowledge and understanding of the island and its recent history, unknown to them before. Other narratives revealed a nuanced understanding of the Greek nation that was previously concealed or had been actively rejected by them, as it held little significance to them earlier in their lives. However, there were some exceptions. Those respondents who had arrived as children but had strong childhood memories of their life in the ancestral home, the return visits were usually very emotional, similar to the first-generation. Their responses were indicative of a re-discovery of a past childhood that persisted in them, as a nostalgic memory and a positive and affirming remembrance of a childhood that had been interrupted by migration. For Penelope (aged 67) who arrived in Australia at the age of twelve and an only child, she returned to Greece with her husband to be introduced to his family living in the Peloponnese. Going back to Repanidi, her ancestral village in Limnos, was, very emotional:

> It was very emotional, going to the house where I was raised…my parents had gone beforehand and they had renovated the place and they built a new kitchen and they built a bathroom, whereas, as you know houses in Greece did not have bathrooms and toilets…yeah, it was quite comfortable…For me it was just a dream when I came here to Australia and everything looked smaller when I went back…otherwise I just couldn't have enough of the countryside, of my house…going to the beach, to the *Παναγιά* (a little church on a hill - a village landmark – that symbolised liberation from Turkish rule)…seeing my aunties and cousins…I really felt at home…that I belong there…I feel the bond with my cousins that I do not have in Australia. I feel good; I feel at home…I miss the life…the house and the village attracts me back… The *Πατρικό* (the maternal house) has a role…it's my mother's…when I'm there I feel very strong, I feel like a very strong Greek or Limnian character, as if I belong, but the locals refer to us as *ξένοι* (foreigners), like we don't belong.[30]

Several second-generation informants expressed a stronger Greek national identity rather than only their regional island identification. They were usually from a 'mixed marriage', that is, a Limnian parent who, in Australia had married someone who was Greek but not from the island and described as exogamous. However, where the mother was Limnian, the pre-dominance of the maternal side of cultural practices seemed to prevail in the home. In this case, the narrators often had a strong Greek religious and

[30] Interview with Penelope, 11 March 2014.

linguistic identification, derived from the broader context of a Greek national identity. John[31], who was born in Australia with parents of different Greek regional backgrounds - his mother was born in Limnos and his father came from the Peloponnese - is such an example. His parents met when his father did his military service in Limnos. They migrated in the late 1960s with the intention to return to the homeland within five years. Both had vocational skills and believed that, with their savings, they could return to re-establish themselves in Greece. John believes that his parents were 'accidental migrants' who defined themselves more significantly with the Greek national identity. They had both lived and worked in Athens as adults for several years prior to their departure for Australia. John described his upbringing categorically as 'Greek', even though he was brought up within a predominantly Limnian extended family and a strong Limnian-Greek community network. He displayed a sound knowledge of both parents' birth places and has visited Greece frequently. He grew up Greek dominated suburbs of Melbourne. He speaks Greek fluently, had attended Greek afternoon school and even now participates in cultural practices and religious rituals, along with his own family. His wife is also of Greek background, born in Australia. His professional life in finance engages him with other Greek professionals and companies dealing with Greece. John's Greek identity is therefore well entrenched, lending strength to his self-identification with a national identity, rather than the exclusively regional identification that characterised many other informants, either born in Australia or who had arrived as young children of Limnian immigrants.

Significantly, John's return visits are linked to a strong national Greek identity, emphasised by the values at the heart of his Greekness, which he articulated in the familiar creed of 'hellenism, orthodoxy and family.'[32] He demonstrated his position with a strong commitment to these values that apply to himself and his young family. In many ways John is an archetypal second-generation Greek who acknowledges that he is also an Australian and who accepts Australia as his primary home, where he has an established

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[31] Interview with John, 16 September 2013.

[32] These values were often politicised and adopted by the Greek Orthodox Church and mainstream political forces, particularly during the early period of Greek democratisation.

career and family. But he has retained and nurtures a strong social and family connection, belonging and identification with Greece and the ancestral homes of both parents and their extended families. He tries to visit as often as his work and family commitments allow him. John's connection with Limnos evolved from within the household at a young age, influenced by his mother, his maternal grandmother who lived with them and the close connection with the maternal extended family that had settled in Australia. His father did not have any relatives in Australia. The first trip to Limnos was described as exciting and understandably affirming, in the light of his upbringing. He met other members of his mother's extended family and recalls a strong sense of belonging and acceptance that was revealed by the positive reception shown to him by relatives, thereby strengthening his fondness for his mother's ancestral island. Although John's family no longer has an ancestral house or land in Limnos, he described his Limnian identity as:

> [P]art of who I am, where I've come from; not having an ancestral home or land does not diminish my love of it… I feel a connection because mum was born there…My wife is not from there, but she loves Limnos too![33]

John's experience of return visits is a form of connection that was consistently echoed by other respondents of his generation. He has consolidated his regional island roots within a broader Hellenistic identity which he has integrated into his own family and life values, as well as into his professional life:

> I love going to Greece, I think it's fantastic, for a holiday, getting away from the cold here in Australia; I feel part of Greece, Greece is part of me and Limnos helps to cement that; I know how rich in history it is, it fulfils me. My cultural/ethnic identity is Greek… I belong to Australia and Greece at the same time. But Greece is about spiritual and emotional things… I think about Greece and Limnos when I'm in Australia.[34]

Like several other respondents, John has remained connected to people in the homeland and performs a transnational reality in the diaspora. Through social media, he follows events in Greece and would like to promote and facilitate linguistic and cultural connections for his children with Limnos and Greece more widely.

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[33] Interview with John, 16 September 2013.

[34] Ibid.

Errikos was born in Limnos and at the age of four years he arrived in Australia in 1954, with his mother and young sister, to join his father who had migrated two years earlier. His parents were children of refugees who had settled in Limnos in the early twentieth century. He grew up in Sydney, New South Wales, completing his tertiary qualifications in agriculture and education during the late 1960s when Australian society was generally xenophobic and influenced by a prevailing White Australia policy. He noted the experience of racism even though he grew up in a 'working class' suburb where increasingly more migrants had begun to arrive. Errikos (aged 65) was passionate about his Greek identity and categorical about his Hellenic roots. He had, from a young age, internalised the view of wanting to return to the homeland and chose his educational career accordingly. He had set the goal of return himself. He recalls his first return trip that he took with his mother:

> I was fifteen years old when I was chosen (amongst his siblings) to return to Greece with my mother. Oh, I was rapt …I loved it! I made friends. I wanted to stay there…the environment just suited me. I loved the lifestyle…I felt part of it, that was my identity…I was never one hundred per cent in Australia…I wanted to do Agriculture so that I would come back to work the land.[35]

Errikos's plan to return to Limnos was suspended for many years after getting married, but he resolved to make frequent trips back to Limnos with his second wife, also a Limnian, and their children. He built his own house in Limnos and now lives semi-permanently on a wind-swept hill overlooking the ocean and Diapori bay, not far from the village of Kontias. He expressed his pride in being Greek thus:

> It's who I am. I'm proud to be Greek…it's natural…I'm trying to be a Hellene…somebody that accepts his history and accepts his culture and everything that goes with it…it becomes part of the make-up…we have a history, follow the philosophers that have added to that cultural background and Greece's civilisation…we have to remember the history; the concept that I have is a healthy body and healthy mind…you must have the balance. We tend to neglect the philosophical…the feeling that is very hard to explain.[36]

[35] Interview with Errikos, 10 June 2014. The word 'rapt' in this context, is an Australian colloquialism meaning 'very happy'.

[36] Ibid.

Errikos lived most of his life 'in the Greek scene' of Sydney but referred to the move to Limnos as 'coming home'. Pride in being Greek has been a consistent and embracing theme for all generations. But, the Limnian regional island identity is an expression and prominent feature that is distinctive. The second-generation voices have reflected on this in different ways. For Errikos, Limnos is the 'physical home' and Greece is the 'spiritual home, but Limnos is where I belong physically.'[37] Interestingly, Errikos considers Australia as the 'home away from home'. In this way, he is unique amongst the second-generation respondents, as he distinguishes himself from them in an unqualified and clear way. This may be explained in part in generational terms, by his age and the fact that he grew up at a time when the White Australia policy significantly influenced his life experiences in Australia.

Pantelis was born in Limnos in 1946 and was eleven years old when he arrived with his mother and sister in the Victorian regional town of Ballarat, north-west of Melbourne in 1957. They joined his father who had migrated to Australia, less than two years earlier. His first return trip was in 1970, as a young adult. He reminisces thus: 'there was no real urge to go back but I thought, "why not?"'.[38] As a musician on his first return trip, he was 'a star' standing in front of the microphone entertaining local gatherings with traditional folkloric music and songs. However, his sentiments tell a different story:

> I felt I never left the place…I really felt I never left… because I've always loved the simplicity and the lifestyle of the village and I was never made to feel uncomfortable because I never showed that I was anybody special. I felt I belonged there, yeah…[39]

Pantelis and his family have retained a transnational relationship with Limnos through their music and the role played in community life in Australia and the fund-raising in the service of improving village infrastructure and other special initiatives, which is a common characteristic of Greeks in the diaspora. He re-iterated his love of Limnos and his on-going and active role in the Limnian community in Australia thus:

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Interview with Pantelis, 13 December 2013.

[39] Ibid.

> I never wanted to go anywhere else...I love the place…I have never stopped doing things for Limnos…in one way or another. I have been able to use my knowledge and expertise…and my musical experience to promote Limnos…[40]

Like many other Limnians, he began to make regular trips to his homeland as soon as his family commitments allowed him to do so. He now has a newly-built house adjacent to his ancestral house in the village of Tsimandria, built on ancestral land, next to his mother's house which was bestowed to his sister as tradition entails. His feeling of home is expressed thus:

> [I]t's a place I can call home, whether it's a home away from home… it's a base for me, it is; I often say, this is where my mother, my parents walked around. I'm linked…shackled, call it what you like… It's not a holiday house, it's a house I can call home… it's where my mother used to sit for shade… it's where my memories are…it's my roots. It's an emotional home…It fills me…it's more than just the physical…It's the people that I'm connected to…[41]

Once Pantelis moved past his emotional expression of home during the interview, he became more pragmatic and realistic about his position of belonging to the ancestral place and its people when he is in Limnos. He is mindful not to idealise his relationship several decades later and is circumspect about his interaction with the local people and neighbours that surround his ancestral home:

> Inevitably, we are all of two minds when we go over there…we want to be involved with the local village life but we can't because we've travelled somewhere on a different planet all those years…we cultivate fond memories of our neighbours and expect them to respond to those memories when we go there but we also forget that those people have lives, their everyday lives, so when I go there I do like to mingle but you can't do a lot of mingling, inevitably you turn to people you know from Australia because the communication is different, the wavelength is totally different…I don't get totally discouraged if we might be ignored by the locals…I don't hold that against them…I don't have expectations…[42]

This poignant reflection on the experience of return is fascinating in that it distils a common experience expressed and felt by both generations of visiting 'returnees'. He reinforces the truism about how migration and time has changed the lives of those who

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

left as well as those who stayed back in the ancestral land. This experience, and the way Pantelis characterises the issue so perceptively, underlies a difficult reconciliation of this reality for both sides. However, in the narrative of the visiting returnees, there is a sense of personalised and permanent loss that some people wish they could reclaim so that they may feel more whole. For Pantelis, Limnos also represents his connection to 'Greater Greece' or *Magna Graecia*.[43] As he says:

> Limnos is my direct link to a greater Greece. I cannot pretend that I would feel the same in being on any other part of Greece… It is in Limnos that I first saw the light of day, my first school, my first experiences as a youngster, it is something that has a continued line of connection in my life…it's been a continuous love for the island…it allows me to indulge my spiritual and emotional …the beauty of things about the island and generally Greece…but we have to be realistic, being close to sixty years in Australia is no small task, you are…you can never ever feel that you are part of this land when your first experiences were somewhere else; you can be a great citizen and a great person by engaging in both cultures …it's not that simple.[44]

This honest and incisive reminiscing concluded with an ambiguity about belonging thus:

> To say, I have to drop everything I've done over here to go there, I can't…I'd like to be a bit selfish and have the best of both worlds…my family is here, my business is here…I don't feel bad about coming back…but being there reinforces the good experiences when I'm there…[45]

Island Heritage, Identity and '*Dual Lives*'

The significance of island heritage, used by many second-generation narrators, is a subtle and metaphorical concept about identity and belonging that stems from a combination of factors. These include the influence of homeland memories, practices and stories that were dominant in family conversations and interactions within the extended family and community networks as this generation was growing up. Wessendorf notes that more recent transnational studies show how, 'regular visits to the country of origin help migrant

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[43] Magna Graecia (Megali Hellas) an adopted metaphor, was used to refer to various colonised ancient Greek city-states such as the coastal areas of southern Italy, from the 8th to 5th centuries BCE. Available from http://www.ancient.eu/Magna_Graecia/ Provided by Mark Cartwright, published 24th May 2013 [accessed 22 June 2016]

[44] Interview with Pantelis, 13 December 2013.

[45] Ibid.

youth to embrace different, positively-valued versions of their ethnic origins.'[46] Recent studies highlight how second-generation visitors to the ancestral homeland, 'become acculturated to the customs, values and traditions of the country of origin during such visits',[47] though I would argue that the 'acculturation' had begun in Australia as children were growing up. However, my testimonials show that, for many second-generation interviewees, this process had remained latent and was perhaps suppressed until they made that first return visit 'home' as young adults. In this study, most narrators conveyed consistent recollections and talked about the dominance and significance of growing up in Australia within the Limnian, ethno-regional and cultural milieu. Other research shows that 'a combination of internally formed and externally imposed understandings of ethnic identity and belonging are also important.'[48] The powerful experience of their first return trip as young adults that later led to cumulative return visits to Limnos is, however, stunning. Young men often spoke extensively about their experiences of 'recovered' identity and belonging to the ancestral homeland, culturally and emotionally, which at the time of growing up in Australia was not of any significance to them, even though some had already returned as children with their parents and had recalled happy memories.

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[46] Wessendorf, *Second-Generation Transnationalism*, 2-3.

[47] Yen Le Espiritu and Thom Tran, "'Viet Nam, nuoc toi' (Vietnam My Country): Vietnamese Americans and Transnationalism" in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, eds. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage, 2002), 367-98;Nancy Foner, "Second-generation Transnationalism, Then and Now, in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, eds. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage, 2002), 242-52; G.E. Fouron and N.Glick-Schiller, "The Generation of Identity: Redefining the Second-generation within a Transnational Social Field" in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, eds. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage, 2002), 168-208; Peggy Levitt, "Roots and Routes: Understanding the lives of the second generation transnationally." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35 (2009):1225-42; Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters, *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, (New York: Russell Sage, 2002); Anastasia N. Panagakos, "Recycled odyssey: creating transnational families in the Greek Diaspora." *Global Networks* 4 (2004): 299-311.; R. B. Potter, "'Young, gifted and back': Second –generation transnational return migrants to the Caribbean" *Progress in Development studies* 5 *(*2005): 213-36.; B. Purkayastha, *Negotiating Ethnicity. Second-Generation South Asian Americans Traverse a Transnational World* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, London: Rutgers University Press, 2005); Robert C. Smith "Life Course, Generation and Social Location as Factors Shaping Second-Generation Transnational Life," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, eds. Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters (New York: Russell Sage, 2002), 145-67.

[48] Tracey Reynolds, "Transnational family relationships, social networks and return migration among British-Caribbean young people," in *Young People, Social Capital and Ethnic Identity*, ed. Tracey Reynolds (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 49.

During the 'growing up' years, many of the interviewees essentially strived to be 'like everyone else' and desperately wished to belong to Australia, their significant home or birthplace, and 'to be Australian'. Several male informants, who had returned for the first time as young adults, found their experience to be surprising, exciting, with renascent significance. Spiros, for example experienced for the first time a sense of belonging to a place that was, until then, fraught with ambiguous and troublesome memories that had confounded him as he continued to define himself as an 'Australian'. His first impressions of the village are fascinating:

> As a child, you remember the streets as being big streets but when you arrive as an adult everything seems tiny and dirty and unpaved…and the houses were tiny…the stairs were tiny…But I had an attachment to the ancestral home…I had memories. I decided to fix the house. It represents my mother's and father's inheritance, I was trying to claim my parents' belongings…when one returns, it was drummed into you to reclaim…I became Greek in this first trip.[49]

Spiros in this way acted on what was absorbed and internalised in his childhood. He sought to reclaim his heritage, which he only experienced by coming back. Improving the ancestral home became for him a way to belong which he had not consciously experienced until then.

Several other male narrators had, through their return trips to Limnos, achieved a greater connection with their Greek identity which until then was only an abstract link. Up until that point, they had minimal awareness and knowledge of classical history usually associated with Hellenism, or a modern history of Greece and Limnos. The experience was affirming and, for some, a life changing event that led to a wish to return regularly to the ancestral homeland. The experience gave impetus to the wish to learn more about the history of Greece and Limnos and to want to travel more around the country, thereby consolidating this renewed and enriched identity and more complex sense of belonging to the nation as well. A re-discovered and consolidated ancestral island heritage, because of numerous return trips, had indeed facilitated not only a meaningful

[49] Interview with Spiros, 16 May 2014.

connection with Limnos as the ancestral homeland but also an evolving identification with the nation state that was absent until then.

A unifying theme between the first- and second-generation is that both groups appear to share a common bond in wishing to return to the ancestral place through regular return visits. In some instances, they are doing so as multi-generational family groups. The desire to return manifests differently for each generation however, through different pathways and experiences in migration. In contrast to their descendants, the first-generation respondents unsurprisingly expressed a strong and consistent connection to island heritage that defined them almost exclusively as Limnian islanders and only secondarily as Greeks. This view conveys identity and belonging couched in physical, spatial, emotional and spiritual terms, directly connected to a sense of self, constructed during the formative years of life on the island. Their experiences and memories seem to reflect the familiar and insular village community in the context of the bounded nature of the island that was situated remotely from the nation state, both physically and figuratively. But the influence of a strong ethno-regional identity in migration guided them in their resettlement to Australia. It appears to have assisted them also in the negotiation of the many challenges that they faced. The veracity of their feelings, experiences and memories is extensively covered in Chapter Three.

The inter-generational experience of return can be seen through the concept of dual lives that stems from the transnational nature of migration and brings us back to meanings and the significance of home. Researchers like Foner[50] make the point that adult migrants seldom detached themselves radically from the ties and memories that bind and orient them to their origins. This point is clearly supported by the testimonials of the first generation in this study. Substantive migration research literature amplifies the reality that the revolution in transportation and communication technologies, in concert with a renewed globalisation of the international economy (especially in the case of newer migration patterns), has indeed facilitated the ability of migration groups (old and new)

[50] Nancy Foner, "What's New About Transnationalism? New York Immigrants Today and at the Turn of the Century." *Diaspora* 6, No.3 (1997): 355-75.

to sustain ties and create 'transnational communities.'[51] Emerging migration research, argues that such transnational communities 'include an increasing number of people who lead dual lives.'[52] Levitt further argues that migrants 'have multiple channels through which to pursue transnational belonging.'[53] This reality has also been borne out in the narrative of both the first- and second-generation Limnians. In practical terms, this is especially true for those who have retired from work and can enjoy comfortable fixed incomes. But, the research highlights a phenomenon for many second-generation Limnians who are also following in the pattern of the first-generation in this regard, or at least re-imagining themselves in leading dual lives. The renewed connection to the ancestral home, real or imagined and the maintenance of property ownership by the first-generation, usually passed on to descendants, has been a powerful factor influencing this trend for many Limnians.

A key difference between these two groups is in the meaning attributed to 'home' that differs for each generation. The first-generation depicts the ancestral home as the 'real' home, emotionally and spiritually at least and Australia as the adopted home, the physical home. Whereas the latter generation is very clear, in most cases, that Australia is the primary home with the ancestral home increasingly becoming an adopted and significant home, due to their experiences of re-connection and rediscovery in adulthood. In returning, they are legitimising the place of their ancestors that had long been constructed as 'home' in their imagination only, through story-telling and family memory. By returning on a relatively frequent basis, they are demonstrating a re-valuing of heritage that, for many, had been a fractious intergenerational relationship that had often manifested in friction and disjuncture for a long time as they were growing up in Australia. However, as mature adults, an established return pattern has led to 'a sense of multiple belongings and a personally constructed diaspora space,'[54] which has allowed

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[51] Peggy Levitt, *The Transnational Villagers.* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2001), 5.

[52] Alejandro Portes, "Global Villagers: The Rise of Transnational Communities." *The American Prospect* (March-April 1996):74-77.

[53] Levitt, *The Transnational Villagers*, 12.

[54] Kindinger, "Of *Dópia* and *Xéni,*" 389-415.

the evolution of a fuller and more complex identity that incorporates historical legacy and the continuation of ancestral heritage. This analysis is compatible with Walter's encapsulation of diaspora, of being "at home" in the place of settlement and concurrently retaining identification outside it.[55]

Nonetheless, recent Australian research about second-generation identity and belonging reveals that there is further complexity in the lives of the second-generation. Butcher and Thomas, who examined youth cultures in North Sydney, found that whilst there was a sense of belonging to a migrant background as well as to 'Australianness', there was in addition a 'third space that was delineated in particular by friendship groups.'[56] This distinction runs through much of the narrative with second-generation Limnians, as they sought to articulate a difference in context in their lives – one relevant to Australia and the other that was linked to cultural heritage, language and the ancestral home. The research shows evidence of identity mobility, where the second-generation is 'capable of moving between spaces of belonging at different times and places depending on the requirements of a given social situation.'[57] Many of the second-generation narrators could situate themselves with ease, whether 'here or there'. These new forms of belonging are compatible with Bhabha's notion of 'hybrid identities' which are employed strategically, depending on the context.[58] What the narrative of second-generation Limnians illuminates is that migration is about change and that identity does not remain static or predictable or easily definable. They demonstrate that they are both able to construct their lives and maintain dual lives in the context of the contribution of heritage

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[55] Walter, *Outsiders Inside*, 206.

[56] Melissa Butcher and Mandy Thomas, "Ingenious: Emerging hybrid cultures in Western Sydney," in *Global Youth? Hybrid Identities, Plural Worlds*, eds, Pam Nilan and Carles Fexia (Abington, Oxon: Routledge, 2006), 59. The term 'third space' paraphrases Bhabha's concept of the 'third dimension' of identity. See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture,* (London; New York: Routledge, 1994), 71.

[57] Ibid., 59.

[58] Skrbis, Baldassar and Poynting, "Introduction – Negotiating Belonging," 263.

as well as autonomy and self-actualisation and 'constantly build, reinvent, synthesize, or even collage identities from multiple sources and resources.'[59]

Communication and Social Media – *Facilitating Relationships*

Emerging migration and transnational research, particularly as it relates to the second-generation, highlights the role that communication technologies and social media play in the maintenance of relationships and reconnections for numerous generations of immigrants. In the early days of mass migration to Australia, the telephone was a rarely used communication tool, especially by migrants from small rural communities. Electricity and tele-communications infrastructure in Limnos was only introduced on the island in the late 1960s. In the villages, access to a telephone was usually only available in the larger village centres, through the local shire office. Accessing a telephone was a big event, usually used only for emergencies. The cost of phone calls was also prohibitive for migrants who prioritised their spending for more important survival needs. Testimony tells us that telephone communication was only rarely used for urgent matters such as the death of a loved one or critical illnesses that needed to be communicated between families.

Since the late 1970s, however a government policy agenda that emphasised multiculturalism, was instrumental in the introduction of multi-lingual radio and later, a Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) television in Australia that radically changed a previously mono-cultural, social fabric. The new medium became an essential tool to access multilingual information and entertainment for many non-English speaking communities, including first generation Greeks and Limnians. The use of communication technology media and more affordable telephone services linking both countries had created a vital link for migrants to their ancestral homes. Once the telephone was introduced in the homes of villagers in Limnos in the 1970s, a major communication hurdle was crossed.

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[59] Rina Benmayor and Andor Skotnes, "Some Reflections on Migration and Identity," in *Migration and Identity, eds.* Rina Benmayor and Andor Skotnes, eds (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 15.

Second-generation interviewees confirmed the broad use of social media and the internet, and indicated that it has aided not only communication across borders but also the fostering of transnational social and cultural communications, relationships and connections across generations. Whilst the ancestral reconnection for second-generation Limnians began with the return trips, the maintenance and enhancement of interpersonal relationships transnationally has been assisted by social media. Various Limnian diaspora community Facebook sites, have flourished. In recent years, these platforms have reflected local community belongings at village level as well as island-wide. They act to facilitate cultural connections as well as to strengthen affiliation and identification with ancestral geographic place and space. These sites are commonly used by regular return visitors to communicate, usually in English, with site members, to share events, news and to post photographs, announcements and local news. These recent phenomena that make use of modern technology act to perpetuate and legitimate transnational relationship exchanges and on-going connections. The potential and scope of social media platforms is only recently emerging. For the diasporic individuals, groups and communities, this type of communication acts to reinforce and affirm a richer and more complex diasporic identity that has been re-invigorated by travel and characterises a new diasporic phenomenon. The use of social media more recently has been pro-actively used by those who've never left the island and their descendants, which acts to engage as well as reconnect the younger generations to a wider world. In this way, the renewed connections are reciprocated and add to the interactive dialogue between parallel generations across borders, in sharing very diverse and different life experiences and unique challenges that nevertheless have led them to a common juncture. Social media is quick and efficient but also, in many ways, a superficial medium. Nevertheless, it has become a new way of reinforcing cultural and ancestral identity and belonging shared across borders and generations.

Summary

This chapter has presented a comparative analysis of experiences of 'home' and its relation to regular return visits. Different groups of narrators reveal differences as well as connections to ancestral identity and belonging, which illuminate powerful meanings and link identity and place in the diaspora. Whilst the significance of returning for the two

generations differs in motivation, dynamics and specificity, ultimately both generations that return are bound by a Limnian ancestral identity which is both inherited and constructed. For the first-generation, return visits to the *πατρίδα* (homeland) are explained as natural phenomena - a return to their birthplace and lived lives of youth. But they return as changed people who experience and see the ancestral home through different vantage points and in some cases with troublesome perspectives. The initial connection for them is through lived experience that brings with it nostalgia and emotional 'baggage' and results in a quandary of feelings, perceptions and interpretations. For the second-generation, return visits are 'rites of passage', navigating in some cases, an amorphous sense of Greekness as well as being a discovery, a re-awakening and affirmation of ancestral identity and belonging 'here and there' in different ways. For both groups, however, there are ambiguities in their responses that are informed by their settlement experiences, the phases of migration, age, gender, family circumstances and economic success or otherwise. Each narrator has a journey with many paths. For some, who could create dual lives, this becomes a consolidation of status, aided by having an ancestral home and an adopted home. For others, as in the case of some second-generation individuals, an affirming hybrid identity enables them to enjoy two homes: the one in Australia, their birthplace or place of childhood, and the ancestral home in Limnos which they have rediscovered, adopted and learnt to love.

Chapter 7 It All Starts with a 'Pilgrimage'

'Heightened social, economic, and political interconnectedness across national borders and cultures enables individuals to sustain multiple identities and loyalties…'[1]

Home has different meanings for each migrant generation, but the concept remains a constant reference throughout the narratives of participants in my study, particularly among the first-generation. The return visits have influenced the identification trajectories of migrant descendants, though these may have been experienced in different ways and with different results. Unsurprisingly, for both generations, identity has usually evolved, changed and has sometimes remained fluid and often unstable. However, diasporic identity is also relative to the context in which one finds oneself at a given time. The perception of others, both within and outside an accepted environment, can influence one's sense of where one belongs. The focus of this chapter is on the interface of migrants who return as visitors with those who have stayed behind, otherwise referred to as 'those who never left'. Oral narratives and the emerging dynamics in cross-border and intergenerational relations, provides new insight and a contribution to this analysis. The evolving and changing human dynamics and relationships of both are examined from several perspectives, including the historical frame that projects the interaction of the visitors with the locals as both fluid and changing with time. The research taps into the experience of 'return' that starts as a 'pilgrimage'[2] by the first-generation only to become an intergenerational event, perhaps unique for islander migration communities, in a quest for finding 'home'. It further explores the impact of these events, upon the second-generation as it leads to the development of sustainable reconnections and a continuous

[1] Levitt and Waters, *The Changing Face of Home*, 6.

[2] A term borrowed from Loretta Baldassar's seminal work on Australian migration and return, developed in her research with Italian migrants to Australia. See Baldassar and Pesman, *From Paesani to Global Italians* and Baldassar, *Visits Home*.

process of engagement, with those who never left. This transnational dynamic extends to forge a legacy of continuous island history which is lived, experienced or imagined by the different groups, regardless of place, space and time. Levitt and Waters pose the issue in this way:

> The frequent and widespread movement back and forth between communities of origin and destination, and the resulting economic and cultural transformations, have prompted some researchers to speak of a set of activities grouped loosely together under the rubric of "transnationalism."[3]

Much of the bourgeoning research in migration studies is increasingly focused on the significance of transnationalism, reviewed in the Introduction and in Chapter Two, that reinforces the continuity of the migration experience inter-generationally and across borders. The apparent pilgrimage that starts with the first generation Limnians returning to the homeland is what builds, for this community, the cultural bridge across generations and borders. Interestingly, this has endured and is evidenced with regenerated vigour, as demonstrated by second-generation respondents that have formed and fostered new relationships with those who never left and maintain on-going communication using modern platforms, highlighted in Chapter Six. Australia's own unique history of migration, and the policy shift to multiculturalism in the early 1970s, explored in earlier chapters, has been influential in shaping this trajectory, particularly for the second-generation. Unique and emerging transnational practices of an island community, importantly, frame my own research. Since the mid-1990s, much scholarship has focused on 'how members of the second and subsequent [migrant] generations negotiate their "in between" positions and multiple identities.'[4] This shift from the study of migration and settlement to transnational belonging holds significance in this research.

Transnational Relationships and Reconnections – *An On-going Process*

This chapter looks at migration through the prism of transnationalism, drawing on contemporary research that has contributed towards an understanding of the complexity, longevity and multi-dimensional nature of migration, and second-generation

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[3] Levitt and Waters, *The Changing Face of Home*, 5.

[4] Lee, *Ties to the Homeland*, 10.

transnationalism. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, when the first-generation respondents first returned to their *πατρίδα* (homeland), some years after their initial departure, they were full of hope and overwhelmed with emotional reminiscence. There was also a degree of ambivalence about the return, because many of them did not believe that they would ever see their village and family or their island again. A migrant's concept of the *αγύριστο ταξίδι* (a trip of no return) is a commonly shared trope of departure in migration memory. Departure has been described by Aikaterini (Keti, aged 66) who witnessed these events in performative terms as funereal and enduring. Keti's account of migrant departure from the Port of Myrina, which she recalls witnessing as a young six or eight-year old, depicts this departure as poignant and painful:

> I remember, at the port people would be hugging each other, young men, young women *θρηνούσαν* (mournful lamentations or dirge-like weeping with grief) and as I would see the buses arriving on Sundays with the *μπαούλα* (glory boxes) loaded on top of the bus, I had the impression that they were like coffins. I had connected the *μπαούλο* with this 'dirge-like lamentation' and it brought to my mind, this imagery; many people would come to the port for this *θέαμα* (spectacle).[5]

When some interviewees returned to visit family they would, often sub-consciously, be assessing the conditions for their permanent return. They were, what Duval refers to as 'benchmarking changes'[6], a term that captures the functional nature of return visits and return migration to the homeland. Those who had returned several years after their departure seemed to think that very little had changed. Con returned to Limnos with his wife after seven years, primarily to see his ailing parents. For him it seemed that very little had changed:

> I did not see a big difference…but I did see a few small shops that had not been there. I was told that due to the presence of the army and some public servants, some of them tended to stay on and were setting up these shops…[7]

On the other hand, for others, a lot had changed. They found a different place to what they had left behind. Paul who returned after six years having left his family behind, found

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[5] Interview with Keti,18 August 2014.

[6] David Timothy Duval, "Linking Return Visits and Return Migration among Commonwealth Eastern Caribbean Migrants in Toronto." *Global Networks* 4, 1 (2004): 60.

[7] Interview with Con, 10 March 2014.

that things had changed for the worse. He had expected things to have been better as he recalls:

> I saw a great difference when I went back. Things were worse, cotton farming had ceased, the music bands that I was part of, had stopped playing; people had left, there was no demand…the cotton factory had closed, so I asked myself, "what am I going to do here?" If I knew, I would not have come; with the money, I spent buying goods to bring back here I would have bought a house there…so I returned to Australia with my family.[8]

Panagiotis returned fifteen years later, with his young family, hoping to re-settle in Greece. He too found it difficult, as he recalls:

> I rented a flat in Athens and I tried to see the way of life and how to establish myself there …with my young family and to establish a business there…I see how much I can make in Australia and how much here (interview was conducted in Greece), it wasn't viable and I said ok, I love my country but it's only good for a holiday…[9]

What narrators had not immediately realised was that they themselves had significantly changed. The different economic and social circumstances that they had experienced in Australia had changed them, perhaps subtly but also immeasurably. Many of them were already married and had started a family. Their view of home had been significantly altered by the migrant experience. From then on, home was viewed from a new prism, influenced by migrancy as well as the transnational dynamic which took on greater clarity with more frequent return trips. Those who had aspired to return to their *πατρίδα* (homeland) had been transformed and perhaps changed for ever. Their yearning for return, in actuality, would be kept alive only in their imagination, and the continuance of frequent short return visits, reinforcing a transnational connection with the homeland, which for some, has continued by the next generation.

Living in the diaspora had resulted in what Salih affirms, using Gilroy's concept, as 'double consciousness'. She refers to identities emerging 'out of breaking boundaries and challenging fixed identities.'[10] Duval's use of transnationalism as a conceptual frame

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[8] Interview with Paul, 26 June 2013.

[9] Interview with Panagiotis, 23 May 2014.

[10] Rubia Salih, *Gender in Transnationalism, Home, longing and belonging among Moroccan migrant women* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2003), 5.

in his work with Eastern Caribbean migrants applies here also, with his definition of return visits as:

> periodic but temporary sojourns made by members of migrant communities…a specific social practice allowing migrants to maintain multiple, yet socially meaningful identities in both their current place of residence and their external homeland.[11]

Like some of the Limnians who sought to explore a permanent return to the homeland, Duval talks about return visits as mechanisms 'that foster the bridging of identities and their role in facilitating return migration.'[12] Even though, in the case of most of the narrators, a permanent return had not eventuated, this conceptualisation has purchase with this case study. Duval contends what other scholars suggest: that transnationalism may explain the interconnectedness of 'social experiences that shape and influence the migration experience.'[13] Furthermore, he notes that how transnational social spaces are negotiated may lead to a consideration of what home ultimately comes to represent,[14] a theme covered in previous chapters. The unique dynamic emerging between those who left and those who stayed, adds another subtle texture to the story of Limnian migrations and history and the way we view the transnational experience through different lens.

In the next section of this chapter, I have drawn on the voices of those-who-never-left and examine how they view their relationship and connection with the migrants returning to the island and what impact migration has had upon their lives, both then and now. This is an aspect of transnational research that has had very little attention. In addition to the increasing tendency for migrant returns to the ancestral home by the first generation, the consistent pattern of 'return' visits to the parental home by second-generation Limnians points to another critical aspect of transnationalism that requires greater attention, particularly as it relates to the interface and dynamic with those who stayed and is explored in this chapter.

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[11] Duval, "Linking Return Visits," 51-67.

[12] Ibid., 52.

[13] Ibid., 52.

[14] Duval, "Linking Return Visits," 53.

The Voices of Those Who Stayed

Interviews were conducted with local Limnians from around the island: six individuals and two couples in their sixties and over, who have lived most or all their lives on the island. Summary profiles of narrators can be found in Appendix 1. All participants had direct or indirect experience of migration, either through their own migration or the experiences of members of their family, neighbours and *χωριανοί* (people of the same village), who had migrated to different parts of the world throughout the twentieth century. One of the couples, Angelos and Poppi, had themselves migrated to Australia several times, while Eleni H had migrated with her husband, firstly to Zaire[15] in 1962 and then to South Africa in 1964. The narrators had then returned to re-settle in their respective villages on the island, where they have lived ever since. All respondents eloquently and consistently affirmed the memories and substance of the first-generation testimony about causes of post-war migration, the experience of departure and return visits. Their testimony provides the rare opportunity to bear witness to a transnational perspective on migration from the vantage point of those-who-never-left, thereby enriching the complex migration story. Several distinctive and emerging themes will be discussed in this section by drawing on their testimony and analysed in the context of migrant narratives, examined in previous chapters. The themes reflect a unique dynamic that functions in the interactions of those-who-return and those-who-never-left to reveal fascinating themes and previously undisclosed perspectives. It reveals aspects of the migration experience that are rarely researched and are significantly absent in migration history. The historical aspect of oral narrative therefore, enhances a rare representation of what would otherwise be lost in time.

Participants were generally reluctant to speak negatively about the visiting *πατριώτες*[16] (expatriates). Several interviewees expressed empathy and understanding

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[15] Zaire (/zɑːˈɪər/), officially the Republic of Zaire, was the name between 1971 and 1997, of a State in Central Africa. It was later renamed the *Democratic Republic of the Congo*, after the end of the Mobutu Sese Seko era. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zaire; [25th October 2016].

[16] *Πατριώτες (Patriotes)* used in this context is a term that is invested with multiple and nuanced meanings in the Greek language. It is applied to show inclusiveness – 'you are one of us', you have retained your

with emigrants about their need to return, to reconnect with family, their ancestral home and to re-live their past experiences and memories in the homeland. Their empathy was revealed in vivid accounts of the initial departure and the mass migration events that had also impacted their own lives. These distilled memories reflected how these events had become part of their own experience, even though they were not the ones leaving. Narrators were simultaneously able to draw on direct and indirect experiences of migration that had permeated their own lives. If it was not a member of their family, it was possibly *χωριανοί* (people of the same village) or neighbours, who had migrated to different parts of the world, confirming that migration had become a shared, communal experience and a shared bond and connection for both groups. Some of the respondents themselves, had migrated and returned at different times in the post-war years, a reality that commonly characterises islanders more generally. Their memories of life (pre- and post-war) growing up on the island were, unsurprisingly, consistent with the testimony of first generation migrants (Chapter Three), particularly in relation to the objective factors of hardship and poverty prevalent in Limnos after the war. Such affirmation was an expression of shared lives that reinforced an empathy between them. Giorgos (aged 73), from the small village of Roussopouli, trained in Italy in veterinary science. Now retired from his role with the Department of Agriculture, he worked closely with the agrarian community for his entire career. He was very blunt in his depiction of rural and work life in the villages of Limnos. In talking about the need for migration by young men soon after the war, he understood that:

> They were the sons of farmers…the majority did not own land or much land. Their families used to work a farm based on a 50-50 share of the produce with the landlords - they were in charge. So, the children started to leave… Those that stayed, they had more animals, combined land pieces and had greater production.[17]

His wife Keti, a child of Asia Minor refugees, grew up and worked for her entire life in Myrina. She corroborated her husband's recollections and added that other significant

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Greekness, as well as your local heritage and sense of identity, you are part of us and you have returned. The interpretation, is inclusive and affirming.

[17] Interview with Giorgos, 18 August 2014.

developments were also taking place on the island after the period of mass migration. She emphasised that:

> Other changes happened. Services like power supply started to employ people; when telecommunications were introduced the same happened…it was not accidental. Government policies and initiatives brought about changes.[18]

Giorgos concluded that 'migration was a necessary "bad". They couldn't all survive on the island.'[19] Keti on the other hand provided greater insight:

> Remittances sent to parents and families helped to support them financially…even the nursing home was established through funds from overseas, migrant donations; the government initiatives (post mass migration) were very slow… the flourishing maritime jobs gave young men work and they brought money to their families. This was like half-migration…They would be away for long periods at a time…this helped significantly and was a parallel benefit with migration.[20]

Angelos (aged 72) and Poppi (aged 62) showed great empathy with emigrants during the interview because they themselves had directly experienced migration to Australia, before their repatriation to the ancestral village of Tsimandria where Angelos was born. They reiterated a consistent story about the economic difficulties and life in post-war Greece and Limnos. Poppi herself was born and raised in Piraeus and had direct experience of poverty and insecurity as she was growing up. They acknowledged that, like others who migrated to Australia, they worked hard, learned 'new ways', new social skills and they prospered. Angelos described Australia thus:

> Australia was… by the time we left, it was like leaving hell [Limnos], and going to paradise…it was the productive land…we opened our eyes in Australia.[21]

But living in Australia was not easy as Poppi added:

> Angelos would leave home at 7am and return home at 2 or 3am every day, seven days a week. People worked hard and long hours because, we wanted to make money and return to our parents, our families...[22]

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[18] Interview with Ekaterina (Keti), 18 August 2014.

[19] Interview with Giorgos, 18 August 2014. The term 'bad' in Greek in this context emphasises inevitability and lack of choice made in the decisions to migrate.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Interview with Angelos, 12 June 2014.

[22] Interview with Poppi together with husband, Angelos, 12 June 2014.

> We felt foreign, we were made to feel so, because we worked hard and prospered, yes, we were called "wogs" in the early days…but now there are too many migrants so they are afraid to call us wogs…then we were told "psst don't talk your language, talk English" … not now, now that we went in 2013 it was like we were in Greece, we spoke our language and nobody minded (Angelos and Poppi in joint conversation).[23]

The material aspects of migration and what constitutes success is both elusive and subjective. Most emigrants from Limnos had left, in most cases, as young, poor and low educated individuals with rudimentary farm-hand skills and even less experience with handling money, as they rarely had any. The yearning, harboured by mostly young men was to work hard and to return home financially successful. The idea of 'making money' and relative success was the goal that is captured well by Angelos and reflects a consistent view by those-who-left and those-who-stayed alike:

> We all…everyone wanted to return home to be greeted proudly by our parents, to return with money…that we had gone out and succeeded but like we said earlier we could not always return like we wanted to, we got married, had children, built a house, then the children were growing up…so it then became difficult to return…[24]

After many years of working hard and for long hours in cafes in rural Victoria, Angelos, with his wife Poppi bearing their children in isolation and away from family networks and support, decided to return and re-settle in the village of his birthplace. Angelos understood and lived the yearning, 'to return with wealth', as well as the consequences of living 'dual lives', having himself experienced life in two very different worlds. They, along with others, spoke about the different perceptions of who is 'better off' in relation to those who migrated and those who stayed behind. In Keti's view, it's questionable as to 'who is better off'. As she reflects:

> In fact, if anything, I would say the opposite…as I recall, the migrants, those who had returned, at least when Greece was doing well, they would say, "You are better off than us" … the reverse, I have not come across it.[25]

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Interview with Angelos interviewed together with wife, Poppi, 12 June 2014.

[25] Interview with Ekaterina (Keti), 18 August 2014.

The views expressed by those who stayed are largely consistent with and reinforce the testimony of emigrants as to their reasons for departure. Overwhelmingly, the return was posited as a given not to be contested or undervalued. A significant empathy permeated their responses towards migrants in terms of their experiences, hardships, sacrifices, their sorrow and their fears in leaving for a foreign and unknown destination. Poppi acknowledged that there was a degree of resentment felt by the locals towards the returnees, though Angelos expressed an opposing view. He believes that the emigrants are welcomed like family when they return. 'They have family and therefore are embraced with warmth as if they belong back home' he said with emphasis.[26] He rejected the proposed suggestion that there is animosity, suspicion or rivalry between the two groups. His wife Poppi was more candid in relation to this theme:

> Perhaps not hate, but a bit of envy…in case they have more (wealth) …but it is an individual thing and varies…it depends on conflict over family assets…yes in relation to this there are conflicts…those who come from Australia and seek their entitlement, the locals query this and feel threatened…but it's an entitlement if that's what the parents had determined...Others who come, make claims to what they are not entitled.[27]

Poppi's point of view coincides with the testimony of some of the first-generation respondents. The issue of ancestral land and property distribution and its dispersal among siblings was usually expressed solely in verbal terms by parents and grandparents. Inheritance was rarely properly confirmed through documentation or a written will. This issue was often highly contested within families, particularly as it affected emigrant descendants. Upon their return to the ancestral homeland, the issue manifests and culminates, in a way, as a metaphor for belonging or not belonging. Whereas for those who remained, it's a contested sign of who had prospered more, resulting in underlying conflict and implicit tension that has often characterised the relationship between family members transnationally.

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[26] Interview with Angelos, 12 June 2014.

[27] Interview with Poppi interviewed together with husband, Angelos, 12 June 2014.

Eleni H (aged 76), like other informants, re-iterated the poverty and ongoing struggles of villagers to survive, particularly in post-war Greece. She particularly recalls the poverty:

> I remember, there was poverty, people were forced to leave…they worked the land… they ate meat only at Christmas and Easter, it was difficult years. Most people worked for a wage at the Mitropolis Estate and had a few animals for domestic use. They would leave on the buses with their luggage, tears, flowers, music… without knowing if they'd ever return…I remember my sister who went to Australia. Can I talk about this? …There they would go to where old things were sold, relying on re-cycled things, shoes, clothes, they all lived in one room, to survive, save and make money…they suffered very, very much…and they worked hard. They prospered, and their children are enriched, they have plenty…Those that didn't leave would say "I too, would have liked to be able to go." Things were very hard...[28]

Eleni H who was a young child during the German occupation, also reaffirmed the hardships that communities endured during this period, consistent with other testimonies documented in Chapter Three and Four. But, the compelling observation that she made was that, 'departure helped but, the situation also made things worse…the villages became ghost towns ερήμωσαν (deserted) because people did not return again.'[29] Her once thriving and vibrant village of Livadohori now has less than one hundred people remaining. Schools are closed, many houses are dilapidated and abandoned and the *καφενείο* (local coffee house) now has very few patrons. For those who are returning in the summer to her village, she maintains that they are not contributing socially or economically to village life:

> Many, you don't see them much in the village, they stay in their houses, get in the car and drive off elsewhere…you don't see them in the kafenio adding to village life, those that do are few...[30]

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[28] Interview with Eleni Hi., 3 June 2014. The Mitropolis Estate also referred to as the *Metochi of Mitropolis* was a former monastery, first established in 1078 AD and donated to the residents of Limnos by the then Byzantine ruler. It was held under the administration of the Archdioceses of Limnos. At the end of Ottoman rule, the estate was transferred from the church to a legislated community body with a public management committee of elected members. This productive farming estate, entrenched in public memory, has served as a lifeline for many landless farmers to work and be productive, especially during the inter-war years and was noted for its social welfare projects. See B. Tourptsoglou- Stefanidou, *Journeys and Geographic Texts about the Island of Limnos (15th – 20th Century)*, (Thessaloniki: Research Unit, School of Politechnic, 1986), cited in the Management Committee for the Metochi of Mitropolis Circular, 2014.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

Nevertheless, like others, she acknowledged the financial assistance provided through remittances from those who emigrated as a significant contribution to the economy and people's livelihood.

Paleologos, born in Kontias in 1934, has been the village tailor for over fifty years. His social position as artisan with extensive local knowledge and longevity in his role, enabled him to provide another perspective on post-war Limnos and life during this period. Paleologos recalled that soon after the war, there was no stable currency in Greece. When the farmers sold their produce, they were being paid in *λίρες* (gold coins) which essentially provided them with limited transactional capacity, compromising their ability in daily exchange and trade. People had to rely on credit and a system of skills exchange. Paleologos (aged 80) himself acquired a healthy reserve of gold coins in exchange for services provided to his customers, which was convenient for both, though perhaps inequitably so. This seemingly symbiotic practice in commercial activity benefited traders disproportionately to the producers of goods such as farmers, as exchanges tended to mostly advantage traders. As he recalls:

> Big families and not enough land to be productive…When they were selling their sheep, the farmers were being paid in gold coins. The currency had lost its value…when they came to me to make clothes we traded in gold coins…in two years I had one hundred gold coins (λίρες) which at the time were valued at about one hundred and twenty drachmas each. I later sold them for over two hundred drachmas each. I sold them all. I did not keep any, not even as a token![31]

At the time of mass migration as Paleologos graphically recounts:

> People were sad, and they were hungry [a term used as metaphor], that's why they left. But those who were left benefited, they rented more land, farmed more animals. Then came the infrastructure, the φράγμα (reservoir for irrigation) was built and irrigation allowed more successful crops… their departure helped those who stayed. Remittances helped those families who were left behind, who could live adequately.[32]

He emphasised the belief that, those-who-stayed have benefited from the returnees, citing examples of houses being renovated and goods purchased which he thinks was good for

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[31] Interview with Paleologos, 2 June 2014.

[32] Ibid.

the local economy. He expounded the view that there is a contest of ideas on the island about what the returnees give back to the community and cited a recent exchange that involved a local ex-restaurateur that he had heard. He recalls the exchange thus:

> We are benefiting in the villages from the returnees every summer (challenging his opponent in the exchange), "not even a glass of wine do they drink" says the other…[33]

When asked if he thought that there was rivalry between the two groups he answered:

> [In Australia] the migrants as you know, worked hard but not everyone was successful. Some were, but others not. They were workers (meaning unskilled), what can you expect, but luckily the government gave them a pension, what is it $2,500 per month? Migration was very beneficial…very few like me recognise this...[34]

At this point he recalled his own experience when he and his wife went to the United States to join their daughter and her family. His attempt to get a job in New York was told as an anecdote to demonstrate his understanding of the difficulties experienced by migrants without skills or language. He disclosed his experience of severe anxiety which resulted in the premature return to the homeland after seven months. Paleologos is a keen observer of people's behaviour in the village, especially because his tailor shop is located on a main street in the village which most people traverse daily. He reiterated his observation that returnees from all migration countries have contributed a range of benefits to the local economy and the community. He believes that very few locals understand the migration experience, except for those who had themselves migrated and repatriated.

A poignant observation made by Keti whose maternal and paternal families arrived in Limnos in the 1920s as refugees, which underscores one's understanding of the migrant experience. She demonstrates a strong empathy towards migrants who have been returning to the homeland and draws a connection between them and her refugee parents when they too, arrived in Limnos:

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

> [L]eft their home country, dispossessed of their roots and experiencing an ambivalent reception in the 'host' country as outsiders, living 'dual lives' and being perceived as a threat within the local context.[35]

The concomitant unfulfilled aspiration for a permanent 'return home' to the homeland was postulated symbolically as Keti drew the parallel with the experiences of migrants to demonstrate empathy, understanding, intellectual awareness and compassion.

Other respondents have hinted at discrete and altered behaviours that manifest on the part of returnees and are reflected in their observations, which, they then attempted to subjectively explain. For example, some returnees often tried to demonstrate to the locals that they were successful migrants, well off economically, and enjoying a comfortable life in Australia. This behaviour postulates a perceived attempt at self-affirmation, on the part of some migrants. Or perhaps, this reflects a more complex dynamic in the exchange that may highlight feelings of inadequacy on behalf of some of the locals. By posturing material wealth as a dominant value, it helps to overcome a perceived personal sense of failure. Nonetheless, it is an observation that has been proposed by both groups in the testimony and reflects that some people 'try too hard' to convey material success which understandably acts to alienate others. This behaviour may be displayed by ostentatiousness in the way people dress and present themselves or in other ways that seem to 'flaunt their wealth' in the presence of seemingly less well-off locals in public spaces in and around the village. Such performative behaviour may also be indicative of a much more fundamental issue – the change in values that serves as an expression, conscious or unconscious, of permanent change, which manifests in the way people dress or behave, but is in fact indicative of a much more permanent and evolving disjuncture between the two groups. In other words, it may symbolise a dissonance in identity that the migration has brought to everyone's lives and that challenges a previous collective identity which was once shared. Nevertheless, most local interviewees focused on the many benefits of migration to the Limnos economy and society more generally as a counter-balance to a focus on ostentatious and exhibitionist behaviour. Several respondents observed the positively strong maintenance of island culture and customs and

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[35] Interview with Ekaterina (Keti), 18 August 2014.

remarked on the observed closeness of families living in the diaspora, contrasting them with the local shift to a more 'westernised' and cosmopolitan lifestyle and values of the younger generations and the children of those who stayed in Greece.

Eleni P (aged 62) was born in the village of Kontopouli in 1952. As a baby, she was adopted to a couple, across the other side of the island at the village of Kontias where she grew up with caring adoptive parents. She finished primary school and has lived there for most of her life. As a child of parallel age to children who were leaving with their parents during the 1960s and 1970s, she had a clear recollection of the time of mass migration and shared memories of events and emphasised the personal impact upon her, as someone who was left behind. She recalls these events with clarity and feeling:

> The number of children at school was diminishing…I was losing my friends and fellow students; it was sad…the amount of crying when my girlfriends were leaving… Those that stayed behind, there were a lot of tears…they [family members] waited for remittances to survive. They had a few animals for their domestic needs...The positives of migration were that those who remained were then better off; many went to other parts of Greece as well. There isn't a house that has not been impacted by migration.[36]

She was asked if she thought that there is dissonance between those who left and those who stayed. Her response was unequivocal and perhaps defensive:

> No, no, I don't think so. Specifically the people of the diaspora, I think in my view, seem to maintain the customs and traditions (ήθη και έθιμα) much better than we do here, because progress (εξέλιξη) has distanced us a bit, yes…but our χωριανοί (compatriots) in the diaspora have maintained all the practices, like when they lived here in the village, they are bonded, they are close, they spend time together…they live differently, whereas here, there is greater distance between people, whether its technology or whether it's εξέλιξη (progress) we have distanced from each other, not like in the past when we were close...many years ago.[37]

I posed the issue of how the visiting migrants have expressed to me a feeling of not belonging, that they feel like *ξένοι* (strangers) when they return. Her response was again emphatic and protective:

> Yes, I understand, times have changed…and people too. They live 'frozen in time', as when they left and expect to find the village the same as they left it

[36] Interview with Eleni P., 4 June 2014.

[37] Ibid.

> but…things have changed. I love it when you all come, I am happy and anticipate them…I don't believe that the differences are great, no, no…but things have changed, of course they have.[38]

Eleni P continues to defend her point of view and rejects that the locals see the returnees differently or with jealousy:

> Of course, the island benefited from migration, of course! I don't think there is envy. We receive them with joy, positively. We had lived with them, share stories, they are our brothers (intended as gender neutral), they seem better connected, closer within the family and they have kept culture more than us here. Here we have become more disconnected.[39]

Keti highlights another point of view in her testimony. Some migrants, she contends, have brought a 'worldly' and urbane perspective in their social interactions with the local community upon their return. She emphasised the new skills, a broader knowledge base and culture that has enriched the overall social environment of the island and considers this a vital contribution. This rare perspective contrasts with the more widespread opinion, expressed by both migrants and locals alike, that has focused exclusively on the material and economic benefits that migrants have brought to the homeland. Repeated references to the general spending in the economy, the refurbishment of run down houses that had brought jobs for the next generation of locals, as well as other financial resources, remittances and donations are recognised and appreciated by respondents. Keti outlines her personal and contrary viewpoint which she tries hard to explain in a self-deprecating way, as follows:

> How do I explain it… my first impression is emotional…old friends, old acquaintances, and old neighbours, returning; my second thought is, they have a wider reservoir of experience, from us here, they have more knowledge, they are how shall I say it, quote unquote, they are "cosmopolitan" that's how I see them. But there are some people who, don't have this, in their lives in the diaspora, they had work, home, work and money; they simply went somewhere else to live without changing at all…whereas, as I said, there are those who are cosmopolitan, they have grown with experience and knowledge, they have gained a sense of personal drive that the locals surely don't have, they have something extra to add here, not just the economic, that measures too but not just…they have much more to offer…they are interested in this place, let's not kid ourselves, when they can they influence things, that's what I think…but I

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

> don't see what you say about them feeling that they are ξένοι (strangers), within my small circle, I don't see that…[40]

Nonetheless, for some narrators, the underlying tensions that seem to characterise the testimony of first generation migrants, subtly and fleetingly emerged and quickly disappeared again. This shows some ambivalence, as they chose to not acknowledge observations put to them, remaining in denial with these perceptions. Why is that? How does this characterise the actual relationships between those-who-left and those-who-stayed? There are many contentious issues that this research project has not been able to consider in depth and that warrant further work. What is apparent, however, is that the tensions expressed may also be reflective of a migration dynamic that is forever changing, shifting and possibly mellowing over time, as people come to accomodate a changing reality. In other words, the perceptions and concomitant responses are likely transitional and part of the cycle of experience. The narrative of those who stayed seems to generally articulate a kinder and empathic response, interspersed with a degree of judgmental comments and observations towards the diasporic returnees and their descendants. This position seemingly reflects a sense of loss that challenges their own self-identity as Greeks within their homeland. Whereas they observed a perceived maintenance of culture and customs and strong family ties that perpetuated in the diaspora, several nuanced comments emerged about a failure on behalf of migrants to succeed in fostering proper Greek language maintenance amongst their children, which they considered to be an essential aspect of what defines one's Greekness and expressed by Eleni P, in this way:

> Many kids have not learnt Greek…some do speak it of course, but it amazes me that many speak the local "village Greek" not proper Greek…that fascinates me, let's say the inherited language (πατροπαράδοτα), that's what the parents knew, it's what they spoke at home...[41]

This nuanced perception of failure by parents in the diaspora to ensure that their children learned to speak 'proper' Greek commonly resonates and by implication challenges the authenticity of Greeks in the diaspora. It casts doubt on the concept of *Hellenism* (Greekness) itself, which may reflect the contemporary state of uncertainty and

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[40] Interview with Ekaterina (Keti), 18 August 2014.

[41] Interview with Eleni P., 4 June 2014.

fragility of a nation in the twenty-first-century. It may also reflect an actual lack of deep understanding and comprehension of the realities of life for migrants, in a 'foreign land', though many informants did demonstrate a superficial or at best, an intuitive awareness of the difficulties that migrants would have experienced. Another aspect, though only fleetingly emerging in the narratives was the degree of empathy for the challenges face by those who stayed. Such incongruence in perspectives may indeed reveal a real disparity in identification and a difference between those who left and those who stayed that displays an irreconcilable consequence of the migration experience itself, as their 'worlds' have moved apart. Empathy and understanding of migration challenges, hardships and sacrifices, sorrows and fears sit in juxtaposition with dissociative perceptions and a widening gap or disparity in attitudes, values, knowledge, cultural practices and beliefs. Keti alludes to this dynamic and expresses it thus:

> They have lost their ability, to re-instate their ability to "speak the same language" (επικοινωνία)… In my experience and limited circle, I don't see that sense of estrangement …society has changed. Everyone has lost something…I don't understand this feeling…what it's about… if they feel it…for us it's a happy occasion…we have all changed… the way of life, from then has changed for them and for us…this is gone. What they gain from us, what exactly do they want from us? I don't know… For us this month especially (August) is a small migration wave…we look forward to seeing them each year…out at the cafes, to have a drink and to talk…I don't think I know how they feel… [42]

Interestingly there are ambiguities and subtle references that overshadow the superficial understanding of the costs and benefits of migration by those-who-stayed. A nuanced reference to a perceived degree of envy by those who are not so well off as some of the returnees was couched in the context of the current financial crisis and economic failures that presently confront the country and which were starting to critically impact families in Limnos now at the time of this research. As Giorgos and others recognise:

> The future of the island is not looking good, the signs are not good, there are bad signs …young people are finishing their schooling but there are no jobs, they are forced to go into casual jobs, what sort of a career is it, being waiters in a café, I don't see it as that…what is his future, like in the past, they are starting to think, just like their relatives of the past, to want to leave…highly qualified people leaving but not finding things as they thought. (the example

[42] Interview with Ekaterina (Keti), 18 August 2014.

given was of the mechanical engineer who left for Australia and then came back).[43]

The twenty-first-century reality for Limnos and Greece more generally may well be feeding into the sensitivities and perceptions of both groups, characterising the dynamic that has emerged. This may perhaps be time specific, reflecting an uncertain external environment in Greece that is not fully appreciated or understood by visitors, whose world seems more stable and predictable. Such a reality is combined with the fact that migrant visitors will be returning to their 'chosen homes' and will be absolved from the dispiriting and harsh realities of an everyday life both historically and currently experienced on the island. Highlighted thus, the present socio-economic phenomenon in the lives of locals may be exacerbating underlying and perceived tensions that might exist. The momentous historic events for a contemporary nation, is indeed an area for further examination and research that is outside the scope of the current dissertation. Nevertheless, the narrative of both these groups, at times, reflects a co-dependent relationship that stems from the nature of migration and a transnational life. The interviews disclose that there's a respective anticipation for the 'visitors' to come back to the island from many lands, each year.[44] For the locals, it signals the arrival of a vibrant and colourful life for the villages during the warm, summer months that follow after a relatively slow 'hibernation' that manifests during the harsher winter climate and a dwindling population of people on the island, during the winter months. Narrators overwhelmingly reveal that, now that the return practice has been established, there is an anticipation to see the visitors arrive as part of their 'pilgrimage' each year.[45] It's become a commonly shared ritual of enormous significance and a touchstone each summer for those who-never-left, as well as everybody that returns from both domestic destinations and other parts of the world. Businesses each year await the busy period and the visitors who will again reconnect with their heritage, their land, with village life and its people. Summer in Limnos involves not only warm island weather and the beach but familiar

[43] Interview with Giorgos, 18 August 2014.

[44] Interview with Eleni P., 4 June 2014.

[45] Interview with Ekaterina (Keti), 18 August 2014.

food and social interaction, many religious rituals and festivals and socio-cultural events that, for a brief time at least, represent a temporary sense of attachment, belonging and connection to place for the visitors. Listening to those who stayed narrate the significance of these events also acts to reinforce a stronger sense of nationhood for the locals as well. Their daily lives and social rituals are revealed as authentic and of value and are re-affirmed by their diasporic compatriots. The expectation that expatriates will be returning during the summer months is now a ritual that echoes great longing and anticipation by the local communities, as expressed, particularly in Keti's narrative.[46]

But simultaneously, the narrative of returnees, harbours actual feelings of doubt and uncertainty as to their status within Limnian society which is both a real and painful realisation for them. First-generation migrants, returning to their homeland, depict a narrative that is pregnant with perceived alienation, antipathy and a sense of not belonging to their homeland anymore. From their vantage point, these views essentially reflect an apparent loss of identity and authenticity of their former lived lives. Several narrators expressed a sense of exclusion and indeed sadness and perceived loss. Their testimonials have echoed an outsider status that they've experienced in Australia that's mostly rationalised by them as understandable, due to their immigrant status. But, more acutely, in the homeland, this experience sits in juxtaposition with their felt loss of belonging when they return, that echoes a feeling of being *ξένος* (a stranger) also in their ancestral land. Their perceived feelings of displacement, channelled through the responses of some locals, is perhaps, inexplicable though it continues to be hurtful to them. At this juncture, a transnational dynamic between those who left and those who stayed comes to the fore, but, is it real or imagined? Interestingly, the apparent loss of authenticity through loss of identity, associated with home, held with great reverence by migrants before migration, is also part of a co-dependency that emerges in the narrative. In the next section, I will examine the nature of relationships between those who stayed and the second-generation returnees.

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[46] Ibid.

From Pilgrimage to *'A Way of Life'*

Since the mid-1990s, there's been an increasing shift towards, '…how members of the second and subsequent generations negotiate their "in between" positions and multiple identities.'[47] This chapter section builds on this body of work and as argued in earlier chapters, applies a transnational frame to analyse and interpret the testimony of research narrators that positions the migration experience as ongoing and cross-generational. Overwhelmingly, the key theme that dominates the second-generation narrative in my research is the significance of on-going relationship building and the construction of identity and reconnection to ancestral history and 'roots'. Chapters Five and Six examined these issues through the narrative of the research respondents, highlighting a significant interface between identity construction, belonging and place and the role of the return(s) to the ancestral homeland. Return visits for members of the Limnian diaspora, have not only impacted and reframed a sense of belonging to place and identity reconstruction for the second-generation but, as I contend, return visits have become a distinguishing and historical transnational feature, unique to this island's migrant experience. The reoccurrence of these 'returns' represents a continuous and on-going process of engagement between those who-never-left and the returnees. For the second-generation, this is, in historical terms, a relatively recent occurrence, involving this generation.

The significance of ancestral property for the second-generation has served as a tangible construct and symbol of belonging, for many respondents. It has been instrumental in the reclamation of identity and has aided in a re-connection to family history and ancestral past. In this process, what emerges is 'a wave of friendship building, spreading' as Nektarios so passionately pronounced.[48] For him, as with others, this has been a critical transnational life event that has forged a lasting re-connection to his parents' homeland. The ancestral house has been a mechanism to facilitate continuity for the children and grandchildren of migrants, bestowing this inheritance and 'gift' to the future generations that is both symbolic and tangible. This dynamic has enabled the

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[47] Lee, *Ties to the Homeland*, 10.

[48] Interview with Nektarios (Nick), 23 Sept 2014.

descendant generations to maintain continuity with their ancestral past as well as to create an on-going transnational future with new, formative and evolving relationships with people and place. Giorgas has argued that a transnational identity has been facilitated also by 'dual citizenship', a catalyst and connector for a resilient Greek identity,[49] that acts to reconcile with some ease both the immigration country and the parental homeland in everyday life. The 'complicated web of social relations that develop out of regular return visits'[50] as Baldassar reveals is what, 'migrants draw upon and create fluid and multiple identities grounded both in their old and in their new homelands.'[51] These factors are clearly not mutually exclusive and define and shape the continuum of the migrant story from pilgrimage to 'a way of life', as evidenced in the Limnian narrative.

Embryonic, transnational experiences of the first-generation are uniquely characterised by their direct link with home and a life lived there before migration. Many remained connected through an obligation to family and the tangible manifestations of regular remittances, provision of donations and fund-raising and the occasional visits home when someone was seriously ill or dying. They held an emotional as well as a physical connection to home which they nevertheless maintained, even if they could not fulfil their desire for permanent return once they resolved to permanently reside in the 'hostland'. The second-generation, however, have largely been the creators of their own transnational journeys. As noted in Chapter Five and Six, they had very few, if any, pre-conceived expectations on their first 'return' visit as young adults and described their experiences as inspiring, overwhelming and re-invigorating. Learning and seeing ancestral landmarks and observing how people lived and expressed themselves in Greece, and more specifically in Limnos, gave them that renewed pride in their ancestral roots and heritage which they have built upon to create their own transnational identity and history. For them, the transnational experience of return visits is an on-going project, whose continuity becomes an affirming process, though challenging at times, and for

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[49] Giorgas, "Transnationalism and Identity among Second Generation Greek-Australians." 53.

[50] Loretta Baldassar, "Home and Away," 88.

[51] Ibid., 88.

some, a project in formation. Its uniqueness is its continuous journey, which has agency and is not pre-determined or defined exclusively by such factors as those that influenced their parents.

Scholars often use different terms to distinguish between 'comprehensive' and 'selective' transnationalism. The term 'intensively transnational'[52] is also used to distinguish from practices that are 'periodic or occasional'. Others talk about 'emotional transnationalism'[53] and 'transnational identity.'[54] Lee cites Wilding who argues for the need 'to focus instead on practices and understandings of mobility or lack of…to include the role of imagination in this mobility.'[55] The transnationalism debates and definitions may be useful, but they are also limiting. They often fail to capture what is, essentially, a complex, changing and relatively recent phenomenon especially for this community. The two consecutive first- and second-generations, as I've argued previously, have constructed 'the cultural bridge' that has established the critical link to facilitate an on-going connection with the homeland. If the physical ancestral house or land remain in the family and the emerging relationship connections being developed, continue to be maintained, this nexus may remain durable and on-going well into the future. The magnitude and intensity of return visits might change, but the signs are there now that the continuity of transnational mobility in the form of return visits will continue into the third-generation, for these Limnians at least.

Summary

The interface of migrants who return with those who have stayed behind, is another facet of the migration experience together with, inter-generational continuity that characterises transnational dynamics. By examining the narrative of those who stayed, in the context of those Limnians who settled in Australia, I have explored the relationships and

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[52] Levitt, DeWind and Vertovec, "International Perspectives on Transnational Migration," 570.

[53] Wolf, "There's no place like "home", 255-294.

[54] Heba Batainah, "Issues of Belonging: Exploring Arab-Australian Transnational Identities" in *Ties to the Homeland: Second Generation Transnationalism,* ed. Helen Lee (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 151-167.

[55] Lee, *Ties to the Homeland*, 7.

connections that are maintained with migrants who are returning to the island. I have highlighted a complex, subtle, sometimes elusive dynamic relationship that is rarely examined in transnational research and has had very little attention more generally in migration research.

The dissonance in transnational identity that migration can bring challenged and fragmented the collective identity which was previously shared across those who left and those who stayed. The responses of some of the first-generation interviewees may in fact be indicative of a much more fundamental issue – the change in values and standards that serve as an expression, conscious or unconscious, of permanent change arising due to mobility and migration. Furthermore, some of the comments and observations made by those who stayed, towards the diasporic visitors and their descendants may in fact, represent a challenge to the authenticity of Greekness in the diaspora and a loss that reflects and challenges even their own self-identity in terms of Greekness in a modern, global world. Indeed, it reveals a change amongst those who left and those who stayed that appears to be irreconcilable and a consequence of the migration experience itself. Their 'worlds' have moved significantly far apart. The empathy and understanding of the migration challenges, hardships and sacrifices faced by migrants, seem to sit in juxtaposition with dissociative perceptions and a widening gap in attitudes, values, knowledge, cultural practices and beliefs between the two groups. For migrants, this represents a loss, essentially, of the old identity and authenticity of their former lived lives. Nevertheless, what characterises these groups most clearly is the co-dependent relationship that has evolved in transnational life, as another aspect of the migration experience.

Conclusion

'No one today is purely one thing…Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities.' [1]

The thesis began by constructing a picture of the island of Limnos, set in the north-east Aegean Sea of Greece. It depicted key factors in the island's twentieth century geo-political history and described a dominant rural culture and setting, both of which contextualise the causes for migration. The thesis has argued that a unique cultural background has contributed to the maintenance of a distinctive diasporic identity. What particularly distinguishes the research undertaken is the focus on Australia's post-war islander migration (1950s to 1970s), examined through an intergenerational lens and concentrating on one community and its strong ethno-regional island identity, which has been preserved and transformed with resilience in the diaspora. This viewpoint has received comparatively little academic attention. The importance of ethnicity more generally, has already been shown to be a factor that assisted migrant settlement in Australia, especially in the context of an environment of alienation, marginality and social discrimination[2] also reaffirmed in the narrative of Limnians. The research has demonstrated that, the children and grandchildren of migrants became substantive beneficiaries of migration decisions and often maintain or develop a strong sense of Limnian identity themselves. They epitomise an accumulated social capital that migration had brought to them, which other scholars have referred to as 'double vision'[3] or 'double cultural competencies'[4] in the second-generation. Unique to these descendants, however, is the significance of a pattern of 'return' as visitors to the ancestral homeland, and its

[1] Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993), 407-8.

[2] Babacan, "Immigration, Nation State and Belonging," 23.

[3] Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity*, 199.

[4] Vasta, "Multiculturalism and Ethnic Identity," 219.

impact on identity construction and re-evaluation as they re-connected with the island through the visits, viewed in this thesis as transnational events, representing a new and emerging research focus. The research was influenced by many years of observation, seeking to understand the factors for generational change and multiple visits made by descendants to the ancestral Greek island. In addition, the significance of ethno-regional identity in the diaspora emerged as an influence upon post-war immigrant islanders and their descendants.

A unique feature in this research was the ability to view migration from the perspectives of those who stayed behind in their interface with those who return as visitors from the diaspora. This research element adds both complexity as well as depth to the research findings. Using a transnational frame to explore the migration experience helps to situate my research, especially as it relates to the descendant generations and a conceptualisation of their engagement with the parental homeland. The islander experience of 'return', the sustainable connections made and the continuous process of engagement between the groups following the visits, especially for the second-generation, is a unique finding in this work. For the first-generation, the significance of ancestral property emerges as a tangible construct and symbol of belonging. The ancestral house has been a mechanism that has facilitated another level of continuity that becomes potentially relevant for the grandchildren of migrants, bestowing an inheritance and the 'gift' that is both, symbolic and real. It is this that has enabled the descendant generations to maintain continuity with their ancestral past as well as to create a transnational future with new, forming and evolving relationships. These factors are clearly not mutually exclusive, but they define and shape the continuum of the migrant story from pilgrimage to 'a way of life'.

The theme chapters that emanate from the primary historical data of oral narrative reveal new and untold perspectives about a multi-faceted islander migration and its long-term impact on people's lives. What oral history has done in this research is to unlock the many complex issues that sit behind migration to reveal a longevity and continuity of experience that lingers and can re-emerge, often positively and constructively, in the lives of future generations once the spark has been lit by a journey of return to the ancestral homeland. The following themes summarised below contribute to the field of migration historiography in Australia.

Identity Changes, Evolves and Transforms

A key finding of my research on Limnian migration to Australia has been that the expression of identity, belonging and place has evolved, modified and changed but it has remained durable and present in peoples' lives. This has also emerged as a surprise for some second-generation narrators in this study. The significance of family and kinship networks, parents and particularly grandparents and the wider, intact community in which they were immersed in childhood, has helped migrant children to experience a safe and familiar sense of belonging and place. For some males, however, the yearning to belong within an Australian environment had been strong enough to cement their Australian identity in youth, largely at the exclusion of family culture and ethnic identification. Many sought to cast-off an 'outsider' identity by rejecting their parent's culture and history, or at least diminish it by attempting to ignore it, because it reinforced a sense of not belonging in Australia. The research has highlighted gender differences. Women as children, on-the-whole, sought comfort and strength in belonging to their parents' culture and identity and were less likely to reject or question this aspect of growing up. The research found that identity construction was not a static event for many second-generation interviewees. However, for many of them, making the first 'return' trip to the ancestral island home, as independent adults, represented an experience of rupture, excitement and identity renewal. What was until then an assumed 'Australian' identity was in many cases, challenged by the return trip and, for some, it became a transformative, exciting and affirming experience. Who they thought they were before had been turned on its head. Going to Greece and Limnos for the first time meant, for many, the resolution of an identity conundrum. The experience of return was liberating as well as illuminating as they reconciled and consolidated a much more complex identity and sense of belonging.

Others experienced their identity transformation much more slowly as it developed over return visits and the forging of new relationships with people on the island and the connection with ancestral property and home. More generally, the Australian-born descendants of migrant islanders had previously experienced a stable sense of being 'Australian' until they experienced a return to the parental homeland. Other narrators, who were born in Greece but had migrated with their families as young children, shared

a stronger sense of attachment to their parental heritage, even though they too strived to fit in to an Australian identity. As adults, with families of their own, when they returned to the ancestral island, they experienced an affirming sense of pride and emotional connection to place, without diminishing the Australian identity that they had cultivated and accrued as they were growing up. Identity construction in the diaspora and reformation of identity and belonging by children of immigrants who have grown up in Australia and who have travelled back to the ancestral home, importantly, challenges the concept of 'home' as being stable and static. These findings challenge a prevailing view in migration research that the power of the migration experience diminishes with time as descendant generations integrate within Australian society and affirms the emerging findings of several Australian scholars in different disciplines.[5]

The significance of regional and local identity emerging in this island case study is little known in current migration research on settlement, apart from Chryssanthopoulou's work[6] in Western Australia. Whereas national identity has received extensive attention in the past and is prevalent in Greek migration research worldwide, the exploration of ethno-regional identity which is distinctive and arguably a special characteristic and vital adaptive factor in migration settlement, is greatly lacking. The regional aspects of identity gained momentum with the second-generation once they began to return to their ancestral home. Their sense of cultural pride in their Limnian identity in addition to a sense of Greekness emerges as distinctive in this study.

Return Visits become a Way of Life in a Transnational World

In this thesis, I sought to explicate a question about the extent to which the phenomenon of return visits to the parental homeland, by descendant generations, reflects identity consolidation for the second-generation living in Australia. The narrators involved in this research were from diverse backgrounds and at different life stages at the point of the interviews. The research findings are not universal, nor are they able to be generalised to

[5] Bottomley (1979); Baldassar (2007); Dawson (2011), Damousi (2015).

[6] Chryssanthpoulou, "Gender and ethno-regional identity among Greek Australians."

the entire community. A limitation in this study is that there is a lack of comparative analysis with those second-generation members who for whatever reason, have not been enticed to return to the ancestral home. This research aspect was well beyond the capacity and resources available. It is also outside the conceptualisation of my thesis.

Nevertheless, the interviewees in this study, demonstrated agency and purpose in returning on numerous occasions as independent adults. Their experiences were expressed as unique journeys incorporating differences and personal revelations. In all cases the trips acted to reframe their sense of place and identity with confidence and affirmation. The experience assisted them in consolidating a more comprehensive cultural identity that helped to reconcile their dual identities, which for some had been abandoned, concealed or neglected. Contemporary research contributes to our understanding of the complexity, longevity and multi-dimensional nature of migration and second-generation transnationalism. My thesis highlights that return visits by second-generation interviewees in this study emerge as significant transnational events. With frequency and repetition, the return visits transform and become a way of life. They act to link people across borders and strengthen relationships that are reinforced by an expansion and use of social media. Narrators have continued to transform and change with on-going return visits to their ancestral island 'home', forging their view of identity and place as being inextricably linked with those who never left, as well as their immediate family members living in Australia. As adults, the experience of repeated returns to the island, helped to strengthen, not weaken their complex cultural backgrounds and in most cases, was, the significant factor in reconciling their sense of belonging to dual homes.

The Ancestral Home Becomes Home Too

The significance of having a tangible and physical house or ancestral property in the homeland emerged as a critical contributor that often acted to solidify the physical connection with the ancestral view of home as well as the metaphorical 'return home'. The ancestral home that was often transferred to descendants through the traditional, matriarchal system of ownership represents a heritage trope for the next generation. For many narrators, their initial experience with the ancestral house was as children when they first visited the village with their parents. As adults, they often found the house renovated and transformed which epitomised the link between old and new identities and

more importantly it became the vehicle for the coalescing of an emerging intergenerational identity, experienced as valuable social capital that represented affirmation and anchorage for the next generation across two homes and dual lives. A physical connection with the ancestral house became the glue that fostered the second-generation's more comprehensive sense of self that had often remained ambiguous, confusing and perhaps never resolved for many descendants of the post-mass migration era. The ancestral home, because of return visits, has become their home too. This finding emerges in a transnational sense, as the cornerstone for the initial parental journey that was taken by their parents to an unknown and foreign land that ultimately became their adopted home. The intergenerational and cross border aspects of home, in migration, are only recently entering a scholar's realm of interest and research. The Limnian case study makes a distinctive contribution to the field, adding to a new and emerging interest in this area.

Seeking a 'A Better Life'

For the first-generation, migration was a 'necessary bad' as one narrator conceptualised it. He had remained and made a life on the island but continued to observe the dynamics of emigration. What he meant was that the necessary social and cultural dislocation of migrants was an essential step to find new and better opportunities in another country, even though a mass exodus of young people from the delicately structured island social system had an impact that reverberated on the lives of those who stayed behind, in both positive and negative ways. The tone of such a view carries a sense of tragedy as well as exaltation in its meaning. For the migrant, the decision to migrate was for the aspirational purpose of creating a better life. This aspiration was indeed fulfilled in most cases, due to hard work and the building of a cultural life that incorporated compatriots with similar experiences and backgrounds like their own. It was this communal strength that supported them, particularly during the initial years of settlement. Narrators also recognised, however, the conundrums of departure and return and were cognizant of and challenged by the radical life transformation that migration brings. It seems that, for the Limnian community at least, the strength of an island regional identity, when it is successfully transmitted to the next generation, has the potential to have greater longevity and significance, particularly if it is reinforced by return visits to the ancestral homeland. This

is an important finding about the second-generation. Whether its durability can survive beyond this generation, with the third and future generations, remains an open question.

Multiple Identities Define Women in Migration

Women's history and experiences in migration have rarely been reflected adequately in scholarly migration research. Various women scholars, however, have established the importance of gender in migration in various studies[7] that authenticate the roles played by women in families, communities and cultural identity formation and maintenance in the diaspora. This research has situated women's lives within their social context, before and after migration, to conceptualise the complexity, ambiguity, continuity and change that migration had brought to women's lives. Whilst not always free agents in the decision to migrate, this research shows, through the narrative of women participants, that they were instrumental in constructing their lives in the diaspora and they did so unobtrusively, with subtlety and pragmatism. They derived strength from personal resources, skills and attributes that had shaped them in the homeland by redeploying them in their approach to settlement in Australia. Their contribution, in their multiple roles to establish families, communities and create wealth, was founded nevertheless on blind faith while seeking 'a better life'. Some women revealed a capacity for initiative, risk taking and an entrepreneurial drive in trying to provide for their families, whilst trying to preserve and facilitate their role as 'gatekeepers' in culture maintenance, transmission and the creation of a unique diasporic identity for their descendants.

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This project contributes to the fields of Australian migration historiography and inter-disciplinary research. My research is the first oral history of post-war islander migration to Australia with an inter-generational focus that uniquely examines the connections that are made with 'homeland' and how this is expressed in everyday life. Furthermore, the

[7] Anthias and Lazaridis, *Gender and Migration in Southern Europe*; Bottomley and de Lepervanche, *Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia*; Chryssanthopoulou, *The Construction of Ethnic Identity*; Chryssanthopoulou, "Gender, Work and Ethnic Ideology; Tastsoglou and Maratou-Alipranti, *Gender and International Migration*; Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation*.

inter-generational reconnections with islanders who stayed behind, and the emerging and at times surprising perspectives expressed in the interviews, provide a further textured and complex dynamic that resonates only when you look at the migration experience in multi-dimensional terms, across generations, time and space.

The focus on intergenerational identity, and the factors that have enabled durability and transformation, together with the astonishing impact of return visits to the ancestral homeland by Limnian descendants, are transnational events. This research deepens our understanding of the degree to which ties are maintained with the homeland and the impact of a localised or regional identity, that transforms one's sense of belonging at different life stages. The findings are important for comparative work among other diasporic island communities as well as other migrant groups. Moreover, my work specifically contributes to the literature on second-generation transnationalism in Australia.

Ofcourse, this thesis has not been able to treat all emerging themes thoroughly. There are many themes and new areas to be revealed around which Limnian ethno-regional identity is created and structured. An ethnographic research field may have facilitated the researcher to draw upon her own cultural immersion within both the Limnian community in Australia as well as the island of Limnos, more comprehensively. An ethnographic/anthropological perspective may have contributed complementary insights provided by that immersion in the everyday life of the community and by observation of practices as performed rather than narrated. This kind of research may be able to be explored in a future project.

Beyond the scope of this thesis, my work provides the basis for future research into several other connected themes. First, there's the third-generation's identity construction and its evolution, particularly for those descendants who have experienced the ancestral homeland primarily because of their parent's 'return' journeys. Whilst this issue was outside the scope of this study, it is a connecting and related issue for identity research in the context of migration, particularly as communities mature and age. Another important research topic, which due to limited resources could not be adequately explored here, is the extent and influence of the current socio-economic crisis and a decade of recession in Greece, upon transnational relationships of migrant descendants visiting Greece and

Limnos and the descendants of those who never left. It remains to be seen how behaviour and connections develop across future generations, and how they are dependent on existing economic and social contexts. If the testimony of those interviewed for this thesis is any indication, however, the future of Limnian ethno-regional identity – both in a diasporic context in Australia, and in the developing transnational lives of islanders themselves – appears to be evolving in a way that will see new belongings to this Aegean island.

Appendixes

Appendix 1 Bio-data of Narrators Interviewed Between 2013-2014

Group 1: First-generation Post-war Immigrants[†]

Anthoula[‡]

Anthoula, born in 1923 in a small village is one of five children. Her father was a market gardener. She finished primary school along with her other siblings and trained as a dressmaker which she practiced in the village until her departure for Australia. She was proud of the fact that four of the siblings had learned a trade, which was unusual in one family. Her three brothers migrated first and later she was encouraged to join one of her siblings who had found work in the car industry of Adelaide. She migrated alone, to Australia at Christmas 1955 'for a better life'. Initially she found it very difficult as she could not find work in South Australia. She soon moved to Melbourne and lived with some of her compatriots who helped her find work in the bourgeoning clothing industry. She had to adapt to very different circumstances to what she had experienced in Greece. She married another Limnian by *προξενιό* (arranged marriage) and they had two children. Since her husband's death in 2009, she has been living alone, self-sufficiently, as a pensioner. She speaks little English but enjoys five grandchildren and two great grandchildren in the extended family. Anthoula and her husband worked all their adult lives. The couple bought a house and until her children started school she rented available rooms to single newly arrived immigrants as it was very difficult for her to find satisfactory child care. Later they bought a Milk Bar / Mixed Business which she operated while her husband continued his factory work. Anthoula recalled a happy childhood and that she was pampered by her auntie who was childless. Her first return trip to visit her

[†] *Interviewed in Greek by the researcher.*

[‡] *Name altered in response to request for anonymity.*

ailing mother was in 1975. Since the couple retired they began regular visits to the ancestral village and slowly renovated the house that was gifted to Anthoula by her uncle and auntie, after their death. No longer able to travel herself, this house has been gifted to the son and daughter who have now commenced a cycle of return visits themselves, to the ancestral home. Anthoula has reconciled the negatives with the positives about her migration experience. Overall, she does not regret her decision. She's proud of her family and she knows she will die in Australia.

Con (Kostas)

Con was born in the village of Androni in 1943 and lives in Sydney with his wife of forty-five years He is now retired and has been the president of the Limnian Association of Sydney, NSW, over many years. He married in 1971 in Sydney and the couple have two children. He has a sister who has remained in Limnos. Con had worked in at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital for 39 years until his retirement, starting off as a cleaner and becoming a supervisor. He arrived in Sydney in 1971 at the age of 26 with the *Patris.* He worked in a bookshop in Myrina, the island's capital and commercial centre. Before his decision to migrate, he had attempted several commercial ventures which did not go well. After his first return to Limnos in 1977 to visit his ailing mother, he continued with return trips from 1987, making at least ten trips.

Constantine (Kostas)

Kostas was born in 1939, in one of the villages, in the central part of the island. He was the oldest of four children, who finished four years of high school, when he decided at the age of seventeen that he would go to Australia in 1956. He lives in Melbourne. His maternal uncle sponsored him, with an expectation that he would resume school in Australia. His parents wanted him to be a teacher, something he did not want. He described his decision to go to Australia as 'an adventure'. He arrived in Sydney, unusually by plane and went to Melbourne to join his uncle. He had learned some English in high school and had a wide-ranging employment history starting as a shop assistant in a milk bar, working sixty hours a week and earning a weekly wage of three pounds. He then worked as a machine operator in a knitting factory, a mail sorter at the GPO, a tram conductor and then tram driver, cartage contractor and then moved into the insurance sphere, becoming a self-managed insurance broker until he stopped work, at the age of

fifty-three. He became his wife's full-time carer for ten years. She died from a degenerative disease. He had met and married her in Melbourne in 1961. They had three children, two of whom are married with children. He has sponsored two of his three siblings to Australia. Kostas's first return trip to Limnos was in 1973. He estimated to have made thirty-three trips back to Limnos. Since 1988 these have been annual trips, spending several months in Limnos.

Dimitrios (Jim)

Jim was born in 1941, at the start of the German occupation (referred to as *κατοχή*) in a small village of Tsimandria. He is one of seven children. He was forced to grow up quickly, as the father needed him at work. He completed third grade primary school in Greece, but as he said, he was not always attending school. As the oldest son in a family of seven children, he was often called upon to help his father with the farm and on the land. He began to work full time, seven days a week, doing chores and whatever was required in the seasonal farming and agricultural jobs. He would leave home early and return at night when all the necessary jobs were done. He would steal time, usually before the evening family meal or before bedtime (in the summer) to play and mix with other boys in the village. He was the first in his family to emigrate to Australia after a 'compatriot' sponsored him (and many others) to go to Melbourne. Jim arrived after a thirty-two-day trip, by boat – the *Cyrenea* (which he described as a small converted warship), at Station Pier, Port Melbourne, Australia in December 1955, at the age of thirteen and a half years. He was, young and small framed. His first job soon after arrival, was as a 'kitchen hand' in cafes for the first eighteen months and in a fruit shop for another year. He spoke no English. He married his wife in 1964. From 1960-65 he shared the job in driving a delivery truck. He then proceeded to buy a butcher shop (self-employed) which he ran from 1966-81 after four months of training-on-the-job without pay. He later opened a home-ware store a few doors from the butcher shop which his wife ran initially on her own, while he ran the butcher shop. (This was soon after his wife was involved in a serious work accident with the mincing machine, in the butcher shop, resulting in the loss of her right hand). Now in his seventies, Jim is technically retired, but since 1985, he runs a cattle grazing farm for meat production. His farm is located north of Melbourne. He lives with his wife when he is not away at the farm. This job keeps him healthy and active. It is in part, a substitute to the way of life that he left in Limnos. He is close to the

land. The couple have three married adult children and eight grandchildren, some of whom are married also. They are surrounded by a large extended family. His first trip to Limnos was in 1980 to visit his parents and he returned briefly again in 1983. In his first two decades in Australia, he sponsored five other siblings (two girls and three boys) and later, his parents and the youngest remaining brother. He has returned to Limnos several times and his passion for the homeland is very strong, but he reconciles himself to his way of life in Australia.

Haralambos (Harry)

Harry was born in 1939 in the *κεφαλοχώρι* (large) village of Kontias. He was one of nine children. Now in his late seventies, he is a self-funded retiree together with his wife Maria, also born in Kontias. They live in Sydney. They have three sons who are all married with children. Harry finished primary school and helped his father in agriculture. He migrated in 1963 at the age of twenty-three with the ship, *Patris,* arriving first in Melbourne where his 'betrothed' had come and they then went to Sydney to join his older brother after they had a civil marriage ceremony in Melbourne. In Sydney, he worked for several years in a range of manual jobs as labourer, factory worker and in building and construction. He later opened-up a fruit shop and continued to be self- employed in the take-away food industry for eighteen years. All his nine siblings sequentially migrated to Australia and were then joined by their surviving mother after the death of his father. Harry returned to Limnos for the first time in 1978 with his whole family due to his wife's poor health and psychological problems which improved in the three months that they spent in Limnos. He then returned, again, in 1990 and has been returning with his wife regularly every second year.

Katerina

Katerina was born in 1942 in the village of Kontias. She finished primary school and migrated to Australia, alone in 1961, at the age of 18 on the *Patris* to join her older brother who had left two years earlier. She is one of four children. She married Stan in 1963, who was born in the village of Kalithea and they had two children. Katerina worked between 1961 – 1995 in a range of factories and had tenants who looked after the children while she went to work. Her first visit back to Limnos was in 1983, when she went back with her adolescent daughter and two nieces to visit her ailing mother and to acquaint her with

her grand-daughters and then continued to visit roughly every three years. Now self-funded retirees, she returns with her husband every two years. For Katerina, there is an emotional significance in the return visits to the homeland as it connects her to memories of childhood and her parents.

Maria

Maria was born in 1934 in the village of Karpasi. She now lives alone since her husband passed away after several years of her being the carer for him. She and her husband Peter, were married by *προξενιό* in July 1958. They had two children who are in their fifties and forties respectively. She has four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Maria is one of five children (three girls and two boys). Her mother joined her sister in America after 1912. She married Maria's father in America, but they returned to Limnos after she was having many miscarriages and was unable to carry a child full term. He died when Maria was four years old, after he was suffering for many years with Parkinson's Disease. She lived through the German occupation, with her surviving mother. Of her two sisters, one went to America and the other married and moved to another part of Greece. One of her brothers went to live in Athens and the other brother emigrated to Australia. Her father's wealth had evaporated with the onset of war and so the family experienced poverty, especially during the German occupation. She completed grade three primary school, at which point the schools were closed and life became very restrictive because of the war and German occupation. Maria left for Australia, under an ICEM scheme, on New Year's Eve in 1957 and arrived at station pier, Port Melbourne in January 1958 on the *Castel Felice*. She soon got a job as a machinist in a factory, followed by other factories jobs. Most jobs were in Brunswick, but she travelled as far as Toorak, making belts for women's dresses. She returned to Limnos to visit her ailing mother in 1982. Life was difficult for Maria before migration and it was complex once she arrived in Australia. She was quickly urged to get married and within five months of arriving in Melbourne, she agreed to marry by *προξενιό* and proceeded to establish her family and her life in Australia. Nostalgia towards her homeland has remained with Maria but she readily acknowledges that compromises had to be made to survive.

Niki

Niki was born soon after the German occupation in 1945 in the village of Kontias. She is one of four children (two boys and two girls). Her father was an artisan stonemason/builder as well as maintaining agricultural land for cotton cultivation and grain crops. Her mother was occupied with domestic duties. Niki finished primary school and did a dress making 'apprenticeship' for 3 years in the winter. In spring to late summer, she was required to help her brother in the cultivation of cotton which was a seasonal crop in Limnos in high demand until the early 1970s. She would plant while her brother ploughed the land and they would then tend the field and pick the cotton. She described this work is exhausting and hated doing it. She left on her own, for Australia on *Patris* in March 1964 with over thirty other Limnians when she was seventeen years of age. There she joined her eldest brother and lived in the house of one of her maternal uncles until she married her husband, another Limnian from a neighbouring village. She returned to Limnos with her husband to visit her family and her ailing mother-in-law who subsequently died. Niki's parents and remaining sibling later migrated to Australia. She went to work in a knitwear factory, two days after arrival in Melbourne. She worked there until she got married, working full time and overtime. She re-paid her travel ticket and they sent her brother's pay packet to her parents in Greece as her father was very ill. With the rest of her pay she and her brother paid for their living costs. After their wedding, the couple rented a room in Dandenong. Later, they bought a Milk Bar business and had their children while they were running the milk bar. Later they progressed to other small businesses and finally bought a large supermarket in partnership with her two brothers. Unfortunately, they lost the business in the 1980s and all suffered heavy debts and lost their assets including their house. They now rent their current house from one of their sons and rely on the age pension for income support. She has not been back to Greece for 45 years.

Nikos

Nikos was seventy-eight years of age at the time of interview. He referred to himself as a 'pensioner without a pension' as he is a self-funded retiree. He was married in 1959 to a Limnian woman. They have two sons who live in adjacent town houses built by him. Nikos arrived at the age of sixteen years in December 1951, on the *Elliniki Prinkipissa* at

Port Melbourne's station pier. He had wanted to go to America to join his two uncles, but his application had been delayed. In the early 1950s it was still difficult to emigrate because you needed a sponsor and money to pay for the travel costs. Nikos was born in the Village of Karpasi, Limnos in 1935, and as a child of six years, lived through the period of the German occupation. In 1939, his father was fighting as a soldier in the Balkan war. He finished primary school and helped his father in agriculture, tending the cotton fields and other crops, as was common, particularly for boys, in those days. He had only one brother and several cousins in Australia whereas, his wife had three brothers, all of whom had migrated in the post-war period. He started off as a waiter in a Greek café in central Melbourne's Lonsdale Street or 'Little Greece', within days of arrival. He used this opportunity to become well connected within the Greek community, as the café was a central meeting place for men, especially. He later progressed to becoming self-employed, owning a milk bar business for over twenty years which assisted him and his wife as they were having a family. He continued as a self- employed "businessman" for 37 years. Nikos returned to Limnos on his first holiday in 1968 for a period of six months to visit his family. He continues to return on frequent and multiple trips 'back home' since the early 1980s with his wife and family. Both his sons and grandchildren have visited the island and report 'loving it'. He proudly describes himself as a Greek from Limnos and has been involved for over fifty years with the Limnian community association, earlier known as *The Lemnos Brotherhood,* now called The Lemnian Community of Victoria -*Hephaestos,* one of four such organisations in Australia. He has held honorary executive positions over many years. He and his only brother passed away within a week of each other in 2016. I thank him for his generous contribution to this research.

Paul (Paleologos)

Paul was born in 1934, in the village of Kontias where he married Afroditi in 1956. Paul is a pensioner and continues to live with his wife in Melbourne. Their only son left Australia and now lives with his family in Switzerland. Paul's father had migrated to America earlier in the century and returned to Limnos to marry and live there. He had made 'a lot of money' and invested in buying land able to be cultivated and for grazing, unlike other American immigrants, who had banked their money, which lost its value within days of the German occupation. He died at the age of forty-eight, when Paul was four years old. Both as a young man and later as an adult, Paul was a skilled shoe repairer,

musician (played the fiddle in social settings) and held significant amounts of land, planting high demand cotton for sale and various grains, such as wheat, for domestic use. He migrated on his own in 1964, at the age of thirty, hoping to 'find a better life'. He arrived with the *Patris* at station pier, in Port Melbourne. He left his wife and child in Limnos, planning to return to the family within a few years, after he too would make some money. He quickly found a job at Goodridge Tyres factory (re-named Dunlop in later years) in Broadmeadows and rented a room in the same house as his sister who had migrated earlier. He quickly learned his job and became a respected worker and invaluable to his employer. He worked long hours, overtime and different shifts, thereby yielding wages well above the norm (he was earnings about 100 pounds a week or more at a time when the average unskilled wage was around 30 pounds). In 1970, he decided to return with his savings, to his family in Limnos and remained there for eleven months before the whole family re-migrated in 1971. His son was about fourteen years of age by then. Paul found the economic situation in Greece, to have changed significantly. When Paul and his family arrived in Melbourne, again with the *Patris,* he returned to his former employer, the Goodridge-Dunlop factory which had grown in production and he was re-instated in a much more skilled job. His wife, Afroditi, began working in various factories in the clothing and other manufacturing industries for at least twenty-five years. In retirement, Paul and Afroditi return annually to Limnos and the ancestral house where they re-unite with their son and family for the summer. They have become a prominent presence in island life each summer.

Panagiotis (Peter)

Panagiotis was born in 1942 in the village of Kontias. He is one of three siblings. His mother was born in Kontias and his father came to Limnos with his family from Asia Minor (Moschonisa) at the age of six in 1923. Panagiotis finished primary school in Kontias and followed his father in the trade of shoe making and repairs, which was then a viable occupation. He worked in his father's shop until he left for Australia at the age of 22. Two of his siblings went to South Africa. He was the only one to migrate to Australia from his immediate family. His uncle had sponsored him to Australia and Panagiotis arrived in Melbourne by boat, the *Australis* in 1965. In his first year in Australia he worked in factories and hated it. He wanted to save enough money to buy a ticket and return home. However, an opportunity came along and he 'helped-out' in a

footwear shop, making shoes and then he bought the business. From then on, he has been a self-employed and successful business man who diversified this business as well as expanding into property development, an area which was also lucrative and successful. He now owns a significant portfolio of properties, making him well off. He now lives in Melbourne's suburb of North Caulfield, with his second wife. His first return to Limnos was with his then wife and young children, in 1980. The intended purpose was to explore the option of establishing himself in business and to live in Greece, but found the experience both, disappointing and unsuccessful. The family then returned to Australia, where he still had his shoe making business. From 1985 Panagiotis, has been returning very frequently to Greece and Limnos. He built a new, large house at the Kontias village entrance and returns to Kontias with his second wife for a period of five months, annually. This enables him to re-connect with his immediate and extended family which he identified is important to him and facilitates regular trips by his adult siblings who have also developed reconnections with the homeland.

Stamatia (Toula)

Toula was born in 1944 in Atsiki, situated in a central part of Limnos. She completed second year of high school in Myrina where she lived in a rented room with her best friend also from Atsiki. She discontinued school and joined the family in tending cotton fields as cotton crops had become the most productive agricultural industry on the island, at the time. Her father's primary job remained as the village blacksmith a trade that had remained in demand, given the high use of metal tools in farming and transportation. Toula migrated to Tasmania in 1962 at the age of 18 years. She went to Australia after she was betrothed in absentia, by b*προξενιό proxenio* to Stelios who had left in 1959 under an ICEM scheme and went directly to Tasmania. He had joined a friend there and worked with him in his take away /mixed business until he established his own business. She arrived by ship (*Patris*) first at Port Melbourne and later went to Hobart where she married Stelios and lived initially in a small town until her husband bought his own business. Later they moved to Hobart. Initially Toula worked in a factory for about three months and then joined her husband in the seven day a week mixed business/take away shop. The couple had three children and they all have families and live in different Australian cities. She is now a widow and has remained in Tasmania and lives in Hobart. Toula was the first sister in the family to migrate and was later joined by her younger

sisters, sequentially. Her parents and youngest sister joined them later but they returned to Limnos some years later. She first returned to Limnos with her husband and two young children in 1970 due to her father-in-law's illness. They stayed for ten months until his death. From 1984 onwards, she returned to Limnos frequently and then annually after her husband's death. Toula's children have visited Limnos often, have learned Greek and are proud 'Greeks' especially her son Andonis, an architect in Melbourne.

Stelios (Lakis)

Stelios was born in Moudros in 1941. He completed two years of junior high school in Myrina, the other side of the island, some 25 kilometers away from his village. Children lucky enough to go to high school in those days, had to live away from home in a rented room and the family would send a basket of food with the morning bus as a way of cutting down costs for the family. He would return home only during the term breaks and public holidays. His family decided he should migrate to Australia at the invitation of his paternal uncle who was married and without children. His uncle promised to 'send him to school there and look after him'. His father meanwhile had served in various wars and had gone to Algiers and France to work and returned with money and bought land in Limnos. However, his bank savings became worthless during the German occupation and the war. He remembers his mum using paper money 'to light the fire'. Stelios has two sisters, one in Greece and one in Australia. He was 14 years old when he travelled by ship to Australia, on his own for 33 days on the *Kyrenea*. He did not go to live with his uncle. He was found a shared room in Carlton which he shared with others. In that house there lived some ten or so, tenants, all single men and recent arrivals. He paid 30 shillings for rent. Within a few days of arrival, he was found a job in a milk bar in the city. He earned four and a half pounds for six and a half days a week. In 1958 he started night school at RMIT and completed an electronics course, obtaining his qualification in 1964. He initially worked for an electronics manufacturer, then set up his own business, selling and repairing TV's. He continued this work between 1982-1995. Stelios became a member of the Victorian Lemnian Association *Hephaestus*, which began in 1939, and was an active member on the committee on several occasions until 2000. He was also involved in many other community initiatives, representing the interests of the Limnian diaspora. Stelios began to document the history of the Association. He was instrumental in establishing the first Website for the Association which was apparently dismantled a year later by the new

committee regime. His first trip back to Limnos was in 1973 to visit his family. He stayed for five months and continued his returns on a frequent basis.

Group 2: Second-generation Descendants of Migrants[‡‡]

Andrew (Andreas)

Andrew was born in 1959 in Kontias and arrived in Australia with his parents at the age of two (2). He lived his initial years in the migrant, inner suburbs, until his family moved to the outer suburbs when they opened their own family business. He now lives in Stanmore, an inner gentrified suburb, with his own family – wife Georgia (of Greek background with parents from another region of Greece) and twins, Jack and Angelika respectively. Andrew speaks English with his friends and at home. He speaks Greek with his parents and other older family members. He defined his cultural/ethnic background as Australian but did qualify his comment by saying that it depends on the social situation or if he is in a Greek or Limnian environment. Andrew completed his HSC and a Diploma in Architecture/Drafting at TAFE. He worked as a self-employed draftsman and later in hospitality and tourism. He was the General Manager of the Limnos club in the 1980s, followed by running his own liquor store and later in building development. He has been a house parent for ten years following his second marriage. His father is now in an aged care facility due to dementia and he has an auntie and uncle and cousins in Australia. In Limnos, he only has cousins remaining. His first trip back to Greece was in the 1980s when he joined a University group tour that changed his view of himself in relation to Greece and his connection to Limnos. He has been returning to Limnos, in the main, annually for the last 15 years. Andrew's story is particularly interesting regarding, his immigrant identity change and aspects of masculinity and social status, particularly within the wider community and in relation to his Limnian and Greek self-view and the factors that influenced this evolution.

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‡‡ *Includes Australian-born children of immigrants and Greece-born accompanying children arriving under the age of twelve years (See Ruben G. Rumbaut (2004) on the complexity of defining 'Second-generation').*

Despina S

Despna was born in 1948 in the village of Moudros. She was seven years old when she came by boat (the Tasmania) with her mother in1955, arriving at Station Pier to join her father who was already in Melbourne. She married Theodoros in 1969 but is now a widow and a retiree (her husband died some four years ago due to ill health). She has three children. Her daughters are married, each with four and three children, respectively. Her son lives with her. Despina has a new partner, two brothers and her mother who lives in Oak Park, where she also grew up. She completed school in Melbourne and a Business Administration course at Footscray College. She speaks Greek and English and identifies herself as Greek. After her studies, she worked as a legal PA/ secretary for Frank Galbally QC for many years. She also worked for Hermes Travel, a travel agency commonly used by Limnians as it was owned by one of the best known Limnians in Australia – Theseas Marmaras (who was her godfather). She then joined her husband in the family business, which according to her, was one of the first IT/computer sale enterprises in Melbourne, at the time. In Limnos, she has cousins and an auntie. Her first trip back to Limnos was after 55 years, in 2011 for nine weeks. She went back to 'rediscover and relive her memories of her place of birth.' She was so overwhelmed and excited by the experience that she went back Greece to live indefinitely, with her partner.

Despina W

Despina was born in Melbourne in 1959 and has lived in Brunswick since she was born. She's one of two children. Her brother George, is four years younger. Her parents, Panagiotis and Maria migrated from Limnos to Australia independently in the 1950s and married each other in 1956 by *προξενιό*. Both parents worked in factories. Maria stopped working when they had children and went back to work once the children started school. Despina went to the local schools of Brunswick and speaks English and Greek, which she leant by attending afternoon Greek school and completed primary level. She attended the Melbourne Teachers College and has been a teacher in secondary, TAFE and higher education. She has been a lecturer in Accounting at Victoria University and has achieved a Doctorate in her field. She married Anthony William in Melbourne in 1983. He was born in Ballarat and Australian by birth. He is an academic/university Lecturer at Swinburne. They have two children who are both secondary school teachers. Despina has

her parents in Melbourne. She has one surviving maternal uncle and cousins living in Melbourne and has paternal aunties, an uncle and cousins living in Limnos. She developed a strong and significant relationship with one particular cousin living in Limnos. Despina and Tony first visited Limnos in 1983 for two weeks as part of their honey moon. They have been making many return trips to Limnos since the nineties with their children. Since 2002 they have been returning annually. They have renovated the maternal home in the village of Karpasi which now belongs to Despina, as part of a matrifocal tradition of passing down the house from mother to daughter. Despina defines herself as an 'integrated Australian' who has a strong Greek heritage which she believes comes from growing up in a Greek family, within a strong family and Limnian network. But she also feels very Australian after making the brake from the close-knit family and community network once she started tertiary education and employment.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth was born in Melbourne in 1961. She is the eldest of four children. Her parents migrated to Australia independently – father from Florina and mother from Karpasi, Limnos. Elizabeth's mother was eighteen years of age when she (as an only child), left for Australia as a sponsored emigrant. Her parents met and married in Australia. Elizabeth recalls several address changes and consequently, different schools particularly in primary school, because her father bought and sold houses. Both parents initially worked in factories, upon arrival, but later her father opened a business selling Manchester both in a shop and door to door which was common in the 1960s. Her mother is now retired and her father, though in his early 80s continues his business, assisted by his son. Her parents visit Limnos on a regular basis. Elizabeth was sent to Mac Robertson Girls High (a selective public school) due to her athletic success and for being a good student. She progressed to Swinburne University where she studied Marketing. She has maintained a self-employed career and has run her own consultancy. Elizabeth married in 1986 at the age of twenty-five because she felt the pressure to marry as the oldest girl in the family. This marriage ended in divorce a couple of years later and she has remained an independent single woman. Elizabeth, went to Greek school, speaks Greek with her parents and English with her friendship circle. She characterises her identity as a Greek – Australian. Elizabeth's first trip to Greece was in 1980 for a family wedding on her

father's side. She has returned to Greece, approximately eight times in total but does not always go back to Limnos. She says that there is nothing of significance to draw her to Limnos, but she is passionate about her Greek heritage and Greece more broadly. Though she has not been back for four years she describes her trips as 'spiritual nourishment' that help her understand her roots. She seems better connected with her father's side of the family but is not in touch with them or feels a strong connection now.

Errikos (Erik)

Errikos or Erik, was born in Myrina in 1949 to refugee parents: father from Tenedos and mother from Aghios Efstratios (a small island that belongs to the municipality of Limnos). He left Greece with his mother and older sister at the age of four years, in 1954. His father migrated through government sponsorship (*πρόσκληση*) in 1952. He was a carpenter/furniture maker and a communist and left for a better life for his children at a time that Greece was in flux politically and economically after the war. Both parents encountered obstacles in having permits to leave their country, due to unofficial *φάκελο,* code for police files on their political activities and backgrounds. Errikos lived in the suburb of Sylvania, Sydney, until his decision to build a house in Limnos. He was educated in NSW with tertiary qualifications in agriculture with a Diploma of Education. He worked as a secondary and post- secondary teacher and later went into business as a packaging manufacturer. His first marriage was in 1972 to a Limnian woman who is now deceased. He has a daughter. In 1981 he re-married to Chrissa who was born in Kontias and who's family had also migrated to Australia. They have a son, Panagiotis. Both children live in Sydney. His wife lives across both countries and may relocate to Greece when she is retired. Erik's first return trip was in 1965, with his mother and later joined by his father. They stayed for five months. His parents wanted to invest in Greece. This trip confirmed his love of Greece, particularly, the island of Limnos. From 1973 he has been coming to Greece annually. Errikos has lived permanently in Limnos for over five years, since 2009.He considers Australia his, 'home away from home'.

Fotoula

Fotoula was born in Melbourne in 1961 and lived in Prahran for many years after she was born. She's one of two daughters. Her parents, Andronikos and Elisavet migrated to Australia, independently, in 1955. Both from the village of Kontias, Elisavet was coming

Australia to marry someone else but she changed her mind. Fotoula's parents married each other through arranged marriage (*προξενιό*) in Melbourne in 1956. They are now both deceased. Her parents worked in factories: Andronikos at General Motors Holden until retirement and Elisavet in a clothing factory until she had children. She then stayed at home in domestic duties, until the girls went to school. Fotoula's mother then resumed factory work. She speaks English and Greek which she learnt from afternoon Greek school and completed up to year ten in high school and one year at secretarial course. She has worked in secretarial roles in the public service and has been the administrator at her husband's Engineering business for several years. Fotoula defines herself as Greek-Australian and speaks English with her friends and sometimes in Greek as most of her friends are of Greek origin, many of them of Limnian background. She grew up in a 'close knit' extended family and fully immersed within the Limnian community and the Greek culture. She married her husband Jim, who is from the island of Samos. He is a fitter and Turner and Mechanical Engineer. They live in Burwood. They have three daughters living at home. Fotoula has many extended family members in Melbourne and has a few cousins still living in Greece. Her first visit to Limnos was with her mother in 1968 when she was seven years old. They stayed for three months to be with the maternal grandparents. She has been back to Limnos on numerous occasions. As her husband is from Samos and they have an ancestral home there, they also visit Samos on these trips. She and her family enjoy Greece and the ancestral islands. She has established significants bonds with the relatives in Limnos. Fotoula, recalls a happy and stable family environment, growing up amongst the Limnian community. She does not recall any major discrimination experiences and feels she's been able to achieve her aspirations. Her daughters speak Greek and seem to have a strong connection with the Greek culture. She 'loves' Limnos and feels privileged to have experienced many the trips. She believes that she would never forget where she comes from and values this strongly felt connection to her parents.

John

John was born in Melbourne in 1976 and lived in the southern suburbs of Oakleigh, Hughesdale, Murrumbeena and Carnegie, in Melbourne. He now lives with his own family in Mt Waverley. He's one of two children. His sister, Helen, was just three years old when the family migrated in 1969. His mother is from Kallithea, Limnos and father,

Vasilis, is from Kyparissia, in the Peloponnese. They met in Limnos when the father was doing national service there and after getting married they went to live in Athens. His mother was a hairdresser and the father, though trained as a baker, worked as a bus inspector. In Australia, both parents worked in factories until their retirement, though Vasilis suffered a work accident and was unable to work for an extended period. They are both retired pensioners now. The parents decided to join the maternal grandmother, who was sponsored by other siblings already in Australia and thus, they decided to join her. But John made it clear that it was not a concerted decision by his parents, to migrate. His father had said that they would stay for only five years and return to Greece, but once they established a lifestyle, they never returned, even though his father has no family at all in Australia whereas his mother has an extensive extended family, including several brothers who migrated earlier. When John went to Hughesdale primary school, he did not speak English as his parents spoke to the children in Greek at home. He went to St Aloysius Catholic High school and at both schools there was a large contingency of children of Greek background, especially in primary school. John completed Greek afternoon school and is a fluent Greek speaker. He studied commerce and has achieved post-graduate qualifications in financial planning. He works as financial advisor within a corporate environment and feels that he has fulfilled his personal aspirations. John married his wife in 2006. She is a second-generation Greek. Her parents are from Crete. They have two young children – Vasilios, 5 and Alexandra, 2 years old. They speak to the children in Greek at home, so until the son went to school he also did not speak any English. At the age of twenty-two, after he finished University, John visited Greece for the first time. During this trip he met relatives from both sides of the and was enchanted by this connection. He has been to Greece on several other occasions, three of which were to Limnos. His wife and son joined him in more recent times. His wife 'loves Limnos'. John has always had a strong sense of Greekness, speaks confidently and has been recognised as a Greek when in Greece which is both unusual and self-affirming for him. He identifies himself as a Greek first, though he loves living in Melbourne. His closest friends are of Greek backgrounds and his oldest friend from primary school is now his *κουμπάρο* (best man). He grew up in a very explicit Greek environment with *γιαγιά* (grandmother) living with his family and surrounded by Greek relatives within proximity. They celebrate key events – name-days, Christmas, with the large maternal extended

family. He hopes that this will continue when his kids grow up. He is passionate and proud of his Greek heritage and clearly thinks of himself as a Greek first – spiritually and emotionally at least and Australian due to the physically of living in Australia. He acknowledges that 'he is not like a Greek from Greece'.

Nektarios (Nick)

Nektarios was born in Melbourne in 1971. He is a police officer with Victoria Police and is married to Joanna of Anglo-Saxon descent, who is also in the police force. Their only child, Connor, died as a baby. Nektarios' parents were both born in Kontias and migrated independently to Australia - father in 1954 and mother in 1956, though they were engaged from Limnos. He has a large extended family in Melbourne and a surviving paternal uncle and cousins in Limnos. As a four-year-old, his family returned on a holiday back to Kontias. He remembers the trip vividly and positively too. Since 1993 he has been returning to Limnos, at least every two years for the summer, which has acted to strengthen the connections, both with family and friends. He described the experience, like, 'he's building their story [referring to his parents] and filling the picture'. He has two other siblings (he's in the middle). The family lived initially in Carlton and then moved to Reservoir. He was taken to the local primary school at the age of four and a half, but he did not speak any English, so his grandfather looked after him that year. For the first couple of years he felt like any other kid. Reservoir High School was very multicultural. He didn't feel different except when he had to go to afternoon Greek school. He was sent to Greek school until year eight, but he hated it. He remembers stories told around the table about the early years for his family, in Australia, like that there were seventeen to eighteen people living in one terrace house in Carlton. Both parents worked, his mother worked initially at the Rosella factory and then in several hospital laundries and his father drove a truck, until they bought a milk bar. They had sold the business by the time he was born. His father, then became a bus driver. He died when Nektarios was 16 years of age.

Nikolaos (Nick)

Nick was born in 1973 in Melbourne and has lived in North Fitzroy all his life. His parents were both born in Limnos: mother in Kontias and father, whose family were Asia Minor refugees, was born in Agios Dimitrios. They migrated separately through sponsorship

(*πρόσκληση*) by their respective siblings, in the early 1960s. His father was a factory worker at the Breweries and his mother was a clothing industry 'outworker', essentially a contractor without any protections or job security, that required the assistance of the whole family, including children. Nick went to the local primary school and then went to a Greek private school, such was the enthusiasm by the parents to bring up their children with Greek language and culture prominent in their education. He completed high school and later did a photography course. He has done various jobs and has been a freelance photographer. His current project is to produce a book of 'moments in time' photographs with poetry and text. He speaks Greek and identifies himself culturally as a Greek. His family returned on a visit to Limnos to see the extended family when Nick was two years old. He returned to Greek again in 1991 at the age of eighteen with his older sister. He has been returning to Greece and Limnos regularly since then, making it over ten trips.

Pantelis (Peter)

Pantelis was born in 1946 in the village of Tsimandria. He arrived in Australia with his mother and younger sister in 1957 by plane. He was aged 11 years of age. His father had migrated one year earlier. He completed his schooling in Australia and discovered his talent with music, which had its roots in family history. His father was a fiddle player and had a talent for writing songs. He went on to become a musician and teacher of music and continues to be involves in his musical instruments shop as a music teacher. He lives in Caulfield, speaks Greek and English fluently and identifies culturally as Greek. He married Christina, from Thessaloniki. They have two adult children and several grandchildren. His first return trip to Limnos was in 1970 as a young man. Pantelis connection with the homeland was nurtured within his family. In Australia, Pantelis has played a significant role in initiating and furthering many transnational fund-raising projects that further cemented his family's contribution to the cultural links with Limnos. In his early seventies now, Pantelis enjoys returning to Limnos on a regular basis and has recently build a house in his village, next to his ancestral home. He sees this connection as 'his direct link to a greater Greece' as it allows him to 'indulge in the spiritual experience of love of this island' to which he feels he belongs.

Penelope (Popy)

Penelope was born in the village of Repanidi in 1949. She was twelve years of age when she came to Sydney with her parents in 1961, where she completed high school and tertiary studies in accountancy, working as a public accountant. She later studied social welfare and worked as in this field, with Greek and Australian communities. She speaks both Greek and English and identifies culturally as a Greek. She married Dimitrios in1971, who has since died. They had two sons. Penelope lives near her mother in Bankstown and has several uncles and aunties and cousins in Australia. Penelope's parents were shop-keepers in Limnos, placing them in a different class to the families who worked exclusively in agriculture. After many years of menial work, Penelope's father bought shop – a family business – and encouraged the only daughter to gain an education. The entire family were involved with the Limnian club which was established in Sydney, in 1957. Her father was a committee member for many years and Penelope followed in his footsteps to become the secretary for many years, as she saw this involvement as one way to contribute to her community, especially given English language skills. She identifies as a Greek – Australian but in a Greek circle she proudly espouses her Greek identity. Her first visit to Greece was in 1975 to meet her in-laws who are not Limnian. They stayed for six months. It was very emotional experience for her to visit her birth home. She then returned in 1999. Her mother's house, her *πατρικό* (ancestral house) and the people in the village play a big role for her to continue to return as this re-connects her to her childhood. Penelope now visits Limnos every two years and stays in her ancestral house.

Peter

Peter who lives in Melbourne was born in Myrina in 1950. He is now 64 years old. He arrived with his family in 1958 by the ship: *Flaminia,* to join his father, a carpenter, who had migrated some twelve months earlier, after trying out jobs in other parts of Greece and even Germany. Peter was eight years old, went to school in Australia and became an accountant. He has continued this profession practices in partnership with another Limnian, working primarily with Greek clients. He married Sophia in 1976 and they have two adult children. He has an older brother and sister and a younger sister living in Australia. His first return trip was in 1974. He has since returned several times to Limnos.

He is realistic about his Australian status but remains very connected to his Greek identity which he expressed with confidence and certainty but also with some ambiguity when he posed the question, 'Is it possible to belong to more than one place?'

Sonia

Sonia was born in 1960 in the Myrina hospital due to pregnancy complications. Her parents are from Kontias and Sonia was one-year-old when in 1961 her mother joined her husband. She is married to Michael who is Australian-born, whose parents are from the island of Kalimnos. They married in 1983 and live at Avoca Beach, on the central coast of NSW outside Sydney, which is the region where her husband's family had settled as farmers. Sonia has a thirty-three-year teaching career as secondary school teacher and teaches at the local school. Her husband is a chemical engineer. Sonia speaks only a little Greek and English and identifies as being of Greek heritage. Sonia's father left Limnos for Australia before she was born. Her father was a tradesman/cabinet maker and worked hard in Australia. He was connected to the Limnian club and was Her parents, now retired, live in Sydney along with various other relatives on both sides of the family, all of whom migrated to Australia in the post-war years. She came with her family by boat arriving first in South Australia's regional town of Mt. Gambier, which, as reported by her mother was a 'hostile' town. Her first visit to Limnos was in 1975 as part of a family holiday and to visit grandparents. Since her marriage she returned several times to Greece with her husband. Sonia has had mixed experiences with Australia which was reflected in how she viewed her identity and the significance of her ethnic heritage upon her own sense of identity and belonging. She goes back occasionally because she 'has the keys to the house' meaning she is now its custodian and feels a special responsibility to keep alive her family heritage which is important to her.

Sophia

Sophia was born in the village of Kontias in 1950. She lives in Moorooduc, Victoria with her Limnian husband of forty-four years who was born in the village of Romanou. She speaks English and Greek and identifies as a Greek-Australian. The couple have two daughters. Angela, lives in Melbourne and Francine who has two daughters lives in America with her family. Sophia was four years of age when her parents, older brother and sister and herself migrated to Melbourne, Australia in 1954 under the government

assisted sponsorship program (ΔΕΜΕ / ICEM). They travelled on the *Star of the Sea* for about 30 days. Due to good fortune, her father had been found a job in Melbourne, through the intervention of a compatriot, to start immediately, thereby preventing the family from going to Bonegilla migrant camp. For the first six months the family (with exception of the oldest boy – seven years) slept in a rooming house, with no other Greek speakers. The brother went to live with compatriots, where the family would go daily to cook meals, do their laundry and so on. Sophia and her siblings went to school almost immediately. She completed three years of high school and then went to a Hairdressing College and trained as a hairdresser. After three years in hairdressing, in the late 1960s, she married and took up the role of Business Manager in her husband's family metal polishing business that her husband and brothers had set up. Sophia and her husband first returned to Limnos in 1997 for two months on a holiday and have been going back for several months, annually after building a house in the husband's village of Romanou.

Spiros

Spiros was born in the village of Kontias in 1954 and lives in the Melbourne suburb of Malvern. He was six years old when his family migrated to Melbourne in 1960. He lost his father at the age of seventeen which led to a rebellion against the customs and traditions which until then seemed to define him. He spoke Greek at home and English with friends. He went to school in Australia and completed a diploma which enabled him to work as an electronics technician until recently, when he took early retirement. He is single and identifies his cultural background as 'Hellenic'. His first visit to Greece was in 1977 when he was part of a student group in a travel program hosted by the Greek government. This trip helped him to reconnect with his heritage and sense of Greekness. He has been involved in Limnian community organisations as an expression of this identity and has been returning to the ancestral island frequently. Since his retirement, he has been making these returns annually, with the strongest felt attachment towards the village of Kontias and not Greece more generally.

Group 3: Limnians Who-stayed on the island

Aikaterini (Keti)

Keti was born in 1948 in Myrina. Her family have roots in Asia Minor and came to Limnos as part of the 1923 population exchange. Her father migrated to Ohio, USA and the family joined him later when Keti was nine years of age. Her mother and the two children returned to Limnos to 're- establish continuity in their Greek education'. Keti's whereas, her father returned to join the family some ten years later. She speaks Greek and some English. Keti finished high school in Myrina and worked at the Myrina municipal council, in the electoral rolls section until her retirement. She appears to be well connected within the community of Myrina and Limnos and with her own experiences, could demonstrate her analytical and conceptual understanding of migration and with her family's refugee background, the meanings and significance of home, departure and return. Keti was married to Giorgos, a veterinarian who worked closely with the agricultural communities in his role within the Department of agriculture. (See the bio-data about Giorgos below).

Angelos

Angelos was born in Tsimandria in 1942 and migrated through sponsorship (*πρόσκληση*) to join his brothers in Bendigo, Regional Victoria in 1962. There he joined them in the café business where they worked long hours, seven days a week, for about fifteen years. He returned to Greece to marry Popi and they then went back to Australia for over ten years. They had four children, three daughters and a son. The family returned to Greece when Angelos' mother became ill, with the possibility of repatriating permanently. But they were caught up in an unstable political environment during the military Junta and the escalating conflict between Greece and Turkey. The resulting events in Cyprus led to compulsory conscription of all males under the age of fifty, which resulted in Angelos being conscripted. Poppi was very uncomfortable and scared by these events and urged her husband to return to Australia. The family subsequently returned to Australia but returned in 1984, some ten years later, to live permanently in Limnos. The primary reason given for the couple to repatriate a second time was that, Popi had never adapted to life in Australia. Within the regional setting of Bendigo, she was socially and culturally isolated and she was unhappy. Angelos came from an agricultural family and he worked

to help the family after completing primary school. He maintained that, all young men wanted to go to Australia for a few years to 'make money and return to Limnos'. His four brothers began to leave in the early 1950s. They were sponsored (*πρόσκληση*) by a compatriot, who had left in the 1940s. He sponsored his first brother to go and work for him in Bendigo and he followed, third in line. Angelos left with the intention of returning permanently and would return frequently until they started a family. Poppi and Angelos returned to Australia on an extended visit for their daughter's engagement in 2013. Their son remains in Australia (Melbourne). The three daughters have remained in Limnos, establishing themselves with families and jobs.

Eleni P

Eleni was born in 1952 in the north-east village of Kontopouli. She was adopted as a baby to a couple in in the southern village of Kontias. She has lived there all her life, except for the twenty years when she lived in Myrina, working in a bank. Eleni finished primary school in Kontias and has vivid memories of the events of mass migration from her village and remembered the personal impact of losing many friends during this period. Her adopted family had experienced migration in the inter-war years and Eleni showed great respect and understanding for those returning to the ancestral land.

Eleni H

Eleni was born in 1937 in the village of Livadohori situated in the centre of Limnos. She finished fifth year of high school in Myrina. Her father was from East Thrace in Asia Minor –and he operated a coffee house (*καφενείο*) in the centre of the village. Eleni and the family helped in the running of the Kafenio. She is one of six siblings – five females and one male. All the siblings migrated to various parts of the world. Her oldest sister went to Australia. Eleni migrated with her husband to Zair (Africa) in 1962 and in 1964 they went to South Africa. Subsequently, they repatriated to Limnos and with his savings her husband set up a trucking business together with his brothers. She recalls the pre- and post- war years clearly, especially because most people in her village had a connection with migration.

Evangelos

Evangelos was born in Myrina in 1932. He is a widower and lives alone. His only son died of cancer at the age of sixty-one years. He is a man of sharp mind and has absorbed a lot of experience through observation in his life. Both his parents were refugees – mother from Tenedos and father, an orphan, from Asia Minor. His parents had settled in Myrina. His father was a *θαλασσινός* (sea -trader). He finished high school, served in the navy and though he applied to go to Australia in the early fifties, he opted for a job offer and stayed in Limnos. He was also encouraged to become a priest but did not pursue this as a career. He became the secretary of the island's Veterinary Group which provided services to the agrarian communities. He was therefore well connected to the farming communities.

Giorgos

Giorgos was born in 1941 in the small village of Rousopouli at the start of the German occupation. He is one of four siblings. His father had migrated to the USA along with several his siblings, but he returned to Limnos to marry and was caught up in the occupation and the war which prevented his return to America. He died when Giorgos was ten years of age. His father owned a house in the USA and with the rental income the family received, he could be supported in his studies at Italy's Parma University, where he trained in veterinary science. Giorgos worked as a public servant with the Department of Agriculture in Limnos and was well known amongst the agrarian community and showed an intimate understanding of the circumstances for the agrarian families, particularly in the post-war environment. He speaks Greek and Italian and has lived in Myrina since 1974 when he married Keti. Giorgos died in 2015.

Marika

Marika was born in Kontias in 1925. She is the oldest of six siblings, five female and one male, all of who migrated to Australia in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The only remaining sibling in the village, she became a widow in her thirties. Most of her husband's siblings had also migrated to Australia, so her only family kinship were the descendants on her husband's side of the family. She completed primary school and worked in farming helping the family and then with her husband who was also part of an agrarian family, until he died. She continued in that tradition until she became a pensioner. At the age of

eighty-five, Marika was sponsored by her siblings and joined them in Australia as her health was failing and she needed care. Marika lived through the two decades of mass migration which included her personal tragedy, hardship, loneliness and isolation. Marika died in Australia due to complications and is survived by her siblings and the extended family.

Paleologos

Paleologos was born in 1934 in the village of Kontias. He has been the village tailor since 1952. He finished primary school and then trained as a tailor in Myrina before going into the army. He and his wife have only one daughter who has married someone who as a child went to America with his family from Limnos. He met his wife when he had returned to Kontias on a visit. They have two children and live in the suburbs of New York. Paleologos is an observant and opinionated man who has a sound understanding of the island's history and the lives of the people of Kontias. He and his wife also went to America to be united with their daughter and recalled his experiences of migration the difficulty with language and employment and his deteriorating health due to the stress of trying to adjust to a new country. Paleologos and his wife returned to the village within seven months and he resumed his trade as tailor in the same shop until 2016.

Poppi

Poppi was born in Pireus and was married to Angelos through arranged marriage in 1971 when she was nineteen years of age. Her husband, Angelos, saw a photograph in her brother's procession and he declared that he wanted to marry her. She is not Limnian but has lived in Limnos for many years and has been culturally established within the village of Tsimandria for many years. (See the bio-data on Angelos above).

Stella

Stella was born in the small village of Varos, in 1933. She has a son who lives in Athens. She experienced many tragedies in her life and experienced severe poverty. For fifty years, she operated the kafenio in the village square and has since, been running a *περίπτερο* (village kiosk) in the same square for years and remains so, at the time of the interview. Stella lived through the pre- and post- war years, mass migration and has witnessed all these events from her small enterprises in the village square.

Appendix 2 The University's Human Research Ethics Application

The Human Participants – Standard Project Application (Ethics ID: 1339450) included the following:

i) Plain Language Statement (Available in Greek and English)

Prof. Joy Damousi, Principal Supervisor,
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Melissa Afentoulis
Doctoral Research Candidate
Ph:0413088041
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Project Title: 'North Aegean Islander Greek Migration: The Next Generation Speaks – memories, stories and meanings of an odyssey'

Introduction

You are invited to participate in the above research project. The purpose of the research is to explore how the experience of migration of one generation, in this case post-second-world-war migrants (period 1950's to 1970's), from the Aegean island, Limnos, influences future generations. This research will explore, through personal stories and collective biographies, the significance of this experience and the perceptions of those who stayed behind. The interviews will be part of a doctoral thesis at the University of Melbourne and has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Application No. 1339450).

What will I be asked to do?

Your involvement comprises an interview and an audio recording. You will be asked questions that form the basis for an open discussion on aspects such as: your experiences, the significance of migration on people's lives, especially the second-generation, identity issues, sense of belonging etc. We will explore why the next generation is returning to visit the 'homeland', what these trips signify and how are they viewed by those who did not emigrate. The time commitment ranges between one and two hours, with possible follow up sessions. I will seek your permission to record the interview. You can stop the interview at any time. Your participation is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw consent at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied. Later, you will be given a transcript of the interview and the opportunity to make corrections or request deletions.

How will my confidentiality be protected?

It is usual in oral history-based research to use participants' names. If you wish to remain anonymous, you will be referred to by a pseudonym in the final research. We will also remove any references to information that might allow someone to guess your identity. In this case, your name and personal details will be removed from all records after you have approved the interview transcript, unless you request otherwise and, for the purpose of receiving ongoing information about the research. Your details will be kept in a separate file, the researchers having access to these details. All data will remain confidential subject to legal limitations.

What will happen to the data collected?

Research results from the data collected will be published as a doctoral thesis. A summary of the findings will be sent to you, if you request it. The results may also be presented at academic conferences, used in journal articles and possibly published as a book for a general audience. The data will be kept for a minimum of five years as per the University of Melbourne's policy.

Where can I get further information?

Should you require any further information, or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact any of the researchers via email or ring Ms Afentoulis on her mobile number provided in this letter.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, the University of Melbourne, on ph: +613 83442073 or Fax: +613 9347 6739.

How do I agree to participate?

If you would like to participate in this research project, please indicate that you have read and understood this information by signing the accompanying consent form.

Thank you for your interest.

Yours Sincerely,

Melissa Afentoulis

Doctoral Research Candidate

Date…….

ii) Consent Forms (Available in Greek and English)

Project Title: North Aegean Islander Greek Migration: The Next Generation Speaks – memories, stories and meanings of an odyssey

Name of Investigators:

Prof. Joy Damousi – Principal Supervisor;

Ms Melissa Afentoulis Doctoral Research Candidate

Name of Participant: _____

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me;

2. I have been provided with a written Plain Language Statement to keep;

3. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form it will be retained by the researcher;

4. I understand that my participation is voluntary and will involve *recorded interviews* and I agree that the researcher may use the results as described in the Plain Language Statement.

5. I acknowledge that:

   (a) the possible effects of participating in the *interview* have been explained to my satisfaction;

   (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;

   (c) the project is for the purpose of research;

   (d) I have been informed that a summary of the research findings will be forwarded to me, if requested.

   (e) I have been informed that with my consent the *interview will be digitally recorded, and I understand that the audio digital recording* will be stored at the University of Melbourne for a minimum of five years after any publication.

6. If I request anonymity, I further acknowledge that:

   (a) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;

(b) my name will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research;

(c) transcripts and associated files will be kept in a locked filing cabinet within the Historical and Philosophical Sciences building, with only the Research Candidate or Responsible Researcher having access and kept in a secure location during the period of fieldwork.

7. I consent to this interview being audio-recorded

□ yes □ no
(please tick)

8. I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings

□ yes □ no
(please tick)

9. My name may be used in the report and publications

□ yes □ no
(please tick)

10. I consent to the transcript being deposited at the University of Melbourne archives

□ yes □ no
(please tick)

Participant signature: Date:

iii) Reference Questions Used as a Guide

Part A: Biographical Data

a) For first generation immigrants

1. What is your name?
2. When did you arrive in Australia? How old were you?
3. What language(s) do you speak?
4. How do you describe your cultural/ethnic background?
5. What is/was your occupation? Level of education?
6. Within which age bracket do you belong: 45-65; 66-73; 74+
7. Family composition? Existing family networks?
8. When was your first trip to Greece/Limnos? Purpose of return?
9. Frequency of return trips since and now?
10. How are you involved with the Limnian community here and overseas?
11. How important is your identification? As:
    i) Greek
    ii) Limnian
    iii) Australian
12. Do you have family in Greece?
13. Do you have any other comments?

b) For second generation immigrants

1. What languages do you speak - at home; with friends; with your parents?
2. Within which age bracket do you belong: 20-35; 35-45; 45+
3. Education background / level of formal education achieved?
4. Occupation / current employment?
5. Family composition? Existing family networks?
6. When was your first trip to Greece/Limnos? Tell me about that.
7. How often do you return to Greece? Limnos now? Why do you go?
8. How do you describe your cultural/ethnic background?
9. How do you identify yourself: Greek; Limnian; Australian; Other?
10. What does your identity mean to you?
11. How are you involved? With:

i) the Greek community?

ii) The Limnian community?

12. Do you stay in touch with family and/or friends from Limnos?
13. Do you have any other comments?

Part B: Australian Experience

a) For first generation immigrants

1. Tell me about your arrival and early years in Australia. ie housing; employment; family relationships; other experiences;
2. What difficulties did you experience?
3. What were the highlights? Special memories?
4. What do you remember about leaving Greece?
5. What do you miss about Greece?
6. Why do you go back? / Why do you choose not to go back?
7. What does your involvement with the Limnian Community mean for you?
8. Do you have any other comments?

b) For second generation immigrants

1. Tell me about growing up in Australia.
2. Did you experience any difficulties?
3. What were the highlights? Special memories?
4. Who were your friends?
5. What were your aspirations? Did you achieve them? Why? Why not?
6. How important was your family while growing up?
7. What do you remember about those years?
8. Did you experience any discrimination?
9. Do you feel you belong in Australia?
10. What are your interests? Community involvements? Civic duties?
11. Do you have any other comments?

Part C: Greek Experience

a) For first generation immigrants

1. Why and when did you leave Greece?
2. Tell me about your life there before you left for Australia.
3. Tell me about your first trip back to Greece? Limnos?
4. Do you have a family home, property there? What does that represent for you?
5. What do you do when you return? How do you feel when you are there?
6. What do you like best? Least?
7. How do you relate with the locals?
8. What does Limnos mean for you?
9. Do you feel you belong in Greece?
10. Do you miss it when you are in Australia? What do you miss most?
11. Do you have any other comments?

b) For second generation immigrants

1. Tell me about your first trip back to Greece? Limnos?
2. Do you/your family have a home, property there? What does that represent for you?
3. How often do you return to Greece/Limnos? Alone or with family?
4. What do you do when you return? How do you feel when you are there?
5. What do you like best? Least?
6. What does Limnos represent for you?
7. Do you feel you belong in Greece/Limnos? What does that feel like?
8. Do you miss it when you are in Australia? What do you miss most?
9. If you go with your own kids, what do they like/feel about Limnos?
10. What do you know about the history/migration period of Greece/Limnos?
11. Do you have any other comments?

Part D: Limnos – Those who stayed

1. What do you know about Limnos's migration period?
2. How old were you when people were leaving to go to Australia/America/Other?
3. Describe what you remember/ what you were told about this period?
4. What were you doing during this period?
5. Describe your thoughts/feelings/memories at the time?
6. Were there benefits of migration for those who stayed? What? Why?
7. What do you think about those who come back to visit?
8. What do you know about their lives in the other country?
9. How would you describe your relationship with the visitors?
10. Do you like them to come? Why?
11. Do you have any other comments?

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Anthoula interviewed 14 June 2013‡

Con (Kostas) interviewed 10 March 2014

Costantine (Kostas) interviewed 19 May 2014

Dimitrios (Jim) interviewed 2 June 2013

Haralambos (Harry) interviewed 19 May 2014

Katerina interviewed 20 May 2014

Maria interviewed 17 June 2013

Niki interviewed 25 June 2013

Nikos interviewed 25 June 2013

Panagiotis (Peter) interviewed 23 May 2014

Paul (Paleologos) interviewed 26 June 2013

Stamatia (Toula) interviewed 30 May 2014

Stelios (Lakis), interviewed 9 July 2013

Group 2 - Second-generation Migrant Descendants

Andrew (Andreas) interviewed 11 March 2014

Despina interviewed 12 August 2013

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† *Interviews conducted by the researcher in Greek*

‡ *Name altered in response to request for anonymity*

Despina W interviewed 19 August 2013

Elizabeth interviewed 31 October 2014

Errikos (Erik) interviewed 10 June 2014

Fotoula interviewed 10 August 2013

John interviewed 16 September 2013

Nektarios (Nick) interviewed 23 September 2014

Nikolaos (Nick) interviewed 20 June 2014

Pantelis (Peter) interviewed 13 December 2013

Penelope (Popi) interviewed 11 March 2014

Peter interviewed 5 April 2014

Sonia interviewed 12 March 2014

Sophia interviewed 21 May 2014

Spiros interviewed 16 May 2014

Group 3 - Limnians who stayed or returned[‡‡]

Aikaterini (Keti) interviewed 18 August 2014

Angelos interviewed 12 June 2014

Eleni P interviewed 4 June 2014

Eleni H interviewed 3 June 2014

Evangelos interviewed 6 June 2014

Giorgos interviewed 18 august 2014

Marika interviewed 8 April 2014

Paleologos interviewed 2 June 2014

[‡‡] Interviews conducted and recorded by the researcher in Greek.

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