

CHAPTER 12

MYRTHIOS TO SPHAKIA; FRANGOKASTELLO; KOMITADES

[Myrthios: the Hatzidakis family]

I first came to Myrthios on 23 September 1916, landing at Plakias and then going down to Plakias to pick up the trawler again.¹ As long as I had known Professor George Hatzidakis at Athens I had known that he still kept up his ties with some village in central Crete, and on this day I learned that he came from Myrthios. There I saw his old father, Nicholas Hatzidakis, who was then just a hundred years old.² He survived for two years more. At this time he was blind, his eyes having been surgically removed some ten years before. He still heard fairly well, and had full use of his memory and wits in general. Only he did not speak much: his voice was weak and high, but then all the Hatzidakis family have these rather high-pitched voices. I noticed it in even a quite distant cousin whom I met at the monastery of Gorgolaini, where he was a monk.³ For the rest old Hatzidakis could not walk, but sat up in a chair. His face was much shrunken and his skin was a dark brown. He was not bald. I saw him again looking much the same in 1917. In 1918 he died. When I saw him in 1917 [sic: most likely 1917] he was chatting with another old man some twenty or more years younger than himself but also blind. It is the custom in Crete to put a male baby into the arms of the bride at a wedding in order that she too may have male children. This second old man, whom I found visiting the Hatzidakis house, had been the baby carried by old Hatzidakis' bride at his wedding some eighty years before. In 1918 the second elder was dead also.

The Hatzidakis family is to my mind so remarkable that I collected at Myrthios and from the professor at Athens a few notes about their history. They were not always called Hatzidakis, a name meaning the son of the pilgrim and extremely common in Crete. A few generations ago they were called Zavetis and lived not at Myrthios but at Agios Yannis, a village above the gorge which leads down to Myrthios and on the way from Myrthios to Retimo. But the family owned a mill, still in existence, in the lower part of the gorge just to the west of Myrthios, and to work this with greater convenience they moved house and came down to Myrthios. The second member of the family at Myrthios built the lower storey of the house in which they are still living. The upper storey is later: in those days there were no such things. This man was a coppersmith by trade and went as a pilgrim to Jerusalem no less than three times. He was in consequence known not so much by his proper surname but as the pilgrim smith, Khatzi Chartchas, which is the Cretan form of *χαλκιάς*. As to the word Khatzis for a pilgrim, it is of course the Arabic and Turkish Hajji, applied in the first instance to Moslem pilgrims to Mecca and in Greece under Turkish rule in popular language to pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre, who are known in the official Greek of the church as *proskynitai*. It was from this very famous pilgrim then that the family took their present name of Hatzidakis. This man, though of course in every way a Christian, was recognised as a brother by the Janissaries at the price of entertaining them in his house when they came to the village. He was a sort of honorary Janissary. This was a custom of the Janissaries in their later days: it seems too that they had a particular friendliness for coppersmiths on account of their reverence for their soup-kettles, which they treated almost as the regimental fetish, whence the colonel was called Tchorbaji, the man who provided the soup. The cook was an important official. Their regular sign of revolt was to upset the regimental

kettles. However this may be, it seems that the Pilgrim Smith contrived in the worst periods of Turkish oppression to keep his house going. And the very house where he entertained the Janissaries is still occupied by his great-grandson.

The son of the Pilgrim was the old Nicholas Hatzidakis whom I saw. He lived all his life in the village, working his mill and fishing in the sea. He had a notable brother called George who died before I came to know the family. This George was a priest at Agios Yannis, the original village of the family. He died an old man about 1898. He was a famous man with a great reputation. [Written at Preveli, 7 April 1918:] He was famed as a powerful exorcist who could drive out demons. For this purpose he had a very large cross and it is said that he used to prod the sick man with this, crying “πού ακούεις το διάβολο, παιδί μου;” [“Where can you hear the devil, my child?”] The patient would cry out in terror, “πουθενά, πουθενά” [“nowhere, nowhere”] and leap out of bed cured. This is told as a sort of joke.

The same priest George was sent for to Sphakia to clear a house of ants by his exorcisms. He read and chanted and after a while called for a cauldron of water and told the people to dig in the floor of the house. The ants’ nest was thus found and they all drowned in the hot water. He had concluded as he was chanting, by his own common sense, that the ants must have a nest under the house and then they found it. These two stories are characteristic of the half-faith, half-sceptical attitude of the Greek peasant.

This priest was said to be *χειράρης*, a lucky man, one who prospers in whatever he puts his mind to, a man who has a good *χειρό*. See note in folklore section.⁴

Myrthios, 30 May 1917

His [= Nicholas’] sons: the eldest John, professor of mathematics at Athens, now in his decline. His son Nikolaos is also a prof of mathematics at Athens, a demoticist; he came to Cambridge for the mathematical congress and has children. Other sons are Emmanuel, who lives at Myrthios, and Constantine, who is dead and was a doctor at Canea, and George the linguist, who is I think the second. The youngest is the *demodidaskalos* of Myrthios, Panayotis, my host there several times, married with children, the eldest being Nikolaos who was a soldier in this war.

Note at Sphakia, 20 July 1917

Pan[ayotis] Hatzidakis [who lived with his father] at Myrthios told me that his brother George the philologist is *οψιμαθής* [a late learner]. He used to bring corn up from Plakias, where the caiques landed, to the mill in the valley below the gorge with a donkey and a mule. His only learning was got at the *demotiko skholeio* [primary school] and helping his father when he sang in church by acting as *kalonarkhis*, the boy who chants as a sort of prompter always about half a phrase ahead of the singer, to the great confusion of the listeners. Then, in 1866, he went as a refugee to Athens and went to the *Ellinikon skholeion* [secondary school] and to the university, got a scholarship and went to study in Germany. He is now (in 1917) nearly 70, born therefore in 1848, and in 1866 was about 18, so it may be said that up to 18 or more he only knew how to read and write a little. They escaped in a sailing vessel from Kórakes, the beach below Rodakino where I set up the cross over Lt Smith’s grave.⁵ The old father stayed in Crete all through the 1866 and 1869 insurrections.⁶

I saw at Myrthios, in the house of a woman who came from Sphakia, one of the special ovens which those women build and are apparently a speciality of Sphakia. First the round floor of the oven is made, and on it a conical or dome-shaped pile of small stones is built up to be the size of the inside of the future oven. The stones are then covered first with leafy twigs and then with clay. The place where the door is to be is left uncovered and marked off by building in a round basket set on its side. Then, when the clay is quite dry, the basket is taken away and the stones taken out by way of the opening, one by one, until the whole oven is cleared. The twigs and leaves are to keep the clay clear of the stones. At the top of the oven they make or leave a hole so that when they heat the oven in the usual way with a fire inside there may be a proper draught. When the bread is baking this hole is closed with a clay cap, so that all the heat is retained. I afterwards saw another of these ovens at the monastery of Agios Charalambos close to Frangokastello.

[Damnoni (Δαμνόνι)]



The entrance to the Pool of Karavos at Damoni, 7 April 1999; the old waterline indicates that the land has risen (as noted by Dawkins)



The Pool of Karavos at Damoni today⁷

The village of Myrthios lies at the mouth of the gorge already described, and on the slopes looking down upon the sea. To the east there is a valley parallel with the sea, at the far end of which is the upper monastery of Preveli [Kato Preveli!]. In this valley coal, or rather lignite, has recently been discovered, and during the war I saw them working it. Bulgarian prisoners were employed and the workings were comparatively shallow. Directly below Myrthios a high promontory projects into the sea. On each side of it is a landing place. On the west is Plakias, on the east Damnioni. In this headland on its eastern side is a curious cleft in the rock into which the sea comes called the Pool of Karavos (του Καράβου η λίμνη). The whole slope above is called Karavos (Κάραβος), a word which means a sluice-gate.⁸ The place is an hour's walk from Myrthios, first down the hill and then very rough walking over the west shoulder of the promontory.⁹ The day – it was in April 1918 – was very hot indeed. The Pool is formed by a great vertical crack in the cliffs, perhaps twenty-five yards wide and a hundred yards deep, going perhaps a hundred yards deep into the side of the mountain. It goes indeed deeper than this, but this inner part is narrower, shallower and blocked with fallen rocks.¹⁰ In the deep pool itself the sheer cliff is naturally higher on the left side, which is towards the promontory, than it is on the other. It is interesting to note that the cliff shows evidence of a rise of the land, for about a yard above the present level is the clear incised line on the rock of an earlier water level. The rocks fell into the cleft later than this rise of the land, for they show no trace of this earlier level of the sea.

From the high part of the shoulder of the promontory before one descends to the Pool there is a view to the west as far as Frangokastello. This sloping shoulder is called *το ρικάρμι*, which seems to mean the Heather Knoll, from *ρείκι*, heather, and *αρμί*, a hill or knoll smooth without rock.¹¹ But this one is rocky.

On the headland, especially the northern slopes, is a great deal of the prostrate *Aristolochia*¹² with big purple flowers (in flower April 1918): not a common plant. There was also, as everywhere in Crete, an abundance of a small *Ophrys* with a green and yellow flower and brown lip.¹³ The boy who guided me to the Pool told me that

children call this plant the Maiden, *η κόρη*, and play a little game with it. They pick it and press their finger to the flower. This breaks the bag of glue at the base of the clubs of pollen, and these then stick to the finger as to a bee's proboscis. Then the child shows his finger with the pollen masses adhering to it and says: "*δο μου, κόρη, το φιλί σου, κι εγώ σου δίνω το δικό μου. Νά το!*" "Give me thy kiss, maiden, and I will give thee mine. There it is!" On the headland I found dittany, and the large white [*ranunculus?*] is common in the neighbourhood.

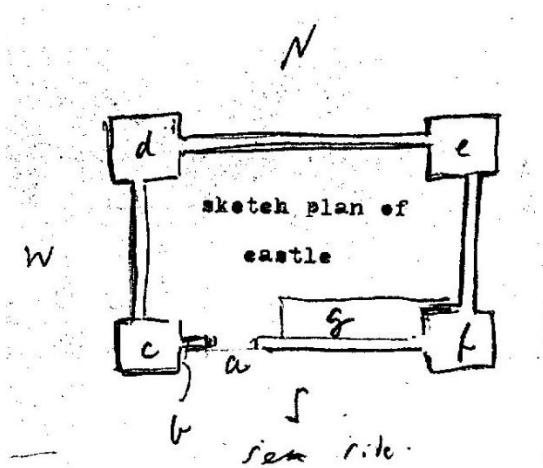
[Myrthios to Frangokastello]

The road along the coast westwards from Myrthios first crosses the valley below the gorge, then ascends to Selli [Selliá], a village as the name implies on the *sellí, σελλί*, the saddle between the Myrthios valley and the next. It then passes along the generally bare folds of the slopes between the mountains and the sea. As it proceeds it passes above a little hamlet called Phinikia. I went there once and sat in the house of the local farmer, a cousin of the Hatzidakis of Myrthios – some fighting took place there too in one of the innumerable Cretan insurrections – then about three quarters of the way to Rodakino there is a spring of very cold water and a big tree a few steps above the road. This place is called *to Phrati*.

The next village is Rodakino, upper and lower. They lie on the two sides of a ravine with olives on the steep slopes, and half an hour below the village is a little beach. It was here that a ship, I think a Russian ship, came and took off the women and children at the time of the insurrection of 1866.

Further westward the coast becomes flatter and there is a sort of rather waste, a sea-plain which continues all the way to the ridge which hides Hora Sphakion. The villages now to be passed, Arghoules, Skaloti, Kapsodasos, Patsianos, Vouvas and Komitades, are at the foot of the hills where the water is, and so some distance from the sea. These villages serve, as I have remarked elsewhere,¹⁴ as the winter habitation for the people who, in the summer, go up with their herds to the highlands of Sphakia, to Kallikratis, Asphendou and such places. Close by the sea, opposite the villages of Kapsodasos and Patsianos, where the plain is some two miles wide, lies a large Venetian ruin, **Frangokastello**. Standing almost by itself in the desolate plain, its appearance is most impressive.¹⁵ It can be seen from a great distance. I have even seen it, as I have said, from the Karavos Pool below Myrthios. The shore here is formed by a little cliff, say fifty feet high, where the plain breaks away suddenly. The castle lies within a few yards of the cliff. Below it is a little cove and a house or two, and a few yards to the east is the Monastery of Agios Charalambos, hardly big enough to break the complete desolation of the great castle.

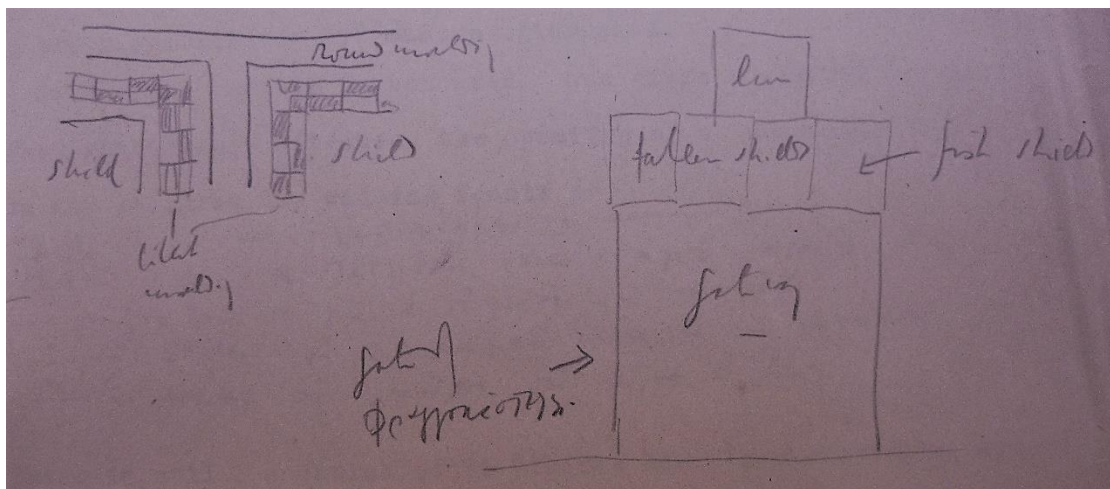
The castle is impressive and more so at a distance than close. Standing all alone on the edge of the plain (for Agios Charalambos is small and inconspicuous), it gives a striking picture of desolation and from a distance, e.g. near Rodakino and still more from the sea, it looks very fine.



Frangokastello, April 1999 (tower C is highest)

The castle is an oblong with its longer side to the sea. The short side I found to be in all 39 paces, the long side probably about 60. At each corner is a projecting square tower. The three towers, D E F on the plan, are only higher than the connecting walls by the height of the battlements, whilst the tower C is considerably higher. The corner towers and plan are like a finer version of the castle of Hierapetra.

All the walls are surmounted by square battlements and below them is a row of loopholes. The whole interior has been gutted and of the buildings inside the court there are only ruined walls, except the building along the south wall which is presumably used as a store as it was locked. The tall tower C is used to store charcoal. High up on the jutting face of the tall tower at B is a framed coat of arms. It is divided horizontally. The lower half of the field looks plain; the upper half bears three six-pointed stars. Over the door were four framed shields. Only the easternmost one is left. It bears three fish set horizontally, each fish a little arched. Above the shields is the Lion of St Mark. An old man whom I saw at the castle told me that the three missing shields are built into houses at Kapsodasos; at a later visit I enquired for them there but could not find them. He also told me that there is another lion at Kapsodasos. The shields and lion were all on separate slabs set in frames of the usual Venetian billet moulding and outside this a plain round moulding, as shown in the sketch:



[Dawkins' scribbles: Round moulding; shield; billet moulding; lion; fallen shields; fish shield; gateway; gate of Φραγγοκάστελλο]

On the plain at Frangokastello the peasants believe that at dawn warriors may be seen fighting in the air, and these are the wraiths of the men who fought here in 1827 when Hadzi Mikhali came from Epeiros to effect the union of Crete with Greece. This is the account I heard of them from old Nicholas Hatzidakis of Myrthios who told me that the battle was on May 12th 1827.¹⁶ The old man was then himself a little boy of eleven and at Myrthios or Agios Yannis must have heard all about the encounter. Vlastos, in his collection of Cretan ballads, called *The Wedding in Crete*, *O γάμος εν Κρήτη*, has, pp. 124-127, a ballad of this fight at Frangokastello in which Hadzi Mikhali Dalianis was killed at the head of his three hundred men on May 17th 1828. The last lines of the ballad (p. 127) are about these spectral warriors, *Δροσουλίτες*, Men of the Dew, as they are now called, and run thus [Greek not quoted]:

They may be rendered:

But still on May the seventeenth appears the ghostly army,
 Hadzi Mikhali with his men; and in the misty vapour
 They seem to fight, and still are heard below the Frankish castle
 The shouting of the miscreant Turks, the hoofs of trampling horses:
 And all who have the gift of sight behold them there and tremble,
 But they, and may God give them rest, do no man any mischief.

When I was passing by one time I saw a shepherd boy from Kapsodasos by the walls of the castle. I asked him if he had ever seen the Men of the Dew. He was quite certain that he had and said that they looked like an army (*σα στρατό*) fighting. It was before dawn and at sunrise they vanished. Similar appearances are recorded by Ramage in southern Italy in the neighbourhood of the Capo di Leuca. These appearances, he says, like the vapours in which they are seen, are constantly changing their position and assuming new forms, and are therefore called by the people *Mutate*. They are seen early in the morning when the air is perfectly calm. Ramage implies that what is seen is generally towers, castles and landscapes, but he alludes to a passage in ancient historians about men seen fighting in the air.ⁱ When I have passed by Frangokastello it has always been somewhere about midday, so I have never had a chance to see anything.

Agios Charalambos by Frangokastello, 19 July 1917

A few yards to the east of the castle of Frangokastello is the monastery of Agios Charalambos.¹⁷ It consists of a church in a courtyard, a part of which is formed by the house in which the one monk now lives. The other walls of the court are [?single] and have loopholes; they were built for defence by the Turks in 1866 when they held the monastery. The church is double. It contains a good carved screen and several of the finely-woven Sphakia towels, of which I bought two at Hora Sphakion. The two altars are hung with the embroidery of a Cretan skirt in polychrome, but the work is neither very fine nor very wide. The monk there is from Preveli. He is now alone; there was another with him, but he died not long ago. He acts as priest in the church and cultivates the few fields around the monastery. He gave us some very good wine. The

ⁱ I quote from *The Nooks and By-Ways of Italy*, by C. T. Ramage, 1868, p. 178.

monastery is *eparkhiakon*; a desolate place with nothing but the castle and a few fisherfolk and shepherds.

Komitades, 9th June 1918

Komitades is a nice village on an eminence on the eastern side of the mouth of the gorge leading up to Askiphou, standing above the sea plain of Sphakia at the foot of the hills at the mouth of the gorge.

Church of St George 10 minutes' walk below the village. Painted inscription on the west wall on the north side of the door. In the same church on the south wall are the pictures of the donors (see Gerola) and by them these two inscriptions [not reproduced here].¹⁸

Between the village and the church of St George there is another old church of St Demetrius with a door in the south wall with dogtooth moulding and the same on the corbels of the ribs of the vaulted roof.

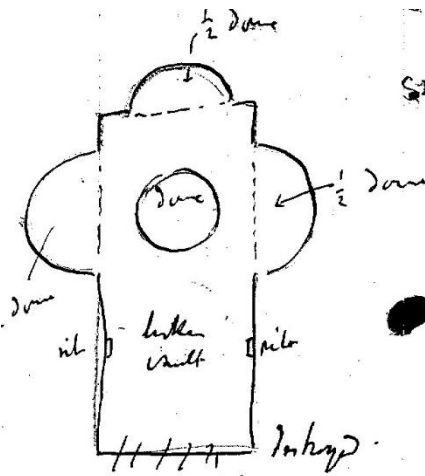
Traditions, 9th June 1918

At Komitades I was told the story that Mahomet (Μαχομέθ) had an assistant, Pachomios (Παχώμιος). In order to get people to believe in his revelation he procured two books exactly alike, one with the Koran written in it and the other one blank. He then put Pachomios down a well with the written book, showed the blank book to the people, and said that he would let it down the well and by a miracle draw it up with writing in it. He then let it down the well where Pachomios was and Pachomios changed the books and sent up the written book. Then Mahomet, being afraid that Pachomios would betray him, said, "Everyone who believes in my revelation must throw a stone down the well", and this they did, and Pachomios was killed. Every Turk who goes to Mecca throws a stone upon the place where the well is. Yannis of Palaikastro knew this story too.

But at Komitades at the same time I heard another version according to which Pachomios was a rival miracle-worker and pretended to work miracles and Mahomet got him stoned in the well in order to get him out of the way. This version is clearly not good.

The odd thing is that Pachomios was a Christian hermit, I think of the Thebaid.¹⁹

Sphakia, 22 September 1916



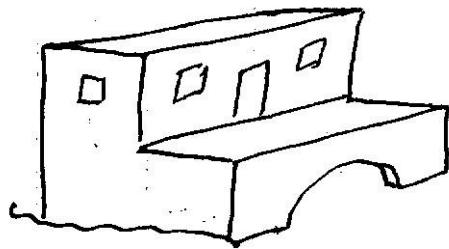
Sketch plan of ruined church of Agioi Apostoloi at Tholos, which is the part of Khora Sphakio on the top of the ridge east of the harbour. The church lies on the road to Komitades. It is figured in Gerola. The west door has been entirely torn out. Above it are remains of built-in basins, probably the usual 5 in a cross.²⁰

A good deal of the roof of the nave has gone. The dome is raised on a high drum which rests upon rather fudged pendentives. There is inside a string course all round at the spring of the vaults. In the drum there are four windows.

The church is in a very tumbledown state with great cracks in the masonry and has been for long too much ruined for use.²¹

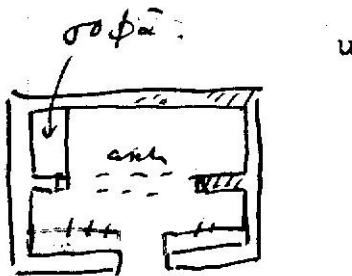
Houses

22 September 1916

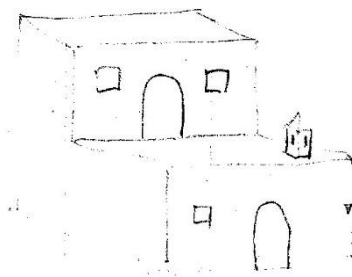


Sketch of a common type of house in Khora Sphakia. The upper part is for living in and has two rooms; it seems that the upper part of the partition is often made of criss-cross wooden lattice. Is there a sofa?

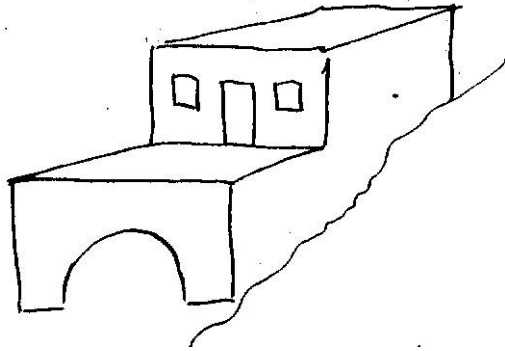
The entrance is on the lower floor under the arch. This lower floor is used for stores and often has at one side under the arch the oven.



At Kissamo Kastelli I was in a *kamaroto spiti* of which I give a sketch plan.

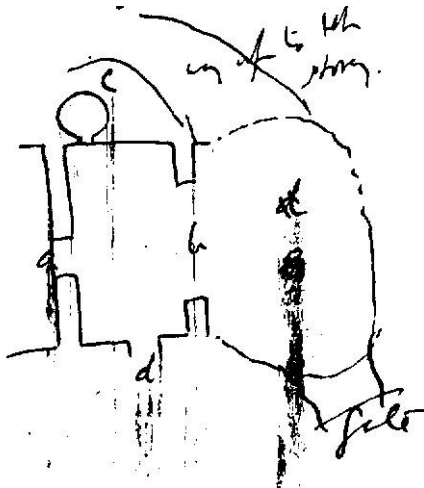


Kind of house at Skalotí, one the villages at the foot of the hills near Frangokastello. The chimney is over the oven or more likely over the hearth. It is very like the Khora Sphakio house sketched above.



Ροδάκινο, 28 May 1917

House at Κάτω Ροδάκινο – Σφακιά type



Μύρθιος

Sketch of groundplan of Hatzidakis house at Myrthios.

- a. entrance to rooms
- b. archway
- c. oven
- d. entrance to more rooms
- e. enclosure used at night as a sheepfold.

The sheep come into the space below the arch and the whole house always smells of sheep.

29 May 1917

At Armenoi south of Retimo many tiled roofs. Houses are of the Sphakia type with a big arch in front. Everywhere from here to Myrthios I noticed that the doors of the courts of the houses are double and very much wider than they are in east Crete. This is because the *avlí* [yard] in front of the house is used as a *mandra* [sheep pen]. This uncleanly practice speaks for the disordered state of the country and the great prevalence of sheep-stealing around Sphakia, so that a *mandra* not immediately by the house and preferably thus actually in the village was not safe. See Hatzidakis house at Myrthios.

12 June 1918 [cf. ch. 7]

Red-tiled roofs at Anopolis only 3 and at Aradena only one. The earth at these places is very red and being used for mortar and for *domata* the general effect is that the houses are as red as the fields. The Sphakia type house of house is common [sketch not reproduced here].

Chimneys, 29 May 1917

The sketch shows the type of chimney in use at Preveli and Myrthios (and I think towards Sphakia). As soon as one gets away from the south coast towards Retimo the usual broken *pithari* chimney appears, not this built type which I have not seen

elsewhere in Crete. (I later saw another type of built chimney in the far west of Crete.)
[sketch not reproduced here]²²

[More] Stories from Nimboro [Imbros], 31 March 1919²³

Between Frangokastello and the mountains in the middle of the plain is the church of Agios Nikitas, which I think I remember standing there all by itself. Close to Frangokastello there were some Christian girls washing clothes in the sea, and a Turkish caique came. The Turks wanted to carry off the girls. There was a Christian on board who wanted to warn the girls and could not do it directly, so he sang a song hoping that they would understand:

μαντίλια και πέτσες
..... μπεμπέτσες
όμπανε όμπανε το βράδυ
θ' αρμενέψουμε [sic for αρμενίσουμε] ομάδι.²⁴

The first two lines I am not sure of. Μπεμπέτσες seems to mean women, ξεβράκωτες the man told me. In any case the girls did not catch his meaning and one of them was carried off. In her Turkish master's house on the feasts of the Cross and St Nikitas she was serving her master with water to wash with and he noticed she was weeping. He asked why and she said it was because it was a feast day. She prayed and the Holy Cross and the Saint worked a miracle and carried her off to the church of St Nikitas.

For this story I note that there is some miracle of St Nikitas, and perhaps the same one, recorded I think by Spratt, and I have some remarks on it in a paper on a walk in Arcadia in the Emmanuel College magazine.²⁵

The woman went on to say that the saints used to work miracles but don't now as God and they are angry at the neglect of fasts.

Émile Legrand, *Recueil de poèmes historiques en grec vulgaire* [Paris 1877] has p. 351 this note in Greek contributed by Manousogiannakis:²⁶

“St Nikitas used to be honoured and given a general festival by the Sphakiotes; witness the opening of a song sung at table and at three-day wedding feasts:

“If you want to relish and admire brave men,
go off to Patsianos when it's St Nikitas' day.
when the villages gather together, the inner ones and the ones on this side,
and you'll see men wrestling and youths competing in athletics,
and you'll see how they dance and fire their guns.

“There is still a church of St Nikitas near Frankokastello, and Buondelmonti²⁷ refers to this as the city of St Nikitas. There were many traditions of the saint and the following miracle. Pirates, perhaps in Saracen days, carried off a girl from here and she on the eve of the feast was sad and her master asked why. She answered:

“Today it's Holy Cross day, and tomorrow St Nikitas',
when they used to have great celebrations at our house.

“And he said:

“If the cross has favour and Nikitas has glory
you’ll go to your house while it’s still dark.

“The same night she dreamed of a man on horseback who took her up and brought her home. This seems to have been preserved also in a poem, but these old songs are lost except just the first few verses which alone are sung at feasts. They are therefore called τραγούδια της τάβλας [table songs].”

Spratt I (p. 346) tells this story in connection with the church of St Nikitas by the shore just west of Cape Sudsuro [Tsoutsouros]. I have never visited it.

Peter Mackridge’s notes

¹ Dawkins writes Plakalona instead of Plakias. Plakalona is the name of a location near Palaikastro that Dawkins refers to in ch. 30.

² Georgios Hatzidakis (1848-1841) was the first person to be appointed Professor of Linguistics at Athens University. His father was born in 1816, as Dawkins notes elsewhere. He was not related to the archaeologist Iosif Hatzidakis.

³ Dawkins describes Gorgolaini monastery in ch. 18.

⁴ In ch. 30.

⁵ Smith may have been the commander of one of the trawlers that Dawkins travelled on during the War. Smith is mentioned in Dawkins’ list of War journeys on 31 May 1916.

⁶ The early life of the linguist Hatzidakis bears a striking resemblance to that of his near-contemporary Joseph Wright (1855-1930), Professor of Comparative Philology at Oxford University and author of *The English Dialect Dictionary* (1895-1905). Wright was born into a poor family in Yorkshire and from the age of six he assisted his father, a quarryman, by transporting quarried stone in a donkey-cart. He was unable to read until the age of 15. According to D. Vagiakakos, *Γεώργιος Ν. Χατζιδάκις (1848-1941): βίος και έργον* (Athens 1977), pp. 5-6, the young Hatzidakis was at Limni in 1868 helping to unload supplies from a Greek boat for the rebels when an Ottoman warship suddenly appeared and the boat had to leave in a hurry with George unintentionally stuck on board. He moved in with his mother, who had settled in Athens for the duration of the revolt, and it was there, aged 20, that he began to attend secondary school. Subsequently he studied at Athens University and went on to obtain a doctorate in Linguistics in Germany.

⁷ This place has been altered out of all recognition since Dawkins’ day: “Surrounded by lush greenery, quietly located on the beach of Karavos, the traditionally built Kalypso Cretan Village offers a swimming pool, tennis court and spa centre” (<https://www.booking.com/hotel/gr/kalypso-cretan-village.en-gb.html>). The Kalypso Cretan [sic] Village was already there when we visited the place in 1999, but it had been temporarily abandoned. The Pool of Karavos is now known (for the benefit of northern European tourists) as “Pirate’s fjord”.

⁸ This Cretan sense of the word κάραβος is confirmed by Pangalos

⁹ Actually over the saddle from north to south.

¹⁰ We didn’t notice these rocks – now removed?

¹¹ According to Pangalos, *αρμί* means ‘ridge of mountains’. We couldn’t see the view of Frangokastello noted by Dawkins.

¹² Dutchman’s pipe, seen by PM and JW on a roadside bank between Agia Fotini and Apostoli in Amari, but not here! Dawkins talks about *Aristolochia* again in ch. 28.

¹³ We didn’t see these either.

¹⁴ See ch. 5.

¹⁵ Llewellyn Smith (p. 153) writes: “From Castel Temeno, erected in 961, the year when Nicephorus Phocas reclaimed Crete from the Arabs, to Castel Sfacchia (1526), all the great castles are more or less gone, and Frangokastello is the best preserved.”

¹⁶ Hatzimichalis Dalianis from Delvinaki in Epirus commanded the Greek insurgents in Crete at the time. During the battle of Frangokastello all the Greek defenders of the castle were killed. Theocharis Detorakis, *Ιστορία της Κρήτης*, 2nd edn (Herakleion 1990), p. 346, dates the defeat and the death of Dalioanis and 385 men to 18 May 1828. Dawkins retells of the Hatzimichalis and the Drosoulites in “Folk-memory in Crete”, pp. 34-36. Xan Fielding travelled to Frangokastello, determined to witness the Drosoulites (“the Dewy Shades” as he calls them), but they failed to appear. In Dawkins’ archive is a cutting of an article that Fielding published about his experiences: “The Ghosts of Frangokastello”, *The Listener*, 29 Jan. 1953, pp. 187-188. I propose an alternative rendering: ‘Dew-wraiths’.

¹⁷ According to Nixon et al. (1989), Agios Charalambos is the only monastery known so far in the Sphakia district.

¹⁸ Gerola II Tavola 11.

¹⁹ Dawkins is right: Pachomius is supposed to have been the founder of the first monastery, in AD 320.

²⁰ By “basins” Dawkins means the ceramic dishes that are often inset into the walls of churches to form decorative motifs (usually a cross over the west door or over the apse).

²¹ The church still seems to be standing, but in a precarious state.

²² See ch. 2.

²³ Told by Mr & Mrs Koutroumbas; cf. ch. 6.

²⁴ I have found similar secret verses warning girls to escape an imminent pirate raid: *πότε θα ’βγει το φεγγάρι, ν’ αρμενίσουμε ομάδα, / ταβλομάντηλα και πέτσες, δεν γρικόατε εσείς μπεμπέτσες*; [When will the moon rise, so we can sail off together, / tablecloths and skins [?], aren’t you listening, girls?]. I’m not sure what *μπεμπέτσες* means, but it may derive from Turkish *bebek* ‘baby’ or ‘doll’. *Ξεβράκωτες* means literally ‘knickerless’, i.e. naked from the waist down, or figuratively ‘stark naked’ or ‘dirt poor’.

²⁵ Dawkins’ account of the Frangokastello version of events is told again in “Folk-memory in Crete”, pp. 25-26.

²⁶ Dawkins’ note is attached to the entry to Nikitas (St) in the glossary to Legrand’s edition of “The song of Alidakis”. The translation of Manousogiannakis’ words is by Dawkins, while the translation of the verse extracts is mine.

²⁷ The early 15th-century Florentine traveller Cristoforo Buondelmonti.