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Children's Clothing in a Picture: Explorations of Photography, Childhood and Children's Fashions in Early 20th Century Greece and Its US Diaspora

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Abstract: Children's dress is a constituent element of individual and group identity as well as an indicator of social change. Exploring childhood in three Greek rural communities in Laconia, Kythera, and Crete as well as in their respective diaspora in the United States, this study aims at shedding light on the (re)presentation of children in photographic records through clothing, perceived as the material projection on the self and the group (familial, ethnic, transnational). Drawing from theoretical and methodological approaches of distinct fields, such as history, fashion, photography, material and visual studies, and social anthropology, the study explores dynamic changes and shifting meanings in the way children were perceived and projected or asserted themselves through tangible sources, namely photographs, and clothing. The time period examined spans from the 1900s to the late 1930s without rigidly defining, as shifts witnessed in this time period were occurring in the last years of the 19th century, while the aftermath of the 1930s recession years could be felt beyond the period under study.

Keywords: dress; fashion; childhood; migration; photography; identity; gender; age; family; culture; transnationalism; materiality



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1. Introduction

Parcels filled with ties, suits, oversized shoes, and rolls of fabric sent by “their brothers” in the US sometimes produced not only gratitude but also laughter in the mountainous village of Kremasti, Greece, for their peculiar patterns, limited usefulness and unpaired sizes.¹ Anecdotal as it may sound, the dispatch of such items introduced villagers to the sartorial habits and choices of “America” filtered through the eyes of the Greek migrant fellow villagers.² The circulation of clothing and accessories however, was not one-sided, with villagers (less frequently) reciprocating, mostly with a cherished homemade cloth from the homeland. Transnational fashions extended to babies and children who are the focal point of this analysis are explored in a comparative context; Greek rural communities and their respective migrant communities in the United States in the first three decades of the 20th century (since the 1940s are unlike due to WWII and its aftermath).

With limited studies on children's clothing in Greece (Bada 1991, 2008; Bada-Tsomokou 1993a; Papathanasiou 2003; Vreli-Zachou 1990) and even less on Greek migrant children and their fashion practices (Dounia 2014), the principal aim of this work is to explore childhood through clothing and dress in a comparative context. The overarching argument focuses on the changes witnessed in children's clothing in the first decades of the 20th century and the ways in which these changes were shaped by both global factors (rise of consumerism, interwar economic and cultural conditions, perceptions of childhood) but also local conditions (migration, transnationalism, poverty). Drawing from private collections of family photographs, this work primarily attempts to identify the changes regarding children's attire on both sides of the Atlantic, following Paoletti's assertion for that period that “changes that occurred in children's clothing were more dramatic than those that took place in adult styles” (Paoletti 1987, p. 138). Then, by placing child fashion

and dress in context, this work further seeks to explore notions of agency, aesthetics, and identities “out of static space and into a dynamic set of relationships” (Bennett 2011, p. 109) that are inextricably linked to notions of nationhood, motherhood and family roles and relations in a transnational and transitional context. In conclusion, the present article shares Woodward’s view that “instead of assuming a predetermined self, the question here becomes that of determining what anthropological conceptualization of the self would arise” (Woodward 2005, p. 21) through the clothing made for and worn by children. This paper ultimately aims to show how, in the first half of the 20th century, localized fashion choices for children in remote Greek villages and their respective migrant communities in the US were not exclusively shaped by transatlantic aesthetic encounters. They were also marked by the transitional phase of a discernibly expanding consumer behavior as well as by a dynamic and varied perception of childhood that ultimately impacted the very definition of “self” for children. Methodologically, this article examines “the interaction between garments, wearers, social settings” (Taylor 2002, p. 107) and viewers “in creating meaning” and uses photographs “as evidence for the physical reality” (Rose 2011, p. 107) of clothes worn by children.

2. Theoretical Framework(s) and Methodology

Fashion studies, as Tseëlon has observed, greatly profit from the “rich interdisciplinary input it generates” (Tseëlon 2001, p. 436). An interdisciplinary lens that combines fashion theory, childhood studies, photography, migration, transnationalism and materiality frames the theoretical context of the present work. To start with fashion studies, from early theoretical preoccupations³ to current research,⁴ the field is ever-expanding. Studies attempt to associate fashion and dress with notions of ethnicity and belonging (Bethke 2019), migration and/or gender (Korotchenko and Clarke 2010; Bal and Hernández-Navarro 2011; Barnes and Eicher 1992; Buckley and Fawcett 2002), art, aesthetics and identity (Gell 1998; Miller and Kuechler 2005; Bal and Hernández-Navarro 2011), globalization and capitalism (Thomas Cook 2004; Welters and Lilethun 2018) and ultimately childhood (Jorae 2010; Brun Petersen 2020). The study of children’s clothing “borders both on childhood studies and on fashion theory”, yet, as Trine Brun Petersen comments, “neither field has taken a strong interest in the subject” (Brun Petersen 2020, p. 3). Furthermore, children’s fashion history, as Daniel Thomas Cook argues, suffers from the “conceptual myopia inherited from fashion theory and limited by an unreflective, uncritical conceptualization of children and childhood” (Thomas Cook 2011, p. 7)⁵ as well as by the inability of historians to grasp the “changing contours of childhood and youth” (Ibid.) or to contribute significantly “to childhood history to any great extent” (Ibid.). Cook states that we need to overcome analytical difficulties and bring in grand historical narratives in the study of children’s clothing so that historians escape the mere “description of supposed ‘objective’ changes in dress” or the simplistic assertions that certain styles “mystically fell out of favor”.⁶ The main purpose of this study is to approach child dress and fashion by historicizing and contextualizing garments, accessories and their wearers in a way that does not mute individual and/or group aesthetics and practices nor obscures identities and agencies. Fashion and dress are examined comparatively in an attempt to explore what it meant to be a child in remote Greek villages⁷ and in the respective Greek–American communities in the US⁸ in the early 20th century to the 1940s. Both subtle and overt changes are sought out and linked with concurrent socio-economic changes underway for the given period of time.

Childhood has also attracted the interest of academia, particularly in the first post-WWII decades. Early focus on children and childhood is mostly found in the fields of folklore, cultural studies and social anthropology with theoretical and fieldwork-based works exploring the role of the child in different subsistence groups, in familial annual-cycle events and rituals, and in arts and games/toys. Also important is the contribution of psychology and pedagogy in approaching childhood. In the field of history, a greater reluctance to engage in the study of childhood is observed, and such lacuna can be attributed either to the influence of early theoretical assertions that childhood is another

“invention” of modernity,⁹ or to the blurry lines in defining childhood across cultures and periods of time, or to the overall inclusion of children in broader studies on family, instead of treating children as a field of study in its own right.¹⁰ Recently, research on childhood has a clearer, mostly multi-disciplinary and cross-cultural lens and incorporates the different facets of childhood experience, such as time, gender, race, class and agency.¹¹ Theoretically, this work oscillates between exploring children’s identity as inextricably linked to family dynamics and socio-cultural perceptions of childhood while at the same time according children a degree of agency, perceptually resonating Gubar Marah’s assertion that “if we scholars want to claim that children have agency, then, we must concede that the kind of agency they have is not synonymous with autonomy” (Marah 2016, p. 293). In Greece, early studies on childhood originated from the fields of folklore, sociology and later social anthropology,¹² followed by psychology, pedagogy and literary analysis. A historical contextualization of childhood has not adequately flourished thus far, with few exceptions (Avdela 2003; Riginos 1995; Papathanasiou 2003).

Theoretical discussion on migration and transnationalism is prolific, yet for the purpose of the present article, the focus is placed on the interrelation of migration to materiality. The role of objects, in this particular case clothing, shoes and other accessories, is linked with memory of places and people, with identity and representation or performance and with emotional belonging (McMillan 2008; Savaş 2014; Svašek 2012). The role of objects in enabling “proxy” presence is also explored, especially for children living in Greece while members of their families have migrated to the US. Finally, the representation of clothing in photographs sent to Greece and its impression on young Greek children of the time would be an interesting approach, yet undisclosed in this work, as it is practically inaccessible due to temporal distance and lack of any systematic recording of such impressions or memories.

From the frequently quoted studies on photography¹³ of Siegfried Kracauer (Kracauer 1927)¹⁴ and Walter Benjamin (Benjamin 1931, [1936] 2008)¹⁵ to the present, the photographic medium has come a long way and beyond its professional, artistic or vernacular use, has become a source of information and a methodological tool for various academic fields and theoretical strongholds.¹⁶ Photographs of children in Greece form a small part of photographic analysis in Greek academia. General interest in photography on a theoretical level reached Greece quite late, mostly after the 1970s, with the return of trained abroad professional photographers from Europe (Petsini 2007, pp. 13–14).¹⁷ Systematic recording of the uses of the medium and its most important operators in Greece is encountered mostly in the works of Alkis Xanthakis (Xanthakis 2008, 1994), while an attempt to historically contextualize Greek photography is found in various recent works.¹⁸ Influential for the present work is the approach of Alan Sekula, emphasizing the discursive meaning of photography as a “metalanguage” and pointing at the importance of representation when approaching an image. For this work, the analysis will follow Sekula’s call for placing an image in its socio-historical context in order to “begin to acquire an understanding of meaning as related to intention” (Sekula 1982, p. 92). The representation of children in family photographs is time and space-specific in an attempt to shed light on the “relation between childhood and the evolution of Greek society in the early 20th century” (Papathanasiou 2003) as well as in the Greek–American migrant communities through the photographic lens of that era. The ways in which photography has been connected to memory and linked to family and its functions are also discussed in the analysis that follows. Primarily, the works of Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Bourdieu 1965; Bourdieu 1996), Julia Hirsch (J. Hirsch 1981), Marianne Hirsch (M. Hirsch 1997, 1999) and Annette Kuhn (Kuhn [1995] 2002, 2007) are significant and relatable both theoretically and methodologically. In particular, Harper’s “photo elicitation” (Harper 2002)¹⁹ and Annette Kuhn’s “memory work”²⁰ and “bricolage” (Kuhn 2007, p. 283)²¹ have proven to be constructive methodological tools. Given the multi-disciplinary theoretical approach related to the topic at hand and the need to explore a distant past based on mostly visual (and not so many written) records, bricolage is deemed indispensable as a method.

The material examined in this work includes photographs originating from private family collections in both Greece and the US. Exploring photographs to study childhood agrees with Cunningham's observation that "those interested in concepts of childhood and in the day-to-day lives of children draw on [...] visual images of children, material culture and a miscellany of written material". (Cunningham 1998, p. 1196). Most of the photographs utilized are from the author's personal archive, coming from three distinct geographical locations in the Greek territory, namely Kremasti in Laconia,²² and two small villages in Kythera and in Crete.²³ Though different in terms of their local history,²⁴ geography²⁵ as well as certain cultural elements,²⁶ the three communities in Greece share some important similarities; all three are remote and mountainous, populated by agricultural and pastoralist households in the time the photographs were taken. Most importantly, all three experienced intense flows of transatlantic migration in the late 19th and early 20th century that followed mostly the same pattern: male-led, viewed as temporary and triggered by similar economic motives. The three communities, in the broader sense, also intersect in terms of their history as due to wars, occupation, trade and marriage, their populations mingled in different moments of their history. In discussing photographic records of the three communities, familiarity leans more towards Laconia, the author's own place of origin. Yet, in all three cases, micro-historical interpretations are also based on personal, unrecorded conversations with people who lived in these places during the historical period in focus. Along with photographic records, the analysis has incorporated extensive searches of the Ellis Island passenger records, official Kremasti community records for the period of 1912 to 1939, letters exchanged between migrants and their kin in Kremasti from 1905 to 1939,²⁷ other family transcripts (for example economic records). Also, all photographic collections included many more photos than those discussed and analyzed here, and viewing all photos was necessary to get a grasp of the communities' imprints in time and space. Printed sources of local cultural associations were also utilized (particularly Stathatos 2006; Dounias 1997). Finally, a yearbook issued by the Greek community of California and now owned by the author has been an invaluable source of many portraits of Greek migrants and their kin as well as advertisements of their—among others—tailor services and small clothing manufacturing industries.

Photographs from Kremasti and its migrant community in the US constitute the more sizable collection consisting of hundreds of photographs sub-divided into the author's private family records as well as the private records of three key consultants descendants of Kremasti migrants in the US. The consultants' thoughtful comments and clarifications were beneficial in identifying those photographs, the occasion of photographs and the use of photographs. The collections originating from Kythera and Crete have been kindly donated to the author by their late owners in the past. In the case of Kythera, long, unrecorded discussions with the owner—who was himself an amateur photographer inspired by his migrant father who returned from the US with a camera and a desire to take shots—had taken place. For Crete, unofficial interviews were conducted with descendants and relatives of the late owner in order to provide reliable context. Knowledge is sometimes intermittent for Kytheran and Cretan photographs, resembling what Bethke also acknowledges when commenting that "photographs [...] were often separated from other written material that would allow us to gain insights into the motivations of the photographers and the subsequent use of the photographs. [...] also, the exact date of the photograph as well as the photographer's identity and that of the sitters are often unknown" (Bethke 2019, p. 220). For the purpose of this work, only some of the photographs of children encountered in the photographic corps are discussed and analyzed, with their selection being the author's personal choice. As shown in the table below (see Appendix A), both amateur and professional photographs are discussed, and there has been an effort to include both staged (in studio or not) and "snapshot" images. Finally, the technical details of photographs are mostly unknown, and an attempt to date them or to identify the type of camera, studio, paper, method and original size in most cases is hindered for a variety of reasons.²⁸ Despite the aforementioned limitations, an attempt is made to explore a mostly understudied topic

of childhood and fashion—through a medium that was not so frequently used in Greece at that time.

3. Historical Background

At the dawn of the 20th century, Greece²⁹ was by and large an agricultural country that had not yet fulfilled its national-geographic aspirations³⁰ while engaging in different war fronts, including the Balkan wars (1912–1913) and World War I.³¹ The end of WWI with the ensuing Asia Minor catastrophe presented a demographic, political and socio-economic challenge for a state in a financial crisis that had to respond to the demands of approximately 1.5 million fleeing refugees while at the same time, this catastrophic aftermath signaled the end of the “Great Idea”.³² A deeply indebted country with major banking institutions lacking,³³ Greece underwent an official bankruptcy in 1932—just a few years after the 1893 bankruptcy and the 1897 international supervision imposed—and entered yet another phase of deep economic recession. The beginning of the 20th century was also characterized by a massive migration flow of Greeks, mostly from the rural periphery and primarily towards the United States, despite legal halts imposed by the US to restrict such flows in the interwar years and after the Great Depression. In fact, in the Peloponnesian province of Laconia, 20.36% of its total population had migrated in the first two decades of the 20th century, followed by the Peloponnesian provinces of Arcadia and Messinia (Gavala 2006, p. 36), while in Crete an annual 2.5% of its population followed the transatlantic journey. The state of New York was the most popular destination for migrants, especially from Laconia, since this was the port of entry to the US at the end of a long and hazardous trip but also because most Greek migrants aspired to “urbanize” rather than head for rural US destinations, or to stay within the auspices of an already established Greek community. In fact, as Contopoulos states about the Greek community in New York, “the federal census of 1910 reported an increase to 8038 [Greek migrants], of which 5314 were adult males over 21 years. The group represented 66.11 percent of the New York Greek community. The remaining 2004 were boys and females. The data clearly illustrated that the New York Greeks formed a predominately adult male society from 1900 to 1910. Very few women, girls and families resided in the city during the decade” (Contopoulos 1992, p. 23).

4. History of Photography

The history of photography in Greece in the first half of the twentieth century is relatively understudied. Allegedly, the first attempt to establish a studio in Athens dates back to 1841–1843 and is attributed to Villeroy or Villeroy. Yet it seems that the time—only 1 year after the launching of a photographic studio in New York by Alexander S. Worcott et al.—was unripe, with Greece being a poor, mostly agricultural and pre-capitalist country but also lacking the pictorial traditions of Western Europe. Daguerreotype was the most common method for the early period of photography in Greece, with its difficulty of execution and high cost making it accessible almost exclusively to the upper classes of Greek and foreign aristocracy in Athens. Greek photographers of the late 19th century included, among others, Filippos Margaritis, who won a prize for his work in the World Exhibition in Paris in 1885, thus improving the profession’s social status in Greece decisively, and Petros Moraitis, who owned the biggest and most expensive studio in Athens and a few years later became the official royal photographer. The 1870s signified an important change in the history of Greek photography with the arrival of Greek migrants from the US who had brought back equipment and were determined to exercise professional photography in Greece. In the same period, a more discernible presence of photographers, permanently establishing their studios or periodically putting up in-transit studios, took place in the Greek periphery. At the turn of the twentieth century, various studios opened up in Crete, especially in Chania, Irakleio and Rethymno (Xanthakis 2008, pp. 94–97), in Syros, in the Ionian islands (including Kythera as we shall see below) and throughout the Peloponnese. Photographs had by then become accessible to the broader public of middle-class families

that would have their picture taken in their best outfits, usually posing against an elaborate (often times archaic) staged or painted background. The interwar years are considered the booming era of Greek photography, with various studios in almost all major cities, artistic photography gaining momentum, amateur photography on the rise and the establishment of the Syndesmos Ellinon Fotografon (Association of Greek Photographers) reactivated in 1916.³⁴ In this decade, an even greater number of trained photographers who were mostly return migrants from the US arrived to open their studios, mostly in the Greek periphery.³⁵

Photographs from Greek rural settings, as Kostis Liontis attests, are the “most neglected” category of photographs in Greece (Liontis 2013, p. 57) despite the fact that, as Yannis Stathatos states, “in the poorest or in the remotest areas, local professional studios are the only source of photographic and generally visual records” from the late 19th to the mid-20th centuries (Stathatos and Petsini 2021, p. 293). Stathatos also adds that “many photographs of these local studios have been destroyed or dispersed, while those surviving have been treated by researchers either as of local interest only or as cute-naive early photographic endeavors” (Stathatos and Petsini 2021, p. 293). In the villages under study, photographic studios that were either permanently settled or touring around different villages had developed sometime before the dawn of the 20th century. In Laconia, the Tsirigotis brothers, from the town of Molaoi, had opened their studio in 1880, while Nikolaos Pantzopoulos had opened his studio in Sparta in 1881 (Xanthakis 2008, p. 101). In nearby Kythera, an island with rich photographic tradition,³⁶ the first professional photographer was Panagiotis Fatseas, also the son of a poor family, who had himself migrated to New York at the age of 22 and returned to fight in the Balkan wars in 1912. In 1919, he opened his studio in one of his family’s rooms. Stathatos believes that Fatseas’ almost immediate success had a reason and elaborates that “the explanation behind such a large production of portraits [by P. Fatseas in Kythera] in such an economically underdeveloped place (where photographing cost the equivalent of three to four days wages) rests on the massive migration wave of Kytherans, primarily towards Asia Minor and Egypt and then towards North America and Australia”. For Stathatos, the need for photographs is directly linked to the fact that pre-WWII transatlantic migration was male-dominated, and in this context, Kytherans (as well as Laconians and Cretans) were left alone, leaving their families behind. It was this spatial dispersal of the family that created the need for photographs crossing borders. (Stathatos 2002, p. 75) In fact, Stathatos adds that in the *Kytheraiki Epitheorisi* (*Kytheran Review*) of 1923, Fatseas was congratulated for expanding his business abroad by receiving direct orders from migrants in the US and in Australia for photographs of their families in Kythera (Stathatos and Petsini 2021, p. 299). Fatseas died prematurely in 1938, yet his studio, operated by his sons Manoli and Charalampos, continued working for another 40 years. In Crete, the photographic tradition was long, with studios operated by Cretans and many foreigners who lived permanently on the island. Xanthakis has recorded the existence of 8 studios in Chania, 6 studios in Irakleio and 2 studios in Rethymno at the turn of the 20th century, yet it seems that there were more (Xanthakis 2008, pp. 94–97).³⁷

In the US, it was in 1888 that George Eastman introduced Kodak No.1, a small-sized, simpler-to-use photographic apparatus that used a film roll, allowing the capturing of 100 photographs.³⁸ The appeal of the new medium, the ability to create pictures of oneself without visiting a studio and the ever-growing Kodak enterprise with new and improved products and services gave rise to what Richard Chalfen called “Kodak culture” in the US (Chalfen 1987). In the first half of the 20th century, photography not only expanded to the broader public and to the state as a tool of governmentality but also depicted the growth of capitalism and consumerism that had then turned towards “home” activities and leisure, both idealized, pleasant, happy and certainly worth remembering. Such a trend was not hampered even during the economic recession of the interwar years. Popular in its use, it could safely be assumed that the photographic medium was more accessible, less costly and more entrenched to the culture and family in the United States and its migrant communities rather than in the Greek rural south of the first decades of the 20th century. As Bethke puts it, “photography was mainly practiced by the upper middle classes in North

America and Western Europe [...] access to cameras in Eastern [and perhaps the same can be assumed for Southern] Europe was far more limited" (Bethke 2019, p. 219). It can also be acknowledged that the migratory flows from Greece to the US in this period of time and the transnational links among Greek villages and their diasporas gave momentum and democratized the use of photography in peasant societies as a means to maintain familial ties, invigorate memories, enable image-management and create proxy presence.

5. Recording Changes in Children's Clothing in Greece and in the Greek Diaspora in the US

5.1. Clothes for Children

The turn of the century signified changes regarding clothing in general and children's dress in particular. Until the mid-18th century, "the bodies of children were basically pictured in the same way as adult bodies. [Children] were dressed like adults, they behaved like adults [...]" (Higonnet and Albinson 1997, p. 122). Yet, in the early 20th century, "dress reformers focused on the health and comfort of the young and encouraged the relaxation and simplification of children's fashion. American society as a whole experienced a relaxation of social norms and manners" (Sheumaker and Wajda 2008, p. 86). Making clothes specifically for children has often been associated with an allegedly delayed acknowledgment of their distinct age category. However, evidence from various disciplines attests that childhood was not another discovery of modernity; on the contrary, children would wear their own clothing, which was in many cases a size-adjustment of that of the adults mainly due to scarcity of means, rather than oblivion regarding children's distinct age group. What constitutes a turn-of-the-century change, especially for the US, is a greater ability for expenditures on children's clothing and a more relaxed sartorial code that centered specifically on children and their needs.

In a picture taken in Massachusetts (Figure 1), young children play in their house garden. Their clothing is simple, allowing them free movement during play. Cotton fabrics without excessive seaming, belts or buttons and low-cut boots seem to respond to children's need for free movement during play. Though haircuts are identical among same-gender children, their clothing is differentiated, with the toddler wearing less sophisticated, all-white attire, while his older brother follows the "sailor" suit fashion trend of the time, which is discussed below. However, clothes adjusted for children were not a unanimously embraced trend among members of the Greek community in the US. While some continued to select adult-like clothes for their children out of necessity, practicality or delayed trend reflexes, others may have felt the urge to dress their children in the best possible attire, which translated into seemingly refined, adult-like, tailor-made clothing. Such is the case of the children held by their father during a July stroll in Elizabethtown, Massachusetts, presented in Figure 2. The young boy in the picture wears an oversized and rigid jacket along with a pair of tight leather boots. His overall attire seems too formal for a relaxed familial outing or in comparison to the less formal clothing of his sister.

On the other side of the ocean, children in Greek villages seem to enjoy less freedom when it comes to their attire. Clothing that mostly resembles that of adults is particularly witnessed in the photographs of young boys, especially during important or official occasions. Antonis, a 9-year-old student in 1914 Kremasti, poses for a local touring photographer (Figure 3). He is wearing a strict lined, fully buttoned jacket and vest in dark colors and heavy fabric. His clothing resembles that of Greek male adults of the time. Freedom of movement seems restricted by the fully buttoned shirt and vest and tight sleeves. The back-side of his photograph is printed on "Postcard Artura" paper, which was only available in the United States, where Antonis' father and sister had migrated in the early 1900s. Given the date that this photograph was taken, it coincides with one of his father's short return visits to Greece for the purpose of temporarily uniting with his left-behind wife and three children. This photograph was most likely ordered by Antonis' migrant father either to remember his son or because the father was preparing all the necessary documents for his son's migration to the US.



Figure 1. Children play at their house yard in Elisabethtown, Massachusetts, possibly in the 1930s (?), unknown photographer, author's collection, paper photo.

Overall, it seems that the recognition of children as a distinct age category did not occur in the early decades of the 20th century; what changed was the recognition of children's needs as distinct and worth-satisfying and the parent's ability to spend on their children's clothing, especially in the US. The trend of the time of choosing knickers, sports clothes, and play clothes complementing the growing attempt to appeal to children's distinct needs and physical status, along with a recognition of the importance of freedom during play or while practicing sport³⁹ seems to be more embraced by the Greek US-diaspora. In Greece, clothing suitable for play or other children's endeavors had probably reached the urban centers⁴⁰ and was very slowly finding its way to the remote villages of the Greek periphery, where children's dress still resembled, to a great degree, that of adults.



Figure 2. Father and children stroll in Elizabethtown, Massachusetts; inscription at the back reads “July 1926, 110th Street MA”, unknown photographer, author’s collection, paper photo.



Figure 3. Antonis’ portrait in Kremasti in 1914, unknown photographer, author’s private collection, printed on Postcard Artura Paper.

5.2. Engendering Clothing for Children and Toddlers

The first decades of the 20th century were also the period that researchers point to as characteristic of a “more immediate sex distinction in clothing” (Sheumaker and Wajda 2008, p. 86). It was then that “the traditional white dress assigned to very young boys and girls alike for about two centuries gave way to the gender coding of infantwear” (Huun and Kaiser 2001, p. 103). In fact, though some researchers point to the use of rubber diaper covers as the reason why boys jumped to pants early on (Worrell 1980, p. 193), others think that parents must have felt no urge to assert children’s gender at such a young age (Paoletti 1987, p. 139). Practicality, along with scarcity and precarity—especially in Greek villages—delayed this age distinction in clothing, which, however, became more pronounced through the 1920s. Konstantina Bada considers both age and gender distinctions from an early age as a way in which young children were “introduced to the world of the adults”, following gender and age distinctions that applied to adults (Bada 2008, pp. 370–71).

A returning migrant from New York to Kremasti looks at the camera while holding a toddler boy dressed in a long white gown used interchangeably for both genders (Figure 4). Some years later, another toddler from Kythera poses standing on a chair, with plain, knitted clothes and a playful hairstyle, in sharp contrast with the overall rigidity of the toddler’s posture and the seriousness of the woman’s image in front of the camera (Figure 5). Clothing this time is gender-specific, with shorts and shirts replacing the usually worn white gown.



Figure 4. Photograph of a toddler and Dimitri, a return migrant in Kremasti, circa 1930s, author’s private collection, photographer unknown.



Figure 5. The studio portrait of a toddler and his female kin is in Kythera. The photographer is unknown, but the author’s private collection is courtesy of GK.

On the other side of the Atlantic, a toddler’s representation is outwardly different from that of her peers in Greece. Alexandra’s father, Panagiotis, born in 1889, left Kremasti for Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1905, while her mother, Harriet, also born in Kremasti, arrived in New York in 1923 with the purpose of getting married. Two portrait photos (Figures 6 and 7) constitute Alexandra’s first pictures but also hint at the prosperous environment in which she lived. In Figure 6, Alexandra is wearing a feminine outfit consisting of a white dress with triangular finishes, elaborately decorated socks, ballerinas and many pieces of jewelry (earrings, two bracelets and a golden cross—a symbol of her being baptized). Figure 7 shows baby Alexandra seated on Peter’s lap while Harriett is standing, with her brother John next to her. Peter’s father, sister-in-law, cousin and nephews are all present, affirming that, most likely, this “official event” is Alexandra’s baptism. The young boys are dressed and combed like adults, with the only exception being their knickers instead of the long pants worn by adults. Their facial expressions also share the stringency of adults in an attempt to look serious and self-composed.

To conclude, the 1920s and 1930s brought changes to the production and marketing of clothing (Brun Petersen 2020, p. 4), primarily with the introduction of sizes, age and (introduction of categories such as toddler, according to (Thomas Cook 2011, p. 14) color coding as a representation of gender, with boys dressed in blue and girls dressed in pink (Sheumaker and Wajda 2008, p. 87). As the diasporic communities of Greeks in the US were more exposed to the new production and marketing strategies of that era, they seem to have more readily embraced this trend, while Greek village households eventually adapted such dress coding later.



Figure 6. Studio portrait of baby Alexandra, New York, circa 1924–5, P.T’s private collection, photographer unknown.



Figure 7. Studio family portrait of Alexandra’s baptism, New York, circa 1924–5, P.T’s private collection, photographer unknown.

5.3. Growing Consumerism and the Children's Niche

In a page-long advertisement of his "Greek tailor shop" found in the Greek-Californian community yearbook, George Manos, a migrant to San Francisco, informs his potential clientele about the merits of his business. "A great collection of all local and English fabrics. All fashionable colors. Top quality American and Greek sewing, perfectly applying so that even the most capricious client will leave satisfied" (Yearbook of the Greek community in California, circa 1920, owned by the author). The distinction between American and Greek sewing remains unanswered beyond what appears to be a successful marketing strategy. The growing consumerism and capitalism did not leave children out of its marketing strategies. The 1930s signified a growing conceptualization of the child as a consumer (Thomas Cook 2004) with its own expressed desires to which parents often succumbed. As Thomas Cook points out, "colors, fixtures, themes and the placement and layout of the retail space itself gradually came to be oriented toward the presumed viewpoint of specifically aged and gendered children" (Thomas Cook 2011, p. 14).

Children's clothing in rural Greece was traditionally homemade, with enterprising mothers in charge of making their family's clothes, which were usually made of wool locally processed or from store-bought textiles. Villagers in Greece knitted their clothes using the loom and also "mended, adjusted and modified their clothes as well as made their socks and shoes" (Papathanasiou 2003, p. 120). As Bada argues, "internal production/consumption contributed to a strong cultural homogeneity and was simultaneously an expression of local identity" (Bada 1991, pp. 185–86).⁴¹ Home production, though, was often complemented by the work of resourceful seamstresses, who usually worked from home and on commission and whose services were affordable mostly to more affluent village households. In a picture meticulously recorded as "souvenirs from school-life, Rethymno 20th of July 1934, Friday of Prophet Elias (religious calendar) at 10 am" placed at the back, a group of young women and children pose around a sewing machine. The two women seated on each side, who look like sisters, are dressed the same and judging from their aprons, they can be considered the teachers of this workshop-like school. Two young girls dressed in beautiful knee-long dresses also face the photographer. In all pictures, the frontality and seriousness in young students' posture is a sign of honor, dignity and respect (Figure 8). Commissioned cloth-making services allowed young women in Greek village communities to contribute to home finances but also introduced villagers to a gradually evolving monetarized economy. Soon, visits to nearby towns and cities for various purposes⁴² became a reason for purchases but also a channel through which villagers came in contact with fashion and styles beyond the self-producing and self-consuming village community. In this regard, the role of migration was decisive, not only because textiles and clothes were sent by migrant kin or patriotic organizations abroad, but also because migrant photographs or return migrants themselves presented new fashion role models for villagers. Furthermore, remitted money from abroad allowed families left behind to access garments and services that they could not access prior to a member's migration and, in this way, to re-negotiate their status within the village community. As Bada observes, "when poor peasant communities were presented with the opportunity to participate in monetarized economies and saw the potential for social upward mobility through this, they grabbed such opportunities and challenged or changed the rules of homogeneity" (Bada 1991, p. 186). Clothing, viewed as an expression of identity, was one of the ways in which villagers expressed materially their desired socio-economic and symbolic capital.⁴³

A similar home mode also characterized the production and consumption of children's clothing in the US until the 1920s. In fact, "infants and children's clothing up to about age six for both boys and girls could be pieced together from store-brought cloth using patterns purchased at dry goods' stores or taken from women's magazines" (Thomas Cook 2011, p. 13) while clothes of all kinds were either knitted or crocheted (Worrell 1980, p. 192). A toddler photo in the US, who is the son of a family with many children, shows what seems to be a home-knit ensemble (Figure 9) and a hairstyle popular among boys of that era. Young Dimitris' attire and hairstyle stand as an example of what Paoletti defines as the

transitional phase between children's clothing in "pronounced sex-typed characteristics" and that of very young boys being "dressed in skirts and having long hair" (Paoletti 1987, p. 136). For children of Greek migrants, another reason for long hair could be the adherence to the Greek custom of not cutting hair before a child is baptized. In this case, Dimitris' portrait in front of a flowered background is a multi-transitional one in terms of age, fashion trends and transnational cultural codes. His homemade attire captures this transition in an attempt to look well taken care of and at best.



Figure 8. Photograph of young women and children in Rethymno (Crete), entitled "Souvenirs of school life, 20th of July 1934, Friday of Prophet Elias (religious calendar) at 10 am", author's private collection, unknown photographer.



Figure 9. Studio portrait of young Dimitris, New York, circa 1920s, PC's private collection, photographer unknown.

In the US diasporic communities, as in Greece, changes brought by the expansion of capitalism to children as consumers were particularly witnessed after the 1920s. According to Lisa Jacobson, the middle-class family of the 1880s to 1930s underwent important changes, heightened in the 1920s; as families became smaller in size, more attention could be given to each child, less discipline was required, and more emphasis was placed on the emotional gratification of children and the parental response to child-specific needs. (Jacobson 2004, p. 30). In this context, “advertising authorities and merchandisers grasped this transformation” and responded by extending their strategies to children themselves as consumers with explicit and expressed desires (Jacobson 2004, p. 31). The “new type of child,” as self-reliant, autonomous, active and expressive, was evident in the clothing styles, clothing advertising strategies and clothing images of that era. Characteristic of this is another portrait photo tinted with color and taken some years later, in which Alexandra poses relaxed and playful, with a book on her lap, signifying perhaps the beginning of her school life (Figure 10). Her airy muslin clothes in pink, matching socks and leather “Mary-Janes”, her hair made into waves, and her jewelry not only affirm a “look your best”

image of a child brought up in a prosperous environment but also depict fashion trends and perhaps a degree of agency exercised by Alexandra herself, as her overall image is congruent to popular “assertive” child icons of the 1930s, like Shirley Temple.⁴⁴



Figure 10. Alexandra’s studio portrait, New York circa 1930, private collection of PT, photographer unknown.

In approaching children’s agency, consumerist habits of that era should also be connected to the public nature of clothing and the social tactics this entailed. For school-goers, peer competition translated into following popular, conventional trends of fashion and gradually avoiding homemade, knitted clothing as opposed to store-bought. As Jacobson points out, “Handmade clothes, carried their own stigma, and girls who wore them had to contend with the patronizing attitudes of better-off schoolmates” (Jacobson 2004, p. 153). Store-bought clothing is evident in all the portraits, regardless of migrants’ hometowns in Greece, in the “Greeks in California” volume of the 1920s. Even the simple white dress for infants and toddlers, practical as Paoletti describes, since “it was easier to sew and fit dresses than to make miniature suits” and “had the advantage of creating a pool of hand-me-downs for later children, regardless of sex” (Paoletti 1987, p. 139) was increasingly becoming market-bought. In a photograph of a migrant from Kythera with his wife and young daughter, the baby is dressed in the usual white dress, most probably bought from a local store (Figure 11). With differences in style, textile and cut, store-bought clothes seem to have brought a democratization as well as an increased sense of agency, as children could now select their clothes and accessories under an expanding consumerist pressure.



Figure 11. Family portraits of Kytheran migrants are included in the “Greeks in California” volume of the 1920s, the author’s private collection, and the photographer’s unknown.

Consumerism also translated into pressure to follow dominant trends, as the “Shirley Temple look” discussed previously. In the same period, nautical clothing dominated the attire of young children, both girls and boys, a trend that was meant to last for some years. A studio photograph of a migrant family from Kremasti is a representation of both dominant, gender-specific trends of the time: oversized head-bows for girls and sailor suits for boys (and sometimes girls) (Figure 12). The three children pose next to their parents in rigid frontal poses, with the girls dressed like their mother yet distinguished by the oversized white bows on their hair while the boy is dressed in the popular sailor suit. Gender and age distinctions gradually become more apparent, with girls dressed similarly to their mothers yet ingraining elements of “extravaganza”,⁴⁵ like bows, jewelry, and overly adorned accessories, while boys followed their own age-suitable fashion and resembled male clothing only after a certain age.

Surprisingly or not, the “sailor suits” fashion did not escape the clothing worn by children in rural Greece in those years. A photo from Kremasti (Figure 13) in the early 1900s in the village’s evergreen forest is a witness of this trend in the least expected place: a family sheepfold. Two women, wearing their traditional everyday tsemperi pose with four adult men and two children, in front of what appears to be an Easter lamb. While two of the men are dressed in the traditional loom-made and knitted clothing for shepherds, the other two are dressed in shirts and pants. Could this mean that the shepherds are receiving guests to celebrate Easter together? The two children are dressed very differently, with the girl wearing a long knitted jacket, a dress made of the same fabric as the woman next to her and a pair of high boots, while the boy is wearing his sailor suit, which would rarely be found in

the mountainous shepherds' household. With forest sheepfolds being the "spring-summer" houses of shepherds' families, we can assume that the guests could be migrants visiting their homeland for Easter. Perhaps these migrants could be the godparents of the young boy, which could explain the ill-fitting and maladroitly worn outfit of the boy's sailor suit, which could have been a traditional Easter gift from "nounos" that may have missed his guess of the proper child size.⁴⁶



Figure 12. Family portraits of Kremasti migrants are included in the "Greeks in California" volume of the 1920s, the author's private collection, the photographer is unknown.



Figure 13. Photograph of a shepherd's household in Kremasti, circa 1920s, author's private collection, photographer unknown.

In discussing the connection between photography and children, Susan Sontag acknowledged that "cameras go with family life". She explained that according "to a socio-

logical study conducted in France, most households have a camera, but a household with children is twice as likely to have at least one camera as a household in which there are no children” (Sontag 1973, p. 8). Cameras are another facet of family consumerism, giving centrality to children and instilling the idea of “creating pleasant memories” for Greek diasporic families in the US. Familial cohesion and commodified affect, in the sense of associating elaborate attire with care and love, hold a central position in the intentionality of many family studio portraits of the time. In one of those (Figure 14), the family of Victor and Koula visited a studio for a portrait that was then sent to their kin in Greece. The three children, surrounded by their parents and one of their uncles—with whom the father co-managed a cafe in Texas—wear clothing of the same fabric and a similar, with gendered differences and style. The children’s poses are more relaxed in comparison to the more rigid portraiture of the past decades, and the effect between family members is also evident by the proximity of their bodies. The emphasis on home, leisure and “creating pleasant memories” was also central to the Eastman Kodak marketing strategies, leading to a growing group of amateur photographers and less stylized and professional representations of children, evident in snapshot photographs of children’s play and daily lives. In a 1927 photograph (Figure 15), Cosmos and his recently arrived wife from Kremasti pose for an amateur photographer with their two nephews in front of Cosmo’s candy kitchen in Iowa. Dressed in the latest fashions, the newly-wed wife seems to be taking the children for a walk and play while her husband and his brother—the father of the children—are at work.



Figure 14. Victor and Koula’s family portrait is from Texas circa 1930s. The author’s private collection is unknown, and the photographer is unknown.



Figure 15. Cosmos with wife and nephews, Iowa circa 1920s, TRM's private collection, photographer unknown.

In conclusion, clothing for children seems to have experienced dramatic changes yet in less dramatic ways for the audiences examined in this work. Gender and age-specific garments and accessories seem to be welcomed by both Greek families in the rural communities of Laconia, Crete and Kythera and their respective migrant communities in the US, yet not without reluctance, having to do with reasons of practicality, scarcity or delayed reflexes regarding fashion and trends. Yet the overarching expansion and eventual prevalence of consumerism regarding children's clothing went less unnoticed by both Greek rural households and diasporic families abroad; children seem to be more assertive in selecting clothes that reflect dominant fashion trends of the time, projecting a degree of agency, especially in the US. Store-bought, commissioned and tailor-made clothes gradually replace clothes made by mothers and kin at home. The latter will eventually become "exoticized" gifts of a tradition of long-abandoned or cherished demonstrations of effect. Store-bought clothing went hand-in-hand with a general increase in spending for families, with children again occupying the central stage. As Bourdieu claims, children were not seen as "photographic material" by early 20th century agrarian families, yet they eventually became (Bourdieu and Bourdieu 1965, pp. 164–74). Photographs taken in studios or in amateur snapshots exhibit another concurrent change experienced by children in the first decades of the 20th century: that of associating consumerism with pleasure, joy and having fun.

6. Identifying Continuities in Sartorial Practices and Dress Codes for Children

6.1. *Dress for the Occasion, Dress with Your Sunday Best*

Clothing and dress have been viewed both as an externalization of selfhood (Gell 1998; Woodward 2005) and also as an expression of socio-cultural belonging. As Bethke argues, “Cultural practices linked to clothing and fashion thus concern the individual and are at the same time embedded in the specific social and cultural contexts of a community” (Bethke 2019, p. 222). For Greeks knowing what to wear had been shaped by various factors, including gender, age and social class. Norms and laws designating what each social class could wear date back to the period of Ottoman occupation of the Greek mainland and some of the Greek islands.⁴⁷ Certain rules de facto survived time, with the most important being that of knowing how to properly dress for each social event and occasion.

Photographic collections manifest that children were recognized as a distinct category, differing in clothing, accessories, hairstyles and poses, yet also having to comply with occasion-specific sartorial conventions. Their distinct age status does not seem to be viewed as a barrier to their socializing, which occurred early on, with children not being excluded from major rituals, life cycle and communal events, production-related activities, as well as familial gatherings. For such important occasions, children were dressed in their “kala rouha” and put on shoes, while photograph-taking by a professional photographer must have been planned so that the best possible image of family members—including children—was captured and thus immortalized. In this way, children’s participation in such events not only introduced them to the social life of their family and community but also incorporated them into the idealized familial narrative captured in “strong moments”⁴⁸ and to the socio-cultural conventions of the society in which children grew up. Their early and unfiltered socializing allowed children to learn their future roles and the ways to present themselves according to the occasion/event at hand. Children’s attire in “official” events may sometimes differ from those of the adults in style, type and size, but certainly not in function. Both children and their adult kin display clothes as both an expression of identity and as individual conformity to the cultural codes of their society. Children embody cultural classifications of child/adult, of “good”/everyday attire, and of official/unofficial ceremony through their attire, accessories, and styles.

Religion was a major part of village life at the turn of the century, with church attendance including Sundays but also the nameday-celebration of a saint in the homonymous temples. In a picture from Kremasti dating to the 1920s, women had gathered outside the village church of Saint Nickolas, where a seated mother holds an infant boy (Figure 16). Women’s clothing, the presence of a photographer, and, most importantly, the half-naked boy seated on a big white cloth allow viewers to identify this as a baptism photo. Given the child’s nakedness—a symbol of innocence, as Kuhn comments,⁴⁹ and the women’s relaxed posture, this photograph must have been taken in warm weather. Females pose together with each one’s hand resting on the shoulders of the other in a pose of intimacy and familiarity; it could thus be inferred that these women are relatives yet in the absence of men. The woman standing first on the right married in Kremasti in 1925, a migrant co-villager who returned from the US for the purpose of marriage and re-migrated right after. The next year, 1926, she followed her husband to California, where they brought up their family. Could viewers, therefore, assume that the women in this picture attend the baptism of a migrant’s child and are themselves wives or daughters or mothers left behind⁵⁰ while their male folk have migrated? Does this justify the absence of men from such an important familial and religious event? In answering such questions, analysis expands to the intended exhibition and viewing of this photograph or even to the commissioned services of the photographer hired to capture the “social birth” of a child whose kin is dispersed across the Atlantic.⁵¹



Figure 16. Baptism in Saint Nickolas, Kremasti 1925, author's private collection, photographer unknown.

Marriage constituted another important religious and social event that affirmed existing kinship bonds, signified kin expansion and combined the sacred (religious ritual) with the profane (celebrations, preparations etc.). Photos of marriage are like confirmation photos in the sense that, as Julia Hirsch claims, they are "pictures of families obeying custom and religion—also subordinate a personal sense of time and place to the demands of ritual" (J. Hirsch 1981, p. 62). In the village communities studied, marriage was celebrated within the economic means of the groom–bride families, and marriage-related ceremonies drew kin, friends and guests together, even from neighboring communities. Marriage photos in which extended groups of kin and friends pose together thus "depict the integration of new members into the network of family relations by posing new members with a series of relatives" (Musello 1979, p. 109). For children, especially in times or in households where scarcity of goods due to poverty was common, marriage celebrations provided an opportunity for fun, for play, but also for a proper meal, as plenty of meat was served even in newlyweds' households with tight economics. The marriage of a return migrant (Figure 17) in the first decades of the 20th century to his village in Kremasti was lavish. The groom desired to offer a memorable celebration that would affirm both his economic success in the US and his indisputable "Greekness" despite the years spent abroad. Musicians were brought in to play folk local music, food was more than abundant, and the groom's male kin was dressed in the traditional foustanela, while the bride's female kin (from the more

urbanized neighboring Leonidion) was dressed in more “Western” or “urban” clothes, to demonstrate their urban background. Children were present, and they surrounded the groom in the photograph. Five boys are seated in manly posture while only one young girl sits next to her female kin—most likely mother. The girl is covered with an oversized white shawl, most likely embroidered, while the boys wear long pants instead of shorts that would be their everyday clothing. The oldest wears his school hat to give a tone of extra formality to the occasion. Not only is this choice an act of agency, but the conceptualization of equating a school accessory with dignity and formality is also an interesting association that is further discussed below.



Figure 17. Marriage of a return migrant in Kremasti, circa 1900s, courtesy of M.D., photographer unknown.

Religious and social events in which children were not excluded were also death, grief and lament.⁵² Rituals were, to a degree, analogous in different parts of Greece, yet social roles and cultural expectations mandated by local micro-cultures varied. Families in grief not only participated in rituals preceding and following the death of a loved one but also adjusted their daily lives and appearance to match the existing cultural norms of the broader village community; house transformations,⁵³ social-life detachment⁵⁴ and household members’ appearance were modified. Clothing, in particular, was transformed as every garment in the house had to be dyed black in most communities, including children’s clothing. Men would typically wear a black ribbon around their arm and would not shave—especially in Crete. Women would wear a black head scarf—a tradition that was often extended to young girls, who, in contrast to young boys, had to embody familial grief as equally involved household members.⁵⁵ In a picture from Kremasti (Figure 18) that seems to be the result of a collage of different portrait photos pieced together much later, kin members pose surrounding their mother. Though Antonis, the only young boy in the photo, wears a shirt and a jacket, his young sister (bottom right) is wearing black clothes and a tightly fastened black headdress, just like the one worn by her mother (next to her) to symbolize grief over the loss of the family’s older son at a very young age.



Figure 18. Collage portraits of family members in grief, circa 1915, author's private collection, photographer unknown.

Across the Atlantic, photos of children are a popular genre of migrants' photographic lens (directly or through commissioning) and for recording the children's socialization with the ethnic clusters of the Greek diaspora in the US. Migration, on the one hand, and having children, on the other, constitute important and dynamic changes in peoples' lives, and this is why "the peculiar ability of photography to document change is also an important feature of its use in the home mode" of migrant families (Musello 1979, p. 113). For Greek migrants abroad, having children was not only purposeful but also a source of obligations regarding the enculturation of their offspring to the Greek diasporic community and culture, beginning with their baptism to the Orthodox faith. There is seldom a picture of so many members of the Greek community of that period posing in a single photo (Figure 19) than in the photo of Giorgos and Kalliope with their eleven children and many other fellow Greeks. The extended group of compatriots seems to be in the countryside, with some cars parked behind them, among the trees. Forty-two children pose either on their parent's lap or cross-legged on the ground. There is an equal distribution of boys and girls, and almost all ages are represented, from infants to teenagers. Younger boys are dressed in sailor suits, the popular trend of the time previously discussed. In fact, their attire corroborates Clare Rose's statement that sailor suits—despite their uniformity in those years—were mostly worn by young boys under eight years of age (Clare Rose 2011, p. 111). Older boys seem to be dressed like little adult men, with the same white shirt, dark pants and a tie. Very young girls wear relaxed, comfortable dresses, three in a style common in that period, consisting of a loose white dress with an embroidered triangular finish. Older girls' dresses are similar to those of their mothers in terms of style and fabric, while all female hair (children and adults) is almost identically cut in an A-line or French bob. The photo seems to be a collage of smaller ones put together so that all attendants of this gathering are panoramically present before our eyes. The fact that people in every fragmented photo seem to be gathering around a mother holding an infant, as well as the wearing of a small white ribbon on many adult chests, may imply that this gathering also had the purpose of a collective baptism. In fact, this assumption may hold true even further, as in the first

decades of the 20th century, the Orthodox Church of North America was not structured or fully organized, with services provided for its members on an ad hoc basis.



Figure 19. Baptism in New York, circa 1920, JPC’s private collection, photographer unknown.

Migrant children dressed with care and according to the sartorial codes of the social events they participate in are also photographed as a demonstration of a migrant family’s prosperity. In fact, such an idealized image of childhood could correspond well to reality but also enhance it to varying degrees. As Batchen reminds us, “accuracy of representation is less important than the overall message of prosperity and well-being” (Batchen 2000, p. 72). The display of material possessions, such as toys, accessories, elaborate clothes, shoes or even jewelry, manifests a migrant family’s progress in the eyes of the photograph’s recipients or viewers or in the visual imagery of family members themselves. On the other hand, as Annette Kuhn reminds us, “children are a costly commodity; their upbringing calls for hard cash as well as a good deal of labor of various kinds, yet [...] the family as it is represented in family albums is characteristically produced as innocent of such material considerations, above price. The family album constructs the world of the family as a utopia” (Kuhn [1995] 2002, p. 57). Despite the alleged nonchalance towards the cost of projected prosperity, the photos examined in this work, but also the broader collection of child images accessed through the “Greeks in California” edition, project the economic potential of the young wearer’s family in any possible way. Expensive fabrics, elaborate designs, meticulously made hairstyles, polished shoes, decorated socks and adorned jewelry are only some of the ways in which family well-being and material progress are embodied by the children and performed through their clothing.

Children in the best presentation of themselves, despite the sharp financial contrast and available means between rural peasant families in Greece and their migrant kin and co-villagers abroad, are found in family photos from both sides of the Atlantic. Such photos are evidence of a lingering conceptualization of dignity emanating from “being formally dressed as a sign of self-respect” and of the “sartorial principle of wearing your best garments for special occasions” (McMillan 2008, p. 51).

6.2. We Will Have to Make Do: Resourcefulness and Strategies to Overcome Scarcity Regarding Children’s Clothing

“The wish to dress elegantly according to European fashion, even if the clothes were already worn out, becomes visible in studio photographs of individuals and families at the beginning of the twentieth century,” Bethke argues (Bethke 2019, p. 223). Worn-out, mended, darned, adjusted clothing was extended to children’s fashions, either in moments of dire finances and general fiscal crisis (like the 1929 Crash and ensuing Depression in the US or the devaluation of the currency in Greece) or in households with poor means. For the US, the previously analyzed “emancipation” of the US child through clothing in the 1920s also went along with child labor (Worrell 1980) and with child poverty shaped by the 1930s economic depression and the unprecedented natural disasters that forced some 2.5 million people to leave their homes in Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas (Eldridge 2008, p. 3). Alexandra, the baby and child in Figures 6, 7 and 10, grew up and met her Greek husband in the US. A photograph of him as a child is kept in the family collection as reminiscent of the dreadful times of the Great Depression (Figure 20). James and George pose for the camera, wearing their worn-out clothes and shoes, simple and identical shorts and shirts

that could have been made at home. Their faces depict the general sentiment of the time or the lived experience of a family hit by economic recession. It was during that era when consumerist pressure was appeased, homemade clothing was gradually de-stigmatized, and singer-made clothing proved to be the middle-ground between store-bought and homemade (Jacobson 2004, p. 153).



Figure 20. Young boys during Depression in the US, PT's collection, circa 1930, photographer unknown.

It is interesting to note that in the same period, cloth and textile dispatches for children from the US to Greece were reduced due to the Depression, yet in Greece, the disdain towards loom and hand-made clothing that was seen as “backward” and “poor”, had also been observed (Papathanasiou 2003, pp. 120–21). Making clothes for children by adjusting adult clothes to smaller sizes, re-using garments of older children mended and darned, or using textiles and fabrics sent from abroad, even altering their original purpose⁵⁶ were common strategies used to overcome poverty and scarcity of means. In a photograph from Kythera, shot by Adamopoulos, two young children are held by their grandparents. The girl with her hair short wears a seemingly “adjusted”, multi-layered dress while the boy seems to also be wearing an “adjusted” adult male jacket. The grandparents smile, dressed in traditional local clothing (Figure 21).

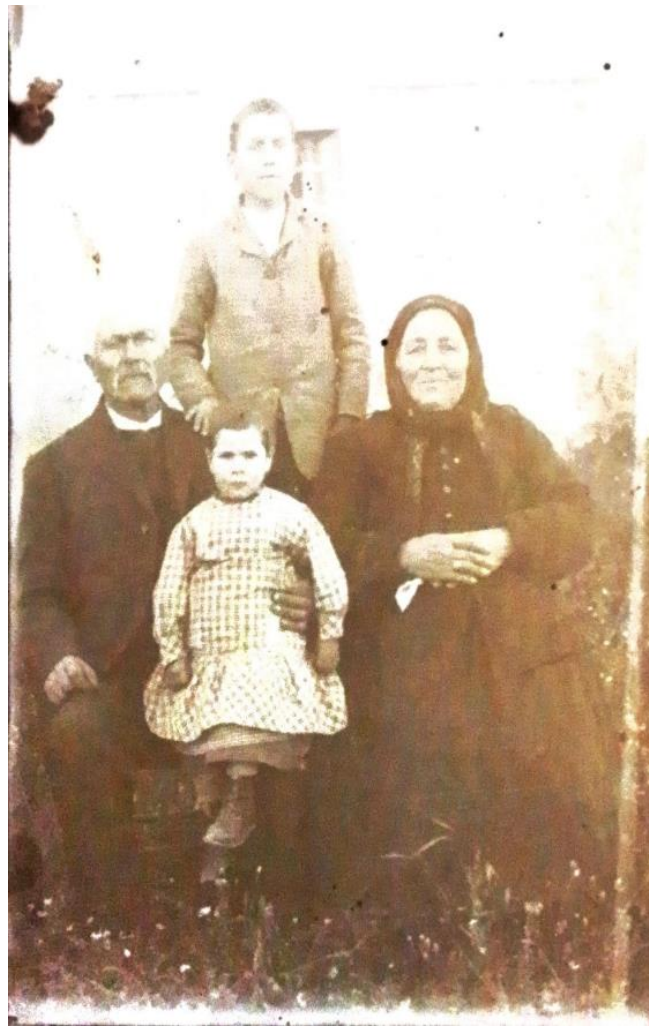


Figure 21. Children with grandparents in Kythera, circa 1920, photographer Adamopoulos, author's private collection, courtesy of GK.

Another popular realistic strategy that responded to restricted means was wearing ill-fitting clothing, which was usually non-concordant to the age and size of the wearer. In a picture from Kythera (Figure 22), taken by Panagiotis Fatseas, siblings pose in front of their family's house. The girl is seated on an elaborate wooden chair where her youngest brother is standing. The girl is dressed in a checkered up-to-the-knee dress, high socks and high leather boots. The baby boy wears a knitted sweater and pants while the two older brothers are similarly dressed, in a suit for young boys, consisting of a knee-high pair of socks and leather laced boots and a short and jacket matching set of the same fabric and style. Both boys seem to have grown bigger in size for the garments they wear, as one can notice from the sleeves of their jackets. The girl's dress with the white, disproportionately long and big ribbon where buttons are attached, as well as the boy's jacket sleeves and collar, could potentially mean that their clothing was refit and adjusted to either match age/size status or to mend and repair a worn-down fabric.⁵⁷

In summarizing, one could argue that children's clothing, both in the rural communities of Greece and their diasporic communities in the US, was affected directly by the economic means available to families for expenditures. While some households constantly battled with scarcity, others felt its effects in moments of crisis or change. Responses varied in resourcefulness and practicality, as well as aesthetic effect. Children wore worn-out, immensely mended and darned, ill-fitting clothing that was either passed down from older siblings, adjusted from adult clothing, or homemade, despite the social stigma this could potentially bear.

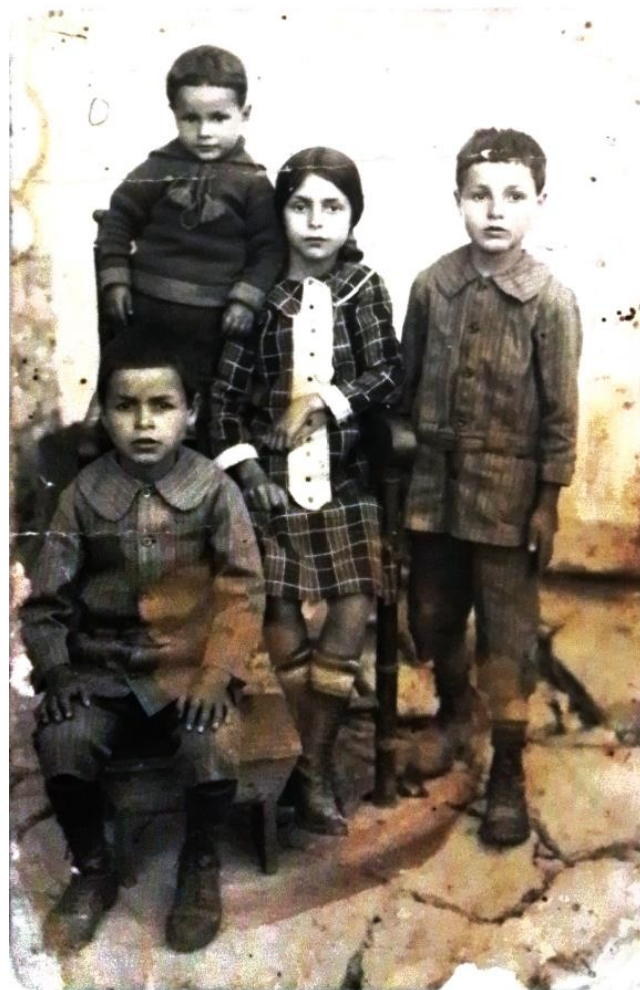


Figure 22. Young siblings in Kythera, circa 1930s, photographer Panagiotis Fatseas, author's private collection (courtesy of GK).

6.3. Agency, Identity and Familial Gaze

It has often been argued that clothing is a reflection of identity on a personal and a group level. Children's identity is not only age, gender and social-class specific, as previously discussed, but also influenced by the situational and positional status of children in different societies, with schooling being considered a major identity marker.

Children's lives were dominated by their schooling. In remote mountainous communities, like the ones in Laconia and Crete, state-assigned teachers came and went assigned a post in the village for variable time periods. During their assignment, they usually lived in a house offered by the village community⁵⁸ and often expected their students to return to school in the afternoon for studying or (rarely) for extra-curricular activities. The high status of teachers meant that their inspection and authority extended to the out-of-school behavior of their students, with young pupils being scolded or punished if found outdoors beyond the school-set curfew if inappropriately dressed or ill-behaving or if seen without their school hat. In years close to WWII, a morning inspection of hygiene-nails, hair and clean feet was often deemed necessary, with urban conceptualizations of cleanliness imposed on the lives of young schoolchildren. Teachers would either side with parents for the disciplining of children or else would attempt to sway unwilling parents to keep children in school.⁵⁹ In many mountainous communities, the only school was a primary, and once graduating from it, those young pupils whose families planned on supporting their education further had to leave their village to attend high school in a neighboring (more populated) village or town as boarders. Overall, for many rural households, education was deemed as an opportunity for the personal advancement of their children, with parents

aspiring to secure an urban future for their survival. It was not only the young guests in the Laconian wedding discussed above who thought that the school hat gave a tone of formality out of the hardships of rural life.

Students, in their almost militarized appearance of a jacket and hat, frequently posed proudly for the photographic lens. In Figure 23, captured on May 1934 in Crete, two teenage boys pose with their school hats and jackets, while the one in the middle wears a simple fedora, shirt-tie-jacket and a traditional Cretan pair of boots (stivania) and pants (vraka). The ill-fitting sleeves of the boy's on the right jacket cannot go unnoticed. Yet the formality and frontality of the young students' poses imply a sense of pride and dignity regarding their identity as students. Given their age, we can assume that the decision to dress traditionally or not rests upon them in a way that asserts their agency. The oscillation between what was considered "modern" and what was perceived as traditional was closely associated with both identity and agency. From Crete again, a picture of a happy family in 1934 (Figure 24) resting on their porch informs us of the transition between modern and traditional. The parents, Kokkolis and Marigo, are seated in the center and dressed in the traditional Cretan attire. Marigo's head is fully covered, which is compatible with her age and status. Three children in shorts and short-sleeved shirts seem to ignore the photographer and continue their play.



Figure 23. Schoolboys in Crete, May 1934, "to my beloved cousins", author's private collection, photographer unknown.



Figure 24. Family in Crete, 1934, author's private collection.

One of the boys is shoeless, a common practice especially in the summer months, while another is holding a wooden stick identical to that of the seated father to replicate manly accessories, mostly worn by pastoralists. The older girls are dressed in more "Western" clothing, with one wearing a nautical dress. The liminal space of this photograph reflects identities and societies in transition between past and future, modern and traditional.

The same gravitation in asserting one's identity can acquire an amplified meaning if discussed in the context of the US diasporic community. Discussing Chinese children's dress in the United States, Jorae treats clothing as a renegotiation of ethnic identity and belonging for both children and parents. She explains that "children growing up in the early twentieth century often rejected the old-fashioned customs of their immigrant parents" (Jorae 2010, p. 454), convinced that "by replacing their ethnic clothing with American clothing, they could more easily blend into society" (Jorae 2010, p. 461). This assertion of their agency created conflict, as some parents saw clothing and material culture in general as grounds for cultural perpetuation and ethnic group social reproduction. In the case of the Greek migrant community in the US, both reactions towards tradition and the aspirations of parents passing down their ethnic culture to children were witnessed. At the same time, an attempt for assimilation was strongly encouraged by many Greek migrants and their associations in the early decades of the 20th century (mostly as a response to discrimination and racism against Greeks), in moments of ethnic exaltation (such as for example WWI and WWII), embracing and projecting their ethnic identity shaped the choices children made, or parents made for them. In a picture of a New York family from Kremasti (Figure 25), the gravitation between tradition and modernity is conspicuously projected. The collage depicts the ways in which boys, in particular, "somaticized" the parent's wish for cultural survival, with the young boy dressed in a "foustanela" while his sister enjoys the sailor-suit trend of the time. Overall, as Savaş argues, "distinct youth fashions are not only symbols of collectively performed identities, but also serve to realize, evaluate and defend a specific position in a complex web of diasporic relationships" (Savaş 2014, p. 191).



Figure 25. Children’s collage portraits in New York, circa 1930s, photographer unknown, N and MK private collection.

In discussing identity and agency, the question of who makes the choices of what children will wear, how they will pose for a photograph or who will be the recipient and/or viewer of that photograph perhaps challenges notions of agency, identity and personal aesthetics and tastes. When discussing family photographs, Rebecca Pardo notices that “they seldom are a self-portrait; almost always it is the look of a parent towards their child, of one who loves to the one he/she loves, of the pair of eyes that idealize and desire to always see what they don’t have before them” (Pardo 2010, p. 8). Characteristic of this is Figure 26, where a quicker-than-expected snapshot reveals who is actually orchestrating children’s representation—both sartorial and photographic. The mother’s arm, posture and gaze, fixedly on her children, are approvingly viewed by the male figure on the porch. The children, dressed in matching attire and perfectly polished shoes, are most likely asked to behave for the sake of a photograph, to be sent back home. Returning to the initial assertion that agency does not equate with autonomy, children’s preferences and sartorial choices have admittedly been shaped by parents and socio-cultural norms and values.



Figure 26. Snapshot family photo, Massachusetts circa 1930s, author's private collection, photographer unknown.

7. Conclusions

Children's clothing and sartorial practices were discussed in the context of three Greek rural communities and their respective diaspora in the US through collections of photographs that were mostly private family collections or public records (like the *Greeks in California Yearbook*). An attempt has been made to answer what it meant to be a child in the early 20th century through the study of clothing. Patterns of change were examined along with lingering traits and habits, with a discussion on identity and agency following.

A finding that is worth mentioning is that in the early 20th century, children's clothing underwent significant changes, with clothes catering to children's age (distinction between toddlers and children), gender (male/female) and needs (for play/for formal occasions), while a consumerist behavior was witnessed in both sides of the Atlantic. It is expected that such changes will reach Greek rural communities with some delay, yet it is significant to add that not all peasant or migrant households will be equally or simultaneously receptive to or embracing change. For reasons of practicality, scarcity or delayed cultural/aesthetic reflexes, some families continued to use the white apron-like dress for their toddlers, irrespective of their gender, whether in Greece or in the US. What seems to be the most dramatic change for the period in question is the eventual replacement of homemade clothing for children by store-bought or tailor-made. Transnational flows of images, textiles,

garments and cash eventually rendered loom-made or homemade clothes evidence of backwardness and poverty (Papathanasiou 2003, pp. 120–21).

Another conclusion about clothing that can be reached is that of the longevity of certain sartorial traditions and clothing styles and choices, despite consumerist pressure and the effects of modernity. Dressing appropriately for each social event not only facilitated a child's social introduction but also secured its participation in the cultural codes of the surrounding community. Inventing ways to overcome limited resources and overall crisis by recruiting, mending, darning, re-using, patching, altering, and wearing beyond-fit-size clothes were common strategies in both Greek and Greek-migrant communities examined. Utilizing clothing as an externalized assertion of identity and selfhood—even transitional—was also common, with children and youngsters oscillating between traditional attire and modern fashions. It has to be argued here that social class is harder to discern in family photos, either because of the incompleteness of photographic collections that renders our knowledge of the past one-sided or because, as discussed previously, homogeneity in village fashion prevailed and dress code had little variations among classes.⁶⁰

As the question of the degree of children's agency in relation to clothing emerges, we are led to look into the intentionality behind photo-taking and dressing and the expected audiences for both. It is worth noting here that as Thomas Cook and others point out, despite their assertiveness, children often succumbed to the cloth—decisions their mothers made and that “at every point when a mother dresses her young children, or considers the kind of garments thought suitable for them, she is aware that it is her motherhood that is on display and that her children's social dignity is as well” (Thomas Cook 2011, p. 17). In a similar fashion, regarding children's photos, it can be concluded that children are looked at by parents who may pose with them or may be far away and attempt to create a “proxy” presence. With one-fourth of males aged between 15 and 40 years of age having migrated to America from 1900 to 1915 (Clogg 1999, p. 135), usually alone and single or married with their family left behind, the photographs of children play a vital role in instilling bonding and intimacy among parents and children as well as solidifying familial unity (real or imagined) in defiance to the temporal and geographical distance.

Further conclusions could be drawn regarding photographs and, in particular, children's photos. One can only agree with Bourdieu in that “photographic practice only exists and subsists for most of the time by virtue of its family function or rather by the function conferred upon it by the family group” (Bourdieu 1996, p. 19). In this sense, child photography as a genre of family photography is the most popular and most demonstrative of the integration of a family group. Whether staged or not, a family photo “displays the cohesion of the family and is the instrument of its togetherness” (M. Hirsch 1997, p. 7), for it brings together members of kin whose bonds of affect are deduced by the looks, postures, implicit care presented in photographs or by the symbolic technique of collage, in which kin is technically brought together, as was the case with the present photographic collections. Also, photography is temporally and spatially demarcated by family in what Dornier-Agbodjan et al. described as “tiempo familiar” or “family time”. (Dornier-Agbodjan and Conill 2004, p. 126)—a family-specific time that seems to be parallel to or even outside of the linear perception of time and intercepted by family events that are captured in photographs—and family space, closely associated with family action within and outside of home/community. Children's births, baptisms, celebrations, and communal events are deployed in familiar settings around the family house or conceptually close to it. Órla Cronin reminds us that photographs “shouldn't be treated as ‘mirrors’ held up to reality”, since “reality itself is a social process, and photographs can be part of the process as well as a product of reality construction” (Cronin [1998] 2005, p. 71). Given sociocultural norms but, most importantly, the hegemonic and instrumental role of parents in the way children are (re)presented in family snapshots, it is also inferred that photographs of children cannot and should not always be taken at face value. Even if their proximity to reality is indisputable, postmodern voices echo “whose reality”, if not “what reality”. Looking at children posing in front of the camera in Laconia, Kythera, Crete and the US, we wonder, for example, why some children

smile (and who told or taught them to do so) while others don't or whether this smile is spontaneous or staged, a photographic convention of the time, or a truthful presentation of the self.

Children's attire during this period is mostly characterized by a multi-layered transition if not oscillation; it oscillates between tradition and modernity or a mixture of both, reflecting a society in a similar movement. It also reflects a transition in the recognition of the child as a distinct category, with distinct needs and desires as well as attire. Further, a transition towards gendered clothing reflects a dynamic society in need of asserting gender identities through attire—a phenomenon that in Greece delayed in comparison to the US. Finally, the gradual adaptation of market-bought clothing for children and, even more frequently, the dispatching of store-bought clothes or fabrics from relatives in the US to the small village communities reflect a change towards a modern capitalist and consumerist economy with an eye to the potential of upward social mobility in the years before WWII. If clothes for children had their own social life as commodities⁶¹ from the US or the nearby town, or the mother's loom to the children's body and from one child to its younger siblings, cousins and neighbors after endless adjustments, mending and patching, clothes for Greek children also signified change, on a personal and social level.

Another conclusion drawn is that of the methodological and theoretical preoccupations and difficulties, such as those described by many researchers, regarding the temporal and spatial demarcation of the communities involved and the primary material studied, which make the process demanding along the way. Combining the methodological, conceptual, and theoretical tools and language of distinct fields, such as history, fashion studies, childhood studies, migration and photography, has been a challenging process. However, the compensation of exploring three under-studied communities through such a multi-disciplinary lens is hopefully adding new insights to the existing literature and has also been joyous and immense. Further research combining different fields in comparative contexts that explore childhood and its images/representations will hopefully flourish in the very near future as another way to look into the past from less-studied angles and through less-noticed eyes, those of the children.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Table for photographs.

	Greek Villages	Greek Diaspora in US
Photos taken in	26	36
In a studio	2	13
People posing for the camera	20	18
Snapshot/Amateur	6	18
Children only (no adults)	6	11

Notes

- 1 There are numerous such “funny stories” shared among locals, referring both to the pre-WWII and post WWII dispatch of parcels with aid (food, clothing etc.) amassed by individual migrants originating from Kremasti or by different Greek patriotic organizations. The author’s father frequently shared one such funny story, where an excessive number of men’s ties were deemed unnecessary by the villagers, who then decided to use those ties to tie their goats.
- 2 Other sources attesting the sending of clothing, textiles and shoes include private family correspondence as well as official Kremasti community transcripts (where remittances are also recorded).
- 3 One of the first theoretical works on fashion is (Barthes 1960).
- 4 Among the most recent studies are (Kawamura 2005; Johnson et al. 2003; Lynch and Strauss 2007). By no means is this list exhaustive, nor is a full catalogue of recent research within the scope of the present work.
- 5 Cook also points at the ways in which fashion history of children’s dress presents presumptions of children as biologically determined and thus creating an image of “a singular universal child” that is “dressed” (in a passive manner).
- 6 (Ibid, p. 10). Though some of Cook’s suggestions are adapted in this work, his emphasis on children as recognized social actors in terms of their dressing and dress-related consumption habits appears problematic, or at least cross-culturally debatable. What is described as “ambiguity” extends-for this work-to the methodological and conceptual pitfall of seeking the children’s voice as the main interpretive discourse for what children wore in the past and how they conceptualized themselves, their appearance, their relation to adults etc, yet talking to them (about their past) when the envisioned/portrayed/photographed children are no longer children.
- 7 Studies on children’s dress and fashion in Greece mostly emanate from folklore studies and usually refer to what were the “traditional costumes” of certain ethnic groups or rural or island communities around Greece. Of special interest and in a dialogue with history and literature are the works of (Bada 1991). Also of interest, again from the field of folklore studies (Vreli-Zachou 1990).
- 8 Works discussing the role and history of fashion in the US come from various disciplines. Here, I mostly rely on cultural studies and fashion history. Such works include, (Sheumaker and Wajda 2008; Eldridge 2008; Ewing 1984) and focusing on children only is (Worrell 1980; Thomas Cook 2004; as well as Bates 1997). On children’s fashion in general, (Brooke 2003; Vänskä 2017; Rose 2011, pp. 105–20; Brun Petersen 2020; Higonnet and Albinson 1997; Huun and Kaiser 2001; Thomas Cook 2011).
- 9 In this regard Philippe Ariès supported the idea that in the Middle Ages children were not a recognized social category and that such recognition occurred in the 16th century. His ideas were highly influential and (eventually) equally criticized (Ariès [1973] 2014).
- 10 For current research and future perspectives on the studies of childhood, it is worth-mentioning the collective work of Spyrou et al. (2019).
- 11 Historical studies that focus on children and childhood as a lived experience include the works of Frost (2008), of Zucchi (1998), of (Cunningham ([1995] 2021), and many others. A full list of history works focusing on children is beyond the scope of this work. Also of historical significance, yet focusing also on psychology and pedagogy is the work of Koops and Zuckerman (2003) and on the changing content and experiencing of emotions in Stearns and Haggerty (1991). Historical studies on children in labor and/or in poverty include (Henderson and Wall 1994; Davin 1996) and many more. Studies on children’s history in non-urban settings include (Rudolph 1995). Recent works that have centered on children with a multi-disciplinary approach include (Baxter and Ellis 2018; Duane 2013; Sánchez-Eppler 2005; and Spyrou et al. 2019).
- 12 To name some of the most important works in these fields, these include (Meraklis 1999). In the same volume, (Avdikos 1999). Also of Avdikos (1996). Also important are the works of Bada-Tsomokou (1993b), and Bada (2008). Also, Makrynioti (2003a, 2003b).
- 13 By no means is this an extensive or exhaustive reference to the different and multiple theoretical contexts surrounding photography, nor is this within the scope or intention of this work.
- 14 “Die Photographie” was first published in the Frankfurter Zeitung, 28 October 1927 where Krakauer served as one of the editors.
- 15 Walter Benjamin’s most important works on photography were published in 1931 (Benjamin 1931, initially published in Literarische Welt of 18.9., 25.9. and 2.10.1931) and 1936 (Benjamin [1936] 2008). Some of his ideas were thought as provocative in that era.
- 16 The most recent work being that of Elizabeth Edwards aiming at familiarizing historians with the world and language of photography (Edwards 2022).
- 17 According to Penelope Petsini, the first theoretical texts on photography were of Kostis Antoniadis (1987, 1994) and of Nikos Panagiotopoulos (1978, 1979, 1982, 1986, 1987). Antoniadis had studied photography in Paris and identified with the school of semiology. Panagiotopoulos had studied photography in London under Victor Burgin and mostly identified as post-structuralist and Marxist. Also significant are the works of Platon Rivellis (Petsini 2007).
- 18 Stathatos and Petsini (2021), Papaioannou and Areti (2013), and Drogkaris (2008) focusing on the ‘micro-history’ of a Laconian photographer, (Karali 2012; Rivellis 1991, 1993, 2000; Skarpelos 2011). The most recent work, discussing photographs taken in Sfakia, Crete, is that of Kalantzis (2019).

- 19 Harper explains that “Photo elicitation is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview” (Harper 2002). In this work, discussion with people who have preserved photos as part of their own family history has been integral in the analysis, for the cases of Kremasti and Crete.
- 20 Kuhn explains “memory work” in the following way; “Memory work has a great deal in common with forms of inquiry which-like detective work and archaeology, say-involve working backwards-searching for clues, deciphering signs and traces, making deductions, patching together reconstructions out of fragments of evidence” and continues by adding that “Memory work makes it possible to explore connections between ‘public’ historical events, structures of feeling, family dramas, relations of class, national identity and gender, and personal memory...Memory work can create new understandings of both past and present, while yet refusing a nostalgia that embalms the past in a perfect, irretrievable moment”. She then offers specific steps for applying this method (Kuhn [1995] 2002).
- 21 Annette Kuhn describes how studies of cultural memory “draw on, mix and match a range of methods of inquiry-sociological, ethnographic, literary-so that a sort of unselfconscious methodological *bricolage*, pragmatic and in varying degrees inventive and productive prevails in work in the field” (Kuhn 2007, p. 283).
- 22 The actual name of the place is used as it has been used in previous works by the author.
- 23 The names of the villages in Crete and in Kythera are not used for purposes of anonymity.
- 24 For example Laconia experienced Ottoman rule while Kythera was under British rule and Crete under Venetian and then Ottoman rule.
- 25 Kythera is an island, Crete is Greece’s biggest island and Laconia is partly coastal partly mountainous in the mainland.
- 26 For example a strong gender-specific moral code was observed in Laconia and Crete.
- 27 Also owned by the author.
- 28 Some photographs have been framed by their original owners and due to temporal distance, it is impossible to remove them from the frame without destroying them. Other photographs have survived only digitally, with technical details usually encountered at the back of the photo, lost forever. Other photographs have been ‘modified’ by the initial owners, mostly using collage techniques much later (in the 1960s) or (in most cases) by sticking cardboard paper at the back of the photo, as an affordable way to “protect” them from crinkling and hand them on the wall without having to procure glass frames. Information is included when photographic details are visible or traceable.
- 29 Works on Greek history of the time in general include, among many others, (Hadjiiosif 2009; Dertilis 2006; Kostis 2013).
- 30 For example Crete that is discussed in this work was united with Greece after the 1913 Treaty of London. The islands of the Dodecanese were under Italian rule until the 7th of March 1948. After the Balkan wars, Salonica (in 1912) and Western Thrace (in the Treaty of Neuilly, 1920) were united with Greece.
- 31 After internal political and strategic division, Greece joined the war in June 1917.
- 32 The role of Greece in WWI and the disillusioning aspirations of Greece but also the catastrophic aftermaths of the Asia Minor expedition are discussed in various works, like (Smith [1973] 2009) and (Hirschon 1989).
- 33 The Bank of Greece was established in 1927 while the Agricultural Bank of Greece-in a country predominantly agricultural-was established in 1929. Until then the monopoly of banking services was exclusive to the National Bank of Greece. Such lacuna explains perhaps the extensive networks of usury and the longevity of feudal structures and customs in certain parts of the country. For more on the economic history of Greece at the time, see (Fragkiadis 2007; also Mazower 2009; Petmezas 2003).
- 34 Alikis Tsirgialou discusses the expansion of the new medium with the arrival of Kodak in Greece in (Tsirgialou 2021). Alikis Xanthakis mentioned that in the mid-1920s a translation of the Kodak book “Stihia Fotografikis” (Elements of Photography), was translated into Greek with information for amateur photographers. In April 1928 the first Greek journal on photography, entitled *Fotografikon Deltion*, was established, soon to be followed by the second magazine on photography entitled *Fakos (Lens)*, by Manolis Megalokonomou. In (Xanthakis 2008, p. 341).
- 35 For example Panos Eliopoulos, the child of a very poor peasant family from Messinia, Peloponnese who migrated illegally to the US (Detroit), got his photographic training in Chicago and returned to open his studio in Messinia. Similar is the story of Argolis-born Yannis Karamanos, who also migrated to the US (Oregon), returned to fight in the Balkan wars and launched his photographic profession in 1916, along with his agricultural chores in a small village of Argolida (Peloponnese). In (Liontis 2013, p. 60).
- 36 A very interesting overview of Kytheran photography, is (Stathatos 2006).
- 37 For example, Stefanos Phiotakis was a well-known photographer, who was born in Crete in 1880s. There is little information on how he learned the art of photography and when exactly he launched his photographic endeavors. According to the Benaki Museum that houses Phiotakis’ archive since 2005, it seems that Phiotakis studied next to Chania-based photographers and also collaborated with Giorgos Potamitakis who had a portrait studio in Athens in the early 20th century. Thereafter Phiotakis migrated to the US and remained in the United States (information on Phiotakis Stefanos, Benaki Museum, Benaki Photographic archives).
- 38 Information from (West 2000).
- 39 In terms of play in the same period the US experienced the first “teddy bear frenzy” along with a first attempt to view children’s toys as educational tools (Worrell 1980, pp. 193–94).

- 40 This can be inferred to a degree by photographs of children in urban areas that appear in books and magazines of the time but also in the national television archive (ERT archive: children in the summertime-1939).
- 41 Yet, Bada points that members of these communities who were close to or below poverty line or who lived very isolated (geographically and socially) did not abide by the rules of garment uniformity (Bada 1991, p. 186).
- 42 For trade, for buying seeds/tools/goods that were not available in the small village community, for military service or to attend middle school/high school.
- 43 Vreli-Zachou mentions that in the 18th century, when Greek rural communities were gradually experiencing urbanization, social roles and structures were challenged and renegotiated and this “social shuffling” was acutely represented in peoples’ clothing (Vreli-Zachou 1990, p. 178). In the case of this research, the influence or the changing factor seemed to be America and not so much a nearby urban center.
- 44 For more information on the transformation of markets to match children’s needs and newly-gained autonomy regarding appearance and attire, also see (Thomas Cook 2004). A popular figure of the 1930s for the girls was that of Shirley Temple. As David Eldridge describes “Shirley Temple was no mere child star, but the superstar of the Depression. She was the top box office attraction every year from 1935 to 1938. Almost 90 per cent of Twentieth Century-Fox’s profits for 1936 were attributable to just three of her films” (Eldridge 2008, p. 63).
- 45 For explicit demands an over-spending on clothing, accessories and other extravaganzas, also see (Jacobson 2004, pp. 30, 151).
- 46 Nounos is the Greek word for godfather.
- 47 An Ottoman firman of 1806 dictated what Greek subordinates were allowed/obliged to wear and also divided Greek subjugates into three distinct social classes with distinct dressing codes for each. For example, as Vreli-Zachou points out, the third class could not wear socks or shoes (Vreli-Zachou 1990, p. 178). Vreli-Zachou adds that the Greek Orthodox church further contributed to the enforcement of the Ottoman laws, also dictating its own rules on what members of each social class were entitled to wear or not (as before, p. 179). Cretans on the other hand, under Venetian rule, were forced to adhere to Venetian laws that obliged them to adopt Venetian dressing styles, that could only be afforded by the rich. Kythera, also ruled by Venetians, received influences by the clothing and styles of Cretans and Peloponnesians who arrived in the island in response to a Venetian call for installation in the island and occupied the northern (Peloponnesians) and southern (Cretans) parts of the island, constituting the local island elites (Dodouras and Eirini 2016, p. 104). Later, English rule had its effect on local styles until the island’s annexation to Greece in 1864.
- 48 As Ortiz García distinguishes, “there are two categories of photos that people take. There are the formal, ritualistic and neat, that represent the individual rites of passage and other occasions of “formal presentation” of the family group, or else what we call ‘strong moments’ or official situations and then there are their opposites, which are those photos representing ordinary life” (Ortiz García 2006, p. 158).
- 49 Annette Kuhn discusses that “the baby’s nakedness, suggesting newness, naturalness, innocence, is set within particular conventions” in (Kuhn [1995] 2002, p. 49).
- 50 For women left behind while their male kin migrated, also see Reeder (2003) and Brettell (1987).
- 51 The term “social birth” to describe baptism in Greek society was encountered in (Bada) where she makes reference to (Paradellis 1995) PhD dissertation entitled “Politismikes kai koinonikes diathlaseis tis gennisis ston elladiko choro tou 19ou aiona” (Cultural and social refractions of birth in the Greek space of the 19th century), Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences.
- 52 For a profound analysis of death and death-rituals in Inner Mani (an area of Laconia), see Seremetakis (1991), du Boulay (1982) and also Danforth (1982) enriched with death-related photographs of a small mountain community.
- 53 Interviewing with the author’s father and locals of Laconia and Crete it was stated that all the clothes were dyed black in a big pot called “harani”, all mirrors in the house were covered with thick black cloth to symbolize the residents’ indifference towards external appearance and beauty and all furniture in the family’s “good room” or “sala” were covered in black cloth, to show their non-use (as celebrations would not take place in this house for the period of grief). In Crete, I.P. mentioned in an informal interview that a young woman whose husband died, watered her blossomed flowers with boiling water to symbolically show her utter grief.
- 54 Again through interviewing it was stated that families in grief abstained from all local festivities and celebrations for a period of time that varied according to the age/status and role of the deceased relative. Also, though the family attended in grief the services of the Orthodox Easter Holy Week, they were expected to abstain from Church service on Easter Sunday, to symbolize their grief and pain.
- 55 This tradition is also recorded in (Papathanasiou 2003).
- 56 In Kremasti, a story shared by the WWII generation is that of a family who made clothes for their children (in the 1940s) out of flour sacks, without being able to get rid of the letters, which luckily few people in the village could read and understand the initial purpose. The story is told as a “funny” anecdote.
- 57 For the procedures of cloth-processing and mending in a Greek mountainous community of that time, see also (Papathanasiou 2003, p. 121).
- 58 In Laconia funding for this also came from the migrants association in the US, mainly in New York.

- 59 This was especially the case in shepherds' households where the seasonal movement of the family meant an abrupt early finish of the school year for shepherds' children at the beginning of spring, or even their total non-attendance, when children (from both shepherd and agricultural households) were expected to contribute their labor to the service of the family, instead of attending school.
- 60 This is also discussed in (Papathanasiou 2003).
- 61 I borrow the term from Arjun Appadurai (1986).

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