

**EI-705**

**ELENI FTERGIOTIS**

**BIRTHDATE: MARCH 10, 1903**

**INTERVIEW DATE: NOVEMBER 2, 1995**

**AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 92**

**RUNNING TIME: 1:00:17**

**INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE, PH.D.**

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**TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: TAPESCRIBE**

**TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: SIMAH KRAUS**

**GREECE, 1929**

**AGE: 26**

**SHIP:**

**PORT: SALONIKA**

**RESIDENCES:**

- **GREECE: KORKINOPOLIS AND KATERINI**
- **THE US: MANCHESTER AND WHITE MOUNTAINS,  
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

LEVINE: Today is November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995, and I'm here in Rowell Hill area of New Hampshire, and I'm with Mrs. Eleni Ftergiotis.

FTERGIOTIS: Ftergiotis.

LEVINE: Ftergiotis. And she is today ninety-two years of age, came here to this country from Greece in 1929 when she was twenty-six years of age. Well, I'm delighted, and I look forward to whatever you can remember that you would like to tell for this tape about your life story. Your birth date was March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1903?

FTERGIOTIS: That's what I said.

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LEVINE: Yes, and you were born in what city?

FTERGIOTIS: Korkinopolis.

LEVINE: Korkinopolis. And that was in the mountains?

FTERGIOTIS: Up the mountain, Olympus.

LEVINE: Olympus. And you also lived in the city.

FTERGIOTIS: After my father and mother, my aunt adopted me, so I go in Katerini, winter time there. Summer time in Olympus, in the city, Korkinopolis. All my life like that. I come here, I find the same thing—up the mountain, and up to Manchester.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh! City in the winter—

FTERGIOTIS: I never stay in the city summer time. Never until—I don't know. I never go up the mountain. And after here, I got up the mountain here.

LEVINE: Well now, what was your father's name.

FTERGIOTIS: I'm going to say the father, the one adopted me, right? Nicolas—Nick, say Nick. Nick.

LEVINE: And his last name?

FTERGIOTIS: Makres

LEVINE: M-A-K-R-E-S?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, Makres.

LEVINE: And your mother?

FTERGIOTIS: Anna.

LEVINE: Anna. And do you remember her maiden name, before she married?

FTERGIOTIS: Anna Kontoutaseiou

LEVINE: Can you spell that? We'll wait 'til the end, and then maybe you can spell that.

FTERGIOTIS: K-O-N-T-O-U is [unclear], another [unclear] in Greek. T-A-S-E-[unclear] only different in Greek, you know what I mean? Kontoutaseiou.

LEVINE: Okay, well let's—Kontoutaseiou. Okay, we'll check that out also with your daughter, with the spelling. Okay, and so did your mother die, is that what happened?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Your mother died, when you were how old?

FTERGIOTIS: I was maybe fourteen, fourteen or fifteen, and I stayed with my father, in Katerini.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. What do you remember about your mother? What kind of a person was she?

FTERGIOTIS: Very nice. Very nice! She used to like me so much. I never [unclear] to do this—nothing! Nothing! But she keep me always, all you're doing, all you go, because she don't know, because adopt me, you know what I mean? She used to ask, "Where have you been? Who you talk? You talk with that? What'd she say? What'd you say?" All the time! "Why you ask me that?" And after, when I got a little old after, when my real aunt, my mother [unclear]. The sister told me one night, she says, "You know what this is? She took it from Katerini." She told me. It's all right, because I say that?

LEVINE: Yeah, sure.

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah. So, used to take me out all the time. We'd go out to have something to eat, something—good time with her. And one night, I come late to home, [unclear]. So I go inside, and my mother says, "You want to eat?" So I said no. So I go in bed; I started crying in the middle of the night. She says, "Why you crying?" I said, "Nothing." "If you don't tell me why you crying, I'm going to stay like that day and night." So I told, you know. She told me, "Because you took me from Auntie." She says, "Shut your mouth. You're not going to say it again." My father sleep on the other side. "I don't want your father to see that. If you talk, I talk." I didn't say nothing. I get up in the morning, I didn't say nothing to nobody, you know, nobody. You know, that mother, the one adopt me, died. The people sometimes says she make me mother, the real mother. She died, that mother, the one adopt me. So, we go to the cemetery, we saw this woman, that's the priest's wife. So she says, "You're mother gonna leave today!" My real mother—because she come, because she's—you know what I mean—brother and sister, near! So she says, "She's leaving today." So I said, "Oh, just [unclear]." And after she knows, because I don't know. I know, but I didn't say nothing to nobody until I come here, until both of them die.

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Then I say. Now I say, I got a brother and sisters, you know what I mean. I keep it, and nobody say nothing to me, nobody. You know that? Even my real mother brought them; she's a principal. She says one day, she says, "Why do you stay there with your aunt? Your mother?" I think. I said to him, just like that—nobody can talk to him. So, I said, "If you don't want your sister give me away, I'm going to stay while I'm growing up." I answered him. So my grandmother, she says, "Oh, [unclear] talk like that!" I didn't let nobody to tell me. I don't want it. I'd be strong in that.

LEVINE: Well now, you remember your grandmother?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: What was she like?

FTERGIOTIS: [Laughs] Oh, years ago!

LEVINE: What did she used to do with you?

FTERGIOTIS: No, I'm just relatives. No near.

LEVINE: You weren't near to your grandmother.

FTERGIOTIS: No, no, no, because I be on the other side, you know what I mean? My brother give to the—you know, they gave me away, so, I used to go there, but I didn't call them, no, I didn't have nothing to do.

LEVINE: Now, you had a brother and a sister?

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FTERGIOTIS: The part who adopted me, that's my mother, [unclear] Anna, [unclear], she had one son. She didn't repeat it again; she didn't have another kid. So you ask my mother, "Can I have a girl? Are you going to give it to me?" She says, "Yes." She give her to me, when I'm born, she says--they took the baby like that." She says, "All right, that's yours." But she took it back, because she have to give me milk.

LEVINE: Who had that baby?

FTERGIOTIS: Me. That's my mother when I born. So she give it to the sister-in-law, just like that, and never said a word. Everybody says, "Don't talk to her!"

LEVINE: So when your mother had you, she gave you as a little baby?

FTERGIOTIS: No, no, no, she give it, at that time, happened to be there. So she give just to touch, to touch me, says, "I'll give it to you, this one." When my father hear that: "Why give the girl? Why give the girl?" She says, "I give her to your sister." My mother says, "I give her to your sister. What's the difference? There or here." So I grown up there.

LEVINE: So you grew up with your aunt?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah. I been there, in Greece, and my husband—we want to come there, happen to be relatives with them, the other side!

LEVINE: Wait a minute. What was your aunt's name, the one that you grew up with?

FTERGIOTIS: Anna.

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LEVINE: That was your—

FTERGIOTIS: The one that took me.

LEVINE: The one that took you? Anna.

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, Anna.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, okay. But her name wasn't Makres?

FTERGIOTIS: Makres.

LEVINE: It was?

FTERGIOTIS: My father is Nicolas, Nick. They have one son, and died! This is big story. Salonika burned, so happened the son had to have a drugstore there, or something. So, they wanted him very bad, very bad. In Salonika, started a fire, and everything there [unclear]. Did you hear of Salonika?

LEVINE: Huh-uh.

FTERGIOTIS: It's a big city, Salonika, next to Athens. So everything—I was young, but I—so a lot of Jews, they have a big store. The biggest store they had, the Jewish. They have [unclear] here, to be like that, you know. How do you know it?

LEVINE: A wall?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, walls, you have doors here, going in. You have a store here. I got a store there. The others got a store there. The other side you

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have another door to go in Salonika. So Salonika burned. All the Jews going out. Salonika changed—changed everything! The mother don't lie down, those things.

LEVINE: Well, this is on the table.

FTERGIOTIS: So, and after my mother who adopt me have one son, she come up the [unclear] was sick. He died there.

LEVINE: How old were you?

FTERGIOTIS: At that time I was very young when he died, the boy. Very young I was. I used to go to grammar school in Katerini, [unclear] up the mountain. Only when I used to go in summer, and the school no close, I used to go there, because they had [unclear] big kitchen there.

LEVINE: What do you remember about school in Katerini?

FTERGIOTIS: Katerini I used to—oh, I used to go to Katerini. First grade, and second grade, and third grade. Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: What was the school like? Was it--?

FTERGIOTIS: Grammar school. The grammar school here, you go the kids here. A little further, just in the same thing, used to be a high school, in the same place. Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And were the teachers strict?

FTERGIOTIS: What is strict?

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LEVINE: Were the teachers strict?

FTERGIOTIS: I don't know strict.

LEVINE: Were they—did they discipline you? Did they make you study hard, learn your lessons?

FTERGIOTIS: If I say, this is not so good, but I'm going to say it [laughs]. I used to be first! I used to do good. So I used to have a first cousin, used to be a doctor, used to be in politics, and everything. So he talked with the teachers, "Oh, Eleni, [unclear]." And that meant you go home, talk with my mother, who adopt me. He said, "You know, Auntie, we're going to send a letter to make them teacher, to make her a teacher, while she's growing up, because she's very smart." Since then, I stopped to do that, to be first. I stopped. The teacher finally came, she says, "What's the matter with that girl now?" So I said to myself, "I'm not going to be a teacher! No! I'm not going to get good marks." She said, "What's the matter?" I said, "Nothing. I do it." Because I don't want to go in the high school, that's why I did that.

LEVINE: What did you want instead? What did you want to do?

FTERGIOTIS: I don't know. I don't want to grow up, because I don't want to be as smart to send in school again [laughs]. So I go grammar school. I can read, I can write, everything, but no high school! [Laughs] But I used to know a lot of things by hand. By hand, a lot of them. A lot of them, by hand!

LEVINE: You mean, like sewing and embroidering?

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FTERGIOTIS: Like sewing dresses, and everything you want, materials, take the wool and make a dress, put it in the weave, and do it—everything! You know, it's everything!

LEVINE: Do you mean you would take the wool, like, from the sheep?

FTERGIOTIS: Yes, how they take the wool of the sheep; they sell it. So you buy it, and put it [unclear], you wash it, and you make it dried, and make a thread. I used to make a thread, I used to make it weave, working. Even now, you know, everything, I used to know. When I come to the United States, you don't know that girl used to go to high school and everything. And my son, I used to sew everything.

LEVINE: Do you remember making the wool from the sheep?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah!

LEVINE: How did you do it?

FTERGIOTIS: You take the wool, when the season coming, the people cut. You take that wool, and you warm it up with hot water, so because dirty, you know, from the sheep. Dry. If they dry enough to have something like this one here, we'd say about this big. You have all the needles like that.

LEVINE: About a foot around.

FTERGIOTIS: So you go like that.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, oh, and you like comb through it.

FTERGIOTIS: You open it, you open it, you open it. And after you make it like balls. If you want the balls, to have it in a stake, and keep it here, and make the thread, all right. If you don't [unclear], you know, it goes around like that. Used to do that. I used to do that—everything. I used to do on the floor, keep the needles here and there. I used to make the thread to go like that. And after you put in a weave, and you know how to make it material.

LEVINE:: Uh-huh, and did you dye into colors? Did you dye it so that it was colored yarn? Did you make it into colors?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah! And after, you take that, and you have one kind of tree, you cut those things and you boil it, so the color come out like dark. So you take that white, and you put it in, and you make it like this, if you want it. And after you take it from there, you dry it. And after, you make the material.

LEVINE: Do you remember what kind of tree that was, that you got that colored dye from?

FTERGIOTIS: Um, I can't remember now [laughs]. Different colors, you buy, like red or something. You buy that. But the one color, that's dark, no. You don't buy it, you take the tree and boil it, it come out. [Unclear], I don't know. It's Romanian. I talk Romanian, too.

LEVINE: You do? Oh. How did you come to speak Romanian?

FTERGIOTIS: Because I [unclear] Vlacos.

LEVINE: What?

FTERGIOTIS: Vlajos means, not Romanian, but it is mixed, you know what I mean? So we talk Romanian. So when I go to school, the Greeks, the real Greeks, talk Greek. They come door to door to say, "Don't let the kids to talk Romanian, because they go to school now." Because they make Romanian to take you to Romany, you know what I mean? I remember [unclear]. He says, "Don't let." So every time, because my mother, the one adopted me, I talked Romanian in that house. When I go out of house, Greek, with everybody. Greek. Because if somebody hear me, she's going to say now, "[Unclear], or they don't take me in school."

LEVINE: Well now, who was Romanian? The mother who adopted you?

FTERGIOTIS: No, we have a Vlajica [unclear] a little from here and there. It's not real Romanian. But they call them Vlaho, Vlajica, Vlaho, yeah. Not Romanian. Romanian is real Romanian. Vlajica is—I don't know, they have no school, no letters, no nothing. Just talking. And in Romanian they have. No idea of nothing. It's just the talk.

LEVINE: Were there a lot of people who spoke that, Vlajica?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yes, Vlajica? Oh, yeah [laughs]. Vlajica, yeah.

LEVINE: And that was in Katerini, or in--?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, in Katerini—any place, you can find it. Any place, you can find it, oh yeah! Any place. But the kids, the Greek, the real Greek, when you go to school they watch it, to talk Greek. Because the Romanian, if they learn the Romanian, going to drop the kids. Once I know, once come this man, come up the village, up to Mount Olympus. I say this now, because I saw him, talk with somebody there. "I come here," he says, "I want to be a teacher." He ask somebody, "What are you going

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to teach? Greek?" "No," he says, "Romanian." Says, "You better go, because you're not going to go. Up here, the people's going to take your hat out. Go." "Oh no, I'm going to stay." He stay only one week, I think. He left, because somebody going to kill him, because you don't want it! You don't want Romanian. The Greek is, you know, you put some Greeks inside, you know what I mean, Romanian—different language. [Unclear] my daughter.

LEVINE: Now, did you like speaking the Vlakica?

FTERGIOTIS: Vlakica?

LEVINE: Yeah, did you like to speak that?

FTERGIOTIS: I talk, yeah!

LEVINE: And now, do you speak it?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh, I speak it, because I didn't go to school [laughs].

LEVINE: But you can speak Greek as well?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah. I speak Greek, and I speak Vlakica, too.

LEVINE: I see. When you speak to your daughter, which one do you use?

FTERGIOTIS: Greek. Greek all the time. I want to say something. I used to say for my husband. So I'd say Vlakica, you know what I mean? So my son—I just lost my son two months ago—my pharmacist. He was pharmacist [unclear], very smart boy. Yeah, he died two months ago. That's why I am here.

LEVINE: Are you saying you spoke to your son in Vlakica?

FTERGIOTIS: Vlakica, sometimes. So, I used to talk with my husband, Vlakica, and I'd say something, and then the boy'd do this, then he'd do that. Vlakica. And my son one day says, "I know who did this." What? Everything I say, he knows everything! Vlakica. My husband says, "Uh, to her, I can talk." He used to know, and then she knows Greek and Romanian. Some don't know. Some Greeks don't know, because don't want to.

LEVINE: Well now, were you a religious family when you were young? When you were in Greece, were you religious?

FTERGIOTIS: I was religious?

LEVINE: Were you?

FTERGIOTIS: What does that mean?

LEVINE: I mean, did you go to church?

FTERGIOTIS: Of course! Oh yeah, the first thing. Don't ask me! Even I come here, and I go to church. They didn't even have icons, nothing, at that church, but I go just the same. I make my cross, because I want it that way.

LEVINE: This is the Greek Orthodox Church?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, mine, yeah, yeah.

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LEVINE: Do you remember, like, any celebrations that happened around the church, that had to do with the church, when you were in Greece?

FTERGIOTIS: Yes, yeah.

LEVINE: What kinds of occasions were there? Like, confirmation, or any of those things?

FTERGIOTIS: I don't know what that means.

LEVINE: Do you remember any celebrations around the church?

FTERGIOTIS: Yes, oh yeah. We do on holidays.

LEVINE: What would you do, in Greece, on the holidays? Like Easter?

FTERGIOTIS: Easter, those years when I was young? I used to go up the mountain.

LEVINE: Why did you go up the mountain?

FTERGIOTIS: It was summer time. I didn't stay in the city, oh no. So when I go there, it being Easter, I remember like now. I'd go in the church, and I'd get out, outside the church. I kissed the priest's hand, and I'd go out. Everybody starts singing, and go around, "Hey!" everybody.

LEVINE: Can you remember any of the songs that you knew when you were growing up in Greece, in the mountains?

FTERGIOTIS: [Raspberry sound]

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LEVINE: Could you sing a little bit for the tape? That would be wonderful, if you could remember any.

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah.

LEVINE: Go ahead.

FTERGIOTIS: [Sings in Greek] Now, when I come, in the dance—[sings in Greek], I'm going to sing, and I'm going to talk. Oh, yeah! I used to be all over. The girls at my party says, "Is Eleni here? I'm coming. Eleni's not here, I'm not going to come." I'm going to be, like a boss!

LEVINE: You were the life of the party?

FTERGIOTIS: Like a boss!

LEVINE: Like a boss! Did you always have such an independent spirit?

FTERGIOTIS: I don't know.

LEVINE: Were your always like that, like the boss?

FTERGIOTIS: Look at now—I just lost my son, I still talking and laughing. Look at now!

LEVINE: Yes, yes.

FTERGIOTIS: I go to church the other day, they said, "Look at her. She just lost a son." But I talk! I talk! I had a nice son. I want to cry, but I cry when I'm alone. Those things happen.

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LEVINE: Yeah, very sad, yeah. Well now, did you know your husband from the time you were a little girl?

FTERGIOTIS: [Laughs] I was, maybe—I go from Katerini, I go up the mountain. My mother says, “Go to Auntie Eleni.” My mother-in-law, Eleni, too. So go there. She says, to bring something. She give me something to go there. I go there, I see somebody inside in the house. Happened to be the door like that, and I look inside there. One have a mandolin, the other have a guitar. And I look, my husband come in the war. He came from here to Greece to fight, to fight with Turkey.

LEVINE: He was in the United States, and came back to Greece to be in the army to fight the Turks, uh-huh.

FTERGIOTIS: So I find my uncle, who used to be a teacher there. So they play together. So I go home; so I say, “Do you know who’s there? Do you know who’s there? Somebody.” I was younger than my husband, so I didn’t know much. But after he came here, and after he came back—

LEVINE: So what did you like about him?

FTERGIOTIS: He was a very nice man.

LEVINE: He was a very nice man, uh-huh. So he was playing the mandolin?

FTERGIOTIS: Well, he used to play here, in United States, to play. In movies here, they have no—

LEVINE: Sound.

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FTERGIOTIS: He used to play; he used to play inside when they have a movie. He used to play in the streets in Manchester when they would have parades. He used to be there, the trombone. I got the trombone home. He used to like music a lot, yeah.

LEVINE: So how old were you when you got married?

FTERGIOTIS: How old, me?

LEVINE: Yeah.

FTERGIOTIS: I think I got, twenty-eight, I don't know. Maybe I got sick, I don't know.

LEVINE: Right before you came here, you were married?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh, yeah, I married. I got somewhere marked down. Yeah, I got somewhere.

LEVINE: Okay, but do you remember your wedding? The wedding?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah, we didn't have a big wedding.

LEVINE: You had a small wedding?

FTERGIOTIS: Small, because when my husband come from here to Greece—when he came out from there, came Salonika, and from Salonika Katerini, and Katerini, go to this house, or another. Two men come from here to Greece. And he go there, and he dream something, he says, "I think my father died." He said to the people there—two boys from here go there. He says, "How do you know?" "Because I dream." He dream,

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because the father died. His father died. My husband's father, dead, in Mount Olympus.

LEVINE: And who dreamed it?

FTERGIOTIS: That's my husband. His son. He dreamed, and he said, he go out, and everybody says, "Oh, welcome home, welcome home," because he had people here to ask. And he says, "My father died." Says, "How do you know? Some people don't know in Katerini." "Because I know," he says, "Because I dream." And that's true.

LEVINE: And it was true?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah. So we didn't have a big thing when I get married, in a house. We didn't have a big thing.

LEVINE: I see. Did you go to the funeral of his--?

FTERGIOTIS: No, it was up the mountain! I didn't have nothing! I didn't have nothing with him! Nothing. Come visit? No, I didn't even know him! He had been [unclear] and come to fight for Greece for [unclear]. To go back [unclear], I stay here, then.

LEVINE: What was your husband's name?

FTERGIOTIS: Anthony.

LEVINE: Anthony, uh-huh. And when he went into the army, how long did he fight? How long was he in the--?

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FTERGIOTIS: I don't know, because I'm not be old enough. I don't know. They have a fight. They have fight, but you know, after when he come here again. And after, and after that, and after decided to come to get married, and he find me. So he used to say what he see in the war. He says, "One night," he says, "I sleep nice, and I have to kill people, you know, for the war." They killed it in the forest, in the ground! He says, "I sleep there on the top of dead people, like that." So I says, "You're not scared?" "I sleep," he says, "I get up in the morning." Yeah, yeah, [unclear]. The war no good.

LEVINE: When he came back after that—

FTERGIOTIS: After that—

LEVINE: Did he come back to get married?

FTERGIOTIS: He come back—when he come the second time, come to get married.

LEVINE: And was he coming to marry you, or just to find a bride?

FTERGIOTIS: He come to marry me. No, no, he come there, and the mother says, "Eleni's a good girl," and yeah. So get engaged, and get married. So we come back here.

LEVINE: Well, before we get to that part, when you got married, were there certain traditions that were Greek traditions that were part of the marriage ceremony? You know, did you come in on a horse? Did you have a veil?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh, no, no. We have the marriage in a—small, in a house, not like here now. [Unclear] because the father dead. So the priest come, in that

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room. So that priest going around and around, and everything was there, and they served sweet stuff after, and you know what I mean. We have a little good time, but not outside, too, to invite a lot of people, no. Because just the father died. Forty days are supposed to go by, and they can after forty days, but no forty days. So, after, we get married, yeah. So, they have big things.

LEVINE: Did you have singing and dancing? Or, you didn't do that, because—

FTERGIOTIS: Because of—

LEVINE: Of the death.

FTERGIOTIS: [Unclear] little, but no.

LEVINE: I see. So, did you and your husband live in Greece for a while after you were married?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah. After I get married, I stayed there, yeah. And after I stayed, I don't know how long. I supposed to be summer here, because he used to have a store up the lake. No, up the White Mountain. He used to get a store there, so I have to go.

LEVINE: Who, your husband?

FTERGIOTIS: My husband.

LEVINE: He had a store in the White Mountains?

FTERGIOTIS: White Mountains.

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LEVINE: What kind of a store?

FTERGIOTIS: A restaurant.

LEVINE: A restaurant.

FTERGIOTIS: And after, and then Bethlehem. Do you hear Bethlehem?

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

FTERGIOTIS: Bought Bethlehem store, restaurant, bowling, billiards—three things.

LEVINE: Three restaurants?

FTERGIOTIS: No, no, no. Restaurant, billiards, and what did I say the other?  
Billiards, and bowling.

LEVINE: Bowling?

FTERGIOTIS: Bowling, you know, they throw the ball. And billiards.

LEVINE: Billiards, is that a bar—what is that?

FTERGIOTIS: Billiards, wait a minute. Bowling. They have a table, so you go through  
the things.

LEVINE: Oh, billiards?

FTERGIOTIS: With the holes there, you know, through the balls so they go there.  
How do you call?

LEVINE: Billiards.

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, I say billiards because in Greek.

LEVINE: Yeah, right. That's right.

FTERGIOTIS: Used to be three stores. So the people in Bethlehem used to come there, one store there, just that store. And people liked that. The women, the rich women—of course, there were hotels and those things in Bethlehem—with the long dresses, and they have like a stairs to sit down there. They pay. It's a lot of money. So my husband says, "Two years we're going to stay here, then leave." We have no insurance—big fire! The next summer. When I go there, I go there to pick up the money on the billiards. They come here to pay. I take the money. Can I say something [unclear]? This man comes, says, "May I have a match?" "I don't speak English." That's all I know. I say it nice, that, "I don't speak English." He go to my husband, in the other room in the restaurant. He says, "What's the matter with your wife. I asked for a match, she said, I don't speak English. But the money, the money says the same!" [Laughs] I remember. So the next times come with a cigar. I see him with the cigar; I take this match, a lot of ways, I put it on the table [laughs]. I have a lot of fun!

LEVINE: Yeah. So what happened? The place burned down? The restaurant?

FTERGIOTIS: My boy just born! He says, "I'm going to get somebody, somebody to get you to bring you here." I don't know, they fixed the stoves and everything. And all that store burned, and next door is um, they had fruits and everything there, not the people. And upstairs, you know who owned that store, the man, he was something in the bank, big shot, in the south, a different place. He used to come in summer; I didn't even

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see him until the next summer. But that burned, and after still, I go up the mountain, I find another.

LEVINE: Another mountain?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, a [unclear] mountain. And after we go from there, another one. And after we built.

LEVINE: Do you remember leaving Greece to come to the United States?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh, yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember packing up and getting ready to come here?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah!

LEVINE: What did you take with you? Do you remember what you brought with you from Greece?

FTERGIOTIS: I took some of the dowry. How you say, dowry?

LEVINE: Mm-hm.

FTERGIOTIS: I take some.

LEVINE: What was the dowry?

FTERGIOTIS: Used to be covers, you know what I mean?

LEVINE: Blankets, comforters?

FTERGIOTIS: Blankets, the one I used to make it. You make it in a weave, and you put something, and you get if fluffy, you know that? Yeah. And some dresses, you know what I mean, I brought. I got pictures. I brought from there, I brought some. So I said to my husband, "Go for two years." We go on a boat. Oh, goodbye to everybody in Katerini, and go to Salonika, and after, go on a boat. When I reached United States, in New York, somewhere out there. When I reached the boat stop, and I started to get up from the boat, shaking—I don't feel so good, you know what I mean. And the stairs outside of the boat, outside, hanging! And I used to be pregnant with my son, from there. But I didn't know at that time; I didn't have no throw up, nothing those things. So I go down, and after I go in. Eh, they took us office here, and office there, I go office, and doctors look, I think, look us.

LEVINE: You had to go out of the boat, you had to go down a ladder?

FTERGIOTIS: No, not—inside.

LEVINE: No, but when you came off the boat—

FTERGIOTIS: That's inside, in a boat. You didn't walk out, no, no, no. Still, you there. You know what I mean? So they take you inside, and the doctor come. He look at everything, you know what I mean?

LEVINE: Like what? What did they do?

FTERGIOTIS: Like put here, you know. I have a fever or something, those things. Plus the hair, the hands, and those things. They used to do a lot. And the women stood here, and the men there—none of them. None of them, no. I come with this friend, because I come to the United States, she says, "I'm coming, too." Her, she says to the doctor, "Come visit."

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Me, they took me inside in the office. I think she was too there. And after they put us in a row like this, standing up, like that. Standing up with our clothes. And they have water, warm, a little water, you know, goes [makes noise] to wash us. Yeah, I remember that! So I said—no shoes, no nothing. And after we put it back. They give us towels, and everything, and dress up.

LEVINE: How were you treated there? Were you treated nicely?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah, nice.

LEVINE: Were they nice?

FTERGIOTIS: Only that. Only that, they put like that, to wash. You know, I get scared, you know what I mean? You know what I mean. But after, all right, yeah.

LEVINE: So did you have to stay at Ellis Island? Do you remember if you had to stay overnight when you first got here?

FTERGIOTIS: No, somebody wait for us.

LEVINE: Who was waiting?

FTERGIOTIS: Ah! That's a cousin, my husband's cousin there. He take us from there, and he brought us back. I can't remember. I took from the boat, I get off from the boat. Oh, the doctor only looked at me. He asked me a lot of questions.

LEVINE: Like what—do you remember any of those?

FTERGIOTIS: Must be have a fever, I don't know. Because some people send back! I seen, send them back! So I said, "Let me here. I sit here."  
[Unclear] So I said to my husband, "If I can't stay now, I'm going to say goodbye, because I'm going to stay in my country just a little bit." But the doctor took me back, and look at me [unclear]. He says, "All right." So let me go. But that things are awful, I'm telling you this!

LEVINE: What was awful?

FTERGIOTIS: To put you there, to wash you like that! Showers, you know what I mean. But I didn't know those things! [Laughs]

LEVINE: You never had known showers?

FTERGIOTIS: I have been in Greece—different, different. We wash ourselves, but different. That's ninety years ago! [Laughs]

LEVINE: So you came here to this country with your husband, and then this young woman came with you? You said a friend came with you?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah. She's dead now.

LEVINE: Yeah, but so it was the three of you traveling together?

FTERGIOTIS: She got a husband.

LEVINE: Oh, she and her husband came.

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, and me. And I find somebody else, too, from there, from Greece come, I know those people, too.

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LEVINE: On the boat?

FTERGIOTIS: The boat, the same boat, yeah.

LEVINE: Now is that person—did you keep up a contact with them? Did you continue to see them after you came?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh, I used to see—oh yeah, because I used to go to school together, I know. She had three boys, and the three boys died young, teaching and everything, younger than my son. And my son died now.

LEVINE: So this friend of yours, she came to New Hampshire, too?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah, Manchester, yeah. But I go up the mountain that way. I stayed one night in Manchester. From the boat—Manchester.

LEVINE: How did you go? On the train, you went from New York City?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, yeah. I come in Manchester, and I sleep in one—people I used to know, because comes from Greece. I stay there one night. The next day, White Mountains. That's it. Then every—back and forth, because used to have store, my husband.

LEVINE: So your husband still had the store in the White Mountains when he went back to Greece to get married?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah, oh yeah! Oh, they had it because they he have another man.

LEVINE: So then you—what did you do? Did you work in the White Mountains?

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FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, in the restaurant, yeah. Before I have the bowling, you know, I used to stay there, because I used to be pregnant. And after, I work, you know, here, there.

LEVINE: So when did you have your first child? Right after you got to this country?

FTERGIOTIS: No, here! I was pregnant when I come.

LEVINE: You were pregnant on the ship?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, and born here. Born in Manchester. And after, go back and forth: mountains, here, mountains, here. And after we have another girl, she died two years old. And after another year, I have this one. And after I say, "No more," because my husband is sick. You know, what happened to my husband. He had a best friend, used to be a doctor, used to send letters and telephones in Greece. But, make operation, and put a needle in the spine. For to make the operation, put a needle in the spine, touched the nerves. And he got a tumor in the spine a couple years. And after that, the bone started: goodbye. He can't talk. He can't laugh. He can't walk. I used to tell the people, "Don't say nothing to laugh, because he have pains." We go to the Lahey Clinic. Did you hear, Lahey Clinic? We go there, get operation, and take the tumor, and cut the bone. And after, he get all right, only he walk like that. And the doctor, at that time, the doctor who make the operation, he go to the army. When he come back, he come. He called me in Manchester. He says he called, because you're going to come here all the time, I'm not going to take nothing but aspirin. I used to buy the aspirin by the box! My son get pharmacist. I tell him: aspirins. So he come. He says, "I want to see you," the doctor. [Unclear] Says, "Do you know me?" Says, "I think I know you." "I'm

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the one that make operation to you.” He says, “You know,” he says, “In a hundred and twenty-five, one can be well, and that’s you,” the doctor says to him! And that’s true.

LEVINE: Wonderful!

FTERGIOTIS: He took the tumor, he took the bone, enough to start to walk, but you know like that. He can walk, but work though—I work, I take care of those kids. But I didn’t pay nothing because you go to school alone. It means you go to scholarships. My son—the same thing. I didn’t pay nothing. Just, [unclear].

LEVINE: What were your children’s names? What did you name your children?

FTERGIOTIS: That’s Evangeline, this one. Van, they call her Van.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, and your son’s name?

FTERGIOTIS: John.

LEVINE: John, mm-hm, yeah. So, did you keep up some of the ways of Greek? In other words, after you came to this country, were there some things that you did that were still the same as people did them in Greece?

FTERGIOTIS: Some, the same, but some, they make it beautiful.

LEVINE: What was the same, and what was different?

FTERGIOTIS: You know what I mean, now? Like, I got so many in my head now, because you didn’t do that in Greece. But they started there. They want to become better than everybody else. It’s that kind of people

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some places, you know what I mean? Oh yeah, they got everything, like you have here! The same things.

LEVINE: When you came here, did you still cook things the way people do it in Greece?

FTERGIOTIS: Now?

LEVINE: Yeah.

FTERGIOTIS: Now, I eat, and I talk!

LEVINE: [Laughs]

FTERGIOTIS: Nothing. You know, it's nothing? Nothing.

LEVINE: But when you first came?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah, of course! Of course! I used to make a lot!

LEVINE: What did you make that was Greek?

FTERGIOTIS: I make colorakya, I make baklava. I baked koravetyis, I make pita. I make lamb cooked, and I make [unclear]. She makes it, if she wants it!  
[Laughs]

LEVINE: Well, do you think it made a big difference to you, the fact that you were born and raised in Greece, and then you came to this country?

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FTERGIOTIS: You know, when I come here I'm go: two years. "I don't stay more than that! I'm not going to stay more!" After that, I lost my daughter, I said, "I'm not going to go; I'm going to stay."

LEVINE: Why did that make you want to stay?

FTERGIOTIS: Because I lost the other daughter, the little one, two years old.

LEVINE: So you wanted to stay here?

FTERGIOTIS: I stay here. So after my husband lost his business, in the Roosevelt have, a lot of people lost everything that, you know. You not born that time, anyway, yeah. I lot of people lost, yeah.

LEVINE: Did you have any feeling about President Roosevelt?

FTERGIOTIS: I used to like him a lot!

LEVINE: You liked him a lot?

FTERGIOTIS: I used to like a lot, but when I find out he had a girlfriend, [unclear], I said, "I don't care for you." But nothing wrong, but when I hear that, I used to—when Roosevelt died, being there now to watch him, oh, you don't know! But, that's the way it goes! [Laughs]

LEVINE: Do you remember the Second World War? Do you remember when the Second World War was going?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, when was that? What year?

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LEVINE: Well, let's say 1940, 1941-'42. That was when the people were going in the service in this country. They were going over to Europe.

FTERGIOTIS: I used to be up Lake Winnepesaukee. We had a store there.

LEVINE: Oh, you did? Another restaurant?

FTERGIOTIS: Another restaurant, on the boardwalk. I used to—Taxley, the name of the store. We had ice creams and hotdogs and peppersteaks, and hamburgers, and everything.

LEVINE: What was the name of it?

FTERGIOTIS: Taxley.

LEVINE: T-A--?

FTERGIOTIS: I don't know, Taxley. That's all I remember. So I got there a couple weeks ago, so I said, "Look at the difference."

LEVINE: So you were always in Manchester in the winter, and someplace, some resort--?

FTERGIOTIS: In the mountains, all the time. Now, I stop. After I finished mountain, I say, "How am I going to stay with the kids here?" Because I do the same thing in Greece: summer in the mountains, winter in the city. All my life—I come here, the same thing. Enough I say what, the other people say, but I'm going to stay here.

LEVINE: So what was Manchester like? How is Manchester different when you first came there, than it is today?

FTERGIOTIS: It's all right, the Manchester It's all right, but it's different.

LEVINE: What's different?

FTERGIOTIS: They changed.

LEVINE: What changed?

FTERGIOTIS: The buildings changed, and the people, the troubles, it's different.

LEVINE: But were there a lot of people from Greece who were in Manchester?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah, a lot of them, all around, different countries, not from I come. Different.

LEVINE: Different parts of Greece?

FTERGIOTIS: Different parts. They're Romanian, they speak Romanian. But I speak Romanian, but I speak Greek, you know what I mean?

LEVINE: So did they get together, the Greek people?

FTERGIOTIS: Oh yeah, at church—three churches there. Saint Nicolas, and [unclear], the one I make now. It's a new church there, [unclear]. A lot of Greek there, a lot, a lot! From different cities in Greece, you're going to find a lot of them. In the coffee houses, you don't know anybody in Manchester?

LEVINE: A couple of people, a few. Yeah. So, how is this time in your life, now that you're older, and you're retired, you're not working?

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FTERGIOTIS: You know, I'm going to tell you the truth: I don't want to live, because I lost my son! [Whispers] But I don't want to say in front of any of the kids. I started, I try to talk, to laugh.

LEVINE: That's good. Good for you, good for you.

FTERGIOTIS: Because my son come in Manchester, "So I see you next week," he says, "Tell me how to make pita." So I said, "Bring only spinach and phyllo. I've got everything." And I hugged him like that, hold him—and that was the first time he hold me like that. And then he goes. And then next Saturday, he [unclear] because he was sick, in the hospital. And he go in Boston to see him. I said, "I want to come, too." He said, "Oh, no, no. I'll go." He got a daughter, Elena. So he says, "I go." And he says, "They go there and fine him dead." He made the operation; I don't know what you call that. And he get up—they let them walk now, if it's not big, you know what I mean? Go there to do there, you know what I mean. And he said to the nurse, "I can't walk now." Grab him, put him to bed—dead. Heart attack. He was only sixty-one.

LEVINE: Oh, that's sad. Well, when you think back on your life, what makes you feel good? What makes you feel like you did something that makes you feel proud, or satisfied, that you did?

FTERGIOTIS: I don't feel good at all, but I try.

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh.

FTERGIOTIS: I try, because I got a daughter, and I got granddaughters, my son's daughters.

LEVINE: Your grandchildren.

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, because he go to college for pharmacist. Twenty years old. The first year or second year from college. He didn't even say nothing to me. I didn't even know. He come from Boston; I didn't know. Can I say something?

LEVINE: Sure.

FTERGIOTIS: She come [unclear], she likes to do this in her head. Same as the other one. So I say, "How come? You got a girlfriend?" He didn't say nothing. I know that girl [unclear]. I know he have some. She used to come every two weeks, every week, to see us, because their father sick. He don't remember [unclear] the father; he used to be sick. So I say, "You got a girlfriend?" He say, "Huh." So I say, "You married?" I just say it! He says, "Yes." So I say, "You know you're married, she's got a trouble." He jumps, and opened the light. There was big room; happened to be alone. My husband was in the other room. He says, "You don't get mad?" I said, "I didn't get mad. You want to get married, you get married, trouble." He says, "No trouble. You're going to see it." And after he left, that's all. And after he go in Boston, he go to school.

LEVINE: Good, good. So tell me, of all the things you did in your lifetime, what makes you feel proud?

FTERGIOTIS: I feel proud because I never fight with nobody. You want me to tell you this! I never fight. I never trouble in my life! If you tell me, because I'm blind, I'm going to say, "No, I'm not." I didn't get mad. I didn't fight with nobody.

LEVINE: Why was that? What did you not fight?

FTERGIOTIS: I don't know. Sometimes, sometimes, my daughter says sometimes, I say "Don't say it like that," or something. Or, it's you, if you say something, I say, "Ah, don't say it that way!" I never take from you to go there. I never take from there to go there. Hey, do you know if he do that? I say, "I don't know." I know, but I'd never say. I never say bad things. If it's good, I say it. I'm like that.

LEVINE: Were there certain things that you wanted your children to know and to learn, certain ways that you wanted them to be?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, I say those things sometimes my grandchildren. She says she gets mad [unclear]. So I say, "Don't get mad." She says, "You know, [unclear]." So she say something good, [unclear]. "So what?" She say it; she didn't do nothing!

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, is there anything else that you can think of that has to do with your coming to this country?

FTERGIOTIS: I come to this country. And you know, my husband's all right, and the business. I work, though. I do everything. I used to work more than him. I'm that kind, you know? My hand gets anything. Not now! You know what I mean? So it was all right. So I say, "I'm here, what should we do now?" And after my husband, so I say, "I'm not going to see country." Oh, oh, sick, sick, less business. I lost the business. I was depressed, I was everything. And I go to Greece. My husband says, "Why don't you go?" He came [unclear]. I go to Greece. I go to Greece.

LEVINE: What was it like for you?

FTERGIOTIS: I go one month, I think I say two months. And I used to work for Puritan, did you hear, Puritan, Manchester? One of the biggest, make the best ice cream in Manchester, Puritan. I work there thirty years in that store, me. Because I go from mountains, and after here, I look to find a store. So I say, "What I do? I'm not going to do nothing." I go in a shoe shop, and work a little. And after going and make the clothes, I used to be one of the best. He says, "Do you know how to make those things?" So I said, "Hey, go and tell me." So the girls with the sewing machines, [unclear]. I didn't say, because I know. So I say, "Tell me." So I used to do the best clothes, the best jackets! The best everything. Each one, the other one talks, says, "You know that woman, the Greek woman? You know, she do this, she do that?" The other make two dresses, I got four or five to make the stitches. You know, I'm like that, but I never say. You have to tell me now. So he says, "You know." Hey, I know a little, but they told me, so I make it. You know something, next to me, nothing. And I go there for a couple of hours, zzzz, the machine. Come from New York, these two men there to put collars on shirts. So I used to make how I wanted. So he says, "Perfect." But when he comes there show me how I make it, says, "Don't make it that way; make it this way." He told me how. So I said, "All right." I make it slow. When I see him go out, I make [unclear].

LEVINE: So after you worked making the shirts—

FTERGIOTIS: The clothes, I used to, shirts and clothes. And after, from there, I go to, so should I go now. Go shoes? Eh. I go in the shoes in the [unclear] there, so I go to the Puritan, ice cream, sell ice cream. I used to be one of the best. So many years, the boss there, the youngest boy, used to go to school with my son. Somebody go there, I hear him: "Hey, how

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long this woman, she work here?" You know what he says? "Before Christ!" [Laughs] Long. The boy, poor boy, dead.

LEVINE: So you felt proud of that, that you worked there all that time?

FTERGIOTIS: I laughed, yeah. And the one man till I come [Unclear] and my son says, "You're supposed to stop." He says, "Why don't you stop? So long." So I got my leg.

LEVINE: Arthritis?

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, arthritis, the one leg. I used to walk like that, crooked. And after I make operation. Now, I'm straight, but I got something else. Oh yeah, I worked long time there. And everybody, kids from high school and everything, I walk there on the street [unclear], and I always greet everybody: "Hey!"

LEVINE: So everyone in town knew you?

FTERGIOTIS: Somebody called me Yaya. Yaya means Grandma. Now, everybody call me Yaya.

LEVINE: Oh, that's very nice.

FTERGIOTIS: Yeah, I worked so many years there, oh yeah. And I like it. The boss used to say, "Do this." "Okay, I'm going to do that, but this way is better." I don't want to be on the top, but he knows, because I know. So I used to be good worker!

LEVINE: Wonderful. Well, this is the end of the tape, and I want to thank you so much for a very interesting interview.

FTERGIOTIS: Well, if you want to ask me. I don't know.

LEVINE: Okay, well, this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service, and I am signing off.

[End of Interview]