

**EI-710**

**ATHENA GAROS**

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**AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 77**

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

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LEVINE: --6<sup>th</sup>, 1995, and I'm here in Hooksett, New Hampshire, with Mrs. Athena Garos, who was born in the United States in 1918, and then went to Greece in 1927, and stayed in Greece for a few years, returning with her mother, father, and brother, in 1930. And today, Mrs. Garos is seventy-seven years of age. I want to thank you very much, and I'm really looking forward to whatever you can remember about—I'll ask the questions, and then you can just tell me what you want.

GAROS: Should I talk now?

LEVINE: I'll start, okay? If you would say for the tape where—your birth date.

GAROS: My birth date? October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1918.

LEVINE: Okay, and where did you live in the United States after you were born here?

GAROS: In Manchester.

LEVINE: In Manchester. So you were born in Manchester, and stayed in Manchester up until you left for Greece?

GAROS: Right, right. Yes.

LEVINE: Now, do you have any early memories of your life in Manchester before you went to Greece as a little girl?

GAROS: Well, I went to Greek school here, before we went to Greece. And then I went to Maynard School, public school.

LEVINE: And when you say Greek school, how is that school different from the public school?

GAROS: Well, we went there in the afternoon, after school. It wasn't a whole day. Just about two hours a day. A week, rather, not all day.

LEVINE: A few hours a week you went to Greek school? And there you learned Greek? Was that--?

GAROS: Right, and we always talked Greek at the house anyway, so everything was—it wasn't complicated at all, because, you know, I knew both languages.

LEVINE: Yeah. Now, had your mother and father come from Greece?

GAROS: Yes, they both came from Greece. My father came first, then my mother came later, and she married my father here.

LEVINE: I see. What was your father's name?

GAROS: Spiros, S-P-I-R-O-S.

LEVINE: And your mother's name?

GAROS: Martha.

LEVINE: And her maiden name?

GAROS: I better write it for you.

LEVINE: Okay, why don't you write it down?

GAROS: So it will be easier for you.

LEVINE: Okay. [Pause] Okay, and how do you pronounce your mother's name?

GAROS: Karaoulis.

LEVINE: Karaoulis, K-A-R-A-O-U-L-I-S. And did you have brothers and sisters when you were in the United States, before you left for Greece?

GAROS: All I had was that one brother.

LEVINE: And how old was he?

GAROS: He was younger than me; he was born in 1921.

LEVINE: Okay, and his name?

GAROS: Aristotle.

LEVINE: Aristotle, okay. Be careful, you've got the—

GAROS: Oh, I wanted to get something over here [pause].

LEVINE: Just be careful of the microphone.

GAROS: I don't know what I did with it. Yes, anything else?

LEVINE: I'll continue asking you questions about Manchester before you left for Greece. So your—

GAROS: My brother.

LEVINE: Your brother died?

GAROS: Mm-hm, three years ago.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And this is—what do you call this, a prayer card?

GAROS: They give it to you after—it's a funeral—[several words unclear]. Just the memory of the date, for services.

LEVINE: I see. And that was in Manchester, where you had the funeral?

GAROS: Right.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, when you think back of your life in Manchester, can you remember, like, where you lived, what it was like?

GAROS: Well, it wasn't like it is today! [Laughs] I can tell you that much!

LEVINE: What was different?

GAROS: Well, the environment, the section we were, we didn't have everything like we have today.

LEVINE: Do you remember the house?

GAROS: Yeah, we lived on Union and Spruce Street, and I went to Maynard School. What else can I say?

LEVINE: Was there a large Greek community?

GAROS: Community, yes, mm-hm.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, and how did they—did they observe a lot of the Greek ways in Manchester?

GAROS: Oh, definitely!

LEVINE: Like in what ways did they keep up the Greek traditions?

GAROS: Well, we have different, like, we celebrate name days.

LEVINE: Oh, tell me about that.

GAROS: Yeah, there's a saint that they fall after. Like, say my husband's name day is March 25<sup>th</sup>, and we celebrated that.

LEVINE: Now was that his—that's the saint's, the name day that your husband has? What's his first name?

GAROS: Evangelos, E-V-A-N-G-E-L-O-S.

LEVINE: And is that the name day for Evangelos?

GAROS: Yes, mm-hm. And plus, the what do you call it now? Oh, I can't remember how you call it. Just like we have Fourth of July here, that was a day of—the twenty-fifth of March over there.

LEVINE: Oh really? It was a patriotic day?

GAROS: Yes, yes, yes.

LEVINE: The twenty-fifth of March?

GAROS: Yes.

LEVINE: And what would you do on the twenty-fifth?

GAROS: Oh, they have parades over there. They even had them here before, too, but now they discontinued that.

LEVINE: But in Manchester when you were little, they still had them?

GAROS: Yes, they still had them, mm-hm.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, and they'd have parades? And did they have like a feast?

GAROS: They did have feasts, yes, all that. That's a tradition, I guess.

LEVINE: Yeah. And do you remember anything about, like, the grown-ups in Manchester when you were a little girl, what they did for a social life, what they did for fun?

GAROS: They didn't have much those days. They all worked, and they all kept together with their families. Now, they have changed a lot, but those days they were so confined, their home mostly. And the ladies worked in the shops or the mills somewhere, and the husbands provided. So like I say, today it's different, very much.

LEVINE: Yeah. Was there a particular kind of occupation that a lot of the Greek men had in Manchester? What kind of work did they do?

GAROS: Mostly shoe workers, I guess.

LEVINE: In like, a shoe factory?

GAROS: Yes. My father was a truck driver for Crystal Laundry, and there weren't too many driving those days.

LEVINE: Oh, so that was considered a good job, to be a driver?

GAROS: Mm-hm, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And your mother, did she ever work?

GAROS: She didn't work then, but she worked after, yeah. After we came back from Greece, she worked.

LEVINE: I see. Well, what was it that—why was it that you went to Greece when you were a little girl?

GAROS: Well, my father thought that we would live there. He loaded up the truck that he had with all our furniture and all. So he intended to stay there, but I don't think he found things the way he wanted over there [laughs], so we came back.

LEVINE: So tell a little bit about the history. Your father came over here first, and then he got a job in Manchester?

GAROS: Mm-hm.

LEVINE: And then he sent for your mother?

GAROS: No, my mother came here as a youngster [telephone rings]. Oh, gosh!

LEVINE: Okay, we'll pause here. [Tape off/on] --after a phone call. Let's see. We were talking about—your father came here first.

GAROS: First his father came, then my father came. And my mother came here as a single girl, 1916. So they got married in 1917.

LEVINE: Did they ever tell you how they met, or anything about it?

GAROS: Oh, those days it was proxy [laughs]. That's all it was in those days.

LEVINE: You mean because they were near each other?

GAROS: Mm-hm. They came from the same home town from Greece, Pentalafos, both of them.

LEVINE: Pentalafos?

GAROS: Yeah, they both came from there.

LEVINE: And they—did they keep up—in other words, do you think they had a typical Greek wedding in Manchester?

GAROS: Yes, they did, mm-hm, yeah. And my mother had white and everything. I have her wedding pictures. It was probably one of those rare things they had in those days. They didn't have too much, you know, and they didn't know too much about the customs over here neither. So she didn't know the language neither. So I guess they got along pretty good after that.

LEVINE: Yeah. Now when you say your father decided he wanted to go back, do you know what was in his mind, why he wanted to go back?

GAROS: No, I don't know why. Probably his folks were there, and he felt as though he had to go, be with the folks—I don't know. We never knew that.

LEVINE: And so he packed everything into the truck?

GAROS: Everything in his truck.

LEVINE: And then what?

GAROS: We went by ship to Greece.

LEVINE: Do you remember leaving Manchester, saying goodbye to people?

GAROS: Yes, yes, yes. It was touching, I remember that much.

LEVINE: Do you remember anything you personally, as a child, wanted to take with you to Greece?

GAROS: No, I was confused. I didn't know what was going on, at that age, especially—no responsibility, no—what can I say?

LEVINE: Yeah, you were probably around nine or so, nine years old.

GAROS: Something like that, yeah.

LEVINE: Okay, so you got the boat to Greece. And do you remember what boat that was?

GAROS: Well, either the Byron or the Edison. I don't remember which one it was.

LEVINE: Oh, I see, so one of those boats you took to Greece, and one of those boats you took back in 1930?

GAROS: Back, yeah, mm-hm.

LEVINE: I see. Do you remember anything about going back, going to Greece that time?

GAROS: All I remember was my mother was so sick in that boat! [Laughs] It was funny. It wasn't funny, it was pathetic, really. She didn't see a decent day all the time we were in the boat.

LEVINE: Do you remember when the boat landed in Greece?

GAROS: Do I remember when?

LEVINE: You remember what was going on when the boat--?

GAROS: No, no. It was interesting, and yet, I don't know—it didn't phase me at all. Like I say, if my brother was living, he would have remembered more than I did. He was very observing, yeah.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Well, do you remember then—where did you go when you were settling now in Greece?

GAROS: Pentalafos.

LEVINE: And was there a house?

GAROS: Oh, yeah, my grandparents were there.

LEVINE: And what do you remember about them?

GAROS: Oh, they were tickled to see us! They couldn't do enough for us! I remember my grandmother was very petite. She always wanted me to be with her.

LEVINE: Did you ever go places with her?

GAROS: Around the neighborhood there. There wasn't much then, because they didn't have any cars then. They didn't have electricity! They didn't have anything, anything! No toilets, no facilities of any kind.

LEVINE: So what would you do, like, in a given day, when you were back, when you were in Greece? Maybe you'd be with your grandmother?

GAROS: Yeah, mm-hm, and friends. A lot of relatives there; no matter where you go there, they're all related to you. I went to Greek school there.

LEVINE: So in other words, you learned in Greek?

GAROS: Uh-huh, and I've kept it up, and I haven't stopped reading Greek papers, and being with the Greek people all the time, even here.

LEVINE: How was the school different in Greece?

GAROS: Oh, they are different. They had woodstoves, and—it wasn't the same as we have here.

LEVINE: Okay, can you say anything that was real different?

GAROS: [Sighs] What can I say? How different? Different teachers had different lessons to give you. We didn't have the same teacher all day long; we had to change teachers [telephone rings].

LEVINE: Okay, we're stopping here. [Tape off/on] Resuming now again after a phone call. You were saying, about the Greek school, was different, and you had different teachers for different lessons?

GAROS: Like, for religion, and for history, and mathematics—they were all different teachers.

LEVINE: Now, was Pentalafos—it was in Macedonia?

GAROS: Mm-hm.

LEVINE: And was it a little town?

GAROS: A little town.

LEVINE: And was it in the mountains?

GAROS: Yes, up in the mountains, very high. I don't remember how many feet it's high. And I've been there several times after that, but I don't remember how high it is.

LEVINE: Yeah. Did they have like a market day there?

GAROS: A market?

LEVINE: A market day?

GAROS: Not in that village, another village. They'd have it in a bigger town.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, and would you go to market?

GAROS: I didn't. My mother and father used to go. I didn't. They figured we were too young, and they didn't want to take us away. I don't know what—when I remember all that, I just can't make it out.

LEVINE: Yeah, uh-huh. So do you remember anything about the scenery, about the town, what it looked like?

GAROS: The scenery was beautiful, beautiful! Like I say, we didn't have any roads for cars. There was the—what you call it? In the winter, my grandfather would open a path, and we'd walk behind him, because he had boots. He was in

America, of course, and he had boots on. He'd open up the road, and we'd go to school. We'd take our own fire wood.

LEVINE: To school?

GAROS: To school, yeah, to run the stove.

LEVINE: Each child?

GAROS: Mm-hm, each child, yeah. Then we'd go home, and have lunch there.

LEVINE: Can you remember any of the foods that you had in Greece, that you liked?

GAROS: There were several things that we liked. Mostly lamb over there, they use. And something else by the name of pita, and Greek cheese, and all that. We didn't have any toast or anything like that. Bread was made right at the house. Yeah, nothing was bought. Everything was real natural.

LEVINE: Uh-huh, and what did your father do for work when he was in Greece?

GAROS: He was a truck driver there, from one city to another. But not in Pendalafos, further down in the larger cities. So like I say, he traded his old truck, and he bought a new one with a partner. And finally he decided in a little while that we were going back to America, and I was the happiest girl that you—I can remember! [Laughs]

LEVINE: Why were you so happy?

GAROS: I, I knew enough that it wasn't the same place as America. It didn't have any facilities whatsoever, and when he said we were coming back, I was thrilled!

LEVINE: Now, did your father say why?

GAROS: No, no.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. How'd your mother feel?

GAROS: She went along with him, but I think she wanted to come back. Because like I say, we were used to being here, and it wasn't the same, that's all.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. What about your brother? What was his name?

GAROS: Aristotle, and they called him Telly.

LEVINE: Oh, how did Aristotle feel about it?

GAROS: He was a lot different than me, and he remembered more than I did. He was very good about that, even up to the last minute that he was alive here, he always: "Do you remember that? Athena, do you remember that?" He always reminded me about things that I couldn't remember.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And was he happy to be coming to America?

GAROS: Yes, mm-hm. He was younger than I.

LEVINE: How was it leaving your grandparents, when you came back?

GAROS: How was it?

LEVINE: How was it saying goodbye to your grandparents?

GAROS: It was hard; it was really hard.

LEVINE: Did they say anything to you, give you any advice?

GAROS: Oh, they were hugging us! Oh, the only thing I remember, my grandmother always told my mother, "Don't forget, when Athena is eighteen years old, I want you to marry her. Because once she stays, and get older, she will never want to get married." I remember that! And I did get married when I was eighteen! Isn't that something? I remember that.

LEVINE: So your grandmother thought that if you didn't get married at eighteen, you wouldn't want to?

GAROS: I wouldn't want to, or I'd be an old maid, they'd think over there. Oh, you've got to get married, because it's like, a must!

LEVINE: Yeah. They have certain definite ideas about men and women, and what they should do.

GAROS: Mm-hm.

LEVINE: Well, can you say anything about that, what the ideas are?

GAROS: Well, the ladies over there have to follow the men's orders, mostly. Today, they're independent; they're different, very different. That's about what I remember. Because like I say, I wasn't very particular about learning things, or following their advice—I don't know what it was.

LEVINE: What was your father like? Can you remember him when you were in Greece?

GAROS: Oh yes, my father was very nice. Everybody liked him. And he was about—one of the men here in Manchester, even, that talked English. And they all asked him to interpret for them. And he was one of the first ones from our village to become American citizen. And they always called him Inglesi, that means Englishman. They always called him that because he became an American citizen. So my mother became a citizen right after him, because she married him at a certain time, and she derived her citizenship through him.

LEVINE: Ah, uh-huh.

GAROS: So, my father believed in being an American.

LEVINE: Yeah, how did he feel about that? What was his attitude about being an American?

GAROS: He never mentioned it, but I guess he was happy being an American, yeah.

LEVINE: And so, when you came—so when you were still in Greece, do you remember any celebrations? [Telephone rings] We're pausing again. [Tape off/on] Okay, we're resuming again after a phone call. Let's see, we were talking about in Greece—

GAROS: Celebrations and all?

LEVINE: Celebrations, any rituals?

GAROS: Well, Easter time is a big thing over there. They celebrate it for a whole week; they fast. Then they have services. I don't remember going, but I think I used to go. But like I say, it's vague.

LEVINE: Do you remember May Day?

GAROS: They celebrate May Day over there, very much so.

LEVINE: Can you say whatever you can remember--?

GAROS: Well, they go and cook a whole lamb, and they have a big party, all day long. They sing and they dance, and they feed the people, the business, that are there.

LEVINE: Do they go from house to house, or where do they have this?

GAROS: No, they have it outdoors, mostly, because they call it May First, and it's spring.

LEVINE: Is it a celebration of spring?

GAROS: It's like a celebration, yes, mm-hm. Yeah, they have a lot of going on that day.

LEVINE: Do you remember any, like, births, or marriages, or funerals? Any ways that the Greeks--?

GAROS: I went to a wake that a grandfather—not a grandfather—my grandfather's brother had died. And I never witnessed anything like that, and I never want to witness it! It was so scary, and so—how can I say it? And since that time, I never forgot that funeral. They lay him out in the house, and they sing some old, old [coughs] sad songs. And they wouldn't embalm him there or anything, and he was—he looked awful! And I could never get that picture out of my mind! In fact, even now, I hate to go to a funeral. That's how much it bothered me. So they have other celebrations. At Easter time, they have a big thing for that.

LEVINE: At a wake, what would happen at a wake?

GAROS: Nothing, they'd just sit there around the corpse, whatever they call it. And they sing sad songs. They don't keep them there more than twenty-four hours; they have to bury them right away, because like I say, there's no embalming.

LEVINE: Was there a procession to the graveyard?

GAROS: Yeah, they carried the casket to the cemetery, yeah—to church, first, then the cemetery. Yeah, but I never went to one of those. But I saw this man, and I, like I say, it was morbid!

LEVINE: Okay, so when you were coming back, then you either came back on the Edison, or the Byron?

GAROS: Mm-hm. [Telephone rings]

LEVINE: And do you remember—wait, we'll pause here [Tape off/on]—now, after the phone call. Do you remember anything of that voyage, when you and your mother, father, and brother were coming back to the United States?

GAROS: No, not too much. Like I say, my mother was sick again, coming back. She never had a meal with us! Then we landed at Ellis Island, I guess.

LEVINE: Do you remember—were you down in the bottom of the ship? Were you in the steerage, what they call steerage, like a dormitory?

GAROS: We were in second class, I think, whatever that is. I don't know.

LEVINE: Did you have like a cabin?

GAROS: Yes, oh yes.

LEVINE: With just your family?

GAROS: Yes, just our family, uh-huh.

LEVINE: And what were meals like on the ship?

GAROS: I don't remember too much, but I remember spaghetti around, on the floor, all over the place! [Laughs]

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh. And do you remember when the ship came into the New York Harbor?

GAROS: No.

LEVINE: And tell anything you remember about Ellis Island.

GAROS: All I can remember is it was a great, big building. And we went there, they fed us, and they interviewed people. But I, like I say, it's vague, really. I don't know why.

LEVINE: Do you know if you had to stay overnight?

GAROS: I don't think we stayed over night. I think we came to Fall River after that.

LEVINE: Did someone meet you?

GAROS: That I don't remember, because my father could speak English, so I don't think he needed anybody to help us out.

LEVINE: So you probably then took a train?

GAROS: We took a train.

LEVINE: To Fall River?

GAROS: Yeah, mm-hm.

LEVINE: And then did you stay there?

GAROS: No. No, we came by boat, I think, to Fall River. And from Fall River, we came here by train.

LEVINE: You came then to Manchester?

GAROS: Mm-hm.

LEVINE: By train. And what was it like, coming back to Manchester?

GAROS: Oh, it was beautiful! [Laughs]

LEVINE: Can you describe it, when you just got back?

GAROS: Well, it was, like I say, like heaven, seeing our old relatives again [telephone rings].

LEVINE: Okay, [unclear]. You got to Manchester, and you felt like you were—it was like in heaven?

GAROS: In heaven.

LEVINE: Could you describe some of the things that you saw, or the way you felt?

GAROS: Well, everybody was so anxious to see us, and they couldn't do enough for us! They took us out to buy us clothes, and—what can I say? We came to my uncle. He had an apartment then, and we lived with him for a while, until we got our own. So that's—

LEVINE: Do you remember the difference in dress, the difference in the clothes that you had in Greece versus here?

GAROS: Yes, they were different, uh-huh, different over there than here.

LEVINE: Can you think of any of the differences? Like shoes, or kinds of dresses?

GAROS: Well, the dresses over there were different. They were made long, and the waist line was up to here.

LEVINE: Oh, empire waist.

GAROS: Yeah, that I remember. And they had the hair mostly long.

LEVINE: Did you have long hair?

GAROS: No, I didn't, but my father used to cut my hair, and he'd cut a lot of girls' hair besides. So he was trying to mix in with different ways of living over there.

So that's about what I can remember about coming into Manchester again, with my uncle waiting for us, and getting our preparations for—they took me out to buy clothes, like I said. I don't know what else that I could remember.

LEVINE: Do you remember any of your brother's reactions to coming back?

GAROS: My only brother—well, we came together.

LEVINE: Yeah, and how did he feel about going back?

GAROS: I think he—was a little different than I, because he was—he was more quiet. But he remembered, like I say, more than I ever did. And then we went to school again in Manchester.

LEVINE: How was that for you, going then back to school?

GAROS: Well, we didn't—we couldn't remember any English at all, when we came back. And we picked it up right away! So they put me in fourth grade, and from fourth I skipped five, and five—I got out of school really early after that, from the eighth grade. I went to high school for a while, and then I fell in love with my husband!

LEVINE: How did you meet your husband?

GAROS: He came from Greece, and he comes from the same home town. We had met him there, and who ever knew that I'd be marrying him! [Laughs]

LEVINE: How did you happen to meet him in Greece?

GAROS: Well, like I say, his mother was my brother's Godmother, so we got to know each other. But like I say, nothing would develop at that time.

LEVINE: Right, well you were only twelve when you came back.

GAROS: Right, mm-hm. But this was in 19—he came in '32, all right. In '34, I think, we started seeing each other.

LEVINE: Do you know what it was about him that you liked?

GAROS: Nothing, I don't know. It's just one of those things, love at first sight, or something! I don't know what you might call it! [Laughs]

LEVINE: And did he pursue you? Did he pursue you for a while?

GAROS: For a while, yes, uh-huh. In fact, we didn't—let's see, 1934, and we didn't get married until 1936.

LEVINE: Now, how was your family in relation to you getting married to your husband? What was their attitude?

GAROS: They thought I was young, but then they liked him. And being, like I say, from the same home town, they all know the families and all that. There was nothing there to bother us. So we got married in '36.

LEVINE: Now, was it like, arranged, through the families?

GAROS: No, it wasn't arranged at all, no! We kept seeing each other secretly, for a while! [Laughs]

LEVINE: Oh really? Because you didn't want the family to know?

GAROS: Yeah, well, they figured I was young, and we were really seeing each other secretly, yeah. So we had a big wedding. In fact, this month we're having a fifty-ninth anniversary!

LEVINE: Wonderful! Congratulations!

GAROS: Isn't that something?

LEVINE: Yeah, now was it a big Greek wedding?

GAROS: Yes, a big Greek wedding.

LEVINE: And what was it like? Could you describe the wedding that you had?

GAROS: If you want to know, even at that time, I didn't remember that I was being married. I don't know, I was just like a child! I was a child, only eighteen. But we, like I say, we stayed engaged for two years. We got to know each other very well. His mother wanted to be very bad, she wanted—

LEVINE: Oh, here comes somebody. Wait, we're stopping here. [Tape off/on] Resuming now after Mrs. Garos's grandson has come in, and gone out! [Laughs] Okay, so you were like a child, but did you like wear a white dress?

GAROS: Yes. I couldn't find a dress, in fact, I was so tiny. I didn't weigh more than, my husband says eighty-nine pounds, but I think it was ninety-eight pounds! [Laughs]

LEVINE: Oh, so you were petite.

GAROS: Yeah. In fact, I've got my wedding picture right on the wall, if you want to see it after.

LEVINE: After this, we'll look at that. So what was your husband doing then, in Manchester?

GAROS: He opened up a place with his brother. They had a market.

LEVINE: So did he continue working in that market after you were married?

GAROS: Yes, yes. How long did it last now? His brother had to go back to Greece again. That was in—I think 1940, his brother took off.

LEVINE: So then did he give up the market?

GAROS: No, he kept it up, yeah. My husband had his mother here, too, of course. She brought him over; she was a young widow, so she brought the boys over. And she died very young—you want to know that, too?

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

GAROS: She died in 1940; she was only forty-seven years old.

LEVINE: What did she die of?

GAROS: She died of cancer, as far as I know, but you know, in those days, they didn't say much about cancer.

LEVINE: Did you have a close relationship with your mother-in-law?

GAROS: Yes, I lived with her until she was taken to the hospital, and then she never came back. It was only four years, I think, that we lived together.

LEVINE: I see. Was that typical, that the mother-in-law would live with--?

GAROS: Oh yes, oh yes, yes, yes, yes!

LEVINE: Even in Manchester, that was typical?

GAROS: Mm-hm, yes, yeah, mm-hm. But no more! [Laughs]

LEVINE: No more

GAROS: Everybody wants their own place, and everybody wants their own life, yeah. It's a lot different.

LEVINE: Yeah. Is there anything else about Manchester at that time that has changed a lot?

GAROS: Oh, definitely! Everything has changed; you don't even know where you are sometimes—the one-way streets, and the modern buildings around, and all that. It's very different.

LEVINE: Well, when you got here, in 1930 I guess, people were driving automobiles?

GAROS: Not too many, no. Not too many.

LEVINE: No? What else did they get around in?

GAROS: Well, some had horses. They used to walk, mostly, because everything was in walking distance, the shops and the mills were all close by. Then people started to scatter around and go in the outskirts.

LEVINE: Were there a lot of immigrant children, like in the school, when you came back?

GAROS: Not too many, not too many.

LEVINE: And were there other groups, besides Greek people, who were coming from Europe to Manchester? Were there other kinds of nationalities?

GAROS: I don't know. There must have been, because there's Polish and Italians and what not. But I don't know.

LEVINE: But you don't remember them, like, in your school, in your class?

GAROS: No. In school, everybody mostly talked English at that time, so I wouldn't know if they were foreigners or not.

LEVINE: I see. So let's see, then, was this then—your father became citizen?

GAROS: Oh, he became a citizen in 19, probably 16, or maybe sooner, before that. Very, very early. Yeah, very early.

LEVINE: And your mother became a citizen on his citizenship?

GAROS: Mm-hm, right.

LEVINE: I see. So did that make you a citizen?

GAROS: Well, I was born here.

LEVINE: Right, and he was a citizen and you were born here. Okay, let's see. So after your husband—did you work at all, after you were married?

GAROS: I worked for a while in the shoe shop, but not too long. When was it—no, I didn't work too much. I stayed at home for a while. I was sickly.

LEVINE: What was wrong with you?

GAROS: I had pleurisy, and was very, very run down. But I got over it, because I was young, I guess. About that time, then we were married eight years, and I had my daughter.

LEVINE: What's her name?

GAROS: Barbara. She lives next door. So then I stayed home with her. I didn't do too much. I used to take her to nursery school.

LEVINE: Was this is Greek nursery school?

GAROS: No, it was one in Manchester.

LEVINE: And then did you have other children?

GAROS: No, that's the only daughter we had. Yeah, mm-hm. We moved here—we bought the place over here in 1946, and we didn't move here until probably five or six years later. But my folks came here ahead of us, because they were being—what do you call it? They had to move out of their house. What do you call it?

LEVINE: Evicted?

GAROS: Hm?

LEVINE: Evicted?

GAROS: Evicted, yeah, because they wanted the tenement for their own purpose, for their own relatives. So we had a little camp over there, and my husband sort of made it into a little apartment. They moved there before us. So my granddaughter lives over there now. Yeah, so we're all together.

LEVINE: Now, your husband was working in the store. And then, did he start another business?

GAROS: Well, he started the slaughterhouse that we had here, killing lambs and cows, and all that.

LEVINE: When did he start the slaughterhouse?

GAROS: Well, he built it in 1946, so he started right away.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. And he's done that ever since?

GAROS: Ever since, yeah.

LEVINE: And he does that now?

GAROS: Now, yeah, uh-huh. But not so much now, because age and all. So he doesn't do too much of it.

LEVINE: Does he cater to the Greek community?

GAROS: Yeah, Easter time he kills lambs for the Greek people. They buy whole lambs for Easter.

LEVINE: Really?

GAROS: It's a very big tradition, yeah.

LEVINE: And where does he get the lambs from?

GAROS: They bring them to him: Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire. But he hasn't been doing too much of it. Then he has his own that he raises, also.

LEVINE: He raises lambs?

GAROS: But not too many, yeah. He has them in the barn right now. Yeah, mm-hm. He loves it! And he's on the go all the time; he doesn't stop. So I'm glad that he does, because it keeps him going, and he's not—like some people, sitting home, watching television, and getting paralyzed or something like that. He's very active.

LEVINE: I know that because it's hard for me to catch him! [Laughs]

GAROS: He's very active. He puts on barbecues, he does—what can I say? He's very active, and that makes me happy, like I say, because he's not a potato couch, they call them? What do they call them?

LEVINE: A couch potato.

GAROS: Couch potato, yeah. I got it the other way around.

LEVINE: Well, now how is this time in your life, for you?

GAROS: Very good. We like the same things together. Every four years we go to Greece. They have the Pan-Macedonian Conventions there.

LEVINE: What is it?

GAROS: Pan-Macedonian. All of that part of Greece that we, my folks, came from. And we've taken that in; we haven't missed one convention. Well, we did miss the first four or five, and then after that we haven't missed one, from 1947 up until today!

LEVINE: Wonderful! What happens at a Pan-Macedonian Convention?

GAROS: Oh, we get together with people we haven't seen for a lot of times. And each year we make new friends, and that's in Greece where the conventions are, in Salonika, the big city next to Athens is Salonika—Saloniki they call it, in fact. So to me, I would rather go there than go to Florida or any other place. But we did have a Convention in Florida, and in Chicago. We have them in the States, also.

LEVINE: And you go to those, too?

GAROS: Yes, we haven't missed them! This year we had it in Boston.

LEVINE: So each four years, you go to Greece, and every year you go to a convention here?

GAROS: To a convention, right, mm-hm.

LEVINE: How do you feel about yourself as far as part of you being Greek, and part of you being American? How do you feel about—do you feel you're mostly Greek, or mostly American?

GAROS: Oh, I haven't considered that at all. I feel like—I like both, Greek and American. So like I say, I haven't stopped reading, and talking Greek, and having the traditions that we're supposed to have. I haven't neglected anything like that.

LEVINE: What kinds of traditions do you still keep up?

GAROS: Well, my husband's name day. That's March 25<sup>th</sup>. And no matter what day it comes on, we celebrate it on a Sunday.

LEVINE: And what do you do on that March 25<sup>th</sup>?

GAROS: Oh, we have a big feast!

LEVINE: Here?

GAROS: Mm-hm. The men go down stairs, and the ladies [laughs]—they all separate, and they all sit in there, and they all bring something. But I prepare whatever I have to have.

LEVINE: And what do the men talk about, and what do the ladies talk about?

GAROS: Who knows what the men talk about down stairs? [Laughs] They come up and get the feed, and then they go down stairs again, because I haven't got a big room, and I haven't got a dining room. So we have a big—what do you call it, downstairs? Recreation room.

LEVINE: Uh-huh. Now, do you invite strictly Greek people, or do you have other people come, too?

GAROS: No, we have non-Greek also. Oh, he has a lot of friends. If you go to—no matter where you go, even in this town, everybody knows him, as Gelly, Gelly, Gelly. Everybody knows him. Nobody knows him as Evangelos! [Laughs]

LEVINE: So let's see. What do you feel very satisfied that you've done in your life? What makes you feel proud or satisfied?

GAROS: I feel proud we're active, and we're well-liked by people. We don't snub anybody [laughs]. Yeah, that's one thing that I'm proud of. And like I say, people all—they all love us! And we love people, too.

LEVINE: Well, that's nice. That's very nice.

GAROS: Yeah. My house is always open. I don't have to invite anybody to come to the house.

LEVINE: People drop in?

GAROS: Drop in, all the time.

LEVINE: Are there a large number of Greek people right around here in Hooksett?

GAROS: No, not around here, but Manchester there's a lot of people, yeah. Over here, there's mostly French.

LEVINE: And how about religion? Was your family religious?

GAROS: No, we're not that pious, but we're Orthodox, and we go to church whenever we have to. It's not compulsory, yet we don't make a habit of going, like

some people have to go, yeah. We keep up with the tradition, with whatever we have to do. Like, we christened our grandson—great grandson! My daughter is baptized in Greek also, and we keep up the tradition, yeah.

LEVINE: How about foods? Do you cook any foods that people cook in Greece?

GAROS: Yeah, all Greek, uh-huh. Mostly Greek.

LEVINE: Can you mention any of those dishes that you make?

GAROS: Well, most of all is lamb [laughs]! And then we have, like, rice, [pause], spinach and rice. No, I don't know what to say about the Greek—do you know of any kind of Greek food?

LEVINE: Well, how about the desserts? Do you cook those?

GAROS: No, I'm no good about desserts, really, but I can make other things.

LEVINE: The spinach and cheese pie?

GAROS: Yes, but I don't make that. I'm no good at that at all. But people always bring me some.

LEVINE: Oh, uh-huh.

GAROS: The other night we went to the church festival, and I bought some over there [laughs], already made!

LEVINE: And how about the grape leaves?

GAROS: I don't make those, neither, but I always go down to the restaurant, pick them up [laughs].

LEVINE: In Manchester?

GAROS: Yeah, in Manchester, Athens Restaurant. I always go there and pick them up, and they're delicious!

LEVINE: Okay, let's see. Is there anything else? Do you feel like the fact that you were born here, you went to Greece, your parents were from Greece, and you really lived most of your life now here—do you feel that made a difference in the kind of person you are, the fact that you immigrated to this country?

GAROS: I think we've met so many people, and I look forward to meeting them again. I haven't felt like an outsider, even when we came here again. Everybody

was gracious, I think. Everybody—I don't know. I don't feel as though we were lonesome, or anything like that, because we've been so busy all the time. So I don't feel anything about it, yeah.

LEVINE: What do you think about this idea of the United States being called a melting pot? You've heard that, a melting pot?

GAROS: No.

LEVINE: In other words, the idea that people come from all over to America, and that it's like you're in a pot, and everybody becomes American.

GAROS: Well, they have the opportunities here that they don't have in Europe. Over here, you can become a policeman to a lawyer, or whatever. But over there, there's only certain people that can do that, because they have—they don't have that kind of money. But now, I guess they're getting pretty good over there. They're way ahead now, but those days, it was just certain people that could do, afford, all of that.

LEVINE: But over here, you felt like you could do it?

GAROS: Everybody has an opportunity here, yeah. So, different, yeah.

LEVINE: Is there anything else that you would say about the American society, I mean, since you sort of know both the Greek and the American?

GAROS: I'm happy as it is. We mix in with everybody, so it's really a nice country. That's all I can say.

LEVINE: Okay, well maybe that's a perfect place to end. I want to thank you so much for talking with me.

GAROS: You're welcome.

LEVINE: And I've been speaking with Athena Garos. It's November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1995. I'm here in Hooksett, New Hampshire. And this is Janet Levine for the National Park Service, and I'm signing off.

[End of Interview]