

KECK-86

MARIANTHE DIMITRI CHLETSOS

BIRTH DATE: 1895

INTERVIEW DATE: NOVEMBER 26, 1985

RUNNING TIME: 41:00

INTERVIEWER: NANCY DALLETT

RECORDING ENGINEER: KIMBERLY HAAS

INTERVIEW LOCATION: PHILADELPHIA, PA

TRANSCRIPT ORIGINALLY PREPARED BY: NANCY VEGA, 1986

TRANSCRIPT RECONCEIVED BY: CHICK LEMONICK, 1/1996

TRANSCRIPT NOT REVIEWED

GREECE, 1910

AGE 15

PASSAGE ON "THE ATHENA"

ORAL HISTORIAN'S NOTE: MRS. CHLETSOS IS THE WIFE OF PANAGIOTIS CHLETSOS, INTERVIEW AKRF-85. PAUL E. SIGRIST, JR. DIRECTOR OF ORAL HISTORY, 1/17/1996.

DALLETT: My name is Nancy Dallett, and I'm speaking with Marianne Chletsos on Tuesday, November 26, 1985. We are beginning this interview at 1:30 PM and we are about to interview Mrs. Chletsos about her immigration experience from Greece or Turkey, however we want to refer to it, in 1910. This is the beginning of side one of Interview Number 86. Can you take me back to the beginning of your story and tell me where you were born?

CHLETSOS: I was born in Lemnos, the island of the Elgin Sea.

DALLETT: And what year was that that you were born?

CHLETSOS: Would you like to know the name of the little village?

DALLETT: Yes.

CHLETSOS: Lihna.

DALLETT: Would you help to spell that?

CHLETSOS: L-I-H-N-A.

DALLETT: L-I-H-N-A.

CHLETSOS: I was born in 19, 1895.

DALLETT: 1895. Okay. Tell me about your family.

CHLETSOS: My family. I came from parents who were, um, (husband speaks), farmers. Father had land, big land. He was working on this land

with his cows, with his plow--

DALLETT: Do you remember what, what he grow on his, on his soil?

CHLETSOS: Yes. Everything. Wheat, beans, sesame, almost everything.

DALLETT: Uh, tell me about your mother and your brothers and sisters.

CHLETSOS: We were four sisters. Is that it? And one brother.

DALLETT: Okay. And, um, do you remember, uh going to school as a young child in your village?

CHLETSOS: Yes. I was going to school. The little village had a school to the third grade. But I was sent to another school who had high grades. My family believed, they weren't knowing how to read and write, both my mother and father, but they believed in education. Might be funny, but that's really how it was. So I was sent to school.

DALLETT: You were sent away, really, to another village to go to school?

CHLETSOS: Yes.

DALLETT: So, how would you get to school then? Would you, would you walk to that other village?

CHLETSOS: Well, you had to go and stay with a family.

DALLETT: How old were you when you were sent to stay with a family?

CHLETSOS: Uh, fifteen, thirteen, between twelve and thirteen.

DALLETT: And, uh, how long did you stay with that family when you went to school?

CHLETSOS: Two years, two years.

DALLETT: Okay. And then what happened after the two years?

CHLETSOS: Ah, after two years I came to America.

DALLETT: How did it happen that, uh, that you came to America?

Who made that decision that you should come here?

CHLETSOS: Well, in order to understand, my father had four daughters. And for us to get married, father had to give us land and a home, which he wasn't able to. In the meantime I had an aunt who was married in New York, she came to New York. That was my mother's sister. So I was sent to my aunt in New York as a young girl, fifteen.

DALLETT: So did you, did you go back from, uh, the village where you were going to school, back to your home, before you came to America?

CHLETSOS: Oh, yes.

DALLETT: And do you remember, uh, actually leaving, on the day you left, saying goodbye?

CHLETSOS: It's the saddest thing anybody can do, when you say goodbye to your family, especially those years. It was a (?) thing, you know. It was just-- Maybe for years and years you wouldn't see them. It was sad, very sad.

DALLETT: And you were fifteen and, do you remember what you took from home with you?

CHLETSOS: We didn't took too much. My parents used to manage to get us a new pair of shoes, an outfit, new one, besides the old, a few old things. But you didn't take too much. You didn't have a valise. You just had one of these (?) sacks, that was all.

DALLETT: And you were going to set off by yourself. You were going to travel by yourself?

CHLETSOS: Yes, with a group. It was a young man who had about, oh, six or eight girls with him. He was in New York before.

DALLETT; So he was bringing a group of young girls to relatives in, in this country?

CHLETSOS: Yes.

DALLETT: Uh, had you known other people to leave and come to America? Had you said goodbye to other people who were leaving for America?

CHLETSOS: Yes. Yes. There were a few others from the same village, that they traveled with me.

DALLETT: How did you feel about that? It must, you said it was very sad to say goodbye.

CHLETSOS: It was sad. It was one of the saddest things in your life because you didn't know if you're going to see your people again. And I did love my people. I didn't have to leave, but I was forced to leave.

DALLETT: Your parents thought it would be better for you.

CHLETSOS: Better life. Better life for myself, and help them out a little bit. They were trying to help you, in the meantime you were supposed to help them.

DALLETT: So, do you remember, uh, making the trip to come to this country? Can you tell me about that?

CHLETSOS: I remember how many nights I used to cry. I was sad. But, it had to be done. Then I came to New York to my aunt. She was a good person. She was nice to me. And what happened, I came in, in the month of October, like. And in March my grandfather died, that is, my aunt's father. And, uh, she took off and went back to Greece with her children, and left her husband in New York. That is my uncle. But she was my aunt, she was my mother's sister. So after she left. life wasn't very easy because before

she left she took me to school, to night school. And, uh, I used to love to go to night school and start at the blackboard, and start writing. I used to love that. But after my aunt left I couldn't go to night school because at night I had to do the washing, the cleaning. See, I lived with my uncle and cousin. The two men, I had to take care of, besides myself. Life wasn't easy. This life I lived about a year. And then--

DALLETT: Before we go back, before we start talking about what life was like in New York, when you were here, can we just go back in time a little bit to before you arrived here. Uh, you were telling me about how sad it was to say goodbye. Do you remember, uh, actually making the trip on the boat?

CHLETSOS: Yes.

DALLETT: Where did you leave from? What was the port where the boat left from?

CHLETSOS: Piraeus.

DALLETT: Piraeus. And, uh, can you tell me anything about that boat trip? What do you remember about it?

CHLETSOS: Hmm. Yeah, sure. I can tell you because I got sick in my ears. I got, I couldn't hear. They got stuffed up. See, I had tonsils, I, I caught a cold, and I got sick, and I couldn't hear. And here we were taking the trip, and I was so scared that if I reached New York and they started asking me questions and I wouldn't be able to hear I'd be sent back.

DALLETT: Had you heard that that was possible, that you would be rejected and sent back if you weren't well enough.

CHLETSOS: Sure. What happened was, it was a woman who had a baby on her breast, and she knew that I was sick with my ears. And she says, "Come here." And she took her breast and out milk from her breast. And that cured the, it cured the whatever it was. I was able to--

DALLETT: And you were able to hear after that?

CHLETSOS: So I came to New York.

DALLETT: Was this on the boat that this happened, where you met this woman?

CHLETSOS: Yeah. On the boat. She was coming to New York too, with her child.

DALLETT: So what else do you remember about the boat? Do you remember--

CHLETSOS: I remember there was a woman who was full of life. She used to sing and dance and knew, all of had-- And somebody says-- See, I was traveling third class, down, two floors down, three. All of a sudden somebody says, "You know so-and-so? She's sick." And she was taken to the hospital, in the boat they had a hospital room. And after a while the woman died. And they took her upstairs, they covered her up, and down-- I was sad.

DALLETT: They buried her in the ocean?

CHLETSOS: Yes. They covered her up with a blanket and (she whispers), the boat stops. It stops. and, uh, we had a minister, Greek minister, who took service. And (she whispers) down she went.

DALLETT: Do you remember, uh, before you got on the boat, did you have to go through an examination of any kind?

CHLETSOS: Yeah.

DALLETT: But your ear didn't hurt then, so--

CHLETSOS: No, no.

DALLETT: And that was no problem, your examination? Do you remember what they did, what they looked at?

CHLETSOS: I had that throat problem. When you have a cold, I used to, your tonsils swell up, that's all.

DALLETT; Okay. And do you remember how long the boat journey took?

CHLETSOS: Twenty-two days.

DALLETT: Twenty-two days.

CHLETSOS: Uh-huh.

DALLETT; Did you stop at many ports along the way, or was it just--

CHLETSOS: From Piraeus to New York, straight.

DALLETT: Straight. Twenty-two days.

CHLETSOS: Eight days it takes you to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

You see nothing but water and sky. Eight days. The other days you see. You go through Italy, you go through different parts. You see something. But, uh, crossing the Atlantic, it's awful. You only see these great big waves. Oooh.

DALLETT: And you didn't, you didn't feel well while you were traveling on the boat.

CHLETSOS: Well, I used to awful seasick. I couldn't take it.

DALLETT: Uh, do you remember, uh, the beds where you slept on the boat?

CHLETSOS: Who?

DALLETT: The beds where you would sleep at night on the boat?

CHLETSOS: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Coming home to New York, the first

trip, that is, I was traveling what they call third class. One, two, three.  
So I was down below. But when I went back I went first class.

DALLETT: It was very different.

CHLETSOS: Oh, yes.

DALLETT: First and third class. How was it different?

CHLETSOS: Well, you got, uh, to eat with the captain, and you can order whatever you want. Which, the other was just bean soup or macaroni or whatever everybody eats. But we had few drachmas, that is money. We used to go to the store and get a piece of, uh, smoked herring or something, a piece of bread.

DALLETT; You could buy that on the boat? You had the money to do that, yeah.

CHLETSOS: Others had cheese.

DALLETT: Had your mother sent any food with you for you to have on the boat, do you remember?

CHLETSOS: Not too much.

DALLETT; And had she given you some money for the trip?

CHLETSOS: I had a few dollars to spend for the trip. Not too much. But you see, you had to hold on like-- I don't remember if it was five or ten dollars. You had to hold on-- At Ellis Island they used to ask you how much money you had. You had to have that money. I think it was either three(?), that is English maybe fifty dollars or something.

DALLETT: So you had to hold onto some of the money.

CHLETSOS: Oh, yes, yes. They wouldn't let you in New York unless you had this money so you can reach your destination, you see. Not everybody lived in New York. How they're supposed to go to different parts of the country?

DALLETT: Uh, tell me what it was like when you came to Ellis Island? Do you remember when you, when the boat trip was over and you landed?

CHLETSOS: It was nice. It was ladies dressed up and they had baskets with fruit and they were giving us fruit free. And they were giving

us little pies, those little things.

DALLETT: Little pies?

CHLETSOS: Pies.

DALLETT: Uh-huh.

CHLETSOS: And I remember after eating the first pie I loved it so much I wanted another one. But they told me I had to pay five cents for the second pie. I didn't have to pay for the first. And I did pay the five cents because I liked it so much. Now, what it was, I don't know.

DALLETT: Were these, were these women officials, do you think, at Ellis Island, or--

CHLETSOS: Oh, no. Those women were what they call like a (?) ladies, like (?). They were just working there as volunteers.

DALLETT: Volunteers.

CHLETSOS: The volunteers were nice people, nice. Nice, nice ladies.

DALLETT: What language, uh, were you speaking?

CHLETSOS: In Greek.

DALLETT: Greek.

CHLETSOS: I know a little bit French, but I couldn't use it.

DALLETT: And what language were these nice ladies speaking who gave you the pies?

CHLETSOS: English.

DALLETT: So how did you communicate with them?

CHLETSOS: Ah, you manage. You'd be surprised, you manage.

DALLETT: Uh, do you remember being examined at Ellis Island?

CHLETSOS: Oh, yes. They examine you by doctor. They were very strict those years, maybe they still are, about your eyes. Some kind of sickness. If they found that kind of sickness, it seems they were a

sickness catch that (?). They used to call them-- I don't know. (We go off record because of coughing.)

DALLETT: Tell me about the buildings at Ellis Island? Do you remember what it looked like?

CHLETSOS: Ellis Island, to me, it seems like a paradise. I sat there and I looked around and looked around. I don't remember seeing the Liberty. Maybe I did. I guess I did. I must have. And there were ladies there, dressed up, and they were giving us fruit and cakes and things. The first impression of New York was nice.

DALLETT: Because these ladies were nice to you?

CHLETSOS: Yes. And plenty of fruit and plenty of pies.

DALLETT: And did you have to spend the night there?

CHLETSOS: No.

DALLETT: Just the day, just the afternoon?

CHLETSOS: Yes. In the afternoon my aunt come in and took me home.

DALLETT: So you came in and had your fruit pies. Uh, you went through the doctor's examination and there was no problem.

CHLETSOS: No, no problem.

DALLETT: Did they ask to see the money?

CHLETSOS: oh, yes.

DALLETT: They did?

CHLETSOS: Uh-huh. You had to have, it was three, three five gold pieces, or five, I don't, I don't remember, so--

DALLETT: And what year was this that, that you came in?

CHLETSOS: (She sighs.) That was 19, what? 10, I guess, 10.

DALLETT: 1910. Okay. And how long was it before your aunt came and met you at Ellis Island?

CHLETSOS: They came in. They were, when they expect people, they

know when the boat is coming in, and they're right there waiting for you.

DALLETT: I forgot to ask you, do you, do you remember the name of the boat that you were on?

CHLETSOS: Yeah. The Athena.

DALLETT: The Athena.

CHLETSOS: Uh-huh. I traveled with the same boat twice. I went back and then come over again with the Athena. Isn't that funny?

DALLETT: It was still in service later on.

CHLETSOS: Yes.

DALLETT: Okay. So tell me what it was like when your aunt picked you up that day.

CHLETSOS: I had a good life with my aunt. She was my mother's sister.

DALLETT: And she lived in New York City?

CHLETSOS: She lived in 228 East 28th Street. That was my first address. She was afraid I'd get lost, and she used to teach me, "228 East 28th Street," just like a poem.

DALLETT: Uh, do you remember how you felt when you arrived at her house that first day and here you were in New York, in your new home?

CHLETSOS: I loved New York.

DALLETT: You liked it.

CHLETSOS: Yeah. It used to be, uh, the wagons with the horses selling fruit. They'd sell bananas and all kinds of vegetables. And ice, and they used to holler everything, "Oh, bananas, oh, apples," or "Ice." Screaming. If you need anything you used to come out the window and wave to them. They would send it up.

DALLETT: And were there, uh, many Greek people who were settled in that neighborhood on 28th Street?

CHLETSOS: It was, it was (?), from the same island. It was a good

many, in those years. It wasn't strange. I had two people from the same village.

DALLETT: And how was it that you picked up your English?

CHLETSOS: It didn't take me very long, you know? I was able to read without knowing what it means on account of knowing few French.

DALLETT: Because you knew some French, and could pick up some English. And, uh, you mentioned that your aunt went back to Greece and then you had to care for your uncle and your cousin.

CHLETSOS: Yes.

DALLETT: And, uh, you said you did that for about a year. Uh, did any of your other sisters come over?

CHLETSOS: No. She come many years later.

DALLETT: Okay. So no one else from your family, in that year, came over. Uh, what happened after that? You said there was a change after about a year.

CHLETSOS: Well, I got married didn't I?

DALLETT: You got married. How did you meet your husband?

CHLETSOS: I knew my husband from the same village. He came and visited. In the meantime he knew that he was, he wanted to marry me. I never thought I would marry him.

DALLETT: Back in the village you didn't--

CHLETSOS: But he knew.

DALLETT: How was it that he knew you were in New York?

CHLETSOS: Nit many months. He was working in Atlantic City and he came to visit in New York. And w e saw one another after so many years.

DALLETT: And you had known him as a child in your village?

CHLETSOS: Oh, yes. We were the same school, the same church. Baptized in the same--

DALLETT: Okay. So, so once you, uh, you got together in New York and then you were married after that, in New York City?

CHLETSOS: I got married in New York City and he took me to Atlantic City. That's where he worked.

DALLETT: Okay. And how old were you when you got married?

CHLETSOS: Uh, I wasn't quite sixteen.

DALLETT: Uh, so then I assume you moved out of your aunt's house at that point and went to Atlantic City and what happened then? Did you start working then?

CHLETSOS: No. No. I never worked.

DALLETT: Oh, I'm sorry. I thought your mother said--

CHLETSOS: In New York a little bit I worked, but not in Atlantic City, not after I got married.

THERSA CHLETSOS: What kind of work did you do in New York?

CHLETSOS: In New York I did the embroidery.

DALLETT: You did embroidery.

CHLETSOS: They used to have blouses and they had, uh, embroidery on the blouses or on dresses. And, of course, I knew embroidery from school. So I worked a little bit. But it was on and off season, season. It wasn't a steady job. But one of those things. I was, I was one year in New York before I got married and in order for me to travel my father had to borrow money, one hundred dollars. And, uh, I couldn't send the hundred dollars. I didn't have that much to support myself and send home. So when Papa come along and he wanted to marry me, my uncle says to my husband, "She's got to work and send her fare home first. She's not ready for marriage." And Papa says, "How much is it, her fare?" So, he says, my uncle says, "One hundred dollars." "You want me to give you the hundred dollars now?" He puts his hand in his pocket and took some money out. He wanted to show my uncle that he had money to support me.

DALLETT: Sure. So then your uncle thought it was okay and you sent money back to your father?

CHLETSOS: Oh, yes. (She whispers.) That was money he used to

borrow.

DALLETT: He had to borrow that money in order to send you to this country?

CHLETSOS: Yeah. He had plenty of land, but no, no cash.

DALLETT: So when was it that your, you said some other sisters came later on, how much later?

CHLETSOS: That was later, that was later.

DALLETT: And you were living in Philadelphia then, when they came?

CHLETSOS: Yes. My two sisters came when I was living here in this house.

DALLETT: So they, they came right here to you when they came.

CHLETSOS: Yes, and they got married here.

DALLETT: And once you were in Philadelphia was there, uh, a, a

Greek community? Did you find a Greek community?

CHLETSOS: Yes. Oh, yes. That was one reason I moved from Atlantic City to Philadelphia, that I wanted a Greek church and a Greek school because Thersa was about five, six years old and she had to start school. And that was one reason why I had to move. So we came to Philadelphia and we came to this house, since 1918.

DALLETT: And when did you become a citizen?

CHLETSOS: Oh, ooh, that's another story. I didn't believe that I had to go through. I had two boys serving in the service during the year, the war. I didn't have to. Papa become a citizen. So it became a law that you have to become a citizen, otherwise you had to report every, was it every month?

DALLETT: Every year?

CHLETSOS: City Hall, or to someplace. So my son says to me, "Mother, this is serious. You're not a citizen. We'll be in trouble." I says, "Oh, you don't know what you're talking about. You two boys, serving in the service, I live all my life in this country and now they're going to?" He says, "They're going to send you back, or you're going to pay fine." I says, "Oh, no. You're crazy." He says, "No, Mama, I'm not

crazy." Finally it came out in the newspaper that this is the last warning now. Anybody who's not citizen they should come to post office and register. So he took me over to, my son took me over to the post office and a young man started asking me questions, why didn't you become a citizen? I says, "I didn't have to."

DALLETT: We just have to-- This is the end of side one of Interview Number 86.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

DALLETT: This is the beginning of side two of Interview Number 86. Okay. Sorry, you were saying?

CHLETSOS: So he took me to the post office, I was supposed to report. So young man sat there and asked me questions. He says, "Why didn't you become a citizen?" I says, "What for?" He says, "You have to become a citizen." I said, "You're crazy. I came to this country when I was only fifteen. I married here, my family's here, my two boys served in the service." He says, "Mama, see that?" He showed me a jail, a room. He said, "That's where I'm going to put you." I says, "You must be crazy." He

says, Yes. If you are mad now, you go right now to this next door and sign application for your citizenship." So that was the end of it.

DALLETT; So you got that. What year was that that this happened?

CHLETSOS: (She sighs.) Oh, after the war, I guess. Not many years.

DALLETT: Oh. When you came through Ellis Island, what was your name, what was your maiden name, before you were married?

CHLETSOS: Oh, Marianne Dimitri.

DALLETT: Dimitri. And was there any change on the Island. to your name? No?

CHLETSOS: Write it in my marriage certificate.

THERESA CHLETSOS: What is your maiden name? What is your maiden name?

CHLETSOS: Maiden name is Karapoliado, Dimitri Karapoliado. Is that it? But I used to go by the name Dimitri for many years. I never

thought that, uh, Karapoliado was necessary. But finally I had to go to--

THERESA CHLETSOS: Why were you called Dimitri?

CHLETSOS: It was easy.

THERSA CHLETSOS: It was your father's name.

CHLETSOS: Yeah, but it was easy, too. By the name I started spelling Karapoliado, Dimitri was easy, honey.

DALLETT: Dimitri was easier to spell and easier to say, so you took that as your name.

CHLETSOS: Sure. You American people, you say something, you say, "How do you spell it?"

DALLETT: Right. So it was easier.

CHLETSOS: How do you spell it. It was awful.

DALLETT: So it was at Ellis Island that you decided to just give that as your name, Dimitri?

CHLETSOS: No.

DALLETT: No.

CHLETSOS: Years after.

DALLETT: Years after. So it wasn't changed, actually, at Ellis Island.

CHLETSOS: No. It wasn't changed there. It must be Dimitri on those papers.

(We go off record.)

DALLETT: Uh-huh. Okay. Let me ask you this. Um, once you came to this country, did you continue with most of, um, baking and cooking like you had done in Greece?

CHLETSOS: Yes. More so.

DALLETT: More so.

CHLETSOS: More so because I was the, the cook-in-chief.

DALLETT: You were the chief cook for your, for your uncle and for your cousin. Did you find that it was easy for you to get the same, uh, ingredients that you would need? Did you have a place where you could get the kinds of things you'd need? Everything you'd need you could get here, yeah?

CHLETSOS: Nothing different. To this day, nothing different, is it.

THERESA CHLETSOS: It's better

CHLETSOS: Because you're around.

DALLETT: How about, how about continuing with your religious practice? Was there a church right near on 28th Street in New York when you first came?

CHLETSOS: That was the saddest part in New York. We never went to church in New York. Only on Easter. And on Easter there were so many people we just sat on the

street. The church was too small for, everybody would go on Easter.

DALLETT: But you wanted to go more often than that and you couldn't?

CHLETSOS: I couldn't go.

DALLETT: Why was that that you couldn't go?

CHLETSOS: Well, the church wasn't near enough.

DALLETT: It wasn't near enough.

CHLETSOS: No. We lived on 28th Street and the church was on 72nd, uh, up there.

DALLETT; How about when you came to Philadelphia?

CHLETSOS: The, in Atlantic City we had a church.

DALLETT: And that was one of the reasons you came to Philadelphia?

CHLETSOS: So we came to Philadelphia and I told Daddy that if you're looking for a house see that the house is near the church. Because I wanted to go to the church for the children, and to Greek school. That was two reasons I moved from Atlantic City to Philadelphia. The Greek church, and the Greek school. That was two traditions that I kept.

DALLETT: And you mentioned before that you were on the Athena, the boat that you came over on originally. You said you were on that boat again. Could you tell me about that?

CHLETSOS: (?)

DALLETT: You went back to Greece on that boat later on? Your husband went back to Greece?

CHLETSOS: No. I came to this country twice on the Athena. I went back on another boat.

DALLETT: Oh, I see. Okay. When was it that you went back to Greece after you first came here?

CHLETSOS: With my baby. She was-- In 19, what, 14?

DALLETT: Because of the war in 1914, you mean?

CHLETSOS: Well, Papa had to serve in the service, see. The island become Greece, from Turk. And, uh, it was a crazy move at that time, I'll tell you. Because I didn't have to go. But I went with my baby, and served six months in the Army. And then we came back.

DALLETT: And that's when you came back on the Athena.

CHLETSOS: Yes. And, uh, coming back the World War One started and the boat got bad weather and we went into Bermuda, outside New York. And here is where we hear the news that Greece was ready to go to war, too. That was a European war. And just about saved Papa, because the rest of the boys who went to serve, they lost their lives in the war. So--

DALLETT: And, um, you also mentioned that you went back to Greece, uh, for your fiftieth anniversary, was it?

CHLETSOS: Yes.

DALLETT: Tell me about that trip.

CHLETSOS: Oh, that was nice.

DALLETT: What year was that that you went, your fiftieth anniversary?

CHLETSOS: What?

DALLETT: What year was your fiftieth anniversary?

CHLETSOS: What year?

DALLETT: Yeah.

CHLETSOS: Sixty? Sixty-one?

DALLETT: 1961.

CHLETSOS: '61.

DALLETT: And where did you go? Did you go back to the village

where you were born?

CHLETSOS: We went, we went to Athens, we went to Jerusalem, we went to Israel, Cyprus, and went back to Lemnos, stayed there seven days and weeks, went back again. We stayed about, what, three months? It was nice.

DALLETT; And what was it like to see Lemnos after all those years?

CHLETSOS: After all those years, going to the village, was sad because it took me fifty years to go back, and, uh, when I left I left a grandmother, I left aunts, I left, I left cousins, you know, doors open. And then when I went back it was sad because I used to get up in the morning and take a walk in the village and I would see those doors shut, you know, like your grandmother's door, your aunt's door. And I used to talk to myself, "Where are you people?" It was just like somebody answered me, "It took you fifty years to come back?" It was sad. But I'm glad that she took us, because if it wasn't for her pushing us, Daddy didn't care to go. He said, "You go." I says, "I'm not going without you." But she insisted and I'm glad that she did.

DALLETT: Do you, when you went back there, did you think at all

how your life might have been different if your father had not sent you to this country?

CHLETSOS: Well, who knows, dear. Who knows, darling. But I was, I was, I was lucky that I was sent to this country. I tried to help my people. I think that I was--

DALLETT: Okay. Thank you. That is the end of side two and the end of Interview Number 86 with Marianne Chletsos.