

“THE RURAL GUARDS’ LOGBOOKS OF INCIDENTS” AS A FOLKLORE SOURCE: A GREEK ISLAND CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The present article is a case study of the logbooks of a rural guard (community warden) in Komiaki of Naxos (a Greek Cyclades island) of the period 1987–1991 and constitutes an attempt to reveal the value of these logbooks as folkloric research sources. More specifically, on the basis of the daily incidents of delinquent behaviours that the rural guard had to record in his logbooks following the *Bookkeeping Instructions* imposed by the Greek authorities’ views of the world of the rural guards are highlighted and most importantly views of the Naxian society and the micro-society of the village Komiaki. The study demonstrates that such rather unexploited folkloric sources in combination with other ones can significantly contribute to the diachronic study of the folk culture.

Keywords: rural guards/community wardens, logbooks of incidents, in-between space, delinquency, Greece, Naxos, Komiaki, Greek culture/folklore.

INTRODUCTION

In Greece, which is the context of the present study, the international term *Folklore/Folkloristics*¹ is often denoted or used interchangeably with the term *Laographia* (study of folk culture), the discipline founded by Nikolaos G. Politis (1852–1921) in 1909. The wide thematology of this discipline can be divided in three main categories as defined by M. G. Meraklis, the folklorist (laographer) who has paved new ways of research for this discipline since 1970²:

A. Social formation: 1. natural place, settlement framework, residence, social places, 2. Family structure and organization, kinship, etc. 3. Wider social groups (ethnic, minorities, refugees, “marginal”, etc.), 4. Administration (communities

¹ The international literature on the first term is of course voluminous. For the second more recent one see inter alia Zemjanova 1964; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1985; Jackson 1985; Dundes 1999, 2005; Alexiadis 2012.

² Meraklis 2011.

during the Turkish occupation, local administration etc.), 5. Production and consumption of goods (technology before industrialization and during the modern times, vocation, trade unions, associations, beggary, stealing of sheep/cattle, folk sciences (such as astrology, meteorology and divination), nutrition culture, etc.

B. Customary life: 1. Customs of the annual cycle and the human life, 2. Customary folk law, 3. Everyday life, 4. National (historical) life (its old and modern performances, the function of the historical memory), etc., 5. Religious behavior (customs of folk worship of God, church organization, non-ecclesiastical organisations, seclusion, ethical and metaphysical quests, such as superstitions, conceptions of the divine etc.

C. Folk art: 1. Folk literature (e.g. legends, folk tales, funny stories, riddles, proverbs, folk songs), 2. Folk arts (e.g. music, dance, attire, weaving, architecture, embroidery, painting, etc.), folk theatre, folk cinema (produced in the period 1950–1970), etc.

In the modern times more subjects of interest and investigation have been added to the above list (e.g. identities, press, political songs, graffiti, soundscapes, cultural associations, folkloristics of the elections), mainly due to the fact that the interest has shifted towards the *urban space* (*Urban Folklore/Laographia*)³. More specifically, new folklore subjects are being investigated and researched along with the previously mentioned ones (their new forms and functions etc.), the modern cultural industry, the management of the tradition nowadays, etc.

Therefore, Folklore/*Laographia* is a discipline that studies and analyses holistically a plethora of folklore subjects *within a social-historical perspective* advocated by M.G. Meraklis. More specifically, the folklore phenomenon is considered to be produced *historically* and thus needs to be studied within the particular space and time and in conjunction to all its social parameters (space, social groups, economy, politics, ideology, etc.). In this sense, he labels “his” folklore science *Social Laography*. To this effort, Folklore has as its helpers all the humanistic sciences mainly *History*⁴, *Social Anthropology* and *Ethnography/Ethnology* (in Greece these three disciplines are considered equivalent)⁵, *Sociology*⁶, *Geography*⁷. Folklore/*Laography* is interested in the points where all these disciplines meet and converge to each other, the interdisciplinary view of the subjects in particular. Its main methodological instruments are field work (with all its modern tools, e.g. participatory observation), oral history⁸, content analysis, biographical narrations⁹, etc.

³ See Loukatos 1963; Meraklis 1989; Avdikos 1994; Kouzas 2012.

⁴ Alexakis 1984; Meraklis 1989: 15–25; Meraklis 2003; Kopsida-Vrettou 2012.

⁵ See Megas 1967; Nitsiakos 1997: 13–23.

⁶ Nitsiakos 1997: 24–29; Meraklis 1980; Thanopoulos 2012; Doulaveras 2013.

⁷ Romaios 1973–74.

⁸ Thompson 2002; Kapsomenou-Chatzitaki 1993.

⁹ Tsiolis 2006; Kakamboura 2008.

Within this theoretical framework, the present work proposes ways of studying a relatively unexplored source of folklore to date, namely “Community wardens’ logbooks of incidents” (henceforth Logbooks). More specifically, this work deals with the ways in which at least two eminent “folklore worlds” embedded in the aforementioned logbooks, namely, community wardens’ (rural guards) and the local communities invigilated by them, are represented in the aforementioned source. The terms “rural guards” (*agrofylakas* in Greek, also called *agrarian police*) and “community wardens” (*kinotiki fylakes* in Greek) are identical the first predating the second since rural guards have been an institution in Greece since 1836. The rural guards were set up immediately after the national restoration of Greece (1830) and aimed at the safety of the rural fields located beyond forest areas and “city, town or village planning”. Rural guards were responsible for the prevention and suppression of rural crime, the guarding of rural estates, the supervision of the distribution of irrigation waters and so on, as discussed later in the present study. An interpretation of the historical reasons that dictated the renaming of rural guards as community wardens is also attempted later in this study. Yet, the long history of the institution, which is inextricably interwoven with the modern history and the fate of Greek people, led me to adopt the historic term rural guards in the present study.

As a case study I chose the logbooks of a rural guard of Komiaki, namely Georgios K. Chorianopoulos (1929–2004) and, in particular, his final records¹⁰ (of the period 1987–1991) with a view to restoring with their help the modern aspects of Naxian culture, those of the early 1990’s, a period that lacks documentation from the scholarly perspective. Komiaki is a farming/pastoral village in the Naxos highlands which stands as a good example of Braudel’s “freedom of mountains”¹¹ and the subsequent delinquency that manifests itself in such areas and of the conflict¹² between the farming and the pastoral worlds of such villages¹³.

The research method adopted in this study is *qualitative content analysis*¹⁴. More specifically, the logbooks are used as *texts* and the research question is whether any folklore information can be deduced from them that can help the folklorist understand the social reality of both the rural guards’ and the invigilated

¹⁰ The logbooks under investigation in the present study were handed to me by Chorianopoulos’ sons. The future researchers can, however, find many such logbooks from all the Naxian villages in the Historical Archive of Naxos (located in the capital city of the island) collected recently by an eminent scholar of the island, namely, Lazaros Theophilos.

¹¹ Braudel 1993: 44–47.

¹² See Damianakos 1987:71–107.

¹³ For the history and folk culture of this specific village and the wider mountainous area see Levogiannis 1996; 2001; 2005. Stewart 2008; 2012, Panopoulos 2003.

¹⁴ The Content Analysis, if used in conjunction with traditional literary methods of *in-depth reading*, can compensate for any problems that arise from the subjective text (Burke 2009: 70). The relevant international bibliography, from Berelson (1952) and henceforth is very rich.

by them society's world. In particular, I immersed in the text and let the folkloristic units emerge. To guarantee credibility I also interviewed the aforementioned rural guard's relatives who confirmed specific pieces of information deduced from the logbooks and further reinforced them with some additional ones.

In what follows I describe the contents and the language of the logbooks focusing on their *bookkeeping instructions* section since I consider them exploitable from a folklore perspective and they guide the way the rural guard's texts are written in terms of style, length and content. Indeed, a number of recordings of this section of the logbooks emerge as valuable folklore information. Then the space and time of the rural guard's activity as depicted in the logbooks along with their duties, symbols of power, social representations are discussed. In the final part of this study, aspects of delinquency along with the social and economic life and the relationships of the particular social web in the invigilated by the rural guard area (Komiaki, a Naxian highlands village) are analysed.

THE LOGBOOKS

The Logbooks of rural guards are usually composed of short texts (a few lines), which constitute the sum of the mandatory recordings of daily incidents. They were quite small in size (14 × 10 cm) booklets issued by well-known publishers in Athens and distributed by the agrarian police to its officers. They were divided into 200 columns of equal size. According to the *Bookkeeping Instructions*, which are to be found on the first and last pages of the logbooks, the rural guard has to fill in the daily incidents in the left-hand column while in the right-hand one (under "Notes - Remarks") he has to note down all necessary action taken (see below for more on this), as dictated by his duties (see photos in the appendix).

From the pool of the instructions found in the logbooks, useful to both the rural guard and our study, I list below those that I consider most useful. The determinant role of instructions No 3 and 5 for the evaluation of the logbooks as a folklore source is also highlighted:

1. It is obligatory for all rural guards to keep a full record for each day of the year, even for the ones when they are absent on annual leave or public holidays.
2. The logbook should be kept clean without any erasing or strikethrough and should always be carried in the rural guard's pocket.
3. The logbook contains model forms of documents which the rural guards should use to compose their own.
4. The instructions mention the other elements (apart from the main incidents) that should be recorded in the logbook, e.g. the days the rural guard was on leave, the days he did not make his daily tour and the reason (illness, for example).
5. The logbook contains a model structure of the subsections of an incident description (presented below in this work).

At the end of each book there is a printed confirmation that “the pages have been counted and that page¹⁵ numbers have been inserted and found to be, and that it is to be used as a book of incidents by the rural guard....¹⁶, and it is the rural guard’s... (number) book in a row”¹⁷. An illustration of this is that Chorianopoulos’s last logbook (which contains entries from 12.04.1991 to 15.06.1991) has the serial number 51. This means that all his working life (he started working in 1963 and retired in 1991) is detailed in those 51 booklets.

According to his relatives, Chorianopoulos used to keep a record of the incident immediately after it had taken place or he kept notes in a rough notebook and registered them in the logbook at night, after he had finished with his daily obligations. Night time is “a neutral time” of rest in comparison to the “functional” time of the day, a period of time that facilitates the process of reflection since it is characterized by retrospection, evaluation and a personal overview of the incidents of the day. A distinction needs to be drawn at this point between “off-hand” narrative speech with its intense personal and idiosyncratic character (which, unfortunately, we do not have at our disposal) and the “official”, “constrained”, strictly structured speech. It seems that Chorianopoulos would not put off the obligation of recording the incidents in his logbook, lest oblivion distorted certain elements of the incident or the incidents, since his recordings reveal that he sometimes faced more than one on the same day and there was the risk of mixing up the details of the various incidents. After all, the written civilization has always been a safeguard against oblivion and memory restrictions.

THE FOLKLORIC EXPLOITATION OF THE BOOKKEEPING INSTRUCTIONS

The aforementioned model structure of an incident description dictates, as mentioned below, a very specific method of recording in terms of both style and content, a formalised, “neutral” discourse. It is the “official”, work discourse. The benefit for Folklore would be enormous if the rural guards were allowed to express themselves in their natural, everyday local jargon used by them in their everyday interactions. If this were the case the content analysis of logbook recordings would reveal linguistic, folkloric and emotional expressions, a discourse born of the writer’s soul, emotions, ideas, viewpoints, causes and effects, anarchic in structure, an anti-structure discourse¹⁸, as is generally the case with folk narratives. This model structure imposed by the authorities, expresses primarily the state’s beliefs about its employees’ educational level, to the assistance of whom it rushes through the basic “writing instructions” imprinted in every logbook, as mentioned earlier.

¹⁵ The word *Columns* would be more to the point.

¹⁶ The name of its possessor is written down.

¹⁷ The number is written down.

¹⁸ Turner 1974: 272–298 and passim; Turner 2008.

I strongly believe that this top-down compulsion was dictated either by the authorities' acknowledgement of rural guards' lack of education (their relative "illiteracy") or by a repulsion towards the exceptionally personal and absolutely "empiric" folk way in which they expressed themselves (a repulsion due to all the aforementioned characteristics of a descriptive, narrative, pure folk text) or else by the official view that rural guards' spontaneous folk speech could not describe delinquent behaviour successfully, in all its width and parameters. Indeed, Chorianopoulos's texts include several terms of the so-called *katharevousa* (a scholarly variety of Modern Greek which approximates the ancient Greek language used in the 19th and 20th centuries) in a difficult to understand text (due to numerous spelling, stress mistakes and bad handwriting). We witness yet another instance of the ideological use of *katharevousa*, of its use as mentality, that is, as a linguistic code, seen by all social classes as conveying upon its user a social prestige, as bringing him closer to his supervising authorities, as singling him out in his small traditional community and so on¹⁹.

According to the above-mentioned model, the instructions in the left-hand column clearly suggest that the entries should include:

1. "Fully checked identification of the perpetrator". We study this information (especially that related to recursive criminal behaviour) and can subsequently establish correlations with social terms of offensive behavior, setting the required variables, such as age, gender and social class, group of perpetrators, etc. This study can help us sketch out the "marginalised part", the fringes of local society.
2. "Date of offence". (On the basis of this information we can record *frequencies* and correlate them to the aforementioned variables).
3. "Type of deviant behaviour (damage done by animals, people, theft etc.)". This constitutes a classification system that defines and signals the unlawful deed, a system which is quite interesting in itself as it reflects the ideological standing and representations of the official approach (the hegemonic legal discourse) and how this is rejected or assimilated by the collective consciousness or how it is imposed on or established in it. We can thus indicate the degree of the seriousness of the deviant behaviour as it is formulated in the social representations of an area as well as whether it is in compliance with the "official" legal/judicial approach.
4. "Animal species that caused the damage along with the tools used by the perpetrator (bare hands or a plough or an axe)". The "tools of abuse" are of great interest to folklorists since they allow the study of the "material world".
5. "Location of damaged property". This information makes logbooks a valuable source of toponymy. Indeed, rural guards' entries provide a wealth of place names for study since their area of responsibility is cut off to smaller areas, which are less or more conducive to deviant behaviour on the part of the local

¹⁹ Politis 1998: 130–134.

population. An example: “26–10–1987 After patrolling the area of Baxivani Livada I have no infringements to report”²⁰. Or, “27–10–1987 I set off for my partol in my area of responsibility. While I was in the area of Sylalia, I was informed by Ioannis that...”²¹. Such mapping of small areas where criminal acts occur alternating with other, “not dangerous” ones (in the sense that no deviant behaviour is observed there) and probably with some others which are somehow “prohibited”, such as the so-called *vakoufia* (property owned by the Ottomans during the occupation period in Cyclades, 1566–1821), represents the totality of the social and symbolic use of the humanised, tamed and socialised landscape. In cases of deviance there is human action targeted at the natural environment and, therefore, an intention of infringement. The micro cycles of “wilderness” - “semi-wilderness” - “civilised” - “trespassed” - “non-trespassed” that emerge out of this mapping and the relationship among them are important for the distribution of zones. Also, the movement of the human community in the local space (“in(wards) – out(wards)”, “up(wards) – down(wards)”, “near(by) – far (away)”) signals the socially constructed zones of what is permitted and what is prohibited and their symbolic significance. In particular, the rural guard’s tracing of his moves across these zones, which constitute his workplace, in his capacity as a “person in-between”, express/reflect his socially defined role in spatial terms.

6. “Type of damaged plantation (wheat, corn, vine, trees, etc.)”. The logbooks provide information on the production process, on the existing danger of destruction of the production. This information allows us to measure the degree of “sensitivity” of certain cultivated species and, in this way, we (come to) capture the ideological representation of the “valuable” species at a symbolic level.

7. Full particulars of both the victim’s and witnesses’ identity. We thus have information on the social structure of the groups, which may potentially allow further categorisations of the “doers – victimisers/sufferers - victims” type.

8. Quantity of damaged goods (kilos, pieces) and cost in money²². This entry indirectly provides useful information on the way the community under study approaches and deals with economic matters.

9. Every crime “... committed (...) in the rural guard’s district in both the case of bearing witness (the perpetrator was caught in the act) or the case of having collected information on the criminal act after its commitment”. The on-the-spot examination on the part of the rural guard constitutes a form of fieldwork and thus possesses a special value from a folklore perspective.

10. The “conditions under which the infringement took place along with its characterization as either an intentional act or one of negligence”. Let me note at this point that an act of negligence is one when the perpetrator’s livestock:

²⁰ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 58.

²¹ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 58.

²² From the *bookkeeping instructions* of Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, of the period 1987–88. Drachma was the national currency at the time (replaced by Euro in 2002).

- “have escaped his attention and invaded” [the farm]²³
- “trickily got into the vine” (of goats)²⁴
- “some remained behind and entered into the farm”²⁵
- “he had lost the goat and was looking for it”²⁶.

Intentional deeds are when the doer knows the conditions under which an animal can cause damage and takes no preventive measures, as in “he knew that they [the goats] were coming down from his own farm and did not take the necessary measures”²⁷, or when he knows about the continuing offence and will not stop it, “he knew they were trespassing”²⁸. Rural guards’ criteria for each of these two conditions are as follows:

- A forensic examination of the scene, which seems to be the most prevalent criterion. Example: “4–9–1987. During my patrol in the area of Plaka I realized that the vine of Nikolaos Antonios Chorianopoulos had been ravaged. During my on-the-spot examination I verified, based on the traces found, that ten goats had invaded the vineyard owned by Ioannis P. Frantzeskos, who confessed to it, and caused damage worth 150 drachmas but that it was an act of negligence since these 10 goats had been left behind the rest of his flock and invaded the vineyard”²⁹. The direct perception of the incident (*I realized*), the appeal to animal traces as evidence for the number of animals involved need to be pointed out.

- Information from the victim, his family, friends or neighbors. “19–4–1991. During my patrol in the area of Trani Elia Skadou I was informed that...”³⁰, or “26–9–1987. During my patrol in Afres I was informed by Ioannis N.L.... that the goats owned by Nikolaos A.M. ... had destroyed his vineyard. During the on-the-spot examination I verified, with the help of the traces found, that indeed 50 goats had got into the vineyard and caused damage to the vine and its leaves and various other fruit trees worth 4600 drachmas and that it was committed on 25–9–1987 and it was an act of intention as their owner was aware of the fact that his goats kept getting in and did not take the necessary precautions”³¹. This type of information is put under careful scrutiny by the rural guard. Chorianopoulos, for instance, seems quite cautious with regard to the complaints of a fellow villager of his concerning damage caused in his property. This villager keeps complaining to the rural guard (we often meet the verb *complained* in his logbooks) that his vineyard did not bear fruit and attributes this fact to the goats of a specific fellow villager that kept eating his plants. The forensic examination, however, reveals that „there was no evidence

²³ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 51, column 58.

²⁴ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 32.

²⁵ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 112.

²⁶ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 38.

²⁷ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number. 44, column 46.

²⁸ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 90.

²⁹ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, columns 4 and 6.

³⁰ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 51, column 8.

³¹ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, columns 21 και 22.

that the plants had been nipped in the bud and I found no damage in the vines or the trees in the vineyard”³². Chorianopoulos’ relatives narrated to me numerous such incidents of resourceful reactions on the part of the clever rural guard, in which this intelligent man refuted his fellow villagers’ allegations with reasonable arguments. This last quotation from his logbook demonstrates the community inhabitants’ trust in rural guards’ judgment, which was well founded on their long experience, their excellent knowledge of the anthropogeography of the area they oversaw and the conduct of the animals and persons itself.

In the case of the present work, the *direct* and *indirect* narration of incidents that occurred in the community life constitutes valuable material for a comparative *emic* study of the organisational aspects of the complex of the subjects’ social relations, networking and motivation.

THE SPACE AND TIME OF RURAL GUARDS’ ACTIVITY

Rural guards’ space of activity is primarily what is recorded in their logbooks as *my district* or *land property position*. This is in essence an “in-between zone” an “intermediate place”, a “civilised physical space”, subjugated, civilised Nature as against the *socialised*, sanctified, inhabited territory³³ of the village of Komiaki. What we witness here is the imposition of the *human* on the half civilised. This is indicated by the very words used: the first compound of the term rural guard in Greek (*agrofylakas*) derives from the Latin noun *ager/agris* which means *field* (in greek *agros*), from which is derived the Latin adjective *ager, agera, agerum* which indicates the wild or untamed (to be found and grows in the fields).

Rural guards are mediators and move in an in-between zone. They impose classifications and limits within this intermediate space. Their service life rotates around the two aforementioned spaces mainly: they enter the in-between zone (their district of responsibility) everyday, except for a few days in the year, as mentioned later in this work.

This in-between space is transitional, and favours delinquency since it is liminal, less safe or more amenable to rules violation. One guards his home more easily than his field, whose natural borders are *by nature* more vulnerable and disputable. In this sense, I consider the “in-between space” as similar to the intermediate, transitional *time* of the rituals during the transitional time periods of the “cycle of time”³⁴ because time and space are contiguous, intermingling facts and concepts. During time liminality the persons or the groups are in a transitional, ambiguous condition since they belong nowhere. This period, therefore, constitutes an “abnormal” situation, timeless and fluid. At the threshold of the *passage* between the “before” and “after”, time seems still, the persons are in mid-air in this

³² Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 51, column 48.

³³ Stewart 2008: 162–163; Lagopoulos 2003.

³⁴ Turner 1974: 231–270 and passim; Stewart 2001; Stewart 2012.

in-between unclear condition (social, spiritual, emotional, etc). This disturbance of the regularity, being dangerous, was confronted with a variety of rituals.

In this line of thought, the more frequently mentioned in the logbooks places within the rural guard's district are the more *delinquent* ones. In rural guards' records, the researcher needs to spot these places, which are also related to:

- individual properties of specific persons, therefore to certain persons who continually violate the law

- some land particularities of the places which favour breaches or border violations or various agrarian violations

- some areas claimed by more than one persons that become the focus of rural guards' surveillance and are thus more frequently visited. The risks that rural guards run are obvious: the orchestrated attack on the part of people who question their decisions, their unlawful fellow villagers and their personal enemies or, simply, accidents. In our case Chorianopoulos hit his knee badly while he was on a tour³⁵.

The rural guard does not have fixed working hours. Ever since the introduction of the five-day working week, he has had to work for eight hours per day. Every Saturday Chorianopoulos writes “27–9–1987 I did not go on duty because of the implementation of the five-day working week”³⁶. The five-day working time-table was implemented in Greece in January 1980. However, years after this date, he keeps referring to this change in his professional life. He is alert and ready to live up to his duties any time day or night. At times he is obliged to be away from his family for a whole week due to the vast distances he has to cross on foot in the huge geographical area under his responsibility or the simultaneously emerging or increased in number events he has to deal with. This is an elongation of his working time within his already extended working space. Therefore, we can see that the rural guard's relation with his work does not follow a strictly defined framework (in terms of time disposal, obligations or personal responsibility) but is guided by his *personal interest* and concern over the work being done properly even in violation of his personal time or even his holidays. He stays and sleeps outdoors in the fields under particularly unfavourable circumstances with obvious consequences for his health, as his relatives testify. It needs to be pointed out here that the older (until the 1970s) folk superstitions about fairies, ghosts etc. who might harm people sleeping outdoors in the fields at night are not at all powerful any more. His attitude towards his professional duties is stirred by a personal, unwritten, handed down, socially formulated “system of values”. This personal choice on the part of the subject of the present study clearly falls within the so-called *sense of honour* (the Greek *filotimo*³⁷). The rural guard's intrinsic interest

³⁵ In Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 50, column 8.

³⁶ In Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 44, column 22.

³⁷ Etymologically, *filotimo* means “love of honor” (= philo + timi), although the honour referred to is not merely external, or for “showing-off” purposes, but a psychologically internalized yardstick of goodness, as in the ancient “kalos kai agathos [good and virtuous]”. See Herzfeld 1985: passim.

in his work has to do with his personal conception of duty, which is not imposed by his superiors but is an entirely individual ideological representation of what constitutes the proper fulfillment of work duties, a fulfillment which can be summarised in the idea-phrase: “I do my job well”. This conception presupposes an appropriation of one’s area of responsibility as a “personally owned space” to be guarded.

This is his working – daily time, which is primary, performative and physiocentric. This routine is disturbed by some special occasions, a different time, which is also working-time in essence but a time of presence alone and, therefore, secondary. Such cases are the days when he goes to town for training or to collect his salary. In our case, the rural guard usually goes to the prefect’s office in the town of Naxos every 16th and 30th or 31st and 1st day of the month to collect his salary. Example: “1/9/1987. I went to the prefect’s office for my salary for the 1st fortnight of September 1987. 1st fortnight’s salary 30130 drachmas 30/10/87, or I went to the prefect’s office for my salary for the 1st fortnight of November 1987. 1st fortnight’s salary 30130 drachmas³⁸. This journey to town is confirmed in the logbook by the signatures of both *the payer* and *the payee*.

Chorianopoulos also visits Chalki, the centre of the “law life” of Northern Naxos, (when his indictments are tried in the court room) for his indictment trials. He usually returns to his duties immediately after and patrols a certain part of his area of responsibility. Example: “22–9–1987. I went to Chalki and presented myself in the courtroom for my indictment, I returned to my District. During my patrol in Paloerou Vlakou no violation of law occurred to me³⁹. He rarely leaves his duty to visit his superior or the agriculturists⁴⁰ to be informed about agrarian and pastoral compensations⁴¹.

The *leave* he is entitled to as a civil servant is his free, non-working time. Example: “My 12-day regular leave began on 14–12–1987 and ended on 29–12–1987. On 30–12–1987 I took up my duties in my area of responsibility⁴².

THE RURAL GUARDS’ DUTIES AND THE SYMBOLS OF THEIR POWER

Rural guards are primarily authorised to keep the order in an in-between space⁴³, as mentioned above. Being persons of power, they are in uniform, with the appropriate power symbols⁴⁴, they show their respect to their superiors by saluting in an army fashion and they also carry other power signs / insignia, such as:

³⁸ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, columns 3 and 80.

³⁹ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 14.

⁴⁰ A scientist who has been specialized in agriculture and deals with the development and improvement of the agricultural production.

⁴¹ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 50, column 76.

⁴² Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, columns 116 and 118.

⁴³ See the ancient Greek use of the term (*agros* [field] and *fylax* [guard]): the person who guards the fields.

⁴⁴ Vrelli 2003.

– weapons, which can be used in specific cases. According to the instructions in the logbooks it is mandatory to record every case in which “...the official gun was used along with the number of the bullets consumed and the reason that caused its use”. In the present case their owner never made any reference to any such use.

– a whistle, to facilitate communication among more than one rural guards (in cases where there are more colleagues patrolling in the same or a neighbouring district) through the use of coded whistles when they are away from their “centre” of operation. This is a signal sound – a socialised sound, which “moves” and is diffused in the wild, uninhabited or the civilised space, signalling its bearers’ relations, first, with the other rural guards, second, in relation to the space they are obliged to supervise to keep the order and, finally, with any to-be offender since this sound acts as an offensive action deterrent.

– a rope to possibly tie a stray animal or a criminal, etc., with. The link between the concepts of power, suppression, confinement, control of the body and this symbol is well known. Let it be noted that, in the process of arrest, no distinction between a person and an animal is made, which means that the arrested subject is tied in the same way.

Furthermore, they are entitled to mete out justice, inflict penalties, punish people, guard the sacred institution of property, testify to property borders in cases of trespassing, and kill stray animals as entitled by the law. The notion of *limits* of any type and of their signification thus slips into my discussion once more: the issue of the boundary lines between the legal and the illegal, the type of action that is treated as punishable and offensive along with the possibility of “exceeding the limits” and, therefore, of interfering with the order, that is the unusual case that may drive the community beyond its *status quo* (even if temporarily) and that has to be avoided at all costs. Rural guards are guards and limit-setters – representing the order as they do. Moving continuously in the “in-between space” of their daily routine, they bring the order of socialised space to bear on the “in-between” one, via surveillance, control and penalty infliction. As Douglas argues, “the order that every society imposes on the world... is not natural but an artificial cultural order that derives from the classification process”⁴⁵.

This is certainly a power complex which, nonetheless, unlike what happens with policing in urban or inhabited space, does not operate with a high degree of violence, exactly because it extends and acts on the structure of nature or where man transforms nature into a *place* via socialised, productive processes. The rural guard eventually ends up being a lovable rather than hated person in the collective consciousness of the Naxian community (the Naxian *only* due to specific historical conditions as explained below) within the framework of the beneficial to the public work he is assigned to do, a person who labours for the “community’s welfare”. Naturally, the fact that delinquency in Naxos during this period is not severe

⁴⁵ Douglas 2006: 11.

(the period of robberies is bygone) contributes to less tense relations between rulers-the ruled-offenders-guards (see below for a more elaborate discussion).

The cultivated land that they oversee (as a living organism and symbolic representation) holds a special position in civilization, forming part and being an inalienable component of the landscape; and thus it embodies part(s) of the history and civilisation of each area. The cultivated fields constitute a symbol of the community’s welfare, its very survival, and a central point of the inhabitants’ daily routine and social life, a place where rituals are performed, and so on. They also constitute one of the most clearly visible symbols of the social processes and collective identity⁴⁶; their history is also their owners’ history, they are visible memories of the past, their arrangement in space indicates the presence of a particular family or clan in the area; they are connected to human labour and interaction on a daily basis since they are also social places of gathering for the neighbours *par excellence*. Their plants or trees are the victims of the illegal attacks of humans and animals (see more analytically below) and rural guards restore the disturbed ethical order and support the rights of the damaged community. Their connection to the saint – guardian of the “wild” forest inevitably emerges in my discussion. In the traditional Greek culture the saint’s interventions are numerous when one attempts to break the law, to cut down a “forbidden” tree in a “sacred” monastery field, for instance⁴⁷. The sacrilegious offender asks in terror for the saint’s mercy, pays back for his illegal deed via a votive offering within the framework of his “do ut des” relationship with God⁴⁸ and thus the order is restored. If the saint is accountable to God, rural guards seem to be accountable to their superiors. What the former represents within the unwritten customary and ethical rules rural guards possibly represent within legislation. More specifically,

– They become mediators in various crises that arise in the community. Here I quote an attempt to settle a quarrel and search for a consensual solution to property disputes: “...one’s animals should not pasture in the fellow villager’s property or rented land if they cannot come to an agreement and if anyone complains that his neighbour’s animals get into his land, I will immediately bring the case to justice...”⁴⁹, or: “I recommended they go to the court to settle their share of the field and this is not my responsibility”. This was a case of a dispute over some olives, which one of the disputants collected by appropriation⁵⁰. This is a good testimony for the study of the texture of human relations, a quite rich emic, as mentioned earlier, material that provides on the spot information that might skip the folklorist’s attention otherwise.

– They have a decisive role in the court, which will eventually judge the offender, through the penalties they set and record in their logbooks. One of the

⁴⁶ Rival 2001.

⁴⁷ Nitsiakos 1997: 51.

⁴⁸ Mauss 1979; Alexiadis 1987.

⁴⁹ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 200.

⁵⁰ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 71.

rural guard's duties is to sue an offender within three days of the commitment of the offence⁵¹. In this case we can notice some issues of conflict between official and customary law.

- They oversee the distribution of valuable water and any possible violations of the arrogation timetable. Let us note that the fair distribution of water supplies constitutes one of the “hottest” issues of Greek agricultural production⁵².

- They master the life of stray or “offensive” animals since they arrest them or put them to death according to the official law. Stray animals (*vaerika*), for instance, are instantly killed in Naxos. The animals arrested for damage of field property are held in custody for ten days until their owner shows up. If the owner fails to show up within these ten days, then the animals are put up to auction and their food, custody and damage expenses are taken off the final bid.

- They invigilate forbidden pasture zones, an issue pivotal to Greek financial and social life concerning the relations between farmers and shepherds at least since the national restoration of 1830, when the areas of pure farming were separated by law from the pasturing ones⁵³.

- They undertake the role of an *estimator* (of damage or the monetary value of property), a role that offers us information about some aspects of material life (land value and so on).

- They record every offence within their grasp, such as animal theft, illegal hunting, smuggling, forest arson, illegal wood cutting, and smuggling of antiquities. In this sense, the logbooks provide us with a wealth of information on the full range of the destructive interventions in the natural environment and the modern view of showing no respect for it, which goes against the awe for nature people expressed in traditional societies⁵⁴.

- They offer full assistance to other authorities and take part in the suppression of illegal action.

- They record tree grafting as well as the trees planted (type of tree, number, owner's identity, property location). I have not spotted such a record in the logbook texts of the present study. However, in 1991 the rural guard of our case offers his assistance to the state agriculturists who came to his territory to see and record the natural damage caused to the vines in order to compensate their owners⁵⁵; he goes about the island with the local agriculturist to verify that the number of animals reported by the owners in the process of securing some financial support from the European Community is indeed accurate⁵⁶ (in Greece there is sometimes some discrepancy between the two).

⁵¹ See indicatively the “Rural guard's Duties” as cited in Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 44.

⁵² Nitsiakos 1997.

⁵³ Damianakos 1987: 71–107.

⁵⁴ Nitsiakos 2008: 81–100.

⁵⁵ Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 51, columns 60 and 62.

⁵⁶ Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 50, column 4.

THE RURAL GUARDS’ SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS

The above discussion leads us to believe that rural guards enjoyed high respect and prestige in the local societies they lived in. I would therefore argue that the extension of their duties in the rural areas to the *humanised environment*, the society of their village, comes as a natural consequence. They expel *anomy* from the „in-between space”, as already mentioned, *bring some peace* to it and, since this space interacts with the socialised one, the fruit of their success is carried to it as well, thus enhancing its social web. Resolving a property dispute in the in-between space, for instance, will also improve relations in the socialised space. As noted below, due to their continuous patrolling, rural guards possess perfect knowledge of their area of responsibility. They are rightly considered to have a global overview of their area. They know its anthropogeography: the owners of the estates, those of the animals arrested thanks to the identifying stamp they carry on their ears (*sfragida* in Greek)⁵⁷, the names of neighbouring property owners, the likely perpetrators of an offence, and so on. They are also familiar with their fellow villagers’ difficulties in times of tension, requiring subtle treatment. All this makes them eminent figures of the local community. In traditional Greek society, their role with regard to keeping track of villagers’ everyday life (births, deaths, adoptions, earlier incidents in their lives, and so on) was performed by the registrar, who was the carrier of mnemonic culture and, thus, a prestigious figure in the community. This knowledge of the past meant power. It is therefore no coincidence that rural guards are members of numerous administrative and cultural councils. In addition to that, they are often the sole informants and assistants of folklorists, hydrologists, environmentalists, agriculturists, etc., who visit the village to conduct fieldwork. Chorianopoulos was one such case.

The way the guards were selected for appointment before⁵⁸ and after 1954 (a landmark for Greek rural police) poses a number of folklore questions and subjects, which, however, as becomes evident, are not recorded in the logbooks. They were selected by superiors, often along favouritist criteria, namely their political party identity. How does this affect their professional life? To what degree does it influence their judgments of offenders, their estimation of the damage caused or the infliction of penalties? How do their family, friendship and likely *do ut des*⁵⁹ relationships affect their work? What are the equity limits in their behaviour as individuals, friends, relatives, civil servants, as persons with a declared political identity? How were they exploited by various Greek governments as these very governments appointed them as guardians of order, especially in those dark periods⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Zevgolīs 1953.

⁵⁸ In Naxos at least they are appointed by the community authorities. In Glinado (a naxian village), for instance, it is inferred by oral testimonies that the rural guard was appointed by the President of the community because nobody wanted to undertake this role.

⁵⁹ Alexiadis 1987

⁶⁰ See inter alia, for instance, Panourgia 2009: 63–116.

when political passions divided Greek people into “nationalists”–“right-wing” and “miasma”–“left-wing”?

The heterogeneous answers to the above questions have made the profession an *amphisemous* one, they have “coloured” it negatively, in rather shameful shades, at least since post – (World) war (II) years (from 1940 on). It is true that, in the collective consciousness of a large segment of the Greek political ‘body’ (at least half of it, the so-called “centre-left”) rural guards are associated with policemen, since the former oversee the “in-between space” and the latter the socialised one (the community). Similarly, Greek society (by the same margin) has formed negative representations of this power component, which has been associated in people’s memory with the worst moments of their post-war history. This is a segment of society synonymous with state appropriation, violence, falsification of the elections outcome, terror, political persecution, ill-defined “nationalism” and so on. In a generalised framework, the priest, the teacher and the policeman were (on a local level) the ideological gate-keepers and suppression mechanisms of the Greek state, who sustained the political and ideological system of 20th century Greece until at least 1981.

In this sense, the change of the *rural guards’* title to that of *community wardens*, which took effect while P.A.S.O.K., the Greek socialist party, was in power, three years after it came to power (1981), cannot be a coincidence. But the change of the name does not bring along as if by magic *catharsis* from the *unlawful deeds* (with or without quotation marks) of the past rural guards are fraught with, for a “violent renaming” cannot erase historical memory. The fact that the rural police body is abolished in 1984 (law 1481), is re-established in 1990 (right-wing government, law 1892), is abolished again in 1994 and 2001 (socialist governments, laws 2218, 2910), is re-established in 2007 (right-wing government, law 3585) and is abolished anew in 2010 (socialist government) is apocalyptic⁶¹. Or, what could the fact that rural police was initially accountable to the Ministry of Interior Affairs (responsible for public administration) and later to the Ministry of Public Order (responsible for keeping the order and civil safety) suggest?

The logbooks reflect clearly rural guards’ educational level. According to law 3030/1954, which has governed the organisation and responsibilities of the institution of rural police since 1954 (with slight modifications), the criteria postulated for the selection of candidate rural guards (at least officially) were Greek nationality, age (23–35), primary school graduation, or, in the case of scarcity of candidate, knowing how to read and write alone, with an appointment decision justification⁶². In our case, Georgios Chorianopoulos is an almost illiterate man as manifested in his written texts.

It is fortunate for the folklorist that Chorianopoulos records in his logbooks, for example, next to the few entries that verify his visit to the prefect’s office to get

⁶¹ Vlachakos, Zannetos 2007: 110–111.

⁶² Vlachakos, Zannetos 2007: 95.

paid, the exact amount of his salary and his Christmas and Easter bonuses (see Table 1). The folklorist can “read” a variety of useful elements into the numeric salary data, juxtapose them to those of other civil servants, use them to estimate the *priorities* of Greek society, the political power of certain privileged “trade unions or pressure groups” on the basis of the responsibilities and services that each professional class offers or believes they offer to society, which are beyond the scope of the present study but open to future researchers. As complementary elements useful for comparison, I mention Chorianopoulos’s relatives’ testimony that in 1963, the year of his appointment in the agrarian police, his salary was 450 drachmas a month. To this salary the folklorist may need to add income from other sources: Chorianopoulos, for instance, also practised the profession of a (pack) saddle maker, which he pursued more intensely after his retirement. Furthermore, his income can be compared to older forms of payment, such as the reward for the capture of animals or payment in kind (barley, olive oil, and pulses). The compensation given in older times by the farmers (not the State) to the rural guard, for instance, was called *agroufilakiat’kou* in Western Greece or *dragatika* elsewhere.

Table 1

Date	Fortnight payment (in drachmas)	Easter/Christmas bonus
September 1987	28.980	
November 1987	30.132	
December 1987		56.770
March 1988	32.870	
August 1990	49.743	
October 1990	49.743 and 14.303 (extra ATA ⁶³) = 64.046	
November 1990	53.259	
March 1991	55.525	
April 1991	56.416	60.632

ASPECTS OF DELINQUENCY IN THE “IN-BETWEEN SPACE” OF THE VILLAGE KOMIAKI

I consider the following classification schema, which is based on the information recorded in the logbooks, important for a closer understanding and study of rural life in Naxos.

The rural offences that community wardens are expected to face, as noted in the *Logbook instructions*, are of three kinds: 1. agrarian property damage 2. agrarian law breaches, 3. agrarian breaches.

⁶³ A.T.A. was an additional sum of money offered to civil servants to compensate for any inflation increase.

Agrarian property damage involves *theft* and *embezzlement of farming objects up to the value of 500 drs*, *damage or destruction of farming objects up to the value of 500 drs*, *damage involving animals* regardless of value. Agrarian law breaches are the violation of the agrarian law provisions of the Community (or Agrarian Council) or those of the Prefecture, e.g. grazing in a forbidden zone, violating the set timetable or the day set for the arrogation of one's fields and gardens. Agrarian breaches refer to the removal of landmarks, size reduction, and breaches involving the capture of animals or the collection of a reward for such capture, infringement of court decision provisions, and so on.

The aforementioned issue of the diachronic rural and pastoral world relations, their confrontation as an expression of conflicting interests, as has been discussed by Damianakos⁶⁴ therefore arises anew but emerges here on a smaller scale, especially in the period analysed, due to the specific local and historical circumstances.

The agrarian law breaches recorded by Chorianopoulos are almost nonexistent. I indexed only one such case, an instance of illegal spring water use, from his logbook No 44 of a six and a half-month period (31.8.1987 – 14.3.1988). The vast majority of the rest of such recordings relate to *agrarian property damage* performed by animals. The “offenders” are goats, which sounds rather natural since they outnumber other species in this period. However, this also confirms Greek people's widespread conviction that goats are demon-animals, tameless, ever moving, treacherous, delinquent⁶⁵. They are somehow the *wild* animal, as opposed to the tamed –“civilised” animal called *sheep*, which Greek people associate with the innocence pole of the *slyness-innocence* point-counterpoint relation (“he is a sheep”).

During the period examined in this study, goats invade mostly fields for grazing them up usually in small groups of 1–10, rarely in groups of up to 30, even more rarely in groups of 50–80, and in one case in a group of 100.

Sheep come second by far in the damage recorded. They “invade” land in very small groups (usually 1–4), rarely in groups of up to 10, pointing to their far less robust presence in the economy of the Naxian animal-raising community of this period. The cattle-raising economy of the island has always been relied more on goats anyway. Victims of these invasions in the Naxian paradigm are:

– Primarily vines. The animals “attack” the products of their “raw”/“unprocessed” nutrition culture. The value of the damage to these products estimated by the rural guard expresses the significance attributed to them by the community and possibly the symbolism borne by these products (especially wine⁶⁶ and other local products) and the position they hold in the nutrition identity of the village studied, that is its economic and social life.

⁶⁴ Damianakos 1987: 71–107.

⁶⁵ Politis 1904, v. 1: 107; Stewart 2008: 176.

⁶⁶ Levi-Strauss 2001; Braudel 1995: 244–250.

– The irrigated fields, planted with peppers, faba beans, garlic, cabbage, potatoes, beans. The importance accorded to these specific kinds of food and the position they hold in the Naxian nutrition system are high and so is the value (both financial and symbolic) of land in the local production system, by analogy. It goes without saying that irrigated fields are more highly valued than dry ones.

– Fruit-bearing orchards (mainly olive-trees, apple trees, fig-trees, pear-trees). The presence of olive oil, a key Mediterranean diet product, in Naxos is decisive.

– Barley fields, fodder and so on. The “humble” barley bread that revives but is poorer nutritionally than wheat bread⁶⁷. Wine, olive oil and wheat form the triad that dominates, to Braudel the diet of the Mediterranean Sea peoples⁶⁸.

In the same logbook (No 44, 31.8.1987 – 14.3.1988) the vast majority of the damages add up to 150 drachmas, few up to 600, one up to 4.600 drachmas. The relatively huge increase of the estimated financial compensations for the years 1990 and 1991 (depicted in the second logbook) in relation to those for the years 1987 and 1988 is impressive: the highest are 8.400 and 10.000 drachmas. This is probably due to the galloping inflation of that period. For illustration purposes, the recording of damages for the two-month period 12 April – 15 June 1991 is provided in Table 2 below:

Table 2

Perpetrators	“Sufferer space”	Estimated damages (in drachmas)	Acceptance or rejection of compensation
6 goats	fodder	1.500	compensation not claimed
number not mentioned	fodder	1000	indictment
4 goats	vineyard	6.700	the sufferer was compensated
1 goat	vineyard	3.800	compensated
2 goats	vineyard	2.000	compensation not claimed
2 goats	vineyard	1.500	compensated
3 goats	vineyard field, wheat field	500	compensation not claimed
number of goats not mentioned – large number expected	fodder	5.000	cannot lodge a complaint because this is a disputable field and the opponents are already embroiled in legal battle
3 goats	vineyard	300	the sufferer does not accept the compensation and does not sign the report
1 goat	vineyard	500	compensation not claimed
1 goat	vineyard	500	the sufferer does not accept the compensation and does not sign the report
1 goat	vineyard	3.000	nothing recorded

⁶⁷ Braudel 1995.

⁶⁸ Braudel 1995; 1997.

Human activity in the in-between space of Komiaki is restricted but more interesting. In Chorianopoulos's logbook No 44 (in the same period of 1987 – 88) for a 6.5-month period I indexed:

- one case of property disputes over the illegal appropriation of olive trees⁶⁹,
- one case of intentional agrarian breach. It is noteworthy that Chorianopoulos's forensic examination was done in the presence of a colleague rural guard, which points to the severity of the case. They went to a field whose fencing had been removed by the offenders and whose fodder had been consumed by the offenders' goats (almost 50 in number) in a period of four months. Their estimate for the damage caused was 1.500 and 1.000 drachmas respectively⁷⁰,
- a case of conscious placement of a mule in an olive tree field the offenders did not own⁷¹.

The other two logbooks offered only one case of intentional agrarian breach. Some villagers destroyed five olive trees in a disputed area on purpose (probably to avenge themselves). The damages added up to 20.000 drachmas (in September 1990)⁷².

The sparse incidents, in my view, demonstrate the self-evident. Delinquency in the “in-between” space in Komiaki has confined itself to almost exclusively unintentional agrarian breaches. This comes as an expected development. Indeed, the presence of three rural guards in the area of Komiaki in 1963 further testifies to this, though severe incidents like those occurring in neighbouring villages (Apiranthos, Filoti⁷³), as reported upon in scientific research or in the local press, were never the case there. This is a consequence of the inevitable normalisation of social life, of the modernisation spirit that permeated the Naxian society at large in the 1980's and 1990's. Therefore, my assumption concerning *delinquency* in the farming and pastoral world of Komiaki being substantially decreased or constantly decreasing as compared to the past (first decades after the German occupation, 1940–1945) is confirmed in this study. Indeed the frequency of the *no incident happened* entry signals this historical truth as articulated by a state official. The folklorist also has to search for the economic reasons that contributed to this development, like, for instance, the rise in the shepherds' standard of living, the fact that appropriate animal food has become affordable and thus animals are deterred from committing illegal acts, the use of high and solid fences that clearly mark and protect the natural borders of landed property and so on.

In the “Notes - Remarks” column, opposite the column where the incident is described, as mentioned above, we usually see the following:

⁶⁹ Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 44, column 70.

⁷⁰ Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 44, columns 122 and 124.

⁷¹ Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 44, columns 24 and 26.

⁷² Chorianopoulos' logbook, number 50, columns 46 and 48.

⁷³ See Giannoulis 2007.

- Whether the perpetrator has been notified.
- Whether the sufferer has been compensated. Example: “for the offence recorded opposite I was given a compensation of 150 drachmas by the perpetrator Ioannis P.F. and have no further claims, signed by the sufferer”⁷⁴.
- Whether the sufferer demands to be compensated for the damage suffered or not: “The incident opposite came to my knowledge in Koronos today, 22–11–1987. For this damage I was compensated with the sum of 150 drachmas and I have no more claims, signed by both the sufferer and the perpetrator”⁷⁵.
- The date arranged for the trial in case of a prosecution in court.
- Some other actions, decisions on the part of the rural guard, or suggestions to the sufferers.
- Sometimes the verdict of a trial, as in: “the case was prosecuted in court, on 30–9–87/ABM.317/ trial date 24–11–87/ defendant (found) guilty”⁷⁶.

The study of such entries a) constitutes a reliability criterion for the rural guard’s decision to refer the case to court since the verdict confirms or disconfirms his own decision, b) reveals the time required for the award of justice in the Greek periphery. The offence above, for instance, was discussed in court almost two months after its referral. In all the above we can observe the rural guard’s socially and symbolically in-between position in relation to the perpetrators/offenders and sufferers/victims. Furthermore, we notice his “mediation” role between the official award of justice that is the state power and the people of the community. The rural guard is a person “in” the community, “one of its members”, “appointed” with the right to “transfer” to the central administration the incidents of the local rural and “in-between” (within the anthropological perspective) periphery.

There are few cases (as shown in Table 2 above) when the sufferer *refuses to receive* the estimated compensation: “I announced to him the agrarian breach opposite and he refuses to receive the compensation, the sum of 500 drachmas from perpetrator A...P...K... and refuses to sign”⁷⁷, so only the rural guard’s signature appears. The folklorist need not rush to conclusions as far as the causes of such entries are concerned. Is the compensation rejected by the sufferers because they do not deem it fair or for a million other reasons that can easily be deduced? Who questions the rural guard’s decisions, estimates, judgments and for what reasons? Other folklore sources can help with answers to these questions. But even when the rural guard’s decisions are fully complied with, what could this mean? Does it mean full acceptance of his judgment and decisions or is it an effort to

⁷⁴ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 7.

⁷⁵ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 87.

⁷⁶ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 44, column 17.

⁷⁷ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number 51, column 55.

avoid further personal suffering that leads them to an “immediate award of justice”? Or is it a compliant attitude towards the rural guard due to certain personal commitments?

Noteworthy are also the cases when the sufferers consent by signing to demanding no compensation, not even a high one: “For the agrarian breach recorded opposite I do not claim a compensation for the sum of 150 drachmas and have no further claims”⁷⁸. Can this behaviour form part of a system of informal mutual understanding in the community, where law violations (mainly unintentional ones) are judged as inevitable and could thus occur to anyone? Is this an altruistic spirit in an agro pastoral society that has created “codes of behaviour” that reduce the tensions inevitable due to the existing structures? Or does this have to do with entirely personal choices unrelated to the “collective spirit” of the community? One way or another, every social subject is a recipient of the value code of the group he belongs to. An example is the conception “he is *my* relative and friend”, “my own person”, so “I cannot do him any harm”. The feeling of *belonging* to a community deters unjust behaviour. This clearly has to do with certain mechanisms through which the community redresses imbalance.

CONCLUSION

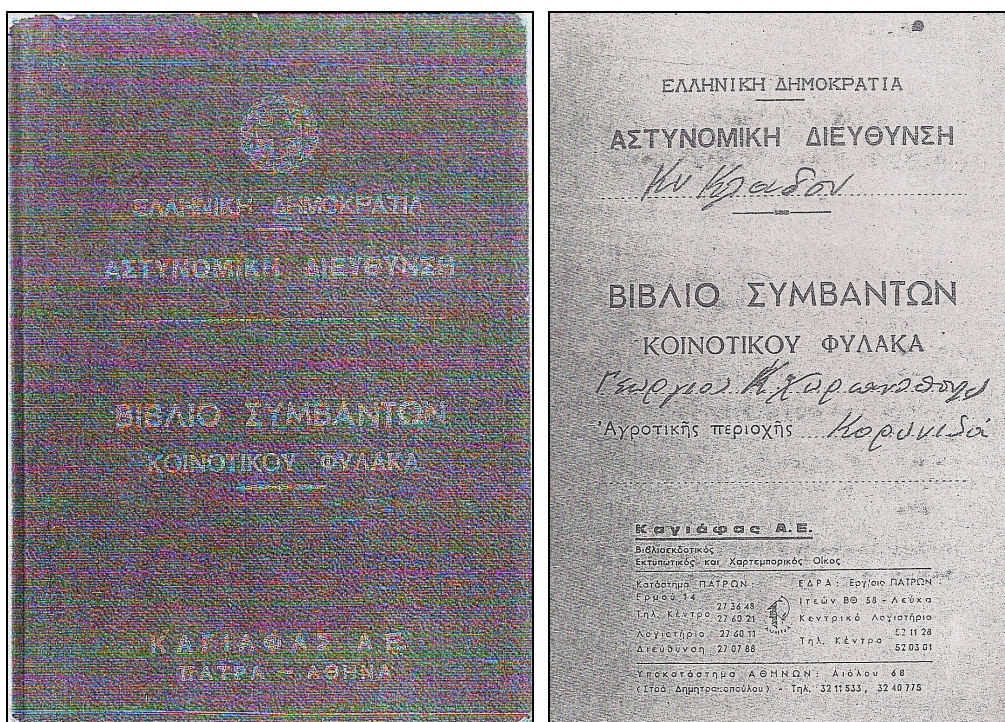
In this study I have used the logbooks of a Naxian community warden as a potential folklore source. More specifically, in this case study, I approached “official” work incidents recorded by the particular rural guard as a narrative process involving the study of the local community. As has become obvious the particular logbooks under investigation have provided us with valuable information, *first*, on the rural guard’s space of activity which has been discussed as an in-between zone, *second*, on his working daily time, which is not restricted to his official eight-hour time limit but seems to be guided by a personal “system of values”, *third*, his duties and symbols of power which have stirred a discussion of the social relationships social and economic context, *fourth*, his social representations as a person of high-standing position in their community, and, *finally*, on the aspects of delinquency in the particular area, which provides valuable information about the nutrition, economic and social identity of the village.

Therefore, in the case of the present work, the *direct* and *indirect* narration of incidents in the particular logbooks that occurred in the community life constitutes valuable material for a comparative *emic* study of the organisational aspects of the complex of the subjects’ social relations, networking and motivation, and thus it constitutes a reliable folkloric resource.

⁷⁸ Chorianopoulos’ logbook, number. 44, columns 21 and 22.

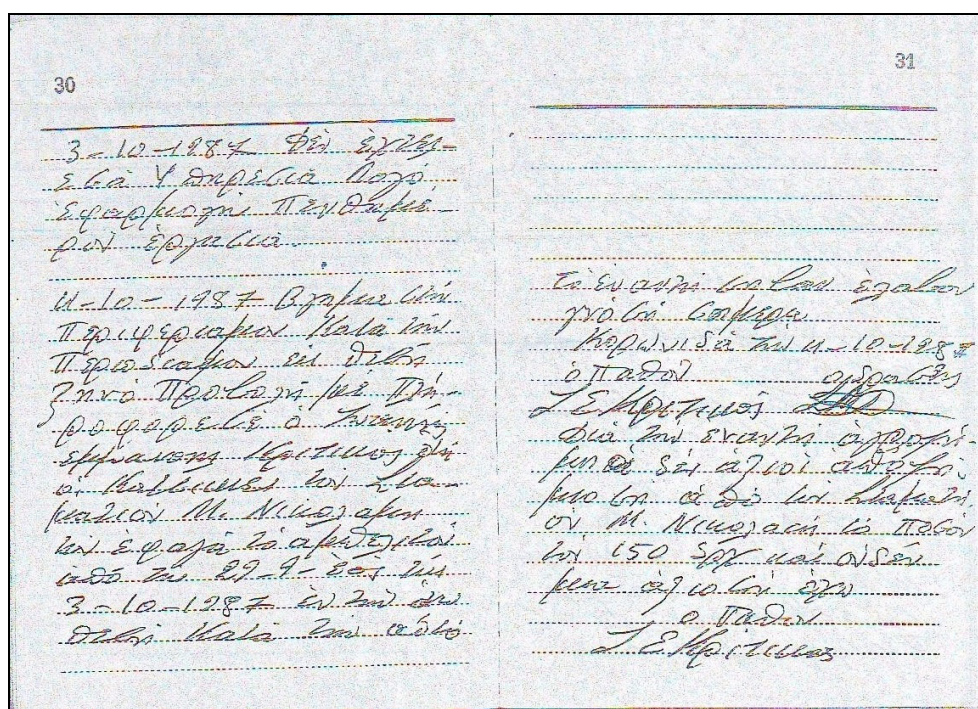
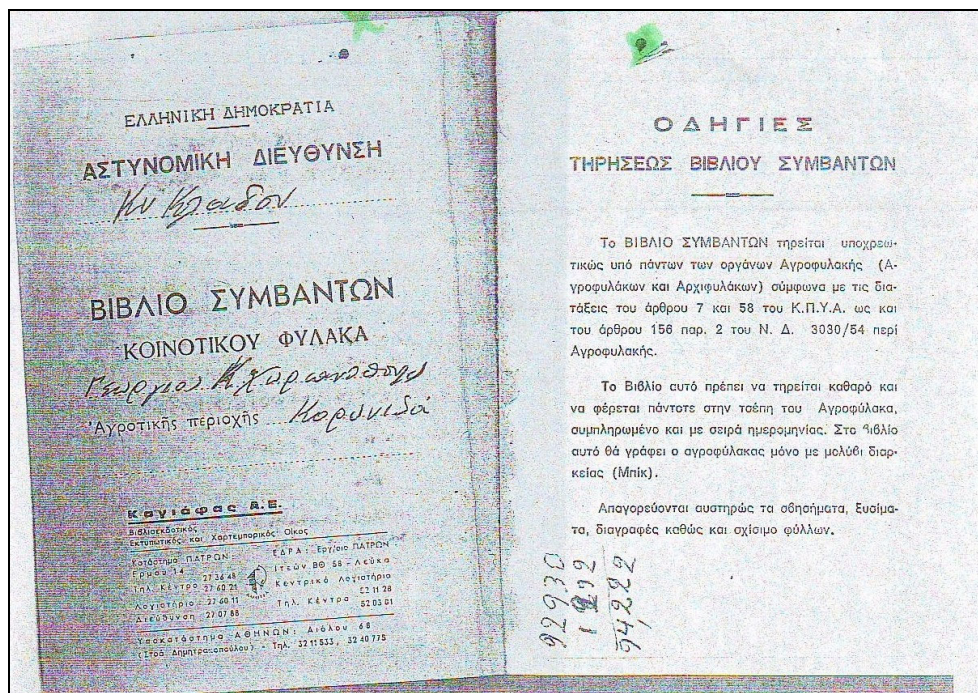
In conclusion, the logbooks of community wardens can contribute along with other folklore resources to the accurate representation of the world of rural police and the area they invigilate. Other such sources might be the study of the state legislation relevant to rural guards, the outcome of a field study with rural guards and locals acting as informants, archives-documents from older and more recent historical periods, publications in the Press, rural guards’ personal diaries or autobiographical texts, the representation of their world in literature⁷⁹, cinema⁸⁰ and other forms of art, and so on. This study has limited its research to only one case which is suggested as an example for similar studies all over Greece. It goes without saying that the comparative study of such logbooks (e.g. from highlands and flat areas or island and continental areas or areas that have witnessed an intense political life and other more neutral ones) can clearly represent views of the Greek society during the particular time periods that the logbooks recorded.

APPENDIX



⁷⁹ See indicatively in the famous Greek writers Alexandros Papadiamantis (The Pinky Seashores, The Female Killer, Summer-Eros) and Ioannis Kondylakis.

⁸⁰ I mainly refer to the Greek movie *The Spring Meeting of the Rural Guards*, by Dimos Avdeliodis (1999).



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