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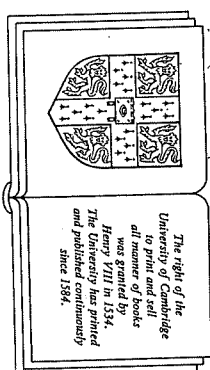
THE MAKING OF THE MODERN GREEK FAMILY

*Marriage and Exchange in
Nineteenth-Century Athens*

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Gifts and commodities, cash and trousseaux

Introduction

In addition to land and other immovable resources Athenian brides in the eighteenth century also received other more mobile goods at marriage in the form of cash endowments and trousseaux. Such items were far from insignificant both symbolically and economically; indeed they were more important than land, olive trees and the like, and their importance was to increase in the nineteenth century. We treat the two together because they can on one level be seen as heralding the beginning of a specifically urban and modern form of dowry endowment in Greece – a movement away from immovable agricultural resources towards a more mobile, alienable, form of dowry enabling, theoretically, a fuller separation of the new conjugal couple from parental ties, especially when combined with neolocality. Only an actual examination of the resources transmitted will establish whether the new conjugal unit constituted an independent unit of production and consumption, and there are many indications that this ideal was far from universally subscribed to in the early part of the nineteenth century. Children, especially sons, were still likely to be dependent upon resources held jointly with other siblings. However, the gradual but definite shift from agricultural land certainly opened up the possibilities for greater separation (physically and economically) of the new conjugal unit from the preceding generation; this was further reinforced through the increase in employment possibilities for men outside the home.

We also wish to test the hypothesis advanced by Skouteri-Didaskalou (1984) and explored by Kalpourizi (1987) that where an agricultural income predominates, clothes and household goods rather than cash and land are transferred at marriage; whereas when a non-agriculturally based income predominates, cash is the main resource transferred at marriage. As we shall demonstrate, such distinctions have perhaps

dubious validity for Athens in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, partly because its economy cannot be reduced to such ready and exclusive categories. Although household goods are somewhat less important, clothing, cash and land were freely transferred with major differences between the various social groups. Nevertheless the growing commoditisation of the dowry is clear in Athens during this period.

There is further significance in the transmission of cash and trousseaux. To begin with, they appear in inverse proportion to each other across time, for example trousseaux appear more important in the eighteenth century, whereas by the 1830s they had declined in favour of cash endowments. This heralds a shift from a hierarchical agrarian-based social order to a more mobile, cash-oriented, specifically urban society. Second, both cash and trousseaux were the two resources which lent themselves to strategic manipulation. Cash figured both as dowry and as dower and it was utilised strategically to further social mobility in a way which land and immovable resources could not. Likewise bridal costumes, which formed a significant part of the trousseaux, reflected socially recognised claims to pre-eminence in a way titles did not. We therefore examine the transmission of cash (in the form of dowries and dowers), and trousseaux (in the form of bridal costumes) with the aim of introducing a greater degree of precision in our analysis of social mobility.

A third significance of cash and trousseaux is that they do not correspond to the traditional anthropological categories which identify cash with capital and commodities, and trousseaux with symbolic items and gifts. Rather, cash possessed a heavy symbolic (as well as an ultimately ambiguous) significance while trousseaux had a strong economic value. We explore these meanings not only with reference to the nature of the economy, but also with reference to the process of class formation.

Finally a concentration on moveables and their circulation at marriage raises important questions. The fact that women at marriage tended to receive moveables to a greater extent than immovables poses a number of problems. Should we see this as an attempt to exclude daughters from access to immovables, most of which went to sons? Or should we see it as an expression of a cultural logic that assigned certain goods to women and others to men? To reduce all these goods to their monetary value is one way of resolving the first question. But in some cases the value of moveables was actually higher than that of land, etc. Should we therefore conclude that sons were disinherited to a greater extent? There is perhaps a certain absurdity in discussions of 'equality' between sons and daughters, although the question remains important. But the issue of 'equality', expressed as it is in a logic of commodity

exchange, may be particularly unsuitable or crude when applied not only to that most gift-oriented of 'exchange' relationships, marriage, but also to a society that was not fully enmeshed in a commodity economy and which responded to it in a distinctive way. In short the concentration on 'equality' does not address the question as to why some resources were given to daughters and others to sons, and even much less so on the effects of such a pattern both on perceptions and on the constitution of personhood. Finally a discussion of these issues can shed light on the whole status of the notion of the 'dowry'. On one level the term *prika* (dowry) is legally unambiguous – it signifies a daughter's share of her inheritance given her pre-mortem at her marriage. On one level this is certainly the case – anything that is given to children *inter vivos* belongs *ipso facto* to the class of goods that are potentially inheritable and thus shares a common 'property' with all these goods. But whether dowry goods are perceived as *one* or *the* share of a daughter's inheritance is another matter. Certainly it is normally a right activated prior to the death of the parents, but the time lapse between the two events creates difficulties and ambiguities in estimating what is actually due to her as the legitimate share of her inheritance, at the time of marriage and in the form of a dowry. This is further compounded when different (often not strictly commensurable) resources are transmitted. Furthermore while the dowry may be viewed in a *post-facto* legalistic sense as a pre-mortem activation of a potential inheritance right, and indeed may actually be viewed theoretically in this way by the actors themselves ('she got her dowry and that is her share of the parental goods'), the actual sentiments when the dowry is given may be quite different. The dowry may not be immediately conceptually linked to the inheritance when it is given. Rather it may be primarily perceived that it is a daughter's right to receive certain goods at marriage, or these goods may be perceived as a necessary condition enabling a daughter to marry, a type of endowment. It may only thereafter be linked conceptually to inheritance: having obtained parental property at marriage, it is only 'right' that this be taken into account when the division takes place and others obtain parental property first. Furthermore while *prika* (dowry) is normally associated with daughters, the word *prikizo*, to endow, can be used in conjunction with sons as well as with daughters. Its meaning is therefore in some cases much closer to an endowment which is not gender specific, rather than to the meanings associated with the English word 'dowry', often associated, as in Italian, specifically with daughters and conceptually linked to inheritance.

We raise these issues because the formula 'dowry=part of the inheritance', while undoubtedly valid, eliminates these important

nuances. It also renders the notion of 'equality' more tenuous, as it bypasses the rationality and motivation of all property transfers to children and reduces the sum total of these transfers to whether, finally, they were equal. In modern Greece *prika* (dowry) is often primarily perceived as what is given by the parents to the daughter at marriage – it is seen as a 'gift' which is a daughter's right to claim (primarily as a daughter and therefore as an heir) and the parent's obligation to supply, not primarily as her pre-mortem inheritance but in order to get her married. Only secondarily is it conceptually related to inheritance, when accounting takes place. Indeed in discourse it is often said that 'the bride received . . .' and 'the groom received' (or 'took' – both terms are covered by the word *pive*). The fact that the 'dowry' is nowadays presented as something which men 'receive' by virtue of marriage, although it is of course legally not their property, indicates something about the matrimonial culture and probably the legal culture which influenced it. Furthermore, the fact that individuals do not consciously go about giving or demanding dowries as a strictly exclusive pre-mortem inheritance indicates the operation of a different rationality from that encapsulated in the legal concept which collapses all exchanges to their end result. It thus renders the notion of 'equality' even more interesting because the dowry's actual operation may well be institutionalising an unequal system in spite of the fact that legally, the emphasis is on equality. Whether the system actually favours sons or daughters is, of course, an empirical matter.

A consideration of these points is important when analysing dowries in nineteenth-century Athens. We suggest that the notions encapsulated in the contemporary expressions that a groom 'took' or 'received' a dowry via his wife are relatively modern, a by-product of a specific matrimonial culture not fully developed in early nineteenth-century Athens. Although we do not have direct information for everyday linguistic usage in this period, the wording of the matrimonial contracts provides some clues. Matrimonial contracts of this period refer to the bride's dowry not just in the contemporarily recognisable form of *prika*, but also often as her *meridhio*, or her share of parental property. There is a slight but important difference in nuance between the two terms. The term *meridhio* is 'used of land inherited by *children of both sexes*, without further qualification' (Hertzfeld, 1980: 230 our italics) and it is thus explicitly linked to the notion of inheritance (*kitronomia*). In this respect some Athenian marriages resembled Ambeliot marriages until 1966 studied by du Boulay (1983). There, brides often had to sign an agreement of disinheritance on receiving their dowry. We have found little evidence of this specific practice in Athens, yet the reference to

meridhio in our contracts may well have served this purpose. *Prika*, by contrast, although certainly linked to inheritance in a legal sense, has more the primary notion of a gift given a daughter by her parents at marriage. It is only in a secondary sense that it is viewed as an activation of rights to inheritable property.

These may appear as slight semantic differences, but the slippage between the two terms suggests a different matrimonial culture. In early nineteenth-century Athens, dowry was linked more strongly in a performative sense to inheritance. This is congruent with a system of status group endogamy. Because individuals inherited their status and a specific position within society, they inherited certain goods which enabled them to enter status-specific types of marriage. Such a system is also congruent with a matrimonial culture which views the marriage of daughters in a 'collective' corporate sense rather than as a series of discrete individual strategies. As we shall show, the modern system which began to emerge in Athens in the 1830s possessed a different rationality. Dowries increasingly became conceptually separable from inheritance, seen as an obligation imposed by 'society' which men had to 'satisfy', rather than as the expression of a right which individuals possessed as members of a determinate status group and which gave them claims to a specific type of marriage, as it had been in the past. Dowries thus became disembedded from status, that is as expressions and manifestations of specific statuses within society, but became much more a means to acquire prestige by a series of individual cumulative and negotiable steps, or to paraphrase Simmel, as an expression of a 'rationally calculated [matrimonial] egoism' (Simmel, 1971).

Cash endowments at marriage

Money figured prominently in many areas of matrimonial, literary and national life in nineteenth-century Greece. Parents donated large sums to daughters at marriage; husbands promised it to their wives; popular literature dwelt almost obsessively on the contrast between fabulous wealth and abject poverty; peasants recounted stories of buried caches of gold coins, often contrasting them to 'useless statues' (*athrisia agalmata*); and national political debates revolved around the national debt, which assumed alarming proportions by the latter part of the century. Even in present-day Greek culture money has an ambiguous status. One of the most desirable possessions, it is also believed to be corrupting, though significantly it is not held to be inherently corrupt. 'Corruption' in the public domain is defined as 'eating' (*efaghe* – 'he ate') – and it is usually brought about by the temptation of easy money which results in 'feasting' (*hortaze* cognate with *horta*: grazing grass).

These metaphors themselves are interesting and significant: why should a largely urbanised society perceive something which is in itself a good thing (money) as corrupting someone through 'eating', an active and transforming process, and one moreover embedded in a rural imagery ('grazing')? At issue here is a specific attitude towards money, evil and the effects of the metropolis on the construction of personhood. But it is fitting to begin our discussion with an analysis of the circulation of money at marriage, for parents increasingly began to donate the essence of commoditisation and the commodity *par excellence* as the highest gift to their daughters. Can the imagery of money being 'eaten' provide any insights into the process of commoditisation of dowries?

We begin by observing that money marked both the beginning and the termination of marriage in Athens. Athenian women received cash at the commencement and termination of their marriages in the form of cash dowries from their parents, and dowries from their husbands or his male kin. We begin by examining cash dowries. The incidence of cash transmission at marriage was much lower than for other goods. Nearly 40 per cent of all brides did not receive cash dowries, compared to 19.3 per cent for olive trees, 25.6 per cent for vineyards and 52.6 per cent for fields. Yet cash, together with the trousseau, was perhaps the most significant symbolic and economic resource transmitted at marriage either as a dowry or dower, and it was far more important than land and other immovable resources. Why was this the case?

To begin with, in the late eighteenth century, cash was a restricted resource. In his memoirs Kolokotronis recounts that 'in my time commerce was very limited, money was scarce . . . It was thought a great thing if a person possessed a thousand groshia [then worth about £22]. Anyone with such a sum could command as much service for it as he could not procure now [1836] for a thousand Venetian florins' (Edmonds, 1969: 128). To an even greater extent than the olive tree, cash was the prerogative of the Athenian aristocracy. By contrast, by the late nineteenth century cash had made its appearance as a significant component of women's dowries even in the villages. Out of the 130 contracts examined by Kalpourtzi for Dimitsana between 1890–1900, 104 or 80 per cent contained cash endowments (1987: 96) compared to 60 per cent for Athens during our period. Our figures also indicate that overall, 27.8 per cent of titled brides received cash payments of 600 groshia compared to 4.4 per cent of non-titled brides (table 17). For sums below this amount the differences are largely negligible.

The table also conceals some important features of cash transmissions. Many of the cash endowments are clustered around the thresholds set by the Orthodox Church (100, 200, 300, 400, 500 groshia)

Table 17. *Cash dowries to titled and untitled brides at marriage*

	No cash received	1-200 groshia	201-400 groshia	401-600 groshia	over 600 groshia	Row total
<i>Titled brides</i>						
Number	12	5	6	3	10	36
Percentage	33.3	13.9	16.7	8.4	27.8	7.0
<i>Untitled brides</i>						
Number	193	160	76	29	21	479
Percentage	40.3	33.4	15.8	6.1	4.4	93.0
<i>Column total</i>	39.6	32.1	16.1	6.3	5.9	100.0

Table 18. *Cash endowments to daughters at marriage according to status of grooms, in comparison*

	No cash received	1-200 groshia	201-400 groshia	401-600 groshia	600+ groshia
A.1 'Siōr' grooms	50.0	0	0	0	50.0
A.2 'Kir' grooms	30.6	19.4	19.4	8.4	22.2
A.3 Untitled grooms	40.1	33.0	16.2	6.3	4.4
B.1 'Kir' grooms marrying daughters of titled fathers	11.1	44.4	22.2	11.1	22.2
C.1 Athenian grooms	38.4	32.0	16.6	6.4	5.7
C.2 Non-Athenian grooms	72.2	11.2	0	5.6	11.2
Percentage received by brides	39.6	32.1	16.1	6.3	5.9

and some contracts specify very large amounts; one case is for 6,000 groshia, a fabulous amount. The mean is 211 and the standard deviation is 444 groshia (median=100 groshia).

Although cash was a restricted item, particularly in eighteenth-century Athens, its possession was a prerequisite to the pursuit of a fully urban lifestyle; control over cash was one of the main markers of social and political distinction. Table 17 merely indicates how titled and untitled brides were endowed at their marriages, yet it does not relate to their grooms, which is perhaps more significant. Table 18 examines the transmission of cash according to the various categories of grooms (i.e., who these women married) and it indicates more clearly how cash

transmissions were stratified and concentrated in the top layers of Athenian society.

Of particular significance in table 18 is the large number (22.2 per cent) of grooms from the *nikokirei* class who married brides bringing large amounts of cash with them (A.2), compared to the small number (4.4 per cent) of untitled grooms (A.3). The tendency increases even further with group or class endogamy; nearly 22 per cent of titled grooms who married into titled families 'received' over 600 groshia at marriage (B.1). Of equal significance are those grooms whose wives were not endowed with cash at marriage; by far the greatest number are non-Athenian grooms (72.2 per cent, C.2). Some were migrants from surrounding villages, but others (accounting for the 11.2 per cent who 'received' over 600 groshia) were wealthy merchants attracted there by new opportunities, such as Kir Angelakis' groom discussed earlier.

Cash was not only required by parents to endow a daughter at her marriage; it was also required by the groom. We are referring here to the dower (*progamnia dorea*, literally pre-marriage gift) probably of Byzantine origin (Skouteri-Didaskalou, 1976; 119). The dower was an important institution which brought together the various rights and obligations of kinship. In essence it was a gift from the groom and his family to the bride. In Athens the dower consisted of the specification of a sum of money by the groom and his family at marriage (at the drawing up of the contract) which was to be handed over to the bride in the case of divorce, upon the dishonouring of the matrimonial contract, or in the event of the husband predeceasing his wife. This cash was to be obtained at such time from the husband's parents, if they were alive; from the husband's estate if the parents were dead; from the husband's property held in common with siblings. The dower appears to have been expressly designed to protect widows. There appears to have been some variation in Greece in its manner of transfer and terminology (Courouli, 1987). For example in the Eubean village of Ambeli studied by du Boulay the groom traditionally was obliged to give his bride jewellery (1983; 248), a clear indication of the scarcity of cash and of the desire to prevent the dower's realisation for cash. In Northern Greece where the *agariki* (a type of brideprice) was given, Skouteri-Didaskalou suggests that this was given to the father or mother of the bride before the marriage and 'it committed all the bride's family to the fact that the marriage will take place. In other words it ensured the right of the groom to take the bride' (1984; 225).

Such a practice does not seem to have been followed in Athens, and an examination of the sources used by Skouteri-Didaskalou suggests that this was indeed more prevalent in the more pastoral north where

women appear to have retained even fewer secondary or residual rights to parental property after marriage. In Athens, by contrast, the dowry was handed over after the dissolution of the marriage and it had the force of law to be transferred between three months and one year after the dissolution. The matter of the dowry was not, therefore, taken lightly by the groom and his kin. Clearly, the dowry held brothers together in a series of mutual obligations. Sisters were usually excluded from these obligations in the same way as they were usually excluded *de facto* from sharing in the residue of the parental property once they had been married with a dowry, especially when this dowry was their *merid-hio* (share) of inheritance. Thus, although daughters were often excluded from a share in the residual parental estate after marriage, they were often also free from such obligations to their brothers.

The effects of this system are obvious. Daughters would be endowed but often would lose *de facto* claims upon the parental estate; sons would be linked together by a series of mutual obligations, not only through property held in common upon the death of their parents, but also through dowry undertakings. The accumulation of dowries served to promote agnatic solidarity. Marriage for a man was not an individual undertaking, for the specification of the dowry required the concurrence of male kinsmen, usually brothers, who would be placed under obligation at a later date. As we shall demonstrate, the greater the social gap between groom and bride – that is, the higher the bride's status – the greater the tendency and requirement for the groom to pledge a large dowry. Thus a man's marriage, even if a spectacularly good example of social mobility, had its own obligations which certainly rendered it a common sibling concern.

In spite of the differences in the timing of its transfer and its terminology, the dowry appears to have been remarkably consistent throughout Greece in two respects. First, it appears to have consisted mainly of cash rather than land, across a territory running from Athens to present day Albania (Vernikos, 1979). Second, it appears to have been a virtual requirement for a man's marriage. In 97 per cent of our total sample grooms pledged a dowry, reflecting perhaps a pronounced tendency for grooms to predecease their spouses. Similar figures emerge from the Albanian village of Mouzakia in the early nineteenth century, where 85 per cent of grooms promised a cash dowry. Although we lack figures for marriage ages of men and women, the apparent obligation to promise a dowry does not suggest early or equal ages at marriage for men and women. Rather it suggests late marriage ages for men, at least in the towns, and/or significant differences in marriage ages for men and women.

Table 19. 10 wives' dowries on promised dowries. Rather than breaking up

Table 19. *Cash dowries according to status of grooms, in comparison*

	0	1–100	101–200	201–300	301–400	401–500	501–600	over 600
	in groshia							
A.1 'Sior' grooms	0	0	0	0	0	0	25.0	75.0
A.2 'Kir' grooms	0	2.8	16.7	11.1	25.0	2.8	22.2	19.4
A.3 'Mastros' grooms	0	0	80.0	20.0	0	0	0	0
A.4 Untitled grooms	2.7	9.7	39.3	21.6	12.4	4.2	4.0	6.1
B.1 'Kir' grooms marrying daughters of titled parents	0	3.7	14.8	14.8	25.9	3.7	18.5	18.5
B.2 'Kir' grooms marrying daughters of untitled parents	0	0	22.2	0	22.2	0	33.3	22.2
C.1 Untitled grooms marrying daughters of titled parents	0	11.4	34.3	5.7	8.6	5.7	14.3	20.0
C.2 Untitled grooms marrying daughters of untitled parents	2.9	9.5	39.7	22.9	12.7	4.1	3.2	5.0
D.1 All grooms marrying 'Kir' brides	2.8	13.9	13.9	13.9	2.8	25.0	27.8	0
D.2 All grooms marrying untitled brides	2.7	9.6	39.9	21.1	12.7	4.2	4.0	5.8
E.1 Athenian grooms	2.2	8.9	38.6	21.6	13.3	3.8	5.0	6.7
E.2 Non-Athenian grooms	11.1	11.1	16.7	5.6	11.1	16.7	27.8	0
Total: dowries promised by grooms as a group	2.5	9.0	37.8	20.7	13.1	4.0	5.4	7.5

Table includes adopted daughters and all figures are percentages.

our data into separate tables, we have identified a series of key variables and grouped them together in order to facilitate a more comprehensive appreciation of the way dowers were pledged according to various categories of groom and brides. Although our 'Stor' (or *arkhon*) sample is too small to warrant any meaningful conclusions, it is nevertheless significant that all pledged a dowel of over 500 groshia (A1). More important are the differences between the *nikokretei* group and non-titled grooms (A2, A4). Among the former only 19.5 per cent pledged less than 200 groshia, whereas over half (51.7 per cent) of non-titled grooms promised a similar dowel. 19.4 per cent of 'Kir' grooms pledged over 600 groshia whereas only 6.1 per cent exceeded this amount among non-titled grooms.

A further significant difference, reflecting the town-country divide in access to resources such as cash, as encountered in other tables, relates to the distinction between Athenian and non-Athenian grooms (E1, E2). Like non-Athenian brides, non-Athenian grooms appear to have had little access to cash, and 11.1 per cent could not provide a dowel at all. Indeed these grooms constituted by far the largest group unable to provide a dowel. The group also includes wealthy individuals (usually merchants), and 27.8 per cent committed themselves to a dowel of over 600 groshia.

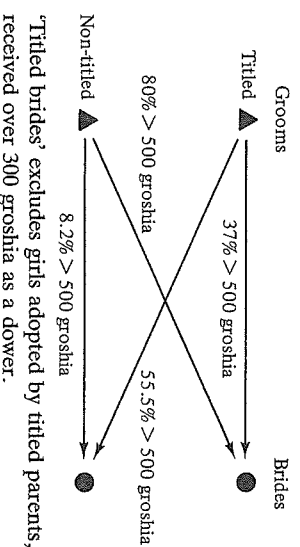
Considerations of prestige and self-respect (*aksioprepia*) appear to have influenced the setting of the dowel, at least among the titled groups of Athenian society. Titled grooms and their families were all equally likely to pledge large amounts, irrespective of whether their brides were titled or not (i.e. were of the same social origins). One reason for this phenomenon may be the substantial differences in marriage ages between titled grooms and non-titled brides, which may have had the effect of pushing up the value of the dowel. A similar phenomenon is evident in the present-day Ionian island of Meganisi, where the wealthiest men appear to take the youngest available brides (Just, 1985), as well as in Lefkas in the first decades of the nineteenth century (Tomara-Sideri, 1986, 154-5). Figure 1 recasts the data to provide an indication of how dowel flows figured in their matrimonial contexts. Immediately striking is the fact that over 37 per cent of all titled grooms pledged dowers of over 500 groshia; 37 per cent to similarly titled brides, and 55.5 per cent to brides from a lower social class.

The question arises, why should a greater percentage of titled grooms have offered large dowers to non-titled brides (55.5 per cent) than to titled brides (37 per cent)? Here we must refer to the patterns of group endogamy and exogamy among titled grooms discussed above. The

figures for dowel flows closely parallel the figures for group endogamy/exogamy (47.5 per cent endogamous, 52.5 per cent exogamous). Thus titled grooms were all equally likely to offer large dowers irrespective of whom they married. This suggests that at issue here was the expression of collective status. Men generally offered certain amounts as dowers because they belonged to determinate social groups, rather than necessarily because their spouses belonged to their social class. By contrast, among marriages contracted between non-titled spouses only 8.2 per cent promised a dowel of over 500 groshia. Figure 1 brings out one further striking feature. Non-titled grooms hoping to marry into the Athenian aristocracy had to be prepared to promise a large dowel. Eighty per cent of these offered a dowel of over 500 groshia.

The dowel was not merely an economic resource; its significance varied depending upon its matrimonial context. Among titled Athenian families it was a symbol and index of wealth and of the 'family's' (i.e. the men's) *aksioprepia*, or self-esteem. It indicated the 'value' which the groom's family placed upon the match and it proved that they were intent on maintaining the bride in a manner to which she was accustomed. It was also consistent with church ideology, which emphasised the *prikosynono* (marriage contract) as the correct means for entering marriage. Pledging a dowel was part and parcel of church-approved marriage which prohibited cohabitation prior to the signing of the *prikosynono* and made material provision for widows. A 'good' family offered a 'good' dowel irrespective on one level of whom its potential recipients were, because a marriage, once contracted, was in theory indissoluble and the bride was considered to form part of her new household symbolically and materially. By obliging the groom, or his kin, to supply this cash the dowel institutionalised the links between a bride and her affines. By contrast among the urban poor and peasant migrants to the town, where marriage was often uxoriocal (table 3) and

Figure 1. Dowel flows from titled/untitled grooms to titled/untitled brides above 500 groshia



'Titled brides' excludes girls adopted by titled parents, none of whom received over 300 groshia as a dowel.

where cohabitation often preceded the signing of the *prikosynfono*, dowers were less in evidence. This was not merely a matter of possessing less cash (which was indubitably the case), but also a matter of such uxorial and less formal domestic arrangements having less need for the safeguard of the dower. Husbands usually predeceased their wives, but they did so in her natal household, or in her dowry house, thus unlikely to unduly disturb the surviving spouse's situation.

In the early years of the period we are discussing, cash held other important significances as well. A scarce resource available only to a few having access to a restricted market, its possession indicated not only wealth but power. It was associated with consumption (initially with rent capitalism and administrative privileges, later with government employment), rather than with production. Paradoxically, the more one offered or gave, the more one demonstrated that one did not need to work, rather than how much one had worked.

The dower and dowry were complementary. While the dowry was a type of pre-mortem endowment of women as sisters by men (fathers and brothers), the dower was a type of post-mortem settlement upon the widow as an affine by the husband's male kin. Indeed at least on a theoretical level the amount of cash promised via the dower was much higher than that actually given via the dowry, and it is also significant that while the Church and the *arkhontes* made strong attempts to control dowry inflation, nothing similar was attempted for the dower. Table 20 compares the two institutions.

As the table indicates, dowers figured to a much greater extent in matrimonial contracts and the amounts promised were consistently higher. How should we interpret this? To begin with, this system ensured that financial burdens did not fall only on the parents of daughters but also on the husband's male kin. Obligations were distributed between both kinship groups which clearly shared a stake in the prosperity of the union. Thus while one group contributed to the establishment of the marriage, another group had to pay if it did not succeed. Everything in this society operated to link men and women and primarily groups together in a series of reciprocal rights and duties; initially between brothers and sisters, fathers and daughters, and later between men and women as affines. Thus, although daughters can be said to have been 'paid off' at marriage by their male kin, to whom the property would return in the case of childlessness, at marriage these sets of obligations were replaced by other obligations. In another respect the dower took the place of residual undivided property rights which women retained with their brothers in North Africa. Although residence in Athens was *viripatrilocal* as in North Africa, women could

Table 20. *Dowries and dowers compared*

	0	1-200	groschia 201-400	401-600	over 600
Percentage of cash dowries	39.6	32.1	16.1	6.3	5.9
Percentage of cash dowers	2.9	46.8	33.8	9.4	7.5

not easily return to their natal households on the dissolution of their marriages through divorce or widowhood, as occurs in North Africa, partly because, by having been endowed as brides by their male kin, they retained only secondary rights in their natal household. Instead the dower theoretically took on the function of 'widow insurance' by enabling her to maintain herself in an independent household.

There is an added dimension to the operations of the dowry and dower. For the society was utilising money not in its fully commoditised and commoditising sense. Cash linked groups, and not individuals; the 'exchange' was not immediate but delayed, and a 'counterpayment' (the dower) was only demanded if the 'spirit' of the initial gift (cash dowry to establish a marriage) was not recognised and accepted (through dissolution of the marriage, for example). Something similar seems to have occurred in Renaissance Tuscany where marital gifts by the husband to his bride replaced the *donatio propter nuptias*, a close equivalent to the Greek *proganicia dorea*. Klapsch-Zuber notes that these gifts often represented 'between one- and two-thirds of the promised dowry [in holdings or in cash], trousseau included' (1985: 220), a situation not dissimilar to early nineteenth-century Athens, when all the dowry goods are taken into account. She suggests that while the marital donation (*donatio*) declined, these gifts 'expressed the need . . . to establish a reciprocal and almost equal exchange between the two parties' (*ibid.*: 233), and even goes so far as to suggest that marriage gifts represented a 'clandestine counterdowry'.

Societies such as Renaissance Tuscany and late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Greece thus attached a very specific rationality to marriage. While the dowry may seem to have had a continuity across time, as indeed it did as a means of transferring resources vertically, nevertheless its rationality and significance to the people concerned was highly specific. For the dowry was enmeshed in a system of alliances between families; as a gift it was countered by a return gift which was given as much as an expression of group status as well as for the purpose of pursuing individual familial prestige. Marriage gifts were as much attempts to express (at least symbolically if not materially) the desire for

some form of equality which amounted to none other than a socially accepted claim to belong to a similar status group. The dowry was not a means to establish a separate household from both familial groups, as it is in many parts of present-day Greece; it thus did not represent so much of a burden requiring immediate and total satisfaction in marriage. Yet it was, perhaps even more so than in modern Greece, conceptually linked to inheritance, manifested in the use of the word *meridhio* (a share which is not gender-specific). Women activated their rights to inheritance at marriage primarily as heirs; rights which took a particular form (dowry) and which they, as daughters, were entitled to receive. As members of specific status groups they possessed rights to specific types of dowries, and it was through this membership that they activated their claims. In the contemporary Greek system, by contrast, women activate their rights to dowries as daughters, a transformation which has important implications for gender identity.

The similarities between the matrimonial systems of Renaissance Tuscany and early modern Greece should not blind us to their differences. While in Tuscany many of the gifts and counter gifts were expressed in symbolic items such as clothing (which nevertheless had a strong monetary value), Greece was distinctive in that gifts and counter gifts were increasingly expressed in cash. In a society suddenly thrown into the modern world system on Europe's periphery, this is hardly surprising. But the use of cash and its inherently ambiguous characteristics in the manufacture and reshaping of desires, and its disposable, liquid, and transforming nature had particular effects on marriage and matrimonial culture. In terms of its universal and levelling nature it contributed to a specific notion of the dowry; it redefined the categories of 'daughters' and 'dowries', making them appear inevitably compatible, and it transformed the matrimonial system making it appear to the participants as a 'matrimonial market'. Its dissolubility contributed to a heightened sense of fear that it could be disposed of by husbands (i.e. 'eaten'), a metaphor carried over to everyday political life where corruption ('eating') is used to denote someone who appropriates goods he is entrusted to protect. Finally, the use of cash created specific tensions when it was expressed in that most gift-oriented of relationships, marriage, and had particular implications for the family and its emotional life.

An indication of the functioning of the dowry during our period of concern comes from the memoirs of the merchant Panayis Skouzes: 'In April 1794 my father, Dimitriou, died. After this my uncle Ierotheos [the father's brother] was informed and he came to Athens from Hydra, paid my stepmother her dower of 100 groshia . . . and she left our house

for she had not borne my father any child' (1975: 100). Skouzes explains elsewhere why his stepmother left his father's house. Apart from not having borne his father any children, she was from a 'lower family' (*katoeri ikoyenia*) and none of his father's family had been keen on the match. Indeed there had been a long history of conflict between the father and his kin over this second marriage. When Skouzes' mother had died and his father had indicated his intention to remarry, his brothers had insisted that a record be drawn up in front of the elders of the community and of kinsmen (the deceased mother's father), listing all the deceased woman's property and based upon the matrimonial contract. The intention was to ensure that this maternal property, brought to the marriage as a dowry, devolve upon the children of the first marriage, for there was the risk that it might be dissipated or that it might be transmitted to the future issue of the second marriage: 'these things [household goods and costume] were then given to my Uncle [father's brother, Ierotheos] to keep on behalf of the orphans. Ierotheos also asked for my mother's land [also brought to the marriage as dowry], and my father objected saying: "If you are even taking all this land, then take the children too." Thus they left these lands to my father' (Skouzes, 1975: 113-16).

Of interest here are a number of features which bring together various points made so far: dowry must be paid by a man's kin to a widow who has not borne any children; there is a desire to remove this woman from the deceased father's house, which can only be effected if the dowry is paid; a man's second marriage is objected to by his male kin both because the bride is from a lower social group and because of the risks it may entail for the future inheritance prospects of the children; the widower's brother and his father-in-law join together to preserve these goods, primarily mobile items (clothing and household goods); and finally the widower considers that his wife's dowry constitutes 'all his property' and he objects to his brother's attempts to assume control over it even if it is for the sake of the orphaned children. Indeed he manages to retain control of his wife's dowry land perhaps because his children remain with him.

Cash and gender

We now wish to consider the relationship between cash and gender. Although cash was 'male dominated' in that it was men who gave or promised cash either as fathers, brothers, grooms or grooms' brothers, women were nevertheless its recipients either as daughters at marriage or as widows upon the dissolution of marriage. Yet why should this society have decided to give women cash rather than immovable

resources? More precisely why should cash have figured so prominently, especially among the higher social groups, as dowries (also accompanied by other resources, such as land), and even more so as dowers? Would land not have served such a purpose? Indeed, on one level land was a more secure resource as a dower.

Although purely pragmatic and economic reasons can be advanced to explain why dowers consisted of cash, we do not believe that they were the sole reasons and there were specific cultural reasons why the dower took this particular form. One reason, though certainly not the main one, is the desire by men to retain control over the residue of the parental estate in much the same way as *ancien régime* 'lignages' and contemporary North African kinship groups attempt to invest men with control over family property. As sisters, brides were certainly endowed with land but their claims to the residue of the parental estate subsequently took second place to their brothers. As we have seen, land appears to have been to endow a daughter with enough land to maintain a relatively modest lifestyle. Even among titled groups land took second place to cash endowments and to trousseaux which had a strong monetary value and component. Most women were expected not only to reside viri-patrilically at marriage, but also to bring resources which would complement a husband's holdings and income, rather than substitute them. And although property held jointly by brothers was eventually divided, clearly the death of any one of them could never be predicted. Pledging a dower of immovable property implied that brothers held no permanent control over their holdings. A death of a married brother could thus activate a sudden claim on land which would be severely disruptive. It would also involve a complex series of realignments and reorganisation of work patterns, as well as potentially alienate land away from the kinship group. Cash, although a scarce resource, had the advantage of at least permitting the surviving brothers to reorganise their resources without interference from third parties; most importantly it enabled men to satisfy their obligations in a clean-cut, definite and immediate way.

A second reason, related to the first, is that the dower was most often paid when the husband predeceased a wife who had borne him no children. In a predominantly viri-patrilocal environment where outside or 'foreign' (*kseri*) women were primarily accepted through motherhood, childless widows were an embarrassment to agnatic sensibilities. As in the case of Dimitros Skouzes' widow the pressure was clearly to leave the household. A cash dower enabled her to be 'paid off' to leave the house. Cash dowers also enabled women to pursue a relatively

untroubled semi-independent life in an urban context and was perhaps preferable to land, which required organisation and still left them dependent on others. Some widows doubtless were less fortunate and left with no dower.

In cases of separation dowers were often not paid and women who did not retain rights in their parental household were obliged to rely on their own wits to survive, as evidenced by the memoirs of Georgios Psilla, an early nineteenth-century minister: 'We had family problems and my mother was obliged to remove herself from our father's house and several times to reside in the rooms of the church [set aside to provide shelter to the poor and homeless]. Later through a decision of the Synod she separated from our father [*apo trapezi kai kiti*; literally, 'from the table and the bed'] and took up employment, taking care of an old man, a father of a Kotzabashas, Spiridonas Kapetanakis, and lived in his house . . . ' (1974: 6). Of note in this example is that Psilla's mother did not appear to have retained rights in her parental household, once she married and moved to that of her husband. Legally separated but not divorced, she was not granted her dower (*proganiea dorea*).

A final reason has more to do with the synbolic associations of cash and trousseaux. Here we believe that the traditional anthropological distinctions between gifts and commodities, and between the private and public worlds, break down or at best have limited explanatory validity. Cash in early nineteenth-century Greek society had a number of associations and circulated between kin to a greater extent than in the wider economy. Kinship obligations were expressed in, and through cash, whereas other obligations such as, for example, those between sharecropping tenants and landowners were expressed through products, patronage and respect. Cash, which was essential to the process of commoditisation and was the commodity *par excellence*, was not a full commodity in this society because it mediated relations between kin to a greater extent than between unrelated free-acting agents in the society. It is therefore much closer to the anthropological notion of a gift than to commodity because of its manner of circulation, in spite of its formal properties.

Furthermore, the possession of cash in this society and its transfer to kin, especially women, indicates that one did not have to work, to sell one's labour in the market, or to dispose of one's resources, such as land, in order to obtain it. More precisely, it indicates that one possessed resources which were worked by others, which enabled men to acquire *nikokiris* status. A *nikokiris* was a man who had risen from humble origins and was concerned to distance himself socially from those origins. A whole range of meanings contained within the linguistic

term express this opposition: an urban consumer, master of his own household (*niko*: household, *kirios*: master) whose womenfolk do not work for others, in contrast to a peasant life characterised by cashless, subsistence-oriented production where both the men and women of the household are obliged to work for others. Clearly *nikokirai* modelled themselves closely on the *arkhon* class who in turn differed only in degree from their Ottoman overlords, in time the *nikokirai* model of the family was to become widespread in Greek society.

The full significance of cash endowments cannot be fully understood unless trousseaux are taken into account. Cash and trousseau complemented each other in their flow and in their associated significances. Together they contributed to the manufacture of *nikokirai* identity as well as to a specific concept of the family. Traditional Athenian marriage involved a complex interplay of gifts and counter gifts in an exchange relationship between families. Individuals transacted as group, that is, as a family, expressing and achieving their individual identities within that context. Yet because the types of goods exchanged were diverse and the transactors (donors and recipients) were both men and women, it is important to examine the relationship between 'persons' and 'things' in greater detail. In this manner we could thus identify the relationship between things and persons in their gender-specific contexts and hence the components in the construction of personhood.

It has been established that women received goods at marriage primarily as members of specific status groups, and secondarily as daughters. While these goods were a necessary precondition to their marriages as representing their family groups and providing links with other groups, this was not a sufficient precondition to marriage. Apart from the dowers promised by their husbands, women also brought trousseaux which were essential for their married life. The goods women received as 'dowries' consisted of both modest amounts of immovables and much larger amounts of moveables – consisting of cash. Immovables – land and houses – were conceptually linked to males, especially in the top layers of society. Thus women's receipt of these goods was 'symbolic' in two senses. From a Western egalitarian perspective they can be seen as 'token' transfers to women permitting the men to retain control and ownership of these resources. Yet they were also symbolic in the sense that the receipt of these modest amounts of land (especially in their different forms – arable, olive groves, etc.) symbolised membership of a specific status group. This 'disinheritance' of women was accompanied by their receipt of large amounts of cash, often more economically significant than land. While donations or transfers of immovables were conceptually embedded in group mem-

bership obligations, cash transfers were much more strategically manipulable and had more of the nuances of gifts. Although the amounts given were certainly linked to social group status, nevertheless the liquid, mobile, and totally transferable characteristics of cash rendered it much closer to the notion of a gift from men to women. Wealthy men (as fathers and brothers) endowed women (as daughters and sisters) with cash dowries, necessary qualifications for marriage. Even more so the groom and his agnates endowed women (as wives and widows of their brothers) with the cash *prognonia dorea*, literally the pre-marriage gift. Cash was thus a valuable dominated by men, but funnelled by them to women.

In modern Greece, cash remains gender specific. Hirschon notes that it is 'seen as an integral aspect of masculine competence' (1989, 100). In Piraeus, husbands made over most of their wages to their wives, a situation paralleled in Malta as well as in Cairo (Watson, 1989) and doubtless other parts of the Mediterranean. Hirschon notes that 'a woman's economic role lay within the home' (Hirschon, 1989, 100), a particularly apt statement when it is recalled that Xenophon defined *oikonomia* as 'the art of household management', yet this was a text written to guide the behaviour of men rather than women.

Women, however, were not passive recipients of the system, recipients of goods and persons exchanged between groups. They too were heavily involved in the exchange system, and in the words of Marilyn Strathern, in the 'gendering of valuables' (1984, 166). For they endowed themselves, and were endowed by the womenfolk of their natal group, with trousseaux (costumes, costly lacework, linen, etc.), all goods which defined them as brides and as daughters rather than merely as heirs. The appearance of such goods in the matrimonial nexus transformed the structural fact of group membership, where individuals were identified as members of a collective, to the personalised individuation of women as brides and ultimately as wives and mothers. The production of trousseaux established relations of support and solidarity among women, in contrast to the divisive and differentiating exchange world of cash dominated by men. Yet in contrast to cash it was a valuable arranged by women as an expression of individuality, collective discreteness and personal incommensurability. Trousseau enabled women as individuals to give a specific expression to their femininity, distinguished them collectively from men, and enabled them to assume their roles as brides, wives and mothers within the differentiating bond of marriage. Trousseau can also be seen as women's response to men's domination of cash. For the 'subversive stitch' also contributed to the production of wealth in a material sense. Costumes, lace and linen were costly items in

their own right which could be given a price and sold, although their sale was not surprisingly, vigorously resisted due to these important symbolic associations.

Goods given and received at marriage thus had a specific gender valuation and identity. The situation would be analytically simple if we could identify those resources that were male dominated as commodities and those that were female dominated as gifts, as seems to occur in a number of societies. But what renders analysis even more complex is the fact that these valuables could function both as gifts and commodities. Cash, which was male dominated, achieved its fullest significance not through its deployment in capitalist enterprise, in production for production's sake, but in expressing kinship obligations and in the establishment of a new conjugal unit. Cash was also rare enough in an imperfectly monetised society to have the symbolic nuances of a gift, and it was given by men to women. Because it was often hoarded, saved for a rainy day, when given it retained, like gifts, the 'spirit' of the giver. It was associated with consumption and a lifestyle characterised by the absence of the need to work outside the home for others. Yet because of its inherent liquid nature it could be disposed of more easily than land by independent-minded husbands, leaving daughters without security – a source of increasing disquiet to those groups who had invested most heavily in cash for the endowment of daughters, as the society became progressively monetised.

Conversely, trousseaux represented and embodied the productive use of time by wives and daughters which the possession of cash permitted. A *nikokina* was a mistress of her own household because she was a mistress of her own time. And it was time spent not in directly productive activity outside the home (such as agricultural work, which could be risky for the family's honour), but in the production of good, which embodied and glorified the use of leisure time in the seclusion and safety of the home. From that a whole set of associated meanings emerge: the connection between the production of textiles in the home with restrained sexuality, as encouraged by Christianity (Schneider, 1980). Similar processes appear to have occurred in other parts of Southern Europe (for example Sicily). In exploring the role of textiles as trousseaux in Western Sicily, Jane Schneider excavates the normative message conveyed by the term *casalinga*, a message which could equally be conveyed by the term *nikokina*: 'a housewife who "loves to stay in the house, living in the bosom of her own family, occupying herself with domestic affairs, with the education of children, seeking refuge from rowdy entertainment"' (1980: 338).

Similar views were expressed in texts which began circulating in early nineteenth-century Athens, initially through translations of foreign (often French) books, and later in Greek contributions. Kitromilides has summarised the dominant model proposed in these texts for women's expected behaviour: 'the woman ought to avoid the "illustrious" virtues and confine herself to the simple and peaceful ones which compose the cycle of modesty. She should be reserved and avoid laughter and noisy company. She should guard against vanity and limit her natural curiosity to decent and proper subjects' (1983: 48).

These are models of behaviour which can find their fullest expression in urban contexts, and which are oriented towards self-control, the interiorisation of norms, and an increasing separation of the public and private domains with gender-specific spaces to enable the fullest expression of the 'inherent natures' of men and women. Such models increasingly came to influence behaviour and gender construction in Greece. Perhaps nowhere more clearly was this brought out than in the concentration on trousseaux as the symbol and physical embodiment of virtue, and carried over in the education of girls at school whose purpose, in the words of a popular journal of the time, was 'to educate girls as virgins, mothers and wives' (Efimeris ton Kirion, A20, 1977/1887).

In the metropolitan urban context the management and manipulation of time is even more closely linked to gender roles, to virtue and honour. Married women's time has to be fully occupied in domestic chores; indeed 'free time' has to be stolen surreptitiously from work seen as 'obligation' (Hirschon, 1989: 144), whereas men's time is spent, and visibly so, in the *cafeneion* (coffee shop). The locus for the expression of female virtue has also shifted. In traditional Athens virtue was primarily demonstrated prior to marriage in the production of trousseaux, for a woman's virtue was intimately linked to her natal family as a daughter. At marriage her movement to a viri-patrilocal context ensured that her virtue was closely monitored and controlled by the other women in the household. In the modern context, by contrast, with neolocality or uxorilocality, virtue as a wife and mother is proved to neighbours and non-kin primarily within the marriage through effective household management, especially in labour-intensive cooking and food preparation (Hirschon, 1989: 151).

Yet trousseaux were also the embodiment of wealth and the expression of leisure. Although they were intimately tied-up in the manufacture of women's identity, and although their sale on the market implied an abdication from the roles of bride, wife, and mother, nevertheless

they were also commodities. They could be bought and sold in the market and increasingly became evaluated in monetary terms as the society became progressively monetised.

Here a distinction formulated by M. Strathern for the symbolism of valuables in exchanges may be useful. She draws a distinction between the metaphoric and metonymic symbolism of valuables. In the former, 'wealth or assets . . . stand for an aspect of intrinsic identity, for agnatic status or "name" for example. They cannot be disposed of or withdrawn from the exchange system without compromising that identity' (1984: 165). Within that class of goods we can locate land and houses for men and trousseaux for women. In metonymic symbolisation, by contrast, 'people exercise proprietorship to the extent that they have personal rights of disposal' (*ibid.*: 165). Within this class we can locate cash gifts as dowries and the *progamnia dorea*. Yet the equation only applies up to a point. For the metaphoric identities of valuables in early nineteenth-century Greece (land, houses and trousseaux) were progressively subverted. Land ceased to have a strong linkage with men, houses were increasingly given to daughters, and trousseaux became increasingly commoditised, losing in the process that essential role in the manufacturing of female identity. They became increasingly 'metonymic' in their symbolism – in Strathern's words 'although disposable they are not "alienable" in the way that commodities are alienable' (*ibid.*: 165). What we are suggesting here is not that dowries are not alienable as commodities in modern Greece; indeed they clearly are. Rather the sentiments and symbolism associated with dowries encourages their separation from the rest of commodisable goods. Disembodied from the complex interchange of gifts and counter gifts which were symbols of group membership in the traditional system, dowries now symbolise the ability to attract a suitable groom rather than reinforce the complex ties between family groups. Furthermore, the progressive and cumulative intervention of the state on legislation and the evolution of a monetised economy has contributed to the notion of the dowry as the activation of a pre-mortem inheritance right for daughters as daughters. Dowries reduced to a cash estimation derive their symbolism from their monetary value, not from the symbolic nuances of their various goods, and have to be protected from a groom's potential depredations.

Conversely the metonymic symbolisation of valuables such as cash has become progressively 'metaphorical'. Cash has become an aspect of the 'intrinsic identity' of a family's worth which cannot be 'withdrawn from the exchange system [the dowry] without compromising that identity'. As Strathern has observed 'the same valuables may operate as now

one type, and now the other' (*ibid.*: 165). Table 21 summarises the complex interplay of valuables.

The relationship between cash and trousseaux was not static across time. While the two coexisted they appear in inverse proportion to each other across time. In the early part of the late eighteenth century trousseaux appeared as more important; by the early 1830s trousseaux had begun to decline in importance and a new standardised bridal costume was beginning to replace the hierarchical organisation of dress. Conversely, cash endowments increased in importance and the dowry became even more monetised and mobile. In the next section we discuss changes to trousseaux and bridal costumes across time.

Trousseaux as social stratification

As marriage required a cash dower of men in eighteenth-century Athens, it required a trousseau of women. As in other parts of Southern Europe, such as Southern Italy (Davis, 1973), Sicily (Schneider, 1980) and Spain, Athenian women could marry without land, cash, animals or a house, but a trousseau was an absolute necessity to qualify her as a bride. In late nineteenth-century Dimitiana Kalpourizi's figures indicate that 98% of all brides received a trousseau (1987: 91).

Whereas in the previous section we examined the trousseau within its wider context as a member of the class of moveables, we now examine it in greater detail from a number of perspectives. We begin by discussing the role of trousseaux (and especially of bridal costumes) as markers of social differentiation not only in content but also in their transmission patterns. We then explore the trousseau's monetary significance and its symbolic value. By analysing the trousseau we suggest that rather than adopting the public-private division of gender and social space, the distinction between formal-informal is more suitable for understanding Athenian society of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. We then discuss how a growing homogenisation of national culture in the nation-state, shaped mainly by the *nikokirei* group, was reflected in the adoption of a new style of bridal costume which became universal in Athens. The model of kinship, the family and of marriage itself became increasingly standardised in the new Greek kingdom, receiving its imprint from the urban Athenian *nikokirei* group. Finally, we conclude by discussing Jane Schneider's characterisation of trousseau as 'treasure' (1980) and suggest some modifications to her thesis.

An indication of the importance of the trousseau is provided by the structure of the contracts themselves. Inevitably, the trousseau heads the list of the bride's goods, and this is followed by the dower, as if once having set the scene by specifying what type of bride was being married

Table 21. *Features of cash and trousseaux in matrimonial exchanges*

	Immoveables	Moveables		
	Land and houses	Dowry	Cash <i>Progamiea Dorea</i>	Trousseaux
		Men to women		
Given by	(Land): Parents collectively (Houses): Father primarily (especially in top strata) Mothers (in lower strata)	F, B to D, Z	H to W HB to HW	Supplied by women themselves and pur- chased among top strata Supplied by women themselves and by grooms in lower strata
Claimed by	(Houses): Sons majority (Land): Major part by sons Minor part by daughters	Daughters/sisters as 'right' expressed as a 'gift'	Men on behalf of their women folk as their 'right'. Women on their behalf as their 'right'	Daughters as their 'right' as women to get married
Represented by/as	(Houses/land): Sons at death of father. Men carriers of 'family name' in public domain	'Gift' as sign of group membership	'Right' as sign of alliance	
Obtained by/through	(Houses): Inheritance (Land): Inheritance and purchase	Men through participa- tion in wider society	Men/women from men	Women's labour
Possession signifies	(Houses): Lineal family identity (Land): Membership of status group (sons)	Leisure, non-manual work, consumption, mastership of one's own household, seclusion of women		Membership of a specific social group rather than family identity
Symbolism	(Land): Membership of family group (daughters) (Houses): Metaphoric (for men)	Metonymic (for fathers) Metaphoric (for daughters)		Mainly metaphoric; metonymic in extreme cases

B = brother, D = daughter, F = father, H = husband, W = wife, Z = sister, FB = father's brother, DZ = daughter's sister, etc.

it was necessary to indicate immediately afterwards how the groom's family responded. As we shall demonstrate, this counterposing was natural; a trousseau demonstrated status as well as wealth, and required a counter demonstration of the groom's equal status.

The Athenian trousseau (*prikia*) consisted of two distinct sets of items: the bride's clothing and items of personal decoration (*voulia*), and household goods and furnishings (*prikia*). During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the former was more important than the latter. While the contracts devote a great deal of attention to the clothing brought by the bride, specifying them in great detail, household furnishings when referred to, are not given the painstaking attention of the former. The contrast with modern Greece and other Southern European societies is striking. For these societies appear to give more detail to household furnishings such as furniture, linen, sheets, blankets, kitchen utensils and the like,¹ than to the bride's dresses and clothing. We do not believe that this is due to a lack of such goods, or to poverty, for costly dowries were involved; nor necessarily to a correlation with agricultural or non-agricultural incomes as Skouteri-Diakalou suggests (1984). The difference between the two is not as slight as might be supposed. Eighteenth-century Athenian trousseaux emphasised the bride's status, and ultimately her origins; modern and contemporary trousseaux emphasise the household's wealth. Why should this be so? Four reasons can be advanced. First, an emphasis on clothing is consistent with a society which gives great importance to status and permanent hierarchies. Second, a de-emphasis on household furnishings can be attributable to a pattern of co-residence. Athenian brides did not bring many household articles with them because many expected to reside viri-patrically, rather than neo-locally. Third, in many Western European societies the trousseau as household furnishings constituted the legitimate share of a daughter's patrimony (the so-called *legittima*), leaving the sons to inherit the bulk of the immovable property. Fourth, there are practical and symbolic reasons specific to Ottoman Greece: on the practical level clothing was not a taxable item and was eminently portable. In times of crises clothing was more easily and compactly bundled and transported than were diverse and cumbersome household goods.

A fifth and final reason has to do with the arrangement of space and the organisation of household activities. If Athenian houses of the early 1800s bear any similarity to houses in the provinces in the mid-nineteenth century, it is likely that furniture was relatively scarce and rooms were not functionally specific. In other words, a lack of furniture enabled people to use rooms in a more flexible manner, for example in

various sleeping patterns (Pavides and Hesser, 1986). This phenomenon is consistent with other areas of the Mediterranean. In the contemporary Djerid, Tunisia, poor people do not traditionally sleep in specifically designated rooms, but adapt to the changing seasons. The same authors also introduce a distinction for the use of space in mid-nineteenth century Eressos, Lesbos, between the formal and the informal. We find this concept more useful in highlighting the basic principles for the organisation of space and gender in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Athens than the more anthropologically popular concept of public and private which we believe is a relatively recent phenomenon.

In one sense the transfer of a trousseau made a marriage, conferring social and familial legitimacy to a new matrimonial alliance. The accumulation of the goods over many years – their estimation and final transfer to the bride's new residence – involved a wide network of kin and affines. Indeed the monetary evaluation of the trousseau and its transfer to the bride's new household were an essential part of the matrimonial preparations, ceremony and celebrations much as the passage of *kiwah* goods in North Africa marks the social recognition of a marriage. In this sense marriage was not only marked by the signing of the *prikosymfono* and the religious ceremony, but also by the public estimation and passage of such goods from one household to another.

The marriage celebrations consisted of a number of discreet events which together made a marriage a social event involving the wider society. Indeed the church ceremony (the *stefanos*), while certainly important, constituted only a small part of the celebrations. Athenian marriage linked family groups together in public statements of alliance; it was not confined to the vows of the ultimate rationale of a church ceremony. Once the match had been agreed the *ksofilii* (temporary agreement and statement of intent) was signed by the two male family heads. This was normally a confidential agreement between the parties concerned and was similar to the Tuscan *scrittura*. Sometimes a considerable period elapsed between the signing of the *ksofilii* and the signing of the *prikosymfono* (dowry agreement), either because the betrothed were especially young or because the dowry had yet to be amassed. The marriage celebrations, however, were initiated by two public events: the signing of the *prikosymfono* and the display of the bride's trousseau at her home. Three days before the church ceremony the notary evaluated the bride's dowry, checking that the items listed in the *ksofilii* were indeed being given to the daughter. This was a public affair, and the priest, the fathers of the bride and groom (or their closest male relatives if the fathers were dead), the godfather, the groom and three witnesses

were present. This was certainly a male affair and denoted that the alliance was sanctioned and witnessed by the wider society. Significantly the bride herself did not appear in this ceremony, a situation paralleled in Renaissance Tuscany (Klapisch-Zuber, 1985; 187) and contemporary Tunisia (Sant Cassia, 1986b). By contrast, the display of the trousseau at the bride's home was a female affair. The goods were displayed with care and artistry in the antechamber of her natal home, and included the groom's presents. The display of the trousseau testified to the bride's industry and virtue and the value placed by the groom's family on the alliance.

On the Saturday the bride's trousseau was transported by the bride's female kin to the groom's house, often accompanied by musicians. This was the most boisterous event in the marriage celebrations; like the North African *kiwahn* procession it demonstrated to the community that the marriage and its consummation was imminent. On that day, too, the bride together with her friends visited the baths, the expenses being paid for by the groom.² Should we see this as a symbolic expression of the 'Griselda complex' where the groom clothes his bride? Perhaps, certainly it symbolises the new responsibility of the groom towards his bride. From this point on the groom would assume the responsibility for her presentation in society from her father and her male kin. His honour was intimately tied to her new role as his bride.

The following day the bride and groom proceeded from the church liturgy to the groom's house. Yet even at this point the procession emphasised the separation of bride and groom and their enclosure in respective kin groups. The bride came first, supported by two female kin and followed by the groom in the rear. In the Peloponnese, Wyse observed that the wedding procession was heralded by muskets let off by the bride's male kin; she appeared 'with a strong escort of fustinaella friends, all armed. She was mounted, cavalier-fashion, on a strong horse, and carried before her, at the saddle-bow, a gigantic circular loaf (1865; 280). In Athens by contrast, the bride was presented with a loaf of bread by the groom's female kin which she then proceeded to divide, as in the Peloponnese, among those present.

Leaving aside these differences, the symbolism is clear. While the formal alliance was initiated and publicly initiated by men, the alliance still involved two separate kin groups as yet unratified. Both ratification and the practical and symbolic expression of the union were dependent upon the involvement and cooperation of the women. It was the female kin of the groom who welcomed the bride into her new household; significantly, it was they who greeted her on the threshold. The presentation of bread, a sacred food (Hirschon, 1989; Campbell, 1964), signi-

fied commensality, common household tasks, and its division among those present indicated that it was through the participation of women that the household could offer hospitality to guests. It was the participation of the women which completed this rite of integration. And by most accounts the presentation and the celebrations were a serious and formal event. Wyse observed that 'the whole was conducted with imperturbable gravity and sobriety, provoking no unrestrained laughter, wild antics, or other explosions of mirth, such as might be looked for on so exciting an occasion' (1865; 280).

Although there were significant differences in the monetary value of trousseaux and in the nature of the goods which a trousseau might comprise, trousseaux differed also in their manner of provenance. Among the wealthy and titled families of the *nikokirei* and *arkhon* classes, and among all native Athenian families, the trousseau was provided by the bride's parents (and to a lesser extent by kin), by the labour assistance of adopted or fostered girls in the household, and by the bride herself through her industry and labour. By contrast, among villagers settled in Athens the trousseau supplied by the bride was rarely purchased and a considerable portion of the bride's trousseau was provided not by her natal family but by the groom and his kin. While the bride gave her groom a Fustanella (the 'Albanian skirt'), he gave her jewellery. These may have served the function of love gifts. The trousseau thus travelled both laterally and vertically as an 'indirect dowry' or 'brideprice' from the groom to the bride via her parents. Such practices, which exist in contemporary North Africa and in Northern Greece, are consistent with agropastoralism and are associated with *de facto* agnatic control over critical resources such as land and flocks.³ Non-Athenian brides also tended to receive items of personal decoration (jewellery, necklaces and rings, though of a lower quality) to a greater extent than Athenian-born brides (table 2). They also received smaller cash endowments from their parents (table 3), and their spouses, some of whom were grooms of village origin, tended to promise cash dowries to a lesser extent than did Athenian-born grooms. Nearly 10 per cent of these grooms did not promise a dowry versus the 2.2 per cent of Athenian-born grooms who did not pledge a dowry. The dowers of country girls were also relatively small. The maximum was 301 groshia, with the mean at 96 groshia and the standard deviation (STD) at 58 groshia (calculating the dowry as an average of all country brides, including the 9.1 per cent who did not receive a dowry).

Thus the trousseau of a non-Athenian bride was heavily weighted towards jewellery rather than clothing, and was in effect a type of substitute for a cash endowment. The value of jewellery purchased by

the groom for the bride could always be realised through sale, and in contrast to the *trahonna* (the bride's cash endowment), which remained with the groom in the event of the dissolution of the marriage, this was a gift from the groom which could not be reclaimed. It was thus a measure of security for the bride. Significantly, this jewellery consisted of a number of items which individually held relatively low monetary value.

For the majority of Athenian brides, however, the trousseau consisted of items of clothing of all sorts. We therefore examine the significance of costume and the role of clothing as markers of social classes.

Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Athens offers a remarkable opportunity to observe how an outpost of the Ottoman Empire, admittedly with strong Occidental links, eventually became incorporated in the European sphere of influence with the establishment of an independent Greek kingdom. Clothing patterns both symbolised and spearheaded this change. Speaking of clothes and fashion, Braudel draws a distinction between those relatively stable social orders such as China and Islam where 'everything stayed put' (1974: 227) and where 'no changes took place . . . except as a result of political upheavals' which affected the whole social order, with Western societies heavily involved in the use of fashion as an internal political strategy between social groups: 'the future belonged to societies which were trifling enough, but also rich and inventive enough to bother about changing colours, material and styles of costume, and also the division of the social classes and the map of the world' (*ibid.*: 235-6).

To what extent did this 'future' belong to Greece and Athens of the eighteenth century? The answer must be that this future was already present in Athens, in an embryonic form. Whereas the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries demonstrate a fixed and hierarchical Ottoman-imposed system of stratification, by the late eighteenth century Athens possessed a more flexible, mobile and complex social structure. Although clothing indicated social status and regional origin, as in any hierarchical pre-industrial agrarian based society, distinctions between different types of costumes were becoming dim. Our contracts indicate that three distinct types of clothing were in use in Athens, each closely but not exclusively associated with a particular social group. We have labelled these costumes Types A, B, C; a fourth, which we call Type 'D' will be discussed later. Type 'A' was worn mainly by non-titled native Athenians, Type 'B' was worn by villagers settled in Athens, and Type 'C' was worn by titled families and the upwardly mobile bourgeoisie. We have here a city-society which distinguished itself internally between those who wore costumes of the wealthy and titled and the rest, and externally between native Athenians and recent migrants to the town.

These costumes also indicated a woman's position in the social development cycle. Costumes were worn on major occasions such as Easter, Epiphany (*Phota*), religious feasts and for the first years after marriage. Significantly, for most social groups they tended to be put away and worn less frequently when the bride had become a mother, indicating that motherhood eventually subsumed other roles derived from civil society. This was particularly pronounced among townswomen but was less common among countrywomen, reflecting a different emphasis placed on motherhood and its presentation.

Large amounts of clothing accompanied brides of all social classes at marriage. The following is a typical endowment of a non-titled bride; it is an ensemble of specific items of clothing which made up the Type 'A' costume:

- 5-30 long shirts of linen or silk (*vrakopoukarnisa*)
- 5-10 long undergarments
- 5-10 long coats (*tzoubedes*) embellished with ermine for the summer and fur for the winter
- 1-2 headresses (*fezes*)
- 1 veil (*feretzes*)
- 5-10 headkerchiefs
- 3-5 belts (cloth)
- belts, slippers and stockings

The copious amount of clothing indicates that brides did not likely supply all their clothing through their own labour; assistance from mothers and other female kin was probably received. Among the wealthy and titled families who endowed brides with larger amounts of clothing whose preparation was also more labour intensive, it is likely that clothing had been commissioned in part mainly from women from lower-status families, and through the labour of adopted or fostered daughters. Textiles in Ottoman Europe were important trade items and domestic embroideries such as kerchiefs, towels, tablecloths, pillow cases and embroidered shirts were products of cottage industry (Gervers, 1982: 7). By the 1840s such goods had already begun to be purchased from overseas, and especially from Europe, the source of new models for the Athenian elite. Iata (1984: 87) cites a case of a merchant purchasing clothing for his niece from Marseilles and Venice.

The frequency of items of clothing and jewellery among the various social groups is outlined in table 22. Some items were particularly associated with certain social strata (such as the silk *anteri* with titled families), and the *grizos*, a plain rough cotton dress, associated with migrant villagers. Such brides wore this dress externally, whereas the

Table 22. *Incidence of items of clothing and jewellery transferred with different types of costumes (1688-1834)*

	Type 'A' (worn mainly by untitled Athenians)	Costume type, in per cent Type 'B' (worn mainly by villagers settled in Athenian suburbs)	Type 'C' (worn mainly by titled families and the upwardly mobile bourgeoisie)
	(total number: 475)	(total number: 74)	(total number: 93)
<i>Clothing</i>			
Vest (<i>anteri</i>)	0	0	100.0
Coat (<i>grizos</i>)	0	83.8	0
Short waistcoat (<i>zipouni</i>)	0	98.7	0
Longvest (<i>zipouni</i>)	91.8	0	0
Belt (<i>zostra</i>)	59.8	77.0	75.3
<i>Sigouna</i>	0	100.0	0
Headkerchief (<i>kefalomandilia</i>)	90.0	94.6	95.7
Coat (<i>tzoubes</i>)	66.0	0	76.3
Plain blouse (<i>poukanisa</i>)	0	100.0	0
Blouse decorated with breeches and lace (<i>vrikopoukanisa</i>)	100.0	0	100.0
Veil (<i>feretie</i>)	67.2	0	89.2
Fez hat (<i>fezi</i>)	86.7	0	89.2
<i>Jewellery</i>			
Necklace (<i>yioriani</i>) with pearls	10.5	0	39.8
Necklace (<i>yioriani</i>) with beads	0	32.4	0
Ring (<i>dachitili</i>)	9.0	79.7	16.1
Necklace (<i>kordani</i>)	0.6	40.5	1.1
Metal bell (<i>louri</i>)	55.4	0	56.9
Bracelets (<i>belerika</i>)	2.3	70.3	20.4
Head decoration (<i>kapoutsali</i>)	39.6	0	11.8
Pearls	16.2	0	18.3
Earrings (<i>skoularika</i>)	55.8	41.9	67.7
Head decoration (<i>tepeltiki</i>)	1.7	0	12.9

Bada (1983) conducted independent historical research on costume transfers; the figures here include data drawn from our contracts.

anteri, its equivalent among the titled families, was always worn under another dress, usually a type of coat (*tzoubes*) which was heavily decorated with coins and professionally embroidered. Undergarments were also a distinguishing feature. It appears that they were common among urban brides but not among women originating from the countryside, a point generally explored by Schneider (1980) for Sicily and Northern Europe. The veil (*feretie*) was another feature of urban life, as were hats, a clear indication if ever one was needed, that urban families secluded their womenfolk, at least symbolically, as a means of maintaining prestige. In 1749 Charlemont commented on the differences between the Aegean islanders, whose womenfolk seemed

much 'freer', and the Athenians: 'at Athens in particular, whether from an imitation of the Turks, or, as I am rather inclined to believe from a more perfect retention of ancient manners, the women are very reserved. Girls are never seen till married, not even at Church... They are seldom met in the streets and go very little abroad' (Stanford and Finopoulos, 1984: 126). But while both Greek and Turkish women were veiled and generally secluded at least among the wealthy classes in the late eighteenth century, by 1821 the veil had disappeared among the Greeks. So complete was its disappearance by the mid to late nineteenth century in a climate of national identity construction that the *feretie* began to be associated with such concepts as Turkish 'barbarism'.

Table 22 also indicates that rural brides generally received jewellery at marriage to a greater extent than did other brides; necklaces, rings and bracelets were customary among brides of rural origin, whereas pearls and earrings were more common among urban and titled brides. Furthermore, brides of rural origin tended to receive jewellery which was of lower value, such as silver rather than gold.

Social differences thus tended to manifest themselves in types of clothing and jewellery and their relative value, their manner of wear, their provenance, and their numbers. Wealthy brides received more numerous, higher quality, and more varied goods than did rural brides, such goods travelling vertically rather than laterally. The wealthy also wore more layers of clothing, which was often heavily embroidered. As in Sicily, embroidery was associated with seclusion and high status (Schneider, 1980) yet the extent of embroidery involved could hardly have been supplied by brides through their own labour and must have represented the pooling of labour or the use of cash for purchase.

At this stage it is worthwhile to move away from formal markers of group membership and social status (such as titles) and concentrate on claims to social status. The endowment and wearing of costume represented not so much a bride's social origins as her matrimonial destination. In most cases this did not involve a radical departure from social origins. Nevertheless costume types, although closely identified with specific social groups, were not identical. The endowment of a bride with a specific costume was the end result of a complex process of negotiation and renegotiation of status between the two affinal groups. As brides were in most cases incorporated in their husband's households, the presentation of the bride in public was the culmination of a process of status negotiation.

By status in this context we mean not just the relationship between titles and the transmission of resources, but the way in which these were socially estimated, and the histories, aims, and strategies of the groups

involved. We are interested here in the social manipulation and presentation of the transmission of resources within the context of matrimonial politics. Marriage in Athens was not only the manifestation of social status but its creation and transformation across time, through alliances between family groups. Some families could move upwards by a careful marshalling of resources while others slid down the social ladder. Thus while Type 'A' costumes for example were mainly worn by non-titled Athenian brides, 10.4 per cent of all brides wearing this costume came from titled families. Clearly these marriages were hypogamous on one level, in terms of claims to status. Conversely Type 'C' costumes were worn by brides of both titled families and wealthy non-titled ones who had managed to marry hypergamosly and successfully claim elite status through the endowment of the bride with a suitable costume.

Table 23 recasts some of our data to reflect the Athenian presentation of the connection between status claimed and accepted, as manifested in costume, and resource transmission.

Some explanation of the tables may be helpful. Table 23 groups together various resources which accompanied brides at marriage; these brides are, however, classified according to the costume they wore at marriage (A-C), rather than by their titles (which are dealt with in tables 10, 11, 13, 17). Thus rather than merely dividing brides into two categories (titled/non-titled), brides are divided into the three costume categories associated with different criteria (the fourth, costume Type D, is a new post-1830 costume which we discuss below). The brides wearing the costumes traditionally associated with wealthy and titled families were even more unlikely to be endowed with animals (96.2 per cent, table 23) than brides referred to as titled in the contracts (87.3 per cent, table 11), an indication that these families aspiring to an elite lifestyle were even more unlikely to endow their daughters with animals, a case of being *plus royaliste que le roi*. By contrast migrant brides were particularly likely to receive livestock in contrast to Athenian natives (57.6 per cent versus 7.6 per cent, table 23) and to receive fields.⁴

Conversely 12.8 per cent of brides wearing the wealthy or titled costume (Type C) did not receive olive trees (table 23) whereas only 2.8 per cent of brides who were actually titled (in the contracts) did not receive olive trees (table 13). Those actually titled were also likely to receive larger amounts (25 per cent received over 161 trees, table 13), whereas only 10.2 per cent of those with claims to belong to this social group received over 161 olive trees (table 23). Thus a number of brides were presented in society as members of an elite group but did not receive the olive tree which was so strongly associated with the core of this elite

group. Olive trees were particularly unlikely among migrant brides (42.4 per cent did not receive any olive trees at all, versus the 17 per cent of ordinary untitled Athenians wearing costume Type A).

Although the differences we are dealing with may appear slight, they do enable us to pursue a more complex understanding of the dynamics of Athenian society. They permit identification of those resources which were associated socially with particular groups, costume being a more subtle indicator of constructed and manipulated social differences than the largely transmitted differences of titles. Thus animals and land were largely the resources transmitted to migrant brides, and the possession of animals was a positive liability to qualify for elite status. Olives were the preserve of native Athenians but brides could be accepted as belonging to the elite even if they possessed less olive trees than titled brides. Far fewer differences in cash were permissible to qualify for elite status. In other words, the possession and transmission of cash dowries to daughters was the single most distinguishing feature of elite brides (wearing costume Type C). In time this was to become even more important in Athens and ultimately a source of particular tensions within matrimonial culture. There are basically no differences between the percentages of titled brides receiving cash endowments and the larger group of brides wearing elite costumes (33.4 per cent vs 34.6 per cent, tables 17, 19). Although titled brides tended to receive larger cash endowments than elite-costume brides, the difference between the latter and ordinary Athenians was far more substantial (table 23).

The same pattern is exhibited when dowers are examined. Table 24 breaks down the dowers promised to brides wearing different costumes; these brides are further differentiated by titles. There were major differences in the dowers promised. Grooms marrying migrant brides (costume Type B) were the most unlikely to promise a dower (9.1 per cent, table 24) mainly because they themselves were of similar origins (tables 16, 19). The brides most likely to be pledged a higher dower were titled brides wearing the elite costume Type C (57.7 per cent were pledged a dower of over 500 *groschia*), followed by non-titled brides wearing the same costume Type C (19.2 per cent were pledged a dower of over 500 *groschia*). The latter and titled brides wearing the ordinary Athenian costume Type A tended to merge together as far as high dowers were concerned.

The data in tables 22-24 give little insight into the monetary and symbolic significance of the trousseau. Costumes very clearly represented embodied wealth, as evidenced by the Church's encyclicals on the dowry, which devoted much attention to the detail and materials used. The matrimonial contracts indicate that close interest was also expressed

Table 23. *Transmission of resources to brides according to costume type*

					Groshia				
	0	1-100	101-200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501-600	Over 600	Total
<i>Cash endowments</i>									
Costume A									
Number	142	56	55	42	22	15	9	12	353
Percentage	40.2	15.9	16.6	11.9	6.2	4.2	2.5	3.4	67.5
Costume B									
Number	25	26	10	3	1	1			66
Percentage	37.9	39.4	15.2	4.5	1.5	1.5			12.6
Costume C									
Number	27	8	9	8	4	4	3	13	78
Percentage	34.6	10.3	11.5	10.3	5.1	5.1	3.8	19.2	14.9
Costume D									
Number	13	1	3	4		1		4	26
Percentage	50.0	3.8	11.5	15.4		3.8		15.4	5.0
Total									
Number	207	91	77	57	27	21	12	31	523
Percentage	39.6	17.4	14.7	10.9	5.2	4.0	2.3	5.9	100.0

		0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	Over 25	Total
<i>Fields</i>			stremmata	stremmata	stremmata	stremmata	stremmata	stremmata	
Costume A	Percentage	54.7	37.4	4.8	1.1	0.8	0.3	0.8	67.5
Costume B	Percentage	28.8	25.8	16.7	10.6	9.1	6.1	3.0	12.6
Costume C	Percentage	64.1	24.4	7.7	2.6	1.3			14.9
Costume D	Percentage	52.6	33.3	7.1	2.9	2.1	1.0	1.5	100.1
(Total excluded)									
<i>Olive trees</i>		0	1-40	41-80	81-120	121-160	161-200	Over 200	Total
Costume A	Percentage	17.0	43.6	26.1	9.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	67.5
Costume B	Percentage	42.5	56.1	1.5					12.6
Costume C	Percentage	12.8	23.1	32.1	15.4	16.4	5.1	5.1	14.9
Costume D	Percentage	11.5	53.8	19.2	7.7	7.7			5.0
Total percentage		19.3	42.6	23.5	9.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	100.0
<i>Animals</i>		0	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	Over 40		Total
Costume A	Percentage	92.4	2.5	4.0	0.6	0.3	0.3		67.5
Costume B	Percentage	42.4	43.9	4.5	1.5	3.0	4.5		12.6
Costume C	Percentage	96.2			2.6		1.3		14.9
Costume D	Percentage	100.0							5.0
Total percentage		87.0	7.3	3.3	1.0	0.6	1.0		100.0

Costume A = Untitled Athenians; Costume B = Villagers; Costume C = Wealthy titled families; Costume D = New Athenians.

Table 24. *Cash dowers according to costume types worn by titled/untitled brides*

	Groshia								Row total
	0	1-100	101-200	201-300	301-400	401-500	501-600	Over 600	
Costume A of untitled Athenians									
Number	6	21	134	81	39	39	12	11	316
Percentage	1.9	6.6	42.4	25.6	12.3	3.8	3.5	3.8	60.4
Costume A but worn by titled Athenians									
Number	0	5	13	6	5	1	5	2	37
Percentage	0	13.5	35.1	16.2	13.5	2.7	13.5	5.4	7.0
Costume B worn by untitled migrant villagers									
Number	6	17	39	2	2	0	0	0	66
Percentage	9.1	25.8	59.1	3.0	3.0	0	0	0	12.6
Costume C worn by wealthy but untitled Athenians									
Number	1	4	7	15	12	3	5	5	52
Percentage	1.9	7.7	13.5	28.8	23.1	5.8	9.6	9.6	9.9
Costume C worn by titled Athenians									
Number	0	0	4	0	5	2	5	10	26
Percentage	0	0	15.4	0	19.2	7.7	19.2	38.5	4.9
New Costume D worn by untitled Athenians									
Number	0	0	1	5	5	3	1	7	22
Percentage	0	0	4.5	22.7	22.7	13.6	4.5	31.8	4.2
Costume D worn by titled Athenians									
Number	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
Percentage	0	0	0	0	0	0	25.0	75.0	0.7
Column total									
Number	13	47	198	109	68	21	18	27	523
Percentage	2.4	8.9	37.8	20.8	13.0	4.0	3.4	5.1	100.0

'Titled brides' refers to brides who possessed a title ('Kir', 'Sior') within their immediate family (father, mother, or the bride herself).

by the transacting partners. In all contracts, but especially those involving Type C costumes worn by the wealthy and titled brides, great detail is devoted to the number and types of coins attached to the costumes. Many of these costumes bore coins of various origins, a clear indication of the primitive accumulation of cash and the multiplicity of currencies circulating in Athens. Such detail indicates a certain wariness among affines and a means to forestall tension, possibly because while cash endowments to the bride were often retained by the groom upon the dissolution of the marriage, the costume and dresses belonged to the bride. They were either transmitted to the orphaned children or to the deceased bride's kin if she died issueless, as occurred with Skouzes' mother.

Tension among affines in estimating the value of the trousseau was often resolved by the use of neutral third parties, a situation paralleled in Sicily through the use of the *stimatrice* (Schneider, 1980), a female valuer whose job was to give a monetary value to highly labour intensive and ornate works of embroidery and lace. In Athens, by contrast, value lay not only in labour input, but also in the actual coins embedded in the costumes themselves, and it was such costumes that received more attention in the contracts. A variety of currencies was then in circulation (including the Turkish piastre and the Spanish dollar, for example) and cash was in relatively short supply. Indeed 'in some parts of Greece money was not generally accepted [and] its use was restricted to some kinds of exchanges only' (Loules, 1985: 85). Clothing was thus a prime vehicle for the primitive accumulation of capital and equally important, for its display in a form which could hardly be realised except through its disintegration.

Costumes and jewellery thus represented and indeed embodied a considerable portion of the value of a bride's direct or indirect dowry. As in contemporary North Africa, coins and the clothing to which they were attached could be pawned as security against a loan. Even more significant were unforeseen crises. In 1787 during the tyrannical rule of Hadji Ali, Panayis Skouzes records that in order to save the lives of their husbands, womenfolk gave up their dowries: 'And they went weeping to the *arkhons* who told them, "Give whatever you have – everything – to save your husbands" ... They sold their jewellery and their farmlands and paid up' (Andrews, 1979: 121–2). In more recent times a similar pattern appears to have been transmitted by Asia Minor island refugees who settled in the island of Amouliani in 1926 (Salamone and Stanton, 1986). The population had lost all their belongings in the Graeco-Turkish War and the land in their new island home

was useless for agricultural purposes. Settlement was neolocal and a lack of employment opportunities meant that brides could not be supplied with cash dowries. The refugees responded to their new straitened circumstances by upgrading their traditional patterns of bride endowment: *rouha* (trousseaux and household furnishings) became the most important resource transmitted at marriage. In their original Marmaras island home and in Amouliani, *rouha* was carefully enumerated by the mother of the bride, and '... was often equal to or greater than the value of inherited property and capital' (*ibid.*: 109). Such ritual wealth 'considered as capital just as was land or gold, was sold by families, painfully, piece by piece, as they struggled to survive the years of exile during the Graeco-Turkish War (1919–1922)' (*ibid.*: 109). Similar patterns are likely to have occurred in Athens during the War of Independence.

The trousseau was considered capital in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Athens, but it was also highly symbolic. To reduce it to its capital functions would be to deny its highly emotive and social significance. The higher up the social scale, the greater was the tendency to restrict its realisation as productive capital. Coins were ultimately jewellery, constituting part of a costume designed to be worn and displayed and not put to productive use, nor to be exchanged for other goods except at the cost of the loss of prestige, and ultimately of social position. The trousseau was also an essential constituent of gender identity. While men derived their identity through their control of houses and land (and increasingly through cash), women's identities as daughters, brides and mothers were inextricably tied to the trousseau, which combined statements about social status and femininity. Pawning a costume literally implied the forfeiting of the most visible marker of social position. As in traditional African economies we are dealing with a multi-centric economy. The value of clothing and jewellery, which were increasingly linked as one moved higher up the social scale, were realised by being worn; more precisely they indicated the *timi* (monetary value and social estimation) placed by the donor (usually the bride's family) upon the recipient (the bride herself). Yet at the same time because it accompanied and marked the establishment of marriage, it was clearly a sign of the esteem with which the proposed match was held. If women gave up their trousseaux they lost that most visible marker of their *timi*, in both its monetary and virtuous senses. This rebounded back on to their husbands and menfolk. It is significant that Skouzes' account links both money and virtue in a scenario likely to strike his readers as the nadir in moral and political degradation brought

about by Turkish rule. For the womenfolk who are 'manless' and 'protectless' have to give up their trousseaux to save their menfolk whose role it was to protect them, thus reversing the moral order.

Jane Schneider (1980) has aptly described the significance of the trousseau as 'treasure'. She has suggested that in Sicily 'until very recently items of trousseau were produced simultaneously for use and potential exchange; their content was at once ornamental and, when stored for emergency conversion, essential' (1980: 351). While we agree with her general argument, we wish to explore this phenomenon from a slightly different perspective. Now the 'value' of treasure lies precisely in its potential for actualisation rather than its realisation. If it is realised its 'value' is lost, or rather its value is realised, but in monetary terms. Although the conversion of the trousseau in emergency situations was certainly envisaged in this society to satisfy particular needs, clearly trousseaux were not put together and given to brides for this purpose. Rather they were given to, and collected by, women as an expression of their role as brides of a determinate social class. The analogy can best be pursued with reference to heirlooms such as paintings and other items of decorative value. Just as the function of a painting is to grace a house and denote something about the occupants and their social origins, so too the function of a trousseau is to denote something about the status and history of the parties to a marriage. Clearly paintings and trousseaux may be sold, and indeed may be purchased with an eventual sale or investment in mind, but they have a determinate and lengthy existence and use between their collection and sale or disposal.

The word 'treasure' contains a multiplicity of meanings, but in its most basic sense it denotes the storage and preservation of precious items, rather than their exchange. If trousseaux were 'treasure' this is because they were accumulated and stored as precious objects to a specific group of people, and because their potential monetary conversion was less 'precious' (in its symbolic connotations) than the value attached to the items themselves by the owners. The exception of course is the holding up of human life for ransom. It is significant that Skouzes linked treasure and human life and he clearly sees it as an inversion of the moral order. It is these two aspects which we wish to explore.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Southern European societies such as Sicily and Greece were market economies and most goods could be given a cash value. But some resources, such as land and trousseaux, did not often enter the market. Land circulated more through appropriation or through sale in straitened circumstances, for example after the plague when the market collapsed; otherwise it was circulated less frequently. Furthermore these economies were far from fully

monetised and cash itself was a scarce resource. Trousseaux, while certainly possessing a determinate monetary value and evaluated in monetary terms, were not pure commodities in the classical sense. Significantly, they were heavily invested in for the purposes of social mobility. They circulated between kin, were put together in determinate 'packages' which carried different messages about the status of the conjugal couple, and achieved their significance in the matrimonial context. They functioned both as gifts, circulating between kin and affines, and as commodities sold on the market between strangers. Although they could be exchanged for cash, cash was itself a relatively scarce resource and was often hoarded. The possession of both cash and a large trousseau in this society conferred prestige because they denoted specific lifestyles characterised by the absence of the need to work. Trousseaux were half-way between 'gifts' and 'commodities'; they were neither fully one nor the other. They were never fully 'gifts' in the anthropological sense, embedded in the matrimonial context, because they were given a monetary value which entered calculations on the size of the dowry, and because they could be sold on the market. They were never fully commodities because they were often transmitted from mother to daughter, and because their sale on the market implied not so much the realisation of their value, but an explicit admission of a fall in social status and circumstance. Significantly, the trousseau decreased in importance when the economy became fully commoditised; it became, in J. Davis' words, 'a poor sort of investment; it does not carry interest, nor does it have great liquidity; it is hard to sell it and impossible to secure a loan with it' (1973: 36).

Trousseaux in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Athens were 'treasure' because they embodied labour, symbolically and materially. It is as if this society sought its inspirational model from an inversion of the labour theory of value. Trousseaux were valuable symbolically and hence materially because their production and accumulation embodied and glorified the productive leisure use of labour. In short they embodied and celebrated the labour of those who did not have to work. A sale of a trousseau as an 'emergency conversion' (Herskovits, 1962) indicated in a clear manner that the owners had lost not only wealth but also social position. At the same time they symbolised the inherent irreducibility of the honour of 'being' rather than 'doing' of the *arkhon* (and to a lesser extent of the *nikoklirei*) families. The following description of 'The Nobility' by Simmel could equally apply to the symbolic significance of trousseaux:

The nobleman is occupied, but he does not labor ... War and the hunt, the historically typical occupations of nobility, are not, despite all the toil involved,

'labor' in the true sense. The subjective factor has decisive dominance over the objective factor in them; and unlike the case in labor, the product is not an object severed from the personality from which it has absorbed energy; rather the emphasis lies in the preservation of the powers of the subject himself.

(1971: 210)

It is not hard to see why the *nikokirei* class and wealthy families invested heavily in trousseaux. They symbolised the ability to maintain the womenfolk in the leisure and safety of the home. The costumes themselves indicated the high status of the womenfolk, and they were security items which could be realised in emergencies. Furthermore under the Ottomans such items were not subject to taxation, as land was, and were ideal 'investment' opportunities. By the mid-nineteenth century this model had become legitimated and diffused throughout the wider society.

By the early 1830s the trousseau had undergone a number of transformations. First, the monetary significance of the trousseau decreased with respect to cash endowments. Table 16 indicates that the value of cash dowries increased after 1830. Second, with the establishment of an independent Greek kingdom, closer contact with Western Europe as well as the decline of the traditional *arkhon* class, a new costume emerged, which we call 'Type D', and which was universally adopted throughout Athens. In design, materials and colour this costume was closely modelled on Occidental fashion, replacing Smyrna and Constantinople as the source of inspiration. In its ceaseless striving for new modes of expression we have here strong proof of Greek elite aspirations to model itself on Western European culture. New items of clothing such as the *kontogiuni*, *kontosi*, *kozaka* and *bicotto* (some of which are of romance origin) replaced the *tzoubes*, *zipounes* and *anteria* of the past. We see here a confirmation of Gellner's thesis (1983) that nationalism aims towards the creation of an equally accessible and standardised culture and language, extending nationally often by reinterpreting or creating new traditions. In the new Greek nation-state the creation of a national language, culture and folklore (Herzfeld, 1982) was also accompanied by the standardisation of the language of clothing both for women, who wore what became known as the first Queen Amalia's costume, and men, who increasingly wore the *foustanelia* (the Albanian 'skirts'). Significantly, while the urban costumes (A and C) merged into a single, modern one, the Type B rural costume remained largely static until its eventual confinement to the countryside, a clear indication of the separation between town and country. Henceforth men and women would not wear radically different and identifiable costumes, but rather would follow the same type of costume 'grammar'

arranged in various ways as a mark of social distinction, especially in the towns. Indeed as cash became more readily available, costumes began to be decorated with false coins suggesting wealth and pedigree rather than embodying it. The growing homogenisation in dowries and trousseaux is brought out in table 25. This correlates the costume Type (A-D) with other components of the dowry (cash, olive trees, vineyards, fields and animals). With the introduction of the new costume Type D, donations of cash increased, but certainly did not reach the level of that previously given by titled families (an indication that the endowment of brides with expensive costumes by the latter held a largely symbolic value). Indeed the amounts of the various goods which accompanied Type D costumes reads like an average of the goods transferred with the other three costume types, an indication of growing homogenisation in the form of the dowry in all its aspects.

This discussion on cash and dowry endowments leads us to the conclusion that in such contexts it is difficult to talk of the matching contributions of the spouses. Men and women carried different resources at marriage; these resources held different semantic loads, were organised according to gender-specific rationalities, and were realised in different time-scales. We are, therefore, in partial agreement with Comaroff (1980) that marriage payments have a particular political and semantic meaning embedded in the strategies of the participants which cannot be reduced to a crude translation of monetary value. Yet this does not mean that economic values were not attached to resources transmitted at marriage, nor that the spirit of economic calculation was absent. The detailed concern and meticulous listing of such items indicate a society keenly aware of their monetary value, of the privileges and duties attached to status in a hierarchical society, and concerned to maintain – and in some case to challenge – those boundaries. Jewellery and trousseaux did not disappear overnight in Athens; they continued to retain their importance. A visitor to the Court and its balls in 1845, Felicia Mary Skene noted that the 'wives and daughters [of the capitani] ... generally carry their whole fortunes on their persons, sometimes wear their red caps, with the tassel, composed entirely of real pearls, while diamonds and jewels are lavishly disposed on the most conspicuous parts of their dress' (Andrews, 1979: 239). Nevertheless, it appears that their significance did change – they were now just one resource among many in an economy and polity which was becoming increasingly diversified. Their display was not pegged onto religious ceremonies or stages in the developmental cycle but to the complex demands of an evolving civil society, and their accumulation was not a substitute for cash but rather an indication of the possession of cash and other resources.

Juliet du Boulay, who has written on the 'meaning' of the traditional

Table 25. Relationship between costume type and other components of the dowry

Costume type	Total number in sample	Percentage receiving cash		Percentage receiving olive trees		Percentage receiving vineyards		Percentage receiving fields		Percentage receiving animals
		Some cash	Over 300 groshia	Some trees	Over 80 trees	Some vineyards	Over 4 plots	Some fields	Over 4 plots	
Type A	353	58.8	16.3	83.0	13.2	74.8	11.9	45.3	3.0	0
Type B	66	62.1	3.0	57.6	0	80.3	9.0	72.2	28.9	57.6
Type C	78	65.4	33.2	87.2	32.0	73.1	9.0	35.9	3.9	0
Type D	26	50.0	19.2	88.5	15.4	65.4	7.6	50.0	15.3	0

dowry in the Evvian village of Ambeli, has suggested that the function of the traditional dowry 'was not so much to confer, as to reveal, wealth' (1983: 259). While we are in general agreement with this stance we have difficulties with her analysis on a number of counts. First, her account of 'wealth' is somewhat economic; for us 'wealth' in this context is also symbolic capital. Individuals and families used markers of wealth (such as cash or trousseaux) in highly symbolic ways. Second, while in Ambeli daughters clearly received less than sons, this was not necessarily the case in Athens, for their cash endowments and trousseaux were often quite substantial. Finally we have difficulty with the reasons which du Boulay advances for this inequitable division of property: in her view, men 'are superior in intelligence' (*ibid.*: 253) and 'anything given to girls was thought of as being given away to a strange house, while anything given to boys was thought of as being preserved still within the family' (*ibid.*: 255). In the case of girls, moral reason is an *ex post facto* rationalisation and appears too heavily enmeshed in village categories to be of much analytical use. In Athens, 'things given to girls' were not necessarily seen as detracting from resources to be preserved in the family through transmission to sons. By giving resources to daughters Athenians were making statements about themselves often in highly symbolic ways. It was expressed in the way men and women presented themselves, in the way they promised resources at marriage, and so on. In metropolitan Athens, in contrast to rural Ambeli, the name of a family and its reputation depended not merely on how much land or resources it preserved down the male line, but on whom it incorporated within its ambit and with whom it gave its daughters in marriage.

Therefore, while du Boulay's account marks an important advance in the treatment of the changing significance of the dowry across time, it tends to suffer from the problem of working backward analytically to explain the specificity of the present situation and why it differs from the traditional pattern. Ultimately her analysis rests on moral concepts of the person and how the commercialisation of the dowry has tended to devalue women by giving them a 'price' although she does not use this word. By contrast traditionally when women had little or no 'price', their 'value' within marriage was universally understood. This approach is appealing but it is perhaps too unilinear and evolutionist. For what is at issue is as much the equation of whether women had 'value' but no 'price' in the traditional system, and a 'price' but 'little value' in the contemporary one. In the traditional Athenian marriage system individuals and families often used dowries (that is, 'prices') in a strategic fashion to confer material and symbolic 'value' on themselves. The traditional 'dowry' was a collective statement and an index of how much

and in what way a family as a corporate group valued and esteemed itself both materially and symbolically within determinate and specified social relations with other family groups. The dowry consisted of a composite set of obligations and rights expressed by different individuals, men and women, who presented different resources. It was not, as is often the case nowadays, the amount demanded of a family by a threatening 'other' (the groom), to 'take' the daughter off a family's hand in marriage. Certainly in modern Greece the dowry appears to give women a 'price', precisely because cash and commodities form the bulk of the dowry. But as Goody has observed, 'price can only be defined in terms of exchange, normally some form of market; that is not at all the case with wealth, which may be without actual or potential exchange value' (1990: 466). What is significant about marriage in modern Greece is that it appears as a 'market' to the participants (and sometimes to outside observers) because of the massive donation of cash and commodifiable resources. Hence the notion that 'today money is everything'. But what is perhaps even more significant about contemporary Greek marriage is that because the field of potential partners is so great the moral qualities of a potential groom or bride are difficult to ascertain, with significant implications for the estimation of 'price'. Money thus acts to filter potential spouses. In the traditional system, by contrast, with a much smaller and known circle of potential affines, women did not only achieve their identity in marriage. They came to their new family at marriage with a definite identity as members of their natal families and with determinate resources which indicated how their natal families wished to present themselves and to be perceived by their affines.

We conclude our analysis of the transmission of property by taking some specific examples into account. We offer two cases. The first concerns the transmission of property within a family which had access to certain resources, but which did not form part of the Athenian elite. Here the endowment of daughters is relatively egalitarian, the brothers contribute to their sisters' dowry and there is a pronounced corporate attitude towards their marriages. Yet while the brothers contribute substantially, they also collect from their own spouses.

Of interest in this example are the transmission of responsibility across time and the general equality between the resources given to daughters and those received by their brothers from their wives as dowries. In 1817 the eldest daughter, Kouzia, was endowed by her parents and her two brothers (see Fig. 2). Her husband Spiros brought a dowry equivalent to her dowry. Two years later when her sister Agathi was due to be married, one of the brothers, Christos, did not contribute

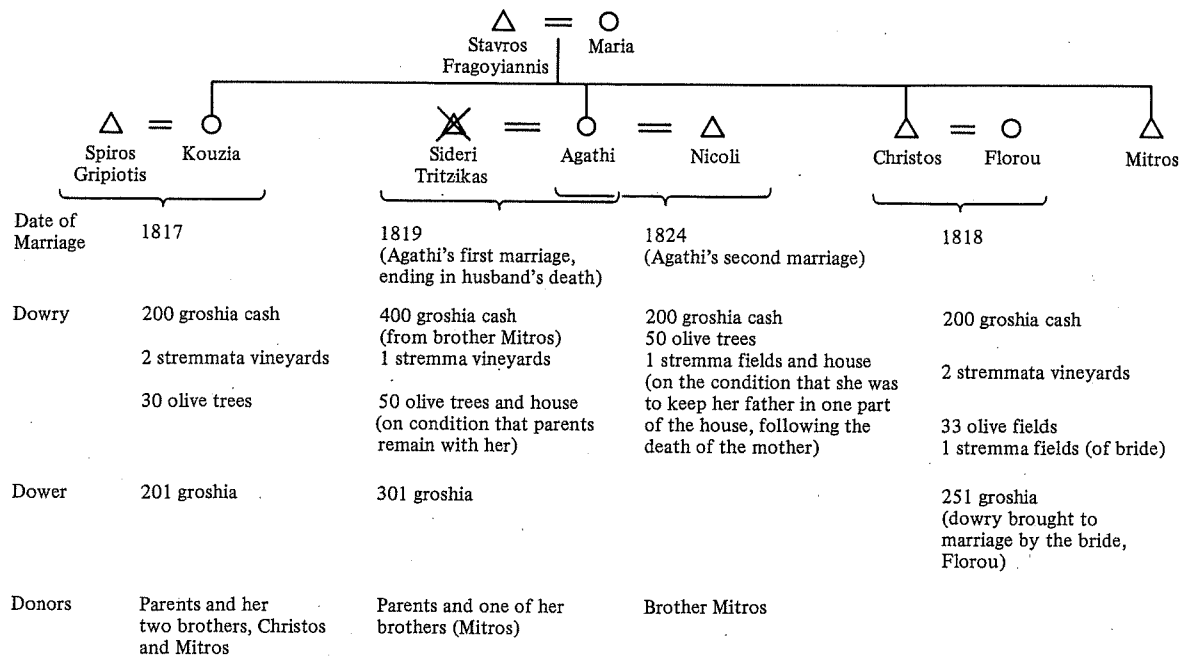
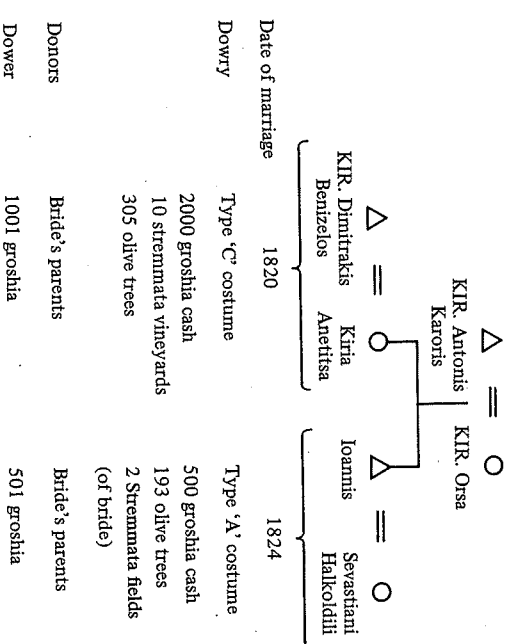


Figure 2. Marriages and the transmission of goods in the family Fragoiannis

to the dowry since he himself had married a year earlier. The burden of providing Agathi with her dowry was carried by the parents and her one remaining unmarried brother. This daughter received more cash than her sister (double the amount), partly because of her brother Miltos' active involvement and partly perhaps because she was obliged to live with her parents – requiring her groom to forego his own parental home. On her second marriage she brought another 200 groshia with her; it is unclear whether this was the residue of her first cash endowment. Finally of significance is the brother Christos' marriage in 1818, for his wife brought in almost exactly the same amount of goods with which he and his family had endowed their sister Kouzia one year previously.

In the second example, by contrast, there is a marked difference between what the daughter Anetitsa, received at marriage and what her brother's bride, Sevastiani brought to that marriage (see Fig. 3). Yet, both siblings married into the Athenian aristocracy. What is significant here is that whereas the daughter, Kiria Anetitsa, was given a large dowry to ensure an easy transition into the ruling group, her brother received (i.e. demanded) much less from his spouse's family in order to make that social transition. Daughters, in short, were heavily endowed while sons demanded less. Of equal interest is the fact that endowments were unrelated: the brother, Ioannis, did not contribute to his sister's dowry, highlighting the point made earlier that the *nikokretei* possessed a more contractual and individualistic, less commensal and matrimonial ethic.

Figure 3. Marriages and the transmission of goods in the family Karois



Conclusion

The changing articulation of cash and trousseaux endowments, as well as the transformations in the nature of trousseaux themselves, indicate a change from an agriculturally based pre-industrial hierarchical and status-bound social order to a more mobile, urbanised and contractual type of society as Athens moved into the nineteenth century and the modern world. The variety of bridal costumes and cash endowments were increasingly replaced by the adoption of a single, universal Athenian costume, by a shift towards household goods as the main constituent of the trousseau, and the general overshadowing of the trousseau by cash endowments as the main economic component of the dowry. What are the implications for our understanding of traditional Mediterranean societies?

On an obvious level we are witnessing a shift from status to class in the new social order generated by the nation-state, but we are also in the presence of a society which traditionally defined and organized itself not in terms of a private-public regulation of social affairs, of the roles of men and women in society, but in terms of a formal-informal distinction predicated upon status. We wish to suggest here that this distinction is more useful towards an understanding of traditional Mediterranean society than of the private-public dichotomy, which we believe is the end-result of a long process of a specifically burgher, or urban middle-class, culture which eventually came to dominate the Greek countryside in the twentieth century. We wish to elaborate on this.

The formal-informal distinction has more to do with the presentation of the self to others in specific social contexts, than with the effects of the inherent properties of space upon action. This is not to say that the formal-informal distinction cannot be reduced to the public-private one; indeed the latter evolved from the former and clearly possesses elements of it. But we believe that such a reduction would obscure the subtle differences between the two. For the formal-informal distinction which ran through the organisation of social life was on the one hand wider in its implications, less physically embedded in the organisation of gender, and intimately linked to social status. Costumes, rather than visible and permanent markers of social status such as houses, the ownership of goods, and so on, indicated status in this pre-capitalist, pre-nation-state society. In other words, people wore their status in this society. This encompassed not only dress, its colour and materials, but also hair styles, the presence or absence of beards and the covering of the head and the feet. This was due in part to the structure of the Ottoman pre-industrial state which rigidly differentiated the population according to religion and occupation, rather than in terms of language-

use. For example an Imperial Firman of 1806 divided the Greek *rayah* into three 'classes' which rigidly specified the dress suitable for each group. Members of the third 'class' were not permitted to wear shoes and they were only allowed the privilege of wearing stockings on movement to the second 'class' and the payment of a tax of between 75–100 *grosnia*.

Such regulations did not merely impose a specific form on the presentation of social reality, but also reflected a specific hierarchical organisation of society. They denoted a society which devoted as much attention to the presentation and markers of power, prestige and social status, as to their actual possession by legal rights and privileges. This could give rise to contradictions, as when an Ottoman overlord group in economic decline jealously guarded its outward signs of privilege from the encroachment of their Christian subjects in Athens, Cyprus and other parts of the Greek world. Such markers could also be consciously played upon and manipulated in what may now seem to be eccentric ways. The foreigner Sieber described Stakian wealthy merchants 'who in their homes wore cashmir turbans, but who when they went out into the streets wore a humiliating blue one because, if they were seen by the Turks they ran the risk of paying a fine of 500 to 3,000 *grosnia* for contempt of the Muslims' (Simopoulos, 1975, 436).

This example enables us to further explore our assertion. For here we have an example of individuals wearing the most highly formal and privileged dress in the privacy of their own homes. Formality and informality depend upon context to a greater extent than the more spatially constituted and irreducible concepts of public or private. And such a context is socially defined as much by the company present as by its physical location. Thus individuals in traditional Athens, men and women, could either be formal or informal in the home; paradoxically, in the case cited above, they could don the most formal costumes in the informality, that is the privacy of their homes. We are not suggesting here that the formal-informal distinction is opposed to the public-private one; they certainly overlay each other but they are not reducible to each other. The public-private distinction seems to us to be defined more in terms of actual physical space and in terms of occasions, which determines whether, for example, women should wear proper shoes or slippers in public, as in Vasilika (Friedl, 1962; Herzfeld, 1986). For example it has often been noted that the 'public face' of the contemporary Greek rural house is the *saloni* (living room) where the family receives visitors and entertains guests. Characteristically it tends to be utilised less by the family for domestic everyday occasions, and kin or close persons are normally entertained in the *kouzina* (kitchen) or

elsewhere. In the traditional Athenian house there was much greater flexibility in the use of space partly because rooms were less functionally specific and also because the nature of the company determined the presentation of self (in formal or informal terms). In other words, in traditional Athenian houses the social context determined the presentation of self; in modern Greek society the physical context determines the presumption of self. In both cases strategic manipulation can occur but it is predicated upon different principles.

The differences between the two systems, although subtle, are nevertheless significant. The 'modern' use of space and its gender determination is perhaps less flexible and more domestically based, drawn around the family rather than around the social status of individuals. We see this change as being due to the process of urbanisation in Athens, and to the emergence of the *nikokirei* model of kinship and the family which gradually but definitely renegotiated the definition of what womanhood constituted, through (among other things) the production of elaborate household artefacts within the home, and by implication of what manhood constituted.

The formal-informal distinction can be seen not so much as a repertoire of roles, as that of the performance of a socially determined identity. Marriage in Greece provides a key insight into the construction of personal identity because it involves an exchange, admittedly of a complex sort. One of the seminal features of the Maussian legacy is that the nature of exchange is related to the concept of the person. Marriage in Greece in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries can be seen as a series of gift exchanges establishing relationships between the subjects (family groups, husbands and brides, parents and children, brothers and sisters), rather than a relationship between the objects of a transaction (as in commodity exchange). Indeed what is distinctive is that this society attempted to use goods as gifts; goods which also had a commodity value outside the matrimonial system. The identity of men and women was inextricably linked to the manner in which they utilised different goods to satisfy their various obligations across social groups. The identity of men was linked to the receipt of houses and to the donation of cash dowries to daughters among the upper social groups, and linked to the donation of items of jewellery to their brides in the lower ones. The identity of women as mothers, daughters and brides was linked to the production of trousseaux and costumes, which denoted both their social status and their position within the developmental cycle. And because men and women received different resources and exchanged them in qualitatively different ways and according to different rationalities, their identity was 'composite' and could only be

realised in and through an exchange system which was primarily a gift system. Hence the attempts at the stratification of dowries to prevent marriage from appearing like a market exchange. This is not to say that economic criteria were absent in such marriages; they indeed were present and considerations of gain and loss were important and increasingly viewed in these terms. But economic criteria of good matches had to follow certain rules that were not related to the criteria of supply and demand. They were tempered by considerations of status, social origins, and claims to prestige and self-esteem.

Hence the notion of a formal-informal dichotomy containing the presentation of self may be particularly useful in explaining this society. The self was presented in terms of a performance of a socially determined identity. To pursue the theatre metaphor more closely, if the 'play' had been 'written' (by some of the actors who arrogated key parts for themselves), individuals were formally obliged to act out their socially determined parts/identities. If they wanted to extemporise or change their parts/identities, they had to do so cautiously so that the situation appeared to remain the same and the 'play' could continue. They were not characters in search of a role, but 'roles' in search of characters to be acted out. As a result one was either 'on stage' or 'off stage', 'formal' or 'informal', except that the 'identity' portrayed formally 'on-stage' became increasingly discrepant with that notion of self experienced informally 'off-stage', in the market, and so on, especially for the *nikokirei* group. Simmel has noted that in the pre-industrial age 'a man did not depend so much upon the purposive, objective content of his associations [as a result] his "formal personality" stood out more clearly against his personal existence: hence personal bearing in the society of earlier times was much more ceremonially, rigidly and impersonally regulated than now' (1971, 133). He goes on to contrast this with the modern notion of sociability and its interaction of equals, accompanied by a courtesy applied equally to the strong and weak (what has been called 'The Civilising Process'), and which is 'a game in which one "acts" as though all were equal, as though he especially esteemed everyone' (*ibid.*; 133-4). In other words the two systems can be seen as analogous to a 'theatre' and a 'game'. It is perhaps significant that Mauss in his essay on the gift emphasised the theatrical element of gift exchange systems which in a post-Malinowskian way we sometimes misrepresent as 'game-like'. Indeed if there is a common 'Mediterranean aesthetic' it may well lie in a juxtaposition of the two systems – that is, men and women attempt to strategically utilise a repertoire of roles to struggle against socially determined identities.

The introduction of cash and the increasing tendency towards the

commodification of dowries within a nation-state undergoing rapid urbanisation had a number of far-reaching effects. It subverted the traditional alliance system of marriage, transformed the perceptions of the role and significance of the dowry and affected relations within the family. It also affected the boundaries between the family and society by redefining the nature and significance of spiritual kinship. In the next chapter we examine changes to the moral and political economy of spiritual kinship as Athens lost its agrarian, hierarchical, pre-industrial character.