



Περίληψη :

Γενικές Πληροφορίες

Area: 14,382 km²

Coastline length: 35 km

Population: 1.050

Island capital and its population: Oinousses or Aignousa (999)

Administrative structure: Region of North Aegean, Prefecture of Chios, Municipality of Oinousses

Local newspapers: "Oinoussai"

Museums: Oinousses Nautical Museum

Archaeological sites and monuments: Antiquities from the historical period at Kastro

Traditional settlements: Oinousses

Natural monuments: The island complex of Oinousses has been included in the European network "NATURA 2000"

Cultural clubs: Oinousses Cultural Association (SFO), Cultural Center "Georgios Christou Lemos", John Diamantis Lemos Foundation

Events: Events in honor of St Nicolas, patron saint of the island (December 6th)

Religious feasts: On St George's day (April 23th), On St Irene's day (May 5th)

Sport events: Swimming Games, Sailing Games

Sport clubs: "Panoinoussios"

1. Location and name

Oinousses is a complex of nine islands and skerries that is between [Chios](#) and the peninsula of Erythraia in Asia Minor. It includes the following: Oinoussa or Aignousa, the largest of the islands (14 square kilometers), and the only one inhabited, Panagia (or the island of Pasha), Gaidouroniso, Vatos, Pontikoniso as well as the smaller ones Arhontoniso, Pateroniso, Pontikoudiko, Laimoudiko and Prasonisia.

In the 19th century, apart from the name Oinoussa/ Oinousses, the name Aignousa (and Egnousa) is also written. Today the name Aignousa is more popular and the people are called Aignousiotes.

2. History

During [Antiquity](#) and [Medieval times](#), the islands were mentioned by the name of Oinousses by various writers (Herodotus, Thucydides, [Hecataeus Miletus](#), Pliny the Younger, Stefanos Vyzantios), either as a geographical position or in relation to the events that took place in the area. In the following centuries, Oinousses must have had parallel history with neighboring Chios. There are only some reports in documents dating in the 14th century, while later on there is information that they weren't inhabited and together with [Fournoi](#) and Moshonisia were a location for meetings of pirates.

In 1521, the Turkish admiral Piri Reis refers to them using the name that can be found later on in Ottoman documents: Koyun Adası



and Koyun Adaları, that is “islands of the sheep”. Later on, in 1566, Chios and Oinousses are occupied by the [Ottoman](#) admiral Piyale pasha. He gave Oinousses as a Timar to his officer Parmaksiz pasha, whose heirs dedicated the island to a religious Muslim foundation (vakif).

Already from the beginning of the 17th century, the reports to the islands were more frequent by [travelers](#) who passed by Chios, a stop in the seaway that connected Constantinople with the Holy Land. At that time, Oinousses were often called by the name of Spalmadori, as well as the relevant Spalmantori, (E)spalmador(es) etc., which was dominant in the foreign texts until the end of the 19th century. Other names frequent in texts of travelers or maps are Agunto, Cenus(s)a(e) and Hippi and sometimes Oenus(s)a and Oenuses. The islands are either mentioned as non-inhabited or inhabited by shepherds.

During the first half of the 18th century, the greatest island of the complex, Oinoussa, was a location of more permanent settlement for the shepherds of north Chios, who until then only inhabited Oinoussa for a few months a year, as well as for other farmers or shepherds from Kardamyli. The first settlement was created in location Kastro, while since the beginning of the 19th century, houses were being built in the east, in Mandraki, which until then was a port for communication with Chios. The people built churches and elected their elders. The population at the time was about 250 persons.

The progress in [shipping](#) which started in the mid 19th century can be seen in the island. The captains which were in contact with the great ports of Europe, the Ottoman Empire and Russia, expanded their horizons and wished to improve their lives. They built greater houses and assigned their decoration to special workers, who came from other places, while they also tended for their church, Agios Nikolaos that they renovated in 1864 and for their children’s education. In 1881, Oinousses went through hardship because of the earthquakes in Chios. The ottoman sovereignty in Oinousses ended in November 1912, during the First Balkan War and the island integrated into the [Greek State](#).

The distance between Oinousses and the closest coast of Asia Minor is only 4 miles. It is evident that relations were formed and some people from Asia Minor went to live to Oinousses already by the second half of the 19th century. In the summer of 1914, hundreds of [refugees](#) from the Asia Minor coastline were in Oinousses, following their persecution. Some of them stayed in the island until their return home in 1918-1919.

In August 1922, more than a thousand refugees (the highest percentage on a Greek island in relation to the native population) settled again in Oinousses, the vast majority of which came from Erythrea. Although the islands did not have any significant land for cultivation and the possibilities for finding work were little, the refugees stayed there, hoping that soon they would return home, which was so close by that some could see their homes or their fields across the sea, using their binoculars. The question of disappropriation of private land was the cause for the disruption of the relations between the natives and the refugees since the end of the 1920’s.

During World War II, as well as during the previous wars, many seamen from Oinousses were lost during combat at sea. In total, the number of Oinousses natives who were lost in shipwrecks of sailing ships or steamships from the mid 19th century until the mid 20th was significant, disproportionate to the population of the island. It is not by chance that the first monument in Greece to be devoted to the “Unknown Seaman” was made in Oinousses in 1952.

In May 1941, Germans occupied Oinousses, causing great problems to the alimentation of the island, as was also happening in Chios. Throughout the occupation, Oinousses were a station for the crossing of Greeks and English to Tsesme and from there, to the Middle East.

After the Liberation, there was an [immigration](#) wave towards Attica. The embarkation now took place in Pireaus, where the ship owners from Oinousses had opened their shipping firms. There were no more work opportunities in the island and the lack of a high school was a significant disadvantage. The earthquakes of 1949 intensified the immigration.

In 1954 the Naval High School was founded in the island and it contributed significantly to the control of the [population](#) recession. Today, the existence of the Naval School and the efforts made by various bodies for the development of the island, help create hope that Oinousses will not be deserted, as are other small islands of the Aegean.

3. Shipping in Oinousses



It is said that in 1822, after the disaster of Chios, many Oinousses natives left their island in order to go to [Syros](#) and elsewhere. Once there, it was clear that the sea could make them wealthy. In 1829, many of them returned home and in 1840, there is the first report that Oinousses natives embarked in sailing ships from Vrontados and Kardamyli. Until then, they only had small ships for communication with the Chios and Asia Minor coastline across the sea.

The Krimean War (1853-1856) is considered the beginning of the shipping activity in Oinousses, since this was the occupation of the majority of the male population. The overall favorable conditions, the circumstances for making Oinousses important in the area, as the once strong [Psara](#) were destroyed, as well as the fact that the families in the islands were actively supporting one another, contributed to its great prime. They constructed ships in Plomari, [Lesvos](#), Syros and Chios and expanded their activities throughout the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The brigs, the schooner and the Ketch-brigantine were replaced with the luggers. The progress is shipping and the wealth of the Oinousses natives was reflected on the island.

Towards the end of the century, the situation in shipping started to change and Oinousses tried to adjust, first by founding a marine insurance company, in 1903, and two years later, by buying the first steamship. Despite all this, the shipping in Oinousses went through a crisis during the first years of the 20th century and the male population migrated from the island to the United States.

The Interwar Period was a period of prime for the shipping in Oinousses and in 1937, ship-owners from Oinousses started moving to London. During World War II, the majority of the Oinousses ships were lost mostly in the Atlantic, participating in the ally forces.

The shipping of Oinousses, despite the disasters that it suffered during the war, soon regrouped its forces. In the following years, the Oinousses ship-owners bought and built a great number of ships. Today, the ships belonging to Oinousses natives are an important part of the fleet owned by Greece.

4. Oinousses Naval Museum

The Oinousses natives had important naval activities from the second half of the 19th century until today. It is no surprise that the first regional Naval Museum was founded in Oinousses in 1965. Nikolaos S. Lemos created the Oinousses Naval Museum with its present form in 1991. The main exhibits of the museum include: a) Paintings of popular ship painters – most works are of Aristidis Glykas, a painter from Chios b) models of ships, most of which have been made by French prisoners in England, at the time of the Napoleonic Wars c) Half models of ships, which date to the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century d) a small collection of ancient ceramic objects, coming from Cyprus e) a collection of 19th century weapons, f) naval instruments, figureheads, instruments of ship maintenance and other relevant objects g) Old photographs showing ships.

Since 1996, the Museum issues a newsletter, while apart from the museum catalogue, it also publishes posters and cards with exhibits from the museum catalogue and the books of N. Andriotis "The small journey. The arrival and settlement of Asia Minor refugees to Oinousses" (Athens 1998) and N. Skoutelis, F. Zanon, The architectural heritage of Oinousses (Athens 1999) as well as the double CD entitled Sea, Remember.

The Oinousses Naval Museum collects historical, folkloric and photographic material that concerns the island; it has created a library and is active in the area of educational programs. It has organized a program under the title «Plow's Words» which is about one day aboard the sailing ship "Archangel", presenting the life of the 19th century seamen aboard a sailing ship.



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	List of sites of Community importance http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_259/l_25920060921en00010104.pdf
	OINOUSSES: Our homeland http://www.oinousses.com/4655/index.html
	Region of North Aegean http://www.northaegean.gr/isisite/home/english.asp
	Βόρειο Αιγαίο Βιότοποι της περιοχής http://natura.minenv.gr/natura/server/user/region.asp?lng=GR&id=6

Πηγές

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