

cases on wooden stents, jatted above the rails. On one of these Dimitri's wife spread scarlet blankets and quilts against the mountain air. Dimitri, smoking a last cigarette as he leant on the balcony's edge, said he thought there might be some truth in the story of the Jews and the flight from St. Nikon. "But who can tell? It's such a long time ago . . . ages and ages . . . over a hundred years, perhaps . . ."

There was a new moon. Who *were* the Anavrytans, then? Probably ordinary Greeks, like the rest of Laconia. After all, the Kravarites had said that the mulberry-trees of **Perista** were planted there centuries ago by Jews, and the Tzakonians of Ay. Andrea had referred to the inhabitants of nearby Karakovouni as "Jews"—meaning, perhaps, nothing more than "strangers" or people ignorant of the Tzakonian dialect—and the Chiots are nicknamed "Jews" because of their commercial acumen. . . . And yet the pursuits of the Anavrytans . . . it was a conundrum. After the Slav invasion of the Peloponnese, these particular mountains were the haunt of a wild Bulgarian tribe, the Meligs. Could some of these, remaining unassimilated longer than the rest and, still heathen, have been dubbed "Jews," the name sticking even after their conversion and assimilation? There are no records, and it is impossible to discover. Wine-heavy sleep soon smoothed out these wrinkles of perplexity.