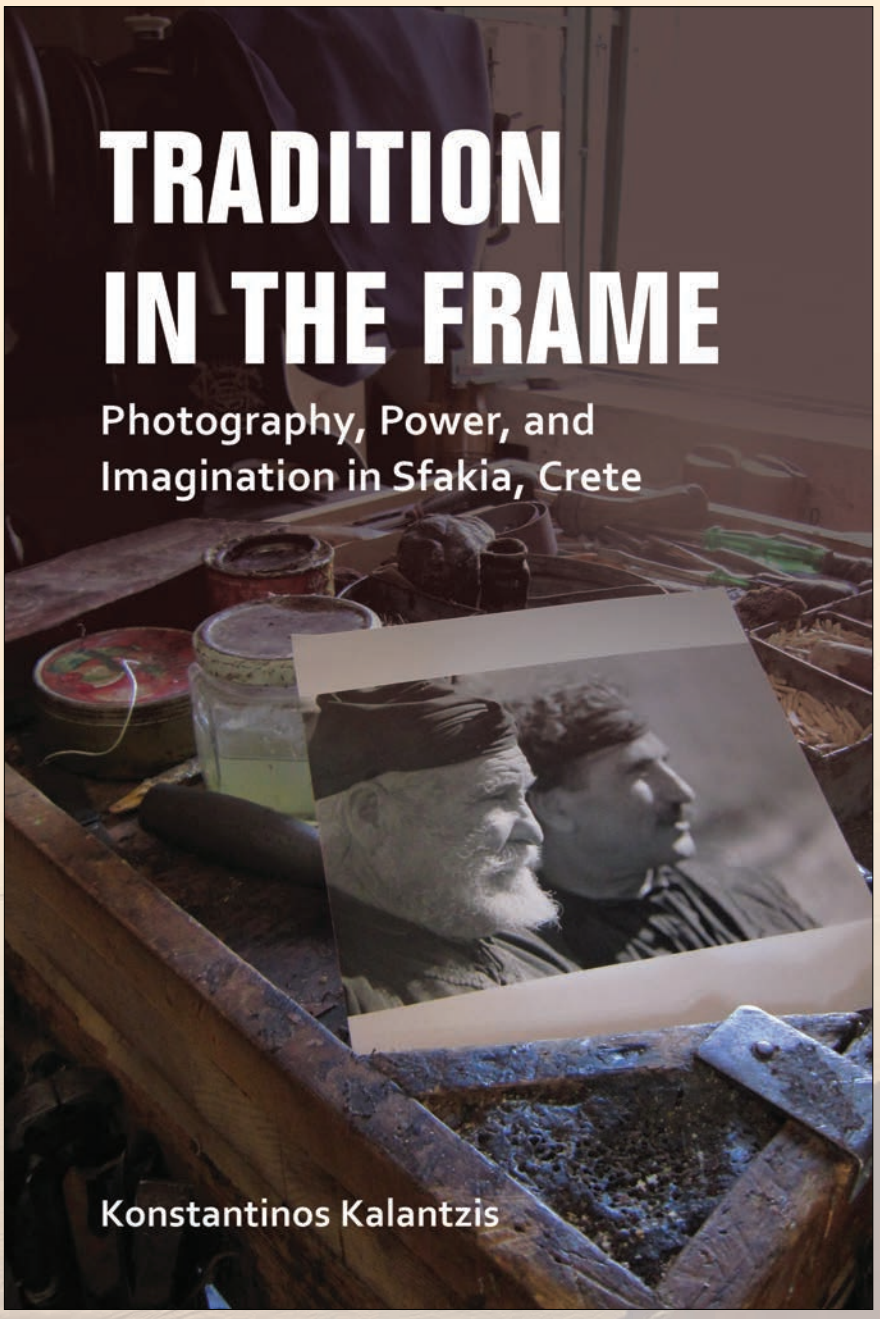
Tradition in the Frame

Photography, Power, and Imagination in Sfakia, Crete

KONSTANTINOS KALANTZIS



Sfakians on the island of Crete are known for their distinctive dress and appearance, fierce ruggedness, and devotion to traditional ways. Konstantinos Kalantzis explores how Sfakians live with the burdens and pleasures of maintaining these expectations of exoticism for themselves, for their fellow Greeks, and for tourists. Sfakian performance of masculine tradition has become even more meaningful for Greeks looking to reimagine their nation's global standing in the wake of stringent financial regulation, and for non-Greek tourists yearning for rootedness and escape from the post-industrial north. Through fine-grained ethnography that pays special attention to photography, *Tradition in the Frame* examines the ambivalence of a society expected to conform to outsiders' perception of the traditional even as it strives to enact its own vision of tradition. From the bodily reenactment of historical photographs to the unpredictable, emotionally-charged uses of postcards and commercial labels, the book unpacks the question of power and asymmetry but also uncovers other political possibilities that are nested in visual culture and experiences of tradition and the past. Kalantzis explores the crossroads of cultural performance and social imagination where the frame is both empowerment and subjection.

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