

# The Koudounat, Carnival of Skyros

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The Koudounatoi, the masquerades of Carnival, appear in other parts of Greece besides Skyros (Thessaly, Macedonia, Chios and Naxos) and under other names. This is a three character carnival costume. According to folk tradition, which is maintained to this day, a crazy shepherd wore the bells of his lost sheep. Also, according to M. Faltait's theory, the events may be the echoes of the breeders' conflicts with the farmers, after the former dominated their coat of arms, the goat. Arriving in Skyros on Carnival, there is a crowd in the narrow streets and in every corner. The sound of bells is heard everywhere and the locals tell their myths to the visitors. Among the events of the Scythian Carnival, there are three phases, the first being the Koudounatoi (unique in Greek), and it consists of the old, the corel and the Frank. The old man is the protagonist of this trinity and represents an old shepherd wearing bells on him. He proceeds with rhythmic strides, shaking his waist so that the bells that pass through him give off terrible, but rhythmic and alternating sounds. The weight of the suit exceeds 50 kg and in order to be able to wear the costume one has to learn the technique of walking and jumping as well as the proper movement. The second part of the event is Trata (usually performed on Saturday but also repeated on Sunday at noon by another group), consisting of open air theatrical performances and satire lyrics by amateur poets and actors. Not only local events, local authorities but also Greek news, political, social news and finally international issues are satirized in the custom of the Skyrian Trata. The third part of the carnival events is "kathari Deftera", the biggest celebration of the Skyrians. On kathari Deftera, all the shops in the market are converted into taverns and there is dancing from morning until midnight. The locals wear their traditional costumes.

## Overview

Country:

