

South Australian Greeks: A Short History

Dr M.P. Tsounis

Introduction

This small book presents the main features in the history of Greek immigration and settlement in South Australia. It is based on material collected for earlier studies. Some of it was used in a series of articles which appeared in the Riverland's *Greek Community Tribune* in 2004. English is used because it is now the main language of the nation's 400,000 or so Greek Australians, a tenth of whom live in South Australia. English is widely used alongside Greek in most community organisations in an endeavour to communicate more effectively with their members and members of the multicultural society to which Greeks have contributed in a substantial way. They contributed not only with their labour in the course of making a living but also as bearers of a rich culture and language which originated in antiquity.

The non-Anglophone pioneers of multiculturalism or cultural pluralism in South Australia were of course the German immigrants who began to establish their own schools and other institutions in the 1830s. But a Greek did come to settle here in 1842. He was Georgios Tramountanas (George North) who will be considered shortly. The only other 'Greek connection' was George Grote after whom Grote Street (in the centre of Adelaide) was named. He was the treasurer of the South Australian Association, a member of the Committee for the Liberation of Greece from the Ottoman Empire and the author of *A History of Greece* (in twelve volumes).

In a study of expatriate Greeks it is important to see how their settlements, *paroikies*, form and how they become organised usually on democratic principles given their freedom. This helps us understand the variety of organisations designed to serve changing needs and also community politics. In South Australia at least there were concerted efforts to democratise an otherwise hierarchical Greek Orthodox Community Church. The pioneer in this difficult endeavour is the Adelaide-based Greek Orthodox Community of SA (GOCSA) which formed in 1930 and is still active in several areas, including Greek Orthodoxy.

South Australian Greeks exhibit other unique features compared to their compatriots in other mainland States where most of them settled. They were rather poor and dispersed before 1940 and they were less numerous up until the 1950s. Also unique were the communities of essentially industrialised workers in Port Pirie soon after 1914, fishermen in Thevernard in the 1930s and, after the 1950s, the agrarian communities in the Riverland towns, complete with their Greek language newspaper and annual cultural festival.

But our story must begin in the nineteenth century when the few Greek pioneers could not form a viable community. The footsteps have been carefully traced by the Australian Hugh Gilchrist in his *Australians and Greeks* (especially volume one).

Part 2

The Early Isolated Pioneers: 1842-1900

About fifty Greeks had settled in South Australia by the turn of the twentieth century, as against, 1,000 in Australia as a whole. From Gilchrist we learn that all of them were young men who arrived at different times from different Greek islands, a few of which were still under Turkish occupation. They were not convicts like the seven Greek pirates or patriots who were brought to Sydney in 1829, nor gold seekers as some were in the eastern Colonies. All took on any job they could find but most finished up either as mariners or wharf labourers in or near seaports, especially Port Adelaide. Only four or five are recorded as having shops, mostly fish shops, a traditional occupation among Greeks in Australia. The very first migrant, George North-Tramountanas, finally settled as a farmer in Colton near Elliston on the West Coast (Eyre Peninsula) after working at various jobs (including as a seaman) for about thirty years. Some had married Australian (or Anglo-Celtic) women and raised large families. Demetrios George and Mary Ellen McMahon had ten children and had them christened “with a mixture of Greek and Irish names,” according to their grandson Denis George.

Most of these pioneers had anglicised their names, a few in ways which resembled neither Greek nor English ones, like de Dear (Bizanes), Jacklong (possibly Makrygiannis) and Ctercteko. Not much else attests to their Greekness or Hellenicity except in the case of Tramountanas who left to his descendants a volume of ancient Greek plays by Sophocles. There is evidence that they were literate but we don't know whether they wrote letters home. We can only assume that those who lived close to one another as in Port Adelaide did meet sometimes to speak Modern Greek and no doubt discuss politics.

Among the early immigrants were twenty-six Greek gypsies from Thessaly who arrived in Largs Bay in 1898 and left a few days later on foot for the eastern Colonies. They were refugees from the 1897-98 Greek-Turkish war and no one wanted them, not even the Greeks it seems. In Melbourne, ninety-four Greeks publicly protested because Australian authorities and the media “classified them as Greeks.”

For a fuller picture of the life of these early pioneers one has to look at several sources. The work of Hugh Gilchrist and that of C.A. Price especially are valuable. Both took the trouble to

trace the movement of immigrants recorded in local and state government documents such as naturalisation papers. Equally revealing are accounts of the pioneers' lives by their own descendants. The task becomes much easier as we move into the twentieth century with the formation of close settlements or communities in urban centres which often attracted otherwise isolated pioneers. These communities have left us with a variety of Greek-language documents worthy of study such as *O Pharos (The Beacon)* newspaper. Two stories of the early pioneers have come to light in another newspaper, *O Kosmos* (no author documented, "Smelters, Gardeners and Caterers", Sydney, 1990):

According to South Australian naturalisation papers the earliest recorded Greek in Port Pirie was Peter Warrick (name anglicized) who in 1892 was working as a carpenter in the town. Born in Kalamata (Peloponnese) in 1855, Warrick arrived in Australia twenty years later. Unfortunately his whereabouts in the Australia before his naturalisation in Port Pirie on 8th November 1892 remain unknown.

Another early Greek settler in Port Pirie appears to have been "Uncle" George Karas to whom many Greek newcomers looked for advice and assistance during the 1910s and early 1920s. Born on the island of Poros in 1833, he is reported to have arrived in Australia as a seaman in 1880. Engaging work in other Australian towns and cities prior to finally settling in Port Pirie, it has been suggested that he must have taken up residency in the town during the last century, or the first decade of the twentieth century. Blessed with longevity Karas died in 1943.

Part 3

The First Greek Communities (*Paroikies*): 1901-1940

Two main Greek-speaking communities developed in this period. The first one was in Adelaide which grew steadily from activities in the catering trades such as fish shops and restaurants. The second was in Port Pirie which grew rapidly after 1914 because there was work in the BHP smelters.

The 1916 "Secret Census" which listed about 180 Greeks over the age of 16 in South Australia confirms this trend. Most of Adelaide's 60 Greeks either owned or worked in fish shops and restaurants. Over 90 of Port Pirie's Greeks worked in the smelters. Only four had shops.

Several other demographic features are relevant: over 90 percent were males, more than half were under 30 years old and there were ten families with children most of them in Adelaide.

It is significant that few of the nineteenth century pioneers were listed in the "Secret Census", a war-time measure to check on the movements of Greeks for possible pro-German

monarchist activities. Perhaps it is because the local police did not consider them ‘enemy aliens’ or because they kept away from Greek shops and other centres under police surveillance.

It is more important to note the background of these early twentieth century pioneers. Adelaide’s Greeks were mainly from the island of Ithaca (off the west coast of Greece) and Castellorizo which is close to the south-west coast of Turkey or Asia Minor. Port Pirie’s community contained Ithacans and Castellorizians but a lot had come from islands close to Turkey such as the Dodecanese which passed from Turkish to Italian rule in 1911; and the Aegean islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos and Icaria which Greece won in 1912. A few came from the coastal regions of Turkey such as Levisi which is opposite Castellorizo. The need to escape conscription into the Turkish army imposed after 1908 no doubt accounts for so many immigrants being young men. But there were young immigrants from Greece such as Evia (Euboea). The youngest worker in the smelters was the sixteen-year old Evian, Con Economos.

Viable Greek communities of industrial workers were unusual in the pre-1940 period. Yet the Port Pirie community kept growing. This was especially so in the 1920s when over 8,000 Greeks arrived in Australia, nearly half the total intake in the whole 1901-1940 period. A comparatively large proportion came to South Australia in the hope of finding work in the BHP smelters. As many as 350 worked there in 1925. Among them were Castellorizians who had been working in the Northern Territory. Dozens of Greeks managed to find work in other industries: the Whyalla Iron Knob quarry, the Port Augusta salts works and the gypsum works in Ceduna as well as the Broken Hill mines. Most came from backgrounds similar to earlier migrants and from new ones like Cyprus which became a British Crown Colony in 1924. Knowing someone who had work or knew where to find it was an advantage to newcomers.

Close settlement enabled Greek migrants to have some social life. According to George Kanarakis in *The Greek Literature Presence in Australia*, Adelaide even had its own bard in the early 1900s. He was Nick Kallinikos from Ithaca who managed a *cafeneio* (coffee-house) for a while. Men often met at the *cafeneia* for a coffee, to talk and sometimes gamble playing cards. Here is a relevant verse:

“The sky and stars are saying, the moon is also singing
the pound in your pocket will soon become a shilling.”

From Kanarakis we also have the following Castellorizian lament which captures the sense of isolation felt by many migrants a hundred years ago:

“Australia is an island where you can sail with ease
but if you go and settle there it’s difficult to leave.”

With the 1928 economic crisis and the Great Depression which followed nearly all the Greeks working for non Greek employers lost their jobs. Only about 30 kept their smelters jobs. A large number left this State, and some left Australia altogether. In the 1929-32 period more Greeks left Australia than arrived. Some could not return to their homelands as in Turkey from where over a million Greeks were forced to leave because of the 1919-22 Greek-Turkish war.

One effect of the crisis was to disperse Greeks over wide areas in South Australia. The Port Pirie community lost many of its members to Adelaide and its resident priest to the larger Perth community. He was Christophoros Manesis from Chios, a former smelters worker whom Metropolitan Christophoros Knetes had ordained in 1925 to serve ‘the Greek Orthodox Community of Port Pirie, all South Australia and Broken Hill.’ The community’s St. George church, a small wooden structure built near the Anglican Church in Florence Street, was closed. The Castellorizian Brotherhood founded in 1927 disbanded but regrouped two years later in Adelaide where many of its members began to settle. The most dispersed group seemed to be Evians. We find them scrub-clearing for farmers on Eyre Peninsula, fishing in Thevenard and other smaller ports to the south, working in their own shops in Mildura (Victoria) where some eventually settled as orchardists and in Broken Hill (NSW) to work in mines or open up their own shops.

Part 4

The First Greek Communities (*Paroikies*): 1901-1940 (continued)

The other effect of the Depression was to impoverish most Greeks. The 1933 Commonwealth Census figures which apply to all Greek-born males in the Australian workforce are revealing. Nearly 80 percent had incomes less than the basic wage of three pounds or so per week while 42 percent were earning a pound a week or less. Nearly 40 percent were unemployed. The poorest Greeks in the Commonwealth were very likely in South Australia with serious consequences. We have no comparative figures but from the church records kept by Eliou the average of those he himself buried in the 1925-1940 period was 43 years, many years below the national average.

The 1933 Census noted that most Greeks were not citizens and that in the case of South Australia 60 percent lived outside metropolitan Adelaide, nearly 54 percent living in rural areas.

Housing conditions left much to be desired. Rural workers usually lived in huts or tents in the outskirts of towns. In Adelaide most Greeks lived in small houses in the side streets and lanes in the west part of the city alongside Italians, Maltese, Syrians and Lebanese. Many bachelors or men without their families, who comprised about 70 percent of pre-1940 Greek immigrants, often lived in the two-storey buildings of Hindley Street close to Morphett Street. Rents were cheap and these buildings were ideal for a shop or *cafeneio* in the ground floor and sleeping quarters in the top floor. This part of Hindley Street, designated as the “Greek quarter” from the early twentieth century, was handy to the Railway Station and other transport points and close to the Central Market and the Fish market from where many made a living as fish shop owners or hawkers of seafood: and it was very close to the Anglican Holy Trinity Church in North Terrace where Eliou was allowed to conduct services and perform sacraments soon after he arrived in Adelaide from Perth at the end of 1924.

Dispersion and poverty retarded community development even though the sense of community was being reinforced by common hardships in a society which marginalised Greeks. Though weakened the Port Pirie community did maintain its after-hours Greek school and helped the needy as best it could. By 1930 Port Pirie’s Greek population stabilised at about 250 including the Australian born. Apart from some work in the smelters most Greeks lived from their shops and small businesses. A few had become market gardeners in nearby Nelshaby and Napperby and further afield in Wirrabra. Eliou began to visit the town more frequently after 1928 and was allowed to use the St. George church, the only Greek church in South Australia until the late 1930s.

Despite the dispersion there was a move after 1929 to found a Greek Orthodox Community in Adelaide. It came into being as a result of a meeting by 97 members in October, 1930, in the Panellenion Club (122 Hindley Street) which elected its first council and St. Demetrios as patron saint. There was lack of cooperation with Eliou even on the question of raising funds to build an Orthodox church. Eliou’s relations with the Metropolitan Christophoros in Sydney were rather strained for reasons which are not clear. What is certain is that Eliou left Perth for Adelaide to work alone and unsupervised by a bishop. Christophoros himself left Australia in 1928 after failing to win enough support to establish the Holy Metropolis diocese of Australia on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Turkey). This gave a free hand to Eliou in this State but not without criticism from some members of his flock. Unperturbed the Greek Orthodox Community in Adelaide became active around Greek schooling for an increasing number of children, charity and fund-raising to build a church while trying to find a more cooperative priest. The arrival of a new bishop, Metropolitan Timotheos Evangelinidis (1932-47), helped pacify the warring factions especially in Sydney and Melbourne and also got Eliou to work with the new

Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia (GOCSA) with its Archangels Michael and Gabriel its patron saints—the *Taxiarchis* church as it is commonly known. Fund-raising for the church was generally supported, not least by the ageing Eliou who toured most States for this purpose. With the help of a bank loan the church (erected on the corner of Franklin and Grattan Streets) managed to open its doors to worshippers on the 25th March 1938, Greece's national day.

The GOCSA institution, commonly referred to as the Community (*Koinotita*), helped unite Greeks and give them some purpose and hope in life. It failed to unite or incorporate the Port Pirie GOC but it did enjoy State-wide support. Most organised groups supported its activities, especially the Castellorizian brotherhood and the *Taxiarchis* Greek Women's Society of SA. It was also in a position to regulate Eliou's activities so as to serve the religious needs of Greeks throughout the State, including Port Pirie and the small but growing fishing community of Thevenard. These services were greatly appreciated. So too was Eliou's experience and knowledge in Greek schooling which he had acquired in Perth and for which there was a pressing need. He had baptised about 500 children in the 1925-40 period and many of these were living in Adelaide. In country centres like Thevenard he was sometimes called to baptise and celebrate three or four children at a time. The GOCSA School in Adelaide and school concerts where children recited national poems and danced folk dances were important and memorable events for all concerned.

There wasn't much more in the pre-1940 period by way of permanent community institutions. In 1914, a young Greek Cypriot, George Nikolaidis, pioneered Australia's second Greek newspaper *Oceanis*. After a few editions he transferred his business to the much larger Sydney community. He returned to Adelaide and became actively involved in the activities of the *Omonoia* Philanthropic Society (1922-28) including publication of *The International Directory of 1927*. It is a 600 page book in three languages—English, Greek and French—containing a variety of information: short biographies with photographs of Greeks in this State and Australia, a short history of Australia in puristic Greek and a lot of material on industries, trade and business of possible interest to immigrants who had begun to arrive in large numbers in the early 1920s.

Another pioneer who is mentioned in the work of George Kanarakis was Omeros Regas, who has left us or the State Archives ten or so issues of his *Pharos* newspaper, 1935-36. Apart from his reports on community life and its lively church politics, the last three issues give details on the alleged racketeering of merchants in the fish market from where Greek fishermen, shopkeepers and hawkers made a living. Also ephemeral were the Apollo artistic society, 1928-33, the Greek Workers Society of Berri in the early '30s and the Greek soccer team 1938-39 which disbanded a year later as young Greek men went to serve the Australian forces in the war.

More permanent were Greek-owned restaurants, cafés and fish shops in Adelaide and country towns mostly to the north of Adelaide, and the numerous family networks. All these were kept informed by two Greek weekly newspapers, published in Sydney from the early 1920s. Both had correspondents in Adelaide and Port Pirie.

In the 1930s Greek merchant ships began to call at South Australian ports where small groups of Greek immigrants lived—Port Adelaide, Port Pirie, Thevenard and Port Lincoln. This was yet another factor which reinforced the sense of community and Greekness generally. In the whole pre-1940 period very few Greeks belonged to trade unions and other organisations and institutions while only about a third were naturalised citizens to exercise their political rights. The Greek Consul in Adelaide appointed in 1930 knew no Greek and had to rely on volunteer interpreters from bilingual members of the Adelaide community for his services. Such bilingual members were generally called upon to play an active role in the GOCSA and other community organisations.

Part 5

A Decade of Rapid Changes: 1940-1950

In this important period of our history we can only manage a brief account of events and trends. For a more detailed account of the GOCSA the reader is referred to *The Story of a Community*, 1990.

World War Two opened employment and business opportunities and also had the effect of regrouping Greeks, especially in Adelaide. War-time manpower regulations had made sure that those able to work were found jobs. About thirty fishermen from Thevenard were directed to work in the Port Lincoln abattoirs for several months every year. But this fishing community survived and formed the West Coast Fishermen's Cooperative in 1945 which was eventually incorporated into the large SAFCOL organisation—now a transnational corporation in which Greeks have no say at all. Most of the Greek seamen in the sixteen Greek ships caught here by the war remained in service in Australian waters, while a few worked on Australian ships during and after the war. Community organisations and Greeks became active in the war effort, especially after the heroic 'No' of the Greek people to Mussolini's ultimatum on 28th October, 1940, to surrender 'sacred Greek earth and water'. 'No Day' became another important Greek anniversary to commemorate. Greeks in Adelaide and elsewhere in Australia proudly displayed their national colours in numerous activities and in their shops. Most Greeks became citizens, their old organisations strengthened and new ones formed. Among them were the Greek War Veteran's Association and the Rhodian, Chian and Greek Cypriot fraternities. The Panhellenic Society of SA, formed in 1946, helped restrain the

conflict which stemmed from the Greek Civil War (1946-49). All celebrated the end of the War and the Civil War which followed but some political and ideological divisions remained.

The Greek youth also regrouped to form the Hellenic Youth Club of SA (HYCSA) and its Olympic Soccer Club in 1947. Most members of both organisations were Australian born, as were the counterparts of these organisations in Melbourne and Sydney. These clubs began to exchange visits, mainly to play various sports. After 1952 these events evolved into the Australia-wide Panhellenic Games which were hosted by different cities in rotation up until the early 1960s. A few Australian born became interested in Greek music. A young girl, Froso (Rose) Taliangis, and member of the Hellenic Youth Club learned to play the piano and entertained members at club dances with the traditional *kalamatiano*, *roditiko*, *sousta*, *hasaposerviko* and *syрто* and delighted both club members and parents.

The GOCSA institution in particular grew during and after the War in membership, activity and resources. By 1948 it employed two school teachers, an office secretary and bought two old houses on the corner of Franklin Street and West Terrace to build a community centre next to the *Taxiarchis* Church. By the same year Timotheos was succeeded by metropolitan Theophylactos, a clergyman who had been serving GOC churches since 1928. Before leaving in 1947 Timotheos managed to have his brother Eraclis Evangelinidis appointed resident priest in Adelaide. Post-War immigrants were finding plenty of work. Most were compatriots and usually relatives of pre-War migrants. But several new regions were involved in migration, notably Aradippou and Rizokarpaso (Cyprus) the latter of which was occupied by the Turks in 1974. Port Pirie did not attract many newcomers but it did have its own resident priest in 1951. He was to serve the needs of Greeks in Eyre Peninsula and the Riverland whose number also began to increase. The Adelaide community as a whole felt optimistic. Takis Lavithis, an immigrant from Cyprus, started a small printery in 1948 which also helped publish the HCYSA's paper *Greek Youth*. None seemed more prepared to meet the challenge of mass immigration than the Greek Orthodox Community of SA with its strong base in Adelaide where most post-war immigrants were to settle.

Part 6

Mass Immigration: 1952-1974

In this period the Greek population of South Australia increased from about 3,000 to 30,000. The increase was largely due to immigrants who came from most parts of Greece as well as Cyprus and Egypt. About 25 per cent migrated under the Commonwealth Government 'assisted passage' scheme which meant that they were obliged to work for two years in industries with labour

shortages, such as public works and agriculture. This had the effect of dispersing some immigrants, especially male workers some of whom became temporarily separated from their own families. But the tendency throughout the period was for Greeks to settle in the inner and/or working class suburbs of metropolitan Adelaide, close to factories and cheap housing. A large number found work in the car industry, especially General Motors Holden. The shipyards of Whyalla, the timber industry near Mount Gambier and the opal fields of Cooper Pedy in the far north also attracted newcomers. The Riverland agricultural communities grew slowly as immigrants took some time to raise the necessary capital and buy their own vineyards and orchards. Most migrants could only get unskilled low-paid jobs and, if they saved, preferred to invest in shops and small businesses in Adelaide. Some bought market gardening land in Virginia, Two Wells and Salisbury to start semi-rural communities close to Adelaide.

With mass immigration came numerous social organisations which more or less reflected the numbers of the Adelaide community and its growing diversity. All of them had clearly-defined aims and management rules. The most numerous and stable were the *ethnicoptica*, homeland fraternities or brotherhoods. Organisations to represent large regions like the Peloponnesos or Macedonia formed in the initial stages of immigration and then organisations for smaller regions such as *nomoi* (prefectures) down to provincial towns. Each Aegean island could only manage one regional organisation. Rhodes had several fraternities as well as the Pan-Rhodian Brotherhood *Colossus*.

Less stable or ephemeral were organisations which sponsored sports, the arts like theatre and political organisations or groupings. The most stable sports organisation was the (West Adelaide) Hellas Soccer Club, successor of the 1940s Olympic Soccer Club. The Platon Greek Workers Club formed in 1957 was also a stable organisation and was one of the first to build its own club rooms. The Greek tertiary students' organisations which started to appear after the 1960s in Adelaide became a permanent feature of the larger Melbourne and Sydney communities.

The Greek Orthodox Community of SA grew rapidly as it expanded its activities to meet pressing migrant needs and respond to national issues like Cyprus independence from Great Britain. It organised dozens of after-hours Greek schools in various suburbs, supplied badly-needed interpreting and translating services, helped find work and accommodation for newcomers, often supplied office services and facilities to community organisations and groups and attempted to represent all Greeks so as to influence government policies in respect of migrant needs and issues. It managed to complete its Olympic Hall complex in 1957, thanks to generous donations of numerous individuals and most organisations. Metropolitan Theophylactos officiated at the

opening ceremony and blessed this newly-built and important GOCSA centre, the first of its kind in Australia. A second GOCSA church began functioning in hired premises in 1958.

The GOCSA's further growth was curtailed somewhat by the new system of Church management which began to be implemented by Archbishop Ezekiel (1959-74). The new 'American system' favoured small GOCs or loosely organised parishes (*Enories*) with religion related activities under clergy leadership, not the traditional democratic GOCs with several churches and secular activities. GOC or Parish property was to be transferred to the Archdiocesan Property Trust while mixed clergy-lay conferences and councils and ecclesiastical courts were instituted, all in line with a hierarchical Orthodox Church which was missing in Australia. The Federation of GOCs of Australia, founded in 1958, opposed the new system and none more so than the GOCSA which became independent from the Archdiocese in 1960. A few other GOCs followed suit and placed their churches and priests under independent or autocephalic Orthodox bishops. A religious schism soon developed which was characterised by heated debates on issues like the rights of the democratic Community (*Koinotita*) and those of the Church (*Ecclesia*) and the canonicity or otherwise of priests and their sacraments. Greek consuls were called upon to police the Sacred Canons of Greek Orthodoxy and make sure that Greeks had Archdiocesan marriage and baptism certificates in line with the fixed policy of all Greek governments ever since 1924.

Greek Civil War and Cold War politics further complicated church divisions. So did the Greek *junta* regime (1967-74) with its 'Hellas of Hellenes Christians' ideology which appealed to Ezekiel. To be an active GOCSA member was to be a democrat and a patriot in this period. Many members and some leaders did in fact participate openly in the movement to restore Greek democracy, for Cyprus independence and to end the War in Vietnam in which young Greeks were being conscripted. Some also became active in trade unions which played a part in these movements. Several prominent Greek trade unionists began to be elected on the GOCSA council alongside small businessmen and persons in the professions. Greek trade unionists were unheard of in Archdiocesan conferences and on councils, let alone radicals and Leftists.

The overall effect in Adelaide at least was that the community became divided ecclesiastically as well as culturally and politically. These divisions were expressed in various other ways: separate commemorations of national days, Greek consuls patronising only those of the five Archdiocesan GOC's/Parishes; the fact that only the GOCSA commemorates to this day the 17th November anniversary which marks the Athens Polytechnic student rebellion in 1973; the fact that many organisations avoided being seen openly supporting Archdiocesan and GOCSA projects of common benefit; and the lack of cooperation to procure sufficient government funding for Greek radio programs, Greek schools and other programs.

Aspects of such divisions became a permanent feature, even after the collapse of the Greek *junta*, the Turkish invasion of northern Cyprus in July 1974 and the hurried departure of Ezekiel from Australia a month or so later amidst wide-spread protests. It is more important to note the complex nature of the Adelaide community in terms of social organisations and their interrelationships. The larger communities of Melbourne and Sydney are much more complex. It all reflects the diverse background of immigrants but also the need to be represented and have a say in their new society. In the process community organisations enable Greeks or Greek Australians to integrate and thus contribute to the Australian multicultural society—a point to be taken up in the next chapter.

Part 7 (A)

The Greek Australians: 1974-2009

There is much research to be done in this period if we are to understand the way in which South Australian Greeks are moving. This only indicates some tendencies or patterns which are more or less clear. The term ‘Greek Australians’ is useful for our purposes.

Greek immigration had all but ceased by the early 1970s. The departure rate of 25 percent or so overall for the whole post-war period had also declined. The immigrant population was ageing and retiring progressively while by the late 1980s the Australian born were the majority in the community. They became basically Anglophones as were those who came as children and teenagers. In the 1990s the greater majority were Anglophones, made plain by the increasing use of English in a number of organisations, including churches. Their formal Australian education and socialisation in the multicultural society had equipped them with occupational skills, social and cultural values different from those of the parents.

The 1991 Census notes that 36.7 per cent of the ‘second generation’ Greeks in Australia had some formal qualifications—12.7 per cent had tertiary degrees or diplomas which compare favourably with the national average of 12.8 per cent. From other reports we find that over 50 per cent of Greek Australians were marrying non Greeks. Enrolments in Greek schools began to decrease after the early 1980s even though more up to date teaching material and better trained teachers were being made available. It is doubtful if more than 20 per cent of parents send their children to Greek school though just as many were learning their Greek in government schools. This is not so in the Catholic and Protestant or private schools where an increasing number were being enrolled from the 1980s onwards. It is moreover significant that relatively few Anglophones become actively engaged in managing the affairs of Greek immigrant organisations though many

attend their annual dances, social gatherings and festivals. Some form their own cultural organisations. What to do with the halls or club centres that immigrants laboured so hard to build is a common problem. The Anglophones did not get passionately involved in church politics while church attendance is usually limited to family occasions like baptisms, weddings and funerals the latter of which have been increasing.

Political involvement in the broad sense of the term has been in society as a whole. Most Anglophones probably have been voting Labor like their parents. This was due partly to the traditional support that the Australian Labor Party has given to national causes like Cyprus and Greek democracy and the multicultural policies which Greeks were involved in through their community organisations and as individuals. Don Dunstan, a prominent Labor Party leader and South Australia's Premier for ten years, was personally committed to all these causes. In the process Greeks acquired a public presence: in business organisations, trade unions, parliaments and government institutions dealing with multicultural or ethnic-specific services, education and social welfare.

Equally significant has been the role of Anglophones or bilingual Greek-Australians in organisations sponsoring a more public exposure of Greek culture from the late 1970s in the form of the annual Greek Glendi Festival which coincides with the 25th March national day celebrations. During the two-day Festival many Greek organisations have their own food stalls to raise money and Greek and non Greek businesses to display their goods. Greek musicians and singers from Adelaide and Greece and Adelaide Greek folk dance groups feature prominently and occupy centre stage in this festival which attracts a great number of Greek and non Greeks. Since 1990 a parallel organisation, the Committee for the Greek Cultural Month of March has evolved to foster Greek cultural activities. Both institutions have contributed in getting Greeks to cooperate which has helped break down church and other community divisions.

In the last twenty or so years there has been a tendency among *ethnicoptica* organisations to form federations at a State and Federal level. Inter-State visits among co-regionals sometimes take the form of festivals. The most important regional festival is organised by the Greek-Macedonian federation to coincide with their patron saint day on 26th October. In Adelaide and elsewhere it is known as the Dimitria Festival and it has been well attended by Greeks and the wider community.

Festivals and social gatherings of all types have given rise to a host of Greek businesses, not only in food and catering trades but also in recreation and the arts. There are now over fifty practising Greek musicians in Adelaide. The majority are Australian born. Most Greek musicians have banded together to play Greek music in events sponsored by community organisations and

families for baptisms and weddings as well as in restaurants and other venues for Greeks and non-Greeks alike. A large number working in theatre and the visual arts are Australian born. We don't know much about the literature of Anglophones. From samples of their work appearing in *In The Footsteps of Art* published by the GOCSA (1997) their themes or interests have little to do with nostalgia for the homeland or *xenitia* ("foreign land") which dominate the thinking of writers in Greek.

It is relevant to note that writers in both Greek and English have had few opportunities to publish. Traditionally, South Australia had a weak Greek press to publish newspapers and magazines which usually welcome writers. There have been at least five newspaper ventures in Adelaide since the 1960s. The only Greek language newspaper is now the monthly *Greek Community Tribune* which is issued in Renmark. Adelaide Greeks have been much more successful in radio media established in 1975 as part of the multilingual EBI FM institution. Private entrepreneurs have recently established two radio stations. Radio Ena and Radio Doriforo now broadcast on a 24-hour basis. Apart from advertising Greek and non Greek businesses and public notices from community organisations, regular news are given or rebroadcast from Greece, Australia, England, Germany and the Voice of America. Some of Adelaide's Anglophones present radio programs often using a rather interesting mixture of Greek and Australian English. They also show a preference for Greek pop music.

The ethnomusicologist Dr Demeter Tsounis who I have interviewed recently confirms that 'rock' and 'funk' styles have become well established in the performance of Greek music by local Greek musicians. Their bands typically feature a 'pop' music line-up of keyboard, guitar, bass and drum kit together with the identifiable 'Greek' elements—singing in the Greek language and inclusion of the 'national' Greek instrument, the *bouzouki*. Even though their repertoires are dominated by the latest contemporary pop hits from Greece, they continue to include a healthy mix of traditional genres of Greek music such as *dimotika*, *nisiotika*, *rebetika*, *smyrneika* and *laika* in their programs. During the 1990s groups such as *Meraki*, *Aman* and *Artemisia* specialised in traditional styles and instrumentation (violin, *toumberleki*, *oud*, six-stringed *bouzouki*, *tzouras*, *baglamas* and piano accordion), performing at Greek baptisms, weddings and social dances (*horoesperides*) as well as multicultural world music venues such as Nexus. *Meraki* and the new group *Ionia* continue to do this. All of this points to a dynamic live Greek music-making scene where the traditional is performed side by side with the contemporary.

Part 7 (B)

The Greek Australians: 1974-2009

Several more trends need to be noted. The church schism lingered on not least because of a strict application of Greek Orthodox Church dogma and canons by Archbishop Stylianos who succeeded Ezekiel. He strongly favoured Parishes (*Enories*) over democratic GOCs for his basic church organisation. He was decisive in demoting and expelling non-conforming clergy, among them five auxiliary bishops. One was Pavlos Laios who is now head of Australia's Autocephalic Greek Orthodox Church and resides in Adelaide. Another was Seraphim Menzelopoulos who was recently elected Metropolitan of Piraeus by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece. Stylianos was also decisive in preventing the Patriarchate of Jerusalem from staking a claim in Australian or Oceania Greek Orthodox churches. To Stylianos those outside his Archdiocese are 'neither Orthodox nor Greeks'. This includes Evangelical Greek churches among others.

The post 1974-Greek governments did attempt to treat all expatriate or diaspora Greeks as equals but retained the time-tested policy of favouring the canonical clergy if only for the sake of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (Turkey). The GOCSA abandoned attempts to resolve church doctrinal differences and concentrated on developing programs that served needs in education, welfare, homes for the aged, community centres next to its four churches, the arts which now feature prominently in its annual Odyssey Festival and a host of other activities to meet changing needs. Apart from GOCSA's after-hours Greek school program it also supported the SA Education Department to transform the Sturt Street school into a multilingual community institution. The Archdiocese too became involved after the 1980s in homes for the aged, welfare centres and day schools or colleges-one in Thebarton and a more recent one in Unley. It generally refrained from sponsoring non-religious or secular activities like theatre but could not prevent its faithful from participating in events like Adelaide's annual Glendi Festival even during Lent. The Glendi has been postponed in 2009 due it seems to the difficult economic times. The Unley church community for some years has hosted an annual festival.

It is more important to note that by the turn of the 21st century South Australian Greeks were mixing freely enough beyond church or any other affiliation, especially at festivals, in regional (*ethnotopica*) events and pensioners organisations which burgeoned from the 1980s onwards. For family reasons like weddings, baptisms and funerals they were obliged to attend any church. Equally important was the need to cooperate in business, workplaces, institutions like government-sponsored multicultural councils and commissions and on Greek national issues like Cyprus and the 'Macedonian question' which flared up in the early 1990s. Cutting across church, religious,

political and regional barriers was the need to participate in pan-Hellenic organisations. A good example is the SA Council for the Greek Cultural Month (SACGM) with a history of nearly twenty years of arts and cultural activities including the now annual Festival Hellenika. But there was no mixing in the Greek government-sponsored Council of Hellenes (SAE) formed in 1996 which Archbishop Stylianos opposed and in which the GOCSA was admitted in 2003. The SAE-sponsored Panhellenic Games were revived in Adelaide in 2007 after forty years with much acclaim from the athletic community. Looked at historically South Australian Greeks have created a culturally rich community. Every one of the hundred or so organisations that formed and functioned since the 1920s added something new to the community and society as a whole. Most of these organisations have endured over time by adopting new programs to meet changing needs and aspirations.

The choice of 'Hellenic' rather than 'Greek' is significant. An increasing number of Greek Australians call themselves Hellenes. It all points back to the ancient non-Christian Hellenic civilization. There are many things to remind them of this heritage such as the ancient names of most regional (*ethnotopica*) societies: Icarus, Odysseus, Colossus, Olympic Flame, Pythagoras, Hippocrates, Leonidas, Pericles and Alexander the Great. Adelaide also has a group affiliated to the Society of Hellenic Studies (formed in Melbourne in the 1990s) which promotes ancient Greek philosophy through seminars and the magazine *Athena*. More effective in learning about ancient Hellenic culture are Australian schools which all students attend. The Modern Greek department at Flinders University offers an education program for all language learners which has consistently been sponsored by the Greek community.

Greek community organisations have done much more than foster traditional Greek culture and commemorate or celebrate important national and regional anniversaries. Every organisation became a centre for social life, especially among new immigrants and their families. Social gatherings often became fund-raisers for a variety of worthy causes: community schools, churches and homes for the aged; South Australia's hospitals and other institutions; hospitals and schools in the homelands of immigrants; and war and earthquake and fire victims in Greece and elsewhere. There were also competitions or friendly emulations associated with such fund-raising activities while the names of donors were usually inscribed in honour rolls in community halls, churches and other buildings. The same competitive spirit was shown in raising funds for the fire victims of Victoria in February, 2009.

Activities undertaken by organisations and individuals to serve social needs have been a unifying factor in a seemingly segmented and divided community. So too has been the practice whereby persons could belong to and hold office in several organisations. In democratic

organisations at least individuals were judged and honoured by their service and deeds, *erga*. If one considers the number of organisations there have been literally thousands of Greek community workers, most of them volunteers. The large GOCSA organisation which is involved in several areas has hundreds of volunteers who work alongside its 100 or so fully or partly employed workers.

Generally speaking, the overall effect of the way the Greek community became organised was to increase opportunities for social participation and increase the production of cultural goods and services available to Greeks and others. In the process the community and numerous other workers have made a contribution to our multicultural society. How notable this contribution is a subject worthy of study in much more detail than has been attempted in this short history.

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There is also a wealth of information in the records or archives of the numerous Greek Australian organisations a few of which have weakened or dissolved.

Another important source are the 120 or so Greek newspapers and periodicals Dr. George Kanarakis has cited in his extensive study of Greek literature in Australia, *The Greek Literature Presence in Australia*.

Newspapers have usually reported the activities of community organisations. *Ethnicon Vema* and the *Greek Herald* (now daily) have done this since the 1920s. Traditionally, Greek newspapers have also supplied much of the information on important events in Australia, Greece and the world.