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A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE STUDY OF THE GREEK PRESS IN AUSTRALIA

Introduction

The press (newspapers and periodicals), like other forms of mass communication, is a social phenomenon, in direct relationship with the social conditions of its environment. As such it can be neither autonomous nor independent and unaffected by the rules and other factors which characterise a social system. It is self-evident that changes in social conditions also exert changes on the press (content, attitude, etc.).¹ Therefore, the press like other social phenomena, has both relativity and historicity and as a consequence it is impossible to consider it out of its social and historical context.

On the other hand, the press is a complex phenomenon. It constitutes the final product of a series of factors: technological, economic, political, etc. and is an industrial product of a multi-faceted process while, at the same time, it has cultural and intellectual dimensions. It is a medium of political and social activity and sometimes a haven for motivating and mobilising the masses.

For these reasons this is where the role and the power of the press lie, because ideas published in the press can acquire considerable influence and, as a result, the press can become a central social force with the ability to pull masses of anonymous individuals in its wake, to pursue the same ideal or even be drawn to the same pitfall.

The press of the Greeks of the diaspora² and, therefore, the press of the Greeks in Australia does not lack this influential role. On the contrary, just as the diaspora press has held a special position in the

¹On the influence of society on the press and *vice versa* see, for instance, Zioutos, 1954: 15; Brown, 1962: 69-70; Clark, 1972: 3-8, 10; Holmes, 1986: 1; Stangos, 1991: 273.

²See especially Petrakakos, 1921: 65-87; Mayer, 1957-1960: 1. 9-16, 285-291, 305-308; 2. 305-320; *Ο Κρίκος* (The Link), 1960: 21-52; Karykopoulos, 1984: ch. 1; Kanarakis, 1989: 175-177, notes 1, 4, 5, 7 [bibliography].

history of the Greek nation since its appearance as a mass communication medium during the last decades of the eighteenth century, with the first ever Greek-language newspaper being published outside Greece,³ in the same way the press of the Greeks in Australia, throughout the course of its life, has been inextricably interwoven with the Greek presence in Australia and so holds a special position in the history of Australian Hellenism.

Consequently, it could be stated with certainty that no serious examination of Australian Hellenism could claim completeness without taking into consideration the activity and the history of the Greek press in Australia. Nevertheless, it must be appreciated that, although the subject has not remained completely unresearched,⁴ no collective work has yet been published covering the Greek press in Australia diachronically and comprehensively, recording it systematically as it deserves.

Of course, the unfortunate reality regarding research on the Greek press, especially that with diachronic components, is that it is seriously hampered by a number of counteracting factors, such as the scarcity of primary material available and the fact that even the little material extant is often held in private hands and dispersed throughout this vast continent, while much has been lost through floods, fires, poor storage conditions, repatriation, etc., the frequent discarding of material after the collector's death; and the library holdings of most publications are incomplete or non-existent. However, apart from the imperative need to locate, record and, where possible, collect the material held in private hands before it is irrevocably lost, despite the above-mentioned negative factors, some sources (library holdings and collections) do exist.⁵

³The first Greek newspaper appeared in Vienna in 1784 with George Vendotis, an intellectual from Zante, as its editor. It was a weekly, but its title remains unknown. No copies of this newspaper have survived (Laios, 1958: 162-184).

⁴For works on, or referring to, the Greek press in Australia, see mainly Petrolias, 1959: 171-188, 197-202, and *passim*; Gilson and Zubrzycki, 1967: 19, and *passim*; Tsounis, 1971: 65, and *passim*; Holbraad, 1977: 53, and *passim*; Tenezakis, 1984 *passim*; Arvanitis, 1984; Kanarakis, 1985: 23, and *passim*; 1987: 15, and *passim*; 1989; Burke, 1989: 222-247.

⁵There exist some complete library holdings of newspapers and periodicals, a few private collections held by past and present newspaper/

The Greek press in Australia, like most ethnic presses, is made up of two categories of publications: the first category ("open press") comprises publications intended for general circulation and available to all the members of the Greek community, whether through commercial outlets, by subscription or distributed free of charge. The second category comprises special interest publications, produced for a section of the community. These are usually of regional, sectional or religious content, are produced by associations, fraternities, the Church, etc. and are intended for circulation primarily, or even only, to members of the organisations which produce them.

This paper will deal with the publications (newspapers and periodicals) of the first category.

Characteristics

Viewing the Greek press of Australia diachronically from its first appearance in May 1913 with the Melbourne newspaper *Αυστραλία* (Australia)⁶ (a four-page weekly tabloid owned and produced by Efstratios Venlis⁷), certain general characteristics can be discerned.

First, the individual publications (newspapers and periodicals) have

periodical owners and editors as well as by other individuals, and also the Greek-Australian Archives established in recent years by M. Sophocleous at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

⁶By 1920 this newspaper had been transferred to Sydney and in December 1922 was sold to the Marinakis brothers, who published it under the new title *Το Εθνικό Βήμα*. The Marinakis brothers were Dimitrios, formerly the parish priest of the Holy Trinity church in Sydney, and his brother Nicholas whom he had brought from the United States. Because of his position in the church, the priest published the newspaper in his brother's name only. This first Greek newspaper has proved to be the longest-running Greek newspaper in Australia, and the second oldest foreign-language newspaper still circulating after the Sydney-based French-language *Le Courrier Australien*, founded in April 1892.

⁷Venlis (1877-1942) was an educated but venturesome community character, reputedly a member of the intellectually renowned Vernardakis family from Mytilene, Lesbos, who arrived in Australia in 1897. In spite of the fact that he was "a skilful handler of the spoken word and of the pen" he was forced to sell the newspaper because of the insurmountable financial difficulties he faced and his "grave weaknesses" ("Ευστράτιος Βενλής" [Obituary], *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ*, 28 May 1942: 4). Nevertheless, objectively he was the founder of the Greek press in Australia.

ranged on a continuum from small, one or two-person productions to large scale commercial enterprises. The small publications have often been family concerns, quite frequently of a few pages only, may have appeared rather irregularly and not infrequently have been run on a limited financial base. Among these publications, which have mushroomed particularly with the waves of Greek immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s,⁸ there has been a high mortality rate with many of them having lasted for only a few years or even only a few issues. Apart from the fact that the number of Greek newspapers and periodicals has been too large in comparison with the ability of the community to support them, this high mortality rate was in part also due to the fact that immigrants quite frequently saw the publishing of a newspaper or a periodical as an “easy” and potentially profitable concern and quite a few were founded by people without the experience or acumen to ensure their viability and continuation.

At the other end of the continuum lie, mainly in our times, the large, commercially strong and vibrant enterprises and publishing groups (such as the Melbourne-based Ethnic Publications and the Sydney-based Foreign Language Publications), which employ a sizable number of staff (journalists, technicians, office workers, and others), and operate on a high technological level and on modern commercial and organisational lines.

With smaller publications the owners have also been the editors and writers of most of the content and, particularly in the past, were often people of education or intellectuals in the community (N. Kolios of *Εθνική Σάλπιγξ* [National Bugle], Y. Lillis of *Σήμερα* [Today], D. Koutsakos of *Ελληνο-αυστραλιανά Νέα* [Hellenic-Australian News], and others) but as publications expanded, or new publications were established on a more commercial basis, the owners became or were business people who, in turn, employed others as editors and

⁸While in the years before 1952 (the year of the signing of a migration agreement between the Australian and Greek governments) Greek immigration to Australia was quite low, it increased to 5,361 in 1953–1954, reaching a peak of 17,896 in 1964–1965, with an overall intake of 195,222 from June 1953 to June 1971, but declining rapidly from then onwards (see Department of Immigration, 1969: 36; Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, 1983: 35).

journalists.

Regarding place of publication, unlike some other ethnic presses, such as the early German⁹ and the Welsh¹⁰ press, the Greek press in its entirety has always been a phenomenon of the main urban centres. Over the decades, Greek newspapers and/or periodicals have been published in every state and territory capital except Hobart, although always predominantly in Melbourne and Sydney.

From the viewpoint of content, consistent with other ethnic presses in Australia and other countries,¹¹ however, the Greek newspapers fulfill their basic purpose by carrying two fields of domestic news (news from the homeland and news from the country of settlement) as well as community news, but in varying proportions from one publication to another, in addition, of course, to carrying other news items, sports, advertisements, etc. What can be observed is that as the dominant mentality in the community has changed after World War II from one of sojourners to that of settlers in a new homeland, so the press has been influenced by this and, in general, from the early 1960s has become less patronising and more informative (Holbraad, 1977: 67), and has changed orientation from being largely centred on Greece and the Greek community in Australia to a greater involvement in Australian issues and affairs (cf. Miller, 1987: xvii). This process has been reinforced and even accelerated by new arrivals who, predominantly carrying this new mentality, became involved in existing publications or established new ones.

A related change which is also taking place in the press is that,

⁹Although the later German press was an urban phenomenon, some of the early (nineteenth-century) German newspapers were published in the rural centres of Tanunda, South Australia and Toowoomba, Queensland. In fact, the first German newspaper, *Die Deutsche Post für die Australischen Kolonien* began in Adelaide in January 1848 where it ran for three months, but moved to Tanunda in June of that year. Following this, other newspapers were also published in Tanunda.

¹⁰There have been three Welsh (Gaelic) newspapers in Australia (*Yr Ymgeisydd*, 1865, *Yr Australydd*, 1866–1872 and *Yr Ymwelydd*, 1874–1876) and all were published in Ballarat, Victoria.

¹¹For example: Park, 1970 and Miller, 1987 for the United States; Pili, 1982 for Canada; Gilson and Zubrzycki, 1967 and Ata and Ryan, 1989 for Australia.

whereas in the past its readership was almost predominantly one of sojourners or relatively new arrivals and its content aimed to appeal to these immigrants, recent years have demonstrated that by and large the press is now more oriented than in the past to people who have made their permanent home in Australia and have settled in its society, and as such the press is following a process of transformation from an “immigrant” to an “ethnic” press (cf. Miller, 1987: xii, xvii), in accordance with the official Australian ideology of multiculturalism.

However, while these general trends are applicable to the Greek press as a body, it must not be thought that it is by any means homogeneous. On the contrary, the range of orientations (political and Church-Community) which the press, as an expression of a democratic society, has embodied from early times, demonstrates that, although the individual publications share a common stock of ideas, their diverse orientations and ideologies reflect the fragmentation which has existed within the Greek community itself (Holbraad, 1977: 53-71, 180-215; Tsingris, 1984 *passim*).

Church-Community disputes have polarised the community at different periods since the early 1920s (Tsounis, 1971 *passim*; Tsingris, 1984; Kapetopoulos, 1985) and various publications have not only reflected but, in some cases, have intensified and perpetuated them. Examples of this are the rival positions taken by the pro-Metropolitan *Το Εθνικό Βήμα* (The National Tribune) and the pro-Community *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* (Panhellenic Herald),¹² both of Sydney, in the 1920s and early 1930s (Kanarakis, 1989: 167); by the pro-Archdiocese *Φως* (Light) and *Πυρσός* (Torch) of Melbourne and the anti-Archdiocese *Νέος Κόσμος* (New World) of Melbourne as well as *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* and *Κυριακή* (Sunday Press) of Sydney in the 1960s (Mackie, 1967: 50-52; Tsingris, 1984: 199-347, 348); by the pro-Archdiocese *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ*, *Νέα Πατρίς* (New Country)¹³ and *Το Εθνικό Βήμα* of Sydney and the pro-Independent Church *Δημοκρατική Φωνή* (Democratic Voice), *Ελληνο-αυστραλιανή Επιθεώρηση* (Greek-Australian Review) and *Παροικιακή Φωνή* (Community Voice), all of

¹²The newspaper *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* changed title in 1978 to *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυκας*, and in 1984 to *Ο Ελληνικός Κήρυκας* (The Greek Herald).

¹³The newspaper *Νέα Πατρίς* changed title in 1978 to *Νέα Πατρίδα*.

Melbourne, as well as *Παροικιακός Τύπος* (Community Press) of Sydney in the late 1960s and early 1970s; and by the pro-Archimandrite Ierotheos Kourtesis (under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem) *Νέος Πυρσός* (New Torch), *Νέος Κόσμος* and *Ο Ελληνικός Κόσμος* (The Greek World), all three of Melbourne, as well as *Ο Ελληνικός Κήρυκας* (The Greek Herald) of Sydney and the pro-Archdiocese *Ακρόπολις* (Acropolis) of Sydney, in the early 1990s.

Similarly, variations of political stands and ideologies have been reflected in individual publications, ranging from leftist political positions such as *Ο Αυστραλοέλληνα* (The Australian Greek) (1949–1957) in its later years and *Νέος Κόσμος* (1957–) in its early years, as well as the publications specifically of the Greek-Australian left such as *Ελληνο-αυστραλιανή [Αριστερή] Επιθεώρηση* (Greek-Australian [Left] Review), *Αλληλεγγύη* (Solidarity), *Νέα Πορεία* (New Course), *Δημοκρατική Φωνή*, *Νέοι Δρόμοι* (New Directions) and others, to conservative positions, and to a strongly anti-communist stand, such as that taken by *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* and *Το Εθνικό Βήμα* during the Greek civil war of 1945–1949 (Kakakios, 1978: 75). Even an ultra-rightist stand was taken during the 1967–1974 military dictatorship of Greece by some publications such as the Melbourne newspapers *Φως* and *Πυρσός*, as well as the Sydney newspapers *Το Εθνικό Βήμα* and *Ελεύθερος Τύπος* (Free Press), which both reputedly received funds from the Greek government of that time (as reported by Paschalidis in *Κυριακή*, 22 June, 1969, 2; see also Tsounis, 1975: 44; Kakakios, 1978: 75).

An advantage which the Greek press of the diaspora, and therefore of Australia, has, compared with the press of Greece itself, is that during periods of totalitarian regimes it is able to promote views which cannot be overtly expressed in Greece. This is demonstrated, for example, by the anti-junta stance of the Australian Greek newspapers *Νέος Κόσμος* and *Τα Νέα* (The News) of Melbourne as well as *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* and *Κυριακή* of Sydney during the Papadopoulos military dictatorship (Buckley, 1967: 31; Kakakios, 1978: 51), although the government in Greece was still able to exert pressure on such publications through its consular representatives here (Sheppard, 1967: 5).

Regrettably, fragmentation in the community has not only been

reflected in the various publications but, especially in the past, intensified by their propensity for becoming involved with the disputes and discords, with owners and editors using the pages of their publications as an easy forum for making political, professional or personal attacks on leaders and other individuals in the community or on other publications. A proof of this is the use in the 1920s by *To Eθνικό Βήμα* of the name "Πανελλήνιος Κόραξ" ("Panhellenic Crow") for its rival *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* and the corresponding nickname "Τζίμης Εθνικοβηματιάδης" ("Jimmy Nationalstroller") given by *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* to the priest Dimitrios Marinakis, owner of *To Eθνικό Βήμα*.

Yet, despite its weaknesses, a quality of the Greek press in Australia throughout its life has been its endurance as an institution, regardless of the varying lifespans of individual publications, and it is characterised today by overall stability. Although smaller publications still exist, the market is dominated by large stable publications (newspapers and periodicals). Moreover, a number of them, concurrent with increasing strength and success, have increased their frequency as, for example, the Sydney newspaper *Ο Κόσμος*, which started as a weekly in 1982 and since 13 March 1990 has been published twice weekly, and *Ο Ελληνικός Κήρυκας* which originally, as *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ*, circulated once a week, became twice a week in 1970, three times a week in 1971 and, finally, a daily since 1982. Likewise, this stability is underlined by the fact that in more than one case a newspaper established in one city has expanded in the form of a sister-newspaper in another city and this, in its turn, has become similarly successful. Examples of this are the Melbourne newspaper *Νέος Κόσμος* with its more recent (1982) sister-newspaper *Ο Κόσμος* in Sydney, and the Sydney *Ο Ελληνικός Κήρυκας* which in late 1990 expanded to Melbourne with the publication of *Ο Ελληνικός Κόσμος*, initially weekly and twice weekly since early 1992.

Moreover, the large newspapers of Sydney and Melbourne are distributed interstate or have simultaneous editions, as for example in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, incorporating a number of pages of news from that city in each issue.

Readership and Circulation

Despite the obvious strength of the Greek press, readership and circulation figures are particularly difficult to determine with accuracy.

What can be stated is that of the 293,000 people of Greek origin recorded in the 1986 census, 267,100 (91%) speak Greek at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1988: 15, 16) and this would be the target audience for the Greek press plus, possibly, for those publications which have an English-language component, people of Greek origin whose main language is English.

A survey undertaken by W.D. Scott and Company for the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs published in 1980 (the only national multi-ethnic survey of its type until now), revealed that 83% of Greeks read, or look at, a Greek newspaper at least once a month, making the Greek community the second highest in native-language newspaper readership after the Argentinians/Chileans (Scott, 1980: 204 Table 6.3.[iv], 209).¹⁴

Incidentally, this survey also found that Greeks were the second lowest group of readers of English-language newspapers (45.3%) above the Lebanese (42%) (Scott, 1980: 196 Table 6.2.[i]), which, of course, emphasises that the Greek press is well entrenched in the Greek community as a major mass media source of information, and that it is to the Greek press, in preference to the English-language mainstream press, that community members turn to cover their information/communication needs.

The circulation of individual publications (not only Greek publications, but those of any ethnic group) is a matter of some contention, as some publications may exaggerate their circulation figures (Best, 1980: 12; *Ethnos* 1989: 8). This would appear to be done in order to attract advertising and also to attempt to increase the prestige of the publication within the community. Very few publications have had their circulation figures audited in the past, and currently only two

¹⁴For readership percentages of certain Greek newspapers (*Πανελλήνιος Κήρυκας*, *Το Εθνικό Βήμα*, *Νέος Κόσμος*, *Νέα Πατρίδα*, *Ο Κόσμος*) and the extent to which the number of editions are read per week or per month, see Tenezakis, 1984: 100 Table D.20.2, 101 Table D.21.2, 102 Table D.22.2.

newspapers (*Ο Ελληνικός Κήρυκας* and *Νέα Πατρίδα*, both of the Foreign Language Publications publishing group in Sydney) are listed as having audited circulation figures (*Margaret Gee's Australian Media Guide*, 1992: 185, 186), while claims are made (*Ο Κόσμος*, 1990: 2) that even figures supplied by the Audit Bureau of Circulation may be inaccurate and certainly are open to manipulation by newspaper owners.

What can be said with some certainty, however, is that the major Greek newspapers have a substantial circulation, exceeding that of many Australian provincial and country town newspapers (Jupp, 1990: 12), but it cannot be possible to determine circulation figures accurately unless a more precise and obligatory mechanism is developed for recording this information.

Social Role and Contribution

Having established at the beginning of this paper that the press in general is a social phenomenon, and considering the high readership level of the Greek press in the community, obviously and unavoidably it must play a significant social role.

The main *raison d'être* of the Greek press of Australia, as of the Greek press of any country of the diaspora, have always been the maintenance of a strong link with the homeland and the fostering and reinforcement of Greek national consciousness.

Maintaining a link with the homeland still exists as an important role in the Greek press today, and similarly the fostering of a strong Greek national consciousness remains just as much a part of the Greek press as it has always been. One need only peruse the different press publications, especially the newspapers, of the early months of 1992 to observe the amount and the forcefulness of the coverage given to the "Macedonian issue" and the consequential overt and covert encouragement and reinforcement of both Greek national consciousness and cohesion to appreciate that this is still a major role which the press plays.

The promotion of Greek national consciousness and identity entails encouragement to preserve and perpetuate the language, culture, values, religion and even behavioural patterns of the Greeks within a foreign-language and culturally different society, keeping them centred around the family, the community, the Orthodox faith and Greek organisations,

while, in nurturing these characteristics and encouraging "Greekness", the press covertly binds the Greeks (even those in scattered groups) together as a single entity in a foreign environment.

The immediate outcome is that the press acts as an agent of social control, reinforcing the behavioural standards which are acceptable within the group, even stigmatising those who act outside the boundaries of what the community, and therefore the press, considers acceptable. Such social control, however, not only promotes strong national consciousness and helps to ensure the survival of the Greek community as a cohesive group, but also functions to protect it from outside criticism.

Such ends are achieved through both direct and indirect channels, in almost all the content of a publication.

Direct channels of influence can be seen in the publication of editorials and other articles dealing with various matters of concern to Greeks, and through news reports relating to events and issues in Greece, including the immigrants' local areas of origin, as well as to the events and affairs of the Greek communities around the country and in other countries of the diaspora.

On the other hand, indirect influence is achieved through announcements and advertisements. For instance, advertisements reinforce Greek cultural patterns through the promotion of Greek products, traditional forms of entertainment, etc., while announcements for activities (name days, Greek national and community celebrations, etc.) have the same reinforcing effect.

Of course, other social institutions such as the family, the Church and Greek schools each play a comparatively more active and possibly more powerful role than the press in this area, but this does not detract from the role played by the press, as each of these institutions reinforces the effect of the others.

Apart from this primary role which the Greek press plays, it also provides a forum, functioning as an outlet for both community discussion and personal expression. Initiating and stimulating debate through articles and editorials, in parallel it makes its pages available for letters and other contributions from its readers, both in response to these and on other topics on which they express their views.

Of course, this function can stimulate disunity or even

factionalism, but it does provide individuals with the means to convey their opinions and criticisms to a wider community audience than would otherwise be available to them and facilitates the flow of consensual or opposing ideas within the community boundaries.

It can be argued, though, that in reality this forum may merely give the community members the impression that they make a contribution to community change when, in fact, it is questionable whether the views expressed have an effect on the actions, structure or power base of the community or the wider Australian society. But, nevertheless, the function of the press as a forum provides the means for the ideas or opinions of individuals to become a subject of wider debate within the community, even a community issue, stimulating individual and/or community action.

Nevertheless, although as outlined above, factionalism within the community is actually fostered by the press due to the differing political, Church and other stands of individual publications, as well as sometimes by its function as a community forum, this is within a framework of Greek identity and of Greek national consciousness which overarches all other issues.

While providing a strong link with the homeland and reinforcing "Greekness", the press, at the same time, has had to come to terms with the fact that it is the press of a minority group and that it and the community exist within the wider Australian society.

In the early decades of this press individual publications dealt with this dilemma by encouraging Greek cohesion and distinctiveness while, at the same time, encouraging their readers to be good citizens within the foreign Australian society.

Particularly since World War II, however, with the massive waves of immigration, the press has become more involved with assisting the new immigrants to settle into Australian society and adjust to the new life of the adopted homeland. To varying degrees, it has published information and advice on a range of social, legal, educational and other matters, disseminating information on government initiatives and services and thus interpreting the host society to the community (Holbraad, 1977: 69), although not to a level sufficient to satisfy readers' needs (Tenezakis, 1984: 236).

Even unintentionally, through carrying Australian news,

advertisements for Australian products, etc., the press has assisted with permeating aspects of the Australian social system and way of life through the community.

Furthermore, and particularly from the 1970s onwards, encouraged by the onset of the ideology of multiculturalism, the press has taken a stand on Australian issues, voiced its reaction to government policies and expressed support for political candidates or political parties at election times. Thus, the press fulfills two roles: on the one hand, holding on to its strong link with Greece and Greek values it reinforces its readers' bonds with the homeland, strengthening their psychological security, while on the other hand, by providing information on Australian society, the press helps its readers to make smooth adjustment to the new social environment, thereby lessening alienation and social isolation. In addition, as the press itself makes adjustments (linguistic, social, political, etc.) to the new society, it leads its readers in the same direction (cf. Miller, 1987: xix).

The question arises, however, of whether, as claimed for the ethnic press in general (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1958: 9; Gilson and Zubrzycki, 1967: 40-41), the Greek press assisted with the assimilation/integration of Greek immigrants, since, while helping and encouraging them to live in Australian society, at the same time it fulfilled the seemingly contradictory role of emotionally binding them to their homeland.

Certainly, providing information on how to adjust to and live in a new society is not the same as assimilation, which demands that immigrants divest themselves of the values and behavioural patterns of the homeland and accept and adopt the core values of the mainstream society. At the same time, language and cultural maintenance, which is also one of the roles of the press, helps "to provide the first and second generation immigrants with the security and self-esteem necessary for a high degree of social participation at both the individual and collective levels" (Castles, 1992: 11), but nor can this be seen as assimilation.

So, the idea that the Greek press, or any ethnic press in Australia, contributed to the assimilation/integration of its readers should be viewed with caution, and especially because "the validity of this proposition has been insufficiently tested" (Tenezakis, 1984: 20).

Furthermore, it could be questioned whether the Greek press today

should even fulfill an assimilationist/integrationist role since, under the current official policy of multiculturalism, it is legitimate for it to express the cultural values and norms of its own society, rather than those of mainstream Australia (Bell *et al.*, 1989: 12-13).

The links of the Greek press of Australia with both countries, Greece and Australia, have also been manifested in another form, that is in the various types of support it has given them.

With Greece, it functions as a stimulus and influencing factor of Greek immigrant public opinion and, according to the case, becomes a motivating, mobilising or even rallying force for Greek immigrants on Greek political and national issues as, for instance, in supporting fund-raising for the Asia Minor refugees in the 1920s (see, for example, *Εθνική Σάλπιγξ*, 9 May, 1923, 2), for the victims of earthquakes at various times, etc., and for mobilising attendance at rallies on issues such as Cyprus and Macedonia. Individual publications have made donations from their own funds for such causes (see, for example, *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ*, 4 September, 1974, 20), or have initiated their own fund-raising appeals, such as that established by *Φως* in 1937 to raise money for the Greek airforce (Tsounis, 1971: 212-215), and the one established by *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυκας* (12 September, 1979, 3) for the victims of a major earthquake in the Thessaloniki area in 1978.

In a similar way, an example of support for Australia, as early as 1938, was the Greeks' Australian National Defence Fund established to raise money for the Royal Australian Air Force, initiated by *Το Εθνικό Βήμα* and even supported by its then rival *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* (*Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ*, 12 October, 1939, 6; also Tsounis, 1971: 215). There have also been numerous examples of Greek press support for fund-raising activities organised by Greek associations for Australian charities (the Red Cross, various hospitals, thalassaemia research, etc.).

The Future

It is apparent, therefore, that the Greek press in Australia has made and continues to make a contribution to Greece and Australia but especially to the Greeks in this country, whether new arrivals or long time settlers, on a community and individual level.

The question which cannot be ignored, however, is whether there is a future for it beyond the short term, and if so what form this future

will take (see Kanarakis, 1992).

The possibility of the decline of the ethnic press has stimulated discussion and, in some cases, its demise has been predicted (Perkin, 1982: 3; Fox, 1990: 46-47), although opinions on the issue differ.

One side of the argument states that in view of the reduced number of immigrants from Greece from the highest point of 16,991 in 1964-1965 (Bureau of Immigration Research, 1990: vi) to a net figure of only 450 in 1983-1984 and still only 690 in 1987-1988 (Bureau of Immigration Research, 1989: 35 Table C.4), due to contemporary Australian immigration policies and improved conditions in Greece, and the parallel decline in the number of Greek-born residents from 160,200 in the 1971 census to 137,611 in the 1986 census (Bureau of Immigration Research, 1990: vi), its readership will unavoidably diminish, and this eventually to a size where it will be difficult for a Greek-language press to be supported at a level at which it can survive. At the same time, it has been demonstrated that increased proficiency in writing English leads to a corresponding decrease in readership of ethnic newspapers (Scott, 1980: 209), while second generation immigrants turn mainly to the English-language press since they, on the whole, tend to become "Australianised" (cf. Price, 1991: 9).

In recent years some publications have made a determined effort to attract second generation readers by incorporating one or more pages in the English language. However, unlike the English-language content of 1934 to 1956 which was mainly literature, English-language lessons or other material aimed at satisfying government regulations,¹⁵ today it consists of community related articles and other items aimed mainly at young people but also at other English-speaking members of the community.¹⁶ But doubt has been expressed at the level of appeal of

¹⁵Government restrictions on all ethnic newspapers in relation to a proportion of their content being in the English language (set by the Department of Immigration at 25%) were instituted in 1934 with the Publication of Newspapers in Foreign Languages Regulations, Statutory Rules 1934, No. 13, and repealed by the War Precautions Act Repeal Act 1920-1955, Statutory Rules 1956, No. 37.

¹⁶The phenomenon of Greek publications carrying columns or pages in English goes back even before 1934, but is encountered in the early years of this press in both newspapers and periodicals. The earliest newspaper to incorporate material (general and literary) in English was, according to the

the material they contain for the majority of second generation Greeks in the community on the basis that it is aimed only at a very narrow section of this group (Efstratiadis, 1988: 20).

The counter-argument put forward about the viability of a Greek-language press is that according to the 1986 census 267,100 people, aged five years and over, speak Greek as their first language at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1988: 17 Table 2.3), and since this includes not only first generation immigrants but 111,700 Australian-born as well (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1988: 17 Table 2.3) it bodes well for the continuation of the Greek language, and therefore of a Greek-language press. After all, this argument continues, the Greek-language press survived in the past with a much smaller Greek-speaking population in this country than today and, therefore, it should be able to survive into the future.

A third, more pragmatic view put forward is that this press will probably follow the same course as various ethnic presses in the United States, that is, from a native-language press it will become bilingual and finally publish entirely in English (Fishman, 1966). In this case an English-language Greek press would perhaps play a role only supplementary to the mainstream English-language press, giving mainly community news and news of the homeland which cannot be found in Australian newspapers and periodicals. However, the Greek-language press in the United States did not follow this pattern. With new immigration waves in the early post-war years and in the mid-1960s the Greek-language press received new impetus while, in parallel, the English-language Greek press not only continued but also flourished with new newspapers and periodicals to meet the needs of second and later generation immigrants (Kopan, 1987). This could conceivably be the pattern in Australia if Greek immigration were to increase but this is, of course, a matter which cannot be predicted or counted upon.

If the press follows the pattern of transition from Greek to

results of my research, the Sydney *Πανελλήνιος Κήρυξ* (1926–) from its first issue, while the earliest periodical was the short-lived bilingual illustrated monthly *The Humanitarism* [sic] of Brisbane (1931), also with general and literary material. Likewise, the Melbourne periodical *Οικογένεια* (1951–1964) was the first publication to include an English-language supplement (literary).

bilingual to English, it will rest with other social institutions to assist in language maintenance, but the press will still transmit features of Greek culture and ethnicity, via the English language. Indeed, functional ethnicity continues beyond the point at which the original native language becomes “substantially dormant” or is lost (Fishman, 1966: 399).

What can be said, however, is that for this press to survive in any form, some criticisms need to be met and some changes, whether in mentality or content, are inevitable.

Criticisms have been made (see, for example, Efstratiadis, 1988: 20–22) about the low production level of some publications, the overall shortage of trained journalists, the poor translation of material taken from English-language publications, the out-of-date nature of some of the content, and the lack of ability of the press to respond to changing approaches to advertising and thus to attract advertising from the overall Australian sector, as well as about other points.

What would appear to be the most important need, though, is for the press to appreciate and continuously respond to the changing nature of the community which consists of arrivals of different times carrying different mentalities, and second generation immigrants, as well as to the changing and diversifying needs of the immigrants themselves as they have adapted to life in Australia.

An example of a successful readjustment to a changing community is that of the Melbourne German-language newspaper *Neue Welt* which, faced with declining readership and circulation in the mid-1970s, changed its format and especially its content to meet the more demanding needs and interests of the German community as it had evolved at that time. As a result, despite the fact that this was a period of extremely low German immigration, *Neue Welt* experienced a significant increase in circulation and readership at a higher level than at any previous time (Reimann, 1986 *passim*).

Certainly, publications which are able to respond to changing conditions and better meet the needs of their readers will not only reap the benefits themselves but will also be better equipped to survive into the future.

Conclusion

Regardless of the fact that individual publications have appeared and disappeared in the historical course of the Greek press in Australia, as an institution it has remained, stabilised and flourished. No matter what the future holds for this press (newspapers and periodicals) within the ethnically and culturally diverse Australian society, it can be safely argued that it has made in the past, and continues to make in the present, a significant contribution to Greek life on both an individual and community level, despite its shortcomings and weaknesses, as well as the difficulties (economic, professional, geographic, etc.) it has had to overcome.

Equally importantly, as a social phenomenon which is both affected by and reflects the mores, the attitudes and the ideologies of the surrounding social system, it constitutes a unique archive for the study of social, political, cultural and even linguistic aspects of the Greek community in its entirety. Although some other printed sources (books, almanacs, etc.) exist, it is the press which gives an uninterrupted and multi-dimensional perspective of the life and world of the Greeks in Australia, and, therefore, is the best primary source for the study of the various facets of Hellenism in this land of the Antipodes over the past eight decades. As such, undoubtedly it merits further academic consideration, research and recording.

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