

HELLENIC COMMUNITY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY

The Voice from the Pavement - Peter Adamis 16 March 2013

If it is fair to say that the Australian Hellenic community is an integral part of Australian society and that intermarriage is increasing. Is the Australian Hellenic community in danger of becoming a hybrid or a minority community. Will we as Australians (of Greek origins) follow in the footsteps of our American cousins or shall the community retain its Hellenic image and Hellenism others by setting an example.

If the Australian Greek community is to survive it may require an infusion of new blood. If that is so, will the Australian Hellenic community embrace the new Diaspora arriving in Australia or will they be met with hostility and be told to "Go back where you come from" Have we become so insensitive or hardened to the plight of the new Diaspora. Have we not learnt the lessons of the first Diaspora?

I must confess, bringing up my four sons as a single parent whilst serving in the Army, made it difficult for me to communicate in Greek. I realized that since I had arrived in Australia at the age of four, English had become my first language. Therefore communication at home was in English. However in my defence, I did raise the boys to understand the Hellenic customs and way of life. My sons despite being born here consider themselves Greek as much as they do in being an Australian.

What does this mean for the future, I really don't know. I have friends in America in the same boat and yet they consider themselves closer to the Greek rather than the Anglo. ("Englezi") Will that mean that our children will intermarry with the Asians. I am not a racist, far from it. My number three son is engaged to a young Chinese lass. Will their children have Hellenic customs.

I think not. I believe that in the end it will be up to my wife and I to lay those Hellenic foundations to the grand children. The word multiculturalism to me is a just a euphemism or a vehicle for integrating into Australian society. It is my belief that the words "integrate" and "assimilation" in this context means being part of the society; the former would indicate not losing one's identity while the latter indicates losing all of your past.

But then again these are my thoughts on the subject only. If that is the case do we believe that faith or a religion is sufficient to retain a culture or we fail to keep on the right track in keeping the traditions. Hopefully the next generation will continue Although I agree completely on the above subject, that we can learn from them in some ways. On the other hand if a person has a different religion, different colour, use another language other than Greek, he has Greek DNA, (one parent was a Greek), thinks like a Greek and believes he or she is a Greek, are they Greek?

I don't believe that whatever others say that we the Australian Greeks will be seen as racists. The Greeks in Greece are no better as I have seen them in action. I think the Greeks in the Diaspora are more tolerant and yet I understand others thought process can differ from a geographical and geopolitical reason. There is nothing wrong with saying that Greeks should be a particular colour or should be practicing the same religion.

I prefer that Greece is all white, has a unified faith, speak Greek and anything else that is Greek, but life is not always that way. It is just an opinion that is all. It should be seen as being racist if that is your belief. We should be beyond that and little more enlightened. I would like to see all of Australia white, does not mean that I have racist views although it can be perceived as such. The same as all the Blacks in Africa saying they want to see Africa only for the blacks.

It is an opinion that although not everyone may agree is to ask the question; how far do we go back in history to define what Greek DNA is. Do we go back as far as the Leleges, Pelagians, Minyans, Luwians, Mycenaean, Dorians, Ionians. That is my point. What is Greek DNA? I certainly do not see my opinion as being racist.



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