

ODE TO AUSTRALIAN GREEKS

ONE DAY OF REFLECTION

The Voice from the Pavement Peter Adamis 31 December 2013

As we approach the end of 2013, let us for a moment pay homage to those who have gone before us. Let us find one day in the year that we can stop for just a moment and reflect on the past and that of our origins. Maybe it can be on the last day of the year as being most suitable. Let us name it "**A day of reflection**" for all of us whose origins are not of this land. For many it would include all but the indigenous people. In our case we who have Hellenic origins.

Is it possible that we too can have an ode of our own that we can use on that one day of the year to remind us of a past that will soon be forgotten in the coming mists of time. I would like to think that we as Australians with a Hellenic past have matured over the ages and have no problems with our identity, loyalties to Australia and that our cultural origins. after all that is what being an Australian is all about.

Let us put aside the petty jealousies, hatreds if have them, the wrong doings that we may have done or have had done to us, the lost loves, to those departed and in many cases those who are nearing deaths embrace. Let us pause for that small moment, no matter where we are and remember those who have gone before us. We don't have to forget our heritage, our cultural past, nor are we being asked to deny our origins romantic as they may seem to others. For we now share the responsibilities and burdens of this land.

Should anyone ask why you are so silent, remind them that you are reflecting what it is to be an Australian with a Hellenic past. We no different to our Anglos/Saxon brethren or to those who are the original owners of this land. We are all Australians no matter our cultural past.

From a personal point of view, I would like to see a future where in our lifetime all Australians are united as one family without having to lose our identity and that of our cultural past. I would like to see the following ode be read out at special gatherings, I have no problem with only sections of it being read out, it's the reflection and remembrance of our past that is important.

Arise and take on the challenges of the future, you captains of industry, leaders of men and women, and those of the cloth. Fear not the steps you take for there are many who will follow you. The future generation will need strong foundations upon which to build their own futures. It is our responsibility to ensure that those foundations are built on solid rock and not the like the marshes with their swiftly sinking sands.

ODE TO AUSTRALIAN GREEKS. "O stranger to this land of ours we call home, Australia. Remember that we too are Australians. We who are of Hellenic origins, and made Australia home were and are always obedient to its laws. We who reside under the great Southern Cross once crossed this great land and have memories of old. May those who doubted our loyalty, remember that we too shared the burdens of Australia and willingly took on the aggressor to retain the freedoms we take for granted this day.

For those of us who are buried in this land we call Australia we salute those who now carry the torch we once carried with pride. To live in a land free from oppression, hunger and disease. To raise our families and educate our children in the manner of the land we now live in. We ask now of the new generation that when the time comes, that they too remember that our lives were not in vain.

Consider therefore, carefully before you criticize, that we who lie beneath this Australian soil, that we once lived amongst you in the flesh and felt the cool breeze against our cheeks and the heat of the sun during the day. We too had visions, dreams, and objectives that were not always fulfilled, but that somehow we managed to find our way through life.

We kept true to the laws of the land, worked hard to sustain our selves and that of our brethren. Laughed, cried, howled and jumped with joy when good news or calamities came our way. We took on the good the bad and even the nightmares of others in good stead, without wavering from what lay ahead. In all matters great and small, we Australians of Hellenic origins never forgot our heritage, culture and our sense of identity during our journey throughout this land we call home Australia.

We ask not much for the next generation other than to remember that we never forgot that we came from a race called the Hellenes. Therefore on the last day of the year, spare that one precious moment to reflect on those who went before you and that of the past and when that moment has passed, look forward to a year with the same confidence and courage of a race called the Hellenes. Stand tall and be proud of our origins and let us not deny our heritage, for it is who we are. Australians of the Hellenic race"

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