Southern Strangers

A Qualitative Study on the Experiences of Post World War Two Greek Migrants.

Nicholas Grapsias
PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning this thesis,

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Student Name: Nicholas Grapsias

Student Number: 94304741

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for my Grandparents:

Nikolaos Grapsias
Panayota Grapsias
Yiorgos Rantzos
and
Katerina Rantzos

Who saved the lives of everyone of my family during World War II and The Greek Civil War.
MIGRANTS

Gary Langford

We ask why migrants stick in groups
when we stick in groups.
We ask why they don’t learn our culture
when we don’t learn theirs.
We ask why they speak a foreign language
when all language is foreign.
For we are all migrants
when we enter the classroom from birth,
greeting each other strangely.
There is a new language to learn,
a culture to observe.
How poorly we teach the first law of all travellers:
it is as easy to hold out a hand,
as to clench a fist.
Hello, my name is.....

*Gary Langford* is a senior lecturer at the University of Western Sydney, School of Humanities, Bankstown campus.
IS AUSTRALIA ‘THE LUCKY COUNTRY’? THE EXPERIENCES, EXPECTATIONS AND CONCERNS OF POST-WAR GREEK MIGRANTS, UTILIZING INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS.

The present research examines the Experiences, Expectations and Concerns of post-war Greek migrants in an interview and focus group setting. The central question of inquiry is whether Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for Greek migrants after approximately fifty years of living in Australia. 27 Greek migrants participated in the study, 11 in the 10 interviews and 16 in the three focus groups. 73% of the migrants interviewed believe that Australia is ‘the lucky country’, and 27% believe Australia is not ‘the lucky country’. 64% of these migrants interviewed stated that they experienced no racism from the host peoples, whereas 36% stated that they did. Of these Greek migrants interviewed, 36% feel that their identity is still Greek, 55% feel that their identity is both Greek and Australian, and 9% feel their identity is more Australian than Greek. 81% of the total migrants who participated in the three focus groups believe Australia is ‘the lucky country’, whereas 19% did not. Overall, of the total number of Greek migrants who participated in the present research, 78% believe Australia is ‘the lucky country’, and 22% believe that it is not. Some of the major reasons why the Greek migrants believe Australia is ‘the lucky country’ include: Australia has provided good occupational and educational opportunities to the Greek migrants and their children. Some of the overall reasons why Greek migrants believe Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ include: racism, qualifications were not initially recognized, and Greece is now perceived as being economically superior to Australia. Some of the main limitations of the present study include; the small number of subjects recruited, advertisement design, ambiguous definition of ‘the lucky country’, and the study was only concentrated in one geographical section of Sydney. Recommendations are included to assist future researches alleviate some of the problem areas.
INTRODUCTION

Migration, can be defined as ‘to go from one country, region, or place of abode to settle in another,’ (Macquarie University Dictionary, 1999). As a general term it is used to refer to the geographic movement of an individual or group (Kuper and Kuper, 1985; Cigler and Cigler, 1985). Dimitreas (1998), puts it as ‘the motivation to migrate emanates from an ordered set of values that are of utmost importance to the given individuals or groups of migrants and that are not adequately met in the home country. For example, people migrate in search for better economic opportunities, from the result of political or religious persecution or to escape various forms of exploitation, alienation or cultural deprivation experienced in their country of origin’ (Dimitreas, 1998).

Social researchers now have come to ascertain that migration is a multifaceted phenomenon, consisting of many different types or forms of migration (Richmond 1998; Castles and Miller, 1993). Migration contributes to demographic change because it involves movement of people between geographic and social locations. As well as mortality and fertility rates, migration can be one of these three important factors which affect structure, composition and distribution of a population (Petersen and Thomas 1968; Wooden et al., 1990). Because of the interrelation of these three, their different rates, together with the size of migration, may have a permanent effect on the demographic composition of a population. This is not only reserved in countries which have suffered mass out-migration, but also within industrially advanced societies such as the United States, Canada and Australia where immigration programs have had a considerable impact on the demographic structure and growth of their population (Richmond, 1988). For example, according to the 1986 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census, a fifth of the Australian population was overseas born (Richmond, 1988). A Bureau of Immigration Research (BIR) report below:

If [the immigrants] have distinctive fertility and mortality patterns which differ from the Australian-born, the immigration program can have an influence on patterns of fertility and mortality as well (BIR, 1990).

Countries with a large immigration influx such as the United States, Canada and Australia, specifically chose migrants who through lack of skills or a knowledge of the English language were limited to certain categories of work (Petersen and Thomas, 1968). These countries were under the presumption that the new arrivals would easily adapt and assimilate more readily within the cultural framework of Anglo-conformity. Within this, there was a common but narrow view which believed that migrants should forget their past lifestyle, their traditions, their language and adapt the lifestyle of the host nation (Petersen and Thomas, 1968). This belief remained strong until the 1960s (Price, 1963; The Secretariat to the Committee to Advise on Australia’s Immigration Policies, 1987). One of the results of these ‘assimilationist’ beliefs was the inability of different governments to adequately define what was meant by the words ‘migrant’ and ‘migration’ (Petersen and Thomas, 1968). Immigration experts assumed that people migrate for only one reason, and that they migrate only once in their lifetime (Withers, 1990), a belief that was soon proven considerably inaccurate by real-life research (Dimitreas, 1998). Socioeconomic changes in advanced industrial nations influenced
people's understanding of migration. Researchers and governments in these nations began to understand that people migrate for many reasons – it became increasingly clear that migration cannot simply be treated as a one-way journey of migrants from country of birth to the country of relocation (Dimitreas, 1998). After settlement, the new arrivals have to let go and forget their language and traditions and adopt those of the host nation (Dimitreas, 1998). It was commonly known that by the 1950s, adjustment and assimilation difficulties in host nations such as in the United States, Canada and Australia resulted in many migrants to return to their countries of origin (Dimitreas, 1998).

Migrant groups are now being classified in relation to the forces that motivated them to leave their country of origin (Dimitreas, 1998). Archaic migration refers to migration that was of a result of ecological factors, such as environmental changes, commonly the scarcity of food and water. Contemporary migration occurs because of the availability of resources and opportunities in the new place (Petersen and Thomas, 1968). Some individuals have no choice but to migrate because of persecutions against their social, political, religious beliefs. Such people are classified as refugees and can be granted refugee status by host societies (Petersen and Thomas, 1968). Refugee migration is generally are result of dictatorships, civil wars or colonization (Petersen and Thomas, 1968). Colonization also is another form of migration and can occur because of increased populations in the sending society, or because of political, commercial or even military considerations (Schmerhorn, 1970).

All types of migration are categorized as either internal or external migration (Rex and Mason, 1986). Migration occurs nationally as well as internationally. Migrants, like all of us, strive to become upwardly socially mobile either within or beyond the national borders of their own country of origin. They look towards migration, hoping that better opportunities will enable them to achieve their goals beyond their country’s borders. Migrants offer their occupational services in host societies, hoping that they will be provided with opportunities which will produce benefits for them and their families (Rex and Mason, 1986).

Sociologists have theorized a 'push versus pull' phenomenon in migration (Broom and Selzwick, 1981). The two forces involved work selectively on different migrant types. The push factor involves unemployment and economic hardship, food shortages, racial or religious discrimination, political oppression, deteriorated environments and overcrowding. The pull factor refers to job availability, cheap land, political and religious freedom and increased educational opportunities (Broom and Selzwick, 1981). This 'push versus pull' theory to migration does not consider the more subtle aspects of an individual's cultural and subjective, or psychological, make-up (Broom and Selzwick, 1981).

Luthke and Cropley (1990) highlighted the importance of confronting internal psychological issues with regards to migration. They viewed migration as a dissolution of attachments to objects, both at the place of origin (the push area) and the place of destination and settlement (the pull area).

Fried (1970), stated that alienation often results from people's dissatisfaction with their home society therefore only a small proportion may be said to migrate voluntarily and that 'it is not always the poorest who migrate,' but a considerable amount of migrants who are somewhat alienated or not content with their country of origin because it does not satisfy their physical and spiritual expectations (Fried, 1970).
The many theories of migration have expanded during the post-World War Two period. Migration has become more of a phenomenon as a result of the contemporary global community. This trend towards globalization appears to be increasing as development advances towards the post-industrial or postmodern system (Stahl et al., 1993). The development of post-industrial societies and the increase in global capitalism has led many more nation states to be involved in either sending or receiving societies of migrants and, in some cases, both (Stahl et al., 1993). Persons of diverse cultural and educational background travel over considerably more borders than in past eras. Migrant movements are international, in an increasing variety of forms and occupational categories, in search for better employment and rewards (Stahl et al., 1993). Women are also seeking social mobility status across countries, overcoming previous gender differences and, like males, are being recruited more (World Council of Churches, 1991; Stahl et al., 1993).

Dimitreas (1998) states that migrants ‘are not seen as conquerors but as new comers to be exploited either temporarily as guest workers, or permanently as settlers – subject to specific government regulations and policies at the time of migration.’ In terms of economic theory with regards to migrants, ‘host societies are meant to provide much-needed labour because of a rapidly expanding economy and, as such, migrants are given entry permits.’ (Dimitreas, 1998).

Today, Australia is consciously multicultural, with approximately 150 different nationalities migrants, but the dominant culture still remains as Anglo-European (D’alton and Jagtenberg, 1993). These researchers state that ‘the rhetoric of multiculturalism stands in contrast to a tradition of strongly ingrained racial intolerance, as reflected, for example, in the long-standing White Australia Policy, and more recently in ‘the Blainey debate.’ The paternalistic and ‘assimilationist’ social policies of the 1940s to 60s have changed to ‘integration’ and since the late 70s to a policy that has espoused ‘Multiculturalism’ (D’alton and Jagtenberg, 1993).

A HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN MIGRATION – Post World War II

Australia’s history is a rich history of immigration. All of us came from somewhere else, even the indigenous peoples who arrived 40,000 years ago. In the eighteenth century, England saw the continent as a place to transport and house convicts, which were the first European migrants. Quite recently, the media presented the discovery of private letters written by Arthur Phillip, where he clearly states that Australia was not only considered as a place to transport convicts.

After World War Two, there was a desperate shortage of labour, so desperate that all opposition to the idea of mass migration into Australia diminished (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). The years of depression followed by war had resulted in a scarcity of many essential services – a quarter of a million homes were required. Building materials were unobtainable, steel production was down and many pre-1939 services could not be maintained (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

The Labor government decided to launch a massive population expansion program unprecedented in Australia’s history. For the first time assisted immigration was offered to non-British people, although British migrants still received significant
preference (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Assistance was not available to everyone. In 1947-8, non-British who qualified for assistance were allied ex-servicemen of ‘pure European descent’, ‘residents of Malta, Eire and the Dutch.’ In 1947, Australia accepted an agreement with the ‘International Refugee Organization’ to offer entry to Europeans displaced by the war. Shortly later, an agreement was reached with Italy and West Germany, then gradually with other European countries. At all times preference was given to single immigrants or those who possessed the skills which were most urgently needed here (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Lowenstein states, ‘for the first time in the history of European settlement of Australia, the years 1945-54 saw more non-British immigrants entering Australia than British. By the end of 1955, a million immigrants had arrived’ (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). ‘From 1959 to 1973, nearly two million migrants came. By this time the population since 1945 had leapt by 57,000 to 13,131,600. Sixty per cent of this increase was due to migration, and the 1,400,000 children born of at least one migrant parent (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

In the late 1950s, Australian immigration trends went through further change. Development in the industrialized countries of Europe resulted in fewer people from these nations desiring to migrate. Therefore in 1966, the Australian Assistance Program changed in order to attract the ‘guest workers’ of Europe – Greeks, Yugoslav and Turks who had finished their contracts in northern Europe, also immigrants from France, Scandinavia, Switzerland and the Americas (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). The gradual relaxation of restrictions on non-European settlers regarding the White Australia Policy, culminated in 1966 with the decision to consider ‘well-qualified’ people of non-European origin who wished to live in Australia. This was on the basis of their ability to ‘assimilate to Australian lifestyle’ (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Immigration from Asia and Africa though at this time was still highly restricted (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

In the 1970s, because of the reduction in industrial growth and a lack of employment and because of fears regarding Australia’s ability to provide services for more than 170,000 new Australians per year, the intake of immigrants decreased. In 1975-6 more migrants left Australia than came (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Although many migrants had succeeded in businesses or professional life, the majority remained blue-collar workers. ‘Whilst twenty-seven per cent of the total work force was born overseas, forty-five percent of all industrialized workers are immigrants’ (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). In industries such as sewerage and water supply which employ a high percentage of labourers, seventy-five per cent of workers are immigrants (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Immigrant women form ten percent of the total Australian work force but compromise sixty percent of all women employed in industry (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Without migrant women, ‘light industry would have difficulties finding sufficient labour’ (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Men and women born overseas are generally poorer, even after long residence in Australia. The Henderson Study in 1966 discovered that that ‘16.2 percent of Greeks, 15.3 percent of Italians and 9.2 percent of British immigrants lived below the poverty line as compared with 7.7 percent of the population as a whole’ (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

The situation gets even more difficult for those who do not know English and for those who did not come from an industrialized country. These migrants usually work in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations which are lower paid, physically exhausting, dangerous and menial, the least rewarding jobs in Australian society (Lowenstein and
Loh, 1977). ‘Fifty-two percent of workers at General Motors and forty percent of Port Kembla Steel workers come from non-English speaking countries (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Migrant women often work twice as hard – at home and in stressful factories. Women did not present issues so much about the low wages but more about the boring, repetitive work performed under the pressure and inhumanity experienced in the factories (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

Management or unions did not adequately cater for non-English speaking migrants. Some shocking results show that forty percent of all industrial accidents in Australia involve migrant workers (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). In some places twice as many migrants are injured as Australians. Simple safeguards, such as safety instructions written in many languages or verbal instructions in the use of machines given through interpreters have not been used (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). ‘Unions have not insisted on them, because non-English speaking migrants are not adequately represented on union committees, even when they form a majority of members’ (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

Australia many times does not recognize the overseas trade and professional qualifications of migrants, so skilled people are forced to work either at unskilled jobs or to carry out skilled work at unskilled rates of pay (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). ‘Because of the language barrier, migrant workers often do not understand their rights under industrial awards and Workers Compensation and are therefore particularly vulnerable to arbitrary dismissal, victimization and intimidation’ (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

Australia has the biggest overseas-born labour force of any nation in the world, except that of Israel (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Sydney and Melbourne with twenty-five percent and thirty percent respectively of their populations born outside Australia are among the world’s most multilingual cities, even more so than New York with nineteen percent (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977). Melbourne has become the second largest Greek city in the world.

Immigration has been a constant theme in Australian history, but for most of its history it has been a British theme with little variation. Now the theme has changed radically. The ethnic diversity and the great number of newcomers have made the last thirty years of Australia’s history quite radically unique (Lowenstein and Loh, 1977).

Policy

The survival of an ethnic minority depends on the type of policy, which the majority theoretically adopts. Simpson and Yinger (1972) list five possible types of policy:

- **Assimilation**: A policy of making members of the minority group similar to the majority so that they adapt the language and the norms of the majority and participate fully in majority institutions. Assimilation can be forced, as in the case of minority Kurds in Iraq, or merely encouraged.

- **Pluralism**: A policy of allowing ethnic groups to maintain separate identities for as long as they so wish. One variant of a pluralist policy is that in which minorities receive legal protection of say, their linguistic or religious independence and even financial and organizational support for cultural development.
• *Population Transfer:* A policy of shipping out a troublesome minority to another
country.

• *Subjugation:* An explicit attempt to maintain minority group members in inferior
social positions. This may include prohibition of freedom to travel or to form
families or the denial or access to jobs, wages, education, politics, and so on.

• *Extermination:* A policy of genocide as exemplified by the Nazi German policy
towards the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s, American policy to native Indians in the
nineteenth century, and the policy of Van Diemens' Land settlers to Aborigines.

From the turn of the 20th century, immigration policies went through a number of
different stages. Firstly, as mentioned above, the White Australia Policy was established
with the passing of the *Immigration Restrictions Act* in 1901, the first year of Federation
when the colonial states of Australia became one and the Australian constitution was
formalized (Jureidini and Poole, 1997). This policy was based upon preserving
British/European population with the assimilation of Aboriginal and migrant populations
(Jureidini and Poole, 1997). It had begun in the 1880s with strict restrictions on Chinese
immigration (and Asians generally) who might work for lower wages and was supported
by all political parties as well as trade unionists (Jureidini and Poole, 1997). After World
War II, a new policy of assimilation (1947-67) was introduced:

*Assimilation* meant that immigrants would become like Australians, changing their
cultural origins to conform with the dominant culture. They would speak English in
public and preferably in private, become citizens when able to speak English, and
abandon visible signs of difference such as traditional clothing...It was assumed that their
children born in Australia would be told by their parents to assimilate and the school
system would complete the process. It was also assumed [rather simplistically] that there
would be no discrimination against immigrants, although anti-discrimination laws did not
exist during this phase (Jupp, 1996).

The major political parties dropped the White Australia Policy platforms in 1965
following the official ending of assimilation (Jupp, 1996). The new policy of *Integration*
meant accepting what was happening in reality, abandoning forced assimilation and
introducing a greater degree of tolerance (Jupp, 1996). Thus, 'Integration meant fitting
into mainstream society on an equal basis without necessary abandoning distinctive
cultural beliefs and practices' (Jupp, 1996).

While integration was a significant shift towards a more tolerant society with a
consciousness of citizenship and human rights, there was still an underlying principal of
assimilation. It was not until 1973 that the White Australia Policy was finally officially
abolished by the Whitlam Labor government and Australia declared a Multicultural
society. The category of race was eliminated from immigration criteria (Jureidini and
Poole, 2000).

The idea of *Multiculturalism* was first used in Canada to acknowledge
Canadians who were not of British or French origin. In Australia the notion sought to
give recognition to a plurality of ethnic minority groups, particularly those of non-
English speaking backgrounds, whose contribution to Australian society as well as their voting power was increasingly significant. As James Jupp put it:

Multiculturalism ended the belief that all other cultures were inferior to and incompatible with the ‘mainstream’ culture of White British Australia. It accepted that immigrants would continue to speak their own languages and would try to pass on to their children a sense of pride in their origins. Those who had come as refugees would still follow closely the politics of their homelands, even while being anxious to become Australian citizens (Jupp, 1996).

While the original impetus for multicultural pluralism began with the Whitlam Labor government (1973-75), the legislative action was developed by the subsequent Liberal-National coalition under Malcolm Fraser (Jupp, 1996). Following a commissioned report on migrant services and programs in 1978 (The Galbally Report) the immigration department established an Institution of Multicultural Affairs (Jupp, 1996). This department funded ethnic welfare workers, migrant resource centers, adult migrant education programs, and interpreting and translating services (Jupp, 1996). Radio stations broadcast in several languages, and SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) television began transmission in 1980 (Jupp, 1996). In 1979, the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA) was established (Jupp, 1996). By 1989 multiculturalism was said to have three main dimensions:

1. Cultural Identity – the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion;

2. Social Justice – the right of all Australians to equality of treatment and religion, gender and place of birth; and

3. Economic Efficiency – the need to maintain, develop and utilize effectively the skills and talents of all Australians regardless of background (Jupp, 1996).

Immigration – the Facts

• Net migration gain has provided about 40 per cent of the increase in our population since 1947. (Net migration gain equals the difference between permanent and long-term arrivals – duration of stay 12 months or more – and permanent and long-term departures.)

• Since 1947, there have been over 2.5 million children born in Australia with one or both parents born overseas. As a result of immigration and these births, our population is now 60 per cent larger than it otherwise would have been.

• The United Kingdom and Ireland remain the largest sources of immigrants, followed by New Zealand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Hong Kong. On a regional basis, Europe and Asia – the latter category includes the Middle East – currently are
each providing about 40 per cent of the total. Immigrants have come from over 120 different countries.

- On average, immigrants are better qualified and have a higher level of schooling than Australian-born citizens, although immigrants of southern European origin have fewer qualifications, Asians have similar qualification levels, and European and Anglo-American immigrants have higher qualification levels.

- Immigrant earnings are, on average, about equal to those of the Australian-born employees, though there are substantial differences between different immigrant groups.

- Initially, immigrant unemployment rates are higher than those of Australian-born employees but after five years of residence they approach those of the Australian-born. Unemployment rates are highest among immigrants born in non-English-speaking countries.

- Immigrants from Mediterranean countries and recent arrivals from Southeast Asia occupy lower-skilled jobs. However, this is explained by the level of job skills held by these immigrants, including English language skills. Over time, most migrants obtain jobs commensurate with their qualifications and skill.

- The children of immigrants appear to do at least as well as those with Australian-born parents, in terms of the occupation and income of their parents. However, there are marked differences in educational participation, with children of Greek parents at the high end and female children with Turkish and Lebanese parents at the bottom end. As with Australian-born children, the higher the level of education they achieve, the better they do in the labour market.

- The level of fertility has been declining in Australia since the 1950s and is now about 11 per cent below the level required to maintain our current population size in the long run. Even if there are no further falls in fertility, without any immigration, our total population will begin falling by 2030. If it continues to fall to the level of countries such as West Germany, then population decline will be evident by 2016.

- With our population ‘greying’ – larger percentages of older persons – demographers expect further decline in natural increase of our population. As a result, the level of net migration will assume increasing importance. The average immigrant on arrival is about five years younger than the average Australian. This means that immigration slows down the ‘greying’ of our population.

- Contrary to popular opinion, migrants from Vietnam and other Asian countries have the lowest crime rates in Australia. In recent years, there has been only 4 Asian in our gaols per 100,000 Asian migrants. This compares with 18 prisoners per 100,000 New Zealand migrants and 12 prisoners per 100,000 Australian-born citizens.
• However, while Australian-born prisoners have largely been convicted of offences against property and individuals, Lebanese, Asian/Indo-Chinese, Turkish, Greek and Italian-born prisoners have considerably higher conviction rates for drug trafficking than Australian-born ones.

• Currently, about 22 per cent of the Australian population have been born overseas. The highest rates of population growth during 1988-89 was recorded by those born in Hong Kong and Macao (20 per cent), followed by the Philippines (17.3), Malaysia (13.2 per cent) and China (10 per cent).

• Over 1988-89, NSW gained most of the migrants (40 per cent), followed by Victoria (25 per cent) and Western Australia (16 per cent). The heavy inflow of overseas migrants to the first two states compensated for the heavy outflows of persons from them to other states over the same period.


The Greeks – A Historical Background

Greece is a nation whose identity and character has been influenced by at least 5,000 years of history and culture. Two important features of the development of the Greeks as a people are its geographical location and established traditions and culture (Dimitreas, 1998). The country is located in the southeastern region of the European continent and the southern part of the Balkan Peninsula (Dimitreas, 1998).

As in ancient times, modern Greeks identify themselves by their 'city-states,' that is, the names of their region of origin, for example, Macedonia, Epeiros, Thessaly, Dodecanesos, Eptannessos, Peloponnesos, Sterea (H)Ellas, Thrace, and so on (Dimitreas, 1998). Greece's location in the vicinity of three continents has resulted in many conflicts over 'territory, cultural and racial issues' (Dimitreas, 1998). One major example of external factors, which significantly influenced Greece's national character, was the 1821 struggle for independence from the rule of the Ottoman Empire, at which resulted in Greece establishing itself as a modern nation (Dimitreas, 1998).

The historian Vakalopoulos (1983), states that 'the national character and the Hellenic individualism and love for freedom have been shaped by a number of factors that tend to exercise their influence on the nurturing and socializing of people.'

The passion for freedom and strong individualism gave birth to the feelings towards the need for equality ever since Homer's epoch. There were no social differences. The people spoke always in the singular and the king never stood higher than the people. Thus, although the country was subjugated first to the Romans and later to the Turks, the Hellenes had the capacity to live free in the nearby or distant mountains and the [geographically] spread out islands (Vakalopoulos, 1983: 109-10).

As well as the factors of individualism, other factors have contributed to what appears to be a common collection of traits that define the Hellenic culture (Dimitreas,
1998). These factors are ‘social, historical and philosophical experiences that are common to all Greeks irrespective of regional location.’ For example, Bottomly (1979) and Storer (1985) state that ‘all Greeks share a common language, common institutions, a common religion, a distinctive set of family values and strong feelings for the family, especially the extended family unit’ (Bottomly, 1979). In describing the Greek national character, modern Greece’s best-known play-writes and scholars, George Theotokas, gives the following description:

Odysseus is suffering from this position that modern history has placed him in, and does not want to accept it as definite. Resting on the prow of his ship, under the star-lit night of the Mediterranean, he is dreaming of the Renaissance that escaped him and another Renaissance, his own, that he promised to himself and which he wants with all the strength of his soul. A Renaissance of Hellenism, a new flooding of intelligence, strong and long lasting, that would develop again all the charismata of the Hellenic people and thus decorate (this people) with glory. Such is the golden vision that the ‘Hellenic demonic’ plays on occasion in the eyes of Odysseus in order to keep him in restless kaemo, [that is, restless yearning] (Theotokas, 1961).

Dimitreas (1998) describes the Greek as ‘the Hellenic spirit that demands the agora, the marketplace, the square, the kafenion, the harbour, the piazza, places where there are people; and this gregarious element is a feature of modern Hellenic life as well as the ancient village or polis (Dimitreas, 1998). In these social settings, new ideas and discoveries can be tested through dialogue and by the fire of debate’ (Dimitreas, 1998). Dimitreas furthers by stating that ‘the spirit of the agora, with a free and open exchange of ideas, is conductive to independent thought and resourceful action, both of which are vital significance to the Hellenic conception of participatory democracy’ (Dimitreas, 1998). It is within this that the Greeks describe as philotimo (people loving, friendly) is best tested, ensuring that, at all times, Greeks remain a sociable people as much as strong-minded individuals who share a common set of values (Vlachos, 1968; Kouvertaris, 1971; Vakalopoulos, 1983).

Dimitreas (1998) outlines the importance of honour in the Greek character ‘people with honour in Greek society are categorised as philotimi, those with a deficit of that value as aphpilotimoi. To be regarded as aphpilotimos (aphilotimoi = plural), that is, to be stripped of honour, integrity and self-esteem, generosity, altruism and egalitarianism is (when applied seriously) one of the greatest social condemnations’(Dimitreas, 1998). Pericles reflects on this view in the eulogy for the first dead of the Peloponnesian Wars, when he states:

One’s sense of honour is the only thing that does not grow old, and the last pleasure, when one is worn out with age, is not, as the poet said, making money, but having the respect of one’s fellow men (Thucydides, 1985).

The Greeks have always held onto very strong understanding of freedom, and it is an extremely important concept in Hellenic culture – both in the ancient times and in modern Greece (Andrews, 1984; Theotokas, 1961). Real freedom to the Greeks was understood not only as a physical state but also as a spiritual and intellectual condition (Theotokas, 1961). Freedom, as in Hellenic mythology, has become the strength for Greek patriots in major historical and political events (Dimitreas, 1998). The leaders of
the struggle for independence against the Ottoman Turks campaigned under the banner of freedom, to gain support of their compatriots (Dimitreas, 1998). Freedom not only came from intellectuals, poets and literary figures, but also from ordinary (even illiterate) people (Dimitreas, 1998). These Greeks rose up with slogans of freedom similar of that of classical Athens, or Sparta’s ‘Victory or Death’ (Dimitreas, 1998). The Philiki Etaireia (Friendly Society) was a secret society that prepared the way for the outbreak of war of independence in 1821 (Dimitreas, 1998). This society had elaborate initiation rituals, which were influenced by Freemasonry and issued death in the event of betrayal of its plans (Dimitreas, 1998). The Society carried and insignia of crossed flags bearing the initials of the slogan ‘I E[leftheria]a i Th[anatos]’: ‘Freedom or Death’. Philhellenes (Greek sympathizers) volunteers flocked to Greece from Western Europe and the United States to help in the liberation of Greece (Dimitreas, 1998). The best known of the Philhellenes was the English poet Lord Byron who arrived in Mesolongi on 4 January 1824 but died of fever at Mesolongi in April 1824 before he could participate more actively in the war (Dimitreas, 1998).

One of the first to develop plans for a revolution was the first martyr of Greek independence, Rigas (Paraios) Velesatinis (1757-98), a Hellenised Vlach from Thessaly, forced to emigrate, as popular belief held that he killed a Turk (Clogg, 2002). The eighteenth-century Hellene poet expresses the concept of freedom in the following way:

For how long, o brave young men, shall we live in fastnesses,
Alone, like lions, on the ridges, in the mountains?
Shall we dwell in caves, looking out on branches,
Fleeing from the world on account of servitude?
Abandoning brothers, sisters, parents, homeland,
Friends, children and all our kins?

Better one hour of free life,
Than forty years of slavery and prison!

Rigas Velesatinis, Thourios [War Song] (1797).

Rigas had 3,000 copies of his revolutionary poems and documents secretly printed in Vienna and shipped to Trieste, where he then intended to travel to the Balkans preaching the gospel of the revolution (Clogg, 2002). Soon after his arrival in Trieste in December 1797, a fellow Greek betrayed him to the Austrian authorities, which handed over Rigas and his fellow conspirators to the Turks at the fortress of Belgrade. Here they were strangled before being thrown into the Sava River in June 1798. Although his efforts for revolution resulted in little success, Rigas’ martyrdom proved a powerful symbol to future generations of Greek nationalists (Clogg, 2002).

The importance of freedom is also expressed by modern Hellenic poets and prose writers, such as Yiannis Ritzos, Odysseus Elytis, Kostas Varnalis and Kostis Palamas (Dimitreas, 1998). Nikos Kazantzakis, one of the Greece’s most popular modern writers, clearly outlines freedom as an important concern (Dimitreas, 1998). In Zorba the Greek as well as Freedom and Death, Kazantzakis is clearly making individual and national freedom the highest issue (Dimitreas, 1998).

The Greeks have been known for their anxious and wandering spirit and they often travel abroad to face the challenges of the unknown as many migrants have
(Dimitreas, 1998). This as a theory often is the result of long periods of peace and tranquility when the Greeks become bored and restless with life in the agora – or marketplace (Monos, 1976). Re-establishing themselves in the new country, the Greeks do not forget their values and ideals (Dimitreas, 1998). The ideal social environment of the polis, (city) and the debates in the agora, pursued with energy, enthusiasm and imagination by ‘the Hellenic soul’ in its attempt to maximize mental and physical satisfaction in a constantly changing world (Dimitreas, 1998).

Modern agoras are found in various forms in Greece and in host societies. In Melbourne for example, migrants have chosen the geographical location of the ‘Hellenic Precinct’ in Lonsdale Street to establish their agora and The Grand Parade at Brighton-Le-Sands in Sydney, as there are some highly significant institutions and natural environments surrounding these agoras that remind the Greeks of similar environments of Grecian agoras (Dimitreas, 1998).

The Greeks and Modern Cultural Characteristics

An important feature of Greek culture is the rigid distinction of the in-group and out-group (Vasiliou, 1964). The in-group includes members of the family although not necessary all of them, friends and friends of friends who are characterized as “for me” people (Vasiliou, 1964). All other people are of the out-group, a distinction that is highly significant. One study on the Greek male noted:

“within his in-group he is supposed to be loyal, trustworthy, sincere, responding with more generosity to the generosity of his friends, in short, behaving according to the highest value of the milieu which is ‘philotimo.’ Within his in-group he is expected to fully respect, obey and follow authority. Outside his in-group, he is expected to be competitive, to outmaneuver his rivals, if necessary cheat them, and defy outside authority” (Vasiliou, 1964).

This is crucial and seems to be pervasive. Trust, honesty and morality generally are significantly affected by this dichotomy (Vasiliou, 1998). The Greek neither trusts nor is honest to the outsider (Vasiliou, 1964). Research into child-rearing practices in Greece show that this distinction is formulated at an early age (Vasiliou, 1964). One study showed that parents punish the child for directed aggression towards them but seldom punished the child for ‘fighting with other children or attacking animals’ (Vasiliou, 1964). The child is taught to show high amounts of ‘respect, concern and loyalty’ to those of the in-group, but for the out-group there are no defining or clear rules (Vasiliou, 1964).

Members of the medical profession, for instance, who work with Greeks, frequently find that their patients distrust them. As Safilios-Rothchild has written:

“Greeks mistrust all doctors in general and avoid them as often and as long as they can. They do not consult them except when acute conditions persist despite home treatment and remedies, and even then they prefer going to a physician who is a relative or a trusted friend.”

It is frequently mentioned that Greeks are reluctant to thank or praise someone (Vasiliou, 1998). This is believed to be because the Greeks see the giving of affect
reserved to the in-group (Vasiliou, 1998). Similarly ‘helping’, ‘advising’ or ‘feeling sorry for’ are also restricted to the in-group, a trait that may explain the underdevelopment of welfare in the Greek community. Perhaps these are negative aspects as a result of this national character, but there are also positive aspects to this Greek characteristic (Vasiliou 1964). Vasiliou states:

“in-group behaviours in Greece have been shown by studies on role perception to be extraordinarily nurturing, comparable to the nurturing involved in the mother-child relationship.”

While the tendency to divide society in this nature seriously hinders the Greek’s ability to establish a meaningful and trusting relationship with the out-group, it does leave them with the compensation of a strong, supportive in-group (Cox, 1974).

*The Super-ordinate and Subordinate*

It is theorized and observed that the Greeks appear to have no concept of equalitarian roles (Cox, 1974). This seems to hold true in relationships between different genders – the male seems to be dominant (Cox, 1974). In most cases, ‘the man has considerably more social freedom and is expected to be highly competitive, socially advancing and asserting himself’ (Cox, 1974). The female seems to be traditionally not supposed to become involved in activities that are defined as ‘male’ and is expected to help and support the male (Cox, 1974).

In father-son relationships, despite the son receiving a considerable degree of pride and favoritism as compared to female children, he is expected to respond to his father with subordination (Cox, 1974). While he can receive help and advice from his father, the son also tends to fear him (Cox, 1974). In most cases, the difference between this role and the mother-son role is that in the latter there is positive affect that is not necessary received from the father (Cox, 1974). The subordination is still present in this relationship and the general nature of the mother-child role seems to foster a high level of dependency (Cox, 1974).

In terms of outside of the family, the same situation regarding the out-group applies (Cox, 1974). Life is perceived as a constant battle and one either survives by dominating or fails and is dominated, much in comparison of the ideology of the ancient world (Cox, 1974). It seems the Greek child is taught to set himself against world forces and the rule in social behavior is to excel (Cox, 1974), as Vasiliou (1964) puts it succinctly:

“under a number of influences stemming from his parents... he is induced to believe that there are two places in society: the first and the non-first” (Vasiliou, 1964).

Cox (1974) and Pollis (1965) further describe this phenomenon: ‘the Greek parent forces the child to do more and more homework and berates the teacher if it’s not provided. To do one’s best is not good enough: the child must be at or near the top. So the habit is carried into adult life. Your neighbour is your competitor, outdo him; your work-mate is your potential replacement, surpass him; even a discussion cannot be lost’ (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) states that ‘this is why Pollis (1965) argues that democracy is an
impossibility in the Greek context (Pollis, 1965). This is why the Greek is not a good organizational man and will, where possible, work either alone or with his in-group; this is why strangers (outsiders) with power are not to be trusted. The only way in which Greek society can be cohesive is through the system of patronage. Co-operation, fair and honest dealings, cannot be expected but must be bought. So the customs of hospitality, of Godparents and so on are used with a degree of ulterior motive. "Beware of the gift-bearing Greek" is true today as in the days of Troy' (Cox, 1974).

The Ideal

From early times, the Greek holds a vision of the ideal and carries this constantly (Cox, 1974). This is in the vision of the ideal man – the Pallikari (Cox, 1974), as Campbell (1964) describes:

"physical perfection is an important ideal attribute. A youth ought to be tall, slim, agile and tough...Any kind of physical deformity is fatal...But moral qualities are also demanded...especially courage and strength of purpose...a man both innocent of the sexuality of women and free to model his actions without compromise according to the ideal pattern of honour, these years of youthful manhood represent a time of perfect manliness when a man reaches as high a point of moral refinement as the human condition will normally allow" (Campbell, 1964).

The Greek culture holds a fairly rigid model of the ideal man and couples it with the concept of philotimo or 'love of honour' (Cox, 1974). A version of this also exists for the ideal Greek woman, as Cox (1974) describes:

"The quality required of women in relation to honour is shame, particularly sexual shame...an instinctive revulsion from sexual activity, an attempt in dress, movement, and attitude to disguise the fact that she possesses physical attributes of her sex" (Cox, 1974).

The woman is expected to abide by a set of behavioural norms to keep her place within her family, 'to serve the males to which life has made her subordinate' and maintain the virtues that are appropriate to her place and status in the family (Cox, 1974). Vasiliou (1964) describes this below:

"She [mother/wife] should give love and care and should not expect reciprocity. From the moment of motherhood, she assumes a role, which highly idealized and considered 'holy'. Despised and suspected as a woman, she is revered, trusted, respected and obeys as a mother" (Vasiliou, 1964).

Cox (1974) suggests an interesting observation in terms of the mother-son relationship, he states, 'it is suggested, she draws from her sons what she could never win from her husband – a sense of needing her love, her affection, her constant care. So, some would argue, she develops within her son an ambivalence towards the female by teaching him, as an ideal man, to despise women while encouraging an affectionate loyalty towards herself' (Cox, 1974).

According to Cox (1974), 'Greek men and women, then, struggle to attain these ideal modes of being and conduct. When they fall short, honour is lost. The system is
unjust in the extreme. A man born with a physical handicap is marred for life. A person with a mental illness will not only carry the stigma to the grave but will bequeath it to his or her family in posterity. A family that is very poor by comparison with others is conceived as lacking in honour and morally destitute. In every sense, the failure tends to be despised and rejected” (Cox, 1974). Blum, on this viewpoint writes:

“if there is any motif in their lives prominent enough to be singled out it is anxiety” (Blum, 1965).

In terms of migration, Cox (1974) states that the Greek migrant is confronted with a higher than normal desire to succeed (Cox, 1974). He states that ‘even in the face of adversity he hold his head high, determined to remain proud and independent, determined to hold onto his honour (Cox, 1974). This makes it difficult to assist the Greek, except with extreme care and only in the context of his cultural and ‘value’ framework (Cox, 1974).

Greek cultural defenses seem to be very strong (Cox, 1974). This consists of denials, rationalizations and ‘perhaps acts of vengeance and these receive considerable support from others who, for all their seeming lack of sympathy, will not see a fellow Greek destroyed’ (Cox, 1974). Blum (1965) suggests, it is not uncommon to see the prevalence of psychosomatic illnesses in the Greeks as a result of their almost unobtainable ‘ideas’ (Cox, 1974). Due to the development of psychosomatic conditions as a protection against poverty and its stigma, it is not uncommon to hear of Greeks sending their ill son who may bring them ‘shame’ back to Greece (Cox, 1974). Describing the institutionalized son as ‘working in the country’ or some other excuse for the truth (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) states that ‘in this anxiety to live up to the ideal and to maintain this philotimo, the Greek builds defense after defense with all the strength and stubbornness that years of tradition have developed’ (Cox, 1974).
Difficulties of Emigration from a Greek Village to an Australian City

Greek cultural traits are not found to create areas of difficulty in the integration process for every migrant (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) has stated that adjustment difficulties depend upon the individual's and/or family's psycho-dynamics, and upon the type of environment within Australia into which the migrant arrives (Cox, 1974).

Separation Anxiety

Cox (1974) explains that 'because of the close ties and emotional connection between family members in a Greek village, migration which involves only a part of the family unit will more than likely cause separation anxieties' (Cox, 1974). The Greek village parent becomes very much involved in the lives their children and grandchildren and is very conscious of any separation from them (Cox, 1974).

Husband's Adjustment

A. Work Patterns

The Greek villager has traditionally tended his farms and animals in very much a traditional way (Cox, 1974). He is used to having no boss and to working in a way where what is not completed on that day can be completed the next (Cox, 1974). Further, his products do not usually compete in an open market setting, which contributes to the fact that there is no incentive to improve and use more efficient methods of producing (Cox, 1974). With regards to adjusting to Australia, Cox (1974) explains that 'this way of work is not adequate preparation for the 8-hour day starting precisely at 7.45 a.m. and the 5 day week where excessive absenteeism may lead to dismissal' (Cox, 1974). It perhaps may be quite difficult and overwhelming for the Greek village farmer to adjust to an urban industrial pattern dictated by time (Cox, 1974).

B. Leisure

Cox (1974) explains that 'the Greek villager's day is not strictly divided between work and leisure (Cox, 1974). Leisure is mainly centered upon the village coffee shops but he may be found there at any part of the day (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) explains that it is not uncommon to find that the villager will "breakfast" there and perhaps spend much of the late afternoon and evening there (Cox, 1974). He is with fellow villagers and yet he is not isolated from his family (Cox, 1974). His children may be playing with others in the square outside and his wife may occasionally pass every hour and she could easily locate him (Cox, 1974).

Cox (1974) contrasts this to the Australian City. 'The villagers leisure is established for him; his traditional coffee shop may be missing, or lie a considerable distance to his home' (Cox, 1974). The villager will probably have more concentrated leisure time on a regular basis, but with no place of relaxation that can easily replace the coffee shop (Cox, 1974). In this situation he may well grow restless or unhappy, seek more work to fill his time (Cox, 1974).
Wife’s Adjustment

A. Increased Isolation

The village wife is involved in a larger social network of females, relatives, friends and fellow villagers (Cox, 1974). Typically, her home is shared with her mother, mother-in-law or others, neighbours constantly come in and out, and she is hardly alone at any time (Cox, 1974).

In Australia her circle of relatives and friends is greatly reduced and may be living too far for her to walk and she most probably does not have a driver’s license, let alone access to a car (Cox, 1974). The migrant woman usually finds herself surrounded by strangers, and her style of life may be far more isolated and confined (Cox, 1974). For long hours day in day out, migrant women find themselves completely alone and sometimes wishes to go out to work, or long to go back to Greece (Cox, 1974).

B. The Increased Burden of Housework

Cox (1974) explains that ‘the Australian house to which the mother has come will, in most cases, be larger and more complex than the one she had in the village’ (Cox, 1974). The migrant wife will now have 3, 4 or more rooms with floors that require more than brushing (Cox, 1974). There will complex stoves to clean, and equipment such as baths, basins, sinks and troughs replacing the one concrete trough that stood in the courtyard in the old country (Cox, 1974).

Her children and husband come to expect more varied meals and clean clothes regularly and she is beginning to find that long hours of ‘drudgery’ are replacing those hours of chatter in the village (Cox, 1974). Further, Cox (1974) explains that ‘the family’s new pattern of life is demanding a routine, a time schedule, and the migrant wife is suddenly faced with the demand to be organized’ (Cox, 1974).

C. Segregation from Husband

Back in the Greek village, many times the wife joined her husband in the fields. Cox (1974) explains that ‘to some degree she shared in his life and felt in her own body the hard work to which his job exposed him’ (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) states that ‘this type of work gave the village wife a strong sense of attachment to the soil and to nature’ (Cox, 1974).

In Australia, ‘her husband may be absent 12 hours per day, 5 or 6 days per week (Cox, 1974). ‘She sees less of him, knows little or nothing of what he does all day and, most importantly, she has no possibility of sharing in his work with him’ (Cox, 1974). Because of this segregation of roles, Cox (1974) explains that ‘some of the bonds which bound them together may be weakened or removed’ (Cox, 1974).
The Greek-Australian Identity

According to Cox (1974), the development of a Greek-Australian community is not a granted phenomenon, nor void of difficulties (Cox, 1974). For this to develop, he states that ‘the cultural heritage of the ethnic group must be both strong and comparatively cohesive’ (Cox, 1974). If this is not the case, Cox (1974) believes that ‘it will tend to weaken under the inevitable pressure to conform and finally disappear’ (Cox, 1974). In this sense, he states that the Greek culture is strong and fairly cohesive (Cox, 1974). What is also important and increases the likelihood of the establishment of the ‘new community’ is that the ‘dominant culture must be reasonably accepting’ of the new arrivals and their changes (Cox, 1974). While there will always be pressures to conform, there must be a basic respect for the minority group and a willingness for it to be perpetuated (Cox, 1974). The Greek identity is one that is not linked in the past with a prior enemy status, nor does it hold a particular political philosophy or a reputation for violence or similar excesses (Cox, 1974).

Cox (1974) states that the migrant, and particularly the younger migrant, has four basic choices in the formation of his identity (Cox, 1974). He may choose to become an Australian and reject ethnic origin and attempt to identify whole-heartedly with the new society (Cox, 1974). Alternatively the new arrival may identify strongly with his own ethnic group and remain entirely around the ethnic majority (Cox, 1974). A third way is to renounce both the ethnic and dominant cultures and withdraw – in a negative sense; or to successfully take on both cultures and combine them into a potentially richer life style – in terms of positive sense (Cox, 1974). Another alternative can exist – the alternating model, one changes sense of identity, and even attitudes and values, according to the context (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) believes that some migrants appear to be able to do this most successfully but whether it can be permanent is debatable (Cox, 1974). Ultimately the individual may be forced back into one of the first three positions (Cox, 1974).

Factors in the Formation of a Greek-Australian Identity

Cox (1974) identifies three factor which may be crucial to the development of a Greek-Australian identity at an individual level (Cox, 1974). These are the age of arrival in Australia, the strength and nature of the ethnic community and the prevailing attitudes towards the ethnic group in the general community (Cox, 1974).

Arrival Age

The arrival age is crucial because it determines that particular cultural attitudes that have been previously internalized in which particular cultural environment (Cox, 1974). The Greek who arrives in Australia aged 20 years or more has probably developed his identity as a person, as a member of the workforce and perhaps also as a husband and father, in an exclusively Greek context (Cox, 1974). Even if the new arrival stays in Australian society to any significant degree it is highly unlikely that he will modify his self-identity to any degree unless unusual pressures are operative (Cox, 1974).

Cox (1974) believes that the 14 to 20 year old arrival is in a somewhat different situation. He may have not fully developed his self-identity in relation to his culture and
to the opposite sex, within the workforce and so on (Cox, 1974). He is, therefore, likely to incorporate certain aspects of Australian attitudes (Cox, 1974). At this stage, the new arrival is usually and sufficiently sure of himself to be able to explore both worlds (Cox, 1974).

'The under 14 arrivals, and the Australian-born Greeks, are clearly going to move through certain experiences that are crucial to the development of a personal identity in an Australian context' (Cox, 1974). The neighborhood group and the school will exert strong pressures upon these arrivals to conform (Cox, 1974). 'If at the same time, the parents and the Greek community generally are attempting to apply pressure to conform to a Greek identity the stage is set for cultural conflict and identity crises' (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974), in his over ten years of experiences amongst Greeks, believes that all cases of cultural conflict and identity crisis have emerged from this younger arrival age group (Cox, 1974). He states that 'such occurrences are, of course, not inevitable, much depends upon parental education and understanding, upon school and teacher attitudes and upon the precise social environment in which the Greek develops his identity' (Cox, 1974).

The Greek Community

Cox (1974) stresses that 'this is crucial in the development of a Greek-Australian identity' (Cox, 1974). The older arrival is fairly effectively excluded from Australian society by the degree of informal and formal networks of which he is a part (Cox, 1974). On this basis, one can assume that there is no hope of the average post-20 year old arrival developing a Greek-Australian identity (Cox, 1974).

Cox (1974) believes that 'the 14 to 20 year old arrival, or post adolescent single person, will to some degree frequent both worlds, however, the strong Greek community on the other hand and language problems on the other determines the outcome to a very large degree' (Cox, 1974). This young migrant person may court Australian women, but it seldom seems to result in any permanent relationships (Cox, 1974). He states that 'that the communal bonds are significant is indicated by a comparison of boys who arrive in Australia at 18 or so with no close relatives here, and those who are part of a close-knit family and communal network' (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) has observed that 'the former tend to learn better English, form more Australian friendships and even occasionally marry an Australian girl' (Cox, 1974). He has also observed that 'the second group with close relatives are more obliged to participate socially amongst Greeks and are subject to Greek pressures as far as the choice of life style and marriage partner are concerned' (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) has seen that 'teenage Greeks who arrived as such, throw themselves into various facets of Australian life but then, when in their 20's, become traditional Greeks' (Cox, 1974). It appears that they always remain Greek, and their visible admiration of Australian ways is not as deep as it initially appeared (Cox, 1974).

Younger arrivals and Australian-born are in a situation where school and peer group both play a vital role in identity formation (Cox, 1974). At the same time they are pressured by a strong, pervasive Greek communal life represented primarily through the parents but also in the Greek school (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) believes 'if the two cultural forces are strong and unyielding, tension is inevitable, which can result in some individuals opting out, leaving home and rejecting their Greek heritage all together (Cox,
1974). This seems to happen where the parents are not strongly Greek in their family life and communal activities, and yet not in any sense Australian (Cox, 1974). Then there are other individuals who work through the tension and finally re-establish relationships with their parents while maintaining their Australian links (Cox, 1974). Cox (1974) believes that perhaps these are the ‘new Greek-Australians’ (Cox, 1974). In these situations it seems to be beneficial that the parents retain their Greek identity while avoiding strong attitudes of rejection (Cox, 1974). This probably gives the young Greek access to standards that are abiding in the midst of considerable flux, change and confusion (Cox, 1974).

Cox (1974) states that ‘Greeks, who are seeking acceptance or status amongst Australians and are confronted with rejection, or an attitude of devaluation, will tend to either withdraw into a Greek identity and perhaps environment. Or alternatively they will attempt to deny their Greek heritage and present as Australians’ (Cox, 1974). He states ‘either attempt may fail and lead to the state commonly known as marginality – a person who lives on the borders of two cultures but is fully a member of neither’ (Cox, 1974).

In other words, the development of a healthy and positive Greek-Australian identity demands a measure of acceptance and respect from the Australian community and the Greek community (Cox, 1974).

The First Australian-Greeks

Trevor Colmer’s 1950 Discovery

Information about the early Greek pioneers of Australia is certainly unclear to say the least. Information and evidence seems to float between myth and reality (Dimitreas, 1998). Were the Greeks, who were master mariners here before colonial Australia? The next section may shed some light on this statement.

Research has recently shown (Messaris and Koulocheris, 1986) the story of Trevor Colmer’s unbelievable discovery of an ancient Greek sandstone carving here in Australia (Dimitreas, 1998). The carving, that of Hermes, the ancient Greek messenger of the gods, was discovered by Colmer in the 1950s in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, New South Wales (Dimitreas, 1998). Colmer did not reveal the discovery for almost 30 years in order to protect the amazing find from vandalism, but was encouraged by his son years later to go public in order to show early European presence in the far southern continent of the world (Dimitreas, 1998). Colmer (who also makes reference to the existence additional ancient Greek artifacts in a Katoomba museum) believes that ‘the Greeks were here in Australia thousands of years ago’ (Dimitreas, 1998). Colmer, believes it is beyond argument that the Greeks were in Australia much earlier than Captain Cook or those that preceded him in the more recent period of European colonization (Dimitreas, 1998). Colmer has stated:

“It’s a Greek country. they were here first. After all, they were top navigators. They’ve been all around the world. the carving must date back a long time – it is not absurd to suppose that it could date back to 10 – 12,000BC.”

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Archaeologist Kapitoglou from Sydney University believes that the carving dates to the Hellenistic period (Dimitreas, 1998). Another amazing discovery is a coin of the same era bearing the image of King Ptolemy IV, which was discovered in 1910 in a rainforest at Kuranda, in Queensland, by a farmer digging holes for his fence (Dimitreas, 1998).

To conceptualize the arrival of the first Greeks to Australia, the historian Michael Tsounis believes that the early Greeks came to Australia for a number of different reasons (Dimitreas, 1998). He states that ‘when people are exposed to certain types of notions about the shape of the world, they too become fascinated by them and in their fascination, desire to explore the world and experience the challenges’ (Dimitreas, 1998). As Tsounis says, the Greek pioneers came to Australia:

To improve their lot, to come and explore a far-away, unknown land and help pave the way for others. This very name Antipodes, if the Greeks heard it, sounded curious enough, like anapodes, the ‘upside downs’ (Tsounis, 1988).

Research has shown that some Greek scholars not living in Greece at the time knew about Australia much earlier than Captain Cook’s voyage to the ‘Unknown South Land’ of the antipodes (Dimitreas, 1998). Hugh Gilchrist comments, ‘the Antipodes or the ‘Unknown South Land’ of Australia became better known to modern Greeks as ‘Nea Olandiki Yi’, ‘New Holland Earth’ (Dimitreas, 1998). This New Holland is clearly shown in a map of the world in the book titled ‘Introduction to Geographical and Spherical’ written by Chrysanthos Notaras at Padua in 1700, outlining about two-thirds of the Australian coastline (Dimitreas, 1998).

The Antipodes like Odysseus’s adventures finds resonance in Hellenic themes drawn from antiquity (Dimitreas, 1998). Drawn from history, one story refers to Nearchos’ 2,000-ship expedition south of India (Dimitreas, 1998). The story tells of Alexander the Great’s fleet voyaged south of India for several weeks and arrived in Australia in 325 BC (Dimitreas, 1998). Another account suggests that Australia was discovered by Athanasios Diakos, one of the Greek Independence leaders of 1821 who was roasted alive by the Turks (Dimitreas, 1998).

Other accounts (for example, Deliyannis, 1989) mentions Hellenes in the initial British settlement of Australia (Dimitreas, 1998). For example, the Greek-Australian author, in an address to members of the Hellenic community in Melbourne, stated the following: ‘we have indications, although as yet not verified, that there were some Greek convicts aboard the first ships in 1788’ (Dimitreas, 1998). Historical recordings provide a much more realistic picture regarding the Greek connection with Australia. For example, ‘Grecian Vessels’ are recorded as having utilized the coastal ports of New South Wales for ‘refreshing’ purposes as early as the late 1820s (Dimitreas, 1998).

**The Seven Greek Pirates**

On the 29th day of July in the year 1827, the British brig *Alceste* was bound for Alexandria, with cargo, the property of several Maltese merchants (Gilchrist, 1992). When the *Alceste* was about 40 miles from the Libyan coast, she came in view of a strange schooner, which altered course, bore down upon her and when within gunshot range, fired a cannon ball and hoisted the Greek flag (Dimitreas, 1998). The *Alceste* was
captured. Several Greeks carrying pistols and curved swords then boarded the *Alceste* and, despite Captain Mallias’ protests, began to plunder it, removing most of the cargo (Gilchrist, 1992).

The Greek vessel was the *Herakles* commanded by Andonis Manolis, a young Athenian seafarer (Gilchrist, 1992). Two days after this encounter, HMS *Gannet*, under Captain Brace, R.N. was cruising 20 miles off the north coast of Crete when she came in view of the *Herakles* (Gilchrist, 1992). *Heracles* was soon over taken by the *Gannet* on anti-piracy patrol (Gilchrist, 1992). Captain Brace sent a lieutenant aboard the *Herakles* to make an examination. Suspicions were aroused and the Greek schooner and its crew were brought to Malta (Gilchrist, 1992). The Greeks were remanded in custody while charges of piracy were prepared (Gilchrist, 1992). Five months elapsed before the Greeks were brought to trial by a British court of Vice-Admiralty, held in the Hall of the Court of appeal in Malta (Gilchrist, 1992).

The nine prisoners who were led into the court were Andonis Manolis, Damianos Ninis, Gikkas Boulgaris, Georgios Vasilikis, Konstantinos Strouboulis, Nikolaos Papandreou and Georgios Laritsos, and two others (Lalekios and Bouff) who were later discharged or acquitted (Dimitreas, 1998). They were charged with having ‘piratically and feloniously boarded the English merchant-brig *Alceste* (Gilchrist, 1992). A recommendation of clemency was submitted to King George IV, who formally approved it (Gilchrist, 1992). Late in 1828 a final order was transmitted to Malta – the death sentences on Manolis, Ninis and Vasilakis to be reduced to ‘transportation for life,’ and on the other four to be reduced to ‘transportation for 14 years’ (Gilchrist, 1992).

On 23 May, 1829 the seven young Greeks left Spithead in the ship *Norfolk*, which, on this voyage carried 200 male convicts (Gilchrist, 1992). After a passage of 96 days the *Norfolk* reached Port Jackson on 27 August 1829, the day which signifies the beginning of Greek settlement in Australia (Gilchrist, 1992).

In Sydney, the Greeks were assigned as servants by the colonial authorities (Gilchrist, 1992). Ninis, whose occupations were listed as sailor and carpenter, was put to work in the Sydney Dock Yard (Gilchrist, 1992). Andonis Manolis was assigned to “Mr. W. McArthur” (later Sir William Macarthur) of Camden (Gilchrist, 1992). Laritsos to Major Drufft of Mount Drufft; Strouboulis to Mr. F.A. Hely (later Principal Superintendent of Convicts); Vasilakis, to Mr. Macalister of Argyle; and Gikkas Boulgaris to the Colonial Secretary, Alexander McLeay, of Sydney Town (Gilchrist, 1992).

**The First Greek Settlers**

Andonis Manolis and Gikkas Boulgaris were Australia’s first Greek settlers (Gilchrist, 1992). Manolis was the first Greek in Australia to be naturalized British, Boulgaris the fifth (Gilchrist, 1992). Both of them lived obscure lives in rural New South Wales and died without revisiting Greece (Gilchrist, 1992).

**Andonis Manolis**

Manolis spent the rest of his life in the farmlands of Camden and Picton, 80 kilometers southwest of Sydney (Gilchrist, 1992). In September 1843, when he was 39,
he was married in the Roman Catholic church at Appin, to Elizabeth Gorey of Redbank, on Picton’s outskirts (Gilchrist, 1992). Andonis had a son named John, who had attained the age of 36 but was, at the time of Andonis’s death, ‘supposed to be dead’, no other record of John or other children have been found (Gilchrist, 1992).

On 20 September 1880, when he was 76, Andonis Manolis died of a stroke according to a magistrate’s findings – and was buried in the Church of England cemetery near Picton (Gilchrist, 1992). A tall slab of sandstone bearing a few commemorative words marks his burial-place, but today it is still a mystery as to who arranged its engraving and erection, some assume his neighbour Hooke, whose also would write poetry (Gilchrist, 1992). Whoever wrote these lines, possessed the understanding of the loneliness of the last years of this pioneer Greek:

In a strange land a stranger finds a grave
Far from his home beyond the rolling wave.

A brook runs today, as before, through Manolis’s plot of land, which holds no trace of his habitation, but a local memory of a once long ago, old gardener (Gilchrist, 1992).

*Jigger Bulgary*

More is recorded of the other Greek settler, Gvikas Boulgaris (Gilchrist, 1992). In 1836 at the pioneering grazing property “Arnprior,” once owned by the Ryrie family and located 19 kilometers north of Braidwood, Jigger Bulgary married Mary Lyons, a 19-year old servant girl from Cork in Ireland. In the next twenty years they had five sons and five daughters (Gilchrist, 1992). The first two children were born at “Arnprior”, a third child was born at Campbelltown about 1842, and a forth at Cooma two years later (Gilchrist, 1992). The fifth was born near Eden on the south coast, late in 1845 (Gilchrist, 1992).

Soon afterwards, the family settled at Bukalong, a village west of Bombala, and there they remained for some ten to thirteen years (Gilchrist, 1992). In 1858, Jigger purchased a block of 65 acres of lightly timbered hillside near the Bombala river, close to Bukalong (Gilchrist, 1992). Jigger built a substantial sawn timber house there, which remained standing until 1967, when it was demolished (Gilchrist, 1992). A few remains of Jigger’s garden is still present, a hawthorn hedge, three sturdy acacias and an ancient apple tree which still bore fruit (Gilchrist, 1992).

*Catherine Crummer*

Historical sources show that Catherine Crummer was reared in a Pasha’s harem, was betrothed to a future Greek prime minister, was acquainted with Lord Byron at Mesolongi and later married a Waterloo veteran (Gilchrist, 1992). Catherine Crummer died at Sydney’s Kings Cross at the age of 98 (Gilchrist, 1992). She was born Aikaterini Plessos, late in 1809 or in early 1810 and was the daughter of Geogios Kostas Plessos, a merchant of Serres and of Ioannina, and his wife Vasiliki (Gilchrist, 1992). At the time of Aikaterini’s birth in the village of Plesion on the coast facing Corfu, the Greek mainland was under the rule of the Ottoman Sultan at Constantinople (Gilchrist, 1992). At Ioannina, northwestern Greece, the Turkish provincial governor, Ali Pasha, was holding
ambitions for a regional empire under his own command (Gilchrist, 1992). Ali had a son named Moukhtar, who governed various provinces of Greece. It was with Vasiliki, Aikaterina’s mother, that Moukhtar became infatuated with, before turning his attention to Aikaterini (Gilchrist, 1992). Vasiliki was 14 when she was married off by her father to George Plessos (Gilchrist, 1992). But her exceptional beauty, and her ‘journeying’ from town to town, led Moukhtar to abduct her for his harem (Gilchrist, 1992). The historian Psallidas tells:

Being very attractive, and often sojourning in distant places, Vasiliki was pursued by many men, and may even have been seduced by some. At the age of 15 she gave birth to her first child, Aikaterini, nicknamed Rousho; and later she gave birth to a boy Anastasis.

Her husband came often from Serres to make love to her, believing that she was faithful to him; but he was mistaken. On his last visit he found her pregnant, in the clutches of Moukhtar Pasha. Seven months later she gave birth to another boy, Constantine, affectionately known as Kostoula. Seeing so many household articles, which neither he or his brother-in-law had provided, the unfortunate husband wondered, but he dared not say a word, and took himself back to Serres.

After Vasiliki had given birth to Kostoula, Moukhtar became so infatuated with her that he behaved like a madman. He confined her in a house near Ayia Marina and assigned an old woman to keep the front door key and to admit no one except her three brothers and he posted three brutal thugs nearby to keep watch.

He would take her to his Seraglio and keep her there for days, while her children stayed behind with maidservants. On important feast-days he would stay at her house but let her go to church; indeed, at Easter he would send her off to the Resurrection service and patiently wait for her return, and would celebrate Easter with her at dinner, after which he would depart.

One evening, when approaching her house, he saw her eldest brother coming out, but failed to recognize him, and would have shot him with his pistol, had his escort not intervened. As soon as he got inside he yelled out “Vasiliki! Send a large candle to Ayia Marina tomorrow – I almost killed your brother by mistake!”

Psallidas describes Vasiliki:

The renowned Vasiliki of Moukhtar Pasha was very beautiful, of medium height, plump and graceful, with a face like the moon, and sweet almond shaped eyes which inspired love, and low bow-shaped eyebrows, a straight nose, a curved mouth, teeth like pearls, coral lips, and broad fan-like chest, small upturned breasts and small rounded hands and feet, a delicious voice and a bright and penetrating wit; in short, she was a masterpiece of nature. She sang like an angel, danced superbly, and played magnificently on the tambourine. She was the sort of woman who by her charms could captivate not only Moukhtar Pasha but any other man. And so she remained until she was thirty, when she became fat and much overweight and lost her beauty.

So deeply had Moukhtar fallen in love with her, writes Psallidas, that he abstained from having sex with any other woman and any boy (Gilchrist, 1992). Moukhtar ordered
one of her brothers to hell her husband to keep away, otherwise he would have him killed; and so her wretched husband remained at Serres in Macedonia (Gilchrist, 1992).

Twelve years later, Ali Pasha launched an attack against the Sultan, but Ali, cornered on the lake-island near Ioannina, was shot and hacked to death by the Sultan’s soldiers and, on the Sultan’s orders, Moukhtar and all but one of Ali’s children and grandchildren were beheaded (Gilchrist, 1992). Aikaterini Georgia Plessos married Captain James Henry Crummer when she was 18 (Gilchrist, 1992). Captain Crummer was the Ionian Islands garrison, part of the 28th Regiment of Foot, commanded by Crummer, an Irishman and a veteran of waterloo (Gilchrist, 1992). Captain Crummer, with his Greek born wife and three children, landed in Sydney from the ship England, which had sailed in June from Plymouth with 230 male convicts aboard (Gilchrist, 1992). In New South Wales he was appointed a Justice of the Peace and Assistant Police Magistrate, and was put in charge of the “Iron Gang” at Newcastle and there he served for 12 years as a Chief Magistrate (Gilchrist, 1992).

After her husband’s death, Catherine moved to Sydney to live in a house on the Rialto Terrace (now demolished), close to Kings Cross, living for another 40 years (Gilchrist, 1992). Although confined indoors in her last years, she retained her cognitive faculties, and often spoke to her family of her youth, she never returned to Greece (Gilchrist, 1992). On 8 August 1907, Catherine died at her home and was buried in Waverly Cemetery overlooking the ocean (Gilchrist, 1992). Catherine left no memoir or letters, and little of her character appears to have been recorded (Gilchrist, 1992). James Crummer was probably the last survivor in Australia of the Battle of Waterloo, and Catherine was doubtless the last living person who had spoken with Lord Byron (Gilchrist, 1992).

Psychology: Theoretical Background

So what motivates people to do what they do? In this case, to decide to migrate to a faraway nation where one does not know the language, culture or customs, and usually migrates with no family? What is it about human nature that drives us onwards? There are naturally many reasons as to why people choose to migrate. In this section I will explore some of the general reasons from a psychological perspective, and discuss psychological conceptions of human behaviour, human development and human motivation.

Early Conceptions in Human Motivation

The Greek Philosophers

Some of the earliest thinking in the nature of human motivation were conducted by Greek philosophers (Franken, 1994). Epicurus stated that we are motivated to seek pleasure and avoid pain, but many of the Greek philosophers realized that pleasure could, in the long run, bring devastation and hence pain (Franken, 1994). Therefore, the Greeks thought that ‘the goodness of a thing could be obtained only if the intellect was fully developed’ (Franken, 1994). This they argued that, ‘the development of the intellect allowed the individual to understand the long-term consequences of a given action,’ and
that it might also be necessary to endure pain in order to obtain a greater pleasure (Franken, 1994). This can be related to migration in that the early hardships experienced by migrants could prove prosperous for them and their families in a land that presents them with more opportunities to achieve economically.

**Instinct Theories**

Dualism, that is, physical or non-physical or body and mind held that human behaviour was the result of ‘a rational soul’ while animal behaviour did not possess this (Franken, 1994). To explain animal behaviour, the concept of instinct was invented (Wilm, 1925). Instinct was viewed as ‘purposive activities implanted in the animal by nature or the creator for guidance of the creature in attainment of ends useful to it in its own preservation or the preservation of the species, and the avoidance of the contrary’ (Wilm, 1925).

Rene Descartes (1596-1650), based his idea of dualism on the assumption that ‘the behaviour of the body, below the level of willed action, could be explained mechanically’ which was referred to as ‘reflexology’ (Franken, 1994). Behaviours such things as moral conduct were believed to be ‘directly under the control of the will’ (Franken, 1994). Although Descartes assumed that humans may have some of the instincts observed in animals, his position clearly argued that we, unlike animals, humans could control those instincts (Franken, 1994).

**Modern Theories in Human Motivation**

**Evolutionary Theory and Charles Darwin**

Darwin is well known in suggesting that evolution occurs by means of ‘natural selection’ (Franken, 1994). Darwin observed that each species seemed particularly adapted to his environment, and that that some members of a species differed from other members of the same species if they lived in different environmental set-ups (Franken, 1994). As a parallel to migration, this is certainly true when comparing the Australian Greeks and the Greeks that have been raised in Greece. The differences in the environments have caused different adaptation patterns in both groups. For example, the Australian Greeks have strongly held on and preserved their cultural identity, perhaps due to the insecurity of losing it in a new country and for support. Yet the Greeks back in Greece did not experience this insecurity and the need to build and establish an identity for cultural preservation, and therefore have become more relaxed with their traditions and culture, especially in the bigger cities such as Athens, have become more ‘Americanized.’ Some Greeks raised in Greece have even gone as far as to suggest that the Australian Greeks are socially backwards because they have not progressed as much as their compatriots have in ‘the mother country.’

Darwin proposed that members of a species differed in their ability to adapt to the environment (Franken, 1994). Those that were most adaptable survived, while the others did not, and only some reproduced, resulting in a gradual physiological change in the species (Franken, 1994). Characteristics of the species that had ‘survival value’ were perpetuated to the succeeding members, while characteristics that did not have survival
value were gradually genetically phased out (Franken, 1994). This can help explain why
the newly migrated Australian Greeks saw it as important to retain ‘certain survival
values,’ such as traditions, religion, language; a strong cultural identity and to create a
Greek community, as well as pass these values down to the second generation. This was
perhaps done for support, whether physical, mental and/or emotional, in order to help
increase the survival of the newly migrated race in a foreign and unknown environment.

Learning Theorists

Ivan Pavlov (1927) demonstrated how it was possible to alter behaviour by
applying certain principals of ‘classical conditioning’ (Franken, 1994). Pavlov
demonstrated that it was possible to alter ‘the frequency and direction of behaviour’ by
applying these rules, and he argued that behaviour as we observe it is largely a
consequence of our past conditioning, that is, our reinforcement history (Franken, 1994).
We are what we are because our environment shaped us in this particular way (Franken,
1994).

This can be applied to the maintenance of culture, religion and tradition. Growing
up as a child in a cultural environment shapes our value systems and our identities. In the
Greek culture and probably in many other cultures, positive reinforcement is given to the
Greek individual by way of membership in the ‘in-group,’ (Vasiliou, 1964) that is, part of
the Greek community. They are also given acceptance and support, so long as the
individual abides by the customs, traditions, values and religion. Strong negative
reinforcement has been known to be given to those Greek individuals (particularly the
second generation, the children of migrants who are experiencing bi-cultural socialization
and identity crises) who do not follow the cultural values of their ethnic background. It is
not uncommon to hear that a child of Greek migrant parents has brought ‘shame onto the
family’ because they chose to find their own identity or chose to marry someone who is
not Greek. To do so is taboo in the Greek community even by today’s standards, and the
family and the community ‘looks down’ on the estranged individual as a failure.
Reinforcement therefore shapes what we are and what we perceive we are.

Cognitive Theorists

The Greek philosophers emphasized the intellect and viewed humans as
essentially cognitive (Franken, 1994). Studies show that how people interpret or label an
event has a great deal to do with the future direction of their behaviour (Franken, 1994).
For example, if a person believes that his heart is beating fast because he is angry, he will
be inclined to behave in an angry fashion (Franken, 1994). If he believes that his heart is
beating fast because he is excited and happy, he will often behave in this way (Schachter
and Singer, 1962; Valins, 1966). Studies further show that if people believe they can
control a forthcoming event, they tend to experience far less stress than when they do not
believe they can control this event (Glass, 1977). There is an abundance of research on
people’s beliefs and attitudes and the amount of anxiety they experience (Franken, 1994).
People who perceive the world as a threat, tend to experience more stress and anxiety and
are usually more neurotic than people that see the world as not so (Watson and Clark,
1984).
In the Greek community, there appears to be a high level of stress related disorders such as anxiety, depression and even psychosomatic disorders (Cox, 1974). Some researchers believe these are the result of the rigidity of Greek values and ideals, traditions and religion of 'the old country' and the die-hard attempt to adapt them into 'the new country.' The Greeks do tend to view those of the 'out-group' (Vasiliou, 1964) as potential threats, not to be trusted, and people that you are in competition with as mentioned earlier (Cox, 1974). I can recall senior members of the Greek community stating that — "Australia is a dangerous country, we don't have crimes like that back in Greece."... "better to lock your children up at home even if they scream and shout, that way you know they will be safe..."

**Humanistic Theories**

**Abraham Maslow**

Maslow states that needs can be grouped into categories and arranged in a hierarchical fashion, with basic or primary needs at the bottom of the hierarchy (Franken, 1994). Maslow believed that biological motivations of the drive-reductions are at the bottom of the hierarchy and once we have avoided needs such as hunger and thirst, Maslow argued, we move onto a new set of needs (Franken, 1994). These other needs include the desire for safety, something that is not as important when we are experiencing severe hunger, and willing to take chances (Seamon and Kenrick, 1992). When safety is physically satisfied, Maslow states that we move onto the need for love and belonging (Franken, 1994). When all 'deficiency needs' are met, we ascend up the hierarchy to the desire for understanding and aesthetic experiences, and finally to the desire for personal fulfillment and peak experiences (Seamon and Kenrick, 1992).

1. **Physiological Needs**

According to Maslow, humans must satisfy a number of basic physiological needs, they must eat, drink, control their temperature, and ingest certain nutrients in order to live and function normally (Franken, 1994). Since failure to remedy an imbalance in any of these areas would disrupt normal functioning and eventually result in death, it is critical for the person to attend to such states of imbalance as soon as possible (Franken, 1994).

2. **Safety Needs**

Maslow says that once these basic physiological needs have been satisfied, the individual focuses on safety needs, which it can be argued, are also basic in that failure to take adequate measures to guard oneself could result in harm (Franken, 1994). For humans, safety comes from an understanding that our environment is predictable (Franken, 1994). This may be why early Greek migrants to Australia kept together and held on tight to what they knew and what they were able to predict, such as their religion, traditions and culture, etc, in an unknown territory. This may be why they sought to quickly create what Dimitreas (1998) describes as the agora, the market place, or the
community. This was a place of identification, of familiarity and expression, where the migrated Greeks can satisfy these physiological and safety needs as well as many other needs such as support.

There appears to be a strong desire for safety, that perhaps, because unmet for whatever reasons, has led to incidences of anxiety, paranoia and neurotic related disorders within the Greek community. This is evident in the Greek retirement villages and nursing homes. This may perhaps be due to the fact that as a culturally rigid race, and because of their in-group, out-group dichotomy (Vasiliou, 1964), there is increasing difficulty in trusting people from the host nation. I can recall many Greek parents sheltering their children, not allowing them to play in the streets with the others, telling them not to have many friends, especially non-Greek friends because they can’t be trusted. They would encourage their children to bring their friends over to the house, purposely to see what kinds of friends they had. The parents would tell their children that there are ‘bad people’ in Australia, and that they ‘steal children’. Greek parents focus on crimes in the media, and you often hear them stating that in the village, no one ever locked their houses, and they always left their car/tractor keys in the ignition. It is not surprising to find a Greek house in Australia with all its windows barred with wrought iron. It is also common to hear parents warn their children each time they’re about to leave the house, that they should be ‘sharp eyed’ and to be careful. A common saying is, ‘ta matia sou, dekatesera’, ‘your eyes, fourteen of them.’

3. Belongingness and Love Needs

If both the physiological and safety needs are satisfied, Maslow says, love, affection, and belongingness needs will then wish to be so (Franken, 1994). The family unit, especially with regards to the Greeks who strongly value family, seems to be held together in large part, by a need to belong (Franken, 1994). There are many examples of people who give money or work hard to preserve organizations (Franken, 1994). This is very true with the Greek migrants who first arrived in Australia, establishing churches, coffee houses, and function clubs for dancing etc. Maslow states that it is in their relationships to other people that many find meaning in life (Franken, 1994).

4. Esteem Needs

Maslow believes that all people have a need or desire to have a good opinion of themselves (Franken, 1994). He describes two sets – first, there are the desires for ‘strength, achievement, adequacy, mastery, and competence’ (Franken, 1994). Second, there is the need for ‘reputation and prestige, status, fame, glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity or appreciation’ (Franken, 1994). Maslow states that satisfying esteem needs leads to ‘self-confidence, worth, strength, and capacity, failure to satisfy esteem needs leads to ‘inferiority, weakness, and helplessness’ (Franken, 1994). The above needs may encompass some of the reason as to why many Greeks decided to migrate: to fulfill their needs to achieve, gain prestige, status and glory, and try to reach the ‘Greek ideal’ which discussed earlier, as these are values held high within in the Greek culture.
5. Need for Self-Actualization

Maslow states that even if all these needs have been satisfied, we will still experience feelings of discontent and restlessness (Franken, 1994). Each of us, he says is a unique person with skills and abilities, and to be truly happy, we must do that for which we are uniquely suited (Franken, 1994). Maslow argues that each of us must search for our own individual uniqueness so that we may experience satisfaction in knowing and doing that which we as individuals are especially equipped to do (Franken, 1994).

Comparing Maslow’s theory to migration, many peoples from post war Europe, and not just the Greeks, saw the need to migrate to a land that presented them with better opportunities. According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the migration of this particular period would have been strongly motivated by the need to satisfy basic physiological drives, (bottom of hierarchy) such as hunger and thirst, and perhaps even safety needs, (second from bottom). Many Greeks after the Civil War (1946-1949) were being persecuted for their political beliefs and for their involvement in the war. Those of whose papers were ‘red’ were perceived as Bolsheviks and were denied employment and other services. Others perhaps migrated to fulfill their esteem needs (forth from bottom), to achieve, be competent and gain approval and recognition. Many perhaps realized that post war Greece could not provide them with the opportunities to fulfill their achievement needs. More so, others perhaps migrated to fulfill their cognitive needs, to know, understand and explore.

6. Belongingness, Attachment and Community

Maslow has stated that one of the basic needs of humans is the need to love and belong (Franken, 1994). In recent years, many have begun to use such words as being attached and even the word community, arguing that humans need to be part of some type of social support system in which they can reach out for help in hardship (Franken, 1944). The term “community” has come to replace, in many respects the concept of family – in the past, people lived and grew up in close proximity to their family and could reach out to their families in times of difficulty (Franken, 1994). Now, as people move away to seek better jobs or to find a better climate, they do not have families near by, so the word “community” is a more inclusive term than “family”, it is a term that includes other support groups such as the church, friends, neighbours (Peck, 1988).

This is certainly true with regards to the lifestyle that Greek migrants had experienced back in Greece. People in the villages lived in close proximity of each other, everyone knew each other well, and their business, and the village helped each other during times of seasonal floods, poor harvest and especially during wars. The word for church in Greek is ‘eklesia,” which is a derivative of the word ‘community’. Each village usually had its own church, and the village church serves not just as an agent of faith and support, but also as an institution that bonded the people as a form of common identity and belief. Some of the things that you often hear Greek migrants miss about their homeland is that feeling of the village community. Here, they say, everyone lives in different streets and suburbs, there is more isolation and loneliness, especially when they first arrived in the 1940-50s. It is small wonder as to why Greek migrants have tried to rebuild that feeling of community and security that they once had back in Greece. For
example, they have done this by dwelling in the same suburbs, such as Marrickville, Newtown, Redfern and Earlwood. By creating their churches, recreational halls and clubs where they can share traditional food and traditional dances and the Greek cafes where the men, as back in the village, can drink coffee, talk politics and play board games. Therefore, there was a strong need for cultural belongingness and community when the Greek migrants first arrived.

Linking the following with the Greeks and migration, there is considerable evidence that people who have good social support systems are less prone to depression and tend to be healthier than people without such support systems (Sarason, Pierce and Sarason, 1990). Low depression rates among the Amish, for example, is due to existence to a highly developed community, and that the high depression rate that has been linked to modern individualism is due to the lack of such a community (Franken, 1994).

Carl Rogers

Rogers stated that in the course of interacting with the environment, people come to develop the need for positive regard (Franken, 1994). Rogers defines positive regard as ‘receiving approval, being accepted, and being loved’ (Franken, 1994). Rogers advises parents to not embrace conditional love as a philosophy for raising their children, (withholding love until the child complies with the behaviours they value). But rather, Rogers states, that parents should embrace unconditional love as a philosophy for raising their children (loving their children for all their choices and behaviours, respecting their inherent ability to do what is best for themselves) (Franken, 1994).

In the Greek culture, it is not uncommon to see migrant parents frequently using conditional love and other emotional devices such as guilt as a means to manipulate their children’s choices and behaviours. If the child does not, for example, adhere to the often rigid nature of Greek tradition, religion and values, Greek parent have been known to withdraw the physical expression of love, and a sense of disappointment is placed upon the child. An example which I witnessed was the daughter of a proud Greek Cretan who chose to marry Moslem boy. The father disowned his daughter, did not speak to her or the boy, despite the boy converting his religion to Greek Orthodox. The father even went as far as to become clinically agoraphobic due to isolating himself from the Greek community for long periods of time because of the ‘shame’ and ‘curse’ that his daughter brought to his good name and upon the family.

Current Motivation Theories

Cognition: Beliefs, Attitudes and Values

Many of our beliefs, attitudes, values, cultures and traditions are often initially copied from our parents (Franken, 1994). We believe, for example, that a certain political party is best for our country because we have listened to the arguments of our parents (Franken, 1994). We form the idea that it is generally good to give to the poor because our parents did or, that it is generally not good to give to the poor because we came to accept their idea that giving too much makes people dependent (Franken, 1994).
Franken (1994) states that ‘many beliefs, attitudes, and values, however, are constructed based on our experiences and our own desires’ (Franken, 1994). He states that as we experiment with the values of our parents, we may be inclined to change them (Franken, 1994). This may serve as a basis for tension between the second generation and their migrant parents. A considerable number of migrant parents, especially those who migrated to Australia in their teens or early adulthood, fail to realize that culture, tradition, religion, values and even community are not static phenomena – they are ever changing, evolving and adapting. For example, Greece today is not the Greece that my migrant parents once knew, and it becomes increasingly more challenging when the second generation has a bi-cultural socialization – values merge, change and some are even dropped, simply because they serve no constructive purpose in the present.

One of the general values held by some members of the Greek community is that people of the ‘out-group’ (Vasiliou, 1964) which is non-family cannot be trusted. Most Greek parents do actively encourage their children to befriend other Greek children as a preference to any other culture. Does this mean that by befriending someone of the same ethnic background, you are assured an honest and trustworthy relationship? This value or attitude can be seen as a hindrance to the second generation of migrants because it would be increasingly difficult to advance and succeed in a nation where the majority of its occupants are non-Greek. Sometimes, migrant parents, with their own insecurities to establish and maintain their culture in a foreign nation, fail to understand the conflicts and difficulties that their children experience by having two cultural identities. Migrant parents may fail to realize that the values that they impose on their children are counterproductive and not practical, and may even hinder them socially, academically and hence economically in the long run. This further creates a ‘Catch-22’ situation, because the Greek migrant parent places extremely high expectations on their children, particularly academically, therefore it is no wonder that the second generation sees it necessary to modify these values and attitudes, and may even drop them altogether.

Stereotypes

Stereotypes such as ‘blacks are good dancers’, ‘men are aggressive’, ‘women are complainers’, are created when we try to generalize from a limited number of examples in which a certain pattern of attributes are observed (Franken, 1994). Because Michael Jackson is a good dancer doesn’t mean that all blacks are necessary good dancers or because we read in the paper several accounts of men killing other men does not mean that all men are violent (Franken, 1994).

Franken (1994) states that ‘stereotypes also form because we have no personal knowledge, and we simply adopt beliefs and attitudes of other people’ (Franken, 1994). Many of these come from our parents, teachers, and other significant people and can be grossly inaccurate (Franken, 1994). As an example, whilst travelling through Melbourne recently, I stopped to use the amenities of a service station in the suburb of Sunshine. On the toilet was written, ‘Dirty Wogs, out of Melbourne.’ Someone had drawn an arrow from this comment and had written the following: ‘The Australian family: Mother – prostitute; father – criminal; sister – whore; brother – druggie.’ You cannot venture too far without seeing or hearing some form of stereotyping. Common stereotypes in the Greek community include, ‘Australian men are drunkards and they gamble all their pay

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at the poker machines and on the races.’ I do know Greek men that fit this same category.

As another example, I was once working as an Activities Officer with senior citizens as part of my psychology internship in Sydney’s west. This was an Australian dominated association. I can recall many examples of stereotyping for example, they would discuss current issues in the media, such as social security fraud, where ‘new Australians’ who were receiving disability pension were caught on hidden camera to be physically working. I remember hearing some senior citizens say, “Bloody wogs, they’re all thieves, they should send the bastards back.” Unfortunately, thieving and fraud is a phenomenon seen in most, if not all cultures. Most of us would remember the ‘Christopher Skase’ embezzlement saga, and he was an Australian. In some Australian houses that I visited as an intern, the word ‘wog’ was commonly used to describe the dislike of foreigners as well as other things. I remember one example, when I asked a senior citizen how he was today, he stated, ‘not good, I have the case of the wog,’ (he was unaware that I was from ethnic cultural background). I asked if he could explain what he meant, he stated: “The flu! I’ve got the flu, haven’t you heard that expression before?”

Like beliefs, attitudes and values, stereotyping are often relatively stable, yet there is research that indicates that they can and often do change (Langer, 1989). Langer (1989) states that ‘the research has shown for example, that stereotypes often tend to disappear when we encounter new examples that do not fit the expected category’ (Langer, 1989). When this happens, Langer (1989) states, ‘we are forced to make finer distinctions, and then the original stereotype (category) is inadequate and the brain rejects it’ (Langer, 1989).

Implicit Theories of the External World

Research suggests that such things as happiness depend on whether or not the environment is providing us with satisfying rewards (Franken, 1994). This is certainly true with regards to the Greek migrants that I interviewed for this project. Those who were the most ‘happiest’ were those who had done well economically, as compared to those who had not done so well. Further, in asking the Greek migrants as to whether Australia had been ‘the lucky country’ for them, those who perceived Australia to be ‘the lucky country’ were usually the ones who had achieved economically. Those who didn’t achieve economically, stated that Australia was not ‘the lucky country’ for them and that they should have remained in their homeland, for they believe they would have probably have been more successful.

Franken states that the way to increase ‘happiness’ is to create a perfect environment (Franken, 1994). Cognitive theories do not see the environment as the appropriate place to focus, but argue that it is often very difficult or even impossible to change the environment, therefore, the best thing to do under such circumstances is to change the way you view the environment (Franken, 1994). They argue, what makes people happy is highly subjective and depends on what people believe makes them happy (Franken, 1994). This idea was summarized centuries ago by the emperor Marcus Aurelius who said: “If you are pained by the external things, it is not that they disturb you, but your own judgement of them. And it is in your power to wipe out that judgment now.”
Individual Differences

The main drawback with most of the early theories of motivation was their failure to account for individual differences (Franken, 1994). Many of the theories of the 1950s were about 'average humans,' and data averaged from random samples of rats, pigeons, and humans were used to tell us how the average person learned (Franken, 1994). Since then we have come to realize that most of us act individually, and humans differ because of sex, age, temperament, past conditioning, cognitive structures, momentary stress, goals, and recent failures and successes (Franken, 1994).

With regards to Greek migration, even though Greece was in post-war depression, not everyone decided to migrate to other countries such as Canada, America and Australia. There can be no denying that there were strong sociological and economic factors, which contributed to the decision for many Greeks to migrate, but there were also many individual factors as well. Through conducting interviews, focus groups and case studies with Greek migrants, it came to be revealed that some Greeks migrated because they were simply bored with village life and village farming. Farming presented no challenges or any chance for advancement. There were no cognitive stimuli associated with it, and it was difficult, seasonal and the rewards were minimal. Many migrants were seduced by the romantic notion of adventure and challenge, of travelling to another country, of escaping from cultural bondage, of seeing another part of the world. Many stated that this was the case until they started to realize the harsh realities of factory life.

Some Greeks decided to migrate simply because many other people, including friends and relatives were migrating, and hence they thought that they should as well. Other individual reasons included such simple things like an argument with a parent, family vendettas over land – one woman left because the man she wanted to marry decided to marry someone else. Another Greek migrant told me that he was caught having relations by the older brother of the girl he was with. He stated that she knew he didn’t want to marry her, and hence apparently set it up in such a way so that they would be caught together. He knew that if he didn’t want to marry her, he couldn’t stay in the village due to the fact that he would most probably be threatened and perhaps even assaulted by the family, and hence he took up the migration opportunity being offered at the time.

Social Support and Health

The social support research is analogous to the research on pessimism – when things are going well, social support systems do not seem to be that important (Franken, 1994). It is when people encounter hardships that social support systems are regarded as important (Cohen and McKay, 1984; Taylor, 1990). The uncertainty of migration, and of the host nation in general, certainly contributed to the recognition of the need to create various social support networks in the newly arrived ethnic communities, such as churches, clubs and even high ethnic dwelling concentrations. Many migrated without their parents, families and relatives, so it was especially important for them to establish support systems. Not only did the Greeks do this, but also many ethnic groups have created support systems as they established themselves within Australia.
Specifically, the research shows that people who have a strong social support system (e.g., family and community) tend to recover more efficiently than those who do not have that social support system (Franken, 1994). With regards to migration, this is why many experts in the field opposed the idea of the early assimilation and integration policies when migrants first arrived to Australia. Migrants were strongly encouraged not to continue with their cultural traditions and heritage and to completely adopt the Australian culture. Professionals have constantly warned and repeatedly stated that these policies do result in higher incidences of physiological and mental health issues in ethnic minority groups, such as depression, suicide and anxiety related disorders.

Arousal and Exploration

Many Greek migrants have stated that one of the reasons why they decided to migrate was simply because they wanted to explore and experience a new environment. Berlyne (1971) has suggested that organisms are motivated to seek out optimal levels of stimulation (Berlyne, 1971). According to his theory, arousal produces positive affect (Berlyne, 1971). He states that 'since it is assumed that organisms are motivated to maximize positive affect and to minimize negative affect, the theory assumes that when arousal is high, organisms will not explore' (Berrlyne, 1971). This may come to explain why many Greek migrants found village life boring, non-challenging and that farming did not hold their arousal levels. When the opportunity of exploring another part of the world presented itself, it is not hard to understand as to why many migrants decide to travel to a place where they thought may increase their arousal levels, their economic status and hence their quality of life.

Pride

It has been suggested that pride, a common driving emotion in the Greek culture, is a positive emotion that can be grouped with other emotions such as triumphant, victorious, accomplished, special, brave, and courage (Storm and Storm, 1987). Lazarus (1991) suggests that the core relational theme for pride 'is enhancement of one’s ego-identity for taking credit for a valued object or achievement, either our own or that of someone or some group with whom we identify' (Lazarus, 1991). Other researchers argue that pride is important for the emergence of confidence, independence, curiosity, and initiative, qualities that characterize people with high self-esteem (Harter, 1990). Franken (1994) states that 'it is from being able to experience pride (take credit) that people gain a strong sense of their own power and it provides them with the unshakable belief that they can effect change and thereby cope' (Franken, 1994).

Pride can be interpreted as the emotion that can help sustain goal-directed behaviour (Franken, 1994). When people encounter adversity they need to know that they can and will succeed if they simply utilize their skills and persist (Franken, 1994). The Greeks as mentioned do practice the frequent use of pride and honour within their values and cultural traditions. Pride may have been learned through parenting and even through history and mythology, as failure in the Greek community is seen with a sense of shame, therefore, the Greek is constantly under pressure to succeed in whatever s/he embarks upon. For a newly arrived migrant, there is pressure to succeed in the new country.
especially when the Greek community here, and more so back in Greece believes Australia offers many more opportunities to do so. There is also the expectation to send money back to one’s parents in the old country as assistance and as a symbol that the migrant child is of course, achieving.

**Qualitative Research**

Qualitative methods have emerged in psychology only fairly recently as alternative approaches to quantitative research (Banister et al., 1998). Banister et al., (1998) states that ‘a qualitative researcher, will be focussing on the context and integrity of the material in focus and will never build his or her account directly, or only from quantitative data’ (Banister et al., 1998).

Banister et al., (1998) defines qualitative research as ‘the interpretative study of a specified issue or problem in which the researcher is central to the sense that is made. Qualitative research is part of a debate, not fixed truth. Qualitative research is (a) an attempt to capture the sense that lies within and that structures what we say about what we do (b) an exploration, elaboration and systemization of the significance of an identified phenomenon; (c) the illuminative representation of the meaning of a delimited issue or problem’ (Banister et al., 1998).

Qualitative research originates from field research conducted by anthropologists as they observe the day to day lives of a select group (Banister et al., 1998). The qualitative approach became standard for sociologists in the 1920s and 1930s (Banister et al., 1988). The purpose of this research technique is to gain a better understanding of the world as seen from the unique viewpoint of the people being studied (Bloland, 1992; Prymachuk, 1996; Barton, 1998; Beech, 1998; Conger, 1998; Macbeth, 1998; Smith, 1996; Crowe, 1998; Bailey, 1997; Gates, 1997; Clark, 1998).

*Qualitative versus Quantitative Research*

Today, there are many studies utilizing the theories and techniques of qualitative research, particularly in the nursing and education fields, and recently in the psychology field (Galden et al., 1998; Atchley, 1998; Duan et al., 1998; Hart, 1998; Cheung, 1997; Horner, 1997; Stiles, 1997; Tinsley, 1997; McLeod, 1997; Arnold, 1997; Kirkevold, 1997).

The major differentiating factor between qualitative and quantitative research is different assumptions about the goals of research (Bloland, 1992; Clarke, 1998). Bloland (1992) and Clark (1998) describe qualitative analysis as ‘the non-numerical examination and the interpretation of observation for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships as opposed to quantitative research (Bloland, 1992; Clarke, 1998).
Ethnography

Ethnography was originally used in the cultural anthropology field to study and describe alien societies (Bailey, 1997). Bailey (1997), states that ‘for qualitative researchers, the central aim of ethnography is to understand another way of life from the native point of view’ as with migrant groups who present differently to the host peoples. This method aims to ‘develop in-depth descriptions of meanings of actions and events to people through the primary processes of participant observation and in-depth interviewing of key or knowledgeable informants’ (Bailey, 1997). Peter woods (1996) views ethnography as such:

It is an open approach, not pre-determined inductive more often than deductive, with theory generated and grounded in the data. Ethnographers do not know what they will find. Initial work is typically messy and chaotic, until themes begin to emerge. Ethnography is an act of faith, requiring strong initial commitment. Some prefer the security of more systematic methods (Woods, 1996).

Hughes (1992) puts it elegantly as he explains:

The ethnographer uses the senses of hearing, vision, smell and taste as much as cognition to characterize important physical and social features of a given field of human behaviour. Where physicians, nurses and social workers center their inquiring gaze on the individual and his or her pathology, the ethnographer describes and interprets the suffering of individuals as part of the lived flow of interpersonal experiences and within the context of the local moral world’s that encircle them (Hughes, 1992).

Purposive Sampling

The researcher basically selects people according to the specific aims of the study (Coyne, 1997). Categories such as age, gender, status, role of function in organization, stated philosophy or ideology may serve as starting points (Coyne, 1997). The logic and power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for study in depth (Coyne, 1997). Coyne (1997) states that ‘information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research’ (Coyne, 1997). He states that ‘researchers will normally go to the groups, which they believe will maximize the possibilities of obtaining data’ (Coyne, 1997). All types of sampling in qualitative research can be classed under the broad term of purposive sampling, and qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on a relatively small sample (Coyne, 1997).

Narrative Account

Baars (1997) states that ‘the experience of time is expresses and communicated in narratives’ (Baars, 1997). He argues that ‘stories seem to grow out of our actions and experiences, that it can sometimes appear as if we are part of a developing story’ (Baars, 1997). He mentions that people can hold a strong desire to express and communicate their experiences to others, to tell their story and be heard as the Greek migrants in this study (Baars, 1997). This strong bond Baars (1997) says, ‘between human activity and
stories was observed by Aristotle in his formula of "Mimesis Praxeos": narrative is the imitation of action" (Baars, 1997). Through stories Baars (1997) believes ‘we communicate to others and clarify for them and to ourselves what the years meant, who we are, and how we interpret personal events’ (Baars, 1997).

One of the most valuable and unique factors of a narrative is its ability to ‘integrate a loose, but potentially meaningful way, the most diverse events, actions and their evaluations’ (Baars, 1997). ‘Narrative is therefore a way of interpreting human life in all its dramatic or un-dramatic proportions’ (Baars, 1997).

**Interviewing**

A major advantage of conducting interviews is that it can permit exploration of issues that may be too complex to investigate through quantitative means (Burman, 1998). Burman (1998) highlights that ‘the main aim in using a semi-structured interview may be to explore precisely those areas where your interviewee perceives gaps, contradictions and difficulties’ (Burman, 1998). Burman (1998) states that ‘another advantage of using a less structured approach is that you can tailor your questions to the position and comments of your interviewee, and are usually not bound to the codes of standardization to push on through your interview schedule, irrespective of how appropriate it is for your interviewee’ (Burman, 1998).

With this approach, the researcher should be vigilant to respond to and follow up issues raised by the interviewee, including ones that may not have been anticipated (Burman, 1998). Semi-structured interviewing, as a more open research tool, can record phenomena’s not usually represented or even envisaged by researchers (Burman, 1998).

**Structured Interviews**

Burman (1998) believes that ‘structured and formal interviewing is a feature of quantitative research and the process is described thus an interviewer asks each respondent a series of pre-established questions with a limit set of responses and categories (Burman, 1998). In this technique, there is little room for changes or spontaneity in response except where an infrequent open-ended question may be used (Fontana and Frey, 1994). The purpose is to document precise data that can be coded and measured to explain behaviour with pre-established categories of closed-ended questions (Burman, 1998).

‘Closed-ended’ is the term used to refer to questions which require the respondent to give a ‘yes,’ or ‘no’ answer, or to register a response to a set of options ranged on some sort of continuum (Burman, 1998). Burman (1998) explains that ‘interviews by phone, face-to-face interviews in households, intercept interviews in shopping malls and parks, or the interviews generally associated with survey research are most likely to be included in this category’ (Burman, 1998).

**Focussed or Semi-structured Interviews**

Focussed or semi-structured interviewing is not as structured as in formal interviewing (Minichiello et al., 1990). This style comes from having an ‘interview
guide’ or ‘aide memoire’ to spark the researcher’s memory (Minichiello et al., 1990). The ‘interview guide’ might be revised during research and questions may be left out and added as the researcher tests his tools on the selected target. Minichiello et al., (1990) defines semi-structured interviews as ‘those interviews in which the researcher uses an interview guide which is simply a list of topics to be discussed with no fixed ordering or wording of questions (Minichiello et al., 1990). ‘The content of the interview is focussed on the issues that are central to the research question’ (Minichiello et al., 1990).

Unstructured Interviews

Minichiello et al., (1990) define unstructured interviews as ‘those in which neither the question nor the answer categories are predetermined’ (Minichiello et al., 1990). ‘Reliance is placed on social interaction to generate knowledge and elicit information the researcher must adapt to the world of the individuals studied and try to share their concerns and outlooks’ (Fontana and Frey, 1994). During the flow of conversation, the researcher may ask the interviewee questions about an issue or topic or engage in ‘probing’ (Laine, 1997). Sometimes the interviewee is not even aware that s/he is being interviewed at the time (Laine, 1997).

A major limitation of the ‘informal conversational interview’ is that it is labour-intensive and time-consuming (Laine, 1997). The researcher cannot use recording devices and relies on memory to record accurately what was said, as recording usually occurs after the conversation (Laine, 1997). Laine (1997), suggesting that notes are best written up as soon as possible after leaving the field for accuracy (Laine, 1997).

The Focus Group

Laine (1997) states that focus groups allow participants to hear ideas and use those concepts in formulating their opinions, allow participants to react to, and build upon the response of other group members in a variety of ways (Laine, 1997). The facilitator/researcher focuses on what each specific individual responds, and the interaction between the focus group participants (Laine, 1997). What individuals say seems to be influenced by the dynamics of that group (Morgan, 1995).

Laine (1997) explains that what distinguishes focus groups from interviews or questionnaires is the interaction between the group participants (Laine, 1997). Laine, (1997) states this is because group participants provide an audience for each other, which seems to encourage more variety of communication than other methods (Laine, 1997). The interview as compared to the focus group is ‘unable to reveal dimensions of understanding that emerge from conversation between participants, who might use anecdotes, joking behaviour, teasing and horse play’ (Laine, 1997). Questions can create a common core around which group members can advance their own discussion, perhaps developing into deeper and not anticipated topics (Laine, 1997).

Krueger (1994) lists six characteristics or features of focus group interviews: (1) people, (2) assembled in a series of groups, (3) possess certain characteristics, and (4) provide data, (5) of a qualitative nature, (6) in focussed discussion (Krueger, 1994). The main advantages to be gained from focus group discussions relate to how interaction between members of the group aid in the development and clarification of ideas,
ideological position and theorizing (Laine, 1997). According to Kitzinger (1995), interaction between participants can achieve seven main aims:

1. to highlight the respondent’s attitudes, priorities, language, and framework of understanding,
2. to encourage research participants to generate and explore their own questions and develop their own analysis of common experiences,
3. to encourage a variety of communication from participants—tapping into a wide range and for understanding,
4. to help identify group norms and cultural values,
5. to provide insight into the operation of group social processes in the articulation of knowledge (for example, through the examination of what information is censured or muted within the group),
6. to encourage open conversation about embarrassing subjects and to permit the expression of criticism,
7. generally to facilitate the expression of ideas and experiences that might be left underdeveloped in an interview and to illuminate the research participant’s perspectives through the debate within the group.

*Some Advantages of Running Focus Groups*

Sim (1998) highlights a number of broad advantages to the use of focus groups:

- They are an economical way of tapping the views of a number of people, simply because respondents are interviewed in groups rather than one by one;
- They provide information on the dynamics of attitudes and opinions in the context of the interaction that occurs between participants, in contrast to the rather static way in which these phenomena are portrayed in questionnaire studies;
- They may encourage a greater degree of spontaneity in the expression of views than alternative methods of data collection;
- They can provide a ‘safe’ forum for the expression of views, e.g., respondent’s do not feel obligated to respond to every question;
- Participants may feel supported and empowered by a sense of group membership and cohesiveness (Sim, 1998).

*Data collection in Focus Groups*

The process of collecting data in a focus group is a deliberate and complex task:

- Data needs to be collected not only in what participants say, but also on how they react with one another;
- Quotations need to be attributed accurately to individual group members;
- The process of data collection should not interfere with or detract from the coordination of the group;
• The method of recording data should not itself have reactive effects upon the group participants (Sim, 1998).

Rationale

The present study examines the Experience, Expectations and Concerns that Greek migrants have with regards to their migration to Australia. It studies whether after almost fifty years of Greek migration to Australia, can Greek migrants state whether Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for them? Are they satisfied with the choice they made? Why did they come here? What have they achieved? Have they any regrets? What would they perceive their identity to be after so many years of living in Australia? What are their personal migration stories? What did they expect of the host nation? And what concerns them about the host nation? This study is an update, which gives voice and lets us hear it in ‘their own words’ with regards to the Greek migrant condition, past and present, their attitudes, ideologies and views. This study also examines how well Greek migrants perceive that they have adjusted to the host nation.

A major limitation of the Greek migrant literature and migrant literature per se is that it does not lend ‘a voice’ to the Greek migrant with regards to their migration experiences. We do not, as researchers have any real insight into what Greek migrants were and are feeling, thinking, planning, what their concerns were and are, their dreams and achievements, their disappointments and what their difficulties were and are. This was one of the key concerns that strongly influenced and motivated the present researcher to conduct research in this area.

Another limitation of the Greek migration literature is that there are very few studies conducted which examine or review the post-migration Greek condition, specifically after approximately fifty years of Greek migration and settlement. There are also scant studies that examine levels of satisfaction and achievement, migrant feelings, regrets, and even identity changes. Most studies employed with regards to migration are usually quantitative and rely heavily upon demographics. Migrant demographic studies typically examine, for example: the number of migrants entering Australia and the given years of in which they did; the percentage of different migrants at different years; residential migrant percentages; the amount of skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled migrants in the workforce; the percentage of migrant women in the workforce etc. There are major shortages of qualitative analyses regarding Greek migration and regarding migration in general. Further, a shortage of studies which take a narrative perspective and allow migrants to share their stories, feeling and experiences in a retrospective fashion.

Another limitation of the Greek migration literature is that present day researchers rarely employ a qualitative research paradigm or the use of qualitative techniques such as the focus group to capture rich in-depth subjective data. One of the advantages of the present research is that it employs two qualitative information-gathering techniques in the same study: the semi-structured interview and the focus group method. The reason for the use of two techniques is to collect more in-depth and different types of data, simply because each information gathering technique may presents with its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Further, a different quality of information can
be collected from different qualitative analysis techniques. There are rarely any qualitative analyses studies conducted in Greek migration that take a narrative approach and which use qualitative analysis data collection strategies let alone to utilize two in the same study.

Of the few studies that do utilize a qualitative research paradigm with regards to Greek migration, these studies lack transcribed critical responses from the migrants. Rather, they use brief skeletal one-line responses which do not do justice to the complexity of issues that these migrants are experiencing or have experienced, or capture some of the moving and inspiring stories in their entirety told by migrants of their experiences. Other studies in Greek migration with their brevity and generalized aims lack true examination of the migrant’s mental and emotional wellbeing. At present, there has not been a coordinated and focussed effort to examine the subjective psyche of the Greek migrant within Australia.

Another limitation of the Greek migration literature is that this literature is usually found in sociology and social welfare journals. Therefore the findings and implications of these findings are embedded within a social welfare context and not a psychological context. These studies typically do not incorporate a grounded theory approach, and lack a wealth of reputable research and theory in the humanistic, motivational, and social psychology areas of behavioural inquiry.

These limitations may be addressed by providing a qualitative research paradigm, incorporating semi-structured interviews and focus groups. They may be also be addressed by providing a grounded theory approach in a motivational and social psychological framework; an ethnological and narrative approach, utilizing a purposive sample of Greek migrants, in order to provide some positive change and contribution to the Greek migrant literature. This research is not about quantitative data, it is about the subjective experience. The qualitative methodology employed to examine the Experiences, Expectations and Concerns of Greek Migrants, has been specifically and deliberately chosen to provide a greater and more thorough understanding of the subjective experiences the Greek migrant. In doing this, the present study picks up from where other quantitative, qualitative and social welfare studies have left off and hopefully takes the Greek migration literature to another level of insight and understanding.

Aim

The aim of the present study therefore is to examine the Experiences, Expectations and Concerns that Greek migrants have, or have had, regarding their migration experiences, and to ascertain whether Australia had been “the lucky country” for them. By experience I mean, any events in history, which subjectively effects or involves the Greek migrant. By expectations I mean the state or attitude the Greek migrant has regarding the subjective experiences of his or her migration, and by concerns, I mean the Greek migrant’s worry, bother or interest regarding their subjective experiences as a migrant. ‘The lucky country’ will be defined as, migrants who are financially, physically and emotionally content in Australia as compared to their country of origin. This will be done by utilizing the qualitative data collection techniques of the semi-structured interview and the focus group. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with one-on-one Greek migrants and focus groups will be conducted with a
group of Greek migrants (approximately 4-8 migrants). The semi-structured interviews and focus groups have been chosen because they are an economical way of collecting the views of a number of people, because they provide information on the dynamics of attitudes and opinions, they encourage support, group memberships and cohesiveness. Further, past research has not substantially utilized semi-structured interviews and focus groups to explore the opinions of Greek migrants and their migration experiences. I hope to address this limitation by contributing to the scarcity of the Greek migrant and qualitative analysis literature. Subsidiary questions involve: (i) What do Greek migrants feel their identity is after many years in Australia? (ii) What percentage of Greek migrants experienced racism? (iii) What would the Greek migrant like to express to the present Australian government?

**METHODOLOGY**

*Advertising the Research*

A multifaceted and coordinated media campaign was undertaken. Advertisements were placed in *The Greek Herald* Newspaper, *'O Kosmos' Greek newspaper, 'New Country' Greek newspaper* and *'The Greek Times.'* The editors informed me that the advertisement will only be published once, i.e. run for one week in their editions at no cost, any further publications will have to be paid for. The newspaper companies translated the advertisement into Greek. The English advertisement that was handed to the Greek media companies is as follows:

**Are You a Greek Migrant?**

Are you interested in expressing your migration experiences? Nicholas Grapsias, a research student from the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur is asking for volunteers to be part of an interview and focus group session, which will examine the *Experiences, Expectations and Concerns of Greek migrants within Australia.* This is a chance for you to share your stories, to have your say – *has Australia been 'the lucky country' for you?* This study will provide valuable recommendations to be made to government and non-Government agencies, which will add to the wellbeing of both migrants and their children. Research will commence 1st May 2001 and will end 31st August 2001. If you are interested or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact Nicholas on 0415 620 383.

The above advertisement was also professionally translated into proper Greek by *Alt – All Language Translations Services* in Marrickville, Sydney where I used the advertisement to create flyers. The flyers were designed in such a way that allowed interested person(s) to tear off the researcher’s phone number at the bottom of the advertisement as a convenience (see appendix for the Greek translation and flyer design).

Greek and English flyers were distributed and placed in many various places around Sydney. Some of the places included *Marrickville Metro Shopping Centre* in Marrickville, Sydney. This venue was chosen because of the high population of Greeks as well as other ethnic groups that are known to shop there. This shopping centre was also chosen because it is a well-known popular place for Greek migrant men, mostly
retired pensioners, to drink their morning coffees at the food-court tables. Here they are known to participate in group discussions about politics and various other topics. Greek flyers were handed out to these men. Flyers in Greek and English were left on these tables and were also adhered to the concrete pillars of which the tables encircle. Flyers in both Greek and English were also adhered to the walls beside each entrance and exit of the shopping centre. They were also placed next to amenities, vending machines, telephone boxes and also adhered to the concrete pillars of the escalators. The researcher also approached well known Greek businesses that are frequented by many Greeks in the shopping centre such as the butcher shop, the delicatessen and the chicken shop and handed them an advertisement in Greek and English to stick on the wall of their business. The researcher also left a handful of smaller sized advertisements with the businesses to place on their front counters for interested shoppers to take.

Many other Greek businesses were also approached on Marrickville Road such as bridal shops, delicatessens, doctor’s surgeries, Greek continental cake shops and even real estates and travel agencies. Most of these businesses fixed the researcher’s advertisement within their shop-front windows or as the above businesses did, on the wall of their shops or on their front counters. One of these businesses included the popular King of Yeeros Shop on Marrickville Road, where many Greeks come to buy the fast food – Yeeros or more commonly known as the Kebab.

In addition to the above advertising strategies, many larger posters of the above advertisement were taped to telegraph poles in the Enmore, Stanmore, Marrickville and Newtown areas. This advertisement was in both Greek and English and both had the facility where the researcher’s phone number can be torn from the bottom of the advertisement. The rationale for placing an English equivalent of the advertisement next to the Greek advertisement is because, as a hypothesis, other interested individuals such as the second generation of migrants and/or even friends and relatives may take note of the research on behalf of known Greek migrants. This may in turn assist the recruitment of more Greek migrants for the research.

Further advertising and recruitment strategies included approaching Greek social clubs and organizations. The clubs and organizations that were approached were The Cypriot Club in Stanmore, Sydney; The Pan-Macedonian Club in Marrickville, Sydney; The Alexander the Great Club in Marrickville and Canterbury-Marrickville Olympic Club. These clubs were approached on two Saturday evenings, during the clubs busiest night of the week. This was done deliberately for the purpose of standing outside the clubs and handing out the smaller sized advertisements to the patrons that entered and exited the club. A research assistant and I conducted the exercise. The advertisements that were handed out were in Greek. A stack of the smaller sized Greek advertisements were also left with permission, on the front counter of the foyer or placed on a pamphlet stand also in the foyer or on a coffee table near the foyer lounges.

With permission by the security guards on-duty and club officials, my research assistant and I entered the club car parks and placed a small version of the Greek advertisement under the windscreen wiper on the driver side of every car. There were on average approximately 30 to 50 cars in each parking lot of most of the clubs’ and approximately 100 cars in the Cypriot Club gravel car park. In addition to this, my research assistant and I placed the same advertisement on the cars parked on the main road directly in front of the club and two blocks up and down the main street in either
direction, the same was done on the opposite side of the road. Finally, the larger poster advertisements in Greek and English were sticky-taped to telegraph poles directly in front and near each of the clubs. These large advertisements also had the researcher’s phone number on the bottom that can conveniently be torn off.

Other strategies in which the research was advertised was through selected Greek Orthodox Churches in Sydney and Sydney’s west. Before the Sunday liturgy, I approached the Greek Orthodox priest and explained the research project to him. This was done with Blacktown’s Greek Orthodox Church, St Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church and Redfern’s Greek Orthodox Church. Shortly before the end of the service, the priest explained the research project to the people and if they have any interest to collect a flyer from myself by the door as they exit the church. A stack of advertisements were also left in the foyer of the above churches for those who attend services during the week. Large advertisements in Greek were also displayed on or near other selected churches in Sydney. These churches included Marrickville Greek Orthodox Church, Earlwood Greek Orthodox Church and Newtown Greek Orthodox Church.

The research was also advertised on Greek national radio. Three Greek radio stations were approached: 2MM – To Vema, Greek National Radio (1665 mm, am); SBS Greek language Program Radio, Sydney (1107 am) and Galaxias, Greek Radio (151.850 mhz). On the April 3, 2001 the researcher received a phone call from the 2MM advertising manager and radio host, Paul Theodorakopoulos who stated that he had seen the research advertisement in The Greek Herald and invited myself to the radio station that evening to discuss the research on-air. Listeners were given the opportunity to call the radio station and express their migration experiences. They were given the opportunity to ask the researcher questions and answer the key research question, ‘Has Australia been the lucky country for you?’ I was given the opportunity to interview them live on national radio.

The researcher also received a phone call from George Balassis, Galaxias Greek Radio host who also saw the research advertised in Greek newspaper O Kosmos and hence, the researcher was invited on May 16, 2001 at 7pm to discuss the research live on-air. The researcher was given the opportunity to interview five callers. The interviewing continued for well over two hours. A heated debate resulted between many of the callers about whether Australia has been the lucky for them, and due to the popularity of the topic, I was invited on-air to come in again at the same time the following week (May 23, 2001) to continue the debate. On this night, the researcher managed to interview seven more migrants. Three more radio hosts were also present in the studio that interacted with the callers as well as myself to discuss and debate the opinions raised by the callers to the questions that I presented in my research. Again as with the previous broadcast, the interviewing lasted well over two hours.

The researcher approached SBS Greek Language Program Radio, in Artarmon, Sydney. The researcher was interviewed by Alex Catharios, Head of Group Greek Language Program and it was agreed that a radio interview will be conducted when the researcher has the results of his research.

The research was also advertised by ‘word of mouth.’ Family, relatives and friends contributed in spreading the fact that recruitment of migrants were needed for research by ‘someone who is known to us.’ This somewhat informal but valuable and effective technique of advertising the research works particularly well in the Greek
community because it is a community that is by virtue a ‘strong knitted’ community, close and even at times ‘rigid’ in values and traditions, and a community very much based on reputation. It is therefore not a surprise to find out that many in the local community would be aware of the research and would often volunteer either someone or themselves to be interviewed. As Vasiliou (1964) has explored and commented about, Greeks have been known to be shy and suspicious of outsiders or the ‘out-group’ (Vasiliou, 1964), such as those of different ethnic groups, religious groups and even those of the same ethnic background but that are unknown. Therefore in theory, Greek migrants would be difficult to recruit. This is where ‘word of mouth’ has its advantages. If the researcher is known or even remotely known, or known about, or even lives in the area, then the chances are more likely that the Greek migrant will agree to be interviewed.

**Design**

The research utilizes a qualitative research approach: Grounded theory method, formulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1990). This method was originally used in the Chicago School of Sociology between 1920 and 1950. Its philosophical origins lie with the work of George Herbert Mead and American pragmatism, and its sociological roots in the work of Herbert Blumer and Symbolic interactionism (Buckham, 1998). This research method tries to discover or create a theory from the collected data. This method starts by asking broad questions as one starts with a topic of study and what is relevant is allowed to be expressed (Buckham, 1998).

Grounded theory method offers a complex set of specific coding techniques and analytic procedures in the way data is broken down, conceptualized and put back together in different and in new ways. This involves two meta-analytic procedures, making comparisons and asking questions about the data. The coding techniques include (1) open coding, (2) axial coding and (3) selective coding.

Open coding is the process of line-by-line coding of data (tape-recorded transcripts) to break down the data into discrete parts, in order to make comparisons and raise questions about the phenomena in the data. This involves using words and phrases used by the informants themselves (Buckham, 1998).

Axial coding involves four main steps designed to re-integrate the data: (i) relating subcategories to a category; (ii) the verification of statements and hypotheses against the data; (iii) the process of proposing and checking for negative cases or a consideration of alternative hypotheses; and (iv) the process of linking categories at the dimensional level (Buckham, 1998).

Buckman (1998) states that ‘selective coding involves clarifying the story line and relating subsidiary categories around the core categories and validating these relationships against the data to arrive at the central phenomenon, or the core around which all other categories are integrated’ (Buckham, 1998).

The forms of qualitative data collection methods include the semi-structured interview and the focus group. The main aim of these procedures is to collect the rich subjective experiences of Greek migrants and utilize techniques that are economical. The focus group is deliberately used to explore and clarify the migrants’ views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one-to-one interview. This is done via a narrative approach where by the subjectivity of the migrant’s understanding is uncovered and
described through the essence of being as represented by the migrant’s language and behaviour. Group dynamics may work in such a way that may elicit more responses and debates from the participants.

The semi-structured interview was chosen as an additional technique to the focus group. This was deliberately done to focus in on individual opinions and experiences. It was also chosen because Greek migrants usually present as shy and reserved and a focus group may have the opposite effect as above and alter some of the participant’s responses. Group dynamics can also have the effect of altering responses.

Design of the Project as a Whole

*Southern Strangers* will consist of two major components (1) A creative piece of work which will be a cycle of poetry on the experiences of migrants and (2) a dissertation written up in psychological format which will examine whether Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for Greek migrants.

The creative piece of work will consist of two sections (1) a cycle of poetry (approximately 100-150 poems) which will express (1) the migration experiences of the migrants interviewed and (2) the migrants’ past such as the village life and World War II. This will be seen through the eyes of *Andonis* and *Sofia*, the two main characters.

The dissertation will consist of a research project designed to ascertain, as stated above, whether Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for the Greek migrants. It will examine the stories, the regrets, the hardships, and the experiences, the concerns and expectations. This will be done by the use of semi-structured interviews and focus groups that will be taped and transcribed and written up as a qualitative psychological analysis.

Design of the Creative Process

The cycle of poetry called *Southern Strangers* will be broken up into four sections – (1) Malamata 1940-1958; (2) Florina 1946-1962; Sydney 1958-2000; (4) The Second Generation 1970-2000. Malamata and Florina will examine the past histories of the two main characters Andonis and Sofia respectively. The Sydney section will examine their personal experiences as migrants as well as other migrants interviewed, and The Second Generation will examine their children and the challenges of bi-cultural socialization.

(1) Malamata 1940-1960

This section corresponds to the character Andonis and will examine Andonis’s life before migration. Malamata refers to the town in which Andonis was born, which is three hours drive south of Athens. Andonis was born there in 1940 and left for migration to Australia in 1960. This section will cover his childhood and teenage years, for example; never before recorded true personal accounts of World War II and The Greek Civil War that followed it. This section will cover his life as a farmer, the ‘kafenio,’ his delivery job, his relative and friends, hunting and various aspects of village life. It will also examine distinct accounts of village personalities such as ‘O Kowbois’ – the communist killer and ‘O Amerikanos.’ This section will also cover Andonis’s dreams, aspirations, his personal ideologies, the town culture and religion.
This section aims to capture in poetry the very essence of Andonis's personality and life as a young Greek village boy as well as examine what motivated him to migrate. This section will end as Andonis enters the boat *The Patris* bound for Australia.

(2) Florina 1941-1962

This section explores the character Sofia who was born in Florina in 1941 and left for Australia in 1962. Florina is a city located north of Greece, approximately and hour from the Macedonian border. This section will examine Sofia's childhood and as a teenager and will end as she leaves for Australia. It will examine the village festivals, the 'panayiria,' her father and the values that he upheld. The section will then explore the outbreak of World War II in Greece and the effect it had on the family and the village as a whole. The section will then examine the devastating impact of The Greek Civil War that followed and as in the above section, true family accounts of both wars will be told for the first time as well as stories about great grandparents. For instance, Sofia's grandparents lived in Constantinople (now Istanbul) and were extremely wealthy until the Turkish invasion in 1922. Her grandfather was murdered for a pouch of gold 'liras' and the family myth has it that he has buried cans full of gold 'liras' in Constantinople and that they are still hidden in Turkey today. This section will also examine gender roles, customs, cultural festivals and the values that people had. Unlike Andonis who was brought up in a rural environment, this section will explore Sofia’s life as a young girl growing up in a European city. This section will also lead up the influences that motivated Sofia to migrate to Australia at the young age of 16 years.

(3) Sydney 1960-2000

This major section will encompass the long journey to Australia for both Andonis and Sofia. Andonis arrived via the boat *The Patris* in 1960 and Sofia arrived via plane in 1962. Andonis describes the journey as one of the greatest adventures he’s ever experienced. He often jokes that there was so much food on the ship that after three months he couldn’t fit into his only good suit and pair of shoes. He talks about how a sandstorm lodged the ship in the Suez Canal, blocking the Arabian traffic for days, and how his mates were detained in the ships holding room for trying to court the captain’s new girlfriend. This section will describe the jobs that Andonis and Sofia did when they first arrived. Like many newly arrived migrant men, Andonis worked at ‘BHP’ – Port Kembla steel works, at ‘Bonds’ and ‘Schweppes,’ also as a labourer, cleaner and in various other factories. Sofia was a baby sitter for her sister’s children when she first arrived, worked at ‘Eveready Batteries’ and also worked at a Jewish owned ‘Glo-mesh’ purse factory in Marrickville.

This section will also explore Andonis’s and Sofia’s buying their mixed business in Riverwood. Andonis managed to buy a house in Marrickville where all his brothers and sisters and their parents stayed. Andonis managed to buy another house in Newtown to put on rent but ended up living there for the next 35 years due to a spinal injury. This section will describe the hardship, poverty, depression and women’s cultural inequality.
This section will also cover the ‘voices’ of Greek migrants. Here excerpts will be taken from the interviews with Greek migrants and placed in narrative poetry. Poems written from the interviews with other Greek migrants will also appear in this section.


This section will further examine Andonis’s injury and the economic impact that it had on the family. It will also examine and portray the difficulties that children with dual cultures experience. It will cover racism and inverted racism, particularly when it applies to children of migrants courting people from other nationalities.

It also sheds an understanding about the plight of working migrant women employed in hard, dangerous working conditions. Who do repetitive, menial tasks and are also, due to cultural pressures and patriarchal ideologies are required to cook, clean and take care of the household. In the poem ‘Portofolia,’ Sofia is not only a housewife and a nurse to her injured husband but she is also an ‘out-worker.’ This poem demonstrates the compounded difficulties and unjust working conditions that women experience, especially unskilled migrant women from male dominated cultures.

This section also examines identity as in the poem ‘Identity Crisis,’ a poem shaped as a question mark which simply says: ‘If Greece and Australia went to war, who would you fight for?’ This forces the reader to challenge his or her own identity and opinions. This section is also about the clash of cultural ideologies – the Anglo philosophies and strict Greek tradition. Also the realization that a ‘new’ second-generation culture is being born, and the difficulties they face in trying to find their own identity. It challenges the notion of ‘nationality.’ This section also examines the aging Greek migrant, the old labourer who walks out of his church on Sunday, ‘bent like a broken tree’ from years of hard working conditions, as in the poem ‘Bastounia’ which means ‘walking stick.’ It also takes the reader into the Greek section of Rookwood Cemetery as in the poem ‘Sto Rookwood,’ where the poet stands among the ‘Diaspora ruins of his people’ noticing that most have had ‘short lives in the lucky country.’

It is a section that combines and accepts all cultures not just the Greeks. Hopefully this section will resonate with a deeper understanding of tolerance and acceptance and that we are all one culture and one people.

Materials

A small portable battery-operated tape recorder was used to record the participants’ responses. Approximately six 90-minute blank cassettes were on average carried to every interview and focus group session as well as pen and paper.

A demographic question sheet was used to record migrant details. Some of the demographic questions included, Greek village/island of birth, date and age of migration, reasons for migrating, how did you learn of migration to Australia? Did you have family already in Australia? Occupation in Greece and Australia? This sheet was usually presented and filled out before the commencement of the semi-structured interview (See Appendix).
A ‘Migrant’s Participant Information Sheet’ was also used. This sheet was written in Greek and in English. The ‘Migrant’s Participant Information Sheet’ provides information about the research, the researcher’s supervisors names and contact numbers. It explains what the interview will involve and how long the interview will take, the fact that the interview will be taped and that the tapes will be held in a secure place with the researcher and that they will be erased after the report has been written. The information sheet also contains the contact number of the UWS Ethics Officer, my contact details and that the participant can freely withdraw from the project at any time without providing a reason. The information sheet also carried the UWS Ethics Approval Rider at the bottom of the sheet. This information sheet was left with the participant (See Appendix).

A ‘Migrant’s Consent to Participate in Interview’ form and a Migrant’s Consent to Participate in Focus Group’ form was also used. These forms were provided in Greek and in English. These forms contain the research title, the protocol number and the researcher’s name. It explains that the migrant has been invited to participate in an interview and/or focus group. It states how long the session will last and that the participant agrees to take part by signing the bottom of the form. Space and dotted lines have been provided where the participant can print his/her name, sign and date the form. These forms are collected and held by the researcher (See Appendix).

Participants were also given the opportunity to fill out an ‘Acknowledgements Form.’ This was a consent form, which gave the researcher the permission to publish the full name of the research participant in the ‘Acknowledgements’ section of Southern Strangers – the thesis. This form gives the migrant the choice to tick whether they would or would not like their name to appear at the start of the thesis. This form provided space and dotted lines for the participant to print their name, sign and date the form. This form was collected and remains with the researcher (See Appendix).

One of the most important of research materials is the ‘Greek Migrant Interview Questionnaire.’ The questionnaire consisted of 35 questions. This was edited down from approximately 154 questions after being trialed on selected migrants. This editing of the questions was done because it was far too long and the interview went over the two hours of allocated time, sometimes even reaching up to five hours. Further, because many of the questions overlapped in theme and many deviated from the aim of the research. It also made the interview session too rigid and, because there were so many questions to get through, the answers were short, rushed and did not allow for much spontaneity. Much of the more important information was revealed when migrants were allowed to simply talk and even deviate from the question – many interesting stories, experiences and even the way they are told emerged when migrants are given this kind of freedom to speak at their will.

Some of the present questions include: ‘Tell me about your first experiences here? What were your feelings about coming to a foreign country? How well did you know the language? How difficult was it not knowing the language? Can you describe your first jobs here in Australia? Do you think Australia has been the lucky country for you? What do you feel your identity is after some many years in Australia? If you were given the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants, what would you like the government to hear?’ (See Appendix for the full version).
The ‘Greek Migrant Focus Group Questionnaire’ was another important research tool used. This questionnaire consisted of 7 questions, which each focus group participant was given a chance to answer. This also initiated debate amongst the participants, which was encouraged. The questions included: ‘What are the good things about migration? What are the bad things about migration? How would you improve the migration experience for others? If a friend asked you what it was like to migrate what would you tell them? Has Australia been ‘the lucky country’ for you? If you were given one wish what would it be? (see appendix for complete version).

PROCEDURE

The Research Process

The following section records in candid detail the formation, the research, the interviews and creative process of the degree. The degree has taken approximately three years and six months to complete, therefore the following will be broken up into seven, six-month sections. Each section will be dated and will cover the research and related events in a chronological order.

Section 1 (October, 1999)

In October 1999, I was informed by the University of Western, Sydney Macarthur that my research thesis proposal called Southern Strangers which was on Greek migrants was successfully accepted by the postgraduate board and I was hence given candidature into the degree. During the first six months of candidature, a large body of research was conducted on qualitative analysis and qualitative research paradigms. Before I discuss this qualitative research process, I would like to discuss the creation of the research thesis proposal of Southern Strangers that preceded October, 1999.

In most Doctor of Philosophy degrees, the student is firstly usually admitted to the degree and then is either given a choice from a pre-approved list as to what research topic s/he is to commence. Or otherwise, students are usually admitted and then are required to write up research thesis proposal on a selected topic of their choice and then submit this topic to the university research committee for approval. In my case, I had already completed the research thesis proposal, written up in accordance to University of Western Sydney, Macarthur Research Thesis Proposal Guidelines and had submitted this with my application for candidature to the university postgraduate board.

My research thesis proposal was called Southern Strangers – In search of the Lucky Country. The word ‘southern’ in Southern Strangers was deliberately chosen for two reasons – firstly, Greeks and/or Greek migrants were known as ‘southern Europeans’ due to geographical location to the European continent. This title also encompassed nations or part of nations such as southern Italy, Malta, Cyprus and the many islands of the Mediterranean. The second reason the word ‘southern’ was used in the title was that the Greek migrants were in fact going further south to migrate to Australia, therefore the title has a double meaning. The word ‘strangers’ befits the feelings of loneliness, indifference and alienation that many Greeks as well as other migrants stated they
experienced and felt (and possibly still feel) when they first arrived in Australia during the post World War II period. ‘In Search of the Lucky Country’ was chosen to accompany the research thesis title because even before I commenced research or had any interest in this area, Greek migrants usually out of conversation would say that they came to Australia for ‘a better life.’ They stated that many people as well as advertisements at the time were claiming that Australia is ‘the lucky country,’ and it is not uncommon to hear that expression used in conversation by Greek migrants today.

But was it really ‘the lucky country’ for them? I was once shopping for a car on Parramatta Road in autumn of 1999, during which time the seeds of my proposed research topic were starting to germinate in my mind. I noticed the strong familiar accent and the broken English of a man who was trying to sell me a car, and I asked him whether he was Greek. He said he was, and after the usual of asking ‘from which part of Greece are your parents from?’ I asked him whether he thought Australia was ‘the lucky country’ for him. He grunted a laugh, looked away and said, ‘Lucky for them! Not for me.’

Many questions surfaced to my mind from this brief encounter: Why did this man feel this way? What was his migration experiences like? What are his regrets? Why did he come here and if he didn’t like it why didn’t he or doesn’t he go back? What has made him stay? What are his disappointments? What has he achieved here? What is his individual story? Are there other Greek migrants like him that feel the same way? What are their stories?

Therefore the essence of the thesis topic was born and crystallized with the idea and central question of whether after approximately 50 years of Greek migration to Australia, has Australia been ‘the lucky country’ for the Greek migrants who came here in search ‘for a better life.’ This research is very much an update to see where the Greek migrant is today, now that the migration spotlight of the 50s, 60s, 70s and even the 80s with ‘Multiculturalism’ has somewhat dimmed from the attention on southern European migration. It seems European migrants have been forgotten in the noise and controversy of Asian immigration and the current refugee crises. Therefore the rationale of the project was to give ‘voice’ to the Greek migrants via qualitative and narrative means, to tell us their migration stories and what they think of their second home Australia after living here for so many years.

Going back to October 1999, the first six months into the degree consisted of reviewing the structural planning and then crystallizing the actual design of the degree. There was to be a dissertation, which was a formal requirement of the Doctor of Philosophy. This was to be an 80,000 to100,000 word document. The researcher resolved to stick to the original thesis proposal and write up the thesis in psychological/sociological format, which was approved by the postgraduate board at the University of Western Sydney. The research thesis will carry a considerable emphasis on a psychological approach, in that the research will be heavily grounded in various psychological research backgrounds and constructs.

A literature search was completed to ascertain whether considerable research has been done with Greek migrants regarding migration satisfaction within Australia. It was not surprising to see, as mentioned in the rationale that there was hardly any research conducted in this area through the sociological and psychological disciplines to update the Greek migrant condition after so many years of living in Australia. More so, there
were hardly any qualitative analyses conducted where the migrant had an actual say or the opportunity to voice their opinions, experiences and concerns about their migration issues and about living in Australia. The body of migration literature has been somewhat blind to the ‘real voice’ of the people that past researchers have ‘crunched’ into years of endless demographics and statistics. Some of these studies range from the number of different nationalities entering Australia per year, to the number of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled migrants that are entering per year. Further, to even the number of ‘Australian meals’ that different migrant groups consume per week, and also even measuring ‘Australian attitudes’ and tolerance to different ethnic cultures that are migrating to Australia.

Another limitation of the literature search with regards to qualitative analysis and the Greek migrant is that it has been extremely challenging to find any studies that utilize the focus group method to ascertain whether Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for the Greek migrant. Further, the present study not only utilizes the focus group method but also utilizes alongside this the semi-structured interview technique. It is quite safe to suggest that it is rare to find any current studies on Greek migrants that not only utilize these two qualitative analysis techniques but also use these techniques to record via narrative means the satisfaction of Greek migrants in Australia after so many years. This rarity is further compounded by the fact that the present study is grounded on a psychological construct with heavy reliance on past theorists in developmental, motivational, humanistic, goal and achievement psychology.

Literature research was conducted to investigate qualitative research. Along side qualitative research, the narrative as it applies to the social and psychological sciences was also investigated along with the focus group and semi-structured, recruitment theory, grounded theory, action research, triangulation methods, ethnography and phenomenology.

The bulk of the qualitative literature was found in the sociology literature and not as much in the psychology literature. Some of the fields that utilized this method of investigation were nursing, education and family studies. Some of the journals that utilize qualitative methods include the Journal of Marriage and Family, Human Organizations, Journal of Advanced Nursing, Journal of Humanistic Psychology, Journal of Aging Studies, Australian Educational Researcher, Journal of Pediatric Psychology, British Journal of Guidance and Counseling, Child Abuse and Neglect etc.

During these first six months I also decided that it would be wise to investigate the literature on recruitment and recruitment strategies. The rationale behind this was the fact I held a general hypothesis that Greek migrants would be a ‘hard-to-reach’ population. Being Greek, I presumed that it would be easier for me to recruit subjects than a researcher that was not from a Greek background. Nevertheless, being Greek and raised it its traditional environment, I understood that it was in their general nature as a culture to be a shy, reserved population that kept to themselves (Vasiliou, 1964).

I also believed that not many Greeks would be interested in this kind of research due to the fact that it was so long ago that they migrated, and that the excitement, novelty and controversy with migrants and migration have somewhat waned over the years. In other words, I was cautious of the thought that the majority of the Greek population would think that ‘It’s an old topic and it has been done, and what good is research now, it would be too late to apply it to help us now.’ Even though my primary objective is a
fresh approach in which I’m wanting to investigate their current situation as an ‘update’ and collect their stories, and also give them a chance to ‘voice’ their opinions, experiences and concerns in a way(s) that has been rarely conducted.

Some of my other reasons for investigating the recruitment literature were to see if this body of knowledge can suggest economical and effective ways of recruiting subjects for research and whether I needed to provide some form of incentive(s). I also wanted to know whether the recruitment literature could shed some light on how to deal with the ‘roadblocks’ to recruiting ‘hard-to-reach’ populations. Also, I wanted to investigate how one advertises as a researcher and writes up a media advertisement to recruit subjects and what are some of the avenues and institutions to approach.

Recruitment literature seems to appear in sociology literature, specifically, in the nursing areas and health sciences. Some of the topics that the recruitment literature has investigated include ‘recruiting patients for a study of sleep disruption in Alzheimer’s disease, use of the print media to attract ‘hard-to-reach’ research participants, sampling hard-to-reach populations such as the homeless, sex workers, drug addicts and people with HIV, recruitment of minority subjects for smoking intervention research, recruiting a community sample of adolescent children of alcoholics, recruiting minorities into clinical trials for disease prevention’ etc.

Research was also conducted in the area of Australian migration history, migration and migrant related statistics and various migrant sociological and social-psychological literatures. Most of the immigration literature was found in the sociology and sociological related disciplines. Some of the literature investigated in this field included ‘ethnicity and race theories and ethnic group membership, attitudes, prejudice and discrimination, historical developments of Australian migration, the origins of contemporary migrant communities and associated statistics, Professor Geoffrey Blainey and the immigration debate, migration patterns and chain migration, Australian public policy and immigration, ethnic stratification and occupational inequality, assimilationist policies and multiculturalism, migrants and particularly migrant women in the workforce’ etc.

Further research was conducted into the area of designing qualitative research psychology experiments, specifically in research tool design such as interview questions, focus group questions and demographic questions. It was necessary to read up on the literature on how to design and facilitate focus groups and various types of interviews. It was imperative to know what interview strategy would best suit this particular research. I needed to know what has worked for other researchers in the past who have gone down similar avenues and explored similar topics, and to learn from their limitations and recommendations. Exploring the design literature was useful to see what type of questions these researchers asked in a qualitative research paradigm. It was useful to use their examples as a template and guide to construct my own research tools, which are to be specifically tailored for this particular research.

Section Two (April, 2000)

During the next six-month period, I designed all information and consent forms, all demographic forms and created my research tools such as the interview questions and focus group questions. A list of all the research tools and consent forms are as follows:
The list of information sheets and consent forms are as follows: ‘Greek Migrant Information Sheet – Greek Translation’, ‘Greek Migrant Information Sheet – English Translation’, ‘Greek Migrant Consent to Participate in Interview – Greek Translation’, ‘Greek Migrant Consent to Participate in Interview – English Translation’, ‘Greek Migrant Consent to Participate in Focus Group – Greek Translation’, ‘Greek Migrant – Consent to Participate in Focus Group – English Translation’, and an ‘Acknowledgement Form’.

In the following section I will discuss the development and relevant changes of the research tool and forms above.

**Greek Migrant Demographics Form**

The rationale behind the construction of the demographics form was to measure any statistical patterns or relationships between the research participants themselves and to hypothesize correlation between their demographic information and their interview responses. For example, question seven of the revised demographics form for migrants asks, ‘Did you have family already in Australia? If many participants answered ‘no’ to this question and most of these same participants found that their migration experiences to be negative, one can hypothesize that without the extra economical and emotional support that most families provide, especially during migration, then migrants may find migration to be much more difficult and hence perceive the transition as a negative experience.

The current Greek Migrant Demographic Form consists of 11 questions. The original first draft consisted of 24 questions. On the first draft, a reading, writing and comprehension scale was created to determine the Greek migrants’ literacy levels in both English and in Greek. The idea behind this initial creation was to see the different literacy levels between Greeks who have been raised in the village (there is a question which asks, ‘Greek city/village of birth’), as compared to a city. It was interesting to note that some of the Greek Migrants that I initially tested my research tools on before officially interviewing, could not read the Greek Migrants Information Sheet that I presented to them as an explanation of the research. As a hypothesis, the idea to test for the amount of English that Greek migrants have learnt may be an indication as to the amount of assimilating that they have done over the years. This was question four and five on the original first draft. The questions are as follows: ‘Can you read and write Greek?’ *(R: 1, 2, 3), (W: 1, 2, 3), (C: 1, 2, 3). ‘Can you read and write English?’ *(R: 1, 2, 3), (W: 1, 2, 3), (C: 1, 2, 3). *1=Good: Read, Write, Comprehend fluently; 2=Fair: Some difficulty; 3=Poor: Minimal.

Although initially a fair idea, I noticed after trialing these questions on research participants, these questions were slightly invasive in that the Greek migrants were embarrassed by the fact that their English and more so their Greek was not at the level ‘1’ standard according to the scale. These questions I felt started the interview with a somewhat negative feel and subsequently affected the mood and enthusiasm of the
remainder of the interview. These questions almost made the researcher seem like he was testing the participant’s IQ levels rather than being interested in their migration experiences. Further, I realized that these questions were marginal to the aim of the research and the slight discomfort it created in the participants was not advantageous. The ‘1, 2, 3’ scales were ambiguous and they were not accurately measuring literacy skills and also the fact that Greeks being proud in nature would probably ‘bend the truth,’ hence the questions were dropped from the demographics form.

Other questions that were dropped from the original demographics form were, ‘Father’s occupation’, ‘Mother’s occupation’, ‘Education level completed in Greece’, ‘Courses completed in Australia’, ‘Siblings in your immediate family’ (age and gender), ‘Current sibling occupation and education levels’, ‘Mode of transport to Australia...Duration of travel’, ‘Who did you initially stay with?...City/suburb’, ‘Number of children’ (gender and age), ‘Spouses nationality...Occupation’, ‘Have you been back to Greece...Frequency and purpose’, and ‘Following you, have any of your relatives migrated to Australia?...Why?’

Some of the reasons why these were dropped were because once again I felt they were not necessary to the research aims or were a tangent with weak purpose. For instance, demographic information about the participant’s mother and father and their siblings and even to how many children they have and more so, the nationality of his wife was not needed to ascertain the participant’s migration experiences. Other reasons why some of the above questions were dropped were because the participant usually answered these questions in the semi-structured interview as they told their story in their own way around the questions that I asked. It is not uncommon to hear some participants say, “like I said before,” particularly to a question like ‘Mode of transport to Australia’ and even ‘age of migration to Australia.’ As part of editing and refining my research tools, it was my job to minimize the ‘like I said before’ statements and to make the interview process a smooth, enjoyable experience without any annoying hiccups.

Greek Migrant Past and Historical Questionnaire

This questionnaire only focuses on the migrant’s past and childhood, i.e. life in the village, and does not cover any Australian migration experiences. The rationale behind this questionnaire was to understand the Greek migrant in many more ways than just through their Australian migration experiences. Going back to the village/city in Europe allows the reader to understand what these people went through in terms of poverty, war, the hardships of farming etc. The reader can further appreciate the cultural traditions, the religion, the ideologies, belief systems and even the history of the village and Greece. It was designed to get the reader to ‘understand’ who these people really were and where they came from, understand the hardships that they experienced and importantly what factors led them into deciding to migrate to Australia. It is a section that hopefully gets the reader to realize that many of us have similar dreams and aspirations, and even though we may be diverse, there is actually little difference between us.

In Southern Strangers, the book of poetry accompanying this thesis, the pre-migration section tries to dissipate the indifference and xenophobia by allowing the reader to experience tolerance and to ‘grow up’ alongside the migrant child. Southern Strangers relied heavily upon this questionnaire in order to explore and capture the stories
of the village farming life and also the stories of World War II and The Greek Civil War. These stories were to be written and placed into the first two sections of the book, *Malamata* and *Florina*, which cover the two central characters Andonis and Sofia’s childhood in the village.

This questionnaire consists of 45 questions. Some of the questions include, ‘Can you describe your childhood, what was it like living in Greece?’; ‘What was school like?’; ‘Can you describe the village, its people and atmosphere?’; ‘What festivities did you celebrate and how?’; ‘What was it like during the war(s), can you recall any war stories firsthand or passed down from parents and grandparents?’ etc. Many questions were purposely designed to try and explore gender and status roles. Some of these questions include; ‘What were your gender roles and chores, was this the same for men/women?’; ‘What purpose do you think the coffee-shops serve, is this the same for men and women?’; ‘How differently are women treated as compared to men?’ etc.

Many of the questions were also very specific that required precise detail to be answered. I almost had the feeling that when asking these questions, the migrant was thinking, ‘Gosh why do want to know what the inside of our house looked like or how we took baths??’ I was experiencing quite a bit of anxiety with regards to writing narrative poetry about a time and its events that were not within my direct experience and understanding – it was like I was writing ‘blind.’ I needed ‘colour’ to make my poetry historically credible and effective. I needed to know what system(s) and technology they had, what was the ideologies of the time, the sociological and political influences, what were the old men talking about in the cafe shops, what board/card games they were playing? I needed to see a place in my mind that I had never experienced so I can effectively write about it. Some of these questions included, ‘Can you describe a typical day at home?’; ‘What did you do for leisure?’; ‘Can you describe your home and living conditions?’; ‘Can you describe the food you ate?’; ‘What did your parents perceive as an ideal life?’; etc. (see appendix for complete version).

*The Greek Migrant Interview Questions*

Three versions of The Greek Migrant Interview Questionnaire were created: (i) Long Form and Case Study questionnaire, (ii) The Short Form, and (iii) The Revised Form.

(i) Long Form and Case Study Questionnaire

As stated in the Materials section above, this questionnaire consisted of 154 questions and was designed not only as an interview questionnaire but also as a case study questionnaire. It was the original questionnaire that was created to interview the migrants. As stated, this questionnaire proved to be too time-consuming and hence was edited down.

Some of the disadvantages that this questionnaire possessed were that migrants seemed to become restless with the amount questioning and time that this inventory took. Further, it did not allow for much spontaneity, where by the client can just tell his/her story in his or her own way. This questionnaire made the interview more structured than
semi-structured and also rushed the interview solely because there were so many
questions to get through.

Sometimes the interview was broken up into two sessions with the same
participant, in order to cover all the questions and to allow for spontaneity and ‘tangents’
in storytelling, which in their own right proved to be very insightful and useful. Some of
the clients did not mind going through the entire questionnaire in one session and were
enjoying the process and its duration.

Some of the questions in the present questionnaire which do not appear on the
Greek Migrant Interview Questions – Short Form include: ‘What were the events that led
up to you coming to Australia?’, ‘Could you describe the state and feeling of the Greek
community back then?’, ‘What Greek services were available?’, ‘Why do you think a lot
of Greeks went to Melbourne?’, ‘How many people lived in the house you were staying
at?’, ‘Can you describe your first experiences with the indigenous peoples of Australia?’,
‘Do you think Greeks know much about the Australian culture?’, ‘Do you think
Australians know much about the Greek culture?’, ‘What were your expectations of
Australia/Australians before you arrived?’, ‘How was Australia/Australians depicted in
the Greek media?’, etc.

(ii) Greek Migrant Interview Questionnaire – Short Form

This questionnaire consisted of 70 questions which were chosen out of the above
long version of the questionnaire. The editing process consisted of going through the long
form and crossing out any questions that are too similar in theme or deviate from the
research aims. For instance, some of the questions that deviated from the aims of the
research included, ‘Why do you think a lot of Greeks went to Melbourne?’, ‘Can you
describe your first experiences with the indigenous peoples of Australia?’ etc. Some of
the questions which were too similar in theme included, ‘Do you think Australians can
describe the Greek culture?’ and ‘Do you think Australians know much about the Greek
culture?’

As stated, I needed a research tool that was concise, succinct and economical in
terms of time and effectiveness. There is nothing more frustrating and confusing than to
be asked the same question in a different way. This irritation was further compounded by
researcher/participant language and translation difficulties due to the fact that my level of
Greek literacy and understanding is not the best and the migrant’s level of English is
usually not much better. Initial trials with the research tool enabled me to see the flaws,
which it inherently had, and to set about revising and rectifying them.

(iii) Greek Migrant Interview Questions – Revised

The Revised Greek Migrant Interview Questions consisted of 35 questions. The
reason for creating this questionnaire was that many migrants were either ill, i.e. in
nursing homes or infirm and other migrants, though initially enthusiastic about being
interviewed did not hold that same amount of enthusiasm when the day of the planned
interview had arrived. So I thought it might be wise to have an even shorter version of the
Greek Migrant Interview Questions because I felt that 70 questions were still far too
many, especially for the infirm and the geriatric populations.
It was an inventory designed to only ask the key, central questions. It was also
designed as a guide that triggered discussion not so much focused on the actual question,
somewhat of and unstructured interview method. Sometimes with certain subjects, many
of the questions were not answered, the Greek migrants simply didn’t want to answer any
of the questions I had presented, they merely wanted to voice certain aspects of their
migration experiences, which as a researcher I was grateful for any information
volunteered.

In some interviews I only asked one question, ‘Tell me about your migration
experiences in Australia?’ – Here the research participant would spill out a one to three
hour monologue of their experiences which usually answered most of the research
questions. As a researcher, I would keep key questions in mind and I learnt to use key
words and present them to the participant when I intuitively thought it was fit to bring
them up. For instance I would say things like, ‘Racism?’ , ‘Your identity now?’ etc. I did
not want to disturb the flow of experiences that the migrants were expressing by reading
out an entire question. Some of the questions that were omitted from this questionnaire
were: ‘When and how did you arrive to Australia?’ , ‘Do you think Multiculturalism is
good for Australia?’ , and ‘What do you think the best way for people to understand the
experiences of migrants?’

It was very handy to have an extremely tight and ‘to the point’ questionnaire in
interview cases where I felt that time was an issue for various reasons. To rely on the
‘Long Form’ or even the ‘Short Form’ and try to isolate the key questions from these
detailed inventories in the presence of the interviewee would be time consuming,
unprofessional and would also escalate the impatience or irritability that the research
participant was already displaying. After all, it was their time and they had agreed to be
interviewed for whatever reasons, which I was either way grateful for. Further, there were
no incentives of any real value for participation, apart for their own subjective incentives
therefore my job was to make the interview a smooth, effective and an enjoyable
experience for the participant and for myself as the researcher. This I noticed could be
achieved by being prepared with the ‘right tools’ that possessed the ‘right characteristics’
for any particular interview type (See Appendix for complete version).

Greek Migrant Focus Group Questions

The Greek Migrant Focus Group Questionnaire consisted of 7 questions, they are
as follows: ‘What are the bad things about migration?’ , ‘What are the good things about
migration?’ , ‘How would you improve migration for others?’ , ‘Why did you migrate to
Australia?’ , ‘Do you think Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you?’ , ‘What do you
think Australia has gained by introducing migrants into this country?’ , ‘If you had one
wish, what would it be?’

These open-ended questions were designed to be simple, succinct not ambiguous
in any way and usually focussed on one area of investigation. The first two questions are
an example of this. Key questions were also used in the focus groups, I deliberately used
the same key questions in the focus groups as I did in the interviews to see if group
dynamics influenced the responses from the same participants that were previously
interviewed and are also participating in the focus group. It was interesting to note that
these two methods do collect a variance in information from the same people. Some
develop what they have originally stated in the interview and some don’t say anything at all. Then again, some suddenly agree with the consensus of the group even if originally in the interview they stated otherwise. And different again, sometimes the focus group can turn into a rather boisterous argument and discussion where I as the facilitator would have to intervene to calm everybody down and move onto the next person or question.

Some of the key questions that were used in the focus group were, ‘Why did you migrate to Australia?’; ‘Do you think Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you?’ These questions were designed to focus on the general research aims and to see whether the migrants’ original reasons for migrating to Australia did actually eventuate. For instance, if a participant stated that they thought they would make more money here than they perceived they would in Greece, did that actually eventuate and would s/he then perceive Australia as ‘the lucky country’? according to how ‘successful’ they became? This is one of the ‘achievement’ hypotheses that the research held. Those that perceived their migration experiences as more negatively usually were not and did not become successful financially. It was not uncommon to hear these migrant participants in this situation stating, ‘I should have stayed in Greece, I would have been better off now...’ Those that did become successful naturally perceived their migration experiences in a more positive light.

Other questions were designed to explore their actual migration experiences as in the one-on-one interviews. These questions included, ‘What are the bad things about migration?’, ‘What are the good things about migration? These questions proved to be valuable because of not only the kind of information that these questions elicited but rather, these questions worked well within a focus group setting. Many participants would agree and build upon what the last respondent would say or either challenge what a respondent previously said.

With the question 7, ‘If you had one wish what would it be?’ this was designed to focus the migrant into the future as an end to the session rather than to keep the focus on the past, which the research primarily focuses on. This question can identify or hint the current migrant’s hopes and even disappointments. For instance, if one of the migrant’s wish was to win ‘the lotto,’ one could assume that the migrant did not do as well as s/he would have wanted to do here in Australia. Though this does not necessarily mean this, the migrant may have done extremely well financially but s/he just happens to have a ‘greedy’ persona, other indications from the client can clarify if this is an accurate hypothesis.

Within these six months I had also designed all information and consent forms. These are as follows: Greek Migrant Information Form – English version, Greek Migrant Information Form – Greek version, Greek Migrant Consent to Participate in Interview – Greek version, Greek Migrant Consent to Participate in Interview – English version, Greek Migrant Consent to Participate in Focus Group – Greek version, Greek Migrant Consent to Participate in Focus Group – English version and an Acknowledgement Form.
Section Three (October 2000)

During the next six months, a considerable amount of effort went into trying to obtain ethics approval for dealing with human subjects in research through the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects).

The ‘University of Western Sydney (UWS), Macarthur Ethics Approval Application Form’, The ‘Notes for Completing the Ethics Application Form’, The ‘University of Western Sydney, Macarthur Ethics Review Committee Guidelines’ and the ‘Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice’ were downloaded from the internet off the University research homepage, Ethics Officer and Research Officer site of http://www.macarthur.uws.edu.au/research/ethics/index.html.

UWS Macarthur Ethics Review Committee Guidelines

The guidelines state that the Ethics Review Committee – Human Subjects, (ERC-HS) is a ‘sub-committee which operates in accordance the guidelines established by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) under the Helsinki Declaration to which Australia is a signatory.’ It states that ‘all institutions that have staff and/or students conducting research involving human participants to have an Institutional Ethics Committee to review and approve research before human participation commences. ‘Any research conducted under the name of University of Western Sydney, Macarthur must have ethics approval from the ERC (HS)’ (UWS Macarthur ERC (HS) Guidelines, 2000).

Some of the reasons why the ERC (HS) and the higher governing bodies make this a mandatory process is that the rights and welfare of human subjects must be protected from any physical and mental discomfort, any harm and danger from research procedures and intrusion of privacy (UWS, Macarthur, ERC-HS, 2000).

Some of the aspects that I had to consider, in accordance to the ERC (HS) guidelines when submitting and application for approval was that my interviews and focus group techniques may elicit information that is ‘considered an invasion of privacy and a disruption of people’s time.’ These research techniques can cause ‘emotional distress and could even result in placing the research participant at risk of criminal or civil liability, damage to their financial and social standing and hinder their chances of continued employment’ (UWS Macarthur ERC-HS, 2000).

Due to the fact that my research involved the use of a tape-recorder to record the participants’ responses, it was important that I understood the legalities of this procedure and the guidelines for storing the data. According the research guidelines set out by the UWS Macarthur, ERC (HS), I as ‘the researcher must provide secure storage of data that will maintain the confidentiality of the participant.’ Further, I must ‘provide information on how will I store the data? Where will the data be stored and will secure locked storage be provided? Who will have access to the data? Is the data anonymous and is it possible for the researcher to assure the participant that responses cannot be traced back to the participant? If it is necessary to keep names and addresses or if there is a coding system used, will this information be kept separately from the data? When will the data be destroyed? What is the process for destroying audio or audiovisual material? For the information that is stored electronically, that is either on computer or on disc, I must
indicate if the data will be password protected and who will have access to the password?’ (UWS Macarthur ERC (HS), 2000).

Although there is much involved in terms of the legalities and risks when using a device such as a tape-recorder with research participants, my rationale for its use is simple. It would be very difficult for myself, and for most people to hand-record everything that is said by the research participant. Initially I did trial the method of writing down what the participant stated. I found that I was unable to record everything, and to record everything accurately. When asking the participant to repeat what s/he stated, and further suggested whether they could ‘slow it down a little’, it disrupted the flow of the interview and used up much of the time allocated for the actual interview. Further, the ‘rush’ of trying to record everything did not make the experience an enjoyable one for me and hence this feeling would transfer to the participant.

I tried a ‘key-word’ technique of recording data, almost like a form of short-hand, where I’d write down brief and even abbreviated participant responses, for instance, ‘...found Aust. lucky...’ and then write up the notes of the interview from these as ‘triggers’ directly after the session. What I realized that this too was still inaccurate and there were ‘chunks’ of information that the participant stated that were not accounted for in detail. Further, it was in my opinion, an almost impossible task to accurately recall and record an interview that took from two hours to sometimes even five hours to complete.

Another reason as to why I saw it as very useful and important to use a tape-recorder was that in many occasions it was not only what the participant was saying, but how s/he was saying it. This too would be lost when recording the participant’s responses by hand. It was also handy to refer back to the tapes for deeper analysis whereas with hand recorded information, deeper analysis would be limited or non existent.

**UWS Macarthur Ethics Approval Application Form**

The procedure for applying for Ethics approval was fairly straightforward. The Ethics Approval Application Form and its associated guidelines, along with the dates that the Ethics Review Committee (Human Subjects) meets to review the proposals were obtained from the University web-site mentioned earlier. After I had completed the Ethics approval form and submitted it, the committee took approximately one month to respond after the submissions had closed for that month.

There are four decisions that the committee can make upon the submitted application: ‘Approved’ – the research is permitted to be carried out as described in the proposal with no modification or additional precautions required other than those already specified in the proposal. **Approved subject to** – allow research subject to modifications of the committee. **Reject with permission to resubmit** – substantial revision required in order to meet ethical standards, but the project is not fatally flawed. **Reject absolutely** – permission to resubmit is not granted, based on the conclusion that the experiment cannot be made to comply with ethical standards’ (UWS Macarthur, ERC- HS, 2000).

Some of the questions that can be found on the Ethics Approval Application Form include, for example: ‘Duration of the Project’, ‘Lay summary of the project’, and ‘Please provide a detailed project outline as described in the guidelines for completing the Ethics Approval Form. Other questions include: Does the project involve use of
invasive/intrusive procedures, which may elicit physical, mental or emotional stress? My response was as follows:

'There are no invasive or intrusive procedures. Participants are informed on the 'Participant’s Information Sheet' that they have the right to cease participation at any time. They will be informed before the interview and focus group that they may ‘pass’ on certain questions if they feel that they are too invasive. If a participant becomes distressed, the interview/focus group will be immediately terminated. As I am an intern psychologist with centre experience, I can counsel or refer the client to a counseling service in their local community. In the case of a disclosure during the focus group sessions, this will be handled with sensitivity and I will inform the participant(s) that they will have a chance to discuss it with me after the focus group session.'

Discuss issues surrounding the explanation and informed consent procedures? My response:

'As I am the sole researcher and that I do speak Greek, I will be explaining the research procedures to the potential participant. The explaining will take place in an area which suits the potential participant, whether in their homes or at mine or a public meeting place such as Greek Church. I am free and flexible to work around the potential participant. Consent forms will be used for both the interviews and the focus groups. Participation sheets for the migrants will be signed after the procedures involved are explained. All participants will be over the age of 18 and of normal intelligence.'

Where will the records be kept? Who will have access to the information collected? How will privacy of the participant be maintained? My response:

'The data which includes all notes and auditory tapes will be held in a locked drawer at my own private residence. Only I will have access to the data and to the key that opens the drawer. There will be no names mentioned or written or mentioned on the audiotapes. There will be no names written on any notes written during the research. If a coding system is used, it will be a number and letter-swap system and this will be only done with initials. The coding system will be locked in a separate compartment to the data. The data will be destroyed five years after the project. Audio-tapes will be erased, notes will be shredded and computer files deleted. Computer files will also be code protected and locked in a safe area.'

My project, Southern Strangers: In search of 'the lucky country,' was given the Committee Approval Number: MERC 2000/034 and was approved by the ERC (HS), subject to some minor modifications. These modifications included that all information sheets and consent forms should be provided on university letterhead and further, these sheets must be translated into Greek. The University of Western Sydney, Macarthur Ethics Approval Rider must be displayed on the bottom of these sheets.

The Greek Migrant Past and Historical Background Questionnaire and the Greek Migrant Long Form and Case Study Questionnaire were both used to interview migrants for the creative component of the Ph.D. This was a good opportunity for myself as the researcher to ‘trial’ the new research tools. It let me focus into areas of the questionnaires that I felt could be worked on and refined and also allowed me to identify sections, which were repeating themselves, areas that were unprofessional or even too invasive or a
‘stumbling block.’ It allowed me to monitor the reaction of the interviewees to certain questions.

Interesting phenomena did occur as a result of the interviews. Many of the responses given by these migrants sparked the creation of new questions and interest in areas that were initially overlooked. As the researcher, I was not aware of these factors simply because these responses were out of my level of experience. Some of the existing questions were replaced by new, more focussed and interesting, sometimes-controversial questioning as a result of the interviews, and even through the interviewee’s ‘tangenting’ into other areas of investigation. Some of these areas included migrant identity – even traditional, patriarchal Greek men admitted that their identity can not be defined as solely Greek after living in Australia for more than 40 years, rather as a Greek-Australian, or a hybrid of both cultures if you will.

Another advantage of trialing the new research tools in these circumstances was not so much to do with the research tools themselves, but on learning how to use them effectively. It allowed me to get to know the tools, areas to slow down and focus on, areas of importance, how to structure and refine the interview process and even get over some of the initial ‘nerves’ of talking onto recording tape.

In this six-month block, I commenced the creative component of the Ph.D. and wanted to begin it quite early in the degree, even before interviewing and running focus groups with other Greek migrants. My rationale for this was that, (i) I was planning to write approximately 50 poems on each section of the creative component (there are four sections in Southern Strangers, therefore approximately 200 poems collectively). This amount may seem a little on the ‘overdone’ side but there were many interestingly unique topics and sub-cycles of poetry to write about, and I knew that I would be requiring a considerable amount of time to do this, and to do this effectively. Also, it must be understood that not all poems will be accepted into the section. During the UWS Master of Arts (Creative Writing) degree, which I completed in 1997, I was taught as a matter of logic that it was better to ‘overwrite’ than to ‘underwrite.’ By doing this, the writer does not stop the ‘flow’ of the creative process. The writer can then simply edit down and refine the poems and hence the sections at a later date to suit the book as a whole – therefore, it is better to have more to work with than less. Just to demonstrate editing, the first two sections of the book, Malamata and Florina respectively, have worked out to have approximately 30 poems in each section, any weak poems or poems that were similar in theme were taken out.

(ii) The other reason why I wanted to get a good ‘head-start’ on the creative component, particularly on the first two sections Malamata and Florina, was that these stories were not in my immediate level of comprehension and experience. How was I, a young adult born in 1970 going to possibly write about a time that occurred 30 years before I was even born? How could I possibly understand the impact of World War II and The Greek Civil War on the many emotional, social, psychological and economical levels? How could I then write about it with the intensity and conviction that all good poetry characteristically requires? How was I to make it convincing and also allow the creative work to hold its high level of honesty and integrity? Personally, to do otherwise or to undermine the stories would be an insult to the many people that experienced the loss of life, the loss of family and friends through the engagement of war and through the devastating poverty and social upheaval that it subsequently created.
Time was an essential factor, and I needed lots of it to make this work; time to interview many migrants on a number of occasions that held experiences of war and village life. I needed time to write, re-write and edit the poetry. In these six months I decided to focus on the first two sections of the creative component, Malamata and Florina.

The first thing that I did after interviewing migrants for the creative component was to physically list potential ‘topics’ from the tape-recordings down on paper. Topics that I thought would be, not only interesting to write about but topics that were also consistent with the themes that are reflected in the research thesis. For example, to show the post-war state of Greece and the factors which led to many Greeks and many other Europeans taking up offers to migrate to countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia.

The second thing I did was to create what I called a ‘poetry cycle wall-chart plan’ of the creative component. This consisted of a large sheet of cardboard that ran from one end of my bedroom wall to the other (approximately three and a half meters long). This, in essence was ‘a map’ of the entire creative component of Southern Strangers. This allowed me see at a glance where each poem was to fit with the others, whether I have doubled up in theme, whether there are any ‘gaps’ in the cycle of poetry and if I neglected to cover any important aspects of migration and the research. It also allowed me to map my progress by literally ‘ticking off’ the poems completed and even to ‘slot’ them around in different orders so to see how it would all read as a cycle of poetry, i.e. in book form.

Each section, Malamata, Florina, Sydney and The Second Generation were allocated a column across the wall-chart, respectively. These columns were divided into 50 squares or spaces. In each of these spaces, I placed a short description of the poem that I wanted to write about (I put these in a rough chronological order across the wall-chart, though I knew may be subject to further change later on). For example, describing which character was to be in the poem, how it was to end, the resonating feeling I wanted to leave the reader with, what ideas did I want to project, why I wanted to write this etc. In these spaces, it could be the recording of a single word like an emotion associated with migration, such as sadness or loneliness. It could even be a word such as farming, to remind me to write a poem that ‘shows’ some aspects of rural activity and lifestyle in the village. Some examples of these short descriptions include:

"The Second Andartiko" – civil war in Greece, 1946, the story of Grandma Panagiota fleeing the communist rebels with her five children, almost being killed."

Malamata, poem number 3

Planning was an essential part of the production of the creative process. It meant that I could work efficiently, effectively and I could always monitor not only my progress, but also the changing context of the written material and to see at a glance, how it fitted as a whole. In essence, I could read the entire book from the wall-chart in front of me without having actually written any poetry. It also allowed me to monitor that I am continuously on the ‘right track’ and that I am not ‘tangent’ into another area that is not significant to my research aims, as can easily happen with larger projects. Another important aspect of ‘planning before you write’ is that without planning and just
‘jumping’ into the writing process, you may spend six months writing ‘slabs’ of creative work that you suddenly realize does not fit with the rest of your project. The risk is that the writer may have unknowingly changed in theme or direction, or a ‘character’ or ‘event’ may have to be deleted to make the project work as a whole. The time spent on developing this character or event(s) may have been a waste, or could lead to more unnecessary time being spent on trying to manipulate the work in order to salvage it.

The creative process during this period was indeed challenging but most enjoyable. I was into a steady rhythm and was producing approximately 10 poems a week, sometimes even as high as 18 and as low as seven. The critical factor here was that I was pleased with what I was producing – it had historical credibility and full of description and ‘showing’ that appealed to most of the senses and emotions. Reading a couple of historical books on Nazi Germany further assisted this process. It was important to understand what was happening in Eastern Europe at the time and even before the outbreak of World War II. I needed to know what was happening with the Weimar Republic in Germany and why Adolf Hitler and Rudolf Hess saw it necessary to overthrow the existing government during the Beer-Hall Putsch in 1928. I needed to understand the political forces involved with the disappointment of Germany at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles at the end of World War I, and the influence this had in the creation of World War II. It also allowed me to understand the ideologies and ‘the personality’ of Nazi Germany as a whole, allowing me to predict and manipulate certain aspects and events in the poems and still be in the right psychological and historical framework and context. For example, the first stanza from the poem titled ‘Malamata,’ from section one of Southern Strangers below, to illustrate war in a Greek context:

Here, the old villagers say –

‘Better to lose an eye than your reputation,’
in this land where the sun rises over Papou’s olive farms
and sets in the marble mountains, still sparkling

with the ‘Judas of English Liras.’

Restless River Morno – twisting like a severed snake,
salty with the blood of Turkish, German and Civil Wars,
haunted with the dusk-cry of our stolen Yenisiari children,
ghost of Ephialtes still hanging from trees –
the people of Malamata, champions with the shovel,
they have dug many graves...

Malamata, Section One

Other poems from Malamata and Florina included topics on the ‘The Depression’ of World War II, The Greek Civil War, farming and various aspects of village life and traditions, leisure and recreation, and aspects which led to the two main characters, Andonis and Sofia to migrate to Australia.

Section Four (April, 2001)

The next six months saw the writing of the following two sections of the creative component of Southern Strangers; ‘Sydney’ and ‘The Second Generation.’
Approximately 60 poems were written for this section, large number, considering approximately 30 were written for Malamata and Florina. The interview with migrants provided an abundance of unique and entertaining experiences, rich with cultural originality, portraying the ‘ideology’ of the time, expectations and concerns regarding Australia, struggles and even the lighter-side associated with language barriers. The ‘Greek cultural mentality’ or ways of thinking and behaviour is also portrayed here. The ‘Greek cultural personality,’ particularly with the male is generally characterized as smart witted, a *kotsavaki*, i.e. being ‘cool’ and physically strong and sexually virile, a *pallikari*, the protection of patriarchal masculinity as well as pride and honour.

There are two sub-cycles of poetry within this section. The first one is at the beginning of the section which comes under the heading *The Patris*. Here, migrants describe some of the experiences upon the Greek luxury liner. Some of these include, the ship being lodged in the Suez Canal for days after a cyclone hit, the first time Andonis saw an African man and touched his arm to see if he was covered in ‘shoe polish.’ More adventures include ‘The Shoe (Papoutsi) Incident,’ where ‘the boys’ or *boythes* were nearly dropped off at the next port in the pacific for trying to court the captains new girlfriend. It was fascinating to hear from these discussions what migrants knew about Australia and what they planned to achieve. For instance, many Greeks thought that the indigenous peoples of Australia were wild and cannibalistic, and hence, a certain amount of fear and wonder was associated with them. They also thought that Australia was country ‘paved with gold,’ and that they would work in ‘the new land’ for a couple of years and then return to their ‘homelands’ like Homer’s ‘Odysseus,’ but many of course stayed.

The second sub-cycle of poetry is at the end of the section and comes under the heading of *The Riverwood Shop*. Here the main characters Andonis and Sofia describe some of the experiences of running a small business in the ‘new country.’ Some of these experiences include the time Andonis got suspicious about an Australian customer known as ‘Charlie’ who would wait outside the shop every morning to buy turpentine spirit, claiming he was a painter and praising Andonis for selling it the cheapest. Here is where Andonis discovers that Charlie was an alcoholic and was consuming it, and as a newly arrived migrant Andonis questions ‘the lucky country.’ The sub-cycle further describes the time Andonis saw a loaf of bread slowly sliding out of the shop and thought that he was drunk but realized that it was a young girl who was living in poverty that was trying to steal it. Here Andonis questions ‘the lucky country,’ again and realizes that it is not ‘milk and honey’ for a lot of people.

As stated, the ‘Sydney’ section begins with the journey or *The Diaspora* of Andonis to a far away place upon the Boat *The Patris*, which set sail from Piraeas in May, 1960. It then describes the initial impressions about Australia and the difficulties associated with not knowing the language. There are poems that describe the Greeks in the Queensland cane-fields, as contract labourers, at the BHP, Port Kembla – steel works, and this section also introduces Sofia. It is a section that shows a considerable amount of racism that Andonis and Sofia and other Greek migrants experienced when they first arrived. For example ‘Sto Everedi’ is the story of Sofia’s first job in a battery factory.
Here, the poem describes the hazardous working conditions, menial duties, racism and sexual discrimination, as illustrated by the excerpts below:

All day, Sofia hardly looks up
as she stands pushing carbon rods into batteries,
the fine black dust over her face,
over her blue tie-back uniform,
over her swollen veined wrists –
today she had them strapped, today, she was coughing...

Sometimes the Australian boss who smelt of alcohol
would turn up the speed of the conveyor belt,
sometimes he would shout – “Faster Dagos, Faster!”

Sometimes he would touch the women,
once he touched Sofia – “No, No, No!” she yells,
shaking her head and slapping her own shoulder hard,
his glazed grinning eyes...

Sto Everedi, Sydney

Other examples include Andonis working in a scrap/timber yard as a labourer in the Sydney suburb of St Peter’s in 1960:

They watch him in the rain,
chopping car batteries in half with an axe,
he drops the seeping pieces into a 44-galon drum.
Not once does he look up at them as they sit under a shelter smoking and laughing,
sometimes he would hear those words again –
“Nah get the Dago to do that...”
“I’ve got a Wog-job for him after lunch...”

He keeps chopping.

Sto Vunderfeld, Sydney

Another example includes public transport. In this excerpt, Andonis and Taso are talking Greek to each other on a bus, the 423 on Enmore Road in 1960:
An old lady with a blue rinse
swiftly turns around...

"Talk English please!!
Talk English please!!
This is Australia!!"

Silent, Sydney

This section will also incorporate the experiences of other migrants that will be
interviewed, particularly in another sub-cycle called ‘Voices,’ which will be further
described in the following six month section, October-2001.

The Second Generation

Again, as in the Sydney section, a large amount of creative work had been written
for this section; approximately 60 poems, which cover topics such as the bi-cultural
socialization difficulties that ‘the second generation’ experience. These difficulties
experienced not only in Anglo dominated schools, through language barriers and
discrimination but also at home from migrant parents. Many Greek parents enforce and
make sure that their children are following their cultural way of life, and that their
children are not being dominated or influenced by western ideologies.

To be the child of migrants can be a very difficult experience and very much a
double-edged sword. Resentment can form on both sides of the child’s identity – the
child’s cultural background verses the child’s citizenship nationality. Migrant children
can be faced with serious identity crises when they reach adolescence, compounding
Erickson’s normal Identity Crisis stage that many youths normally experience during
their teen years when they try to search for their own unique identity. Children of
migrants have been known to rebel at this stage by doing the ‘unacceptable,’ for example,
by moving out of home, by marrying someone other than from their own cultural
background, not naming their children after their Greek parents, for example. This
‘naming the third generation children after the migrant parents’ tradition is still very
strong in Greek culture, one that apparently brings ‘shame’ to the new parents and the
grandparents if it is not followed. I can recall instances when Greek migrants would
discuss situations where second generation Greeks have not adhered to this and how
negatively these ‘deviate’ Greeks are portrayed.

Adolescence is also a time where some migrant children wholly accept the mother
and father’s cultural identity as their own. This is perhaps due to increased pressure by
the parents over the years and even by the ‘threat’ of being disowned which is not
uncommon, and further, being ostracized from the Greek community as a whole and the
risk of ridicule within this community. I can recall many instances where parents would
argue, ‘But what are the people going to say??’ Sometimes, if not more than, the need to
maintain a so-called ‘positive cultural reputation’ sadly overrides the emotional, physical
and psychological well being of their migrant children.

In this section, as in the Sydney section, racism is expressed, but unlike in the
Sydney section, here racism is experienced somewhat differently if not in a two-fold
manner by the second generation. Not only do they experience racism in school or in the
neighborhood because of their ‘ethnic physical features’ or by their culturally obvious names, but they also experience and are a witness to ‘ideological racism and stereotyping’ – a form of indoctrination from their parents and other members of their cultural background. This is especially prominent, as illustrated above when the second generation adopts any aspects of Australian lifestyle or if they do not perpetuate Greek cultural traditions. This ideological racism and stereotyping is usually directed towards Australian culture and Australians in general, in a superior/inferior mode of comparison, and can be seen towards other cultures. If a Greek child happens to befriend an Australian child in school or even a child from another nationality, migrant parent(s) have been known to ask if there are any Greek (or ‘accepted’ European) children in the class and if so, advise their children to befriend them instead. Here is where the child learns ‘distinction’ and forms their own amateur constructs or hypotheses about other cultures. Here also is where the child’s core beliefs and personal constructs form, they ask, ‘What is wrong with these people that my parents don’t like? Why must I keep away from them?’ In this section, I try to show that there is discrimination and racism on ‘both sides.’ I attempt to get the reader to see that unfortunately there is ‘small-mindedness’ in all cultures.

“You are Greek!
Not a bloody Australian!
They’re drunks,
criminals,
racists –
Greek talk at home!
Greek friends only!”...

Portrait, The Second Generation

The following poem demonstrates ‘deviance’ in the opinion of Greek traditionalists and what is accepted and what is not:

The old Greek man shakes my hand,
he asks me if I can speak Greek,
“Ne,” I nod smiling,
“Bravo, bravo,” he says.
He asks me what work I do,
“Bravo, bravo, luck and prosperity.”
He asks me whether I am married,
“Not yet,” I laugh “Almost.”
He looks at me, “Is she Greek?”...

The old Greek man looks at his wine,
“Ah,” he says, turning away.

At the Gathering, The Second Generation

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It is not uncommon to see that many migrant children almost ‘skip’ their childhoods because they are forced to grow up so quickly due to migrant hardships. More so, this is seen with work related injuries that many migrant parents suffer due to harsh working conditions overseas and in Australia, hence a lot of the burden is placed upon the second generation. Many migrants have come from completely different environments of hardship and hence come with different medical histories. For instance, most migrants were farmers, whereby a typical working day in the village would include back-breaking labour such as digging irrigation trenches, lifting bags of corn, wheat bails, pushing plows with beasts of burden, cutting wheat and corn with the sickle and scythe, etc. A ‘vulnerable spine’ from ‘the old country’ would be further undermined within Australia, particularly due to the fact that it is migrants that are on the bottom of the employment hierarchy. Migrants quite commonly did/do the dirtiest, low paying, physically difficult work in the most hazardous of environments, in an era where a proper Occupational Health and Safety policy didn’t exist in the 60s as it does today.

This influx of migrants subsequently pushed up Australian blue-collar workers into higher white-collared supervisor and managerial positions. Many migrants would tell me that even if they were aware that they had an existing back injury, they would keep it to themselves and hence keep working, simply because they feared being sacked if they did not lift what they were required to. There would be plenty of migrants to choose from to fill their positions, so to speak. One could speculate why many senior Greek men have back troubles, which walk bent with walking sticks as the following creative piece illustrates:

Bent like a melted candle,  
the old Greek man walks  
with his wooden stick...

King Street Newtown  
has seen many of you,  
shuffling out of your church  
still praying to the sidewalk,  
still carrying bags of gravel –

between Australia’s bricks,  
the cement-paste  
of grinded Greek vertebrates...

Bastounia, *The Second Generation*

*Section Five (October, 2001)*

The following six months were primarily concentrated on advertising the research through Greek newspapers, Greek national radio and by creating flyers and interviewing the Greek migrants that responded to the advertising. The six months were also used to write additional poetry for the creative component. These poems were written from the experiences expressed directly from interviews with the migrants.
Advertising – The results

As stated in the ‘Advertising the Research’ section at the start of Methodology, Greek newspaper companies such as ‘New Country’ (Neos Kosmos) and ‘The Greek Herald’ (Ellinikis Hirikas) were approached. As a university research student, I asked the companies if they would be kind enough to advertise the research. I handed these companies a copy of the flyer that I had created (see ‘Advertising the Research’ section at the beginning of the Methodology for further details). The newspaper companies were helpful in that respect, even though one of the companies wanted to charge me a fee of 25 dollars to print it each time. After stating that it was a study that would be used to benefit and enrich the Greek community and the fact that a leading newspaper rival was publishing for free, this newspaper company withdrew the charge.

As this was a good start, and the fact that these newspaper companies were nation-wide, I was expecting to be inundated with calls. After asking the newspaper companies how long will the advertisement run for and when will it begin, the companies assured me that some will run it for approximately two weeks and some will run for approximately one week. I was grateful, considering that these newspaper companies printed daily. I started to devise and prepare a portable ‘appointment book’ in order to deal with the high frequency of calls that I expected to receive.

One of the most disappointing parts of the ‘advertising process’ for the present study was to discover that only two newspaper companies ran the advertisement and these companies ran the advertisement only on one day. I discovered this whilst visiting the local library in Marrickville and newspapers daily to go through the Greek newspapers there, as well as through the newspapers that family and relatives bought.

The final insult arrived when I received only three calls as a result of these two printings of the advertisement, and that one of the persons who called me was from Melbourne. Regardless, he was very keen and excited about my project, praising me and stating that it was ‘a very good idea’ to see where these migrants are today and to examine their views about ‘the lucky country.’ We did manage to conduct a small interview over the phone but had to cut it short due to telephone expenses over a long distance. The other two were keen to be interviewed and were both from the Bankstown municipality so interview times were scheduled.

After this initial reaction to my research project by the advertising community, I was forced to explore other more productive avenues of subject recruitment. I devised a series of ‘flyers’ (see ‘Advertising the Research’ section at the start of the methodology for more detail and appendix for actual flyers).

Of the approximately 500 flyers (perhaps even more) that I placed on cars parked at four Greek-club car parks and surrounding areas on two successive Saturday nights, I received no phone calls. Of the advertisements that I placed in shopping centers, on popular Greek businesses and on telegraph poles, I received no phone calls. However, with regards to handing out flyers at selected Greek Orthodox Churches in Sydney and Sydney’s west, not all the results were as negative. Three Greek migrants did express interest in the project. They were from the Greek Orthodox Church in Newtown and St Mary’s and were subsequently booked in to be interviewed. Even though six participants were better than none, I still could not help thinking as to why I was not recruiting more
research participants, considering the fact that I was at different Greek Orthodox churches on a Sunday morning where they are without fail always full.

I started to generate ideas as to why recruiting Greek migrants was proving to be quite a challenge, even as a fellow Greek. A few hypotheses came to mind (these hypotheses will be expanded further in the ‘Limitations’ section of the ‘Discussion’ at the end of this paper). Firstly, it was suggested to me by a Greek migrant that was reading the flyer after I handed it to him that it was a ‘mistake,’ a ‘laathos’ to put my mobile number instead of a normal telephone number, i.e. a land-line number on the flyer. He stated that ‘many Greeks are cheap,’ he laughs rubbing his index finger and his thumb together as if to indicate money, ‘calling a mobile phone is more expensive, not many Greeks will ring you just because of this, believe me’ he stated ‘you should change these papers.’ I had the ghastly feeling that he may be right.

Another idea that I had as to why recruitment was poor was in relation to Vasilion’s (1964) theory on the ‘in-group’ and the ‘out-group’ phenomenon in the Greek community. The mere fact that I wrote the word ‘government’ on the flyer was enough to frighten participants away. This word ‘government’ also suggested to the migrants that despite myself being Greek, I am part of this ‘out-group’ where people ‘assumed’ to be part of this group should be treated with suspicion (See Discussion).

Lastly, another hypothesis why recruitment was low was mentioned to me by another Greek migrant outside one of the churches. He stated quite frankly that he didn’t feel that this research was so important because it would be ‘too late to help us with the findings now.’ He stated ‘it would have been useful when we first arrived, not now.’ I did state however, that it was a retrospective study where my primary aim was to see whether Greek migrants felt that migrating to Australia was the right choice for them.

In terms of recruitment, I was still not getting the number of research participants that I had hoped for. What significantly increased my recruitment number was being invited to appear on two Greek national radio programs, 2MM To Vema, and Radio Galaxias (see ‘Advertising the Research’ at the beginning of the Methodology for more details). This was a unique and exciting experience where I had the opportunity to interview listeners live on air. The radio stations helped to advertise my research to a considerable degree. Not only did they discuss my research and give out my phone number repeatedly whilst I was on air, but they reserved a copy of my flyers and repeatedly announced my research, providing listeners with my contact details whilst broadcasting during the week, and this was done for successive weeks. This was particularly conducted by Galaxias Radio, whose help with the present research was invaluable and very much appreciated. Through this I managed to recruit more participants as well as interview a number of listeners live on air.

The remaining participants were recruited through other participants that I had already interviewed. One participant suggested that on a Sunday afternoon, both of us could go to the homes of some friends of his that he believed would like to be interviewed and would be helpful to my research. We trialed this method and found that some were not home, yet we still managed to interview three senior Greek migrant couples. At first I realized that to ‘drop in’ un-expectantly with someone unknown was taboo enough let alone a research student who not only wanted to interview the household but also to record the interview. One of the ‘surprised’ participants stated that he was willing to be interviewed and recorded only under the conditions that he can
instruct me to switch off the tape at any time and that I was to erase anything that he said but later wanted removed. This was of course fine. This participant also refused to sign consent forms. Nevertheless I did leave him with an information sheet about the research.

This ‘surprise’ method did prove to be a slightly awkward technique in that the initial feeling of ‘coldness’ and lack of enthusiasm was evident. But it was noticed that as the interviews continued, the participants who were initially ‘slow to warm up’ started to volunteer more information about their migration experiences, and seemed to be enjoying it. Some of these interviews lasted well over two hours.

Despite the concluding success that this technique had, it is still a method that I would not be repeating nor recommending. This even if the referring well meaning Greek migrant claims that he ‘knows these people well’ and that he solemnly believes that like himself they too would be interested and enjoy the experience.

*The Interviewing of Greek Migrants*

One of the first aspects that I noticed when I started interviewing Greek migrants was that many of them were not that interested in giving a series of answers to the list of research questions that I held before us. Rather, the Greek migrants seemed to want to ‘tell their story’ in their own way, and as freely as possible. In many circumstances I had to be vigilant with regards to making sure that I turned the cassette over or changed the cassette/batteries in time so not to lose any of the experiences. This also had to be done with minimal disruption to the momentum of the storytelling.

This of course, as a researcher was precisely what I was hoping for and understood that this was the ‘essence’ of the narrative semi-structured interview. I even encouraged this type of responding with a broad opening question, which I used even before any of the formal questions were asked. This was an open-ended question, which I usually adapted with experience as I conducted more interviews: “So, what can you tell me about your migration experiences?” (Stated in Greek). There was nothing worse than having a research participant that strictly adhered to the questions that were being asked without variation and expansion, or i.e. giving one word or one line answers, and hence completing an interview designed for over two hours in only half an hour.

Tangents from the initial question of inquiry were positively reinforced with ‘head nodding’ on my part, with the raising of the ‘eyebrows’ to portray interest, in order for the participant to continue. It was my job to keep the participants talking and to collect as much information as possible. ‘Tangenting’ was a valuable part of the semi-structured interview process that I conducted, because it would on many occasions trigger further investigations and probing into areas of interest and uncover information considerably more valuable than the original research questions would have elicited.

The only disadvantage that this type of interview strategy had was one of time. Sometimes this broad initial question would take up the entire allotted interview duration and many responses to key questions at the end would have to be compromised. Yet with most participants, time was not an issue and most were happy to go over the designated interview period, due to the fact that it was in their own homes and the interviews were not conducted too late in the evening. It was only when interviewing Greek migrants in time-structured organizations such as nursing homes, and also with prominent and busy
members of the Greek community where duration of interview time was previously agreed upon, did this method have its short falls.

Despite the above, what I noticed with the interview method was that the majority of the participants, through their ‘story-telling’ and ‘monologues’ did actually answer most of the questions within the research questionnaire. Having said that, I felt that the advantages of this ‘tangent’ method did outweigh the disadvantage of time and therefore I decided to continue with this method of interviewing.

Another aspect that was interesting to see with regards to interviewing was the use of the tape-recorder. One widowed lady that approached me outside a Greek Orthodox Church in Sydney’s west as I was handing out flyers expressed sincere interest to be interviewed. As I met her at her home and started to explain the interview procedures to her and gave her a copy of the information sheet, she refused to conduct an interview with the use of the tape-recorder. I assured her that I am bound ethically to confidentiality and can be liable if it is breached. I then stated my reasons as to why I use it, due to its efficiency and accuracy (as explained above in the Methodology), but she still felt uncomfortable and uncertain, therefore I conducted the interview without the use of a tape-recorder. She went further to say that the ‘government’ may get a hold of the audio tapes and there may possibly be repercussions for her. I tried not to smile but I understood and that was fine.

It was then that it occurred to me once again. As previously stated above in the ‘hypotheses regarding recruitment difficulties’ (in ‘The Research Process’) that by using the word ‘government’ in the flyer, many Greek migrants would instantly be cautious (See Discussion) The above widow did also refuse to sign any consent forms.

I did however initially hypothesize that these problems would occur with regards to Greek migrants, I had an awareness simply due to the fact that I was Greek and I naturally knew a bit more about them as a culture than the average non-Greek researcher. Hence, I thought that if these episodes did occur, the next best thing was to recite the interview as much as I could into the tape-recorder as I drive home, which is exactly what I did with the above participant, being careful not to disclose any identifying information.

Another phenomenon that I witnessed with regards to the use of the tape-recorder was that some of the Greek migrants that I interviewed seemed to be ‘guarded’ with regards to their responding when the tape-recorder was on. They were also general in their responses, did not elaborate as much, less opinionated and were more positive with regards to controversial questions such as racism, discrimination and cultural comparisons. It was only after the tape-recorder was switched off at the end of the session that the ‘true’ interview began. Comments at this point held more conviction, previous stories that were vague and general were expanded on and opinions were not held back. Some migrants even went further to admit that they didn’t want to mention ‘these things’ before while the tape was running (See Discussion).

Again, as the above widow portrayed, a certain amount of caution and mistrust is evident. I guess in all fairness it is understandable, I am therefore a stranger in their homes, who has in his possession their names, addresses and signed consent forms, as well as a recording of their opinions about issues that do involve politics and the government. One can understand, and besides most migrants have come or have been affected from the hardships of the post World War II era, where ‘trust’ wasn’t an
available and abundant commodity as it is today. A concept that many ‘younger researchers’ may not have a clear appreciation of.

Another aspect which made the interview process slightly more challenging than I had anticipated was the fact that my level of Greek was not at a standard that enabled me to fully understand every word or response that the Greek migrant(s) would give. Now and then I would find myself asking the participant to explain the comment(s) or word(s), which they would do without too much of a disruption. Sometimes all it took was for me to crease my forehead and slightly shake my head and they would automatically explain it either in simplistic Greek or find the English equivalent of the word(s) or concept(s) if their level of English permitted them to do so. Many of the clients did initially ask me whether I was born and/or raised here or in Greece and hence attributed the fact that my ‘not so great’ level of Greek literacy may be understandable.

Despite some of the above minor challenges to interview process, most of the interviews were insightful, conducted efficiently and an enjoyable experience for the participants as well as for myself. Two participants even went further to state that they ‘had these things bottled up inside them for years and always wanted to talk them out as well as possibly have them recorded,’ therefore they saw it as very much a cathartic experience. One research participant, who is a prominent member of the Greek community, broke down and cried as she retold stories of the hardships that she and her parents had experienced back in Greece and with regards to their migration experiences. Despite her breaking down, and my suggestion that we end the session there, she insisted that we continue which we did for approximately ‘five hours’ which turned out to be one of the longest, most insightful and memorable interviews I have had the privilege to conduct.

The Writing of Additional Poetry

The following six months also saw the creation of additional poetry for the ‘Sydney’ section of the creative book, Southern Strangers. These poems were written directly from the experiences expressed by the Greek migrants through the above interviews. Many of the stories were very inspirational to say the least, and as a writer I quickly took the opportunity to try and bring them to life in the form of poetry whilst the memories and the emotions were still quite recent.

Some of the stories that were transformed into additional poetry include Greek migrants working in the sugar cane fields of Queensland, or as the migrants would call it ‘Sta Kalamia.’ It was an exciting experience for me to interview a couple of Greek migrants who had worked in the cane-fields, simply because I was having considerable trouble finding Greek migrants who had actually worked there. I very much wanted to write a poem about this experience but I lacked the research and insight as to what it might have involved. Nevertheless, I did manage to interview migrants who had worked there and managed to write about the experience as illustrated by excerpts below:

All day, Andonis hacks the cane with a machete,  
blisters on his palms and thumbs, lipstick stain the wooden handle,  
demon-eyed embers of last nights fire, burning his ash-soaked feet...  
rising strings of blue smoke – the anoxic souls of rats and snakes,
smoldering around the hot knuckled stalks —
he shoulders the scorched bouquets to a pile,
clear liquid bleeds from the hard wattle core...

Sta Kalamia II, Sydney

Other poems written for the creative process inspired from the interviews include ‘Voices.’ This is not poems in the traditional sense but more in terms of narrative/monologue/prose poem with snippets from different migrants that were interviewed. ‘Voices’ explores the common key research question, ‘what were the reasons why many Greeks decided to migrate?’ What was noticed was that the answers to this obvious question were more diverse than originally thought. Yes, many Greeks did decided to migrate in order to improve their economic situations due to the poverty caused by World War II and many other factors. But it would be a slight generalization to state that most migrants were in this category (even though many of them were) as the following illustrates:

"...I left because I didn't want to do my two years of compulsory national service in the Greek army..."

"...I left because I was arranged to marry a man here by proxy, my father couldn’t afford a dowry back home..."

"...switch off the cassette (he points to the tape-recorder). I left because I was being persecuted for my political beliefs, no one would give me a job, my papers were ‘red’...

"...I left because I was caught seeing a girl in my village and I had to marry her or otherwise (runs a finger across his throat) her father, her brothers, uncles and relatives would kill me — huh! (smiles) she knew I didn’t want her for marriage, she made sure I’d be there when her brother came home, the cunning fox!..."

and of course, as many migrants did express, for economic improvement:

"Why? For a better life Niko! For us and our children. Greece was poor, crippled by years of constant wars against the Turks, World War II and the Civil War. The Greek government was in post-war depression, there were no jobs, no opportunities for learning a trade — we were hard working farmers, hungry and barefoot and Australia promised opportunity and wealth. Advertisements on a television that I saw in an Athens shop-front window showed the surf beaches, limousines and handfuls of money— we all said, just a few years here and we’ll come back to our ‘mother country’ that we love — huh! I am still here..."

Voices, Sydney
Section Six (April, 2002)

The next six months saw the commencement of the Greek migrant focus group sessions. I was fortunate enough to run three Greek migrant focus group sessions within this time period. In addition to running the focus groups, this period saw a considerable amount of time spent in typing up and editing the creative component of the Ph.D., Southern Strangers as well as arranging it into a cycle and in book format. This period was also utilized in preparing and sending some of the creative work from Southern Strangers to literary journals and magazines for publication.

The Greek Migrant Focus Group Sessions

One of the first things that struck me when I was running the focus group sessions was that the responses from the participants were generally quite diverse which had the effect of ‘sparking’ highly vocal and heated discussions, particularly in two of the focus group sessions. This was a reaction that I did envisage would be an advantageous one simply due to the high amount of information ‘rolling out’ and which contained a sense honesty, conviction and even in the way of being cathartic for the participants themselves. Initially I did allow this/these rather ‘rowdy’ focus group session(s) to continue and was quite happy with the amount of information the effect was eliciting, but it seemed that at times facilitator intervention was required. This was because I felt that some of the participants were starting to limit and caution their responses, grow quiet or simply agree on all questions with the dominant opinion/person in the group. Hence, I started to become concerned that the responses were not unfolding as a true representation of the participants themselves as well as the group as a whole which was actively being ‘swayed’ by a loud aggressive voice(s) (see the ‘Results’ section following ‘The Research Process’ for transcribed responses and ‘Discussion’ for further inquiry).

Some participants were highly opinionated and very vocal to the point where they would try to dominate the ‘air-space.’ Many of these people would interrupt a participant’s response by cutting in, even when the question was asked by myself as the facilitator and aimed at a particular person in the group. Needless to say, facilitating the groups were indeed a challenge where at times I found myself stopping the focus group session then resuming it again and allowing the particular participant who was interrupted to have a turn in answering the question. This is even after I did explain in Greek, the ‘few basic focus group house-rules’ at the beginning of each session. They are as follows:

Facilitator: “Thank you all for attending today’s Greek Migrant Focus Group Session. Before we begin I would like to explain how I will be running today’s focus group and the procedures involved. I would also like to go through some of the rules of the focus group session, which will help the session run smoothly and efficiently and enable everyone here to have their say in a fair and courteous manner. These basic rules will ensure that everyone here today will have an enjoyable and enlightening experience.

Firstly, as you can read from the Information Sheet and Consent Forms (handed out and signed prior to the session, Greek translation), there will be the use of a cassette player to record today’s responses. This is to make it easier, more efficient and more accurate for me when recording responses. As it explains in the information sheet, the cassette tapes will be held securely and confidentially with myself; this includes all signed consent
forms also. No names or identifying information will be attached to the comments said here today when they are transcribed and written up in the thesis. Is everyone clear on that? Are there any questions?

The focus group will consist of 7 questions. How it works is I will firstly ask a question and then I will go around the group in a clock-wise direction where everyone will be given the opportunity to answer it. If you cannot think of anything to say, you can simply ‘pass’ and I’ll move on to the next person. I will give everyone the chance to voice any additional comments and/or let the group engage into a discussion after everyone has had a turn at answering each question.

Some of the basic rules that I would like everyone who is participating here today to be aware of throughout the focus group include: (1) Letting each participant have as much time as they need to answer the question. (2) Do not interrupt the participant whilst they are talking, there will be time allocated after each question to discuss the group responses. (3) Please refrain from yelling whilst talking, particularly to other participants. (4) Do not belittle, ridicule or intimidate any participant(s) and/or their responses but rather discuss them in an objective fashion, and (4) Please be aware that everyone has a right to his or her own opinions and that there are no wrong or right answers to any of the questions. Is everyone clear on these rules? Are there any questions?”

Two of the focus group sessions were held at a research participant’s home in Enmore, Sydney and the other focus group session was held in an office at Radio Galaxies – Greek Radio Station in Canterbury, Sydney. With focus groups that were smaller in size, for instance no more than four participants, the participants would seem to talk more and appear to have more confidence with regards to each question. There was less of the ‘copycat’, ‘sitting on the fence’ and ‘going with the flow’ phenomenon where participants would either agree with the consensus and/or with the previous person or the most outspoken person. I noticed that participants in the larger groups stated much more often that they ‘don’t know’ and seem undecided when the focus group is divided in opinion, particularly if it is a ‘heated discussion.’ These participants are usually heard saying things like, “I agree with what everyone else has said” or “Yep, as the person before me said, I feel the same” or “I don’t know, my child.” This is of course fine, as all of us do at some point agree with others and are unsure of certain issues and certain situations but it gets rather obvious that there are other factors or group dynamics at play when the same person(s) continues this pattern of responding. I did get the impression that many of the women were very shy (not all) and reserved and were not used to publicly speaking out within a group, especially when their husbands are present. I also got the impression that seeing as though the males and husbands largely dominated the discussions, many women seem to have been taught not to have ‘an opinion’ or if they do, not to express it. Further, in some ‘closed cultures’ the women is also taught to think that she does not know as much as the men, and it is the men that discuss complex social inquiries not the women.

A recommendation would be to conduct a focus group for migrant women alone, particularly without their husbands present. This may help to help elicit more responses and to eliminate any hidden biases and variable which may be a hindrance to participant disclosure. Perhaps as an idea, it would be wise to have a female researcher or staff to facilitate the focus group.
Another interesting episode, which I observed with regards to the focus group, was a considerably heated argument between two participants regarding the split in the Greek Orthodox Church.

This focus group argument was so heated that two of the participants rose out of their chairs and started to aggressively finger point at each other to which I quickly and vocally introduced the next question. Other members of the focus group were chuckling and one of them asked me, 'Is this alright to be on the tape?' Despite this focus group being informative and very interesting to say the least, I still felt that it did not fulfill my research objectives. Therefore I managed to arrange two more focus group sessions to get a clearer and more informative representation of the Greek migrant situation, and without too much of the 'politics' involved.

In general, the focus groups as a whole were very informative. One of the aspects that kept arising from each of the focus groups was the issue of racism and discrimination during the early days migration and through the readjustment process (which will be covered more in the Results and Discussion section). It seemed that most of the Greek migrants in the three focus groups would bring this up on their own accord or as an answer to the question, 'What are the bad things associated with migration?' And others would support it, followed up with their own experiences of racism. It seemed that most of them had at least one example of racism and discrimination to talk about. I can recall one example of racism that a migrant expressed:

"...I was working in a factory in Roseberry, Sydney when I first came to Australia in 1960. I was walking to work one morning and I saw hundreds of papers all over the footpath. I thought they were an advertisement and I said to myself, 'Ah! Let me too see what they're advertising', so I bent down to pick one up – it said, 'Greek wogs go home!' All the papers around me said 'Greek wogs go home!' This was my first week in Australia and I have never forgotten it. That is why Niko I have never warmed to this country and I don't think I ever will..."

K.K. March 17 2001

Not all early Greek migrant experiences with the host nation and its people were subjected to racism, in fact many Greek migrants did say that there were crowds of Australians welcoming them as the got off the boat, actually yelling 'welcome!' and holding banners of equivalent greetings. There are also many examples expressed by migrants in the early days of migration where Australians would go out of their way to help the new arrivals. One migrant told the story during the focus group of when he first came to Sydney:

"...I was starting a job as a cleaner in Elizabeth Street, Sydney in 1956. It was my first week. I had the name of the building and the address on a piece of paper but I didn't know how to get there. I stopped an Australian man and showed him the paper and he started to give me directions but I didn't understand what he was saying. We then walked to his car where he got out the street directory and showed me again but I still didn't understand. He then saw a bus pull up next to us, which he knew went straight past the place I wanted to go to. He went to the bus driver and explained my situation to him and told the driver to let me know where to get off..."

I.K. July 28, 2001

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There is no denying that the early Greek migrants and many other migrants from different cultures did experience racism, and sometimes are still subjected to it today. Some migrants during the focus groups did however express that there are unfortunately racists an unpleasant and ignorant people in all cultures. They even said that this exists within cultures and the phenomenon is even compounded by socio-economic class. For instance, in terms of inter-cultural racism, Greeks who come from areas close to the Turkish borders and who have been influenced by Turkish culture are not considered as 'highly' as Greeks who come from, for example Athens or from the mainland. Egyptian Greeks are said by some Greeks to be 'snobby' and 'egoïstes,' (egotistical) that they believe they are 'better' than the mainland Greeks. Same with the Cypriots according to some Greeks are 'snooty' because they insist on being referred to as Cypriots and not Greeks. This reminds me very much of ancient Sparta. It is almost as if nothing has changed in human nature from 400BC where Greek Hoplite soldiers would fight other Greek Hoplite soldiers from nearby villages. City-states would fight city-states and the Spartans, as well as fighting almost everyone else would also fight and enslave the Helots – Greek speaking tribes who lived in the surrounding villages of the great armies. The Helots, despite the fact that they were Greek speaking, worshipped the same gods were still heavily persecuted, exploited, ridiculed and not considered as superior by the Spartans.

There was one woman in the second focus group, and like the other women didn’t say much but what she said with regards to racism as the session was coming to a close seemed to hold a considerable amount of resonance:

"...when we say that Australians are racist, just try to imagine that it was the Australians who were migrating to Greece. Not only do I know we Greeks would have been racist towards them and much worse at that, but I honestly believe that we would have eaten them alive!..."

_E.B. July 8, 2002_

No other focus group participant had anything further to add to this comment.

*Typing up 'Southern Strangers': The Creative Component*

A considerable amount of time was utilized in typing up the creative component, Southern Strangers. This consisted of 195 pages of poetry, which equated to approximately 188 individual poems. The first two sections of the collection, Malamata and Florina, consist of approximately 35 – 40 poems each. It was the next two sections Sydney and The Second Generation that I seemed to write considerably more on, in fact almost twice as much. This is most probably because most of the content that I expressed in the poems comes directly from my first hand experiences and memories, whereas the first two relied heavily on interviews, historical research and photographs. I did understand that quite a few poems even though they may have been written well, simply had to go. This of course is part of the common editing process that many writers go through when polishing a piece of work. I had a considerable number of poems in mind to leave out of the collection. These would include poems that I felt were weakly written or weak/insignificant in theme and were repeating the same themes in the collection as a
whole. Poems I considered too personal or were close in breaching the privacy of those that I have interviewed, and poems that I felt just didn't quite fit into the collection as a whole or seemed to interrupt the flow of the cycle.

One of the first aspects that I noticed when typing and editing the creative work straight onto the computer from the first paper draft is that it was quick, neat and efficient, without having to re-write the poem as I once use to on past projects. What I used to do in the past, before I had the use of a personal computer was edit the poem approximately six times on sheets of paper. This meant of course writing and re-writing the poem in order to finish with a clear product so to get the whole effect of the poem and to clearly view its aesthetic qualities. Editing on computer also meant that I was able to edit each poem on many more occasions than just six times. Most of the poems were edited at least nine to ten times and sometimes even more. This even meant that I could concentrate on the small finer details in editing such as commas, capitals and even tabbing lines for visual effect and to stress performance emphasis. Typing and editing the poetry on computer was certainly a time saver but it had one disadvantage. What I noticed when I first started editing was that I would edit the poem to what I thought I was happy with on a particular day, save it into the computer and then on hard disc(s). When I then opened the particular poem and read it with a refreshed and objective mind I would notice that on many occasions I preferred the previous version of the poem before I had edited it. With a hard copy, i.e. on paper as I once previously edited, I could simply refer back to the previous drafts and undo any changes. Upon the computer though I suddenly realized I didn’t have any past drafts that recorded the developments of the poem to its current state. To avoid this, I then started to save every edited version of every poem by date on computer and onto hard disc(s).

The next step I took after editing the collection to a point where I was content with was to arrange the poems into a ‘readable’ collection, or into book form. This meant that as a cycle of poetry, each poem had to build upon the poems that were to follow, in terms of ‘telling a complete story.’ That is of course if you are employing a chronological method of recording and re-telling of historical events that took place. To create this effect, I had to make sure I arranged historical poems and associated events together, so the knowledge of dates and of course history was crucial. This method also applied to the characters own personal historical events also. For example, to illustrate the chronological importance, in the Malamata and Florina sections, there were many poems, which expressed aspects of World War II and The Greek Civil War that followed. It was then logical that early in the sections I should express poems of the German invasion first and then The Greek Civil War that followed in 1946. ‘Sprinkled’ through these poems I placed ‘non-war associated poems’ of the main character growing up amidst all this, as well as poems of the ‘village life,’ traditions, and festivals and so forth in order to reduce the monotony brought about by ‘clumping’ similar themes and chronological events together.

Getting the right order for the collection was a meticulous and time-consuming process. This involved physically laying out all the printed and edited poems over a large area and quite literally staring at them, reading them, imagining how they would read side by side and as a whole and then collecting them one by one into some sort of readable order; a process that could take hours to complete. This was done for all four sections. The next thing was to read the entire book as a whole and to write down changes that I
thought would enhance the order and content of the collection. At this point I also took the opportunity to edit the work further in its hard copy form and to also note any poems that I thought best to consider leaving out when I print the book again due to content or repetition of themes. By reading the hard copy version, I could clearly see any repetition of phrases or images in the body of work as well. These were things to edit out or rewrite in another way. Further, it was amazing to see how many mistakes I could actually find when I wasn’t reading my work directly from the computer screen. After I was content with the order and I corrected all the errors, I printed the collection once again, adding graphics, which were old photographs.

During the last part of the six months, time was spent on further editing and polishing the creative component. I also chose some of my poems and sent them to literary journals and magazines to be considered for publication.

Section Seven (October, 2002)

The next six and final months were utilized in planning and writing up the thesis *Southern Strangers: In Search of ‘The Lucky Country’.* This is the psychology grounded, qualitative analysis that will demonstrate as to whether Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for the migrants interviewed.

Planning the Thesis

One of the dilemmas I had with regards to planning the write-up was how to incorporate creative arts into a psychology thesis. I had to find a way to merge two distinctly different disciplines together in some form of harmonious body of research, where the two disciplines complement each other and come together as one. I thought the best way to deal with this issue is to go ‘back to basics’ and draw up a plan as I did for the creative component of the degree.

I firstly listed all the obvious headings or sections, which I felt should be covered in the thesis. These included such areas as definitions and statistics on migration and review of the migration literature. Due to the research being written in psychological format and utilizing a qualitative mode of investigation and discussion, the research should be grounded in a psychological construct and in past theories such as motivational psychology, achievement and social psychology.

The research should demonstrate theories on migration, i.e. as to why people choose to migrate and the various factors that contribute and effect migration patterns. The thesis required a history of Hellenic migration to Australia, from the days of the first fleet to the present. It also required a discussion on the past history of the Greek people, not so much in terms of archaic history but particularly from about the time when *Constantinople* (now Istanbul) fell to the Ottoman Empire in 1453 and the struggles endured until liberation was achieved in 1821. It required an exploration of World War II and The Greek Civil War that followed and how it relates and deepens the understanding of southern European migration to Australia.

The research needed a concise, sound ‘Methodology’ and design and an explanation on qualitative analysis and the various techniques and strategies it employs to investigate social phenomena. As part of the methodology, the research needed a discussion of the research tools, information and consent forms as well as advertisements
created by the present researcher in investigating migration, and a discussion on the derivation and development of these research tools.

I also believed the present research should contain a concise and detailed ‘Research Process’ which covers the three and a half years that it took to complete the Ph.D. This should be an almost step-by-step recording of the procedures involved, which also covers many aspects of the creative process and which presents and discusses some of the poetry written as a result from the interviews with Greek migrants. It should have a concise ‘Results’ section, which employs transcribed responses of the interviews and focus groups with the Greek migrants. And finally, the research should have a discussion, which broadly examines the entire research as a whole and discusses its limitations and recommendations.

This plan leans heavily towards a psychological and sociological paradigm of investigation. My rationale for preferring to plan the research thesis in this way and not so much towards turning this thesis into a creative arts discussion was one of balance. Seeing as though two separate bodies of work or theses were to emerge from this Ph.D., it was only fair that if one was to be solely creative in content, the other may lean more towards a psychological and sociological construct in order to investigate the key research questions involved.
Results

A total of 27 Greek migrants participated in the present study. The results section will consist of two main areas of examination: (1) The Greek Migrant Interviews: Eleven Greek migrants participated in the interviews. An individual examination of themes and transcribed responses to key interview questions by the 11 Greek migrants interviewed. (2) The Greek Migrant Focus Groups: Sixteen Greek migrants participated in the focus groups. Three focus groups were conducted. Overall themes and transcribed responses of the focus group sessions will be examined in relation to the focus group questions. A short demographic summary will precede each examination of the Greek migrants interviewed, and an overall demographics summary will precede the discussion of the Greek migrant focus group results.

The key interview questions from the Greek Migrant Interview Questionnaire – Revised that mostly will be examined here are as follows: (1) What did you first think of Australia? Your initial impressions? (2) Can you recall some of the difficult times? (3) Can you recall any instances of racism and discrimination that you encountered? (4) Why did you come to Australia? What motivated you to migrate? (5) What do you feel that you have achieved in the past years of being in Australia? (6) Do you think Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you? (7) What do you feel your identity is? Has it changed living in Australia for so long? (8) What would you have done differently if you were to migrate here again? (9) If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you like the government to hear? (10) What are your future goals or dreams?

In order to preserve the identity and confidentiality of each of the Greek migrant participants that were interviewed, and those who participated in the focus groups, alias names and number references will be used to refer to each of them below.

The Greek Migrant Interview Results

Interview Subjects

Eleven Greek migrants were interviewed for the present research. All migrants interviewed lived in Sydney, NSW. Specifically, they resided within the surrounding inner suburbs of Sydney City; Sydney’s southwest and greater west. Of the eleven migrants interviewed, seven were male and four were female. All migrants were of a working class socioeconomic background and were all above the age of 45 years. All migrants chose to be interviewed within their own homes.

(1) Leonidas - Greek Migrant Interviewee Number One

Demographics

The present interviewee Leonidas is an unmarried male born in 1926; he is 77 years of age. He currently resides in Sydney’s southwest. He was born in a Greek village in the west Peloponnese of Greece, and migrated to Australia in 1955 at the age of 29.
His occupation in Greece was an office worker. Leonidas became aware of migration to Australia through Greek newspapers in his village and he did not have any family in Australia when he first arrived. He initially stayed in the Sydney suburb of Kensington and some of his occupations included labourer in a refrigeration factory, clerk in a travel agency, worked in SBS Greek radio, and as a Community Liaison Officer for the Greek Orthodox Church. Leonidas stated that his initial reason for migrating was to search 'for a better life.' The interviewee is currently retired.

Q. What did you think of Australia? Your initial impression?

Leonidas stated that the first impression that struck him hard when he arrived to Australia and started working, was one of deep loss:

"...when I first came to Australia, I felt that I had lost. I found myself in a worse position than I originally was. When I went to the factory, my first job being to shine these ‘disc’ like objects that used to go in old refrigerators and as I was cleaning off the smudges, my tears would run because I saw it as if I was a ‘nothing’..."

Leonidas states that in terms of the physical appearance of the nation, Australia was ‘beautiful’, ‘neat’ and ‘orderly.’ Unlike Greece that was in post war and civil war ruins and which lacked simple things like guttering and footpaths on streets and even the houses which seem to be ‘unfinished’ for years. He goes on to say that even though the city was orderly, it was the ‘culture’ that was ‘primitive’ as he states below:

"...the life in Australia when I first arrived was primitive in many ways, first of all in fashion, there was nothing. Then in terms of food: steak and eggs, a bit of mash potato and peas, there was the stew, toast, and they had no other foods. The Australian fish was dipped in batter, dripped with fat and smelt, then wrapped in newspapers – well you tell me is that primitive or not? Especially when you knew from your house [back in Greece], egg and lemon marinated foods, the feta and spinach/leek pie, the rice and meatball soup, tomatoes stuffed with rice and meat etc..."

The other aspect that he noticed was the differences in the British system as compared to the Greek system. Leonidas states that in Australia, there is a ‘rule’ or ‘law’ for everything here, everything is organized and most people obey these rules and accept them as a normal part of the society in which they live, unlike the Greek system which is much more ‘relaxed’ to say the least. As much as he appreciates the efficiency and effectiveness of the British system, he sees that too much of this ‘conformity’ can have a downside. He gives an example:

"...even today rules in Greece are not enforced as much as in Australia, they don’t have that ‘strictness’ which we have here. Today I noticed a car in front of me had hung a rag on the end of piping he was carrying and I said to myself look at that, for everything there are laws here. And all these laws make it as if you can’t move, you can’t be free..."

Leonidas then tries to explain why the Greek is the way s/he is in terms of ‘cultural personality.’ He expands on the unique Greek cultural characteristics, even
comparing it to ancient Greece, stating that it is the result of the ‘spirit of freedom’ that is
generally inherent in the culture’s identity:

"...if you tell the Greek that he is not allowed to pass through this way, the Greek will
then search for a window or anything else so he could somehow get in, he doesn’t take it
for granted what you tell him – that is the ‘spirit’ that is working within him, the ‘spirit
of freedom.’ And we see that when they come here as migrants, without a basic
education, without knowing English and you see that he [the migrant] manages and he
achieves. He gets into different businesses and makes money because he never stops and
accepts that the situation is futile, he never gives up. But then there is an opposite side to
this characteristic that is the Greek doesn’t obey. And we see this from the ancient times
in Greece where they could never unite and communicate effectively, because of that
inherent ‘spirit of freedom’..."

Q. Can you recall some of the difficult times with regards to migration?

Leonidas states the main difficulty experienced was in terms of the negative
attitudes of Australians towards the new arrivals. He states that it is this feeling of
‘inferiority’ that he was constantly made to feel from these attitudes that still resonate
with him today:

"...I saw and experienced things that ‘wounded’ me – now for these people to make me
feel as if I was a nothing would hurt me a great deal. If you’re a foreigner, you are
blamed for everything that goes wrong. You wouldn’t have any advantages and we had to
accept that..."

Q. Can you recall any further instances of racism and discrimination that you
experienced; is the above example racism to you?

Here, Leonidas expands on the above example and demonstrates a deeper ‘two
sided’ understanding that it was ‘logical’ for Australians to be skeptical and unsure of the
new arrivals:

"...I can’t exactly say that the above example is racism. Look I was never a racist but we
must understand that the people [Australians] were in their own country and here they
would see all these foreign people entering – it was logical for them to be skeptical that
‘that person cannot be better off than me.’ Because you see, when I first arrived, nothing
existed here but [a model of] ‘London’ for the Australians. They didn’t know of any other
races because no other races existed..."

Q. Why did you migrate to Australia?

Here, Leonidas tells his own story and unique reasons as to why he decided to
migrate to Australia. He saw it as a means to help his family back in Greece who were
experiencing post war hardships:

"...I came to Australia for something better. I was the only son and I had two sisters. My
father was sick, though our home was good in Greece and I lived well as a child. But the
war came and so did poverty and sickness and bad luck. So I found myself now ‘loaded’
will all the responsibilities of the family, and I thought to myself, what do I do? So it was
then that I decided to come to Australia. I came here to help the family by sending money
back to them...”

Q. What do you feel your identity is? Has it changed living in Australia after so many
years?

Leonidas explains that the present Greek culture has a dual ‘identity crisis,’ which
very much relates to the historical aspects of the development of the culture and the way
it presently finds itself. Leonidas also explains the differences between the Greek cultural
identity and the Australian cultural identity as he sees it. He also states that he feels that
he cannot be a ‘pure’ Australian and he also cannot claim that he is ‘fully’ Greek now
after so many years. He views both cultures as part of his whole identity, and he feels as
though he has gained by this and has been enriched by it:

“...identity yes, as Greeks we have a ‘complex,’ a dual complex, ‘the great past and the
poor present,’ and we understand this when we leave Greece. We don’t possess that
’social attitude,’ we don’t have that ‘free spirit’ and it is more evident here because of the
British system of ‘etiquette’ and formality. On the other hand though, we have a sense of
‘feelings’ where you can go to a tavern in Greece and meet and socialize with complete
strangers, a kind of hospitality and ‘warmth.’ It is this ‘casual and open heart’ which
means we are approachable. And here you see that with your next door neighbour, you
don’t speak. This is what Australians lack and when they come to Greece they love it. It
is a chance for them to ‘unbutton’ so to speak from all the conformity and ‘rules’ of the
British system. I can’t say that Australians don’t have feelings; it is just the ‘culture’ in
that you always have to be ‘proper.’ And this proper does not allow the Australians to ‘let
their hair down,’ to express themselves; that is where they struggle...”

“...as far as my identity goes, I believe for me to live in two countries and two cultures, I
haven’t lost but rather I have ‘widened’ in my thinking, I haven’t been completely in one
or the other, and I have taken the best from both cultures. Because I cannot say one
[culture] or the other is better or worse. You find good and bad in all cultures like in
people. There is a Greek saying, ‘the saint and a crime, the thief and a blessing.’ I am not
the Australian ‘fair dinkum’ and I will never be because I can’t be, but then again I am
not the same Greek, which I was when I left Greece. My identity is that I’m both – Greek
and Australian and that I am proud of this...”

Researcher: What if Greece and Australia went to war, which would you fight for?

“...it is hard to answer this, because it was like when we had the civil war in Greece, there
you were fighting against your own kind, you were against your brother – that can’t not
be a wound. And it is hard to answer where you would go. I would never ever want to see
that, even in terms of disharmony between our two governments because I love both
cultures...”
Q. Do you have any regrets coming to Australia? What would you have done differently?

Leonidas expresses here that he believes that if he stayed back in Greece he would have been ‘better off now.’ He also reiterates the ‘duties,’ which he had with regards to his immediate family back in Greece. He states that he would have had more opportunities in terms of employment and career because he had completed a high level of schooling in Greece, as he explains:

‘...if I stayed back in Greece, I would have been better off now. I had a job in a big company and because I knew the people well, I would have had the opportunity for further promotion, but here in Australia I remained a worker. In Australia, I did also work in offices here and there, and over the years I learned the language, but my years had left me, the years had passed. If I did stay in Greece, and seeing how Greece has change for the better economically, I would have had my house, my car and my family and everything. Here, I didn’t get married because I had to send all my money overseas to help my family...’

Leonidas then states that if he was to come to Australia again and he knew what he knows now, he would not have stayed. Though, he also explains that once you get used to a certain lifestyle, it is hard to change it:

‘...I think if I was to come here again, I would not stay. But now I don’t want to go back to Greece, because I have gotten used to the space here, the quiet. When I go to Greece and especially Athens, it seems to me that houses, automobiles and people are all ‘mixed up’ together. This is simply because I haven’t gotten used to that. Those who come from Greece to Australia to visit say, ‘You mean this is how you live? Locked up in a single house alone? To not even see people walking in the streets?’ But if I was coming from Greece to a city in Australia, I would have said no – this is not life, this is ‘necrea,’ it’s dead. Once I met a Swedish man and we were all out with a group of Greek friends. He turns to us and says, ‘you Greeks live as if this day is your last’ and a mate of mine says to him, ‘you Swedes live as if you haven’t even been born yet [Leonidas and researcher laugh].’”

Q. So after saying what you have said, do you believe that Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you in any way?

Leonidas make it quite clear below that he feels he cannot call Australia ‘the lucky country’ with regards to himself. He put is clearly and simply:

‘...no. I would have been better off in Greece, as I explained...’

Q. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you like the government to hear?

Here, Leonidas jumps straight to the second part of the question, expressing his disapproval with regards with the government’s initial immigration policy of ‘assimilation,’ enforced upon the new arrivals to Australia in 1947. He states:
"...firstly, it has ‘wounded’ me – but rather what I should say is that the government does not win us by forcing us into assimilation. If you don’t accept me as a person, you don’t win me. What has hurt me and hurt me a great deal is when they look at me as something lower...”

Q. What are your dreams and goals for the future?

Leonidas states that despite the fact that he may have had past regrets and he misses certain things by not being in Greece, he is settled within Australia and enjoys the life that he has created for himself here:

"...now I’m used to it here, I love this life in Australia even though it is not what I wanted but I’m used to it. I know I miss certain things if I was in Greece I would have, certain things that I can’t have here, but I love what I have...”

Q. If you had one wish, what would it be?

Here Leonidas expresses that it is the simple things in life, the things that many of us at times take for granted that he wishes for:

"...my beautiful fireplace, and sometimes when it is Saturday, I’ve got a lot of places to go to because I am involved in a lot of things, but instead I turn off the television, I get a book and sit in my chair with the lamp light, I put on a little bit of music – its a beautiful world. Now I have gone past 70 years of age, I don’t think in terms of establishing myself in work, to make or to build, and even in terms of travelling – I can’t be bothered. In terms of my wish, I’ll tell you something about Kazantzakis, on his tomb it reads: ‘I have no fear, I have no hope, I am free.’ I am happy because I have good health considering my age and I wish to leave peacefully, in my bed asleep – I just don’t want to fall ill and slowly die of sickness, that’s all...”

(2) Maria - Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Two

Demographics

Maria is a widow who lives alone in Sydney’s greater west. She appears to be over the age of 60. She became aware of my project through one of my flyers that I handed out at a Greek Orthodox Church, in Sydney’s west. Maria strictly did not want me to use a cassette player to record her responses. She refused to fill out the Greek Migrant Interview Consent Form, the Greek Migrant Demographics Form and the Southern Strangers Acknowledgements Form.

Additional Information

Maria stated that she felt that she ‘could be identified on tape through her voice’ and she was afraid that ‘the government may find out what she said’ and there may be repercussions for her, or as she stated, ‘troubles.’ I explained to Maria that I am ethically bound in terms of confidentiality and privacy and that a tape recorder was only used to
aid me as a researcher to record efficiently and accurately. I presented her with a *Greek Migrant Information Sheet* to read, and assured her that if she still didn’t want me to record her responses via tape that was fine too. She still felt adamant about her initial decision, therefore we conducted the interview without the use of a tape recorder.

Using an alias to refer to her, I did however record into the tape as I drove home, the main issues that she spoke about, with care not to record any identifying information about the interviewee. The interview was rather semi-structured/unstructured to say the least. Maria did not seem interested in answering my questions but rather to say what she felt she needed to say. When I attempted to read out the first question, she stated that she first wanted to say a few things (which ended up being many things) and then to continue with the questions. She did manage however to answer some of my key questions by the end of the interview. Therefore, the following does not contain a large amount of transcribed responses from the interviewee, but rather my recording of the interview that I had with ‘Maria.’

**Q. Can you tell me your initial impressions when you first arrived to Australia?**

Maria stated that one of the first things that made an impression on her was not the country itself but of its people. She states openly that ‘the Australians as a culture are a cold culture, they never want to be friends with a migrant, and you can never be a friend with them.’ She then expresses some of the ‘stereotypes’ with regards to the Australians, stating ‘they are all about drinking and fighting, being racist.’ She then compares the Australian to the Greek:

‘...the Greek will welcome you into their home, be hospitable, the Australians are not like that...’

Maria had nothing further to say with regards to her initial impressions of Australia and Australians when she first arrived.

**Q. Can you recall some of the difficulties, which you experienced with migration?**

One of the first things that Maria expressed to me as I commenced the interview session was that she was having a difficult time accepting the fact that Greece ‘apparently’ sold its migrants to Australia in the 1950s. Maria stated that she heard on Australian morning radio (she could not recall which morning show and/or which radio band she heard it on when I asked her) that Greece sold its migrants to Australia for nine million dollars per year. She further stated that she heard on this same broadcast that, the reason why Australia could not initially bring more Greek migrants abroad was because Australia simply could not afford to ‘buy’ more. Maria then asked me whether I had any knowledge of these facts which I replied ‘no.’ Perhaps I had missed it somewhere in the literature, but I can say that I had not come across this fact in any of my readings on migration, and nor have I ever heard any migrant, or non-migrant for that matter to remotely suggest this claim. She asserted that this is what she heard. Maria stressed that it has been upsetting her for quite awhile and she felt that it is important that I record this in my research.
Maria's reasoning as to why she was so upset about this allegation was because she saw it as a 'betrayal' from the Greek government. She stated, '...it was like we were sold as slaves...'. She almost put it poetically when she stated '...we Greeks were betrayed by our own kind once again, not with the shackles this time, but with the signature...'. She then parallels this allegation with King Leonidas of Sparta who was betrayed by a fellow Greek at the Battle of Thermopylae in 480BC. She compares this example with the Greek 'yenitsari' children who were stolen and turned against their own kind during the Ottoman occupation of Greece between 1453 and 1821.

Maria explained that her migration experiences were generally difficult because when she arrived in the 1950s, the Australian government did not provide any services for the new arrivals - they were just expected to 'assimilate' into Australian society and be forgotten. Maria stated that this initial attitude, not the language barrier, is what made her migration experiences a hardship.

Q. Why did you migrate to Australia?

Maria stated that the reason she decided to migrate to Australia was that she was under the impression, like many other migrants, that there was a lot more money to be made in Australia. She simply said that she came 'for a better life' - the cliché response used by many migrants.

Here, Maria provided some insight into the procedures which the Greek government employed with regards to migration. She stated that she had to see three doctors to get medical clearance before she could be allowed to migrate. She also said that the Greek government checked her criminal record, particularly to see whether she had a record of any involvement with communist organizations. She also stated that not only was she checked with regards to communist associations or if she had 'red papers,' as she referred to it, but whether anyone in her family and extended family did.

Upon the above procedures, she stated that the Greeks that migrated to Australia in the 1950s were the '...best Greeks, the clean Greeks, the good Greeks...', as she put it.

Maria expresses some memories from her journey to Australia. She recalls being taught the English language and English etiquette upon the ship. She stated, for example, it was 'impolite to spit on the footpath' and 'when you bump someone accidentally, you should apologize.'

Q. Has Australia been 'the lucky country' for you?

Without hesitation, Maria stated that Australia has certainly never ever been 'the lucky country' for her, and she expressed that she gets quite annoyed when Australia is referred to as such. She stated she should never have left Greece, relating this belief to her husband by stating '...the poor man, my husband, he could have died and have been buried in his homeland, not here...'. Maria states that now she doesn't want to go back because her husband is buried here and she wished to be close to him.

She regards Australia as 'the unlucky country' and states that the only thing that she has had here in Australia is sadness. She explained that this was because she became very homesick and would have rather stayed next to her parents and extended family. She
mentions again how the Australian government did not provide any services to assist the migrants and this contributed to her isolation, alienation and hence, sadness.

Maria stated that she has worked in a soap factory in Alexandria, NSW for many years. She recalls that when she first came to Australia, she obtained employment in Sydney’s greater west. She explains that this job required her to literally ‘dig’ with a shovel. Maria stated that she felt quite bitter about this, as she expresses below:

“...My Jesus, look where I have come, I should have stayed in Greece. I would have been doing the same thing, and I’ve come to Australia to do this?”...

Q. Can you recall any instances of racism which you experienced?

Maria expressed that she believes there is a lot of racism here and there will always be racism. She states the Australian personality is as such that ‘if you press him a little, he will come out with that word ‘wog.’ She believes that this attitude towards migrants will never go. Maria generally tells of how in the factories where she would work, the Australian bosses and the Australian workers would freely refer to the new arrivals as ‘wog’ and ‘dago,’ tell them to ‘hurry up’ and to ‘shut up’ when they spoke in their native tongue. She stated that they were treated with a considerable amount of disrespect.

Maria then explained that because there was a lot of racism, many Greeks would change their names, or shorten them to mask their ethnicity in order to make it easier to get jobs and to increase their opportunities within the new society.

Maria states that the second generation of migrants are being teased about their unique ‘ethnic characteristics’ by the Australian children in schools, such as ‘big nose,’ or the ‘one eyebrow’ which we see ‘sent up’ on TV sitcoms such as Acropolis Now and more recently, Pizza. She did mention though this degree of ‘teasing’ depended on the areas in which the second generation lived and attended school. If there were only a few migrant children in the school, they would get teased more by the Australian youths as compared to if there were more migrant children in the school. Maria then gives an example regarding her daughter, who was teased a considerable amount when she attended a public high school in Sydney’s greater west where the majority of the school pupils and the people in the local area were Australians.

Q. Can you tell me what you have achieved in Australia?

Maria stated that she achieved nothing but a house here in Australia, and she states that she could have achieved that in Greece as well. So in general, she feels she has achieved nothing here in Australia and hence, had nothing more to add to this question.

Q. Can you tell me what you feel your identity is after living for so many years within Australia? Has it changed at all?

Maria stated that she is a strong Greek patriot and that she is very, very proud to be Greek and she adds, whoever is Greek should also be proud. She says that this is because she considers the Greek culture to be ‘a great culture’ in terms of its ancient historical achievements and its contribution to humankind. She clarifies that she will always be
Greek and she does not feel that her identity has changed with the years that she has spent in Australia.

Q. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants, what would you like the government to hear?

Here Maria expresses her sadness and concerns with regards to the preservation of the Greek culture, globally as well as within Australia. She states that the Greek people need to be aware of the fact that Greece is being ‘bought’ now that it has joined the European Community and that the Euro dollar is in use. She feels that Greece has opened up its borders to many Albanians and others, which will also allegedly bring in an increase in ‘criminal activity’ into the country. She states that many Germans are entering Greece and buying large amounts of land because it is cheap as compared to land in Germany. She gives an example of a village in southern Greece, where the inhabitants of this village are solely Germans. She states that there are German flags everywhere in this village, and everyone of course speaks the German language. She says that there is an old Greek man left there who owns a little shop with a little Greek flag on top of it. She explained that many would ask the old man why he still lives there and the old man would say:

"...this is where I was born and this is where I will die. I do my best with the Germans, but this is my home..."

Maria then states that she believes that many other countries ‘envy’ Greece, particularly with Greece’s archaic past. She refers to Lord Elgin, Thomas Bruce – ambassador of His Majesty the King of England, who at the beginning of the nineteenth century misappropriated the Parthenon sculptures. Lord Elgin did this by systematically stealing the greater part of the decoration of the Parthenon and other marbles over a period of 20 years, taking advantage of the fact that Greece was crippled and weak under Ottoman rule. Some of the marbles appear in the British museum, and others are presumed to be in private collections. I did however tell Maria that I personally heard Mr. Tony Abbot state on behalf of Prime Minister John Howard, at the last Greek Independence Day Festival at Sydney’s Opera House on March 25, 2002, that they may be returned in the near future. According to Mr. Tony Abbot, the Australian government is currently holding talks with the British government in an attempt to convince the British government to hand the ‘Stolen Parthenon Marbles’ back to Greece. Mr. Tony Abbot went further to say that he is ‘hopeful’ that the ‘Stolen Parthenon Marbles’ may be returned in time for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. Maria stated that she does not believe that the British government will return the ‘Stolen Parthenon Marbles,’ simply because it will set a precedent for other countries to lay claim on the other stolen artifacts, jewels and resources that the British had seized through its years of imperialism.

Maria again expresses her pride for the Greek culture. This was in regards to scholastic and intellectual achievements. She mentions the specific disciplines: ‘art, architecture, geometry, chemistry, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, law, democracy’ etc. Here, she also states that I should be proud to be Greek.
(3) Yianni - Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Three

Demographics

The present interviewee Yianni is a married male born in 1942, he is 61 years of age and he currently resides in Sydney’s southwest. Yianni was born in a village called ‘Lauda’ next to the city Florina, in the north of Greece. He migrated to Australia in 1966 at the age of 25. His occupation in Greece was a fitter and soldier. He also spent many years growing up and working in Romania as a fitter after his parents migrated there when he was nine years of age to escape The Greek Civil War in 1946. Yianni became aware of migration to Australia through his friends in the army. He did not have any family in Australia when he first arrived. He initially stayed at the migrant hostel in Bonegilla, Victoria, where he then traveled up to Wollongong, NSW to work at Port Kembla, Steel Works. Yianni stated that his primary reason for migrating was ‘not so much for a better life as many others,’ but more for the ‘adventure’ of experiencing a different country.

Q. Can you tell me your initial impressions when you first arrived to Australia?

Two of the first experiences that Yianni had in Australia were a disappointment and quite a shock to him. He states that these two initial experiences in the ‘new country’ immensely contributed to his impressions of Australia. Here he makes an interesting distinction between the ‘people’ and the ‘country.’ The first experience was, being told at the Australian consulate in Greece that Australia required ‘technicians.’ They placed him down as a technician after Yianni showed them his diplomas, only to arrive here in Australia to find that his file read ‘labourer.’ The second experience, which is expressed below, he calls ‘the second incident’ — racist pamphlets, which further contributed to his initial negative impressions of Australia.

‘...huh, I expected others things and I found different things... I was working in a factory in Sydney — this is the second incident after what they did to me at Bonegilla (classed him as a worker and not as a technician) that really distanced me from this country, and even now I’ve been here for 34 years and I’ll tell you, I still haven’t put Australia in my heart — No! I go to Greece every now and then to get relief. This is not to say that the Australian people were bad to me, in fact in many circumstances they were good, especially when they see that you’re a good worker, they won’t give you a hard time. But when I first came I was living in Roseberry [NSW] and one day I was walking along the road and I saw that the road was full of pamphlets — the road was full of them! And so I pick one up and I read it, in big letters it said – ‘GREEK WOGS GO HOME!’ — what a thing! And because I was young and new in Australia and I just previously had the problem with ‘labourer’ on my papers instead of ‘technician,’ I then realized that we are not welcomed here. I still have not put this country into my heart, the people though I have put them into my heart — Australians. I have no hatred against the Australian who is ‘awake,’ who has traveled and who knows of different cultures...’
Yianni does express some of the positive aspects of Australia that did make an impression on him:

"...here there were better services than in Greece. Hot water for instance – that is a big thing to have continuous hot water in the home, in Greece it is not always like that. Also the hospitals here, the schools, the cleanliness – these are some of the things that kept us here, that dampened the ‘pain’ of migration..."

Q. Can you tell me some of the difficulties that you experienced?

As stated above, here Yianni tells the story of how he was bitterly disappointed when he reached Australia and was placed into a labourers position and not in a technical position. He states that he went to the Australian consulate in Greece, explaining that he had technician qualifications. The Australian staff said, ‘yes, we do need technicians in Australia’ and they ‘apparently’ wrote down technician on his immigration papers after he presented then with proof of his technical qualifications. He then arrived to Australia only to find out that his immigration papers stated ‘labourer.’

"...I went to the Australian consulate in Greece; I filled out some forms and told them I am a technician. They said, ‘ah! We need plenty of technicians.’ I said ‘ah good I am a technician so I’ll go to Australia.’ But the people in the consulate didn’t write that I was a technician – they didn’t want us in Australia as technicians, they wrote ‘labourer,’ simply ‘labourer,’ but they told me at the consulate! If they told me back then that ‘no in Australia you’re only going to be only a labourer,’ I wouldn’t have come – and this I found out when I arrived at Bonegilla. When I arrived at Bonegilla, I went to them and said I am a technician. The Australian man that was there said – and it was then that it hit me on the head – this man says to me ‘you’re not a technician’ and I say ‘what are you talking about, but at the consulate they told me that Australia needs technicians!’ And when I did go to the Australian consulate [in Greece] I even had a letter from a big company in Thessaloniki in Greece to work there as a technician if I wanted, and it was a good paying job. I thought I’d also be a technician in Australia and I’d have a chance to learn better English, because if you knew English and worked for this company in Thessaloniki, you would get even better money, it was a Greek-American company. And this man says to me [at Bonegilla] ‘not according to your papers here you are a labourer’ and I say ‘but how am I only a labourer, they wrote down technician, here look I’ve got my diplomas here!’ and he said ‘no, no, we don’t recognize them here.’ They brought us here just as simply workers. They sent me to the steel works at Port Kembla and I was picking up rubbish. And I could see others doing the job I knew, that the technicians were doing and I said to myself ‘look where I have ended up when I had a good job in Greece if I would have stayed.’ It really ‘cooled’ me inside when they said that I am only a worker here, that was the biggest lie, that lie changed my entire life..."

Q. Did you experience any racism when you arrived?

Yianni expresses an incident of discrimination in terms of a particular worker at the factory. Here he demonstrates how ‘ignorance’ may contribute to racism and by being ‘educated,’ this ignorance and hence racism can be minimized. He expresses another incident where despite the fact that he had diplomas as a technician, he was trying to
obtain the Australian equivalent by sitting for exams. Here he says that this is where the ‘racism’ truly showed itself:

"...I was working in [says company name] for 22 years, I remember there was an apprentice there, this man hated migrants. He finished his apprenticeship and he went to Europe. He then came back a year later and got a job at this same company as a fitter – he was a completely different person to migrants. The migrants then started to like him – because he ‘woke up,’ he went to Europe and saw different people, different life – after that they liked him! Those who have traveled are completely different…"

"…what happened was I got a job at this factory in Sydney, I wanted to sit for exams to get the Australian diploma, and it was then I realized what the ‘simple’ Australian was all about and how much racism they had towards us migrants. This man was a supervisor and a union delegate and I said to him I want to sit for exams to get my diploma, you know what he said? Which I didn’t expect from a union delegate, he says – ‘No way, you have to go three years same as all the other ones at Tech, then you can get the Australian papers.’ And I tell him ‘but I have done three years of technical school, and I have worked in major companies.’ And still during that period, the way I understood it, many people in the unions were against the migrants, the same way that many politicians wanted us as simply ‘workers.’ I remember the Whitlam government had just come in, the employment office then allowed me to sit for the exams again and I got the Australian papers…"

Here, he gives an example of how Australians would get promoted in the workplace before migrants did, even though the migrants were there longer and were more qualified:

"...I remember a case of a Greek-Egyptian man, this man was ‘leading hand’ when I started – the most professional and most experienced man who worked there but he was there for years as ‘leading hand.’ Then they would employ Australians – two to three years later, and then bang – Supervisor! Now this man wanted to become a supervisor, but no way did they make him a supervisor. And they had people as supervisors who didn’t know the job and didn’t care to, and this poor man was still ‘leading hand.’ I remember he got into an argument with them all in the office and only then with reluctance they made him a supervisor…"

Researcher: What was Bonegilla like? How were the Australian people towards the new arrivals?

"...at Bonegilla where they took us, there I saw the Australians seemed to me simple, good people. Many Greeks were complaining that they didn’t like the food – the peas, gravy, mashed potato, coleslaw, but I was the type who grew up on my own. In Romania I was in a boarding school, then I graduated, and then I lived on my own. I would eat anything. I had no problems at Bonegilla. But I understand when you come from a home where the meals a completely different from the Australian cuisine, it would be hard to eat – me I didn’t care. The Australian people there, the teachers they were very good to us. We lived in barracks, not like the army ones, they were before in the early days of migration. These were like cabins, out of fibro, one bedroom with two beds, a small living area, two would live in these. They were like small retirement cabins; it was fine. There, I didn’t feel any attitude [from the Australians] because we went straight there
from the boat. I still hadn’t come in contact with the typical Australian in society. Those Australians who worked at Bonegilla understood the migrants and knew their ‘pains’.

Q. Why did you decide to migrate?

Here Yianni explains that unlike many other Greeks who came to Australia to increase their economic condition, Yianni states he was a technician whether he was in Greece or Australia. Therefore, he thought working in Australia would give him the opportunity to ‘experience’ a different country and enrich him, as well as to work in his chosen trade. He expressed this with an almost ‘Odysseus-like spirit’ of travel and adventure:

“...I came with Deme – Greek immigration contract policy. I went to the Greek consulate in Greece and, I’m a technician, I’ve finished a fitter’s course at technical college. And I thought to go to Australia, something different, not out of any economic issues, even if I stayed in Greece I still had good work, I had just finished my national service, and I thought something different which I didn’t know much about and I wanted to ‘try’ Australia...”

Q. What do you feel you have achieved being in Australia for so many years?

In this question, Yianni makes it clear that he feels that he has achieved nothing within Australia. He further states that the government punishes the worker and rewards the lazy person by providing pension to those who did nothing to benefit the country. Here he also expresses that many were jealous of what the migrant had achieved within Australia:

“...and in the end what have we migrants achieved in this country Nikolaki, nothing. For me, I cannot see anything. The government says because you have that [assets] you’re not getting a pension even though you have sweated all your life. And that person who was lazy under the tree all day and drank like ‘Norm’ from the Life, Be In It advertisement, he’s entitled for the pension and all his life he never did anything for Australia – but they’ll give him something. Here we get punished because we have made something. Now I’m not talking about the millionaires, I’m talking about people with ‘five, ten dollar notes’ in the bank, they’re not entitled to the pension...”

Researcher: Was there anything else that you feel you achieved here, anything positive?

Here Yianni pays tribute to his wife as she sat adjacent to us, playing with her two-year-old grandson:

“...the only good thing that I found here was my wife [she smiles at us]...”

He does though take the opportunity to express what he feels Australia has gained as a nation with regards to the migrants:

“...without the migrants, Australia would have been 200 years back, 200 years back! The people who worked the hardest here were us...”
Q. What do you believe your identity is? Has it changed being in Australia for so long?

Yianni expresses how the Greek identity is strongly linked to its rich and proud past. He also states that he feels that he is Greek and will always remain so:

“...we Greeks are very much close to our history, with all our history, the old and new history – that makes you proud to be Greek. Because we Greeks, we always go with the fair, the right and honourable way...”

“...I’ve remained Greek. I was born Greek and I will die Greek. I will never say that I have become an Australian, Never. I don’t say this out of malice, it is all the situations that I went through that I do not feel proud to say that I am an Australian, finished. That pride I have in me – I have Greek blood in me, even if I was raised in Romania and spent most of my years in Australia, and even though I have spent a total of nine years in Greece, that will not change my feelings in any way. And even in Romania, there were thousands of Greek refugees and the Romanians would tell us to be proud to be Greek, to be proud of our history as a people and your situation. And because of this, I made Romania my second nation and I love Romania because it is the people that make you love the country. It is not the beauty of a country, every country has its beauty – yes there are places that I like here in Australia, but it is the people that make you love that country. And because these Romanian people told me that I should love my country, it made me want to love theirs! This is because this culture showed the Greeks sympathy...”

Q. So after what you have expressed, I presume you feel that Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ for you, so you regret migrating to Australia?

Here Yianni briefly recaps what here has already expressed above:

“...never ‘the lucky country.’ Like I said, the moment I got here it was ‘the unlucky country’ for me. I should have stayed in Greece and worked in that new company in Thesaloniki...”

Q. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you want the government to hear?

Yianni states below that he would like to see the Australian government acknowledge the fact that the Greeks did significantly contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of Australia, though he is doubtful that any formal recognition will ever be made. He also feels the need to address the Greek-Australian people with regards to the split in the Greek Orthodox Church. He says that this is a ‘big shame’ and he sincerely hopes that one day the Greek people in Australia can completely unite:

“...the only thing that I want is that the government should recognize all the Greeks that helped this country, at least to respect that. The other thing I want to say is to the Greeks – I remember when we had a protest against the Macedonians, we were 60,000 in Sydney, in Melbourne there was more of course. There we showed our strength, the strength that we have when we want to unite – in one way I’m ashamed to say this but the Greek people are separated, you know this don’t you Niko? One side is the Kinotita and...
the other side Arhipiskop; that is why sometimes I don’t want the festive days like 28 October and the 25 March to come...”

In conclusion, Yianni expresses below the importance of the present research in terms of its cathartic value:

“...this research brings out the negative feelings inside. When you hold something inside you, it chokes you; someone who is hurting inside has to tell his pain to someone. With what you are doing now, you are giving us migrants the opportunity to get out something, which has been inside, suppressed, and further, these things will be written. You say it from your heart that which you are feeling – ‘catharsis of the soul...”

(4) Sophia – Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Four

Demographics

The present interviewee Sophia is a widow born in 1933; she is 70 years of age. She currently resides in Sydney’s southwest. She was born in a village in Crete known as ‘Hania,’ and migrated to Australia in 1959 at the age of 26. Sofia’s occupation in Greece was a student and she also worked in a shop and as well as in a sewing factory. She became aware of migration to Australia through her sister who had previously migrated to Australia. Sophia initially stayed in Melbourne and then traveled up to Sydney. Her primary occupation in Sydney was a sewing machinist, making clothes and leather bags. Sophia states that the reason why she migrated to Australia was because her sister was here and ‘for a better future.’ Sophia is currently retired.

Q. Can you tell me your first impressions of Australia?

Sophia states below that she found that Australia was a beautiful and peaceful country and gives examples of some aspects that she remembers when she first arrived:

“...I liked Australia, yes I liked it a lot, very much so, nice country and quiet, very peaceful. There wasn’t any crime when I first arrived; no one was doing things like that. You would see the Australian ladies with their baskets, and their purses in them and no one would steal them. When you used to buy milk, half of it was cream — I liked it here, it was nice...”

Researcher: How did the Australian people treat you when you first arrived?

“...for me, they were very good, very good...”

Researcher: Were there any services to help the migrants when you first arrived?

“...no they didn’t help, but they didn’t do me any bad either, they didn’t help because there was no unemployment back then, there was nothing like that...”
Q. What were some of the difficulties that you experienced as a migrant in Australia?

Here Sophia explains how despite her knowing some English, she states that there was a difference between the English that she learnt and the type of English or slang that the Australians spoke:

"...I knew a little bit of English, but I learnt the English version of English. But here it was different, English and Australian English was different, ha, they are much different. But anyway, everything was fine, I went to the factory, I came on a Thursday from Melbourne and on the following Monday I had a job..."

Researcher: Where did you first work?

"...my first job was in a government factory that was near the house where I lived and that was in the city, and we were sewing sheets, pillow cases for soldiers, for the army, shirts, all the clothes for soldiers [Sofia gets up and shows me a pay-slip from a Commonwealth Clothing Factory], that was my first place of work, then I got married and then my second job was in a shoe factory where I had to glue parts of the shoe together. Then I went back into making shirts, then into ladies clothing, then into plastics, then from there I went to leather bags in Newtown. Big travel bags where you can place suits in them, and from there I never worked anywhere else..."

Researcher: Was it difficult work?

"...it was a very difficult job, yes it was okay, I mean I was handling it fine but my hands would get tired a lot, my hands hurt me a lot..."

Researcher: Were there any other migrants there?

"...yes the majority were Greek and Australian, not really any other cultures just Greek and Australians..."

Q. Can you recall any experiences of discrimination that you encountered?

Sophia recalls below that she has not experienced any form of discrimination from the Australian people. She states that in fact, the Australian people at her last place of employment were quite fond of her and the Greek people in general, and they appreciated her skills and hard work:

"...Oh, no, no, no, they loved us Greeks, yes. I remember I left to give birth to my son and after 40, no, 60 days they employed me again. And they would say to me 'why are you leaving? Why are you leaving?' and I would say 'but I have to give birth to my son' [she laughs]..."
Q. Why did you decide to migrate to Australia?

Here Sophia describes that she decided to migrate to Australia to improve her economic status. She states that post World War II Greece was in economic ruin and employment was difficult to find:

"...I came to Australia for a better life, because when we left Greece back then, Greece was in a very big mess. It was 1959 and there were no jobs, there was nothing. Greece was down because of World War II and the people didn’t have jobs. Now Greece is better than here, I think so, Greece is very good now..."

Q. Do you believe that Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you?

Sofia clearly states below that she feels that Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for her. She states once again that she likes it here in Australia very much and has no desire to go back to Greece to live:

"...Yes, I like it here and I don’t want to go back to Greece, no I don’t want go. If I do it would be just for a holiday, but to live I don’t want to. My children are here, why should I go to Greece, my parents over there have died..."

Researcher: How much do you feel that Greek migrants contributed to the development of Australia?

"...I believe that the migrants have helped Australia very, very much to develop. When I first came here there were not many different foods, just fish and chips, mashed potato, peas and carrots; that was basically it. I mean in the way of spaghetti and rice they hardly knew them. Rice wasn’t even in the restaurants. I remember we went to Moree to a restaurant that a fellow Cretan relative of mine owned. He was making a traditional Cretan meal of rice with egg white and butter, very nice, and the Australians would go there to eat this rice because they didn’t know of it, and when they tried it they liked it. Yes in my opinion the migrants developed Australia very much, because they worked hard and they bought many things, many things..."

Researcher: How do you think the government should help other migrants coming to Australia?

"...what the government provides now is good enough, but when we first came we had nothing, they gave us nothing .We did it with the one suitcase that we had, and that was it. Back then we weren’t expecting anything from the government – I knew that I was going to come here and work, I didn’t expect anything else. My sister wrote what to expect in letters before I came and I knew everything that was happening here..."

Q. What do you believe your identity is after living in Australia for so long? Has it changed at all?

Sophia tells below that she feels she is more Australian than Greek. She states that she has lived most of her life in Australia and hence has experienced more in Australia than in her birth-land. Therefore, she feels more Australian as she expresses below:
"...I feel like I’m more Australian, yes because I live here, this is where my children were born, this is where I was married, here was everything. Most of my life, I have live here in Australia, I love this place more..."

**Q.** If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you like the government to hear?

Sophia states that she would acknowledge who the Greek people are and what they have achieved, and how they contributed to the development of this nation:

"...that is a difficult question, that one. I haven’t got much to say, just that the Greeks developed a lot here. Most Greeks are good family people, good workers and achievers..."

**Q.** If you had one wish what would it be?

Here Sophia expresses her one wish, to go to heaven, suggesting like many other Greek women of her age, she practices her Greek Orthodox faith:

"...I wish that I go to heaven [she laughs], that is the best wish I think..."

(5) **Petros - Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Five**

**Demographics**

The present interviewee Petros is a married male born in 1932, he is 71 years of age. He currently resides in the Canterbury municipality of Sydney. He was born in Athens and migrated to Australia in 1955 at the age of 23. His occupation in Greece was a student and a soldier in the Greek army. Petros became aware of migration to Australia through a friend that worked in a government office in Greece. He did not have any family in Australia when he arrived. He initially stayed in Melbourne where he spent two weeks at Bonegilla, three months in Adelaide then he made his way up to Sydney. His main occupation in Sydney was business proprietor. Petros stated that his reason for migrating to Australia was to start a new future. He is currently retired.

**Q.** Can you tell me your initial impression of Australia when you first arrived?

Petros states that he liked Australia from the very first moment that he arrived, describing Australia as paradise. He states he found a big, productive nation and people that were helpful. Petros then describes some of the work that he did such as picking grapes and running a business in Sydney:

"...when I first came to Australia I thought it was paradise. I found Australia very big. I found good people, productive, the people would help you, I liked it a lot, I liked it here. When I first came, I was picking grapes; it was a factory that made wines. Then from there I went into the country – northwest of Moree, I worked there too, that is where I had
my family and that is where my children grew up. Then I came down to Sydney, I opened up my own shop, a restaurant in Sydney, and now I am retired...”

Researcher: *Was it difficult not knowing the language?*

“...the language for me was difficult for the first seven to eight months, and then I started to pick it up because I was working with Australians. And in the restaurant where I worked I had communication with the Australians. And before you knew it, days passed and you have learnt the tongue. I also was taking English lessons by the mail, correspondence – I would send them [assignments] from South Australia and they would send them back. I answer the letter and any mistakes would come back in the next letter. And I learnt English well...”

Researcher: *What was Bonegilla like?*

“...yes Bonegilla was where the army base was. These were round aluminum and fibro barracks constructed during the Second World War. There were different sections, like the Greek section, the Italian section, yes. I stayed there for two weeks, it was good, and then I worked for the wine company in Adelaide...”

Researcher: *What was it like picking grapes?*

“...easy, the truck comes in one way, you know, the tractor. We cut the grapes with scissors and throw them into the truck, and keep going ahead. You do that for six to seven hours per day. And they would ask ‘anybody wants to work Saturday, you get overtime,’ I worked some Saturdays. It was very good...”

*Q. Did you experience any discrimination?*

Petros states quite adamantly that he personally did not experience any discrimination, though he acknowledges that there may have been where others were concerned. He states in a lighthearted manner, that he would not have even understood what they would have called him to recognize that it was discriminatory in any way:

“...nothing! There may have been a little bit back then, not much. Even if they called us something we didn’t understand what they were saying [he laughs]...”

*Q. So would you consider Australia ‘the lucky country’ for you?*

Petros states that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for him. Petros required some prompting to ascertain why:

“...my country yes. I love it here...”

Researcher: *Why do you feel this way?*

“...I love this country because I’m free, I have freedom of choice, this country give[s] you opportunities you would never have in any other country I reckon Australia give a lot of opportunities, I build a big family – four kids, [I] educate my kids...”
Researcher: *Do you believe that migrants helped develop Australia?*

“...yes, very much so, very much so...”

*Q. What do you believe your identity is after living in Australia for so long?*

Here Petros does not clearly specify as to what he feels his identity is after so many years in Australia. I do however ask below what he believes the identity of his children may be. With regards to himself, he does however state that he has both countries within his heart, as he animated by slapping at his heart, and makes it clear by repeating himself that he will never forget the country of his birth:

“...because I have been here for so many years, Australia is the country for me [slaps at his heart] but I never forget the country I was born – my parents are there [in Greece], my brothers are there, sisters are there. I never forgot them but Australia is my country [slaps at his heart again]. I belong here, but I never forget the country I was born...”

Researcher: *What do you believe the identity of your children is; more Greek, or more Australian; or Greek-Australia?*

“...the identity of my children I reckon, fifty-fifty, fifty-fifty...”

Researcher: *Did the government assist the new arrivals in any way?*

“...a lot! A very a lot. They helped you buy a house back then; the [Banks] interest was all tax deductible at that time when we came. They let you bring the woman you want to marry from Greece to Australia for free – which other country does that? Does any other country do that?...”

*Q. Do you have any regrets here in Australia? What would you have done differently?*

Petros does not actually state that he has any regrets, but rather he explains that if he was to come back again, he would simply remain vigilant to opportunity and perhaps further his education. He also feels that it is important to achieve what one can, on one’s own:

“...if I was young again with what I know now, I would steer my life to opportunities of that particular day and also get more of an education, and what I do I do on my own without asking for anyone’s help and holding out your hand, even from your father, you have to make your future yourself...”

Researcher: *Where do you see the Greek culture in Australia in say another fifty years time? Do you think Greek Hellenism will survive here?*

“...ah [sighs], it will survive but it won’t be like what it is today, because it is losing, the generations are coming closer to [the] Australian way. I see my kids don’t speak Greek, and slowly, slowly from parent to child it gets lost...”
Researcher: *How do you feel about this?*

"...I'm very sad, very sad because I love my culture..."

Researcher: *Why do you think the Australian government decided to bring migrants to Australia?*

"...because Australia could not produce on its own, it did not make production – no production, no money. You have to pay for the pensioners, for the unemployment and many, many other things. Export more you get more money in..."

*Q. What are your dreams and/or goals for your future?*

Petros states that he feels he has achieved what he needed to achieve in his lifetime and feels, though not in a negative sense, that there is no future for him, or no need to create one. He is content with what he has achieved in terms of family, and his only wish is to see them healthy:

"...I've made my future, my future is finished. I've made a family; I've made grandchildren, now I look after myself, now just to live comfortable and free. I just like to see my family healthy and that is all I want..."

(6) **Andreas - Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Six**

**Demographics**

The present interviewee Andreas is a married male born in 1934; he is 69 years of age. He currently resides in the Marrickville municipality of Sydney. He was born in the Greek city known as ‘Tripolis’ and migrated to Australia in 1956 at the age of 22. His occupation in Greece was a builder and labourer. Andreas became aware of migration to Australia through advertisements in the Greek newspapers in his town, and he did not have any family in Australia when he first arrived. He initially stayed in Adelaide when he first arrived and then made his way up to Sydney. His primary occupation in Sydney was owner taxi driver. Andreas stated that his reason for migrating to Australia was for ‘an adventure.’ He is currently still working as a taxi driver.

*Q. What were you initial impressions of Australia when you first arrived?*

Andreas positively states that Australia is a country with a future and outlook. He says that the Australian people were helpful and the nation was economically healthy. He then compares the nation to Greece, providing an example of the economic hardships of the post World War II crippled European country, where it was not uncommon to find people employed and the employer not being able to afford to pay them, as he illustrates below:

"...Australia is a country which has future and outlook, and the Australian people were always good to us migrants at work and everywhere else. There was never high
unemployment in Greece, you work hard and on Friday, the [the employer] says to you, ‘I’ll bring you your pay tomorrow because I don’t have any money.’ And many times and days away you don’t get paid, but here, you work you get paid. Who ever doesn’t know of the hardships of Greece criticizes Australia. I came here and I realized it is better. And it is better! everything about Australia. In Greece, they have the habit of saying that they go out and ‘live it up,’ if you have money that is okay, but in Greece they work but they can never save because of the cost of living. Australia is much better even if this is my last resting place, I like it here.”

Q. Can you tell me some of the difficulties that you experienced?

Here Andreas recalls his own unique story from the time he arrived in Freemantle in 1956, to approximately the first few months that he was in Australia. He describes some difficulties and/or adventures that he experienced:

“...things were sometimes difficult but it was an adventure. I left Greece on a ship called ‘Skaghou.’ I left January 13, 1956 and I arrived at Freemantle [Western Australia] February 17, the same year. We stayed at Freemantle for about a day then they brought us to the upper harbour of South Australia where they were requesting grape-pickers and we gave our names and went to pick grapes. We worked there for the season and when there was no more work, we went to Adelaide. In Adelaide they gave us this job – from the front door, it was sixty-six kilometers deep into the South Australian Mountains; where they were mining a white rock – I’m not sure what they used it for. The boss came to me and said, ‘take you helmet, your job will be in the mine.’ The first time I entered the mine, I was scared because it was like I was a rat trapped. I was going inside on a small train, one train was going in and one was coming out. But when I came out of the mine I realized that my stomach was swollen – it was the acetylene (odorless and colorless gas used in metal welding, cutting and as an illuminant) in the air, I couldn’t stand it. I told the boss my stomach swelled and I’m not going in again, the acetylene. He says, ‘look this happens to everybody at first...’

Andreas then travels up to Sydney. Fellow countrymen at his last place of employment notify him that they have heard there are jobs in Sydney. He tells of his experiences in Sydney below:

“...we took the train to Sydney. I found a room in Chippendale in Edward Street and it was with Greeks and many others. I was paying 35 pounds just for bed, they were even renting out the balconies, you couldn’t find anywhere to rent, I would pay 35, and it would leave me with 5 pounds [per week]. We lived with Greeks, Maltese, anyone...”

“...I got a job at Zetland in a Jewish factory that made shoes, Jean shoes. He asks me if I have any experience, I say, ‘long time age, but I pick up’, ‘okay’ he says. they needed workers. I started work, and he says to me that I have to make 88 pairs of shoes per day. It wasn’t the whole shoe, I just made a part of it. So he comes up to me the first day, and I only made 46. The other day he comes and I had made 60. The third day he comes to me and asks, ‘what is you production? How many have you done today?’ I say ‘up to 62’ and it was only 1PM. Then he says to me, ‘look, I’m a Jew and I want production, I don’t muck around.’ When he said this to me, I had the shoes in my hand and I lifted them up to hit him over the head. I said, ‘I give you one on the head, go to hell!’ He went into the office because he thought I was going to hit him. He then brought me exactly three days
worth of pay – I worked two and a half though, but he paid me extra, he thought I was going to kill him [he laughs]...

"...I left from there and I went to the transport RTA, got some forms to get a taxi driver license. This form had 220 questions. For two days I read about the hotels, the next two days I read about the hospitals, the next day the main buildings, and learnt it – I read and I wrote, every question separately. I went to Roseberry to the transport [office] and they gave me 60 questions and I wrote 56 correctly and they said, 'you passed.' with the first. So I got my taxi license for Sydney, and as soon as I leave Roseberry RTA, I take a wrong turn, instead of going to Dulwich Hill, I ended up in Botany Bay [he laughs]...

Q. Can you recall any discrimination that you experienced?

Andreas states that he cannot say that he had experienced any discrimination. He says the Australian people were helpful and welcoming, and he even tells of an example where once he was in Greece and he actively defended Australia in conversation:

"...no the people were always good to us, they helped us, gave us a sandwich and a drink when we first arrived and said, 'you are welcome alongside us and I hope you find Australia a good prosperous country..."

"...I like Australia, but there are others who didn’t like it and talk too much. When I went to Greece, I met up with Greeks who were in Australia. You know, we were all sitting down at the table to eat, and they would talk nonsense about Australia. I would say 'I’m from Australia, those things that you are saying I write them on my shoe-sole, nonsense!' They say, 'why?' and I say 'because if you were prepared to work 10 to 15 years in Australia you would have enough money now to buy something here – you’ve done nothing there and nothing here, you are nowhere and you are talking rubbish..."

Researcher: What kind of things were they saying about Australia?

"...they would say that in Australia you work and you are left with nothing. They would say that they went to Australia and that they ‘lost’ all their years there. And I said to them, 'what do you mean you lost all your years in Australia? Here in Greece what have you done, nothing!' They say stupid things. Let them talk I thought, I found Australia very nice. I made a family, I financially set up my children here and I’ve been to Greece eight times! And to London, America, anywhere I want to go. I didn’t find any difficulties here..."

Q. Why did you migrate to Australia?

Unlike many migrants who came to Australia to improve their economic status, Andreas found it more of an adventure and a dream as he briefly states below:

"...it was a dream for us migrants who didn’t know much about other countries. I was young and I didn’t fear anything..."
Q. Do you believe Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for you?

Andreas states that he is content in Australia. He then compares Australia to the economic state of Greece at the time, believing that migrating to Australia was the right choice for him:

"...I’ve had a good adventure. I am happy that I came to Australia. I made a family, I married [off] my children – I lived in Athens for five years and I know how Greece was, I never had any problems with money because I work hard, and I am very happy to be in Australia..."

Q. What do you believe your identity is after so many years in Australia?

Andreas states that he feels he has two ethnic identities, saying that he is proud of them both. I then ask a subsidiary question below to clarify whether he still feels Greek or more Australian now. Interestingly, he differentiates between what he feels he is and what is legally recorded in terms of his citizenship:

"...I have both cultural identities. I am an Australian citizen and when I go to Greece I have a passport, and I am Greek, and I am proud to be Greek when I’m in Greece and proud to be Australian in Australia. It does not make any difference to me, to retain two nationalities..."

Researcher: Do you believe you are more Australian now or still Greek?

"...no I am Greek. I’m Greek all the way. I am written down as an Australian citizen. My children though are Australian because they were born here and don’t know much about Greece – I can’t be Australian because I was born in Greece, I’m a Greek..."

Q. What do you feel that you have achieved after all these years in Australia?

Andreas feels that he has achieved by migrating to Australia. He states that he has been successful in terms of his taxi business, furthering that his children have done fine in terms of education and career, and as well as providing him with 13 grandchildren:

"...I have had my own taxi business for many years. I have been to different places around the world. I’ve made money, made a family, were well off. Both of my sons are motor mechanics, my daughters are married, everyone is fine, and I have 13 grandchildren! The eldest is 16 years of age..."

Q. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you like the government to hear?

Here Andreas states that the Greeks were good, hard working ‘settlers.’ He then boldly states that the Greeks are worth being ‘envied’ by what they have achieved here:

"...I would like to say that the Greeks in Australia were good settlers and they worked hard and achieved, and we are worth you people being envious of us [he laughs] because
we are exceptional — I would have truly said that. I would say the best words for the Greeks because we are worth it very much and we were valuable to this country...”

(7 & 8) Theo and Irini — Greek Migrant Interviewees Number Seven and Eight

Demographics

Theo

The present interviewee Theo is a married male born in 1935, he is 68 years of age and resides in the Marrickville municipality of Sydney. Theo was born in a village near Sparta, and he migrated to Australia in 1957 at the age of 22. His occupation in Greece was farmer and soldier. Theo became aware of migration to Australia through newspapers and ‘Australian migration forms’ that were located in the village mayor’s office. He did not have any family in Australia when he first arrived. Some of his early employment in Australia included cutting sugarcane in Queensland, his primary occupation being labourer. Theo states that his reason for migrating to Australia was ‘for a better life.’ He is currently retired. Vasili is a friend of Theo’s that was visiting at the time.

Irini

The present interviewee Irini is a female born in 1940, she is 63 years of age and resides with Theo, her husband, in the Marrickville municipality of Sydney. Irini was born in the city of ‘Kalamata,’ and she migrated to Australia in 1959 at the age of 19. Her occupation in Greece was farmer and sewing machinist. Irini became aware of migration to Australia through friends and newspapers, and she did not have any family in Australia when she first arrived. Her main occupation in Australia was sewing machinist and homemaker. Irini says that her reason for migrating to Australia was because, and she states, ‘Greece was in ashes after the war.’ She too is currently retired.

Q. What were your initial impressions of Australia when you first arrived?

Theo’s first impressions of Australia include descriptions of some of his early memories that he experienced, such as cutting sugarcane and difficulties associated with not knowing English. He states that initially he did not like Australia:

“...when we arrived in 1957, at the start for a year, to tell you the truth I didn’t like it. I was only here for four months and we were once at a Greek dance, remember Vasili [Vasili nods] there was about 10 of us and there we all decided to go as workers to the sugarcane farms up at Queensland. We stayed for about a month there then we went to Cairns. We were making 2 Liras per day, and when the season stopped, we all came back to Sydney...”
Researcher: *What was it like cutting cane?*

"...we were cutting it with big knives, and then we’d cart piles of them onto trucks and they would take them to the machines [in the factory]. First they’d burn the plantation to get rid of all the leaves, the snakes and other things, and the next day we’d cut...now they don’t do that, now there’s machines to do it, back then it was with the hands, it was hard, very hard..."

Researcher: *Was it difficult not knowing English?*

"...of course, do you think even now after twenty years that we know the tongue? Now we have learned a bit and have gotten used to it, but back then it was very hard..."

Q. *Irirni, how did you find Australia when you first arrived?*

Irirni states below that she initially did like Australia when she first arrived:

"...I found Australia nice; I didn’t see her as bad at all for me anyway..."

Q. *Why did you migrate to Australia?*

Theo states the usual clichéd response that many migrants initially give. With prompting, Theo reveals that he had a five-year plan in Australia, which he then hoped to return back to his homeland. Irirni agrees, she states that her reason for migrating was because Greece was in ‘ashes,’ and she wished to ‘better’ her condition:

Theo: "...we came for a better life [laughs]..."

Researcher: "...for a better life?"

Theo: "...so we can retire and leave again. Our plans were for five years here and to leave again and we ended up staying here..."

Irirni: "...we came to Australia to establish ourselves, we were young. We left from our home country because it was in ashes after the war, so we came to better ourselves..."

Q. *What were some of the difficulties that you experienced?*

Here Irirni give examples of some of the hardships she initially experienced such as from sharing a room for years with other migrants until they could afford a house, to difficulties with the language when she went shopping. Interestingly, she then compares her difficulties to the difficulties she imagines that the Australians would have experienced if they were to migrate to Greece:

Irirni: "...I’ll tell you, we had worries, we sometimes had big troubles. We didn’t have a house, we didn’t know the tongue, we had nothing. Not even how to write, we didn’t have a skill or trade, each migrant knew a little bit of something, not much. We did suffer. It was difficult when we first came and we didn’t have houses and we would..."
bunch up in one room for about four to five years until we could save up to buy a house. And do you know what it’s like to have to go shopping and you don’t know what to say? I would point at the apples but I didn’t know how to ask for the amount I wanted...”

Theo: “...[speaks to Irini], tell them about the time at the butcher in Erskenville (Sydney), that time with the butcher...”

Irini: “...I was asking for a shoulder of lamb and I didn’t know how to say it, but I knew how to say the word lamb, and so I said ‘one lamb.’ So the butcher goes in the back and comes back with an entire lamb on his shoulder and drops it onto the counter...”

Theo, Vasili and Researcher: “...[laughter]...”

Irini: “...no, no, I was trying to say shaking my head – it was the second or third day that I was in Australia...yes it was difficult for us but imagine what we would have done to the Australians! It was much easier for us...”

Q. Do you all believe that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for you?

Here, all three interviewees agree that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for them, but they all express some doubts as to how long they feel Australia will remain so:

Irini: “...it still is, I don’t know for how long it will be, but it still is...”

Researcher: Theo, do you believe that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for you?

“The...Australia? Yes now it is but I don’t know for later though, I don’t know what will happen in another twenty years time...”

Q. What were some of the bad things with regards to migration?

With regards to this question, all three interviewees seemed to have a degree of difficulty answering it. After a considerable pause, Theo was the only one who stated quite succinctly that the most difficult aspect of his migration was the isolation:

Theo: “...the loneliness, no friends, no family, it was very lonely...”

Researcher: How much do you believe that migrants contributed to Australia’s development?

Theo: “...Huh! [Turns to Vasili] How was Sydney when we first arrived Vasili, remember?...”

Vasili: “...I never saw any buildings that were higher than two floors. The new Australians built all the high rise buildings you see now...”

Theo: “...Italians, Greeks and the Yugoslavians!...”
Q. What do you believe your identity is after so many years in Australia?

When answering this question, the interviewees, especially Theo, seemed to initially identify with being completely Greek. It was only after asking the subsidiary questions that all three interviewees acknowledged the fact that part of their identities is Australian. Interestingly, Irini makes a distinction between identity and loyalty, admitting that yes, part of her identity may be Australian but she points to her heart stating that ‘within’ she will always be Greek:

Theo: “...of course I’m a Greek...”

Researcher: Do feel fully Greek or Greek-Australian, or more Australian than Greek?

Theo: “...now we have to take from the two. I do feel I’m Greek but there is a little bit of Australian in me...”

Researcher: Irini, what do you believe your identity is?

“...no I’m not in anyway a full Australian, but now I can’t say that I am much more of a Greek, because I have lived 42 years in Australia and 22 years in Greece. But we might be in Australia, but in here [points to her heart], in here we are Greek...”

Q. Do you have any regrets here? What would you have done differently?

Here Theo states that they would have attempted running a business if they were to migrate again. Irini states that she always wanted to learn how to drive, and all three interviewees agreed that they would have put more effort into learning English considerably better than they originally did. Irini does outline some of the hardships and expectations that migrant women are subjected to, expressing that even if she did want to do much more, she would not have the time with all that was expected of her:

Theo: “...I would have opened up a business and made more money...”

Irina: “...now if I was to come here again, I would go to driving school to learn how to drive, which I did want to do when I first came. The other thing I would have done is to learn the language, these two things – I couldn’t do anything else above this. We came to a new country, we got married straight away without a house, then we started a home and family, work, and we couldn’t do much else...”

Vasili: “...yes the language is important. I remember we went to English classes in Newtown, there was about twenty of us. The teacher started to talk, talk, talk; no one knew what he was saying or what he was writing. He was supposed to tell us – ‘this thing is called [picks up a cup of coffee] a cup of coffee,’ for example, then he should write it, then we should write it, so we can learn things one by one. But he would talk, talk, talk; then he’d say, ‘okay?’ And we’d all say, ‘okay.’ I’d leave, go home and the wife would ask, ‘what did you learn?’ I’d say ‘nothing...’”

Theo, Irini and Researcher: “...[laughter]...”
Q. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow Greeks? What would you want the government to hear?

The interviewees agreed that the present government should know that the early Greeks were ‘good Greeks’ i.e. they had no convictions, health issues or even deviant political ideologies. As a subsidiary question, I asked the migrants what they generally knew about Australia before they migrated here. It took some convincing for me to conceptualize the fact that all three interviewees stated that they were actually not aware that Australia existed as a continent and a nation - quite literally as a landmass south of the equator, until they decided to migrate here in the 1950’s as they express below:

Vasili: “...we’ve been good in Australia; here they brought the good Greeks, not dirty punks...”

Irini: “...they brought all the good Greeks here. All your papers had to be clean; you had to be a good person...”

Taso: “...they passed us through three to four doctors. Your papers had to go through the police, whether you’re communist, whether you have been charged with anything – everything clean...”

Researcher: What did you know about Australia before you arrived?

Vasili: “...we never heard of Australia, ever...”

Theo: “...nowhere did we hear about this land...”

Researcher: You were honestly not aware that this country existed before it was requesting migrants?

Theo: “...that is right, never heard of this land, no one did...”

Vasili: “...only when I became a soldier, I heard some talking that they were thinking of going to Australia...”

Theo: “...yes, and it [Australia] is as big as all of Europe!...”

Researcher: You never learnt about Australia through geography at school?

Irini: “...no, it wasn’t even on the map...”

Vasili: “...Niko, the schools back then in Greece were very simple and we learnt only about Greece, nothing else, and we didn’t have any books. We’d cart around logs of wood so we can start the fire and warm up in class [he laughs]. I had one exercise book for the whole year, and when my father would kill a pig, I’d collect the fat because my father couldn’t afford to buy me ink. And I’d mix it [the fat] in with the remaining ink, and on the cold days at school it would freeze and I couldn’t write...”

Irini, Vasili and Researcher: “...[laughter]...”
(9) Michalis - Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Nine

Demographics

The present interviewee Michalis is a married male born in 1908; he is 94 years of age and currently resides in a Greek Orthodox nursing home in the Canterbury municipality of Sydney. Michalis was born on the island of Samos and he migrated to Australia in 1948, he was 40 years of age. His occupation in Greece was high-school teacher. Michalis first became aware of migration to Australia through village friends and through newspapers. Michalis states that he decided to migrate to Australia to help his family back in Greece who were experiencing post war poverty. Michalis presents as a unique case with regards to the reasons why he decided to migrate. He disclosed that another factor that motivated him to come to Australia was to find his father who had abandoned his mother, pregnant with Michalis at the time. Michalis initially stayed in Sydney when he first arrived and then he made his way to Madura, Western Australia. His main occupation in Australia was business proprietor.

Q. What were your initial impressions of Australia when you first arrived?

Michalis states that he did like Australia when he first arrived but outlines some of the general difficulties that he and other early migrants experienced. He also expresses some of the values that he feels represents the Greek culture and how those values seem to be changing:

"...I like Australia very much, very much so. For me, first of all Australia was an unknown country, I didn’t know of her; but I knew this country was developing and that many came here and it developed, they worked a lot, a lot, and in difficult circumstances. Life was difficult back then because there weren’t many jobs, money was short, they suffered very much but even so they [the Greeks] had belief, they believed in their country, they believed in their religion, they believed in themselves, and they achieved..."

Researcher: Did you know any English when you first arrived?

"...no, I didn’t know any at all. Because one bad thing we had in Greece was that in school we were taught French and Latin. What business did we have learning these languages? They should have taught us English from young because everyone speaks English, most people do and I didn’t know a single word. I had a shop and 10 people working for me and I didn’t know a single word they were saying. So a friend of mine would bring some books to the shop so I could learn a few words. It was a big difficulty, very big, the tongue is very important..."

Researcher: What were some of the good things about migrating to Australia?

"...life here was completely different, their culture [the Australian] was completely different, and in many cases much better. We learnt two cultures and we live better than they do back in Greece..."
Researher: Do you believe that migrants significantly contributed to the development of Australia?

"...of course! Of course! Not just the Greeks but all the migrants. I can’t remember his name – the Australian Prime Minister who decided to bring migrants here after the war – big mind, very intelligent, because this country needed hands to work and develop it. And the migrants are the ones who did so – the migrants played a key role in the development of Australia..."

Q. Why did you migrate to Australia?

Interestingly, Michalis presents a couple of reasons as to why he decided to migrate to Australia. Firstly he states that Greece was in post-war poverty and he had to find a means to support his family, and secondly, he then discloses with a degree of hesitation that he was latently searching for his father who had abandoned his mother pregnant with Michalis:

"...I was married with two children when I left my home-country, I left them there. And I left only because I wanted to change my life. Because after the war there was a lot of poverty and suffering in Greece – there was no future for my family or me. One by one people were starting to leave – my island had 12,000 people living there and it ended up with 2,000, everyone was leaving, where were they going? To Australia; so I too came to Australia. That was my reason, I was forced to leave and come here in the hope that I can further benefit my family, and when I came here I entered into more difficulties..."

"...my father was here first – I can’t say much about my family situation [pauses] no I can tell you it all but [pauses] my father came here and left me unborn, he left me unborn in Greece, do you understand what that means? He left my mother pregnant, he left and came here. He stayed in Western Australia, in Albany. And I came here 40 years of age, married with two children and I saw him for the first time – and he gave me no regard, there is a lot involved, you understand? That is another reason why, as well as the war that I came here – I thought I could reason with him, but I did not succeed, it just cost me a lot of money..."

Q. What did you achieve here in Australia?

Michalis states that he did exceptionally well economically in Madura, purchasing businesses and houses, but he experienced some ‘bad luck,’ which he did not want to expand upon. He stated that this bad luck resulted in him losing his fortune and ending up in a nursing home, and stresses the point that it was by no carelessness or poor judgement on his part. Despite this misfortune, Michalis seems to be positive with his current circumstances as he expresses below:

"...in Madura I established myself economically, I did well, I achieved, with my children and with my wife. After we left Madura and went to Sydney, I felt good in Sydney. With the money I had, I bought shops, houses, but I found bad luck for various reasons that I do not want to say, understand? I found bad luck and became poor, without my doing, without my fault. Not because of my stupidity, but because of my good nature and trustworthiness, and I was forced into this old people’s home. But here, this is my second..."
church, we are looked after here – it’s like I’m in my own home and my children visit, I am happy...”

Q. Do you have any regrets? What would you have done differently if you were to come here again?

Here Michalis states that if he was to come to Australia again, he would generally do things differently, but he makes it clear that he does not regret migrating to Australia. He says that he believes Australia is ‘the best place in the world:

“...Huh [laughs], that is a very difficult question. If I knew back then what I know now, and if I had now what I had then, I would have been completely different. But I still would have come to Australia, for sure, it’s the best place in the world – here it is the best, you hear every day the troubles in other parts of the world ‘fires’ everywhere, ‘fires’...”

Q. Do you believe that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for you?

Michalis does believe that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for him, but he states that he is not to sure if it will remain so for his children and grandchildren. Some of the reasons why he generally believes Australia is ‘the lucky country’ is because he states there is equality and opportunity for all types of people:

“...it was lucky and it still is! But I don’t know if it will be ‘lucky’ for my children and grandchildren because I can see difficult times ahead. This country has been lucky for me, doesn’t matter that I ended up in an old people’s home, don’t look at me now, I was rich once. But this country has a future, and for everybody, not just for one type of people. Everyone [migrants] was saying, ‘Australia! Australia! The only place where you are equal and you can make it’ – and it was, for everyone...”

Q. What do you feel your identity is after living in Australia for so long?

Interestingly, Michalis makes a distinction or perhaps a contradiction, between what one feels they are and what one is inside. He does state though that his identity consists of two cultures, but he clearly states that he is Greek within, as he almost poetically describes:

“...I feel that I am both – I feel that I am an Australia but inside I am Greek. I can’t take that out because that is where my roots are – that is where I was born, that is where I was educated. That is where I became a Christian; that is where I grew up, that is where my mother and fathers bones lie – my identity is there, it’s inside me and I cannot take that out...”

Q. If you went to Greek festival and was given the microphone, what would you say on behalf of your fellow Greeks, what would you like the government to hear?
Michalis acknowledges the achievements that the Greek culture has had on the development of Australia, and states that the Greeks in Australia hold onto wholesome values, have a good name and always strives to achieve:

"...I would say that the Greeks played a huge role in the development of Australia, from the old days. As Greeks, we should be proud that we were good for Australia, the Greek family, the Greek name is recognized as good everywhere, but we are divided. If we were not divided, we would be even better. If we were together, we would produce miracles. And the government themselves says good things about the Greeks. The first Greek Church in Australia, Ayia Triada in Surrey Hills, Sydney, recently celebrated its 100 years, with Bob Carr present and other politicians – the Greek name always goes up, never down... "

Q. If you had one wish what would it be?

Michalis’ only wish is to travel to Greece one more time but fears that he may be too frail to do so:

"...I have been to Greece five times for trips, I would like to go to Greece one more time but I am too old, and I am scared to go. I don’t know if the doctors will let me, so I can go back to the soil that gave me birth, my country where I grew up, was educated – but this all depends, we’ll see...”

(10) Taso – Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Ten

Demographics

The present interviewee Taso is a married male born in 1928, he is 75 years of age and he currently resides in Sydney’s east. Taso was born in a village known as Agios Theodoros, southern Greece. He migrated to Australia in 1955 at the age of 27. His occupation in Greece was a farmer and a soldier. Taso became aware of migration through newspapers and through the forms that were distributed through the village. He did not have any family in Australia when he first arrived. He initially stayed at the migrant hostel in Bonegilla and then made his way up to Sydney. His main occupation in Australia was working on trains and various other factories and labouring jobs. Taso stated that this primary reason for migrating to Australia was to find good paying work. He is currently retired.

Q. What were your first initial impressions of Australia?

Taso opens his conversation by stating that most Greek migrants initially did not plan to stay in Australia indefinitely, but rather to work for awhile, save some money and then return to Greece. Below Taso also describes some of his early experiences within Australia, particularly with regards to his stay at the migrant camp at Bonegilla:

"...about ninety percent of us when we first arrived were not wanting to stay too long, just work a bit and then go back to Greece..."
“...it took about 31 to 32 days to come [to Australia], we passed through some formalities, then from there they took us to Bonegilla. They put us into big rooms [Bonegilla] made of fibro, two bedrooms inside. And we would go with our can and line up to get food in the morning, lunch and evening. We stayed there 16 days. This place was for soldiers, [Bonegilla] it used to be an army base for the Second World War. It wasn’t just us there, we [Greeks] were in block 10, there were Italians, Germans, every country was in its own block by block. There were lots [of blocks]. They had us all separated. I remember there was a lake near by where we would bathe, I remember that the Greeks would bathe in their underwear [he laughs] we didn’t have swimmers, the Germans next to us had swimmers – we were from villages. There was a Greek man there that could speak English, they had their officers in one of the buildings, and they would call us up and they would ask us what job we did in Greece. From these questions they would give everyone of us a job. Others went to Tasmania to the mines; others went to the cane-fields in Queensland...”

Q. What were some of the difficulties that you experienced?

Taso below provides a rich variety of difficult experiences that he and fellow countrymen initially encountered in Australia. He describes some of the harsh conditions that the new arrivals were subjected to in the remote rural setting of outback Australia, and even in the city of Sydney. Taso then gives an example as how difficult it was not knowing the English language:

“...yes it was difficult at the start until we established ourselves...”

“...back in those days, whatever work the Australians didn’t want to do, they sent us [migrants] to do it. Australians were not doing this type of work – that is why they brought us over. And we signed that we have to stay for two years in the job that they give us. When I was in Athens, passing through doctors to come to Australia, there were pictures of the hotels that we were going to stay in when we arrive [in Australia]. What hotels?? Where hotels?? They sent me and some other Greeks to a town called ‘Maroula’ [after Canberra] to work on some [railway] lines, but we were far from the main town. They gave us each a piece of rope, a sack which we filled with hay, and that’s what we slept on – that was the beautiful hotels. There were no showers – we cooked on an open fire, the toilet was a hole in the ground, and the rats would come at night and eat our bread. We also didn’t have any money at one stage. Do you know what it is like to be in the cold bush and every night there is frost? We ate bread and tea for 15 days...”

“...we caught the train to Sydney because we heard there was a Greek Church there and it was Greek Easter, there were four of us. But we didn’t know where the church was, we were walking around Central and we couldn’t find it, we got lost and we didn’t know the language. We walked up through Oxford Street, and I remember finding a milk-bar that was Greek. We had a coffee, the owner gave us directions and we went again. But we couldn’t see the church anywhere. Now the time was about 8.30, 9PM, where were we going to sleep? It was getting dark. So we went to the hotels where they sell beer, the hotels were full of Australians drinking – but we couldn’t speak the language. There, where we were walking, were two kids talking Greek, they were playing. So I went up to one of them and said, ‘please, could you help us by going into the hotel and explaining to the barman that we need accommodation for the night, we’ve got no where to sleep.’ The
child stated, ‘Ah no, they give no notice, the Greeks sleep in Hyde Park’ [Taso laughs]. Ah well, so we spent the night in Hyde Park, next to the clock so we can see the time...”

Q. Why did you decide to migrate to Australia?

Taso states that the primary reason why he came to Australia was to live a better life, as he states he believes that many Greeks did so for the same general reason. He also states that after he completed his army training, he saw the world differently and realized that the village did not present many opportunities for him:

“...we didn’t have money, if we did we wouldn’t have come to Australia. After I returned to my village from completing national service, I stayed for six months in the village; there was no life and no work. When you come back from being a soldier, you see things differently, because you have seen more of life...but I came to live better, not only me but all the Greeks who came here, because there were no jobs in Greece...”

Q. Do you feel that Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you?

Taso states that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for him. He provides a comparison to the political and economic condition of Greece during the Second World War and post Second World War, providing considerable insight as to why he feels Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for him:

“...look for me, I was born in 1928, I remember from 1940 and beyond, the war came, then came the hunger and poverty, the lice – I experienced all these. The war then ended, the Germans left, then the Civil War started, I was 16, 17 years old. They came [the Greek Army] and gave us guns, and then the butchering started. Then after this I joined the army for 34 months – I never saw one good day in my home country, only wars and hunger, understand? So Australia is very lucky for me...”

Researcher: Do you remember much of the wars?

“...I remember a lot from the war. The biggest mistake that we [Greeks] did was to start an uprising [against the Germans], the Andartiko. The Andartiko didn’t do good for us Greeks, maybe it did good for the Americans and the English. And because of this Andartiko, we would attack the Germans, and the Germans would attack villages and kill innocent people that were not Andartes [freedom fighters] – in one village they killed a thousand. The Andartes there killed 10 Germans, the Germans came to this village, dragged people out of their houses, lined them up on the wall and ‘grrrrrrrrrr,’ machine guns, cleaned them all up. Understand? They would also burn our villages, I remember. In another village again, a German was killed, the Germans then killed 60 I remember at Agrinio. If we didn’t harm the Germans, they would not harm us, but because we were attacking them, they would attack us. We simply didn’t have the resources to fight two countries, Italy and Germany, us? We were only 9 million people, a poor country, we had no airforce, and they had everything, tanks, and airplanes; what ever you wanted. How could we put it up with 100 million Germans and Italians?”
Q. What do you feel you identity is after living in Australia for so many years?

Taso makes it clear that he feels that his identity is Greek despite living in Australia for so many years and despite having Australian citizenship:

"...I am a Greek for sure, I don’t say that I’m otherwise, I’m an Orthodox Greek, but I am an Australian citizen, if I wasn’t I wouldn’t be able to get the pension, understand?"

Q. What do you feel you have achieved in Australia?

Taso states that one of the aspects that he achieved was his home. He also states that he also managed to purchase a block of land in the city of Athens:

"...in 1959 I bought this house, 4000 Liras. I thought I’d work to pay off the house, save some money and then go back to Greece. I went back to Greece in 1974. I bought a block in Athens so I can live there. I came back, then I waited for my son to finish high-school, then he went to university, then he got married, then grandchildren arrived, and then I decided not to go. If my family is here why should I go? First of all, we would be the foreigners if we go back..."

Q. Do you have any regrets here in Australia? What would you do if you were to come here again knowing what you know now?

Taso stated that if he were to migrate again, he would open up his own shop in Athens with the money that he earned whilst working in Australia. Taso then provides some interesting insight into the unfortunate and unjust social and economic system that is (or was) prevalent in Greece, and which made it increasingly difficult for its people to economically establish themselves. This may have also contributed to the reasons why many did eventually migrate to a nation that provided them with more just opportunities:

"...maybe open up a shop. I did want to save up some money and then go back to Greece but not to work, me or my children. To get a job there you have to have connections, understand? If you don’t have someone to get you in you can’t get a job – that is how the system is. And with the political parties also, whichever party is ruling and what you believe in will also affect your chances. If ‘Pasok’ is ruling, you have to be Pasok, if ‘New Democracy’ is in power, you have to be ‘New Democracy.’ I don’t like those things – that is why I don’t like my home country that much. Each political party that is in charge should not know what you believe, if you are good for the job you should be entitled to it, if you’re not you shouldn’t be, understand? Say for instance that you are a communist, okay fine, are you hurting anyone? No, if you do, then you should be punished. Believe whatever you want! Isn’t that right? That’s why I wanted to go back with money so I or my kids don’t have to ‘kiss feet’ to get a job..."

Q. If you were given the microphone at a Greek festival, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you want the government to hear?

Taso stated that he would express his happiness towards his fellow Greek-Australians regarding their achievements in the new country. Taso then states that not all
Greeks did achieve in Australia and gives an unfortunate example of his friend George who was part of his group of friends when they first migrated to Australia:

"...I didn't want to see the Greeks as young new people end up on the streets. I am happy to see Greeks achieve here, understand? Not to be on the footpath. Not just the Greeks but everyone, no matter the nationality, we're all people. We left mothers and fathers, home and country, and I didn't want to see not one Greek not achieving. I didn't want to see them in the cafes all day playing cards, or horses, or at clubs because there is opportunity here, many Greeks did achieve here. But then again, many ended up in a worse situation. I knew many, they fell to playing cards, horses, and they died in the streets. I remember one friend that we used to live together when we first arrived, his name was George, he was an Athenian. He was a good kid, young, 24 years of age, I saw him ten years later in the city with a beard, unwashed, and I didn't recognize him. As soon as he saw me he recognized me. He says, 'Taso how are you?' I recognized his voice, I asked him, 'Why are you like that George?' He says, 'the horses and cafe cards ate me up.' Two years later he was dead. He wasn't married, he had nothing. That's what I didn't want to see. Because when we came here, we had to come with purpose..."

(11) Betty - Greek Migrant Interviewee Number Eleven

Demographics

The present interviewee Betty is a 56-year-old female psychologist/social worker born in 1945 and who migrated to Australia in 1954 with her mother when she was nine. Betty and her parents come from the island of Chios. Betty states that one of the reasons why her parents decided to migrate was for better work opportunities and in order for the family unit not to be separate, as her father was a merchant seaman in Greece and would be away for long periods of time. For many years, Betty has been actively involved in lobbying for social reform with regards to multiculturalism, disability, rights for the child, the rights for women, indigenous peoples and in many other areas. Betty had a working relationship alongside many politicians, especially in the Whitlam Labor government, and particularly with the immigration minister of the time Al Grassby, during the historic days of the monumental changes implemented by this government towards the rights of the migrant. The interview with Betty below, unlike most of the other interviews above, provides a deeper historical, political and social understanding of the migrant condition, and illustrates with many rich examples the difficulties and discriminations that many migrants were experiencing in the early days of assimilation:

Q. Can you describe some of your early migration experiences? What were your initial impressions of Australia?

Below Betty provides some of her early migration experiences and the distinct differences of village life as compared to urban life. She provides examples of how many of the early Greek migrant families would rent a single room in a house in order to save money to purchase their own home. Betty also gives example of some of the cultural foods that the early migrants brought with them:
...I came here in 1954, April 1954, and we came by ship because the planes that were bringing the migrants at that time was really expensive. We were sponsored by my uncle who was here before the war, he was as merchant seaman with the Greek ships, and so he was married to an Australian, Anglo-Australian and he was living here, so he nominated us and we came. We were assisted by the interchurch council at that time, we were not sponsored by Greece with ‘Deme’ so we had to pay a lot of money – I think it was 700 pounds at that time and my parents had to pay it off. So I was nine years old at the time, I had no choice in migrating because my parents were making the decisions – I’m glad they did [she laughs]. What I remember is we came from a little village from the island of ‘Chios’, ‘Viki’ that’s the village, so we really hadn’t been in an urban environment, so it was very strange....”

...and when we arrived here, we were lucky because my uncle was here, so he had a house, a big house in Glebe that’s now an art school. Very big house, must have been one of those old terrace-houses for well off people because it had jails underneath. It had stables, it had a summer, and we really explored it being children, beautiful house, two story with verandahs all around. At that time there was the wave of migration, so the house was so huge, 14 rooms, and my mother said to my uncle ‘look there are some people who want to rent some rooms, why don’t you rent some?’ So they did, we had about 10, 12 families living in the house. And I remember that every morning I had to take six little children to school, and at that time there were trams, so I had to get them in the trams and pick them up in the afternoon because I was the eldest...”

...every weekend everyone would pool food and drink, and we had a really big room this house – it must have been a ballroom or something because it had two folding doors and it opened up and became a huge room, practically the whole length of the house. I used to put on the music and dance and have a good time – this was the only socialization for some of them. You know because of money, they needed to save money to buy their houses or to send [money] back home or to pay off debt and so on, so it was nice. We even had weddings there; some of them got married...”

Q. Can you recall some of the difficulties that you and/or your parents experienced here in Australia?

Betty below provides many examples of the difficulties that the early Greek migrants experienced. Such as the harsh, discriminatory and dangerous, low paying dirty, menial working conditions, the difficulties of not knowing English – for example, with regards to health, many migrants were either wrongly diagnosed or were prescribed medication that was incorrect. Betty also describes how difficult it was for her as the ‘the second generation’ and being a ‘young interpreter’ for her parents and for other Greek migrants with regards to legal cases, social security and medical cases. She also provides insight into mental health and the migrant, as well as the difficulties and problems in communication and the clash of culture that the second-generation experience with their migrant parents. She explores what it was like to be a ‘shop-child,’ and some ways that the Greek migrant would leisure and cope with the ‘culture-shock’:

...I had to help my mother a lot, because my mother was in a factory, she was working at a biscuit factory, and my father was working at a timber yard in Pyrmont and it was very hard work. So I had to do the housework and my brothers had to help as well. And then
when she [mother] came home, she was very tired. At the factory, they had to pack biscuits in tins, and at that time they were packing the biscuits for the Olympic Games in Melbourne, so they had huge orders to complete. But see what happened was that the machines were so quick, very fast and they couldn't cope with it, and the biscuits were falling down, and they, these four ladies [floor managers], [one of them] she was really a tyrant and she used to smash their hands and abuse them. My mother came home and she was really crying all the time. And you know the biscuits with the pink marshmallow? They had to do with their hands [notions kneading with her hands] seven cauldrons every day, so her hands used to be swollen...”

“...and the other thing was there were no interpreters in the hospitals, in the immigration officers anywhere, because they believed that the migrants will come here and assimilate – you know, they put them through a machine, they are stamped and boom they become Australian products [she laughs]. That was a very wrong concept, so the government didn’t really provide any services at all, just dumped the people in there, it was up to us, the kids that learnt English quickly. And I remember I was an interpreter for everything, legal cases, insurance, and doctors. My mother was sort of a mother to some of the girls [that lived in the house] and when they go pregnant and they didn’t know what to do, and when they had to go to the hospital and everything, I was the interpreter all the time [she laughs]. And a lot of times I didn’t know the terms, and I’d think ‘Oh dear what does that mean? The water broke?’ And I had to help because there were not interpreting services and these people needed help...”

“...I remember a 10 [year old] – a little boy had to tell his father that he had only three months to live because he had terminal cancer, can you believe that?? I can’t believe it, [she rubs her forearms and says in Greek – ‘I’ve got goose-bumps!’]. I said [to the doctor] ‘how could you tell the kid to tell that to his father??’ That reflects the professions concept and understanding. That is [also the same] with teachers and other professionals. That’s why it was important for them to do cross-cultural training! I used to liaise with Callen Park [psychiatric hospital]. Some [migrant] people were wrongly put into the hospital – if they were lucky enough for someone to go around, they just remained there because they couldn’t speak the language...”

“...our shop [in Redfern] was a very good education; that was the other way that we learnt about people, because it was in the crossroads. Most of the light industry and manufacturing was there and the bus stop was right outside the shop, and the station [Redfern] was behind, most of the workers would pass by the shop. And also we had Greek newspapers – we were the only shop that had Greek newspapers and sweets, so for the Greeks, if you needed to find out anything about the Greeks, you go to the ‘Chios milk-bar.’ The people came asking for help – you don’t refuse them, anybody no matter what they are. So it became know if you need anything, you went to the [Says surname] milk-bar – it was another avenue, it was like a welfare centre, unwillingly we were drawn into that situation, you know to find people employment, housing and so forth...”

“...at Redfern there used to be the ‘Lawson Theatre’ there. The Lawson Theatre was the only Greek theatre, after the one on Paddington, the one the Greek community bought – this was bought by Greeks and the same Greeks bought the Lawson Theatre. These two theatres is where Greek films were shown, so I remember hundreds of people would see the films because they didn’t have televisions at that time. They would go after church – this was one ground where they went to meet, see the films and remember Greece, and do with their ‘home-sicknesses’ [she laughs], and the other thing was the dances. The dances
played a major role in socialization and also cushioning the ‘culture-shock’ of the migrants...”

“...I’m glad my parents maintained the rule that you know, for us to speak Greek at home because otherwise and it happens that children don’t learn Greek well enough and parents can’t speak English, and there’s no communication. And there still is no communication – in-depth communication is lost, because your mother tongue is embedded in you and it’s the language of the emotions. I found when I became a welfare worker and I was mediating between the young people and the parents, they just couldn’t communicate, you know, to tell each other how they felt – it was so sad...”

Researcher: The way you describe it, it’s almost like this wall between them.

“...During the adolescent years when they are trying to find their own identity, that’s when most of the crisis points arose. You know, the rebellion, they were courting, stealing, drugs, you know. And because at that time I was the only Greek speaking welfare worker, I used to get calls from the courts, doctors and hospitals to intervene and I did. Huh, I spent so much time at the children’s court, and family law courts because at that time too there were no bilingual people – when I graduated from university, I suppose I was the only Greek speaking psychologist besides my tutor. So what was happening was that you had an Anglo social worker dealing with the situation, they had very limited knowledge about cultural values in Greek and other ethnic communities. These were some of the migration traumas that the people went through...”

“...there was a social education project and I was one of the advisors, this was done in Melbourne. So they were asking children to say ‘how they felt on being Greek in Australia?’ There were some very interesting examples. One of them that really stuck in my mind that I still remember is this little seven year old girl, she had drawn a picket; you know a gate and picket. She marked the middle picket, and on one side she had the Australian flag and on the other she had the Greek flag. And she said – she was asked to explain, she said, ‘when she leaves home and reaches the middle picket, she stops being Greek, she become Australian, and when she leaves school [and comes home] that picket again [she] becomes Greek.’

“...we had problems with some of the Greek girls, you know, they got into trouble and they were ostracized by their parents, and they were forced to give their children up for adoption because they didn’t have any assistance. And that’s another thing with our communities, we have to try and educate our communities, you know – I mean what’s the point of getting your daughter out of the house because she got into trouble?! So where do they go, the girls?? They have to go somewhere. So the family, you know, the ‘honour of the family,’ and ‘we’re going to be ashamed’ and I said, ‘it doesn’t matter, do you love your daughter?’ ‘Yes,’ ‘we’ll if you love your daughter, you try to help her out now that she has trouble,’ ‘ah yes, but what will the people say?’ ‘Don’t care about what the people are going to say!’ ‘no I don’t want her in my house because she is going to corrupt the other girls,’ I said ‘well I think you are doing the wrong thing, I can’t make your decisions, but as a Greek I think you are wrong because your daughter will go out into the streets,’ ‘I don’t care, I don’t want her here!’...”
Q. Can you recall any instances of discrimination?

Betty provides many examples of discrimination that she experienced in school and highlights the serious lack of cross-cultural understanding at the time. She also shows how she was disadvantaged and discriminated against when she went to university and applied for work:

"...after two or three years my parents bought a milk-bar in Redfern (NSW), so I went to school, the local school, Glebe Public, with my brothers and the other kids. But what happened was that, well, there was a lot of discrimination and racism. I mean at school we were called all names, and all the migrant girls, because it was a girl school, used to sit together for support. We were not allowed to speak our language so we had to go into the toilets to speak Greek – they had the attitude that if we spoke Greek we wouldn’t learn English, you see. If they see us talking they’d say, ‘Don’t speak your language! Speak English!’ or they would physically separate us, you know one at one end of the playground and one at the other...”

"...they would also change our names when I went to school. First time I went to school – my name is [actually] ‘[says full name], it’s a really big name. And so the head mistress said, ‘oh my goodness, how are we going to remember her name? We’re going to call her Betty,’ so that’s why I became Betty [she laughs]. Oh yes, it wasn’t convenient for them to know the names, so they changed the names...”

"...I reached the second year of high-school. I was good at mathematics but of course I wasn’t good in English. I [was] coming in the top 5 in mathematics, although I was a migrant child. But before that, we had to do an I.Q. test so they can place me in the class. So I was put in a room and given this form and was told to answer the questions – I didn’t know the questions because I couldn’t read English. So of course, my mark was below average [she laughs], so I was put in class F, right down the bottom [laughs]...”

"...my mother and father they said, ‘look you better go and ask your head mistress what other school you can go to so you can go to university.’ So anyway, I went and asked the head mistress and she said, ‘Oh Betty, you’ve got a nice personality, why don’t you work in your fathers shop?’ [Betty laughs]. Well that’s the career advice that I got, so I took her advice. In the morning I would help my mother and father with the shop, and I was studying at the bottom table of the shop [high school evening classes]...so we [migrant children] were shop-children. And in that street, all the big trucks roar past so I really had to concentrate to study, then I got a Commonwealth Scholarship and went to university...”

"...yes so I graduated and I was looking for a job as a psychologist. So I applied for a job with [says company name] and I was interviewed by a panel of four men of course, no women. At that time there was no Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), or Anti Discrimination Board, that was back in the 70’s. So I went through the interview and then they said, ‘um, you are a woman and the men might not accept your authority’ – that’s one. The second one was, he said, ‘you have an accent’ – ‘yes?’ and the third one was ‘your cultural background.’ I said, ‘I’m sorry, why do you men accept women to compete with you academically but not in the workplace? I find no reason whatsoever that because I am a woman and that I will be supervising men that they shouldn’t accept my authority. Secondly,’ I said, ‘do any of you men speak another language?’ ‘no.’ I said, ‘well I do, I
speak Greek, and when you speak another language you have an accent.' And I said, 'and the cultural thing, can you please explain to me why my culture would be an impediment to my work?' and they said, 'what happens if you have to go interstate, would your parents let you go?' I was 25 at the time, so I said to them, 'look gentlemen, my work life and my home life will be two different things; I am professional enough to know that.' And I said, 'having two cultures is a big advantage to me because I can see things from different perspectives, from two perspectives, I can see things in a different way than anybody else.' Well I didn't get the job, of course, but I was discriminated on three grounds — sex, language and culture, but there was no discrimination board to take it to...''

"...back in 72, the 23 year Liberal Party dominance was broken with the Whitlam Government coming in, thank God for the Whitlam Government! I mean, they criticize him [Gough Whitlam] but I think it was short of a turning point for Australia in all aspects. So at that time Al Grassby became the minister for immigration. Al Grassby opened all the departmental files and some of the discrimination that was practiced by the departmental people to keep Australia 'white' — because on a subtle level, the 'White Australia Policy' was functioning until about 1972. Not openly because we [Australia] signed the 'Human Rights Charter' after the war and we couldn't openly have the White Australia Policy you know, where coloured people, people from other non-English background were not welcomed. And also looking through 'the 1988 – 200 years Celebration of Australia [Bi-centenary]' really brought to life in the archives a lot of the discriminatory practices that were being done here in Australia and also through research conducted by migrants...''

"...so I became very much involved and assisted Al Grassby. We started a working relationship from that time — we had his ear as a minister...it was important for them to hear a different view form the 'grassroots' level. So one of the good things that happened in 1973 was the 'telephone interpreters service' was set up and 48 bilingual information people were placed at different immigration offices around the country. And for once you had all these people, you know, that spoke another language. So we were trying to do community development so that we can advocate 'multiculturalism.' Because first there was the White Australia Policy, then there was Assimilation, you know, where we all become the same, and then in the 80s there was Integration, you know [where] we accepted differences but we must have a homogenous society. And then of course in the late 80s, we got Multiculturalism, you know, where we accepted everyone's rights and we managed to have them put in policies. I worked with Neville Wran a lot — he's a very good man. Al Grassby, lovely man, you see, because he was doing things and the 'racist lobby' combined and spent millions of dollars for him to lose his seat. He was the only minister that lost his seat after the first elections. He wrote a book about that — 'The Morning After,' I can give you a copy, I've got some at home. They poured millions of dollars into the Riverina area to get him out. We were stunned when we were watching the results. He was good, he really spoke up, he was the only other immigration minister that spoke another language, because his father was Spanish and his mother was Irish. He did a lot of good things for Australia. When the Liberal government came in — Frazer, I must admit he did a lot, he continued the multiculturalism that was started by Labour — I don't think he had much of a choice really because the momentum was gathering up. But also for the first time in Australian history in 1975, 'The Galbally Report' was commissioned. One of the good things that the Labor government did was institute all these Royal Commissions so that people can have a say. Like the Human Relations Commission, The Administrative Tribunal Commission and one of them was The Galbally Report, and that was a 'watershed' in relation to ethnic affairs and
multiculturalism. Because it pointed out all the inadequacies and the huge problems that resulted in all areas – health, welfare, you name it, with migrant people, because of the lack of language and lack of services...”

**Q. Why do you think your parents decided to migrate to Australia?**

Betty states that her parents decided to migrate in order to keep the family unit together. Due to the fact that Betty’s father’s occupation in Greece was a merchant seaman, it meant that he was away from the family for long periods of time. Betty further states that her parents also decided to migrate in order to provide better opportunities for her and her two brothers with regards to education and employment:

“...my father was in America for five years, before coming to Greece, and we migrated [to Australia] and I think they migrated because my father was away on ship for many years and my mother was by herself with three children and so in order for us to altogether that’s why they decided to come here. But also to give us a better opportunity because it was two brothers and myself, I was the eldest and if we were in Greece, my brothers would have become merchant seamen like my father. And me, I would not have had an education because the education emphasis was on the boys rather than on the girls, although my parents had liberal views about gender and that was very helpful...”
Q. Do you believe Australia is 'the lucky country' for you?

Betty does state that she believes that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ but it may be in danger of becoming ‘the unlucky country.’ Betty compares Australia to underdeveloped third world countries that she would visit for conferences. She states that although, Australia may not experience the severity of poverty that third world countries experience, Australia does have many living below the poverty line. This is especially evident with families that solely rely on the pension and other benefits which is not enough to sustain a family, especially those on rent and those who have children:

"...yes, in a way we are. We are lucky, we are lucky in many regards because, I have traveled in some countries – part of my job is in relation to children, because I’m involved in children disability and aged care. Over 35 years I’ve been involved in everything. [I’m involved in an] International early childhood, education body – it has a 70 country membership and it had UNESCO and UNICEF status. So I’m the present president in Australia. So I went to Latin American countries and some of the European countries, because each year they have a meeting in a different country and yes, we are lucky. It depends what country you compare Australia with, because some of the third world countries, oh dear! Yes...”

Researcher: Thank-you so much for such a lengthy, insightful and inspirational interview.

Betty: “My pleasure, and I wish you well with your studies.”

Overall Interview Results

As stated, 11 Greek migrants were interviewed. Of the 11, eight believed that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ (73%), and three believed that Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ (27%). Four of Greek migrants interviewed stated that they experienced racism (36%), and seven migrants (64%) stated that they did not experience racism from the host nation. With regards to identity, six migrants interviewed (55%) stated that after so many years in Australia, they feel that they hold both Australian and Greek identities. Four Greek migrants interviewed (36%) stated that they still feel that their identity is Greek, and one Greek migrant interviewed (9%) stated that she feels she is more Australian that Greek after so many years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTITY</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Identity Results from the Greek Migrant Interviews
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACISM</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racism Experienced</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Racism Experienced</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Percentage of Racism Experienced by Greek Migrant Interviewees

The Greek Migrant Focus Group Results

Demographics

Three Greek Migrant Focus Group sessions were conducted. A total of 16 Greek migrants participated in the focus groups. The first Greek Migrant Focus Group consisted of four men. All four men are from a working class background and they currently reside in the Canterbury municipality of Sydney. Their occupations include: sheet metal worker, store-man and part-time Greek singer, and Greek radio hosts. Their ages range from between 30 to 45 years. The focus group was conducted in a Greek radio station in the Canterbury municipality. The second Greek Migrant Focus Group consisted of three men and four women. All seven participants are from a working class background, three of the men and one of the women are currently retired. One of the women currently works as a housemaid and a cleaner, the other a housemaid, and the other woman works as a carer in a Greek nursing home. They currently reside in the Marrickville, Newtown and Canterbury municipalities of Sydney. Their ages range from between 40 to 75 years. The focus group was conducted in a participant’s home in Canterbury. The third Greek Migrant Focus Group consisted of three women and two men. All participants are from a working class background and they currently reside in the Kingsgrove, Marrickville and Drummoyne municipalities of Sydney. Their occupations include: clothing manufacturer and distributor, mechanic, legal secretary, housewife, and a retiree. Their ages range from 38 to 65 years of age. The focus group session was conducted in a participant’s home in the Marrickville municipality of Sydney.

Seven Greek Migrant Focus Group Questions were examined, they are as follows: (1) What are the good things about migration? (2) What are the bad things about migration? (3) How would you improve migration for others? What should have been done? (4) Why did you migrate? (5) Do you think Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you? (6) What do you think Australia has gained by introducing migrants into this country? (7) If you had one wish what would it be? Some subsidiary questions may also be examined in certain focus groups.

Transcribed responses from the focus group participants will be examined below. Each participant will be assigned with a number and letter to ascertain which focus group they are from, the content and frequency of their responses, as well as to demonstrate group dynamics. The gender of each respondent will also be noted before each of their responses. Transcribed responses from each focus group are in chronological order under each question. Major themes will be extracted from across the three focus groups for each of the Greek Migrant Focus Group Questions.
1. What are the good things about migration?

Across the three focus groups, 10 themes emerged: (1) Australia has a good bureaucratic system, (2) Australia provides good opportunities for the children of migrants to be educated well, (3) there are opportunities to find good work for migrants and their children, (4) more consumer product availability, (5) class equality, (6) freedom, (7) cleanliness, (8) good medical system, (9) no sexual harassment, and (10) beautiful landscape.

Focus Group 1:

Male participant 1a: “...there is system here [in Australia], we have manners and courtesy here when you wait in line...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 2a: “...listen, when I first came I told myself that in six months I have to leave – I didn’t like Australia at all. I saw the people, the culture and I didn’t like it at all! In those six months I sat down and thought and weighed up the good and bad things about this country and compared it to my home country. Say I went back to Greece and worked as a barber, because I’m a barber in Athens, and say I have two kids, I wondered what will these kids do when they grow up? How am I going to put them through school? But here I thought the system is easier for the kids than in Greece and it happened that way – you might say I’m lucky because my children all went to university and graduated and all have good jobs, and this is why I stayed...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 2b: “...I had a lot of ice creams and chocolates, which I didn’t have in Greece, lot of things we have here we don’t have in Greece...” (focus group 2).

Male participant 2b: “…freedom. You can go to a friends place, to the movies, you have things that you could do. I don’t know about anyone else but we were restricted to a certain degree [in Greece]. We could go to the park and play [in Australia], get a hamburger, to me that was good. TVs, radios, we never had them...” (focus group 2).

Male participant 1b: “…some of the good things, I believe that Australia has the best cleanliness in the world. It has a good medical system that keeps us wanting to stay here. It is even a good country for the ‘bludgers’ and lazy people, not that I have tasted that life style [he laughs]” (focus group 2).

Female participant 5c: “…Australia is good, why? Because when you went to get a job, your boss would not sexually harass you or no one like they do in Greece. Here in Australia, you had a choice whether you wanted to become a ‘prostitute’ or not – and jobs? Only a lazy person wouldn’t find one, there were plenty of jobs. I’ll tell you, I was a single mother with two kids and I had a mortgage – I worked four jobs and I paid it off. If I was in Greece, I wouldn’t be able to do that. Australia had a lot of good for the people...” (focus group 3).

Female participant 5c: “…here if you work or you don’t work, you still get paid! Which other country is good?? I mean look at America that has so much and it doesn’t pay...I was a cleaner in a school here for 20 years and I would drink coffee with the principal. But in Greece, the principal and a cleaner to drink coffee together? No way! Never!...” (focus group 3).
Male participant: 4c: "...me, I have no complaints here. At the start there were some hardships but with effort slowly, slowly I got a job. Not one factory sacked me because if you are a good worker, no one sacks you – I have no complaints here. I lived in Greece for 26 years and all I saw was hunger, wars and suffering – I never saw a good day, let's not lie...I was never barefoot here..." (focus group 3).

1. **What are the bad things about migration?**

Four themes emerged across the three focus groups for the following question: (1) language difficulties, (2) discrimination (3) the perceived dissolve of the Greek culture, and (4) social and work quality of the Australian lifestyle.

**Focus Group 1:**

Male participant 2a: "...the hardest mountain that we had to climb here in Australia was the language, not knowing the language, nothing else. You had to shop, work; you had to go to the banks. You know how they [Australians] say [the word] 'maybe' [in conversation], well I thought they were saying 'baby,' and I'm thinking why are they saying 'baby' and 'baby' to me all the time? [focus group 1 laughs]"

Male participant 2a: "...the Greek culture will finish here. If the *Kinotita* and *Arhipiskopi* don't provide programs to maintain the Greek language, of course the Greek language will vanish. The Greek Church will be here, but there will be no Greek tongue – it will be like in America where there is Hellenism but no one speaks Greek, but the religion is there. In the Greek churches there [in America], they speak English; they don’t speak Greek at all. The same will happen here – unless the *Kinotita* and the *Arhipiskopi* do some various programs where they can preserve the Greek language..." (focus group 1).

Male participant 2b: "...there was a lot of racism in school, mainly because they didn’t like our salami sandwiches. There were a lot of Aussie kids picking on the Greeks or the Yugoslavs. The school I went to, there were sections where the Australians were, the Yugoslavs, the Turks, the Greeks – there was a lot when I went to school. Today, not as much, back in the 70s yes, but it’s mellowed down. I would say that there was racism with us [Greeks] and the Australians as well. There was a lot of racism I think from both sides. But the fact that we ate salami sandwiches and not peanut butter made a lot of difference..." (focus group 2).

Female participant 7b: "...bad things? G.S.T [everyone laughs]. It's all work, work, work, social life is very limited. There [in Greece] they work and they go out every single night. We don’t do that here, only Friday, Saturday night. There [in Greece] they don’t have much money and they have nothing in their fridges – but they have a great time. I was there for eight week, and wow, the way of life – we have everything here but we really have nothing. They have a different philosophy. Here we think about making money, over there, they don’t care. We’re future orientated, they are over there are not, day by day – today, don’t worry about tomorrow..." (focus group 2).
2. How would you improve migration for others? What should have been done?

Five themes emerged from across the three focus groups: (1) Greece and Australia should have taken the responsibility to teach English to the migrants, (2) more services when the migrants first arrived, (3) cultural freedom, respect and acceptance when migrants first arrived, (4) access to the Australian pension overseas, and (5) to unite the Greek Orthodox Church.

Focus Group 1:

Male participant 2a: “...what Greece should have done was if you wanted to go to Australia, they should have put you into a three-month compulsory English course before you left. And the other thing that we should have found here was structured agreements that Greece had to have made with Australia. Even today they haven’t written up the agreement for the pension, even after all these years, back then they should have done this. Because if a person worked here for 25 years, will they have the right to get a pension if they go back to Greece? If Australia said yes, sign here, we would be able to. Now here it has been 25 years that the people have worked and they want to leave for their home country but they can’t get their pension...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 2a: “…Australia should have ascertained whether we know English or not, put us in a course for a couple of months before they put us in the workforce, there should have been better services to help us when we arrived...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 1a: “...we have the Kinotita and Arhipiskopi collecting millions of dollars, the Arhipiskopi even more – multi-millions and no one knows where the money is going – and if you go to them for help, they will not help you. The hard working Greek migrant built our facilities, not the committees. If Arhipiskopi and Kinotita do not unite, nothing will be done, nothing will happen. If there is a Arhipiskopi march and all of us Greeks decide not to go and if there is a Kinotita march and all of us decide not to go, then you’ll see what they will do, then they’ll have to unite!!!” (focus group 1).

Male participant 1a: “…and another thing, the [Greek] priest drives a brand new car every year, you drive a second-hand car always! And if I call the [Greek] priest to come and do a ‘blessing,’ say on this place, and I don’t give him some money, he will never come back again. He does get his wage, and because he does he is obliged to come and do it. And if I don’t give him anything extra, he should still say thank you and he himself should call me and ask me, ‘when would you like me to do another blessing?’ That is what I think...” (focus group 1).

Focus Group II:

Male participant 1b: “…they should let the Greeks and other migrants to feel comfortable to practice their culture, speak in their different tongue, not to say, ‘talk English!’ on the busses and trains...” (focus group 2).
Focus Group III:

Male participant 3c: "...the Australians to treat the migrants better, with a bit more respect and they should have had more services when we arrived, such as interpreters in hospitals – my child was sick and nearly died...” (focus group 3).

3. Why did you migrate?

Across the three focus groups, four themes emerged: (1) to get out of doing the compulsory Greek National Army Service, (2) for better opportunities and future for migrants and their family, (3) Greece was in post-war depression, and (4) it was a dream and an adventure.

Focus Group I:

Male participant 1a: "...I left to skip out from doing my national service, but if I knew that I didn’t have to do it or face any legal repercussions, I would go back, and I would have gone back years ago. That is what has held me in Australia...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 2a: "...we came for a better future. We had the opportunity to grab it, it was up to us. Some grabbed the opportunity and are better [off] than others, but some of us are the same as we have come...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 2a: "...yes, but there are some situations where some made it from nothing. It was just luck that they would get this [picks up my pen] in their hand and it would bring them fortune, but me, I would get this [picks up my pen again] and instead of it giving me fortune, it gave me tears, understand?...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 2a: "...so [for you to understand, I’ll give you an example: in 1976, I opened up a shop in Liverpool Street (Sydney), sandwich bar – I was trying to grab the future, opportunity as they say, alright? But when I opened up that shop, all the offices around, without me knowing – and that is why the other owner sold it and I didn’t know, all the offices around were closing because they were knocking down the old offices and they were going to build new ones. And when I bought the shop, all the offices closed and I had no customers! I not only lost the money that I put in, but I also lost money from the loan, and then I was working to pay off the loan! And when that happens to you early you’re ruined forever – but if the offices around were not closing, today I could have been a millionaire, I could have had five shops! Understand?...” (focus group 1).

Focus Group II:

Male participant 1b: "...better future, I think most came for that. Greece was in post-war ruin, the Civil War did a lot of damage too. Greece was poor and the people were hungry. There were no opportunities, we had no choice...” (focus group 2).

Focus Group III:

Female participant 3b: "...at the start I didn’t think, I was young and thought it was all a game and adventure, everyone was going to Australia – we all though we were going to be rich and make a lot of money, that was our dream. It was only until I started working
in the factories that I realized it wasn’t a game. Then we said we’ll work for a year or two then go back, but nearly all of us have stayed...” (focus group 3).

4. Do you think Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you?

Out of the total 16 Greek migrants that participated in the three focus groups, only three stated that Australia was not ‘the lucky country’ for them. Some of their reasons were discrimination and a general preference for the Greek cultural way of life. On the other hand, approximately 81 per cent (13 of the 16 Greek Migrant Focus Group Participants) stated that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for them. The five main themes across the three focus groups, as to why the Greek migrants considered Australia ‘the lucky country’ are as follows: (1) the wide availability of good services and products in Australia, (2) the children of migrants have graduated and found good vocation, (3) there are generally more opportunities in Australia, (4) there is no class prejudice, and (5) it is much harder to achieve in Greece.

Focus Group I:

Male participant 1a: “...yes, whatever you want, you have it here...” (focus group 1).

Male participant 2a: “...no, it’s not good here, because if I stayed in Greece I would have been better off. Because when I went over there [to Greece] and saw my relatives, I noticed that they live better than I do. And you know why? Because many [Greek migrants] left from there [Greece], providing more opportunities for the others who staying and now they’re better off...” (focus group 1).

Focus Group II:

Female participant 4b: “...ah yes, in Greece it would be harder...” (focus group 2).

Male participant 1b: “...I believe 95 per cent that Australia is better than all the other countries. I went back to Greece, then I came back, I see here that my children are progressing well. If this country didn’t have problems with crime and drugs it would be 100 per cent the best country in the world...” (focus group 2).

Female participant 5b: “...yes, a lot more opportunities, after seeing how they live over there [in Greece], our kids have more opportunities...” (focus group 2).

Focus Group III:

Female participant 5c: “...over there [in Greece] if I’m are a cleaning lady and your son falls in love with my daughter, you would say [in Greece], ‘What? The rubbish woman’s daughter?? Why are you going to marry the rubbish woman’s daughter??’...”

Researcher to 1c: [says name] Do you think Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for you?
Male participant 3c: "...it has been lucky because I married off my children, they
graduated, I bought my house and I paid it off, what else can I say, I’ve got my boat what
else do I want?..." (focus group 3).

Researcher: If someone gave you the microphone a Greek function, what would you say
on behalf of your fellow Greeks? What would you like the government to hear?

Female participant 5c: "...for the government to give us the pension, any time we want to
go he should give it to us, because he is trying to cut it. Me who has worked here 30 years
and I want to go back to Greece he should give it to me!..." (focus group 3).

Female participant 1c: "...and the person who comes here at 70 years of age, becomes an
Australian citizen can then leave and have the pension! And those who worked here for
years cannot!..." (focus group 3).

Male participant 4c: "...the other house that I have, I paid tax on it and I budgeted and
economized to buy it. I didn’t steal it or cheated someone to get it. And now they say
because you have that and it’s worth $200,000, you don’t get a pension. So what are you
going to do? Eat the bricks?? ..." (focus group 3).

Female participant 5c: "...only Whitlam appreciated the migrants, no one now, Howard?
– no way! Whitlam yes and that is why they threw him out! And Whitlam would have
given us the pension no matter how many houses we have!..." (focus group 3).

5. What do you think Australia has gained by introducing migrants into this country?

Four themes emerged from across the three focus groups: (1) the introduction of
new fashion, (2) many new and varied cultural foods, (3) a new Australian cultural
identity, and (4) the progression of the economy.

Focus Group I:

Male participant 2a: "...a lot of foods, fashion – when I first came there was no fashion in
David Jones, now you see Italian, Greek – European, the food, the cultures, Australia is
a mixture of many cultures. You see Australians now buying Greek salads, Greek foods,
even smashing plates in Greek restaurants..." (focus group 1).

Focus Group II:

Male participant 2b: "...they gained a lot. We built up Australia. We worked hard and we
built it up. Restaurants, businesses, food wise, cafe bars tables on the street – they never
had, clothes wise. If an Australian can go and see ‘The Wog Boy,’ we’ve done something.
The Greeks have made a big impact..." (focus group 2).

Male participant 1b: "...the Greek migrants if not 85 per cent, for sure 75 per cent has
lifted up Australia; not only the Greeks but all European migrants – Italians,
Yugoslavians, etc. The European brought cosmopolitanism, he wanted to be paid well, he
wanted to eat well, but he worked and he also spent his money..." (focus group 2).
Researcher: *What does it mean to be Greek? What makes a Greek, Greek?*

Female participant 5c: "...to be proud..." (focus group 3).

Female participant 2c: "...its something you can’t change, I can’t change, even living in Australia for many years, I am Greek to the bone..." (focus group 3).

Female participant 1c: "...to have more hot-blood [focus group 3 laughs]. They [the Greeks] have a lot of ‘me,’ big ‘ego’ for themselves and then for their country, isn’t that true? [looks to the others in the group]." (focus group 3).

Researcher: *Has that changed living in Australia for so long?*

Male participant 4c: "...to tell you the truth, slowly you do change, more so for the second generation, the kids..." (focus group 3).

6. *If you had one wish, what would it be?*

Five themes emerged across the three focus groups: (1) to see their children and grandchildren healthy, happy and successful (2) to go back to Greece, (3) to win lotto and to obtain financial independence, (4) for their children to generally succeed in life, and (5) the retirement pension.

**Focus Group I:**

Male participant 1a: "...see my children healthy and happy, comfortable and to live long enough to watch my grandchildren grow up, and go to Greece one more time..." (focus group 1).

Male participant 2a: "...win lotto and go back to Greece..." (focus group 1).

**Focus Group II:**

Male participant 2b: "...have the money to retire and just enjoy life, financial independence..." (focus group 2).

Male participant 1b: "...to see my children successful in everything that they do and to see them healthy..." (focus group 2).

**Focus Group III:**

Male participant 3c: "...what, I don’t know, I am happy...the pension, to get the pension because I worked hard..." (focus group 3).
Overall Focus Group Results

As stated, 16 Greek migrants participated in the focus groups. Of these 16, 13 (81.25%) believe that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for them, and three migrants (19%) that Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ for them.

Total Interview and Focus Group Results

A total of 27 Greek migrants participated in the present study. Of these 27 migrants, 21 (78%) stated that they believe Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for them, and 6 (22%) stated that they believe Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ for them.

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Figure 3: ‘Is Australia the Lucky Country?’ Total Greek Migrant Results

Discussion

The Interviews

One of the initial thoughts that I had when I started receiving calls in response to the newspaper advertisements from Greek migrants that wished to be interviewed was quite simply, ‘why do they want to be interviewed?’ Good for me of course, but I still couldn’t help hypothesizing from a psychological perspective as to what was the motivating or driving factor behind these migrants wanting to be interviewed – ‘what did they want or need to tell me?’ I did initially perceive Greek migrants as a shy, reserved, hard-working cultural group and even suspicious of people from the ‘out-group’ which of course includes researchers. The motivation must have been strong enough for the interviewees to pick up the phone and dial a mobile number (which is more expensive). Talk to a complete stranger, give this stranger their address and invite the stranger into their private home to discuss personal accounts about events that occurred approximately 50 years ago. Then, allow the stranger to record their personal accounts and personal demographic information onto cassettes and forms which the stranger takes away. That is a lot of trust. Perhaps this is an indication of the considerable need of some Greek migrants to narrate and understand what their migration experiences and even their lives have meant to them and to others. Perhaps they felt that this research may provide them with the opportunity to share and record some of their experiences.
In relation to the above, another hypothesis that I initially held was that, of those Greek migrants that called me, I believed that they were going to share negative migration experiences and state that Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ for them. I had the ‘gut feeling’ that my advertisements and flyers would only serve to attract one type of Greek migrant – those who wanted to only voice their dissatisfaction, which was of course fine also. But I felt that this would only skew the results of the research and would not be a general representation or an indication of the beliefs of the Greek migrant population as a whole. Of course, I do understand that the number of subjects I recruited for the present research was not nearly enough to confidently ascertain social beliefs and patterns, something of which I will discuss in detail in the ‘Limitations and Recommendations’ section to follow. Nevertheless, I did hypothesize that the need to express a ‘negative migration experience’ would hold more of a motivating factor than the need to express a ‘positive migration experience.’ After all, when we are content, we usually don’t have the need to ‘voice’ or ‘narrate’ as much – a happy Greek migrant is perhaps a quiet one. In saying this, of the three Greek migrant interviewees that called me from the newspaper advertisements, all three did express negative migration experiences and believe that Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ for them. This is by no means conclusive in any way and does not prove much. I guess to ascertain whether in this case, ‘dissatisfaction leads to more recruitment’ would be a different study altogether. One would have to use a larger population sample for starters, compare ‘advertisement recruitment’ and ‘recruitment by other means,’ ascertain statistical significance and then draw conclusions accordingly. The three dissatisfied interviewees did however serve to get my ‘alarm bells’ ringing. Among many things, they also may have served to simply suggest and indicate that it wouldn’t be a bad idea to ‘mix up’ so to speak, the recruitment strategies in order to eliminate any bias and/or hidden variables and to hopefully achieve a result that is closer to a true representation of the social phenomenon examined. Therefore when participants came forward through word of mouth, through radio exposure, through past participants recommending other Greek migrants to interview, I gladly welcomed and encouraged the diverse recruitment strategies and would recommend it to future researchers in order to minimize sampling bias. This is, even though I was aware at the time that the other recruitment strategies did possess their share of disadvantages and pitfalls as well.

So why did these three believe that Australia is not ‘the lucky country’ for them, seeing as though 78% of the interviewees believe it is? The first interviewee, Leonidas felt that when he initially arrived to Australia, the Australians did not welcome him. Further, being one of the few migrants interviewed who had completed a high level of education in Greece, Leonidas felt that it was of no right for the Australians to patronize him or insult his cultural background. This, especially when Leonidas held himself in high esteem and that he perceived that the early Australian hosts were, as he states ‘primitive.’ By this he believes and explains that the Australians did not possess high levels of education, culture, fashion, cuisine, cosmopolitanism, socialization and the family values of honour and respect. And because Leonidas perceived the host people in such a way, he felt it was more of an insult when the host peoples disrespected his culture that he proudly regarded as honourable, intelligent and civilized. A clash of stereotypes perhaps; not all Greeks are intelligent and not all Australians are ‘primitive.’
So was it the fact that Leonidas had a negative welcoming that brought him to the conclusion that Australia is not ‘the lucky country’? Perhaps it is a combination of many experiences and beliefs. When I asked Leonidas why he decided to migrate, he stated that even though he had a good office job in Greece, he was forced to migrate in order to provide for his mother and sisters. This was because he stated without going into detail that his father in Greece was an irresponsible family man. Leonidas was sending most of the money he made in Australia back to his family, and because of this he missed out on making his own fortune and even missed the opportunity to marry. He also stated that he was doing hard dirty jobs, and when he compared these jobs to the employment he had in Greece, he considered it as a profound ‘demotion.’ In terms of achievements, he bought a house, but he states that he could have had a house in Greece as well. Leonidas saw migration as a solution to a preexisting problem – it was almost like he had no alternative. It was not a choice, it was a necessity and certainly not an adventure or an opportunity for Leonidas, nor was it a dream to travel, to experience or to increase his own financial status as many Greek migrants perceived and envisioned of their Diaspora. Leonidas was a heavily pressured young adult when he first arrived, burdened with the huge responsibility of his family’s survival – Lenoidas’s migration was the result of an unfortunate situation, and it is not surprising nor is it difficult to understand why he perceives his migration experiences as negative. Perhaps Leonidas himself, selfless as he demonstrated towards his loved ones, was a victim of the Greek cultural value ‘honour and respect of the family’ that he regards highly as part of his core beliefs and identity.

The second interviewee that thought Australia was not ‘the lucky country’ was certainly interesting to say the least. Maria was one of the few migrants that refused to sign consent forms or allow me to use a cassette player to record the interview. What seemed to motivate Maria to participate in the research was the long held disappointment that she believed that Greece ‘sold’ migrants to Australia in the early days of southern European migration. Maria stated that she heard this on talk-back radio quite some time back but was unable to tell me the radio show, the radio band or approximately when she heard it. She stated that the radio station mentioned that Greece was collecting 9 million dollars per year for every year that it sent migrants to Australia. To be honest, I found this very intriguing and wanted to know whether this belief held any truth, probably because it was the first time I was hearing this. I did not come across this fact through any of my readings nor did any of the other migrants remotely hold this similar belief. I am somewhat skeptical of this belief for a few reasons – one explanation could be that it is simply a misunderstanding due to the language barrier. Or perhaps the radio host or a caller was expressing a thought or an opinion or ‘jumbled’ pieces of facts without crediting the correct source(s). Nevertheless, Maria was very adamant of what she heard and was equally as disappointed. This was one of the first aspects that she expressed to me when we commenced the interview and also stated that it is imperative that I record this in my research.

What was interesting was that Maria attributed what Greece apparently did by ‘selling’ its migrants as an act of betrayal, comparing it to King Leonidas, the Spartan leader who was betrayed by a fellow Greek at the Battle of Thermopylae in 480BC. She also drew comparisons to ‘The Stolen Yenitsari Children of The Greek Civil War,’ stating that ‘once again fellow Greeks have betrayed fellow Greeks, but this time not with the shackles, but with the signature.’ Despite expressing in the interview that she is
fiercely patriotic and proud to be Greek, some may consider her wish for me to record this belief in my research as a form of betrayal in itself against the Greek government of the 1950s. Does someone who is strongly patriotic betray its own former government? Accuse this government of betrayal with an act of betrayal? Perhaps there is a distinct difference between patriotism and Greek leadership. Is her disappointment a matter of how she uniquely views this belief? Even if this belief held some credibility, can it be considered an act of betrayal? After all, the Greek government was not forcing its people to migrate, and why shouldn’t Greece that was in post-war ruins draw up a financial agreement with Australia in order to repair her poverty stricken economy?

I guess without Maria saying so, her request to be interviewed may have served as a form of catharsis for her, not just for the above which she felt strongly about and insisted should be recorded, but also with the fact that she felt that Australia itself had "betrayed" her. Maria stated that she as well as many other Greek migrants were under the impression or the illusion that there was an abundance of money to be made in Australia. When I explored this belief, not just with Maria but with other interviewees also, many Greek migrants stated that the Australian television advertisements that were broadcast in Greece portrayed a 'rich' Australian lifestyle. By 'rich' the interviewees stated that these advertisements displayed, 'handfuls of money', 'limousines', 'the beaches and surfers' etc. Some interviewees even went further to state that they were told by the Australian consulate in Greece that they will be staying in 'hotels' when they first arrive, not in ex-military barracks and migrant camps in remote areas of rural Australia, as was the case for many. I guess what influenced Maria to permanently view Australia as an 'unlucky country' for her, was the fact that when she first arrived, she was placed in a job located in a remote area of western Sydney, a job that required 'digging' with a shovel all day. Try to imagine this for a moment -- Maria's upbringing in Greece consisted of working on farms, i.e. digging, lifting, sowing, harvesting etc., with little reward. She sees an advertisement on television, "...Australia! The Lucky Country!...". Maria sees the richness, the dream, the future, the opportunities, and the way out. She decides to migrate, understanding that she is bound by a two year working contract with the Australian government, weighing this up as well as leaving her parents and family, her relatives and friends, her culture and a lifestyle that she understands. Maria arrives to a country that is on the other side of the planet, a country that she knows nothing of, let alone the language. Where she knows no one and has little or no money, which is so far from everything that is an identity, an emotional security and a reassurance to her, in order to simply dig, again. It is small wonder she stated "...my god, I came all the way to Australia to dig?? I could have done this in Greece and be next to my family..."

I guess it is not hard to understand why the phrase 'Australia, the lucky country' annoyed Maria when I stated it as a question during the interview. Unfortunately things did not get any better for Maria with the early loss of her husband, this compounded with the grief, the loneliness, the isolation and the alienation must have been extremely difficult to say the least. Many may argue that most migrants were in such a post-war socioeconomic predicament, that they simply had little choice but to migrate. Yet despite this, and by doing so, the act was incredibly brave, one that required a lot of faith and struggle, as Maria has demonstrated despite all.

So what of the third interviewee Yianni, who stated Australia, was not 'the lucky country' for him? Like Maria above, Yianni's story presents with similar themes of
betrayal and catharsis but of a somewhat different nature. Unlike many of the other interviewees and other migrants, Yianni stated that it was simply 'for the adventure' that he decided to migrate to Australia, almost in a somewhat Odysseus-like spirit of travel. Yianni did not present with one of the clichéd responses of 'for a better life' or 'for a better future' nor did he state that his reason to migrate was out of economic desperation because of the lack of work in his home country. Yianni simply migrated for the opportunity to experience another part of the world that he knew little about. Yianni was one of the few in Greece who wasn't directly affected by the difficult post-war economic condition. He held a good trade as a technician and also held an acceptance letter to work for a well paying Greek-American firm in Thessaloniki (northern Greece). This job held the promise of promotion, as he was well acquainted with some of the company hierarchy. Yianni envisioned that because it was a Greek-American firm, his chances of promotion there or in any other Greek company could be enhanced by the fact that he knew and understood English, as there was a demand for it at the time. It was then that Yianni decided to approach the Australian consulate in Greece and inquire as to whether there was a demand for technicians in Australia. The Australian consulate stated to him 'yes, we need plenty,' and with this he showed them his qualifications as a 'technician' and they recorded him down as such. So here was Yianni – acceptance letter to work in a well paying Greek-American firm in one hand, and his immigration papers in the other. Yianni was aware that he would be also bound by a two year working contract once he was in Australia. Here is where Yianni thought that 'whether he's in Greece or in Australia, he will still be working as a 'technician,' and so his spirit of adventure took the better of him and he ripped up the firm's acceptance letter and decided to migrate. Yianni arrived in Australia only to find out that he in fact was recorded down on his papers as a labourer and not a technician.

Like Odysseus, Yiannis first migration experiences presented with disappointments and struggles, with longings and regrets. His 'spirit of adventure' was instantly shattered when he arrived at the Bonegilla migrant camp and he was allocated to a labouring job. Much to his protests, the staff at Bonegilla refused to change his category of 'unskilled labourer' on his file, despite Yianni showing them his technician diplomas, industrial experience and other qualifications, which in turn they simply stated 'Sorry we don't recognize those here.' Yianni regarded this as the biggest betrayal he has ever experienced. He stated that 'this lie changed my entire life.' He says that Australia did not want technicians or other qualified migrants, but rather labourers to do all the hard, dirty, heavy, repetitive and dangerous jobs that the Australian population would simply not do. It is easy to conceptualize why Yianni did not regard Australia as 'the lucky country,' nor would it be much of a surprise to hear such comments from him as 'my heart is cold for this country.' From this, it took Yianni years to achieve his technician status in Australia.

If the above wasn't a disappointment enough, Yianni tells of another incident in his early migration days, which isn't as devastating as the above in terms of livelihood but which is all the same quite amazing, and I guess, shocking and painful nevertheless, especially to a newly arrived migrant. And which probably served in crystallizing Yianni's initial impressions of Australia and of its people, and why he still finds it hard even to this day to 'warm' to this country and to accept it 'into his heart,' as he says. Yianni states that after the above events, he transferred to Sydney where he was working
in a factory in Roseberry. As he was walking to work in the morning, he sees hundreds of flyers on the footpath before him. Yianni, thinking it was an advertisement picks one up to read it, only to find that it said, "GREEK WOGS, GO HOME!" Here was a newly arrived Greek migrant who had just been demoted to a labourer from a technician, walking to his ‘labouring’ job and then comes across these flyers in his path. He quite literally stood in the middle of hundreds of these flyers, trembling and realizing that the migrant was not welcomed in Australia. He speaks of many incidents of what he calls racism, such as in the workplace in terms of promotion, where Australians newly employed would get promoted before migrant workers who were in the position for years and who had higher qualifications and more industrial experience.

In terms of host attitudes towards its new arrivals, Yianni did make an interesting comparison. Yianni was raised in Romania from the age of nine after his parents fled The Greek Civil War in 1946. Because the Romanians were sympathetic towards the Greek refugees, welcoming them and reminding them to be proud of whom they are as a people despite their hardships, Yianni was able to accept the Romanian nation and it’s people into his heart with ease. He states that, ‘it is the people that make the country what it is, not the country itself or it’s opportunities, and when a nation accepts you and your culture, it makes you want to accept and learn about their culture too.’

Yianni, like many migrants stated that he initially envisioned that he will work in Australia for a couple of years, finish the contracts, make money and then return to Greece, perhaps with some English skills to enhance his chances of promotion. But like Odysseus who was once trapped by the sea nymph Calypso on the island of Ogygia (Malta), he eventually returned to his beloved Ithaca. I get the unfortunate feeling that Yianni is still trapped in his own Ogygia, restless and not content, with perhaps similar feelings of longing that Homer’s Odysseus once expressed to return home.

In terms of the rest of the eight interviewees, all expressed that Australia was certainly ‘the lucky country’ for them, some even defending Australia when they returned to Greece for a holiday and were amongst company that disapproved of Australia in some way. The interviewee Andreas challenged the outspoken ex-Australian Greek citizens directly comparing what they have financially achieved in Greece as compared to what he has financially achieved in Australia, and which he furthered by stating that this exercise usually ‘shut them up.’ I remember the early days of my research when I was invited to discuss the project on live Greek radio, specifically Galaxias Radio, where Greek migrants could ring up and discuss their migration experiences with me and the hosts. One Greek migrant presented with a negative migration experience, where he criticized Australia in many areas. The following migrant caller highly charged and vocal with regards to defending Australia, abused the last caller and stated that ‘if anyone out there is not happy with Australia, they should go back to Greece!’ And he meant it. I found this quite honourable and comical because it was a response that you would usually hear migrants complain that certain Australians would say to the new arrivals.

So why did these migrants consider Australia ‘the lucky country?’ Some of the main themes consisted of the fact that there were better services here in Australia as compared to the old country. For instance, a popular one was the medical system. In Greece, and especially during the post-war period, the medical system was in such an appalling state that only people who could afford to bribe hospital personnel got some form of basic quality health care as compared to the rest. Many migrants did express their
disappointment with the Greek medical system at the time, but equally as much understood the damaged post-war condition that the Greek economy was in. Many of these same migrants now state after recently visiting Greece, that the hospital system today is exceptionally good.

Another popular reason why many migrants consider Australia lucky was the availability and abundance of work. Some migrants stated that it was the ‘lazy man’ that couldn’t find work here or achieve in Australia. These migrants did believe that if you were prepared to work hard, you could actually achieve more than you would be able to in Greece, and many did. One outspoken migrant woman from the focus-groups put it quite differently but nevertheless makes a strong point, she says, ‘in Australia you have a choice whether you want to become a prostitute or not. It was common to see many migrants jump from one job to another until they have found the one that either pays them more or suits them better for whatever reasons. I guess in terms of a definition of ‘the lucky country,’ it would be knowing that if you didn’t like your present job you could find a different one quite literally the next day.

Also Australia is considered lucky by many migrants due to the opportunities it presents for their children, specifically in the way of education and vocation. Even though many migrants would express the difficulties and hardships that they initially endured when they first arrived, such as sharing a single room with many, hard jobs and even discrimination, they all seem to agree that it was all worth it when they see their children achieve. Many Greek migrant parents strongly encourage their children to do so, often reminding them of their hardships, and hence taking great pride when they see their children graduate with a university degree or complete a good trade and settle into a well paying field of employment. To the degree that if some migrants consider Australia latently unlucky regarding themselves for whatever reasons, they certainly do not disagree when it comes to the opportunities that Australia presents for their children. I guess they know all too well that in Greece, education is not a right but a privilege and a luxury, and is usually reserved for the rich and those that have some sort of meson or ‘connections.’ Many migrants have described the education system in Australia as free, fair and available to everyone. No matter how wealthy, no matter what race, creed or colour, gender, belief or religion, and is not subject to a ‘who you know’ system of selection.

Equality was another strong reason why many considered Australia lucky. After The Greek Civil War in 1949, many things changed in Greece. Those who were involved in some way with left-winged communist groups that rebelled against the Greek government after the Germans left were usually described as having ‘red papers.’ Along with being persecuted by the law, this meant that it would be increasingly difficult for these people to find any form of employment and virtually impossible for them to obtain entry into any high positions, be it government or university. Some migrants have even stated that they would be denied basic medical services. What made the system increasingly unjust was the fact that these ‘red papers’ would be kept in archives for generations; to the point where if your grandfather, uncle or distant relative was suspected in having had some involvement with the ‘communist rebels,’ you can be denied employment and selection into university. Even if these events took place thirty years ago whereby the person of whose future it presently effects was not even born, and probably doesn’t even have an understanding of what it was all about. Many migrants did
express the above to me, and especially when the tape was not running or when they requested for me to switch it off. One migrant told the story of a friend who was studying law at university. In his case, the student was actually accepted into university but after an investigation by higher academic and governmental bodies into his family history, he was expelled because his grandfather was suspected.

Many migrants have expressed that one good thing about Australia is that you can believe what you want to believe, providing you’re not hurting anyone and you know you will not be denied any of you civil liberties. You can be of any nationality and of any faith, gender; class or colour and you will still be seen equally by doctors and treated equally in the areas of employment and welfare. Migrants have expressed that in Australia, it is considered very normal to marry across classes, i.e. for say a doctor to marry a secretary. In Greece, migrants have expressed that it would be considered a demotion and scorned upon by the family who perceives their child is marrying into something ‘lower’ in terms of class, status and wealth.

In terms of the difficulties that migrants experienced, the most popular difficulty experienced would be, not knowing the English language. Many migrants found it a challenge to conduct simple business errands that we take for granted such as shop for our groceries and pay bills. There are many stories – which are good to see migrants retell now in a light-hearted fashion of the ways they would overcome the language barrier in the marketplace. There would be stories of migrants imitating chickens, complete with arm flappings and vocalizations when requesting eggs, and even women exposing thigh to request a leg of ham, much to the wide-eyed expression of the butcher. There would be a lot of pointing and grunting and some unique examples that migrants would express to me laughing, which are quite original. For instance, a migrant man, instead of requesting a bag of semolina, requested ‘a bag of Mussolini.’ One lady instead of requesting vegetables, was going around requesting ‘untouchables’ which was a popular black n’ white series back in the early days of migration. One migrant, in conversation with Australians would hear the word ‘maybe’ all the time and he thought they were calling him ‘baby.’ There would be other examples of migrants only knowing a small selection of English words, and they would try to get by on these. I recall a friend telling me that once when she went shopping with her migrant father, the shop attendant asked him, ‘how are you today sir?’ in which he would nod and reply ‘yes.’ Off to another shop and the attendant asked ‘would you like a bag or box for these sir?’ in which he once again replied ‘yes.’ And again off to the third shop in which the cashier asked him, ‘would you like anything else sir?’ in which he this time replied ‘yes please,’ the cashier waiting confused until his daughter stated to the cashier ‘no, no that’s fine, thank-you.’

Light-hearted as the above may be, what made it all the more difficult for the migrants with regards to not knowing English was the fact that some Australians discouraged the migrants speaking in their mother-tongue in public. Here were these newly arrived migrants who were unable to speak English, and who were also made to feel uneasy to communicate with a ‘fellow countryman’ in the only way they knew how to. Many of us are aware that communication, expression and the social support that it provides is vital for psychological well being. This is especially true for migrants who were already isolated and missing most if not all of their supports and social networks.
from 'the old country.' It was almost as if the new arrivals had no choice but to become silent once they ventured out of their front doors.

Many migrants expressed to me that they would be on buses or on trains, in schools and even in public parks where Australians would approach them that 'this is Australia and that they should talk English only.' One interviewee told me of a case where he was in a bus in St Peters one afternoon with a migrant friend and they were talking Greek, when an old Australian lady sitting in front of them swiftly turned around and said, 'Talk English Please! This is Australia!' Other interviewees would tell me that they would feel uneasy unfolding a Greek newspaper in the bus or train in fear that they may be threatened and told to put it away, which they have expressed did actually happen. One interviewee told me that before he's about to open his Greek newspaper on a bus, he out of habit to looks around first and sees who was on the bus. He compares the Greek and the Asian, stating that 'it doesn't bother the Asian.' The Asian could have his newspaper spread all over the seat and if an Australian threatened him to put it away, the Asian he stated, would most probably nod in apology and do so. But the Greek, he said, would simply not put it away if threatened to. 'There would be trouble,' and that is why many times he would fold the newspaper under his arm and wait until he arrived home to read it in order to avoid this trouble due to the awareness he had of his 'cultural character.'

Many interviewees did express that the above ‘attitudes’ were more so in the earlier days of migration, specifically during the Assimilation and Integration Policies of migration and usually doesn’t occur much, if at all today. In saying this, I do however recall quite recently an interesting incident that reflected some of the early viewpoints that some Australians held with regards to migrants speaking in their foreign language in public. I was in a large well-known department store franchise that sold electrical goods. The sales staff and most probably the owners were of Asian cultural background. There was a display wall of different brands of televisions towards the back of the store, and as we have seen, the televisions are switched on and are synchronized to the same channel. On this particular day, there was an Australian discussion being held about foreigners speaking in their native tongue in Australia. There was a panel of approximately six women and a male host who was facilitating the discussion. Due to the fact that the store was not busy, many of the sales staff were watching the program. There was one young Australian lady on the show who could not have been more than 25 years of age, stating that 'it is wrong for these Asians to speak in their native tongue in Australia.' She went on to say that they should make the effort to learn English seeing as though they are in Australia, which many may agree is a fair comment. After some prompting and further questioning by the host, this young lady stated that she considers it 'rude' if two Asian people are conversing in their native tongue next to her in public and that she feels that they may be talking about her. It seems to me that this young lady may perhaps have some latent psychological issues regarding insecurity and self esteem. I have never felt as if two foreigners talking in their own language in my immediate vicinity are actually talking about me. Are these viewpoints learnt and/or passed down? Do they spontaneously perpetuate generation after generation? After all, it's not as if this young lady or I for that matter would have experienced much of the Assimilation and Integration atmosphere of the 70s and 80s. And if so, was probably too young to appreciate it intellectually and socially as much as an adult of that era would.
As far as the Asian sales staff who were watching the program were concerned, they simply smiled, literally lowered their heads and went back to work. I couldn't help thinking what they were feeling and I felt embarrassed and shameful as an Australian and on behalf of this young lady that we may feel this way towards our guests. Perhaps this is simply my interpretation of the above; perhaps there are many ways to view this same incident, nevertheless a fascinating social experiment.

Quite a few interviewees did express to me that sometimes they would hear on talk-back radio or read somewhere that some Australians could not understand why migrant populations still have yet to learn English after so many years in Australia? This is despite the services available to do so. Some of the interviewees feel that the Australians believe the migrants are refusing to accept any societal, cultural and linguistic aspects of the host nation. Refusing to assimilate and integrate, and are only focussing on practicing and preserving their own cultural way of life that they understand and brought with them from 'the old country.' Perhaps there is a considerable amount of truth in this. But an interesting point raised by a female focus group participant shed some light as to why many of the migrants may have found it difficult. This participant stated that she did not have time or the energy to learn English with all the duties that were required of her. This participant would work in the factory all day, come home to cook and clean for her husband and children, and also other various duties that she was culturally bound to do as a migrant wife. She stated that it was not that she didn’t want to learn English, rather on the contrary very much wanted to for many reasons, such as increased vocational opportunities – it was just virtually impossible to find the stamina and time. Many migrants and migrant couples could not afford not to work in order to learn English, as many were on rent, sharing accommodation and wanted to purchase their own home to raise a family.

The other major difficulty that the interviewees expressed that they experienced when they first arrived was the lack and availability of culturally specific services such as migrant welfare centers and basic bilingual services. One interviewee in particular presented with some moving accounts of how the children of migrant parents would be burdened with the responsibility of interpreting for their parents and other migrants, sometimes interpreting things that they as children were too young to understand or too young to emotionally accommodate. One incident involved a ten-year-old boy with his father in a doctor’s surgery. This boy had to translate to his father that his father had terminal cancer and that he had only months to live. Many interviewees did praise the Whitlam government and immigration minister Al Grassby for their sympathetic approach to migrant welfare and to their efforts in isolating problem areas through the initiation of Royal Commission Inquiries. Also, allocating funds for services, which not only included health and basic social welfare but also paved the way in providing media services such ethnic radio and television services.

In terms of other difficulties, 36% of the interviewees stated that they did experience racism. Most migrants did have a story to tell about the use of the word ‘wog,’ ‘dag’ and even ‘garlic munchers’ which was commonly used by Australians to refer to ethnic workers during the construction of Warragamba Dam and the Snowy Mountains River Scheme. I must admit (and I may be guilty of attribution errors here) that I did get the impression that many more of the interviewees did experience some form of racism but for various reasons chose not to disclose it and stated that they did not. I got this
impression because when I did ask whether any of them did experience racism, many of
the interviewees would either hesitate, sigh, pause, smile, look away, laugh nervously,
and nearly all of them would then follow up with saying ‘no’ they didn’t. Others were
even very adamant in stating that they did not experience racism, as one interviewee did.
He stated, ‘no I neva see, I’m happy here, I no complain,’ but when I switched the tape
recorder off, it was then that he disclosed an experience of racism that he was still
carrying and that was obviously still bothering him. Sometimes I even felt that the true
interview started when I did switch off the tape, a phenomenon of which I will discuss in
the ‘Limitations and Recommendations’ section to follow. Others that I’d ask the
question to, who were usually quite talkative on all the other questions, would simply
look at the tape recorder running and only state ‘no.’

I noticed also that many interviewees approached this question in a light-hearted
fashion. Many stated that ‘even if they were calling us names, we didn’t know what they
were saying to us anyway.’ Some interviewees even told of experiences where
Australians would call them a derogative term and the migrants, not knowing what they
said and so not to be impolite, would nod in return and say ‘thank-you.’ It would be only
when a fellow worker would later explain to the migrant what the Australian man
actually said that there would be physical fights in the factory. There is no denying the
racism and discrimination that took place in the early days of migration, and there are
many examples, some quite devastating. One migrant told me of a shocking case where
some Australian men played a trick on a migrant worker in a factory. This migrant’s
religion did not permit him to eat pork. The Australian men knowing this placed a slice of
ham in his sandwich. Taking a bight of the sandwich, the migrant worker notices the
ham, he discretely and calmly spits it out and puts the sandwich away. Knowing exactly
which Australian was responsible for tampering with his lunch, the migrant worker
returns with a knife, stabbing the Australian man who subsequently died on the factory
floor. There was a similarly devastating incident that quite a few interviewees told me
about which occurred during the early days of European migration. I received two
versions of the same story. A former Yugoslavian man entered a pub on King Street
Newtown after his work and requested a beer. One version of the story was that the
barman would not serve ‘wogs’ and asked him to leave. The other version was that the
migrant was in fact served and one of the pub’s patrons sitting next to him stubbed out
his cigarette into the migrant’s beer for no reason other than for the fact that he was a
foreigner. The former Yugoslavian man threatened to return with his friends, only to
return with a knife as the above, and this is where the story blurs, he either killed one man
and injured another, or actually killed two Australian men.

Do these ‘attitudes’ exist today? I had an interesting experience working with an
acquired brain injury client. Apart from some short-term memory loss, this client
reserved most of if not all of his cognitive faculties. I guess the comical part of my
relationship with this client was the fact that he did not know that I was of ethnic cultural
background, as far as he was concerned I was of Australian/Anglo cultural descent just
like himself. As we would be driving through the Sydney inner suburbs of Auburn and
Leichhardt, and people who displayed physical characteristics of ethnicity such as darker
skin, would jaywalk in front, he would quite frequently say, “Ah! Run ‘em over, they’re
only wogs anyway!” Despite these comments, the family were actually nice people and I
was frequently welcomed into their home. Yet it was very common, frequent and normal

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to be sitting at the dinner table with the family which consisted of two teenage daughters and to hear in their conversations — ‘bloody wogs’ down the street, ‘bloody wogs’ in school, ‘bloody Muslims’ in relation to September 11 and the Bali bombing. Of course this didn’t bother me, though I guess I couldn’t exactly agree or add to the stereotyping and I found myself quiet when topics as such would arise. But I knew they weren’t malicious people, and like many have had their share of struggles, but I found the whole situation quite fascinating and couldn’t help hypothesizing as to whether stereotyping is actually learnt, that is, an environmental phenomenon.

Also, with regards to the above family and which relates to my hypothesis, this same client told me of an incident involving his father. This client’s father was walking past Leichhardt Oval in the 70s. There was a soccer match scheduled and hundreds of Italians were lined up outside on the footpath waiting to enter. This client’s father, walking past with his Australian friends, made some derogative comments, referring to soccer as ‘a wogs game’ and ‘a poofa’s game.’ This resulted in the client’s father being stabbed by one of the Italian men and he almost lost his life. The client finishing off the story with, “these wogs are crazy, they’re f***ing crazy.”

Other interviewees would tell me that during the 50s and 60s in Newtown, migrant and Australian gangs would frequently come into conflict. One interviewee even admitted being involved in the gangs. He tells of an incident where he was walking with a large group of Greek migrants on King Street Newtown, and they walked past a corner pub, which had many Australians massing out the front of it drinking. As the migrants approached, the Australians would not move to let them through, so one of the Greek migrants grabbed two of the Australian men and ripped them aside to pass which resulted in a huge clash and involved police to bring to order. One interviewee told me of incidents, which involved their mixed-business shop in Redfern. Many times drunken Australian men would enter the shop, accusing the new arrivals of taking jobs, businesses and houses. This same interviewee stated that many times they would find metal bins smashed through their front shop window in the mornings. This interviewee continued, mentioning that despite these incidents, she believes it was not the Australians fault that these things occurred, but rather the governments for not preparing the Australian people for the influx of new arrivals.

It was around the time of these incidents, and especially with regards to the homicides that interviewees stated there were media/political broadcasts, asking the Australian public to be more tolerant, accepting and understanding of the new arrivals.

What was interesting to see was interviewees providing explanations and even sympathizing and excusing the Australians for their beliefs and behaviours. One interviewee stated that it must be understood that these Australians were in their own country. He makes the distinction between racism and xenophobia, stating that it’s not that the Australians were racist as such, they were just xenophobic. They feared the foreigner because they didn’t understand her/him and they also feared competition — they were afraid that this foreigner may perhaps do better than them financially in their own country. Others put forward the theory that it was usually the Australian that hadn’t traveled as such, or has only known one type of life style and has never experienced other cultures that are usually narrow-minded and/or display racist ideologies and behaviours. This same interviewee gives the example of one Australian man that he worked with who would never say a nice thing to a migrant, but after traveling the world and returning, he
was a changed man – more understanding, polite and educated; the interviewee saying that this man ‘woke up’ because he had experienced diversity.

It was quite noble to see that other interviewees would flip the scenario and admit to some of their own faults as members of a cultural group. These interviewees would downplay the amount of racism that migrants had experienced in Australia. They stated that ‘it is nothing compared to what the Greeks would have done to the Australians if they were to migrate to Greece, the Greeks would have eaten them alive.’ Quite a few migrants after admitting that yes there was racism here, would state that there is racism everywhere. They would compare the question back to their own cultural group and state that ‘the Greeks can be very racist as well,’ even to their own kind, especially with regards to class prejudice.

So what about migrant identity? In terms of changes in migrant identity after living in Australia for so long, it was interesting to see that 55% per cent, which was the majority of the migrants interviewed, felt as though their identity consisted of both Greek and Australian. 36% per cent stated their identity was and has remained solely Greek, and 9% actually stated that they felt their identity was more Australian than Greek. I expected more interviewees stating that their identity had not shifted in the slightest over the years from being Greek. I guess I perceive the Greeks as being fiercely patriotic as one could come to understand from reading the sad and tragic history of the Greeks under Ottoman occupation for 400 years, this occupation almost resulting in the Greeks losing their cultural identity. Many Greek migrants, and perhaps usually those whose migration experiences lean more towards being positive, stated that they hold ‘both countries in their hearts,’ and often use the ‘mother’ metaphor to refer to Australia, specifically as ‘our new mother.’ One migrant that I interviewed on live Greek radio stated ‘Australia is the blessed country!’ He told me of an experience where he was visiting Greece and he overheard some tourists talking Australian. The interviewee stated that he was so excited that he introduced himself and said, ‘I’m an Australian too!’

This question did cause some confusion and challenged migrants to stop and think as to what they perceived their identity was. It was common to see some migrants say that they were ‘both’ but then state they were ‘Greek’ inside. Is this a contradiction? Or is it a matter definition, be it psychological, philosophical or even spiritual? Some simply said that they love both cultures equally and have been enriched by both. Some interviewees acknowledged that they can never become the ‘fair dinkum’ Australian, nor do they feel that they are the same Greek they were when they left Greece many years ago. In terms of seeking clarity to this question, many compared themselves with the current Greek people in Greece, stating that they would certainly not consider identifying with the Greek people, the way they are in Greece. The interviewees have stated that these Greeks have evolved as ‘a people without love’ and no regard for their fellow man. Perhaps this is a matter of interpretation, as it may be a global phenomenon that is characteristic of bigger cities. It may even be a clash of perceptions, separated by time and then thrown back in together again in terms of the interviewee visiting a past place that s/he once had a different understanding of. Despite all this, the interviewees described the Greeks in Greece as disrespectful, impolite and have forgotten the archaic value of honour, family and self-respect, which the Australian-Greeks brought with them and have preserved and maintained. They even stated that the Australian-Greeks are perceived as socially backwards by the Greeks in Greece, because they have not evolved
with the rest of Europe and I guess the northern hemisphere, particularly America which has influenced Greece in many respects. The Australian-Greeks acknowledge the fact that they still retain the ‘old’ Greek ways and a degree of ‘naivete,’ and many interviewees expressed that they feel these are admirable qualities to retain and maintain, and are quite proud of them.

Most migrants who stated that their identity was solely Greek were those migrants who perceived their migration experiences as negative. Some stated that they are ‘Greek to the bone’ and ‘I will never accept this country into my heart.’ But in saying this one interviewee, despite stating that Australia was not ‘the lucky country’ for him, he still made the point where he felt he had both cultural identities and felt that his identity had been enriched by both. He stated that he had been ‘widened’ in terms of knowledge, experience and diversity by migrating to Australia.

One interviewee actually felt that her identity was more Australian than Greek. She stated that she could no longer consider herself more Greek simply due to the fact that she has lived in Australia much longer than she has in Greece – does place and time have a direct effect on identity? Or is it a feeling that is not changed and not influenced by time and place? It seemed that she perhaps measured her identity in terms of the amount of years she spent in each nation, and not in regards to what she feels on some inner level, or perhaps time and place directly effects what she perceives identity is and hence her identity to be? But then again how would you define identity? Is the concept and formulation of identity different for different people? How would you go about measuring it? And can you actually measure identity? Or is it an abstract schema, an ideal that can only be understood through qualitative inquiry? This interviewee stated to me that the Australians welcomed her warmly and helped her greatly when she first arrived. Can this be another reason as to why she found it easier than other interviewees to accept an Australian identification and regard it as her primary identity? Can perceived host relations shift core identity?

When I was creating the interview inventory for the Greek migrants, I was interested in ascertaining what migrants felt their identity was and whether it had shifted, and if it did, what caused the shift? I also wanted to form a hypothesis as to what the overall ‘cultural personality’ of the Greeks was and is, if there could possibly be such a thing. I thought the interviewees’ response to this question of identity would ascertain this for me or point me in the right direction, or even provide a piece of this ‘personality.’ I did this because I wanted to learn more about these people as a whole and understand them, even though I was aware that I may be in danger of constructing or perpetuating stereotypical ideologies, nevertheless I wanted to explore this and see how far it would take me. Therefore in terms of ascertaining the identity of migrants and creating questions to do so, I had to ask myself what I personally perceived ‘identity’ was. What I came up with was ‘loyalty’ and therefore constructed the following question: ‘If Greece and Australia went to war, which would you fight for?’ Even though some academics and fellow researchers that I discussed this question with thought it was certainly a good way to tease out identity, I did however only use it once on the first interviewee, and his response made me realize how simplistic my thinking was. He stated, ‘I cannot answer that, that would be like The Greek Civil War where sons were killing fathers, I love both countries and I hope I do not live to see that between our nations, that would make me very sad.’ I almost felt as though I offended the interviewee in my attempts to get a
‘clean-cut’ response – and he was right, how could you possibly answer that? I decided not to further use the question.

So what would Greek migrants say on behalf of their fellow migrants given the microphone at a function? What would they want the Australian government to hear? A two-part question – my rationale in constructing this was to literally give ‘voice’ to the migrant, providing the opportunity for them to say anything they felt or carried within them about the two cultures. I also envisioned that this question may elicit praise, regrets, themes, concerns and even issues about the future that the interviewees would like to express. What I did notice with regards to this question was that quite a few interviewees concentrated on one part of the question. Most migrants focussed on the second part ‘What would you like the government to hear?’ even though many of the answers can overlap into both parts of the question.

For this second part of the question, the majority of themes included ‘acknowledgement’ and recognition by the government of the positive contribution and sacrifices that, not just Greek migrants but all migrants made to the economic, cultural and social development of Australia. Many interviewees made a point in stating that all migrants should be equally acknowledged, and that all migrants contributed, and this acknowledgement should not only be reserved for the Greeks. In saying this, many interviewees did state that the Australian-Greeks contributed considerably with regards to creating businesses, cafes and restaurants, schools and churches, and also proved to be a strong and dedicated labour force in the blue-collar sector of employment during the post-war era. Many migrants did say that they would have liked to see the present government acknowledge considerably more the efforts and sacrifices that migrants have made with regards to Australia’s development. ‘We spat blood here Niko’ they would say, ‘we spat blood.’

In relation to what the migrants would have liked the government to hear involves the Assimilation Policy that was put in place when the migrants started to arrive in the 50s and 60s. One interviewee put it as such, ‘if you don’t accept me as a person, you don’t win me.’ Other interviewees did acknowledge that they felt Australia had no idea what to expect and hence did not know what would happen when masses of migrants started to arrive. It was a huge social experiment where no one could accurately predict what the outcome would be. The creation and implementation of the Assimilation Policy is precisely an indication of how little informed the government was.

A quick exercise; just try to imagine as an Australian, that you, because of say, economic hardship, you have to migrate to a country that you virtually know nothing about, let alone the language. For the argument’s sake, let’s say China because it is distinctly different to an Australian way of life. Now here in China, you are required to assimilate and there are no services available such as bilingual interpreters or migrant welfare centers. You have little or no money and you are most probably alone with no friends or relatives awaiting you in the ‘new country.’ You are most probably semi-skilled or unskilled. You are not allowed to speak English in public, and if you do, you know that you may be reprimanded by a member of the general public. You are required to learn the Chinese language to have some basic advantage in seeking employment, but are finding it increasingly difficult to grasp at this late stage in your life. You are also finding it difficult to find the time and energy outside the long hours of your labouring factory job in order to learn it. A different system of faith exists, your religion is not
exactly welcomed and there is no where for you and your family to practice the faith of your people. No place for cultural dancing or to celebrate saints and feasts days, besides in your own home. You are insulted and discriminated against on many levels, especially because your physical characteristics differ from that of the ‘dominant culture.’ Your children are taught the ‘Chinese’ language and are reprimanded in school if they speak the tongue of your ancestors. The children are also taught the ‘Chinese way of life and thinking’ and you find that you are struggling to understand your children and feel you are drifting from them because communication and understanding is strained, and because of the clash of different philosophies. You feel isolated, alone, misunderstood, resentful, frightened, repressed, insecure and insignificant. You feel lonely, longing and depressed. So you start to form supports where ‘your kind’ can get together and create social networks in order to cope with the adjustment process. You also do this to alleviate some of the depression and alienation that is common, in an attempt to alleviate mental disorders which can result from prolonged isolation and alienation. Ask yourself how you feel after this? Ask yourself was this much different to what most migrants experienced in Australia?

The preservation of the migrants’ culture may not be is because migrants don’t agree with the Australian culture or think their culture is better. Although I’m not denying that you will find migrants who do believe this, but I feel it is more so to help adjustment and to alleviate the isolation and soften the culture shock. The Australian government and hence the public thought that the migrants would simply ‘slot into an Australian way of life,’ where ideally it would eventually become a challenge to distinguish the foreigner from the Australian-born Anglo. Some interviewees and other prominent authors on the subject feel that the Assimilation Policy was a racist policy. Perhaps if anything, it was a policy that was not carefully researched and one that was a result of profound ignorance.

Going back to the first half of the question ‘What would you say on behalf of your fellow Greek if you had the microphone at a Greek function?’ The recurring theme was that many interviewees felt that the Australian-Greeks should be commended in relation to the contributions they have made to the development of Australia and with regards to themselves as a respected and well established cultural group. Many of the interviewees expressed great pride with the achievements of the Greeks, especially because, and as they stated, ‘we came with nothing, and we not only made something, we flourished.’ But there was one major disappointment that quite a few interviewees expressed – the division of the Greek Orthodox Church. These interviewees stated that it is a great shame that we are unable to have unity in our own church, and they hope that this discourse within the church can be resolved within the near future.

*The Focus Groups and Group Dynamics*

Originally only required to conduct one focus group for the present research, my rationale for conducting three was because the first focus group primarily concentrated on issues involving the Greek Orthodox Church. This was fine of course, there was obviously a need to express it, but as a researcher I felt that I didn’t utilize the technique to its full potential with regards to the research aims. I was also still learning how to facilitate focus groups, as there were interruptions, arguments, and some participants
dominated the discussions. This first focus group, despite the contributions that it did make, I still felt as though it was a ‘warm-up.’ The other major reason why I decided to run more focus groups was because I wanted more of a female input, as the first group consisted of only men. I also took advantage of the fact that by the time I was at this stage of my research, many Greeks in the community were aware of the research through the media and through word of mouth. Therefore recruitment was not an issue as it was in the beginning, and due to the fact that focus groups by nature are not so much involved in terms of questions and time, this makes them easy, quick and convenient to run.

Along all three focus groups, 81.25% stated that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for them as compared to the interviews which was, 73%. Did group dynamics have anything to do with this? Is it because Greeks that are usually shy as a cultural group, considered it safer to go along with the group consensus? Again, as the interviews above, and which I will only briefly cover here, the major reasons why migrants considered Australia ‘unlucky’ is because they have recently visited Greece and have perceived that their relatives are faring better economically than them. Their reasoning was also linked to the fact that Greece provides the pension to retirees, but Australia is trying to abolish it here and is pushing the ‘Superannuation Scheme.’ Another aspect that these participants brought up was that fact that if you, say own two houses in Australia, you are not eligible for benefits. They stated that the Australian government punishes the ‘high achiever,’ whereas in Greece, you are still entitled to a pension regardless of the amount of property you have acquired throughout your working career.

A female participant from the second focus group stated that she does not consider Australia ‘lucky’ when she compares it to Germany, where she originally migrated to before she decided to migrate to Australia. Her comparison was more in terms of how the people of the host nations accepted her. She stated that in Germany, the Greeks were very welcomed and helped, and not discriminated against in any way. She compares this to Australia, stating that she was discriminated against here and made to feel ‘un-welcomed’ and ‘subordinate.’ This participant did not provide any other reasoning as to why she felt Germany faired better than Australia. Another male participant who stated Australia was not ‘the lucky country’ for him also agreed in terms of discriminatory factors. He tells the story of when his son was seriously ill and a doctor refused to see them on the grounds that he and his wife could not speak English. He stated that this initial experience in the ‘new country’ helped shape his perceptions of Australia and of Australians.

One of the major advantages of utilizing focus groups is that group dynamics can lead to the clients disclosing more of their underlying feelings in relation to certain topics as compared to the interviews. Of course there is a flip-side to this, clients participating in the focus group can also become ‘quieter’ and simply go along with the consensus and would probably reveal more in an interview setting. Nevertheless, one of the positive attributes that group dynamics can possesses is that it can create discussion, opposition, constructive arguing and challenges, and if the focus group is facilitated properly can lead to the ‘uneartthing’ of deeper core beliefs, attitudes and identification. To illustrate this point, the migrant above that considered Australia ‘unlucky’ because of his initial experience regarding his ill son, stated in the focus group that this is because ‘all Australians are racists.’ If this was in an interview setting, his opinion may not have been challenged and explored, whereas in the focus group, a second participant stated that ‘not
all Australians are racists.’ This opposition caused a challenge. Most of the participants agreed with this last comment.

At this point, I was allowing the argument unfold carefully as it was revealing a considerable amount, such as a deeper understanding into racism and a demonstration that core beliefs differ in cultural groups. I had to be ready to intervene if I felt participants may be intimidated, offended or dominated in any way. This actually was one of the results I was hoping to achieve in the focus groups – I wanted migrants to ‘get below the surface’ and express what they really felt within, regardless of what it may be, and not to ‘gloss’ over it. This incident though did change the group dynamics thereafter, participants became more cautious with their opinions and there were more generalizations and short cliched responses. Yet further into the focus group, this first participant became more ‘objective’ in his viewpoint. It seemed that he had shifted to the group consensus and became somewhat more ‘open minded.’ Even to the point where he concluded that Australia is ‘the lucky country’ for him, not that I feel confident that he truly believes so. Perhaps his answer was more out of a sense of embarrassment with regards to probably realizing the limitations and immaturity of his previous comments. Perhaps it was simply group consensus, and/or his initial comments were his way of ‘testing ground’ i.e. testing the group consensus? What really played on my mind afterwards was, would he have considered Australia ‘lucky’ if the consensus agreed with his initial comments? This is one limitation that the focus group technique can possess.

Another example of group dynamics involved a female participant from the third focus group who was finding it hard to decide whether she felt Australia was ‘lucky’ for her. She was literally ‘ummm and arrrrrr,’ when another female participant stated rather abruptly ‘what, are you suffering here? What, do you think it’s better in Greece? You who were eating olives and bread and had nothing else!’ This second participant went further to state, ‘don’t talk rubbish girl, come on, Australia is ‘lucky’ for you.’ Once again there was a challenge in opinions. Even though what the second participant stated was fine and healthy in group discussions, it was more of how she said it that alerted me, it was just that I didn’t want her forcefully imposing her opinions on others and answering for them. Here is where I felt I had to step in and state ‘[first participant’s name] no, you say what you feel.’ This first participant was in ‘danger’ of stating Australia was ‘lucky’ for her simply out of group pressure and not because she truly believed so. Perhaps because I intervened she did eventually feel safe enough to state what she originally felt. She went on to explain that even though she knows Australia is a good country for her, it is ‘unlucky’ in the sense that she misses the lifestyle and her family back in Greece. She had to weigh up what was more important to her – the opportunity to make money at the price of leaving family and a lifestyle that was part of her identity and hence contentment. She stated afterwards that she realized years later that money should not have taken precedent and therefore she considered Australia ‘unlucky’ for her, which was a fair enough answer. This was a valuable opinion, one that many migrants could perhaps identify with, and one that may have been lost as a result of a dominant focus group participant.

So what were the good things about migration? Across the three focus groups and very much similar to the interviews, and because of this I will only briefly highlight here. Most participants found that the good things about migration included: a good social and governmental system, a good medical system, opportunities for their children
and themselves, and the availability of more goods and services. One participant stated ‘ice cream’ as one of his positive aspects of coming to Australia, something of which he couldn’t frequently have access to, if at all in Greece. This same participant also stated ‘freedom’ to go and play in the park, to go to the shop and say, buy a hamburger etc. Other positive things concerning the migration process included, ‘Australia is clean country’ ‘class equality’ as discussed in the interview section, and also ‘laws on sexual harassment.’ One female participant stated that in Greece, this harassment did frequently occur and she found it a relief that there were protective bodies of law within Australia to guard people against this in the workplace. This is just one example that illustrates how important it is to have mixed genders in a focus group, providing it is within the research context. In this case, if the participants were all males, this issue would probably never have arisen. The vulnerabilities between men and women can obviously vary, and what one gender may consider is as important, the other gender may not even consider it as an aspect to rate positive or negative.

The most popular ‘not so good thing about migration’ was not knowing the language. Many migrants felt disadvantaged by this. Another aspect was again, racism. One participant stated that he arrived in Australia with his parents when he was a young teenager and found it extremely difficult to fit in at school. He acknowledged the commonly seen ‘playground phenomenon’ where students of the same nationality form a group, perhaps for identity, protection and support. He stated that the Greeks, the Turks, the Italians, the Lebanese, and the Australians all had their own groups within the playground and sometimes would come into conflict. Racism he stated included, ridicule over cultural foods, such as ‘salami sandwiches’ as compared to Peanut Butter or Vegemite. He stated that this simple aspect made a big difference. One migrant lady told me that every lunchtime, she used to eat her ‘culturally obvious’ food in the school toilets.

The other aspect that migrants found as a negative of migration was the Greek nationality will be undermined and not perpetuated by the second generation. This fear caused a considerable amount distress, especially between participants in the first focus groups. One male participant stated that every migrant parent worries about this fact, children are inter-marrying; they are not practicing the Greek language to the point where now the Greek Orthodox Church runs a youth liturgy on Thursday nights which is conducted in English. Other negative aspects of migration include the ‘social verses working life’ of the Australian system.’ Some migrants feel that Australia is void of ‘life.’ The emphasis is all on work and not on socializing such as in Greece. Many stated that the cultural philosophies vary considerably in terms of what people value. One female participant in the third group stated that in Greece, the people may not have much in their fridge at home, but they will be out having a coffee with friends every night, not just Friday and Saturday nights. Cafes and restaurants are open at all hours of the night and early morning, and do not close at 10PM on a weekend. One migrant described Australia as a ‘perpetual clock.’ He stated that a fellow villager who had just returned from Australia warned him, stating, ‘you will get sick of the clock, everything is by the minute, you are never free.’

Despite this, it is quite common and interesting to hear Australian-Greeks ridicule the Greeks back in Greece, stating that they are ‘lazy’ and bring up the fact that they ‘siesta’ during the afternoons instead of work as the Australian-Greeks do. I have
frequently heard Australian-Greeks state at the dinner table, 'here in Australia we work, we don’t sleep and have coffee all day like the Greeks back home, that is why we have made something.

Other negative aspects of the migration process included identity. One migrant from the first focus group expressed that whilst being in Australia, he constantly longed to go back to Greece, but when he did go to Greece he realized he could not live there after becoming accustomed the Australian social system. He realized that both nations had their own share of positives and negatives and he was having difficulty finding his own ‘place of best fit.’ This made him feel extremely displaced, lost, restless and incomplete, and which eventually resulted in him questioning his identity and/or formulating a new one. Other negative aspects of migration include issues with the pension as stated, and the G.S.T (Goods and Services Tax). Once again, the division in the Greek Orthodox Church also received a negative mention, with regards to similar reasons previously stated above that it is a ‘great shame’ that the church is divided and cannot unite here in Australia.

Similarly as in the interviews, the reasons why the Greeks decided to migrate, included, better future and opportunities for their children and for themselves. Greece could not provide work and was in post-war ruins, to make money and then go back, which many subsequently stayed. Many saw it as a dream and an adventure, and even some males stated they migrated to get out of completing compulsory Greek national service.

*Interviews verses Focus Groups*

Comparing the effectiveness of the interviews and focus groups as tools of social inquiry, there are distinct differences, and both present with their share of advantages and limitations. In the context of this study, one of the obvious advantages that interviews have over focus groups is that with interviews, the participant is allowed to tell his/her entire story. The participants can literally indulge in his or her narrative spiel without feeling as though s/he will be using up the ‘talk-time’ of others in a focus group setting. In allowing this, the interviews capture the uniqueness of the participant’s migration story, giving voice, which was one of my original rationales for choosing interviews. Even though many migrated for similar reasons and have similar experiences and beliefs, every participant’s story is uniquely different as the interviews demonstrated. The interviews go beyond the ‘one line answers’, the ‘generalizations’ and ‘cliches’ that are frequently seen in a focus group setting. The interviews also go ‘beyond the surface,’ providing a deeper and subjective understanding of why people decided to migrate – one migrant eventually admitted that he came to Australia to find his father after initially giving the usual cliche of ‘for a better life.’ This is quite unique to say the least, and I feel he most probably would not have shared this had it been a focus group setting.

Interviews can be perceived as being safer. There is less chance of being challenged, ridiculed and even regretting a disclosure. For instance, with regards to the example above, this migrant would have perhaps felt a certain degree of regret disclosing this to a group of people, particularly if the cultural group perceives that what his father did by leaving his pregnant mother as a ‘big family shame.’ Here, this migrant risks being
ridiculed and scrutinized within the community, which is quite common in cultural groups that place a lot of emphasis on reputation and tradition.

Interviews also possess the advantage that there is less chance of other participant’s breaching focus group confidentiality, unless your interviewee is particularly careless. Interviews are ideal for people that are quite simply shy and do not have the confidence to speak on a particular topic in a public setting. I found this particularly so with the women, even though some women were very vocal in the focus groups to say the least. Some of the shy women simply stated that they agree with everyone else or they cannot think of anything off the top of their heads.

Interviews can also serve as a powerful cathartic tool. Focus groups can act as cathartic tools as well, but in regards to what I have witnessed in the present study, interviews more so than focus groups. This I feel is because interviews allow the participant to ‘get out’ whatever s/he has had inside them for years in an ‘interruption free’ and ‘time-limit free’ approach. Focus groups on the other hand do not have this advantage. Another advantage of the interviews is that there is one person involved which means it is easier to find subjects to participate and easier to facilitate as compared to a focus group where it is a more involved process in terms of preparation, coordinating and facilitating.

One of the major limitations of the interviews as compared to the focus groups is that interviews fail to form group cohesiveness, group identity and participants cannot provide each other with understanding and support. I cannot be sure as to what degree the three focus groups provided participants with support, but many seemed to eventually agree and identify with other participants by checking their thoughts and feeling with the thoughts and feelings of people that have experienced similar circumstances.

Another major limitation of the interviews is that one person’s experience, beliefs and opinions are explored as compared to a focus group, where at least four and up to eight different opinions and stories can be explored in the same session. The focus groups can also challenge opinions, which may help identify deeper core beliefs, whereas in the interviews this is not possible. The interviews, particularly in this present study can be time consuming as compared to the focus groups. The average time it took to complete an interview was between two to five hours. This is because, unlike in the focus groups where responses are succinct, the interviews are usually long detailed stories which then tangent and merge with other stories, and frequently mix with opinions, facts and beliefs. This could occur with each question asked by the researcher. The focus groups would not run more than two hours on average for this study.

Overall, it is up to the discretion of the researcher as to why s/he chooses a particular tool for social inquiry. My rationale for using both was to see if there were any significant variations in opinions with regards to comparing the two techniques. I was aware of the different advantages and disadvantages of both research tools, and by using both I could take advantage of each of their positive attributes whilst limiting the negative attributes which all research tools possess.
Summary of Total Results

Overall, combining the results of the interviews and the focus groups, 78% of the total subjects for the present study (27) stated that they felt Australia was 'the lucky country' for them, as compared to 22% overall, who felt Australia was not 'the lucky country' for them. This does provide an indication that most migrants felt that they did make the right decision during the post-war era to migrate to Australia. Looking back after so many years, it seems that these migrants who participated in this study are content with what the Australian nation has provided them, and what they have achieved, and the opportunities it has presented for their children and grandchildren.

Limitations and Recommendations

All research studies have limitations or ways in which the inquiry could have been improved, and this study has no shortage of them. Unfortunately it is usually when the research is near completion that we find it easier to identify ways in which we could have enhanced it. Research is very much a gamble – you are just not sure of what you will find, let alone knowing beforehand how to avoid the 'pitfalls.' What makes it difficult is that every research presents with its own set of unique challenges – there is no set 'research recipe' to follow.

Firstly, to ascertain whether Australia is 'the lucky country' to at least a higher level of certainty, the recruitment of more research participants would be an essential start. 27 research participants are not enough to confidently ascertain that 78% of Greek migrants believe Australia is 'the lucky country,' and that 22% of Greek migrants don't. Perhaps the present research results can work as a guide but I would recommend at least 50, and even as high as 100 research participants to have any level of confidence in the concluding results.

Another limitation is in terms of the definition of 'the lucky country' and of 'identity.' How do you define these concepts clearly enough to be able to measure and hence draw conclusions from? Perhaps many migrants hold different ideas of what a 'lucky country' is. Is it defined by how much you financially achieve? Is it defined by how the host peoples accept the new Australians? Is defined by the success of the children? Is it subject to personal and individual temperament, psychological and social factors as well as other environmental factors, whether past or in the present? Are these concepts dependent on class and gender, and do these concepts change over time? And if they do, what are the factors that contribute to these changes? How do you tease out and account for these variables and all the hidden variables? 'The lucky country' and 'identity' are very much subjective concepts and heavily rely upon individualistic opinion, and hence by virtue of their natures makes them difficult to measure, and therefore the present results should be seen more as just rough estimates or as guides. A recommendation to minimize this methodological flaw would be to ascertain by a short and tested questionnaire, which has been specifically designed to measure these concepts, exactly what the definition of these concepts are in terms of popular public opinion. This should be designed within a cultural context if dealing with cultural populations. The researcher can formulate a definition of the concepts of inquiry and then utilize this definition upon a selected target group.
Another limitation of the research is that it presents with multiple geographic restrictions. It only takes into consideration the Greeks that reside in Sydney. It only concentrates on one part of Sydney, which was the Marrickville and Canterbury municipalities, which are quite close. Are there differences in the opinions between Melbourne Greeks as compared to Sydney Greeks? Or even Darwin and Perth Greeks? This is a major limitation, considering that Melbourne holds the third largest population of Greeks outside Athens. This of course is very much related and dependent on research funding. In terms of Sydney, are there differences in opinions and experiences between Greeks from the suburbs surrounding Sydney-city as compared to Greeks residing in Sydney’s greater west? A researcher can argue that it was only Greeks from the inner suburbs of Sydney that responded to the newspaper and radio advertisements. But are there other ways to recruit? Are there other ways to geographically concentrate advertisements? What about American-Greeks, Canadian and English Greeks? Are their stories of migration similar? Perhaps here is where the Internet could be utilized to collect stories, opinions and even responses to research questions. Technology can even go as far as conducting on-line focus group sessions, with web-cam hook-up so research participants can view each other, and where voice tone and facial expressions can be recorded when transcribing responses.

Another limitation is that the age of the migrants when they first arrived in Australia was not taken into consideration. My research definition of a migrant was someone who was born overseas and came to Australia, regardless at what age of arrival. Research has shown that the degree of migrant’s socialization and identity directly relates to the age that they were when they left their birth country and arrived in the ‘new country.’ For instance, the socialization process and identity issues would present significantly different for a migrant that was 50 years of age when s/he first arrived to Australia as compared to a migrant that was 10 years of age. In the present research though, the majority of migrants were retirees over the age of 60, which didn’t pose any real problems in terms of skewing the results, although I did have three migrants that were in their teens and younger when they first arrived. It would have been good to compare the degrees of socialization and identity. Interestingly, two of these younger migrants, even though they were proud of their bi-cultural socialization, were able to easily criticize and express the limitations of their own cultural background in terms of cultural restrictions, (in relation to aspects such as out-marriages) as compared to migrants that arrived at Australia at an older age.

As mentioned in the ‘Research Process,’ one major limitation was the initial difficulty in recruiting of participants. A Greek migrant at a radio station stated that this was probably due to the fact that I had placed a mobile contact number on the flyers that I had widely distributed, and not a land-line number. Unfortunately all my flyers only stated my mobile number, and all were distributed by the time I felt that I seriously needed to explore other avenues of recruitment, such as Greek radio stations. What made things considerably worse was that on the flyer I stated the research will aid government and non-government agencies to assist. After reading Vasilion’s 1964 study of Greek migrants and the distinctions that Greek migrants make with regards to the ‘in-group and ‘out-group,’ the word government would have most certainly scared most of them off.

Other limitations included using a cassette player to record the interviews and focus groups. Many migrants became wary of this, some refused to allow me to use it and
quite a few did not wish to sign consent forms. There would be times during most, if not all the interviews where the migrant would request that I rewind the last comments and tape over them, this was a common occurrence. Limitation as it may be, there is not much you can do about this but try to provide reassurance to the participants that researchers are bound by the University code of Ethics. The advantages of using a tape recorder heavily out-number the handful of migrants that you will lose as a result of using it. The quality, the richness of experiences and the amount of knowledge recorded, not to mention the tone as to how these experiences were expressed, certainly enriches the research project as a whole.

Other limitations of the study are more subjective in the way that I would structure, or rather re-structure the research project if I were to conduct it again. Firstly, I would research second-generation adolescents and the effects that bi-cultural socialization had upon them. This is what I originally had in mind in terms of my research thesis proposal. Researching Greek migrants was very much an involved process as it was, especially when conducting interviews and focus groups. I feared that I would undermine the quality of the research with the migrants if I 'cut it short,' and commenced research with the second-generation. I didn't want to 'thin' myself out, and I certainly didn't want two sub-studies that were 'general' in depth and inquiry. I had to ask myself what was more important in terms of my research aims and then choose. If I were to incorporate the second generation as a sub-study in the future, I would most probably only conduct interviews with the Greek migrants and focus groups with the Australian born children of migrants.

Another way I would re-structure the present research is by incorporating different cultures for inquiry. Many people did express that it would certainly be interesting to incorporate the experiences from a collection of different cultures. Comparisons could be made between different cultural groups and also between cultural groups that migrated later, such as the Vietnamese, ascertaining whether governmental services and assistance had improved since the days of post-war southern-European migration.
Appendix

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Memo To : Gary Langford (p/s), Nicholas Grapsias (p/r).
From : Prof J. J. Macdonald
Date : 4.5.01

Project : MERC 2000/034 “Southern Strangers: In search of the lucky country”.

I am pleased to inform you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has granted full ethics approval for your project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
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The Committee normally grants Approvals for a maximum twelve-month period. A final report should be submitted on completion of the project if this occurs within twelve months. If the research project is to continue beyond the twelve months, the principal researcher is required to submit a progress report and seek an extension.

The Principal investigator is required to report immediately anything that may affect the ethical acceptance of the project to the Committee, including any proposed modifications to the project, adverse effects on participants, unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. Should you encounter any ethical issues or dilemmas, you are encouraged to contact any member of Committee for advice.

The above approval number must be quoted in all future correspondence regarding this project.

Kind Regards,

Prof J. J. Macdonald
Chair, Hawkesbury HREC
Migrant’s Participant Information Sheet

I ........................................................... agree to take part in the project
Southern Strangers- ‘In Search of the Lucky Country’ to be conducted
by Nicholas Grapsias under the supervision of Gary Langford and Dr
Richard Lunn at the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur.

I understand that my involvement in this project will require taking part in
an interview lasting approximately three hours and a focus group
discussion lasting approximately two hours. I agree to my comments being
taped during the focus group discussion and during the interview. I
understand that these tapes will be held in a secure place with Nicholas
and will be erased after the report has been written.

I understand that this participation on my part will add to an understanding
of the experiences, expectations and concerns of migrants and their
children. I have been informed that such an increased understanding will
allow valuable recommendations to be made to government and non-
government agencies, which will add to the well being of both migrants
and their children.

I am aware that I can contact Nicholas on (02) 45 783775, Gary Langford
on (02) 9772 6265 and UWS Ethics Officer Sharon Falleiro on (02) 9772
6265 if I have any concerns about the project. I also understand that I can
withdraw my participation from this project at any time I wish and without
giving a reason.

I agree that Nicholas Grapsias has answered all my questions fully and
clearly. I give permission for the information gathered for this project to
be published in a form that does not identify me or my career in any way. I
understand that I have a choice for my name to be published as part of the
acknowledgements to this project.

This project has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Research Services.
Building 1, Room 1, Blacktown Campus. Locked bag 1797 Penrith South DC, NSW
1797. EthicsOfficer, Sharon Falleiro (02) 9772 6785 (Phone), (02) 9772 6786 (Fax),
s.falleiro@uws.edu.au (email).
Σχολή Φιλολογίας και Κοινωνικών Επιστημών
1 Μαρτίου 2001

Ενημερωτικό Φυλάδιο για Συμμετέχοντες Μετανάστες

Ο/Η υποσημείωσες/ες .............................................................................................................. συμφωνούν να συμμετάσχουν στην έρευνα Νότιοι Ξένοι- "Ψάχνοντας μια την Τυχερή Χώρα" που θα διεξαχθεί από το Νικόλαο Γραφίκα από την επίβλεψή του Gary Langford και του Dr Richard Lunn στο Πανεπιστήμιο Δυτικού Σίδνεϊ, Macarthur.

Αντιλαμβάνομαι ότι η συμμετοχή μου σ’ αυτή την έρευνα απαιτεί να πάρω μέρος σε μια συνέντευξη που θα διαρκέσει περίπου τρεις ώρες και σε μια εστίαση ομαδικής συζήτησης που θα διαρκέσει περίπου δύο ώρες. Συμφωνώ να μαγνητοφονήσουν τα σχόλια που θα κάνω κατά την διάρκεια της εστίασης ομαδικής συζήτησης της συνέντευξης. Αντιλαμβάνομαι ότι οι τανίες αυτές θα φυλάσσονται από το Νικόλα σε ασφαλείς μέρους και τα σχόλια θα αφήσουμε μετά τη συνεχοφόρτηση της έκθεσης.

Αντιλαμβάνομαι ότι αυτή μου η συμμετοχή θα προσθέσει στην κατανόηση των εμπειριών, προοδευμάτων και ανησυχιών των μεταναστών και των παιδιών τους. Έχω πληροφορηθεί ότι η καλύτερη κατανόηση αυτών των θεμάτων θα επιτύχει να γίνουν πολύτιμες συντάσεις σε κυβερνητικούς και μη-κυβερνητικούς φορείς, που θα βελτιώσουν την ευεργεσία και των μεταναστών και των παιδιών τους.

Γνωρίζω ότι μπορούμε να επικοινωνήσουμε με τον Νικόλα στον αριθμό (02) 4578 3775 και με τον Gary Langford στον αριθμό (02) 9772 6265 και την Υπεύθυνη Χθεσικά και Δεοντολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου UWS Sharon Falleiro στον αριθμό (02) 9772 6785 αν με απασχολεί σφάλματα σχετικά με την έρευνα. Επίσης αντιλαμβάνομαι ότι μπορούμε να αποσύρουμε τη συμμετοχή μου από την έρευνα αυτή οποτεδήποτε το θέλημα και χωρίς να δώσω λόγο.

Συμφωνώ ότι ο Νικόλαος Γραφίκας έχει απαντήσει όλες μου τις ερωτήσεις πλήρως και σεβαστά. Ανω την άδεια μου οι πληροφορίες που θα μαζευτούν γι’ αυτή την έρευνα να δημοσιευθούν σε μορφή που δεν θα αναγνωρίζονται η ταυτότητα ή η ομαδική ονομασία μου με κανένα τρόπο. Αντιλαμβάνομαι ότι έχει δικαίωμα εκλογής να δημοσιευθεί τ’ όνομα μου στα πλαίσια των ευχαριστιών γι’ αυτή την έρευνα.

H έρευνα αυτή εγγράφεται από τις Υπηρεσίες Έρευνας του Πανεπιστημίου Δυτικού Σίδνεϊ, Κτίριο 1, Αίθουσα 2, Πανεπιστημιούπολης χώρος Προσπάθειας (University of Western Sydney Research Services, Building 1, Room 2, Blacktown Campus, Locked Bag 1797 Penrith South DC, NSW 1797). Υπεύθυνη Χθεσικά και Δεοντολογίας, Sharon Falleiro (02) 9772 6785 (τηλέφωνο), (02) 9772 6786 (φαξ), s.falleiro@uws.edu.au (email).
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEW
(Migrant's Form)

I have been asked to take part in an interview lasting approximately three hours talking about my experiences, expectations and concerns about migration. I have read, or Nicholas has read to me, the form explaining why this interview is important and how what I say will be used to help other migrants. I agree to take part in this interview by signing the bottom of this form.

Name (please print): ........................................................................................................

Signed: .........................................................................................................................

Dated: .............................................................................................................................
Σχολή Φιλολογίας και Κοινωνικών Επιστημών
1 Μαρτίου 2001

Τίτλος Πρωτοκόλλου: Νότιοι Ξένοι-"Ψάχνοντας για την Τυχερή Χώρα"
Αριθμός Πρωτοκόλλου: 2000/034
Ερευνητής: Νικόλαος Γραφίδας

ΣΥΓΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΗ ΓΙΑ ΣΥΜΜΕΤΟΧΗ ΣΕ ΣΥΝΕΝΤΕΥΞΗ
(Έντυπο μετανάστη)
(Consent to participate in Interview - Migrant’s Form)

Μου ζητήθηκε να συμμετάσχω σε μια συνέντευξη, που πρόκειται να διαρκέσει περίπου τρεις ώρες, για να μιλήσω για τις εμπειρίες μου, τις προοδευτικές και τις ανησυχίες μου σχετικά με τη μετανάστευση. Έχω διαβάσει, ή ο Νικόλαος μου έχει διαβάσει, το έντυπο που εξήγηε γιατί αυτή η συνέντευξη είναι σημαντική και πώς αυτά που θα πω θα χρησιμοποιηθούν για να βοηθήσουν άλλους μετανάστες. Συμφώνω να πάρω μέρος σ’ αυτή την συνέντευξη υπογράφοντας το κάτω μέρος αυτού του εντύπου.

Όνομα (καθαρογραμμένο παρακαλώ): .................................................................
Υπογραφή: ..........................................................................................................
Ημερομηνία: ......................................................................................................
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Protocol Title: Southern Strangers-'In Search of the Lucky Country'

Protocol No: 2000/034

Researcher: Nicholas Grapsias

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN
FOCUS GROUP
(Migrant’s Form)

I have been asked to take part in a group discussion with others lasting approximately two hours talking about my experiences, expectations and concerns about migration. I have read, or Nicholas has read to me, the form explaining why this group discussion is important and how what we say will be used to help other migrants. I agree to take part in this group talk by signing the bottom of this form.

Name (please print):........................................................................................................

Signed:...........................................................................................................................

Dated:.............................................................................................................................
Σχολή Φιλολογίας και Κοινωνικών Επιστημών
1 Μαρτίου 2001

Τίτλος Πρωτοκόλου: Νότιοι Ξένοι-"Ψάχνοντας για την Τυχερή Χώρα"

Αριθμός Πρωτοκόλου: 2000/034

Εγγυητής: Νικόλαος Γραμάς

ΣΥΓΚΑΤΑΘΕΣΗ ΓΙΑ ΣΥΜΜΕΤΟΧΗ ΣΕ
ΕΣΤΙΑΚΗ ΟΜΑΔΑ
(‘Εντύπως Μετανάστη)
(Consent to participate in Focus Group - Migrant’s Form)

Μου ζητήθηκε να συμμετάσχω σε ομαδική συζήτηση με άλλους, που πρόκειται να
dιαρκέσει περίπου δύο ώρες, για να μιλήσω για τις εμπειρίες μου, τις προοδομίες
και τις ανησυχίες μου σχετικά με τη μετανάστευση. Εξω διαβάσα, ή ο Νικόλας
μου έχει διαβάσει, το έντυπο που εξηγεί γιατί η συζήτηση αυτής της ομάδας είναι
σημαντική και πώς αυτά που θα πούμε θα χρησιμοποιηθούν για να βοηθήσουν
άλλους μετανάστες. Συμφωνώ να πάρω μέρος σ’ αυτή την ομαδική συζήτηση
υπογράφοντας το κάτω μέρος αυτού του εντύπου.

Όνομα (καθαρογραμμένο παρακαλώ): ..................................................

Υπογραφή: ..................................................................................

Ημερομηνία: .............................................................................
Southern Strangers - "In Search of the Lucky Country"

Acknowledgements

Please Tick Below

( ) I give permission for my name to be published as part of the acknowledgements.

( ) I do not give permission for my name to be published as part of the acknowledgements.

Name (please print)...........................................................................................................................................

Signed...............................................................................................................................................................

Dated...............................................................................................................................................................
Southern Strangers - In Search of the Lucky Country
Greek Migrant Demographic Questions

1. Name:

2. Date of Birth: Gender:

3. City/Village of Birth:

4. Date of migration to Australia: Age:

5. Reason(s) for migrating:

6. How did you learn about migration to Australia?

7. Did you have family already in Australia?

8. Where did you initially stay?

9. Your occupation(s) in Greece:

10. Your occupation(s) in Australia:

11. Would you like to be part of a focus group session?

   Contact phone number:

Notes:
Southern Strangers - In Search of the Lucky Country
Migrant Past and Historical Background

1. Can you describe your childhood? What was it like living in Greece?
2. What were your gender roles and your chores?
3. What was school like? Can you describe a typical day in primary and secondary?
4. What were school hours? What did you wear?
5. What subjects did you study?
6. Can you describe the occupations your parents and grandparents held?
7. Can you describe the village/city, the people and atmosphere?
8. What festivities did you celebrate? How were these celebrated, in terms of family and town?
9. Can you describe your home and living conditions?
10. Can you describe the food you ate?
11. What was your role on important feast days?
12. What involvement did you have with the church?
13. Can you recall any wives tales, superstitions and even home remedies passed down from your parents and grandparents?
14. How did the Greek people interpret life? What did it all mean?
15. Can you describe your brothers and sisters?
16. Can you describe a typical day at home, e.g. holidays, weekends?
17. What did you do for leisure? What did your family do for leisure?
18. What would stress you and your family? How would you and your family express stress?
19. Can you remember any highlights or significant events, stories from your childhood?
20. What hobbies did you have?
21. What was it like during the war(s)? Can you recall any war stories firsthand or passed down from parents and grandparents?
22. What was the village/city landscape like around you? I.e. mountains, buildings, farms. What were your ambitions and dreams as a child?
23. What made you upset? What made you happy?
24. What were you good at? What were you bad at?
25. What did you think of Greece as compared to what you heard about the rest of the world?
26. What were your thoughts about Australia?
27. What did you know about Australia?
28. What did typical teenagers do in Greece? What were they into? What did you do?
29. How many people lived in your parent’s house? What was that like?
30. What were you most afraid of in Greece?
31. What were some of the most positive things you experienced in Greece? What were some of the most negative?
32. What did it mean to be ‘Greek’ in Greece?
33. How did the Greek media portray Australia? How did school portray it? Was there a difference? What did school teach you about Australia?
34. Can you recall any stories your mother and father, and grandparents used to tell about the past? E.g. their childhoods, significant people and events, their jobs, family members? What did they talk about?

35. What got you through the hard times in Greece? What type of personality traits and characteristics did you need to develop in order to cope?

36. What did your parents want you to become?

37. How differently are women treated as compared to men?

38. What do you think your parents perceived as an ideal life?

39. What was your perception of an ideal life when you were in Greece?

40. Can you tell me your earliest childhood memories?

41. Did you have paid work in Greece? If so, what was it and what did you do with the money you earned?

42. How prevalent was mental illness in Greece? Can you describe some cases? What about physical illness? Diseases?

43. What opportunities did you miss in Greece that you now regret? Did you have any other regrets when you were in Greece? E.g. not marrying someone etc.

44. What was standard of living like in Greece? What amenities did you have/not have in Greece?

Is there anything more that you would like to tell me about your childhood in Greece? Is there anything you think I’ve missed and should explore? Are there any questions that you would like to ask me?

Notes

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Southern Strangers - *In Search of the Lucky Country*
Migrant Interview Questions – Long Form and Case Study Questionnaire

1. What were the events that led up to you coming to Australia?
2. What did you first think of Australia? Initial impressions?
3. Have those thoughts changed at all? If so to what? If not, why?
4. When, where, and how did you learn about migration to Australia?
5. How did you arrive? Can you describe the journey and your anticipations/feelings about coming to a foreign country?
6. Did you know any English?
7. Can you describe the first suburb you stayed at?
8. How did the Australian people treat you?
9. Can you recall any instances of racism that you encountered?
10. Could you describe the state and feeling within the Greek community back then?
11. What Greek services were available? E.g. churches, clubs, shops etc.
12. What did the Australian government expect of you? i.e.
   What did the government encourage you to do? E.g. Citizenship?
   Find work? Assimilate? How did they express this?
13. Why do you think a lot of Greeks went to Melbourne?
14. Why do you think Australia allowed so many people to migrate in the 1950’s?
15. What was your first job here in Australia?
   Can you describe it? The conditions? Your boss? etc.
16. How many people lived in the house you were staying at?
What was that like? What were your roles?
17. What would you do for leisure?
18. Did you meet your partner here? If so how and where?
   What were the events that lead up to your courting and marriage?
19. What were your overall impressions of the Australian culture?
20. Can you describe your first experiences with the indigenous peoples of Australia? What did you think of their situation?
21. Can you tell me some of the stereotyping that the Greeks held about Australia and Australian culture when you first arrived? Why do you say that?
   Has this changed at all today? If so, to what?
22. Can you tell me some of the stereotyping that you think Australian’s hold or have held with regards to the Greek culture and its people?
   Why do you say that? Do you think it has changed? Why/ why not?
23. Did you ever get home sick? When? Why, do you think?
   What do you think you were missing? What were you most afraid of being in Australia?
   Why? When were you least afraid?
24. What were some of the positive things about migrating and being in Australia?
25. What were/are some of the negative things about migrating and being in Australia?
26. How rich or poor were you as compared to the average Greek migrant, other migrants and to the Australians?

27. Were there any conflicts between the Greek migrants and other migrant subgroups? Or Australians? Or the indigenous peoples?

28. What do you think the Australians think of the Greeks being here in Australia? Do you think that view has changed since first arriving? In what way?

29. Do you think the Australians know much about the Greek culture? Why? Why not?

30. Do you think the Greeks know much about the Australian culture? Why? Why not?

31. Did you have any Australian friends when you first arrived? Can you describe the relationship?

32. If you had a friend back in Greece who was thinking of coming to Australia, What would you tell him/her? Is this view different to when you first arrived? In what way?

33. Can you recall any unhappy moments in Australia? What made you unhappy here?

34. Can you recall any happy moments in Australia? What made you happy here?

35. Did the Australian government provide adequate services to assist the new arrivals? How fair do you think the government was in terms of support?

36. What do you think it means to be Greek? Do you think that is different from being Greek in Australia (or a Greek Australian?)

37. Do you feel that you have lost some of the old culture from the old country? Why do you say that?

38. Can you describe the Australian culture?

39. Do you think Australians can describe ours? Why? Why not?

40. What was the Australian landscape like when you first arrived? What do you think about the rate of development?

41. How much do you feel that the migrants contributed to this rate of development?

42. What was Australian TV like when you first arrived? What did you think of it? When did ethnicity first appear? How were we depicted by the media?

43. What are the Greek values, in terms of tradition, expected life roles, up bringing, jobs, education, and gender? Have these changed at all in Australia?

44. Do you regret coming to Australia? Why?

45. What were your expectations of Australia/Australians before you arrived? How was Australia/Australians depicted in the Greek media?

46. Do you think Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you? Why? What is a lucky country?

47. Where do you think the term, ‘the lucky country’ came from?

48. How would you improve the migration experiences for other migrating Greeks? What should Australia have done when the Greeks first arrived?

49. Why do you think that you are in Australia?
50. If a friend asked you what it was like to migrate, what would you tell them?
51. Can you recall what the Australian media was saying about the new arrivals?
How do you think they portrayed us? How do we portray ourselves? E.g.: Acropolis Now
52. Were you ever made to feel inferior in comparison to Australians or other
nationalities because of your cultural background?
53. How well can you read and write Greek? How well could your parents read
and write Greek?
54. What do you think the future holds for you?
55. Can you tell me the role of superstition in Greek culture? Can you tell me
some Greek superstitions, home remedies and wives tales that you know of?
56. What are your goals/dreams now?
57. What do you feel that you have achieved in the past years of being in Australia?
58. If you had three wishes what would they be? If everything one day turned out right,
how would you know?
59. If you won a million dollars what would you do with it?
60. Do you feel that your values and beliefs have changed/adapted from the
old values and beliefs since living in Australia?
61. Did you find migration as a traumatic or exciting experience?
62. What did you bring with you to Australia, whether physical or innate?
63. What was the first thing you did when you arrived?
64. In general, what are the Greek people good/bad at?
What are the vices or weaknesses of the Greek community? What are the strengths?
65. How important is/was the Greek Orthodox religion to you, particularly when
you were migrating?
66. What do you think got you through the hard times?
67. How was it seen by family and the Greek community for a Greek person to be
dating or marrying someone from a different culture? Was it the same for women and for
men? Which cultures were tolerated and which ones were not?
68. Can you describe some of your gender roles?
69. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia,
what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you
like the government to hear?
70. What did you want by coming to Australia?
71. Can you describe yourself, your personality, your traits?
72. What did you want to become when you were young?
73. What did your parents want you to become?
74. Can you describe the relationship with your parents when you were young to
now? Why do you think it has or has not changed? Why do you think it is as such?
75. What cultural values do you encourage your children to hold? Do you encourage
Greek tradition? Greek religion? Which Greek traditions do you celebrate,
and how?
76. What motivated you to migrate?
77. Why and how did people get married in those days? Was it love and/or security?
Why did you get married?
78. Can you describe some of the fortunes and misfortunes that you experienced in
Australia?
79. Do you believe that you and your children have experienced or are still experiencing bi-cultural socialization?
80. Where do you see the Greek culture in Australia in another 50 years time? Do you think it will be different to the Greek culture in Greece? In what way?
81. What can you tell me about ‘the generation gap’ and ‘cultural gap’?
82. What do you feel that your identity is?
83. What do you think your children’s identities are?
84. Did you experience the threat of losing your own cultural identity when you first came to Australia? What was that like?
85. Do you feel that your children will not carry your traditions over to the next generation? How does this make you feel?
86. Do you feel that traditions are important for cultural identity?
87. Do you think that traditions and cultural identity has changed from your parents to you even before your migration?
88. Do you think that the children of migrants should understand and be aware of their parents migration experiences as well as childhood histories? Why?
89. Do you think migrants should be given a voice? Why? What would you like to say as a migrant?
90. Do you feel that it is important to express and communicate these experiences to others? Why?
91. How do you interpret the years that you have lived? What have they meant to you?
92. What did you know about Australia and Australians before you came here?
93. Has that past knowledge of Australia and Australians changed now that you have been living here? How has it? To what?
94. How would you define ‘successful’? How would you define ‘failure’?
95. How would you define ‘the lucky country’? Can you tell me where you think this concept came from?
96. Out of a rating of one to ten (ten being the highest), how good do you think Australians as hosts treated their new guests?
97. Have Greek values and beliefs changed from your parents to you, from you to your children?
98. What do you think the purpose of life is?
99. What do you think your destiny is/was?
100. Do you feel your children are confused as to what nationality they are? Why?
101. Are you satisfied with what you have achieved so far being in Australia?
102. When comparing the lifestyle of Greece and Australia, which do you prefer?
103. What adjustments would you like to make to the Australian lifestyle? And the Greek lifestyle?
104. Under what circumstances would you go back to Greece to live?
105. Have you traveled to other parts of the world? If so, how do these other nations compare overall to Greece and Australia?
106. Compared to men, how differently are women treated here and back in Greece?
107. How differently are poor people treated or seen compared to the rich here and back in Greece?
108. How important do you think the church is in Greek culture?
109. What does it mean to have ‘a good reputation’? How important is reputation in the Greek community here and back in Greece?
110. What do you perceive as an ideal life?
111. If you were going to write a book, what would it be about?
112. What would you have done differently if you were to migrate here again? What opportunities would you take advantage of?
113. Can you describe your last day in Greece? What did you do? What did you pack? Who took you to the airport/dock?
114. What did your parents think of you migrating? What did they say/do? What were yours and their last words?
115. How did you feel leaving Greece? What were you wearing at the time? Your last meal? Can you recall the day?
116. Did you meet people and make friends on the trip to Australia? How were these people feeling about migrating? Did you work at the same places? Do you still keep in contact with any of them?
117. When you first arrived, what were the procedures? What were you expected to do, or expected to stay? (migrant hostels, barracks- where were these? What were they called?) Were the procedures the same for people that had family here and were staying with them?
118. How were you greeted by the Australian people at the airport/dock? Who was present, i.e. media, journalists etc? Did anyone approach you?
119. What was the first thing you ate/bought in Australia? How did you find using a different currency? When did you realize that your English was poor?
120. Why did you choose Australia to migrate to and not say, America or England? Why did you settle in Sydney and not say, Melbourne? etc.
121. How would you compare the standards of living of Australia when you first migrated to that of Greece of the time? What modern amenities/appliances did you have access to? Can you tell me some famous brand names of food, cars, shops, clothes, etc.
122. What was the fashion like? Can you describe it?
123. Did you have your own bedroom? Can you describe your sleeping arrangements?
124. What thoughts dominated your mind? What would you think about just before going to bed, or when awakening?
125. What pressures were on you? i.e. to find work, or get married, Who pressured you, the government, the family, friends?
126. How did you find your first job? What was it? Can you describe it? Your feelings?
127. Can you name some Australian celebrities of the time? Can you name some Greek celebrities in Australia/in the community e.g. singers, writers, musicians, wrestlers, entrepreneurs, the wealthy, the scandals?
128. What music was being played on Australian radio and TV e.g. The Beatles, The Doors? What were the hippie 60’s like?
129. What was crime like back then? Can you recall any that shocked you? Any in the Greek community?
130. Did you expect better of Australia or worse? (in terms of country, people, culture, values, etc.)
131. What was the first house and car that you bought like? What was the story behind these purchases?
132. What did you do with the money you earned?
133. How much would you get paid in those days? Was that a good amount comparatively?
134. How many jobs did you do? Can you name them? Can you describe them? Why did you leave them?
135. When and why did you decide to have kids? Were they planned?
136. How prevalent was mental illness in the Greek community?
   Can you describe some people that you thought or others thought weren’t mentally stable?
137. What do you think that you’ve learnt through your migration experiences?
138. What characteristics did you learn that you had or had to develop to cope with life in a new and different country?
139. How did you cope with stress? How did others around you cope with stress?
140. Did you write home? Did they write to you? What would you say? What would you send? What would they say? What would they send?
141. What were you good at? What talents did/do you possess? What talents do you wish you possessed?
142. What opportunities did you miss that you now regret?
143. Where did you go to meet other Greek men and women? Can you describe the Greek courting ritual?
144. Who would you visit to get advice or help from? e.g. friend, priest, Greek counselors?
145. Did the Greeks when they first arrived keep to themselves? What was that like?
   Did they help each other and have a strong sense of group identity? Why/why not?
146. How would the Greeks react to perceived racism to another fellow Greek? Do you know of any cases?
147. What did the ‘writing on the wall’, or graffiti say with regards to the southern European migration?
148. Do you think Multiculturalism is good for Australia? What do you think Australia has gained by introducing migrants to this country? What have you gained?
149. How important is money to the working migrant? How do you prioritize your money?
150. What is your concept of family? How important is family to you? How would/did you take a child moving out of home? Would you react the same for both sexes?
151. What do you think family is to an Australian?
152. What do you think that I as a researcher should do to capture the essence of Hellenism in Australia and what it means to be Greek?
153. Do you think this type of research is important? Why?
154. What do you think is the best way to understand and record the experiences of migrants?
- Is there anything more that you would like to tell me about you migration experiences?
- Is there any area that you think I’ve missed and should explore?
- Are there any questions that you would like to ask me?
- Do you know of any other Greek individuals and families that you think might be interested in participating in this research?

- What are your overall impressions of this session? How did you find it? Can you provide any feedback?

Notes
Southern Strangers- In Search of the Lucky Country
Migrant Interview Questions- Short Form

1. What did you first think of Australia? Your Initial impressions?
2. How did you arrive? Can you describe the journey and your anticipations/feelings about coming to a foreign country?
3. Did you know any English?
4. How did the Australian people treat you?
5. Can you recall any instances of racism that you encountered?
7. What was your first job here in Australia?
   Can you describe it? The conditions? Your boss? etc.
8. What would you do for leisure?
9. What were your overall impressions of the Australian culture?
10. Can you tell me some of the stereotyping that the Greeks held about Australia and Australian culture when you first arrived? Why do you say that? Has this changed at all today? If so to what?
11. Can you tell me some of the stereotyping that you think Australian’s hold or have held with regards to the Greek culture and its people? Why do you say that? Do you think it has changed? Why/ why not?
12. What were you most afraid of being in Australia? Why?
    When were you least afraid? Why?
13. What were/are some of the positive things about migrating and being in Australia?
14. What were/are some of the negative things about migrating and being in Australia?
15. What do you think the Australians think of the Greeks being here in Australia? Do you think this view has changed since the Greeks first arrived? In what way?
16. If you had a friend back in Greece who was thinking of coming to Australia, What would you tell him/her? Is this view different to when you first arrived? In what way?
17. Can you recall any unhappy moments in Australia? What made you unhappy here?
18. Can you recall any happy moments in Australia? What made you happy here?
19. Did the Australian government provide adequate services to assist the new arrivals? How fair do you think the government was in terms of support?
20. What do you think it means to be Greek? Do you think that is different from being Greek in Australia (or a Greek Australian?)
21. Do you feel that you have lost some of the old culture from the old country? Why do you say that?
22. What was the Australian landscape like when you first arrived? What do you think about the rate of development?
23. How much do you feel that migrants contributed to this rate of development?
24. What are the Greek values, in terms of tradition, expected life roles, upbringing, jobs, education, and gender? Have these changed at all in Australia?
25. What were your expectations of Australia/Australians before you arrived? How was Australia/Australians depicted in the Greek media?
26. Do you think Australia has been 'the lucky country' for you, if yes why, if no why not?
27. How would you improve the migration experiences for other migrating Greeks? What should Australia have done when the Greeks first arrived?
28. Can you recall what the Australian media was saying about the new arrivals? How do you think they portrayed us? How do they portray us now? How do we portray ourselves?
29. What do you think the future holds for you?
30. What are your goals/dreams now?
31. What do you feel that you have achieved in the past years of being in Australia?
32. How important is/was the Greek Orthodox religion to you, particularly when you were migrating?
33. What do you think got you through the hard times?
34. How was it seen by family and the Greek community for a Greek person to be dating or marrying someone from a different culture? Was it seen the same for women and for men? Which cultures were tolerated and which ones were not?
35. Can you describe some of your gender roles?
36. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants? What would you like the government to hear?
37. What did you want by coming to Australia?
38. Can you describe yourself, your personality, your traits?
39. What motivated you to migrate?
40. Do you believe that you and your children have experienced or are still experiencing bi-cultural socialization?
41. What do you feel that your identity is?
42. What do you think your children’s identities are?
43. Did you experience the threat of losing your own cultural identity when you first came to Australia? What was that like?
44. Do you feel that your children will not carry your traditions over to the next generation? How does this make you feel?
45. What do you think a lucky country is?
46. Do you think migrants should be given a voice? Why? What would you like to say as a migrant?
47. Do you feel that it is important to express and communicate these experiences to others? Why? To whom in particular?
48. How do you interpret the years that you have lived? What have they meant to you?
49. What do you think is the best way to understand and record the experiences of migrants?
50. What did you know about Australia and Australians before you came here?
51. How would you define ‘successful’? How would you define ‘failure’?
52. Out of a rating of one to ten (ten being the highest), how good do you think Australians as hosts treated their new guests?
53. What do you think the purpose of life is?
54. Do you feel your children are confused as to what nationality they are? Why?
55. Are you satisfied with what you have achieved so far being in Australia? Why?
56. How important do you think the church is in Greek culture? Why?
57. What does it mean to have ‘a good reputation’? How important is reputation in the Greek community here and back in Greece? Is there a difference?
58. What would you have done differently if you were to migrate here again? What opportunities would you take advantage of?
59. How did you feel leaving Greece? Can you recall your last day?
60. When you first arrived, what were the procedures? What were you expected to do, or expected to stay? (migrant hostels, barracks- where were these? What were they called?) Were the procedures the same for people that had family here and were staying with them?
61. What thoughts dominated your mind? What would you think about just before going to bed, or when awakening?
62. How prevalent was mental illness in the Greek community? Can you describe some people that you thought or others thought were not mentally stable?
63. What do you think that you’ve learnt through your migration experiences?
64. What characteristics did you learn that you had/or had to develop to cope with life in a new and different country?
65. How did you cope with stress? How did others around you cope with stress?
66. Was suicide/attempted suicide prevalent in the Greek community amongst the new arrivals? Did you hear of any cases? What aspects do you think contributed to this act?
67. What opportunities did you miss that you now regret?
68. Do you think Multiculturalism is good for Australia?
69. What do you think Australia has gained by introducing migrants into this country? What have you gained?
70. What do you think that I as a researcher should do to capture the essence of Hellenism in Australia, and what it means to be Greek?

Are there any other aspects of migration and/or the Greek culture that you feel that I should be focusing on? Is there anything more that you would like to tell me about your migration experiences? Are there any questions that you would like to ask me?

Do you know of any other Greek people that you think might be interested in participating in this research? What are your overall impressions of this session? Can you provide any feedback?

Notes
1. What were your feelings about coming to a foreign country?
2. What did you first think of Australia?
3. How did the Australian people treat you?
4. Did the Australian government provide adequate services to assist?
5. Can you recall some of the difficult times?
6. Can you recall any instances of racism that you encountered?
7. What did the Australian government expect of you?
8. Can you describe your first jobs here in Australia?
9. What thoughts dominated your mind when you first arrived?
10. Why did you come to Australia? a. What motivated you to migrate?
11. What were your overall impressions of the Australian lifestyle and culture?
12. What are the positive things about migrating to Australia?
13. What are the negative things about migrating to Australia?
14. How much do you believe that migrants contributed to Australia’s development?
15. What do you feel that you have achieved in the past years being in Australia?
16. What do you think Australia has gained by introducing migrants to this country?
   What have you gained?
17. What do you think it means to be Greek? a. Has that changed living in Australia?
18. Do you think Australia has been ‘the lucky country’ for you?
19. In what way has the Greek Australian changed from the Greek back home?
20. If you had a friend back in Greece who was thinking of coming to Australia, what would you tell him/her?
21. How would you improve the migration experiences for other Greeks?
   a. What should Australia had done when the Greeks first arrived?
22. What do you feel that your identity is? a. Has it changed living in Australia?
23. What do you think your children’s identities are?
24. If Greece and Australia were at war, who would you fight for?
   a. Who do you think your children would fight for?
25. What do you feel is important for cultural identity?
26. What have you learnt through your migration experiences?
27. What would you have done differently if you were to migrate here again?
28. Where do you see the Australian Greek culture in another 50 years time?
   a. How does that make you feel?
29. If you were handed the microphone at a Greek festival here in Australia, what would you say on behalf of your fellow migrants?
   a. What would you like the Government to hear?
30. What are your goals and dreams for the future?
31. Do you think this type of research is important? Why?
32. If you had one wish what would it be?
33. Is there anything more that you would like to tell me about your migration experiences?
34. Are there any questions that you would like to ask me?
Southern Strangers—In Search of the Lucky Country
Greek Migrant Focus Group Questions

1. What are the bad things about migration?

2. What are the good things about migration?

3. How would you improve migration for others?

4. Why did you migrate to Australia?

5. Do you think Australia has been “the lucky country” for you? Why?

6. What do you think Australia has gained by introducing migrants into this country?

7. If you had one wish, what would it be?

- Is there anything more that you would like to tell me about your migration experiences?

- What are your overall impressions of this session? Can you provide any feedback?
Are You a Greek Migrant?

Are you interested in expressing your migration experiences? Nicholas Grapsias, a research student from the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur is asking for volunteers to be part of an interview and focus group session, which will examine the *Experiences, Expectations and Concerns of Greek migrants within Australia*. This is a chance for you to share your stories, to have your say- *has Australia been ‘the lucky country’ for you?* This study will provide valuable recommendations to be made to Government and non-Government agencies, which will add to the well being of both migrants and their children. Research will commence 1st May 2001 and will end 31st August 2001. If you are interested or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact Nicholas on 0415 620 383.
Are You a Greek Migrant?

Are you interested in expressing your migration experiences? Nicholas Grapsias, a research student from the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur is asking for volunteers to be part of an interview and focus group session, which will examine the Experiences, Expectations and Concerns of Greek migrants within Australia. This is a chance for you to share your stories, to have your say- has Australia been ‘the lucky country’ for you? This study will provide valuable recommendations to be made to Government and non-Government agencies, which will add to the well being of both migrants and their children. Research will commence 1\textsuperscript{st} May 2001 and will end 31\textsuperscript{st} August 2001. If you are interested or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact Nicholas on the number provided below.
Είστε Έλληνας μετανάστης;

Ενδιαφέρεστε να εκφράσετε τις μεταναστευτικές σας εμπειρίες; Ο Νικόλαος Γραψιάς, φοιτητής ερευνητής από το Πανεπιστήμιο Δυτικού Σύδνεϋ Macarthur ζητά εθελοντές για να συμμετάσχουν σε μια συνέντευξη και μια ομαδική συνάντηση εργασίας που θα εξετάσει τις Εμπειρίες, Προσδοκίες και Ανησυχίες των Ελλήνων Μεταναστών στην Αυστραλία. Έτσι σας προσφέρεται η ευκαιρία να μοιραστείτε τις ιστορίες σας και να πείτε τη γνώμη σας - ήταν για σας η Αυστραλία "η τυχερή χώρα"; Απόρροια της μελέτης αυτής θα είναι πολύτιμες προτάσεις που θα υποβληθούν σε Κυβερνητικούς και μη-Κυβερνητικούς φορείς με σκοπό τη βελτίωση της ευμεταξίας των μεταναστών και των παιδιών τους. Η έρευνα αρχίζει την 1η Μαΐου 2001 και θα περατωθεί τις 31 Αυγούστου 2001. Αν ενδιαφέρεστε ή θέλετε περισσότερες πληροφορίες παρακαλείστε να επικοινωνήσετε με το Νικόλα στον αριθμό που παρατίθεται πιο κάτω.
Είστε Έλληνας μετανάστης;

Ενδιαφέρεστε να εκφράσετε τις μεταναστευτικές σας εμπειρίες; Ο Νικόλαος Γραψίας, φοιτητής ερευνητής από το Πανεπιστήμιο Δυτικού Σύδνεϋ Macarthur ζητά εθελοντές για να συμμετάσχουν σε μια συνέντευξη και μια ομαδική συνάντηση εργασίας που θα εξετάσει τις Εμπειρίες, Προσδοκίες και Ανησυχίες των Ελλήνων Μεταναστών στην Αυστραλία. Έτσι οι εμπειρίες να μοιραστείτε τις ιστορίες σας και να πείτε τη γνώμη σας - ήταν για σας η Αυστραλία "η τυχερή χώρα"; Απόρροια της μελέτης αυτής θα είναι πολύτιμες προτάσεις που θα υποβληθούν σε Κυβερνητικούς και μη-Κυβερνητικούς φορείς με σκοπό τη βελτίωση της ευημερίας των μεταναστών και των παιδιών τους. Η έρευνα αρχίζει την 1η Μαίου 2001 και θα περατωθεί τις 31 Αυγούστου 2001. Αν ενδιαφέρεστε ή θέλετε περισσότερες πληροφορίες παρακαλείστε να επικοινωνήσετε με το Νικόλα στον αριθμό (02) 4578 3775 και 0415 620 383.
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Southern Strangers

Nicholas Grapsias
Southern Strangers
Nicholas Grapsias

A Cycle of Poetry on the Experiences of Greek Migrants

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About The Author

Born into a poor Greek migrant family in Newtown, Sydney, Nicholas Grapsias started writing poetry at the age of eleven as a positive means to deal with the often difficult experiences associated with having bi-cultural socialization. He completed science at university and went on to study Psychology and Creative Writing. As an Intern Psychologist, Nicholas has worked in juvenile detention centers, with the frail and aged, with brain injured and developmentally disabled clients. He has lectured in Creative Writing and has been a supervisor for the Master of Arts (Creative Writing) degree at the University of Western Sydney, whilst completing his doctorate and internship. Southern Strangers is the final major work of his Ph.D. (Creative Arts) degree, supervised by Gary Langford, Senior Lecturer in Humanities at the University of Western Sydney.
"So often I think of our people - those eternally persecuted, long-suffering Greeks - and I am overcome with emotion and compassion and admiration. How many thousands of years we've been fighting, clinging to these stones and the unfertile earth; while the barbarians sweep over us in continuous waves; and still we endure. And not only have we endured, but we have also found the time and strength to give the world the two most precious gifts: freedom of soul and clearness of mind. We were the first to understand the process of thinking, and through it we brought order to chaos and freed the soul from fear."

Nikos Kazantzakis
(The Fratricides, 1964)
for Gary Langford

you were always my 'shoe-maker,'
you gave me a tongue
and a thick sole
to carry it far...
Malamata
mud
delivers him
her brown cracked hands
her scythe by the bed

she offers a breast
a breath from her lung
to all the children
of Malamata

mud
Andonis’s first pair of shoes...
Malamata

Here, the old villagers say –
‘Better to lose an eye than your reputation,’
in this land where the sun rises over Papou’s olive farms
and sets in the marble mountains, still sparkling
with the ‘Judas of English Liras.’
Restless River Morno, twisting like a severed snake,
salty with the blood of Turkish, German and Civil Wars,
haunted with the dusk-cry of our stolen Yenitsari children,
ghost of Ephialtes still hanging from trees –
the people of Malamata, champions with the shovel,
they have dug many graves…

This is the land where Mussolini once drove through,
claiming he will take it over ‘with songs and guitars,’
‘with flowers and condoms,’
this is the home of the Tsoulides war-cry – “AERA!!”
run Makaronades, run.

The barefoot children play gouroupa
with a tin can and their mothers wash-beating stick,
slithers of frozen mud cutting their feet,
the children bend nails when they step on them.

The shrill of the panayiri lamb,
throat bleeding into the fire on ‘Saint of Plenty Harvest.’
Mud-brick church, arched terracotta roof tiles,
here village teenagers show off their new clothes
and eye-code secret lovers, where to meet later.

They will tell you about miracles and superstitions,
about ‘the Evil Eye’, ‘the Mati’, ‘the Jinx,’
don’t you dare praise them – ‘Piousou! Piousou!’
they spit on you, over their own chests,
the old black scarfed ladies with lightening eyes,
secretly pinned with filahitories, a crochet cocoon
of holy bread, garlic and church blessed olive oil.

They will tell you stories, the mora of the succubus,
the ‘diavolo’ that jumped on the back of Jimi’s horse
as he rode through midnight farms,
the night border soldier, his head twisted 180 degrees
by the dancing Neraides ghost ladies –
the beautiful liturgy from a locked and empty church,
the crying of Mother Mary that only children can hear.

Gossiping women cross their chest three times as they speak,
‘blue-eye’ talisman and crucifix around their necks,
gypsy reading your future in your coffee cup.
The roads glow at night with the kandilaki of the dead,
and the flicker of silent shadows that light them.
This tongue of road, fattened well over 400 years
from licking Greek blood off the Turkish sword –

‘Secret Schools’ teach our children the Alphavitario,
where Klefs and freedom fighters wait
with muskets and knives, with the ‘Friendly Society,’
whispering, ‘Freedom or Death...Freedom or Death...’
The War Song of Martyr Poet Rigas Velesstinis,
echoing through the corridors of our hearts,

“Better one hour of free life...”

here, is where we struck down the closest Turk
with whatever we had, war shrilling in the ‘1821 Up-Rising’
with Xanthos, Skouphos, Tsakaloff, Makriyannis, Nikitas
Kolokotronis –

“ZITETO I ELLADA, ZITETO ELEFTERIA!!” – here,
the people of Malamata, ready to die beside them...

A village of 220 people, young boys carry hunting rifles,
expert swingers of the scythe, cutting trifili in the snake fields,
the venom sucking children carry blood stained tourniquets.
They say these children are sharp as razors – ‘artsidia,’
they could steal the very trousers you’re wearing
and you would not even notice! They play ‘Two Up,’ Striflo,
pockets full of ‘talira,’ mouths with the bubble-gum of vulgar wit –

“And I’ll have a serving of nothing,
with a generous sprinkling of none on-top thanks!!”

shouts my ten year old cousin Niko
when the waiter forgot to collect his order.

The old men say, ‘whoever hasn’t got brains, has legs,’
in the Kafeno they drink to each other’s health, “stin ighea sas!”
raising their small cups of thick Turkish coffee, briki made,
sweet wood-fire smell, they play tavli on Gypsy made tables,
talking politics and war – they too are ‘artsidia,’
watching their friends don’t ‘laugh them’ out of a single Drachma,
komboloi like toasted vertebrates resting by their sides.
Here, the old men drag you by the earlobes if you’re a naughty boy.

 Yiayia prepares dinner, reheating meat stored in pillina pots,
covered with hardened animal fat, macaronia with feta cheese
that salt-burns your mouth, spanokopita and fasolada,
retsina and pickled olives, corn bread buttered with lard
and sprinkled with sugar –
the table gathers, crowding with children, relatives and friends,
“Kalos orisata,” shouts Papou raising his glass of wine,
“Kalos sas vrikame,” they shout back, eating, joking and laughing,
as the sun sets in Malamata...
Kalimera Mitera

Yiayia rolls her black sleeves up
as the sun juices over the fog-fleeced mountains,
she pours the ksinoghalo into a tall wooden cylinder.

Old shovel handle, hole-punctured metal plate
nailed to the end of it, she places it into the cylinder.

With force and vigor, she raises it up and down
like a hunch-back ringing church bells
the frothing milk,
the sweat running down her handkerchief face,
her dark armpits staining darker.

Her hands, smelling of goat’s teats,
swollen leather knuckles, work toasted
as if pickled in her own blister water
she spoons out butter into a clay pot.

She walks into the kitchen
and cuts up the warm loaf of yellow corn bread,
butting them, she hands one to little Andonis –
"Kalimera Mitera," he says kissing her on the cheek.
"Bartoskayia!"

Eight year old Andonis stares out the classroom window, he watches the winter birds settle upon the school roof.

As soon as the morning break-bell rings, he bolts out of the school, running all the way home. Yiayia plucks a chicken on the back step –
"What are you doing home?" she yells
"Getting something to eat mama"
"Na pas quickly, back to scholi!"

Andonis tiptoes into his father's room, he carefully picks up the double barreled shot gun. He tiptoes into his brother Jimmi's room and puts on his 'hlemi' military overcoat, the woolen hem splashing through mud puddles as he runs back to school, hiding the gun underneath.

The kids were playing when he runs into the yard, the birds were still there – Andonis takes out the gun, he falls onto one knee and props it onto his thigh, lining up the sight he fires – "BOOOOM!!"

Four kalimanes fall, twitching and spinning, along with pieces of the tile roof, the teachers yell –
"Andoni!! Ahx Andoni Grapsa!!" They chase him as he quickly grabs the lice-infested birds and runs, "Come back 'aliti... come back!!"

"Andoni!" his father yells, "Where did you get those?"
"On the school roof"
"With what?"
"With your gun"...

"Bravo Andoni!" he says slapping him on the back, "Bravo re! From now on 'bartoskayia' and hunting!"
Andonis hands the birds to Yiayia –
"I said I was getting something to eat mama." He smiles, she slowly shakes her head.
1940: The 1st Andartiko

Before we had time
to let our secret revolutionary smiles fade,
the Germans drove their jeeps into Malamata...

"Freedom fighters of Greece!
If only you saw how they marched
into the first house of our village,
lined up Stelios, his wife Vicki,
his daughter Irine upon a street wall,
and shot them!"

How they dragged old men from the Kafenia—
mothers murmuring, rocking on their knees,
holding their dead children...

Freedom fighters! Hitler and Metaxas are friends!
they went to university together in Verolimo.
The Fuhrer warned us — 'a peaceful walk-through,
for every German killed, 100 Greek civilians,
for every tank destroyed, 100 Greek civilians.'

My poor patriotes, the wars our nation has endured,
from 'the Persians' to 'the Ottomans'
from 'Smyrna' to 'World War Two'

100 Greek civilians
100 Greek civilians,
the blood-springs of Mother Hellas will never run dry...

Do not throw blankets into their tank wheels,
do not hold secret resistance meetings —
let us peacefully die of hunger in the winter streets,
let them take our white lambs to feed their Great army,
for the Lord Byron in my heart

is

D
E
A
D.
O Karagiozis

The barefoot children run after him,
laughing and yelling as he sings,
riding his horse and cart into Malamata –
"Ei O Karagiozi is coming, O Karagiozi..."

Papou and village friends row the tavern chairs,
Yiaia prepares him room, the Karagiozi is here.

Five Drachma’s each, for Patra’s favourite clown,
the Grapseti kids help hold his stick pictures
as he sings, playing his bouzouki, the villagers crowd,
singing with him, raising their drinks and shouting –
"To your health Karagiozi! To your health!"

They all laugh as puppets trot across the stage,
Barba Yioryis – the strong herdsman with the glitsa
who knew not of schooling, chases the Turkish Sultans,
kicks and punches, glass and nails,
throwing them out of windows,
how the clown Niomo would laugh and laugh
as the Turks roll through goat shit on the road

and poor fat Kolitiri, always eating –
"Babaka babaka"
"What is it son?"
"Babaka babaka, I’m hungry, I’m hungry."

And there is Zakinthos ‘the Cool’ – “Na poume re,”
who would slap Niomo like Abbot did Costello,
but don’t ridicule Stavrakas, he’s the tough manga
"Na vghalo to macheri, tha sou rixo merikes spathies!..."
"Babaka!"
"What re??"
"I’m hungry, I’m hungry..."

The thunder of the village’s laughter
who smell of dairy and sacred mud,
their roast lamb greased fingers and lips,
their Ouzo eyes shining in the firesight of Papou’s taverna –
"Ei O karagiozi, O karagiozi,”

the karagiozi is here!
O Kowbois

Karvelos sits outside Yiannis’ s taverna,
he drinks his morning short black.

Thick moustache like a boot-brush,
stern cabbage-wrinkled face,
he narrow watches each person that passes,
slightly nodding as they greet him.

   Karvelos is a communist killer,
   he wears two silver revolvers like a Texan –
   once across a cafe table, he shot a man dead
   for suspecting him being in the ‘K.K.E.’

Karvelos sees two men swiftly approaching,
he calmly takes a sip –
dark moons of his pupils rising
   he
   suddenly
   stands

striding towards them, his guns already out...

Karvelos walks back to his table,
he finishes his coffee.
1946: The 2nd Andartiko – (Grandma Panayiota’s Story)

Yiayia was at the back of her dairy
when she hears the police sirens and announcements –
"Everyone flee now, quickly! The Andartes are coming..."
Orange machine gun flashes from the mountains,
black columns of smoke from the next town,
parents yelling their children's names,
carrying infants as they run,
"The Andartes are coming! The Andartes are coming!!"

Yiayia quickly throws off her apron,
she picks up a piece of rope, shouting for her three sons,
she ties baby Maria to her chest
and toddler Andonis to the back of her neck.
She grabs a cow as her dog follows,
"You boys run ahead quickly!"

The charging yell of a thousand communist guerillas,
the partisans of 'The Greek Civil War,'
their cursing shouts, the jack-hammer of their guns –
long black beards, faces sprayed with blood,
holding severed heads, like brief cases...

the cries of children, the shrill of women,
villagers sprint past, spilling possessions,
old men run from the kafenia with their walking sticks,
falling into the streets, shouting to their grandchildren –
"Keep going, keep going for God's sake run!!
The Andartes are coming! Tha sas kopsoun ta kefalia..."

Yiayia runs alongside the river Morno,
stumbling, she falls upon the jagged coloured flint-stones,
cutting her knees, twisting her ankle –
she grasps her crying children, holding balance
so not to crush them, she groans in agony.

For two hours, she wrestles the mountains of Malamata,
reaching the village Grantsa, she bashes on her uncles door.
"What??" He shouts, "You've come here? With your Children?!
Straight to the wolves mouth you stupid woman, didn't you know,
my own sons are Andartes! And they're coming, quickly leave!!"
Yiayia starts to cry – "But where can I go Thanasi mou, where??"
"Leave now, can't you hear them, run!!"
"Where can I go? Where-can-I-go??" She runs down the hill...
Yiayia crosses the river, holding her infants over her head, the grey freezing waters slapping her flared nostrils. They hide in tree shadows as she milks the cow, palm ing the warm liquid to little Andoni’s and Maria’s lips.

After two hours, she reaches her cousin’s house, Alexandria’s brother answers the door.
“A! Cousin kalosorisate,” He says waving them in, Yiayia cautiously enters. “Where’s Alexandria?” “E, she’s not here, so your latest news, your husband fighting the Andartes in Naupaktos ei?” He places his feet on the table. Yiayia stares at his boots, British issued, the sole of traitors –
“What will happen here cousin?” She quietly asks, “I don’t know?” He smiles – Yiayia hastens for the door.
“Ei! Where are you going?” He laughs, “Sit!”
The sound of distant shouts and gunfire, as they run...

down towards Naupaktos –
there was no where left to go,
the red flesh-eating ants, lava swarm from the mountains
towards the fortified city...

Police cars and army trucks race into Naupaktos, followed by thousands of villages and their goats – Papou Nikolaos stands at the door, holding his rifle. Stelios gets out of his jeep, he walks to Papou slowly shaking his head – “Malamata is on fire, I’m sorry.” Papou starts to cry, he snatches the rifle from Stelios’s hands – “Niko!” Papou grabs a bottle of wine and runs to the high front.

Yiayia sprints across the beach Fanari
“Run!!” Bullets hiss through the water, whistling past, hitting sand-clouds up in front of them. She shrills at the top of her lungs as her right hand holds Maria, her left pushing Andonis into her neck – the closing razor-wire doors of the city

“Open the Doors!!...Oh God...Open the Doors, Please!!”
“I have to fight.” The soldier yells.
“Take my Children!! Please Christane mou PLEASE!!”
The soldier crouches down, he starts firing up at the Andartes – “Quickly, Hurry!!” Yiayia runs in as he slams the door, she collapses onto the ground. She wails in tears, rocking back and forth, holding her children, the villagers run to her, untying Maria and Andonis from her sweat soaked body...
Word spread quickly around the fortified city
about ‘that woman with the dog and cow,‘
‘that journey with her five children,’
Naupactos’s army captain wanted to meet her –
he gave her the best villa in the city to stay in,
he orders his soldiers to find Papou Niko,
“Tell him his wife and children are here.”

“My wife and children are dead!
Butchered by those Bolshevik bastards,”
Yells drunk Nikos as he fires both rifles into the mountains –
stumbling, he falls. “Ella Niko,” The soldiers laugh
as they pick him up

and carry him down.
Sto Ayiou Yioryi

the old man limps to the cart,
stacked with the bodies
of 147 young Greek men

two meter tall *pallikaria*
in their lice infested clothes,
their long black beards and faces
covered with flies and blood

one by one
he pulls up their top lip,
for the familiar gold tooth
    of his only son...
Paliopeda

There was not much farming to do during Malamata’s winters, sometimes the village youth would secretly go around during the evening and swap everyone’s cart wheels, putting little ones with the big ones – there was nothing funnier than seeing morning cursing farmers riding their limping carts to work – “Prousou! Paliopeda, the devil take you!...the devil to take you all!!” Or seeing them meet in the square, arguing as they try to sort out whose wheels were whose, the frustrated farmers shouting at each giggling kid that passed, pointing at the town’s ‘Y’ tree where they’d all skin their animals – “If we catch you, that’s where we’ll hang you!” It was that or gang fights. Malamata was divided into Pano Mahala and Kato Mahala, Andonis was in Pano Mahala, the upper part of town where the shops were. He and his fellow gang members could leisurely sit at his father tavern, drinking porto kalades and chase any Kato Mahala gang member all the way back down. They would imitate the old Achaeans of The Trojan War, honouring the bravest with names like Achilles, Odysseus, Agamemnon, Great Ajax and Diomedes...

Andonis points to a Kato Mahala member, “We’re going to rip you!” The Patra boy picks up a stone, he throws it – Andonis yells, holding his shin, blood gushing out between his fingers.
“I’m going to kill you.” He shrills, limping, the Patra boy runs.
Andonis calls his brothers, Jimmi and Yianni, they chase the boy all the way to his front door – “Better not step foot up town,” Andonis yells.
“He’s going to have to,” Jimmi shouts, “All the shops are there.”

It was two weeks later before they saw him again – there he was, at the Taravira’s Kafenio, wearing his best church clothes, sitting with the old men, drinking a lemonade –
“Huh, he thinks he’s safe,” Andonis says. “Give me your slingshot Yianni,”
“Crack his head open!” Yianni says, handing it over.
Andonis picks up a walnut sized rock, closing one eye and poking the tip of his tongue out, he pulls the elastic as far back as it could go

the Patra boy screams, falling off his chair and holding his left eye, blood saucing all over his face and shirt – “Shut!” Andonis yells,
“I got his eye, I’m dead! I’m dead!” He runs, throwing the slingshot.
The old men hold the boy still, forcing his hands away from his face – they sigh, smiling – “Endaxi, don’t worry, it’s nothing, it’s nothing,” as they inspect the deep slice on the socket bone...

Andonis slept at his cousin’s place for one week until he thought it was safe to go home, but as soon as he snuck back in, his mother grabbed him by the ear, and gave him ‘ena kislo’ with the stinging ivy vine tsouknda that grew in the backyard. “Your stupid little gang fights could have destroyed that child for life.” “Ah! Ah!” Andonis yells, as his mother hit, pretending it hurt more than it really did – he was glad to get it over with, he missed her cooking.
**O Amerikanos**

Everyone knew *Andonios* was a gangster, a luggage-bag full of stolen whisky money – *the Chicago man*

with a bow-tie, who chewed a cigar, lit or unlit, it never left his thin moustached mouth.

He had the same full name as little Andonis, sometimes he would receive the gangster’s mail. *Andonios’s* revolver, a snatch away as Andonis enters his room – “Bravo sporti bravo.” *Andonios* always flicked him a *taliro*.

*Andonios* was a champion boxer, he bought a tractor company and most of Malamata. Shaven every morning at 7am sharp by ‘Old Stamati,’ the *Naupactonian* barber – “Kalimerasas Andonios,” there was always a chair reserved for him.

Once his cousin was outside being shoved by three, *Andonios* politely excuses himself, wiping the soap from his face, he boxes all three men, turning their noses into ruptured tomatoes, *Andonios* calmly sits back in the barber’s chair and continues his conversation where he’d left off.

Once he heard of his good friend and wife – *murdered in Athens*, the friends he fled Chicago with. The whole village in silent awareness to let him know if anyone asks for him, even the shrewd street kids, who knew how to lie.

*Andonios* died a poor old man on rent in 1962, his gambling, drinking children… they say his blue lips were still clutching a cigar, his stiff hand, a revolver – *Andonios Nikolaos Grapsas* was my great uncle.
Brizoles

Uncle Yianni holds the white pig down,
as Uncle Mitzos cuts into its throat with a knife,
    warm red flesh
steaming in the sunny winter morning.

Mitzos sighs as the animal stills,
he picks up the axe and chops off its feet –
    "Patera will boil these up."

He knifes holes between the tendon and bone
of the back legs, passing rope through them,
he hoists the carcass up onto the ‘Y’ tree
outside Yiayia’s house.

Yiayia comes out of the shed with a wheelbarrow
as Mitzos slices the pig symmetrically open –
the coloured intestines and organs spilling into it.
Yiayia carts them off, placing them in the stone sink
under the trobo, she starts to rinse and dice them,
making her famous smoked loukanika.

Slit by slit, Yianni carefully skins
the hide off with a small knife,
    Mitzos assembles the spit,
as the village children laugh,
chasing each other with the chopped tail.
The Woman of my family

Every Saturday, pregnant Yiayia walks 60km
to Agrinio jail, the donkey beside her
saddled full with smoked loukanika,
cornbread, dried figs, cigarettes and wine –
she has long sewn up the bullet holes
in her black mourning dress.

They discharged her brother from Athens hospital.
She chews bread and honey,
spreading the beige paste over his wound,
bullet still lodged in his spine –
that block of wood he hit drunk Papou with
was now his walking stick.

Through the cold blind fog,
sweat rolls from her bronze Roman nose,
black scarfed like the reaper,
the shuffle of her cloth shoes, blister wet

my quiet Yiayia

who would say, "bean by bean, the bag fills,"
swollen blue veins weave over the tendons
of her callused hands –

she walks and walks and walks…
The Proxenia

After church, Andonis and Anna walk to the river, she pulls him towards her, the taste holy bread on her shivering lips...

The next morning Papou unstacks chairs in his taverna when Anna’s father and two older brothers walk in — "Marriage?" Papou yells, "Did she consent to sex? Did my son rape her?" They shake their heads, "Well then, my son is 13, he’s too young for marriage."
He continues placing chairs at tables.
Anna’s father pushes his chest out, he walks to him, "He will marry her or else!" Papou stops, "Or else what?"
"Come on re Niko! He spoilt her, he must marry her."
"She spoilt herself! Now get out of here, exo tora!!"
Papou shouts, slamming his hand on the back of a chair.

Andonis climbs out of bed, he smiles to himself as he thought about yesterday. Half asleep, he stupor’s down stairs — Papou suddenly bangs down his coffee, he quickly stands, tugging at his belt — "Ella edo esi!!" ripping it out from the loops, "So you want marriage ei?"
Papou yells running after him...

Andonis spent the first two weeks of his summer holidays in the room above the kafenio, the word was out — he was a dead little village boy.
Sometimes he’d see Anna’s brothers walking through, asking his friends where he was, once they saw him — "Come down kolopedo!" They point at their feet, gritting teeth and running a finger across their throats.

O Kowbois was in town, "Ella kato!" He says sternly, "I am here!" He pats his own chest, Andonis comes down, "I was five towns away and I still heard about it. The Poulos’s were going to hang you on the same tree where your father skins his Christmas pigs. " He laughs — "Bravo re Andoni," he says slapping his shoulder hard, "Just like your uncle Karvelos here."

Anna’s father and brothers see him sitting with Karvelos, they quickly walk past, ignoring them as Karvelos follows with one of his frost-bladed trademark stares —
they suddenly cancelled all wedding arrangements.
Father Tells – ‘Hunting with the Grapsei’

“There were five of us –
O Vagelis, O Karpos, O Andreas, O Christos and me,
I was just a kid, ‘pitsirikas.’

Niko, your grandfather would say –
“Andoni when hunting ducks in a group,
always take the beach position.
Look east at sunrise, look west at sunset,
you’ll see them flying in the horizon light,
not against the dark mountains.”
I run to the beach.

A duck takes flight –
I hear Vagelis’s ‘dikano’ shotgun – Dn! Dn!
I hear the duck ‘puag, puag, puag.’
Ah! I say, the duck is hit, then I hear Dn! Dn! Dn!
Ah! Still alive, Dn! Dn! Two more, three more,
three more again, then another two – 17 bullets!
As soon as I see the duck coming towards the beach
Bam! One bullet, down!
I quietly walk into the water and get it.

I had brother Jimmis old police jacket on.
I hang the duck from my belt and cover it.
Vagelis and Karpos were cursing –
“To Christo sas! Tis Panayias! Pitousou!
One duck cost us 17 bullets?!
The only duck in the whole bloody lake,
five of us and not one of us hit it!”

They keep cursing as I walk ahead,
suddenly the duck’s foot slips out from underneath
“Ihhh! Vre bastardo, kolopedo” Vagelis shouts,
“You hit the duck and we’re here cursing all this time
and you don’t say a thing??”

“Ah you clowns,” I say to them laughing, “You clowns.”
The Village Ilithio

Theo Tzamaris is 35, he has the common sense of a village goat. He makes up for his stupidity with his amazing athletic feats — he is the strongest swimmer in Naupaktos.

He struts down the main street in his tight trunks, swinging his stocky arms and smiling at the girls. The local legend with a following of kids, he dive bombs into the sea.

Sometimes he’d swim all the way to cargo ships, sometimes he’d try to climb them as they spill hot water down on him — today he swims towards the Greek Naval Vessels, but as he approaches, he sees a soldier with a gun shouting, "Shark!" and firing into the water.

Theo Tzamaris — the village ilithio, suddenly dives under and headlocks the sinking carcass, he side-swims it back, dragging up a swordfish.

"Aide Andoni," he shouts, "Get my wheelbarrow, we’ll take this to your old man in Malamata, he’ll hang the nose-spear on his taverna wall."

The kids laugh as he zigzags it all over the road, villagers shaking their heads, smiling and yelling — "A re Tzamaris, when will you ever grow brains?"
Father Says,

Yiayia was the prettiest girl in Malamata, she had many offers for *proxenia*...

Holding a basket of picked vegetables, she walks past the kafenio on her way home.

Her brother watches from the distance as he stacks bags of wheat onto a cart – the *manges* sit at the outside tables, laughing as they drink and smoke, they whistle at her.

One gets up and walks in front of her, dancing a *mangiko* with his arms out – *"Allo kouklara mou,"* he says smiling, her brother runs,

he whips him around, punching him once with his chimney fist – a nauseating crack, he watches him fall and never get up...

Father says, my Great Uncle Andonis was the strongest man in Malamata – after many years he died in *Agrinio* Jail.

After many years, Yiayia still picks wild wheat and lays it upon his grave.
Ta Horafia

Andonis was ten
when he started working his father’s lands,
all day he would lift *trifili* bails, bags of grain,
dig irrigation trenches all the way to the river,
slash at corn with his sickle, the jagged roots –

*shattered fingers of the dead,*
*reaching for him out of Charos.*

Trembling with sweat in the whipping sun,
he groans with the dragging mules,
pushing the rusty claws that tear open the *horafia,*
birds feeding on the wriggling arteries of worms.

*Yiayia* works alongside, bent over and hacking –

*the sweat and blood stained*
*wooden handle of her sickle,*

the sunken black moats around her eyes,
webbed with the roasted veins of autumn leaves.

Bouquet of yellow wheat stacked high on her back –
now and then, she would slowly rise as if coming up for air,
holding her heart, she wipes the sweat from her face,
looking up at the sun’s angle, she lowers again.

Sometimes you would see her quietly chop at a snake,
kicking the red twisting pieces aside to the birds.
Sometimes the only thing she would say all day –

*“The land wants our ‘haema’ Andoni,*
*here, we spit blood my son, we spit blood”...*
Yasou Patrida

He woke early,
pink dawn smears a lightly feathered sky,
he stares at the mountains of Malamata.

He stares at his mother,
sprinkling corn to the chickens —
*handful by handful they rain,*
*solidified, stale and yellow,*
*like the tears she has held for today.*

Andonis opens his suitcase —
*one pair of underwear and trousers, one shirt,*
he closes it and stares around the room.
His father enters, "*Some money for your trip,*
*let's hope no blonde Aufstraleza breaks your heart.*"
Andonis smiles.

Yiayia waits for him at the bottom of the stairs,
wiping her tears —
*Aide my child,*
*you too go to Australia and prosper,*
*good luck and don't stray.*
She puts her strong mahogany hands around his face,
she kisses both his cheeks.

Brother Yianni drives Andonis to Pireaus —
there, The Patris, like a floating Parthenon, Andonis boards.
Yianni stands on the wharf,
he lifts his crossed arms up and uncrosses them,
Andonis nods back, raising an open palm, *all is done...*

Andonis stares at the meter of water
that separates the ship from his homeland —
*"How many 'meters' away?"
*When now, will I ever see my 'Patrida' again?"
*Then tin hortasa akoma, then tin hortasa."*

Kazantzidis's 'Songs of the Diaspora'
play over the ships speakers —
*"Ora kalisou Petro mou, ora kalisou Ilea"*
as The Patris sounds and pulls out —
a single tear runs down Andonis's cheek and falls
into
the
sea.

[ 32 ]
Florina
Sophia
slowly walks out of Florina
holding an old brown suitcase,
now and then

she looks back to see her mother
standing on the grape hill
above their home, shrouded black.

Sophia turns away,
a hand over her trembling mouth
as she listens to her mother
crying and crying,

moaning like a whale song
that could be heard

three valleys away...
The Kandilaki Man

Every 3am, Papou Yiorgho rises, black tsoka-wool overcoat, he walks into the snow filled streets.

He stops at a kandilaki –
   dark lantern beside the road,
   roofed by a rusty crucifix,
he opens the small glass door.

He lights the scorched wick that stems from a cork medallion, floating in a cup of water and olive oil

the flame, like blood
into the pale weather-faded photograph of the dead,

the man who seldom goes to church, crosses himself
   and walks to the next one.
Loukoumia

Outside Sunday school
he waits for her,
hands behind his back,
swinging a brown komboloi,
Sophia runs to him.

He lifts her up,
carrying her on his shoulders –
   the safe scent of his hair
   like fireplace and wild tea,
they walk past the cake shop.

Papou stops –
"Only if you eat all your dinner
otherwise mama will know."
"I promise," Sophia says,
doing a quick sign of the cross.
"Good," he smiles

"Pame mesa."
Great Grandfather Thomas,

was a chef, he owned a seafood restaurant, a Constantinople department store.

He had a thin moustache, carried a leather pounghi money pouch, he'd buy fur coats for his wife Athina, forbid her to work or associate with the poor.

Great Grandfather Thomas trusted no one, at night he would dig holes in his estate gardens and bury tins filled with gold liras – Great Grandfather Thomas disappeared

on a business trip to Bulgaria, the year Turkey closed its Constantinople borders,

they say he was robbed and murdered by gypsy women – he liked his wine, his tavern bouzoukia, they never found his body.

Along with his tins, still buried today, in some Turks backyard.
“Opla Kato!”

Papou worked the big guns
on Florina’s monastery mountains,
he didn’t fire a single shell –
“Guns down! Guns down!”

An endless convoy of German tanks,
trucks, jeeps and motorcycles
slowly termite into the city,
officers shouting through megaphones,
troops blowing kisses to women.

Farmers in the hayfields rise to look,
cafe conversations and tavli games cease,
drinks spill as the outside tables tremble,
gypsies still holding out their hands,

shop owners lean in their doorways,
the deafening crush of trodden gravel,
the warm smell of machinery – the drone
shivering through cutlery and jars,
through organs and bones

no one says a word as they all stare –
Churchill’s radio rumor, worlds away

here...
Visitor

Papou sits on the couch,  
baby Toulia in a crib beside him,  
he places a hand-gun  
under her warm sleeping body,  
holding it, door aimed.

His head tilts as he lightly sleeps –  
the room suddenly darkens,  
Papou opens his eyes,  
   a German soldier  
stands in the doorway,  
hand resting on a machine gun,  
he walks in.

“Sleip! Sleip?”  
Papou slowly nods –  
the soldier stares into his eyes,  
silent and still,  
    not a blink between them,  
Papou feels for the trigger

the German soldier firmly turns  
and walks out of the house.
Prodota

Hands stiff behind his back,
the young SS officer
turns to look at her.
Wearing her mother’s rouge,
beautiful Daphne smiles,
she points to a mud-brick house,
"Communiste," she says blushing.

"Communiste? Ya? Ya?"
She schoolgirl nods –
"Danke,"
pulling out his hand-gun,
the SS officer puts it to her head
and fires –

he points to three of his troops,
then up at the house
as her body twitches on the ground.
The young SS officer
takes out a handkerchief,
he wipes the blood-spray from his arm
and walks away.
O Stignos Agimatias

Papou walks to the SS officer with his toolbox, he silently waits, head down as the officer jokes with his men, their black polished boots, reflecting the passing clouds.

"Ah! My favourite Greek mechanic."
The officer walks along a row of parked trucks, slapping the bonnets hard - “This one, this one...” Papou nods, he quickly walks to the first.

'Another fleet, stolen Greek produce, ' Papou thinks, 'the blue-bloated Elinopedia, rotting in the streets’...

They stare at him as they talk and smoke in a circle, sometimes they would laugh – he knew they were mocking him.

Papou closes the last bonnet, he waits beside it, head low, the officer swiftly approaches – “You have children ya?” Papou looks up, he hesitates – “Kinda? Paedi? Ya??” “Ya,” Papou whispers, a cold tremble through his heart as he stares into the officer’s iceberg eyes

the officer walks off jumping into the back of a truck, he returns with jars of rose jam, pushing them into Papou’s hands – “For your family!”
Young Michalis,

stumbles as the German soldiers shove him forward
holding machine guns to his back.
His mother, his little brothers and sisters cry,
pleading behind – "He's not communist.
He's not communist. Leave my child, please."

"Tasta!" The villagers yell, running to them,
"My son!! They're going to hang my son!!"
Uncle Petros sprints to the soldiers–
"Listen please, I know the family,
the boy is not communist. They lied to you,
his father has died, his mother is sick,
this boy is feeding the whole family.
Please, they lied, he is not communist."
The German soldiers keep walking.

Uncle Petros bolts home, he grabs his shotgun.
Barba Jimmi holds him – "No re Petro! You'll kill us.
Look at all the children around you,
they won't leave one alive by tonight."

"Pitousou!" Uncle Petros spits, shaking his head,
pausing, he suddenly runs back to the soldiers –
"Leave the boy, you take me,
you take me!" He shouts, poking himself
hard in the chest – "Aglimatis! Murderers!"

Young Michalis continues up to the tree,
black birds on the shoulders of hung communists,
pecking at their fly-peppered faces,
he stands on the potato box as they tie his hands
behind his back, placing a noose over his head,

the entire town has gathered, weeping and wailing,
his mother shrills, collapsing – Michalis closes his eyes,
waiting for them to kick the box

without a word,
the German soldiers turn around and walk away.
Polio

On the sofa, beside the oven wood fire
Sofia sleeps, still as death.
Yiayia Katina beside her,
a gold cross in her trembling hands.

Now and then,
she would pray to the Panayia.
The teacher with eight tongues
stares at the candle flame –
"Please, I will come to you on my knees"...

It burns long and still,
an orange web over the apostle ikones
that surround it,
     the still eyes following.
the cold raw smell of snow
     creeping under the door...
Enemy

On her way to school,
little Sophia skips past the SS officers.

One of their
German shepherds growls —

Suddenly

it leaps on-top of her,
pushing her to the ground,
it bites into her arms

the officer shouts,
running to his dog,
He pulls out a hand-gun,
    and instantly shoots it dead.
Smyrna, 1922 – Interview with a 97-year-old Migrant

I

Katina’s mother pushes her forward – “Trexé! Trexe quickly to the boats!” The Turks fire into the fleeing crowd, swinging swords from horseback, shouting, “Death to all Giaours!”

Katina runs, clasping the gold lira mama gave her, she stumbles over the blasted bodies that fall in front, shrilling infants crawling over their dead mothers...

Greek men shout, lowering boats, Katina quickly enters, she watches as the crowded vessels overturn, parents throwing their children into them as the Turks slash bodies floating in the crimson waters – “Row to the English ships quickly!! They’re here to help us”...

II

On their decks drinking tea, the English captains watch, laughing – a naval officer stands as they near

he raises a lira in his right hand, nods, swings his arm back in welcome. He raises his left, opening it – empty! He sweeps his hand forward as if to say – ‘Go back and die.’

Panicked peasants scale the ships – drawing swords, officers run to the sides, they chop at hands and fingers, kicking the rolling digits back at them – the strangling screams of seagulls the arches of blood, the English continue pouring down pots of boiling oil – the shrill of old women and children, holding their melting scalps, their bubbling faces

Katina covers herself with her scarf, she bows down into the boat, yelling as she feels the scorching splash over her back

the English officer shouts, swiftly raising his lira –

Katina raises hers as he snatches it, as he lifts her on board...
The S.A.K. Man

Papou holds his daughter’s hand, watching the woman across plead with the ward nurse – “Please, my child, se parakalo...”

On a bare mattress, her cold-pimpled son lies still, head slanted limp, half closed eye.

Papou stares at the nurse, folding blankets with her back turned, ‘How much bribe money each day?’ He already handed her his.

The boy’s mother silently tears, toes worn through her mud-wet shoes, slight constant tremble of her head, the nurse walks out of the room.

Papou quietly gets up, following her. He reaches into his pocket and slams down a fold of money onto her desk —

shivering with startle, the nurse quickly looks up at him – “Now bring the boy a blanket!” He whispers.
“Anathema!!”

Uncle Vasili tiptoes up the hallway, carrying a small homemade axe, he slowly peers around the door. On the ground, his daughter weeps, rocking back and forth, clutching her lap, her torn school uniform – the German soldier buttons his trousers.

Uncle Vasili’s face trembles, his eyes frost over –
he tiptoes into the room,
his daughter looks up,
the German soldier turns around...

“Quickly!” He says to his daughter, “Bring me blankets.” He carefully scans the street through the front window.

Uncle Vasili wraps the body, tying it with wheat rope. He holds his crying daughter as they both stare at it, a shovel by his side – Uncle Vasili looks out the back door, into the yellow acres, waiting for dusk.
The Civil War (1946 – 1949)

S
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I

...they shoot at women running into the streets,

the infants they hold with their own bodies...

D
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G
The Boy Returned

Every night she is there, wrinkled in a black scarf, she holds her Andarte son’s hands through the jail bars.

A homemade blanket, a katsarola of bean soup, her seeping red eyes, she walks to Papou –

“I’m burying my husband tomorrow, let my son out to attend his father’s funeral, please”

“Oh, I’m sorry.”
The boy swiftly stands, “I will return!” Papou stares at him,

he has not had his first shave, whiskers on his pimled chin, “I will return, orkisome!” His blinking tearing eyes.

Papou walks to him – “Listen very carefully, if you don’t they will shoot me, but YOU will be pulling the trigger.”

“God bless you! God bless you!” Weeps the mother, gently touching Papou’s face, as he unlocks the cell.
The Ambelí

Papou rakes the moist soil into parallel mounds, he knows how much his family loves strawberries.

White sleeves rolled up, S.A.K railway boots –

tendons of his neck string tight,
ribbons of moving muscle of his forearms,
sweat zigzags down his peppered cheeks.

He could grow peaches and plums on one tree, they wanted him to teach at the university –

“No!” Papou said, “Busy!”

He couldn’t read or write.

Yiayia brings him a glass of cold water –

“You know those young soldiers are picking grapes from your ambelí again.”

Papou looks up at his acres – “Let them,” he says reaching for the glass, “Let the children eat.”
The Dance of Zalghou

The widowed women of Souli
hold their infants as they dance and sing
to the end of the cliff –

“...ehi yia kaimene kosme,
   ehi yia yiliki zoi...”

The Ottomans advance, cornering them

“...the fish cannot live without water,
   nor the Greek without Freedom” –

one by one
they throw their children over the edge
and leap after them,

as they dance and sing...
“Florina is Burning!”

Holding his coffee, Papou slowly stands, he watches smoke rise like black tornadoes from the town below – “Ohi! Ohi!” Grabbing his gun, he runs to the captain.

“Kapitano! Florina is burning! Leave requested to protect my family.” The captain stares through his binoculars...

“Kapitano! Leave requested, please!”

“I need you here,” he says getting into a jeep.

Suddenly Papou sprints down the mountain, “Arrest him!” The captain shouts, the armed policemen surround him – “Yiorgho! Don’t do anything stupid”... he drops his gun.

“My children!!” He tears, raising an arm towards the blazing city, “All of you would do the same if your families were down there, like our Kapitano is doing!!”

“Shoot him if he deserts.” The captain gets back into his jeep.

“Bastarde!! Ba-star-de!!”

Picking up his gun, Papou fires at his tyres – a sudden blow to the back of the head, Papou falls to the ground, he is still...
The Rantzos House

I

Yiayia stares through the open slice of curtain, slowly rubbing the gold cross around her neck, muffled hammerings of machine-gun fire, unfinished shrills — from house to house the communists went...

Yiayia walks into the kitchen, she tucks a long double-edged knife into her skirt pocket, she calls her children, humming the Song of Missolonghi,*

"... 'mothers send your children to sleep,' the Turks are coming to rape and kill them, to turn them into 'Yenitsari,' mothers, send your children to sleep..."

II

In the basement, behind Papou’s cobwebbed barrels of tsiporo they hide, Yiayia stares at the small dust-brown window below the ceiling, two grey shadows — "Rantsos’s house! He’s a policeman!"

Yiayia trembles, she takes out the knife, holding Sofia and Toula tight across her chest, she looks up, whispering ‘The Paterimon’...

"Kiria Katina! We know you and your children are in there," he knocks ‘Three-Hard-Times’ —

"The first knock means, your husband is kind, the second knock, he does not gossip or betray, the third — he saved an Andarte boys life. You are the only family spared in Florina today, you tell Rantsou this."

Yiayia sits frozen, listening to the footsteps fade. Slowly releasing her grip from her children, she drops the knife and starts to cry.

* 'Mothers Send your Children to Sleep — Song of Missolonghi,' Arnoul, Stephen (1782-1860) and Pacini, Giovanni (1796-1867)
Captain Stelios,

...keeps firing as his men run
carrying the wounded — "Trexe!! Trexe!!"
He is forced back by a bullet to the chest.

Falling to his knees, he keeps firing,
as he coughs blood down his chin,
the rebel women shoot him in the abdomen.

He could smell their rosy perfume
as they stand above him —
"We've got the leader!" They cheer.

He spits up at them as they hold his head —
they scoop his eyes out with a knife,
bringing an axe down onto his throat.

They lift his head up high in the air
as they laugh and dance... taking turns,
they drink wine from his shattered cranium...

In 1995, the Greek Government erected
a statue in his honour at Prespa, Florinis,
declaring him a National War Hero of Greece —
Captain Stelios Rantzos was my 'Great' Uncle.
Sydney
The Patris – _tou_ 1960

I

*Overnight,*

The Patris had turned, jamming into the narrow widths
of the Suez Canal — Arabian traffic banked up for miles,
the ship’s decks covered in sand — “_Ma! What happened?_”
Andonis stares. “_Sand storm? Re ti pathame!_” Taso says.

For two days tugboats pulled. Arab merchants in white
row to the side of the ship, rafts full of clothes and food —
“Arapathe!” Andonis shouts, he points to a pair of shoes,
a big Mexican sombrero and dry apricots — “_Petaxeta up!_”
The leather faced Arab shakes his head — “_Seven talira,_”
he says in Greek. Andonis and Taso look at each other,
“_Bravo ton Arapathai!_”

Andonis puts his money in a little bucket and lowers it —
“He better bring them up, or tha ton alaxo ton Allah!”
The Arab intently inspects each coin. “_Re ton anthropo!_”
He places the items in the bucket, as Andonis pulls it up.
“Efaristo,” Andonis yells. “_Na se kala,_” the Arab says.

The Patris dislodges, over the speaker the captain calls —
“Requesting two divers to inspect the ships propellers,
you will be paid.” “Don’t you dive for sponges re Taso?”
“We’ll drink them tonight!” Taso says taking off his shirt.
Andonis stares at the shiny onyx African that boards The Patris, waving to his family as the ship pulls away from the Egyptian port—"Kita mavros," Taso says. Andonis keeps staring.

Suddenly, Andonis reaches out, he runs a finger down the African man's arm, then stares at the tip of it—

the African looks at him hard, he then runs his finger down Andonis's arm and stares at the tip of his—

"Andonis!" Taso yells, the African man smiles, Andonis smiles back, nodding as Taso pulls him away—"Re Andoni! Why did you do that??" "I've never seen a man that black before," he says, "I thought he was covered in shoe polish."
The Boythes – Andonis, Taso, Spiro and Thanasi gangster stroll into the function hall, they order drinks, staring at all the shy young Greek girls –
“Look at that blonde one, san tin ‘Vouloulaki,’ san tin ‘Maralin Munro,’ kouklara mou!” Taso says.
“Aide re, ask her to dance,” elbows Spiro.
“Go re,” Andonis says trying to push him off his seat.
Taso rises, grinning across at her, pulling his trousers up over the sweaty rolls of his stomach –
“You're beautiful, ptousou, ptousou,” the boythes laugh.

Taso walks across the empty dance floor, a silence as everyone stares, he stops in front of her, holding out his hand – “May I have this song?”
She shakes her head and looks away. Taso feels his cheeks burning, he repeats – “May I have this song??”
“No! I said, go back to your village!”
Her friends giggle, as he nods, smiling – “Endaxi kiria.”
Taso suddenly does his back flips across the floor, all the way to his seat. Everyone applauds as he smiles across at her. The boythes, patting him on the back.

The ship’s captain – grey with mop-string eyebrows enters with his navigators, he sips his retsina. Staring at the blonde lady, he walks towards her – smiling, she takes his hand to the dance floor.
“Why the dirty old man!” Taso yells, “The paliyero! Just because he’s the Kapitano!” Spiro wags his toe-hanging shoe to the music – Taso snatches it.
“Re Taso!” Spiro yells trying to snatch it back – “I’m going to break his head”...

Taso throws the shoe across the room, hitting the captain’s buttocks, scuffing his naval whites – the captain looks across at the boythes, he swiftly walks to them as his navigators rush up, along with the waiters – one of them picks up the shoe and suddenly throws it out the window, into the sea – “Ihhhh!! To papoutsi mou re!!” Yells Spiro.

“Who threw the shoe?! Who threw it?!!” The captain shouts. Taso stands up swiftly – “I threw it manga Kapitano!”
He pushes his chest out as Thanasi holds him back – “My shoe re!! They threw my shoe!!” Yells Spiros.
“Call the police down,” the captain says staring at Taso, they handcuff him and take him to a holding cell.
"My shoe, I want my shoe back right now!!" Shouts Spiro, I don't care if it's on the bottom of the ocean, turn the boat around, get your scuba diver's out, cut your heads off because I want it back now!"

He limps after them.

"When are you releasing Taso?" Andonis asks the Captain, "Huh! Your friend is going to be charged at the next port, he'll then make his own way to 'The Lucky Country.' Andonis calmly walks up to the captain, he whispers — "Listen Kapitano, if he isn't released by tomorrow, you see all your lovely leather couches here, we'll gut each one of them open like Easter lambs! And then you can charge us all at the next port."

"And I want my shoe back!" Yells Spiro from behind.

The next day Taso is released, and Spiro is paid three-fold for his shoes — "Ei boyles!" He shouts, showing off his new Amerikano boots, carrying his old shoe — they sit at the other end of the smoker's lounge, laughing as they take turns trying to throw Spiro's other shoe out the window and into the sea.
Sta Kalamia – Queensland
(Bonegilla Work Assignment)

I

The old Australian lady enters
the earth-floor sheds where the migrants sleep –
"Wake up boys, come on, the sun is up
and there's a lot of cane to cut down!"

*The boythes* stir, slowly rising –
"You're all supposed to be up at 5am!"
"*Sorri Missars Smith,*" Taso stretches.
"*No alarm clock.*"
"*No alarm clock ay?*

The next morning, *the boythes*
suddenly jump out of bed right on 5am,
as the old Australian lady runs a metal pole
across the outside corrugated iron walls –

"*Wake up, time to wake up!*" She shouts smiling.
II

All day, Andonis hacks the cane with a machete, blisters on his palms and thumbs, lipstick stain the wooden handle, demon-eyed embers of last night's fire, burning his ash-socked feet.

Rising strings of blue smoke – the anoxic souls of rats and snakes, smoldering around the hot-knuckled stalks –

he shoulders the scorched bouquets to a pile,
clear liquid bleeds from the hard wattle core,
sharp cinder smell.

Monsoon rains of Queensland, porridge vapour exhaling grounds –
Sometimes, you could not tell the ash-migrants from the charred skeletal forest, black sweat lines like faces behind bars –

sometimes Taso shouts, “Fidi!” “Fidi!” Like in the old country, chopping at the knotting ‘red belly’ as the serums and syrups fall,

sometimes, not even the mud’s undertaker who reaps us could tell their warm sweetness apart...
Sydney

I

It was evening when Andonis and Taso exit the country train from Queensland, they enter an Oxford Street Pub.

Andonis walks to the barman –
"How much kost room tu sleip?"
Laughter as someone imitates his accent.

"We’re full mate!" The barman says, smiling over to his patrons, laughter, as someone yells – "No wogs allowed!"

The barman points to a Greek Take-Away, laughter as they walk into the street.

Laughter as the Take-Away owner says –
"Hotel room for Greeks? Huh! Here, the Greeks sleep in Hyde Park."
Outside a Newtown jam factory, an unemployed crowd of migrants, white Australians and Aboriginals.

The boss appears in the doorway, carefully scanning the gathering. He points to two blonde men and notions them up stairs.

Not even a minute later, Goran comes back down – “What's happen?” Andonis asks him, “Why no job?” “Because I no Australian.”

Andonis picks up half a brick – “Piouso! Ratisis!!” He shouts, pitching it hard at the wooden doors.
The Foreigner

Andonis enters a restaurant on Enmore Road, portrait of the Queen on the wall, the waitress hands him a menu.

He opens it - S ! T # A S R % I & N = G
at the words - "To?ato?" He points.

She returns with a large stainless steel pot like the ones in hospital.
Andonis eagerly sits forward and opens the lid, he slumps back abruptly

*huddled together in the middle of the dish, three tiny tomatoes, skinned and boiled -

Andonis grunts a laugh, he calls the waitress, waving his hands over it and shaking his head, he points to a man eating bacon and eggs - "Afto, afto," he says.
Yiayia Katina,

walks into the supermarket on Marrickville Road, she shuffles down each aisle with her stick. Stopping, she lifts up her black framed glasses, staring endlessly at the names of products – “Ma! What are these?” She whispers in Greek.

“Can I help you at all?”
She looks at the shop attendant, smiling politely and continues down the aisle. It is forty minutes until she appears at the counter, empty handed – “Didn’t find what you were after?” She looks at him and pauses, “Avgha?”

“I’m sorry, I don’t understand.”
“Avgha, Ko, Ko, Ko, Ko,” she puts her fists under her armpits and waves her elbows as she strides up and down – “Ko, Ko, Ko, Ko.” The attendant starts to laugh, “Ah! Chicken, you want chicken!” She nods.

He runs to the freezer, dropping it onto the counter – “No!” She shakes her head and continues her dance, squatting – “Ko, Ko, Ko, plop...Ko, Ko, Ko plop.” “Eggs, eggs of course.”
He points down to the front of the counter, smiling, she picks up a pack as the shop attendant still laughing, rings it up.
Sta Contrata

"You better wait for the boss," Andonis says, as Taso picks up the jackhammer –
"A! The sooner we start, the earlier we can go to the bouzoukia" Taso dances, outstretching an arm and clicking his fingers, "Don't worry re, I'll just start it off."

Suddenly a thunderous explosion – Andonis falls back, he watches Taso, still holding the jackhammer shoot up into the air like a rocket, his confused, soot covered face – "Taso!"

Taso falls, coughing, laughing. "Taso!!" Andonis yells – "Re Taso, you hit a cable you dumb ahlada!! You're lucky, your boots saved your life!"

Andonis sighs, starting to laugh, he looks around, and stops – "Huh!" he says, "We've got the sako!" Amber flashing traffic lights, cars beeping, dark office towers – "Katkame."

Two North Sydney grids down for three hours, hundreds of people trapped in elevators – "Bouzoukia ei??" Andonis says, "A re ahlada!" Taso still laughing, as they walk off, sacked.
Shopping with Sophia

I

"Untouchables, you sell untouchables?"
The supermarket staff look at each other—
"You mean vegetables?"
"Yes vegi-ta-bels, sorri, vegitables."

II

"How are you mam?"
"Yez."
"Box or bag for these?"
"Yez."
"Cash or credit?"
"Yez."

III

She points to the green beans—
"Won pount, won pount."
"A whole pound?" She nods.
The grocer piles them onto the scales higher and higher—
"No! No!" She takes handfuls off—
"Oh, a pound's worth.,” he says.
She nods.

IV

"Ken I hev one bag of Mussolini—
e! Semolina! Sorri, one bag of semolina."
The shop attendant laughs.
Sto Evredi

All day, Sofia hardly looks up
as she stands pushing carbon rods into batteries,
    the fine black dust over her face,
    over her blue tie-back uniform,
    over her swollen veined wrists –
today she had them strapped, today, she was coughing.

She wears her mother’s scarf in her hair
as the grey sweat falls from the tip of her nose,
the Yugoslav women across from her
stare with their narrow-blue gypsy eyes,
sometimes they would whisper – Sofia was seventeen.

She lifts box after box onto the production line,
batteries on
    batteries off
faster and faster – they paid her bonus money.

Sometimes the Australian boss who smelt of alcohol
would turn up the speed of the conveyor belt,
sometimes he would shout – "Faster Dagos, Faster!"

Sometimes he would touch the women,
once he touched Sophia – "No, No, No!!" she yells,
shaking her head and slapping her own shoulder hard,
his glazed grinning eyes...

Sometimes Sophia would think of her father,
"Babaka mou, where have I come?"
Swallowing her tears, she peels off her sooty gloves –
the sweat and blister water of her shriveled hands
    doing all the crying for her.
Andonis and Taso

walk through Glebe,
they see a man selling Hotdogs on the street –
“H-O-T   D-O-K-S
zesto skili?” Andonis looks at Taso,
raising an eyebrow, “Bravo?”

“Ella Taso, I’ll shout you.”
Andonis points into the steaming steel tub,
“This Dok?”
“Yeah mate Hotdogs, very nice!”
“Giv mi two.”

Andonis takes a small cautious bight,
“Hmm,” he nods, “Good.”
“Kalo” Taso says chewing,
opening the buns and inspecting –
“Which part of the dog do you have?”
Sto Port Kembla

Andonis picks up the pieces of scrap metal, the giant bird talon drops, he carefully lowers them, piece by piece into a large drum-furnace of molten steel, orange hissing, beaming like the lava-face of the sun.

He shields his eyes with a gloved hand, quickly stepping away from the neon splash – sometimes it snake-spits back, burning holes through his singlet, blisters among the pink scar dots that riddle his torso.

His swollen forearms, glittering with sweat and scratches – he reaches up for the control pad, tarnished chains lift the entire furnace, slowly tilting it, pouring 140kg moulds, brief case sized – Andonis stares into the hypnotizing spill,

they did not find one single bone when big Bruno fell into one of these,

he wipes his red saturated face.
Sto Vunderfeld

They watch him in the rain,
chopping car batteries in half with an axe,
he drops the seeping pieces into a 44-gallon drum.
Not once does he look up at them as they sit
under a shelter, smoking and laughing,
sometimes he would hear those words again –
"Nah get the dago to do that..."
"I've got a wog-job for him after lunch..."
He keeps chopping.

One of them walks to him – "Oi! Lunch time!"
Motioning food into his own mouth.
Andonis stares at him long and hard,
slowly straightening up his back,
the sweat and rain clawing down his face,
he drops the axe into the mud.

Andonis sits on his own,
he brings out a sauce-pan of dolmades.
Vienna loaf filled with feta cheese, tomatoes, olives,
salami and oregano – he opens two bottles of milk
and drinks one before he starts eating.
The Australian men ridicule him, as they eat
a single sandwich – "Got enough there mate?..."
"Geez that wog food stinks!..." Andonis stares ahead.

One of the Australian men lights a campfire,
throwing tea into the charred interior of a ‘billy.’
He then picks up a piece of rusted metal
lying in battery acid and engine oil, and suddenly
stirs the tea with it! Andonis turns and looks at him –

"What! You want some!?" The Australian man says.
"No thankyou!" Andonis chuckles as he looks away.
Bouti

Sophia walks into the butcher shop –
   “Can I help you luv?”
She points to the display bar,
then pats her thigh.

The butcher shakes his head –
   “Not sure what you’re saying luv.”
She slaps her thigh again.

She slightly lifts her skirt,
pointing and pointing at her thigh –
the butcher raises his eyebrows
as she quickly pulls down her skirt,

   “Moo or baa?” he says chuckling.
Silent

Andonis and Taso
enter the 423 on Enmore Road,
stale sweat on their clothes,
scruffs of dried mud on their shins,
they talk in Greek.

An old lady with a blue rinse
swiftly turns around,
her yellow shriveled face
like the skin of fried chicken –

"Talk English please!!
Talk English please!!
This is Australia!!"

Andonis stares at her,
the blood in his jugulars thumping –

he smiles,
and he nods.
The Kotsavakia

Andonis and Taso walk through Victoria Park, a group of fellow countrymen play soccer in front of grass lounging Greek girls, the young kotsavakia exercising wit and athleticism — "Check out the ‘gomenes’ re," Taso says.

The ball rolls astray, Taso runs to kick it back. One of the players wearing a singlet, tensing his little drumstick biceps, shouts — "Leave it! Leave it! Or I'll screw your mum!"

Taso stops, he stares at him confused — "Why re fellow Greek?" Andonis yells.

Taso swiftly strides towards the player, they lock into a wild flurry of swings and grunts, the other players run towards the fight — "Eh! Stay out!" Andonis yells, "Or I'll jump in."

Police sirens sound from Broadway, they all scatter...

It wasn't even an hour later when Andonis and Taso see them walking down King Street Newtown, bouncing the soccer ball — "Ah, look whose here," Andonis says with a smile, "Wilson Lane!" Taso barks.

As Taso and the player fight, Andonis suddenly sees from the corner of his eye a full swing at him from a watching player — he instinctively moves as the fist grazes his forehead. Without hesitation Andonis swiftly steps forward, he head-butt him with all his might, the nauseating sound of bone on bone — the player exerts a groan and drops still as death.

Taso and his opponent stop fighting, the opponent runs to his friend, shaking him, slapping his face, nothing. They all stare at each other, pale, eyes wide, still and silent — suddenly they run, sprinting away in every direction, Taso yelling — "You’ve killed the man re, we’re going to jail!!"

They run all the way to Bucknell Street. Andonis pulls his brother Lukas up from his card game, as Taso makes two trembling Ouzos — "Lukas go and check if there’s police everywhere"...

"Nothing re eximino, no cops, no ambulances and no dead soccer player," laughs Lukas, as he grabs the Ouzo bottle and pours more into Andonis’s and Taso’s glasses.
Sto Brudfort

Andonis quickly walks past the 16 cotton machines, 
he glances into the barrels beside them 
filling with fragile cotton rope, he removes 
the full ones two by two, replacing them 
with empty barrels, he runs them upstairs 
to the migrant ladies in the spinning rooms.

All day, up the vibrating floorboards, 
covered with grey foot-rolled clumps of cotton – 
the air, fog-thick with suspended fibers, 
floating graciously on the yellow light beams 
that spear through smog stained windows, a sign – 
"Do not open! Wind disturbs cotton." – Like a dog, 
Andonis sweats through summer and winter.

Sometimes he cleans the machines 
with the vacuum tubes that hang from the ceiling, 
sometimes he adjusts the clogging cotton 
so the machines don’t catch fire – white downy hairs 
sticking to his face, settling on his hair – 
he looked an old man at the end of each day.
"Voices"– Interviews with Greek Migrants

"Why? For a better life Niko! For us and our children. Greece was poor, crippled by years of constant wars against the Turks, World War II and The Civil War. The Greek government was in post-war depression, there were no jobs, no opportunities for learning a trade – we were hard working farmers, hungry and barefoot, and Australia promised opportunity and wealth. Advertisements on a television that I saw in an Athens shop-front window showed the surf beaches, limousines and handfuls of money – we all said, just a few years here, after our contracts and we'll come back to our 'mother country' that we love – huh! I am still here...”

"...I left because I didn't want to do my two years of national service in the Greek army..."

"...my family was in poverty in Greece, I came to work and send money back, so they can eat..."

"...I left because I was arranged to marry a man here in Australia by proxy, my father couldn't afford a dowry back home..."

"...I came here because everyone else did. We were young, we thought it was a game, fun and easy money. It wasn't until we entered the hard, dirty factories that we realized it wasn't, then we wanted to go back but it was too late, we signed for two years..."

"...yes, I came here for an adventure, not because I needed money, I had a good job in Greece as a technician – I came because I wanted to see another part of the world. I went to the Australian consulate in Greece and they told me that they need 'plenty of technicians,' so I showed them my papers and they put me down as a technician. I said to my self, a technician in Greece or Australia? – I'll go to Australia, something different, and I then can learn English too. But when I got to Bonegilla, at the migrant hostel, my papers said – Labourer! 'But I'm a technician!' I said to them, 'they wrote down technician in Greece, look at my papers!' They said, 'we don't recognize these here.' Then I understood – this country didn't want technicians – educated workers, they simply wanted slave labour do all the hard, dangerous and dirty jobs that the same Australians would not touch – you had to be strong, not smart. If I knew, I would have stayed in Greece! I had good opportunities there, but now I was bound by a two-year contract! That lie, that 'pema' changed my entire life..."

"...switch off the cassette (he points to the tape recorder). I left because I was being persecuted for my political beliefs, no one would give me a job, my papers were 'red'..."

"...in Greece, for anyone to get a good job, you needed to know someone 'high' in the field who could get you in – 'meson,' it's who you knew, not what you knew..."

"...I left because I was caught seeing a girl in my village and I had to marry her or otherwise (runs a finger across his throat), her father, her brothers, uncles and relatives would kill me. Huh! (smiles), she knew I didn't want her for marriage, she made sure I'd be there when her brother came home, the cunning fox!..."

"...for the women! What else, I always wanted to have a tall beautiful blonde Australian girl..."
The Wedding of Strangers

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The Riverwood shop

I

Before Andonis opens his shop,  
there he is again!
On the front step, in the pink dawn light,  
the red-vein nosed man eagerly stands –  
"How are you Tony?"

"Allo Charlie my frend,  
more methalatid spirit for painting ei?"
"Yes that's right," he reaches for a bottle,  
trembling seven cents onto the counter,  
"And you sell it the cheapest."

Andonis watches Charlie through the window,  
he sees him quickly open the lid  
and suddenly take a long gulp –  
"Ihh! Kita ton anthropo re!"

"Afstralial! 'The Lucki Countri, 'Afstralial!"  
Andonis slowly shakes his head.
The shop was busy with the regulars
when a man places two empty soda bottles
on the counter for five cent refund —
"Ten cents please."

Andonis picks up one of the bottles,
"No buy from hir my frend, I neva sell."
"That dosen't matter!"
"Yes but dis matta."
He horizontally faces the bottle at the man,
running his finger along the fine print —
"He say no rifund."

"Give me my change!"
"But he say no rifund, huh!" Andonis laughs,
looking at his head shaking customers,
"How I give you change?"

As the man turns to leave,
he pushes at a stack of newspapers — "Eil!"
Andonis shouts, stumbling over milk crates
to catch them — they fall all over the floor.
"'Tis Panayia sas! Sophia, watch the shop!"
Andonis jumps the counter,

he chases the man up the street, shouting
"Moulari e moulari!" as he kicks his backside —
his customers, now outside on the footpath
laugh and cheer — "Get him Tony, get him!"
Andonis sits behind the counter, sipping his whiskey, dusk fading around the darkening terraces, he starts to close his eyes. He slightly opens them, staring at the bread-rack beside the door – a loaf starts to slowly move, sliding out of the shop.

Andonis suddenly sits up, blinking and blinking, he looks at his glass, at the whiskey level in the bottle, back at the rack – everything is still, "Mba??" he takes another cautious sip, staring at the rack once more. He decides to count the loaves...he counts them again – "Re!! One missing!!" he runs into the street.

There in a closed shop doorway, a young barefoot girl squats, hugging the loaf as if it was a new-born child – "Why you steal?" Andonis asks, "I-I'm hungry." She starts to cry. "Is alright, if you ask I give you, next time no steal ok?" She eagerly nods and hurries away. Andonis watches her, "To kakomiri," he whispers, slightly shaking his head, "To kakomiri"...
Larry the milkman drops the crates –
"Tony what did your wife have?"
"Not sure Larry, still in hospital."
"Hoping for a boy?"
"Of course, but in our family all girls! My brother hev two girl,
my other brother hev three girl,
my sister, four girl!
And I alredy hev one girl,
you see Larry, anotha girl!"
"Nah mate, but you this time it's a boy."
"What you bet Larry?"
"A case of beer."
"Ok, one box beer, good!
You betta hev box here tomorrow."

Abdul the taxi driver enters –
"Andoni, wife hev baby?"
"Not yet Abdul."
"I just bet Tony a case of beer
that it'll be a boy," Larry says.
"It will be boy!"
"How you know Abdul?" Andonis says,
"Andoni, my wife hev seven children,
stomach different when boy,
don't let Larry the thief steal your beer."
"Ah! I don believe, all bullshis." Andonis says.
"Ok I bet with you if you don't believe,
another box beer!" Andonis looks at him –
"Alright! You bring box tomorrow in taxi.
"You hev beer ready tomorrow in shop!"
Abdul says.

The next morning Larry comes in –
"So Tony, what did your wife..."
"Behind the door, one box!"
"Ha!" Larry shouts.

Abdul walks in moments later,
"Behind the door, one box for you too!
Now get out of here you bludgers."
They laugh.
The Second Generation
"Bravo Australia!"

Father and Papou Niko
stroll through Centennial Park.
Papou suddenly stops,
he stares at the fat geese and ducks –
"Re Andoni! Where's your gun?"

Father starts to laugh –
"You shoot them and you'll go to jail."
Papou walks up to them,
he could have snatched them all!
He excitedly points into the pond
like the children beside him –
"Look re, the eels! The fish!"
"You can't touch them either," father smiles,
"This is Australia."

"Bravo Australia!" Papou says,
nodding and raising an eyebrow,
"Bravo!"
The Randal House

I remember him lying in his own sweat, 
a blanket of his own knitted nerves, 
relatives surround him – I was 4.

I remember him moaning 
as they tried to stick 
the leggo of his spine back together, 
children giggling around him, 
I didn’t

as I stood back in a diagonal shadow, 
'the menthol ghost' introducing herself –

"I am the stench of sickness 
that you will always remember, 
that will greet you everyday after school 
in the dark hallway of The Randal House, 
to nest in your play clothes 
and fragrance your tears"...

I remember looking at him, 
a face crushed like an egg carton, he whispers – 
"the other house... I lost the other..." 
as my cousins skip, singing nursery rhymes.

I remember my father looking at me, 
frozen in my watch – he looks away 
as the golden serums of the afternoon sun 
spill down the aisle towards him.
Christmas, 1974

Mother stands pregnant at the counter –
"Plis, we hev no moni, my huzhan
sick in car, plis, I hev two children..."
The Australian woman shakes her head.

Mother walks out of the welfare office,
traffic – muffled and slow,
she does not shoo the flies from her face.

She looks at father from the distance,
his face, pale, wrinkled in constant agony,
he stares at her

Nikola and Yiota play in the back seat,
laughing – her face,
as she slowly moves her head
from side to side...
Lopoditi

"I'm going out," father says,
walking to the front door.

"Ma, where's Baba going?" I ask.
"Your Baba is going to find you
a new Mama!" she says.

I wait for him that night.
I crawl up onto his chest
as he falls asleep watching TV,
he awakes — "Re lopoditi!"

He looks down, in my hand
one of mother's bobby pins,
bent out straight like a knife
to his throat —

"If you find another Mama
I'll kill you," I say.
"Endaxi re!" he says laughing,
looking at mother, "Endaxi."

[ 86 ]
Ward 3A

Double Parthenon columns
soldier the glass door,
I walk beside mother –
"Look Mama, they're Greek!"
She only saw spines too.

Beige linoleum floor, as if covered
with the sawdust of grated bone,
ghosts in the empty corridors
pat me on the head as I walk past.

The waves of Little Bay below
cut and saw into Prince Henry's cliff,
as if the sea was just another surgeon,
moaning whale vertebrates
with sea flowers to Ward 3A –
he could not turn his head
as I kissed him on the cheek.

He lay in a torso of plaster,
still, hands to his sides, pale and slow –
my father angles his eyes towards me
as far as he could,
he asks me how I am

my broken father asks me
how - I - am!
I stare at him, saying nothing,
I start to cry.
Portofolia

In the yellow evening lamp light,
over a second-hand table, she sits hunched,
holding a wooden handled skewer,
she slowly runs it along a sheet of glomesh,
counting – “ena, dio, iria...”

The Jewish boss with the branded arm
has been kind to her, boxes of extra work
in the dark hallway –
her granite-stern face, tear carved,
she whispers – “tesera, pende, exi...”
She too, branded with numbers.

Her rub scented, Band-Aid fingers,
her green-swollen varicose calves,
her gauzed wrists – she runs a candle stick
along the sheet, wearing her thimble,
she skews it apart, claw by claw.

My mother, she makes ‘purses,’
the one who knits us winter jumpers
when we cannot afford to buy clothes.
Who endlessly cooks and cleans,
nursing our sick moaning father,
saying nothing when he curses all,

I stare at her

“See how your mother works Niko!”
She suddenly says, not looking up –
“That’s why you must study hard,
so you don’t ‘happen’ like father and I.
So you one day, may become
something better.”
i promised myself
fifteen years ago
as i lay in the middle
of my street

the warm blossom
of their bruises

    as they threw
    my new bike
    over and over

smashing it to pieces
and shouting

"...Grapstas, you fuckin' greasy wog!..."

i promised myself
there, that moment
as the hot bitumen
burned into my face

this book

This Book
The BBQ King

I stand outside with the Greek men,
listening to them talk politics and soccer,
father tongs chops off the BBQ.
He hands them out, the boythes yell –
"No more Andoni!"
"No more? Mba! Ti let re! Come on,
what do you mean no more?"

Sophia! More bires!"

Father cuts pieces from the kondosoufli –
"This is..." he says rotating his palm
and raising his eyebrows "...tha best!"
He holds it up as it smokes with heat –
"Spiro!"
"More Koubare??"
"Ella tora, Where's your beer?
Sophia! More bires!"

I watch father tell his Diaspora stories –
"Remember I head-butt that manga unconscious,
remember Taso?" Taso laughs, nodding –
"His friend turned your nose into an eggplant,
na stokane!" Father notions a big nose.

A tea towel over a shoulder,
his outstretched arms clutching tongs and a beer,
the boythes listen to him intently,
suddenly exploding with laughter as father does –

Yes, this is The Greeks –
'when they laugh, they laugh from the heart,
when they cry, they cry from the heart,
and when they eat, they eat!'

My father is the BBQ king,
don't eat and you'll offend him –

"More bires Sophia!"

[ 90 ]
Portrait

You are Greek! Not a bloody Australian!
Dago!
They’re
greasy
drunks,
Greek,
criminals,
go
I
racists-
back
C
Greek
to
H
talk
where
O
at
you
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home!
came
A
Greek
from,
S
friends
you’re
only!
not fuckin’ welcomed here you dirty Wog!
The Easter Man

for Kosta Bagou

Uncle Kosta sits on a log,
he turns the lamb on the spit.

He'd always let me rotate it
on those crisp *Paska* mornings.

He pinches out *Drum* tobacco,
rolling it in a piece of *Tally Ho*.

the scent of lemon blossoms,
wind gently messing his hair.

Sometimes he'd tear crackling off
and hand the golden skin to me –

"Nice *et Niko?*" he'd smile,
sipping his homemade wine,

he was our Easter man.

...shirtless and coughing,
hose in the side of his chest,
red fluids dribbling though...

...purple surgeon lines,
blood bag beside his bed,
he was our Easter man...

...he sat silent in a wheelchair,
hospital blanket over his legs,
we didn't have lamb 'that year'...

...I remember carrying him
up the stairs of his new home,
lighter than a cat...

...I remember him trembling,
ripping the oxygen mask off,
lifting a palm, to say goodbye...

...his nails, blue like sea clouds –
I close his crooked eyelids,
I kiss his forehead...
Identity Crisis

Australia and went to Greece.
If who would you fight for?

[ 93 ]
The Blood Chromatograph Test

PATIENT: PAPPAS, Michalis
D.O.B: 3rd July, 1935
BORN: Athens, Greece
NATIONALITY: Greek

Sample Results:

Eighty six percent (86%) Greek
Nine percent (9%) Turkish
Five percent (5%) Unknown

Diagnosis:

Nationality is a state of mind.

Dr N.G.
Theo Andrea

In a hospital room on his own, they said it was inoperable.

More of an uncle than most, he taught me how to fish.

We’d slowly walk to the wharf, rods on our shoulders,

he was a proud Kritikos. He gave me a knife, engraved —

“...keep me close as I can be your most loyal of friends...”

The man from Bonegilla, that I did not get to interview

when the shadows called his name...
At the Horo,

the old Greek man shakes my hand,
he asks me if I can speak Greek,
"Ne," I nod smiling,
"Bravo, bravo," he says.
He asks me what work I do,
"Bravo, bravo, luck and prosperity."
He asks me whether I am married,
"Not yet," I laugh, "Almost."
He looks at me, "Is she Greek?"

The old Greek man looks at his wine,
"Ah," he says, turning away.
A Cure for Racism

∧

together, you’ll

Everest soon

Mount sort

climb out

Go your

people! petty

Hey differences!
Bastounia

Bent like a melted candle,
the old Greek man walks
with his wooden stick,

his brown arthritic knuckles,
camouflaged,
over the trembling handle.

King Street Newtown
has seen many of you,
shuffling out of your church,

still praying to the sidewalk,
still carrying bags of gravel –

between Australia’s bricks,
the cement-paste
of grinded Greek vertebrates...
Different

Pink tarama sandwiches, plaited biscuits, keftedes of garlic and onion – the blonde freckled kids stare at my food, sometimes they’d giggle and point, I learnt to eat quickly, hiding it in my palms.

Teachers tried to pronounce my name – “Grasp-, Gra-Grapias, Graspias?” They placed me in a room door-marked E.S.L., the Australian kids in the playground yell, “Errr! You’re in the dumb class.”

Dark hair, dark skin and eyes, an accent, and my poor sick migrant parents could not afford us the latest clothes or shoes – I wore seconds, rode in an old back sagging multi-coloured Kingswood – school kids shout, “Wog Chariot!” as father drives us home.

‘Wog,’ it was one of the first words I learnt as they kicked me up against the Everleigh fence – I still taste blood when I hear that name. They told me to ‘go back to fuckin’ Greece.’ that I am not welcome in this country, but I was born here...

I didn’t want to be different when some today ask – “Grapsias? What nationality is that?”

I didn’t want to remember.
Sto Rookwood

for Andonis Manolis

A few old Greek ladies are here, black and bent —
   to the cemetery taps, they slowly limp,
carrying sponges and ‘Attiki’ buckets,
arranging flowers in old jars
of ‘Turkish Style’ coffee,
they cross themselves, over and over

with their tri-pod fingers, whispering
as they scrub and scrub the mud veins
from the white marble, lighting the kandilaki —
the Greeks, they groom their dead well.

I stare into the grey techni-coloured photographs,
   a growing horizon of my people,
the Broken Greeks of the Diaspora,
like ancient statues smashed and strewn —
short life in ‘the lucky country’...

The deafening maze of their incomplete whispers,
the beat of unfinished hearts —
Southern Strangers,
   here,
   lost
   in the foreign darkness.
Paska – The Gathering (Interview with the Second Generation)

"...many believe the 'identity' of Greece is being lost, and it's by us here, half the world away with our old traditions, Greek schools and churches that are keeping it alive..." (Greek Migrant Interviewee, 2001)

Midnight – Newtown Orthodox Church crowded with Greeks in black, the police close the road with traffic barricades, escorting us through on motorbikes as we walk around the block, singing and chanting, carrying the wooden, white and pink orchid covered tomb of Christ –

"...to be second generation Greek in Australia means being able to walk in the middle of the street with your family and friends on Easter, on the ‘Ohi’ day through Sydney (October 28), and on Greek Independence Day (March 25)...it means having a culture that is accepted and is allowed to be expressed with pride..."

"...to be second generation Greek in Australia is to be very close to our families – we are taught to respect them, sometimes strictly, that's what makes us unique, I think..."

They hold long yellow candles with aluminum foil cupped around the flame. The patrons of the Sandringham Hotel opposite, watch us, smiling at each other with a beer in their hands, trying to understand, as I am. The priest, looking very Byzantine with a long grey beard and long embodied stolls, yells, ‘Kirie Eleison,’ ‘Kirie Eleison,’ ‘Kirie Eleison,’ holding the bible with its gold engraved cover, the two-headed eagle of Constantinople –

"...two cultures enrich you, yes, but sometimes they clash – my parents expect only Greek, and they do everything they can to preserve that within their children. From talking Greek at home, to Greek school, to marrying someone who is Greek. Deviance from this is seen as a failure on the parents part to enforce this and hence their reputation in the Greek community is tarnished, but they don’t understand what we, the second generation are going through by having two cultures – Are you Greek or are you Australian?? These are some of the bad things of being the child of migrants – I wasn’t even allowed to have ‘Aussie’ friends..."

From the church, a large group of us walk through the Newtown streets, the second generation – consisting of cousins, relatives and friends, the slower ‘oldies’ following. The candles in our hands still burning as passerby yuppies, coming out of noodle-bar restaurants smile at us bewildered – sometimes they’d say hello to us as we greet them back. We laugh and joke, warning each other not to walk close behind, as hair-spray and gel may catch fire, as was the case a few years back to one poor Greek woman, doing ‘the block walk.’ This was like a game – we try hard not to let the ‘holy’ flame extinguish, to see who can get it to our place – the nominated venue for this year, without re-lighting it from someone else. Sometimes we’d yelp as the hot wax drips over our hands, sometimes other Greeks would walk up to us and re-light theirs. A bunch of ‘gothic’ dressed teenage girls in Doc Martins, near the old ‘Hub’ shout, "Happy Easter" to us, waving their arms and giggling – one ignites her lighter and raises it above her head. A drunk sitting up against Newtown Station raises his paper-bag covered bottle, with half closed eyes, he too says, "Hap-happy Ea-sta."
"...if Greece and Australia went to war, who would I fight for? Gosh Nick, you pick hard questions mate – umm, I don’t know, umm, I love both cultures – I can’t! It depends on how the conflict started and why, I guess, but I wouldn’t fight, I doesn’t feel right..."

"...it’s great being Greek in Australia, for starters, you’ve got a proud ancient past that founded the western world, the language, the mythology, the food, the religion, the traditional dances in all our colourful costumes – especially in the Town Hall and at the Opera House on the ‘Ohé’ day, where there’s thousands of Greeks sitting on all those steps – I feel lucky to be part of the Greek culture that did so much for humanity and even Christianity..."

"...even like ‘name days’ and other traditions, and having ‘big woggy barbecue’s’ with all our relatives and friends – ‘the gathering’ is the essence – driving through Marrickville on the weekends, you can smell all the Greeks barbecuing [we laugh]..."

Everyone stops outside The Randal House. "Remember, right foot first into the house," Mother says. "Listening kids?" “Yes yes, we know," They smile. She unlocks the front door and with her candle, she scorches a cross on the white doorframe above her head, she places her right foot on the front doorstep and enters as everyone follows. The warm smell of Koulouria – Easter biscuits and Mayeritza – a traditional Easter soup of wild spinach and chopped animal organs. A huge crystal bowl filled with red-dyed eggs in the middle of the dinner table. Upon them, tiny coloured stickers, depicting Christ’s ‘neon’ Resurrection from his tomb – a Roman soldier beside him, falling to the ground and shielding his eyes with his forearm. Mother lights the kandilaki with the ‘holy’ flame, placing everyone’s candle, still lit, to stand in glasses of water upon the kitchen sink. “Okay" She says, “Whose going to have some Mayeritza?" The second generation yell in unison, “No way!”

"...hey Nick, you wanted to know some of the bad things about being the children of Greek migrants? – Mayeritza! I mean, who can eat that?! Besides our dads who eat anything – chopped up heart and liver, intestines! Gross man, gross! I hope your mum has made Tiropitakia, I’ve just finished my ‘fast’ for Easter and I want some real food..."

"...huh, has she? Cuz the fridge is full of everything you want – food and deserts for tomorrows lamb on the spit – there’s no room in there..."

Mother and the other women cover the large dining room table with assorted food dishes, as the men sit around it, talking ‘Hellenic politics.’ Tomato and lemon potatoes, roast beef, roast chicken, rice, Dolmades, Mousaka, capsicum and garden salads, fried salami, barbecued wings, crab-sticks and fish cocktails, sardines in olive-oil and garlic, octopus in red wine, platters of assorted Greek cheeses – Feta, Halouni, Kefaloghaviera and Kalamata olives, Tarama and Tzatziki dips, Vienna bread sliced ‘brick-thick,’ and yes, Tiropitakia – there was hardly any room on the table for dinner plates, let alone cups. "Okay, before we start," Mother says, "Everyone take an egg." We pass the bowl around, the second generation inspecting the eggs for ‘hardness’ by tapping them – "Ei! Come on, no cheating," Father yells, smiling. "Hey Jimmi, pity you don’t have your red wooden egg from last year," Cousin Alex says. "Yeah, the ‘oldies’ got suspicious when I kept refusing to peel and eat it. I won two years in a row before they clicked," He laughs. Mother and father hold an egg, "Okay, you go first, nose to nose," Father says, he holds his egg with the point facing upwards as mother hits his point with the tip of her egg – “Ahh! I win!” Mother yells as everyone cheers.
“Ptousou!” Father says laughing, inspecting the cracks, “First round, beaten by the wife.” The men laugh. “Okay! Bum to bum,” He says as they turn their eggs over, “This time I hit!” Father says. “Ahhh!” Everyone explodes laughing, as his egg cracks again, “Aide!!” He shouts, “Bye-bye Charlie,” He waves, laughing, starting to peel it. Everyone else has a turn around the table in a process of elimination as they laugh and shout in excitement, the winner this year being cousin Irini, “Bravo bravo Irini, you’ll have luck this year, bravo,” They yell.

“...being second generation Greek in Australia Nick is by far about ‘the family,’ like this here, these moments are so special, the traditions, the respect and eating together – I don’t know whether the Australians put as much emphasis on traditions, family and respect, I think that’s the big difference between our two cultures...”

“...I mean, look for instance at all our rich cultural dances that all of us second generation always get up and dance at weddings, christenings and ‘Horos’ – and our parents sitting together watching and even tearing in pride...”

“...I must admit though, alright, the Greeks have done well, now and in the past, but we can be so up ourselves and all, yeah?...Come on guys, admit it, we tend to think we’re better than others with our culture, traditions and ancient past – we have a lot of pride and ‘ego’ and sometimes we overdo it, don’t you think? I mean, they send it up all the time in ‘Acropolis Now’ and even in ‘The Wog Boy.’ Yeah, I mean, the Greeks are far from perfect...”

“...Yeah, why do you think our parents came here? Look at all the food on the table, would they have had all that in Greece? Everyone knows the system is better in Australia than in Greece, do you see any of our parents going back?...I think too much of this ‘national pride’ spoils us, especially when we are reluctant to accept other cultures in a multicultural society – I don’t know, that’s my two cents, what do others think?...”

Mother brings out the Vasilopita – ‘the Jesus Pie,’ from the oven, the women make room for it on the table – “Okay kids, we’re going to cut the Vasilopita now.” Everyone silences as she holds a large bread knife, cutting the pie into specific sections, whispering, “Jesus’ piece, the house, father, mother...” then pieces for her children, the relatives and their children by age, she hands the pieces out as the second generation hurriedly break up their piece with their fingers and search through it – “Whose got the money?” They ask each other, “I got it! I got it!” Yells cousin Maria, as she peels crumbs off an aluminum foil covered dollar coin, “Bravo Maria, Bravo,” Everyone says, “Keep it in your wallet for luck this year.”

Everyone passes their plates around, the women place the varied foods upon them and hand them around the table. “Kalos orisate!” Shouts father, raising his glass of retsina, “Kalos sas vrikanome!” They shout back as everyone raises their glasses and clink them together – “Christ is Risen, Christ is Risen,”...The candles melt into stalactites on the kitchen sink, the ikona of Christ and the pictures of our grandparents watch down upon us from the walls, as everyone feasts, chatting and laughing into the early hours of the morning...
Strangers,

for Betty Grapsias

it doesn’t matter what nationality we are,
it doesn’t matter what religion we belong to,
it doesn’t matter what we look like
or what food we put in our mouths.

It makes no difference what our gender is,
our sexuality, the amount of money we have
or our political views –

we all have dreams,
we all have struggles,
we all laugh and cry,
we all, have a story.

Understanding speaks all languages,
the ‘wisdom of the human heart’—
tell each other your stories, swap one another’s shoes,
share traditions, laughter,
drink to Humanity.

And I would miss the eucalypts, the southern stars
I love to trace, I would even miss the blow-flies.
The cicada’s summer-song,
the ‘Opal’ of the mangiko dance,

   eating together during yiortes  —
   Yet

I am neither culture, not defined or owned by either one,
for Culture is something you individually create.

Who of us ignores the graffiti bigot?
Who of us welcomes the black child
into the white playground of life?

Understanding has always been ‘colour’ blind.

Strangers,

It doesn’t matter where you’ve come from,
it doesn’t matter where you are going.

I hold out my hand,

   I am, your friend.

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Who Were The Greek Migrants? Where Are They Today?

"...this is the blessed country...the blessed country!..."

After approximately fifty years of Southern European migration, has Australia been ‘The Lucky Country’ for the Greeks? In a unique, witty and inspirational cycle of poetry, the author Nicholas Grapsias gives ‘voice’ to the Greek migrant and to the second-generation, exploring their hardships, their achievements and regrets within Australia. Nicholas takes the conversations out of the Greek ‘Kafenia,’ beautifully capturing ‘the Greek personality’ – stoic, proud, an ageless spirit that strives to achieve despite all odds. Nicholas takes us back to ‘the old country’ back to Andonis’s and Sofia’s village, retelling never before recorded and moving accounts of World War II and The Greek Civil War that followed. He provides the reader with a historical backdrop and a deeper understanding as to who the Greeks were, are, and what forces have culturally shaped them as a whole over the last century. Nicholas explores the factors that influenced so many Greeks to leave their families and the ‘mother country’ and to make their epic journey to a distant land that they knew little about. He puts us on the Diaspora boat to Sydney, retelling many of the entertaining stories that the migrants experienced whilst on board as well as in ‘the new country.’ Nicholas’s ability to capture the Greek patriarchal pallikari in a bold and humorous way is most impressive. Equally, his ability to recreate through the migrants eyes the kaleidoscope of emotions experienced in a country where they did not know the language or culture, had ‘little’ but achieved so much, especially profoundly contributing to make Australia the proud nation that it is today. Southern Strangers deals with the issues that most people would rather avoid – Assimilation, racism, stereotyping, the ‘culture-shock,’ the unfair working conditions, the bi-cultural hardships that the second-generation experienced, identity issues and the clashing of ingrained cultural values and the new Anglo-philosophies. Nicholas’s second book of poetry – Southern Strangers has been described as a “book with blood!” A powerful, crisp and rich cycle of poetry – clever, controversial and an honest account of the Greek migrant experience. It is one of the first of its kind that provides ‘an update’ of the Greek migrant of today, and one of the few that has ‘the guts’ to exposes the myths, the belief-systems of both the Greek and Australian cultures, and to voice them. One that dares to tell it how it was, and how it is.

Gary Langford