

Australian Institute of Macedonian Studies Thirty Years of Shining Contribution to Macedonian Hellenism

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Summary:

In 2017, after thirty-four years of shining input to Macedonian Hellenism and the enhancement of its historical and cultural values to Macedonians of Hellas, the Australian Institute of Macedonian Studies (AIMS) remains in the Hellenic Diaspora one of its monumental literary, research and academic institutions, marking a milestone in the history of Macedonians abroad. Throughout the last three decades, over four-hundred remarkable European, American, Asian and Oceanian scholars, moved by their fervid zeal for the history of Hellas, made their work, writings and thought a striking feature of the intellectual life of this institution. Their passionate devotion to the legacies of Macedonian Hellenism thought, and achievement was expressed, with assumed enthusiasm, in various international and national Conferences, symposia, concerts, publications, fellowships and academic visits planned by the AIMS. Some of the most prominent historians of the 20th century in classic, Byzantine and contemporary Macedonia presented their fundamental scholarly findings in those academic fora established by the AIMS rendering due service to truth, against those few whose fervid zeal was shown in appropriating the doctrines and legacies of Aristotle, Philip of Macedon, Alexander the Great and the Olympian deities.

The Australian Institute of Macedonian Studies (AIMS) was formed in Melbourne, Victoria on 10 August 1986 on a more solid foundation than the earlier Macedonian Cultural Society, and with more concrete policies and objectives.¹ The new entity emerged as the result of a successful lecture given by Anastasios M. Tamis, entitled “Recent Developments on the Macedonian Issue”, organised by the Association of Thessalonikeans “The

¹ Its objectives included to conduct research, to produce publications, to organise conferences and seminars, to encourage a constant inflow of academics from all over the world to visit Australia and deliver lectures.

White Tower”. Following the presentation, the speaker invited the large audience of 400 people to contribute to the establishment of the Institute and the setting up of a permanent secretariat; on that evening the amount of \$11,000 was collected, and Christos Kosmidis was appointed special secretary in the offices of Pan-Macedonian Association of Melbourne and Victoria (PEMV). The founding members comprised professionals and academics and included Anastasios M. Tamis, who was elected founding president, with P. Liveriadis, chairman, Dimitris Iakovidis and Peter Iasonidis secretaries, Nicholas Halatzoukas treasurer and M. Kasapidis, Theofani Karabatsas, Nicholas Katris, Panagiotis Gogidis, Makis Kasnaxis, Christos Mantzios and K. Hatzistavros as members of the first Board of Directors. Its objectives included the promotion and development of cultural, literary, historical and linguistic issues pertinent to Greek Macedonia. It is fascinating for the administrative chronicles of the Greek community that with the exception of N. Halatzoukas and Dimitris Iakovidis, who had successfully served the AIMS’ objectives for the first fifteen years, all other inaugural members maintained continuously their post of responsibility for almost thirty years.²

In February 1988 AIMS organised its First International Conference on Macedonian Studies, which was attended by over two hundred academics from thirty-five universities of Europe, America and Australia. A total of sixty-three participating academics³ presented a paper, highlighting the complexity of the issues surrounding the Macedonian cultural heritage. The Congress was opened by the Deputy-Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Brian Howe, MP and was attended by prominent academics, politicians, scholars and students. This academic event attracted the adverse attention of the Macedoslav community which was inflamed by the sensationalism displayed in their media which labelled the Conference as “political”. The Macedoslav leaders managed to convince their community that the conference had as its objective “to negate and falsify the history of our

² In 2017 most members of the inaugural Board of AIMS of 1986 were still serving the Institute. These included A. M. Tamis, P. Liveriadis, P. Gogidis, C. Mantsios, Th. Karabatsas, M. Kasnaxis and K. Hatzistavrou.

³ The participants included: Photios Petsas, Constantine Romaios, Georgios Babiniotis, Nicholas Katsanis, George Delopoulos, Nicholas Nikonanos, George Lavvas, Harilaos Symeonidis, Milton Papanikolaou, Antonios Thavoris, Euthymia Georgiadis-Koundoura, Dimitrios Pantermalis, Ioannis Hassiotis, Phaedon Malingoudis, Vassilios Dimitriadis, Vassilios Kontis, Stephanos Papadopoulos, Agapitos Tsopanakis, Michael Sakellariou, Artemis Xanthopoulou-Kyriacou, Charalambos Papastathis, Areti Fergadis-Toundas, Ioannis Papandrianos, Kaeti Manolopoulou, Evdokia Miliatzidou-Ioannou, Loring D. Danforth, Ricki Van Boeschoten, Evangelos Kofos, Evangelos Kyriakoudis, A. Papaspyropoulos, Michael Katiforis, Nicholas Themelis, Poly Enepekidis, Angelos Deftereos, Constantine Plastiras, Constantine Pyrzas, Vickie Hatzigeorgiou-Hassiotis and Nicholas Ioannou; Journalists: Charalambos Bousbourelis (*Vema* newspaper), George Karayiorgas (*Kathimerini* newspaper), Eleni Kypreou-Filippidou (*Acropolis* newspaper); Ministers and parliamentarians: Stylianos Papatthemelis, Nicholas Martis, Vassilios Papas; Friends of the AIMS in Greece: Nicholas Kyriacou (President), Maro Lazaridis, Zois Oikonomou, Constantinos Stergiadis, Pantelis Vysoulis and Gregorios Velkos.

people”;⁴ and represented “a new attack by the Greek authorities against the Macedonians”.⁵ Counteracting the Macedoslav reactions, the Secretary of the Serbian National Committee, Dr S. D. Fillipovich responded (9 February 1988): “We greet our Hellenic brothers in faith and brothers in arm, wishing you success. Neither territory of Macedonia nor Macedonian language, nor Macedonian nation exists on Yugoslavia’s territory — only South Serbia and its Serbian language. ‘Macedonia’ was invented by Committee and implemented by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia”. The proceedings of the conference and the edited volume that followed under the title *Macedonian Hellenism*⁶ failed to justify the fears of the Macedoslavs.

In an effort to appease the situation, AIMS appointed an academic committee comprising Australian scholars to organise in July 1991 the Second International Conference on Ancient Macedonia, dedicated to renowned British historian Nicholas Hammond at the University of Melbourne. The appointed chairman of the Academic Committee was the Head of the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies of the University of Melbourne, Peter Connor. The other members included Prof. R. Milns and Dr Con Castan (University of Queensland), Arthur McDevitt (Monash University), Dr Norman Ashton (University of Western Australia), Peter Thomas (University of New England), Dr Greg Horsley, Christos Fifis and Dr A. M. Tamis (La Trobe University), Con Prokopiou (Victoria College) and Professor Dimitrios Pantermalis (University of Thessaloniki). Over thirty archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, ethnographers and literature critics took part in the conference. Prof. P. Connor had this to say in the preface of the edited volume entitled *Ancient Macedonia: an Australian Symposium*.⁷

⁴ *Australian Macedonian* newspaper, pp. 1, 2 and 3, 21 January 1988, *Dardalis Archives*.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2 and 4, 15 January, *Dardalis Archives*.

⁶ A. M. Tamis (ed.) (1990), *Macedonian Hellenism*, River Seine Press, Melbourne. This volume of 395 pages incorporated 32 articles in six chapters: archaeology Prof. D. Pantermalis and Prof. P. Connor; history, politics and international law: N. G. Ashton, S. L. Parkinson, J. K. Hassiotis, E. Kofos, A. Kyriacou-Xanthopoulou, M. Hatzopoulos, A. Stavridis-Zafraka, I. Papandrianos, A. Angelopoulos, A. Tounda-Fergadi, K. Manolopoulou-Varvitsioti, B. Kondis; anthropology and culture: K. Romaios, A. Bibis-Papaspyropoulou, K. Pyrzias, P. Kavakopoulos and S. A. Papatthemelis; linguistics: A. Tsopanakis, G. Babiniotis, N. Katsanis, D. Delopoulos; literature and immigration: G. Kehagioglou, V. Hatzigeorgiou-Hassiotis, C. N. Fifis, G. Kanarakis, Con Castan and A. M. Tamis; Macedonian art: N. Nikonanos, E. Georgiadis-Koundoura, K. Loverdou-Tsigarida and E. N. Tsigaridas.

⁷ Peter Connor (ed.) (1995): *Ancient Macedonia: An Australian Symposium*, Mediterranean Archaeology, Sydney. This publication of 135 pages, dedicated to historian Nicholas Hammond, incorporates a monumental introduction by Professor Hammond on Macedonia before Philip, and chapters on Ancient Macedonia by Eugene Borza (University of Pennsylvania), Peter Londey (The War Memorial Museum, Canberra), Elizabeth Baynham (University of Newcastle), Ian Worthington (University of Tasmania), Ian Sharples (University of Western Australia), Leah McKenzie (University of Melbourne), Graeme W. Clark (Humanities Research Centre, ANU), Peter J. Connor (University of Melbourne), Minor M. Markle (University of New England) and Greg H. R. Horsley (University of New England).

“...The Congress was a great success. Large numbers of participants attended the day-sessions devoted to specialist papers, whilst the general public filled the large Sunderland Theatre of the Medical Centre on each of the three nights to hear the keynote speakers: Professors E. Borza, R. M. Errington and D. Pantermalis. The Symposium was opened on Monday 8 July at 8.15 by Professor Nicholas Hammond in the Great Hall of the National Gallery of Victoria before a capacity audience.

The theme of the Symposium was the history and archaeology of Ancient Macedonia and aims to present recent research by scholars from Australia and Greece, together with the contributions of several eminent international scholars. Our four special guests each performed on two occasions. The programme achieved an effective balance between history and archaeology and, in particular, the participants at both day and evening sessions were privileged to hear of the very latest archaeological discoveries in Northern Greece...”

Eminent Professor N. G. L. Hammond in his introduction to the volume offered the following comments: “The organisers of the Second International Congress on Macedonian Studies are to be congratulated on bringing together a number of historians from Australia, Europe and America and a brilliant team of archaeologists from Greece and Australia. The Congress provided a wonderful opportunity for scholars to report on their own researches and to learn from one another. Moreover, it was very well attended by citizens of Melbourne, who proved most appreciative of both the public lectures and the specialists’ papers and sometimes took part in the discussions... Many recent archaeological discoveries have confirmed the correctness of ancient oral and literary traditions, for example, the excavation of the ‘Cemetery of Tumuli’ below Vergina has revealed phases of occupation which correspond well with the oral tradition of the Makedones, as told to Herodotus, that their early neighbours were the Phrygians who then migrated to Asia and that, according to Strabo, Illyrians and Epirotes occupied the area next. We should therefore be ready to accept the tradition in Hesiod that the Makedones were Greek-speaking people who lived in very early times in the high country of Mt Olympus and Pieria...”

The Third International Conference entitled *Byzantine Macedonia* organised by AIMS was held at the University of Melbourne 10–17 July 1995, with the participation of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, the University of Thessaloniki, the University of Melbourne and La Trobe University.⁸ The Academic Committee comprised Prof. Roger Scott and John Burke (University of Melbourne), Professor A. M. Tamis (La Trobe University) and Professor Phaedon Malingoudis (University of Thessaloniki). This is how Prof. Scott and John Burke described the Conference in the two volumes that they edited under the title: *Byzantine*

⁸ A total of 34 distinguished scholars from across the world contributed to the success of this Conference, including Prof. Angeliki Laiou from Harvard University, Johannes Koder from Vienna University, Ioannis Tarnanidis from the Aristotle University, Johannes Irmscher from Berlin University, Andreas Schminck from Frankfurt University, Dion Smyth from King’s College, University of London and Prof. Pirros Thomo of the University Tirana.

*Macedonia — Identity, Image and History*⁹ and *Byzantine Macedonia — Art, Architecture, Music and Hagiography*:¹⁰

The Conference was the third international conference on Macedonia organised by the Australian Institute for Macedonian Studies. As with its two earlier conferences on Macedonia (1988) and Ancient Macedonia (1991), the Conference organisers were able to add to our local strengths by bringing to Australia a distinguished group of scholars from Europe and America with, on this occasion, an appropriately strong representation from Thessaloniki. The Australian Institute of Macedonian Studies aimed at providing not merely an academic forum within the discipline but also at making this discussion accessible to the general community of Melbourne and at reaching the English-speaking audience in Australia rather than only the Hellenic one...

In the meantime, AIMS managed to widen its authority nationally in Australia, establishing branches in state capitals, including Perth, and publishing monographs,¹¹ the literary journal *Makedonikos Logos* (first published in 1988),¹² the monthly *Macedonian*

⁹ Roger Scott and John Burke (eds.), 2000: *Byzantine Macedonia, Identity, Image and History*, Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, Melbourne. This publication comprises 232 pages with the following authors: Angeliki E. Laiou of Harvard University; Johannes Koder of Vienna University; Ioannis Tarnanidis of the University of Thessaloniki; Johannes Irmscher of Berlin University; Andreas Schminck of Frankfurt University; Dion C. Smythe of King's College London; Apostolos Karpozilos of the University of Ioannina; Martha Grigoriou-Ioannidou of the University of Thessaloniki; Dionyssia Myssiou of the University of Thessaloniki; Athanasios Karathanassis of the University of Thessaloniki; J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz of the University of Nottingham; Alkmene Stavridou-Zafraza of the University of Thessaloniki; Gerhard Podskalsky of Frankfurt University; Demetrios Constantelis of Richard Stockton College, New Jersey; Rosemary Morris of Manchester University; Triantafyllitsa Maniati-Kokkini of the University of Thessaloniki; Michael Jeffreys of the University of Sydney; V. Nerantzi-Varmazi of the University of Thessaloniki; Angeliki E. Laiou of Harvard University.

¹⁰ Roger Scott and John Burke (eds.), 2001: *Byzantine Macedonia: Art, Architecture, Music and Hagiography*, NCHSR, La Trobe University. This is a 254-page publication incorporating 15 chapters on the art, architecture, music and hagiography of Byzantine Macedonia with an introduction by Prof. Roger Scott and John Burke. The chapters include the contributions of Eutychia Kourkoutidou, Aristotle Mentzos, Panayiotis Vokotopoulos, Ploutarchos Theocharidis, E. N. Tsigaridas, Chrysanthi Mavropoulou-Tsioumis, Evangelos Kyriakoudis, Constantine Charalampidis, Gojko Subotic, Pirros Thomo, Panagiotis Panagiotidis, Antonios Alygizakis, Anna Karamanidou and Panteleimon-George Tsorbatzoglou.

¹¹ A. M. Tamis, 1994, *Immigration and Settlement of Macedonian Greeks in Australia*, La Trobe University Press, Melbourne. This was a 387 page award-winning volume on Greek Macedonian and Macedoslav migration and settlement in Australia, depicting the patterns of occupation and settlement, the model and structure of the social organizations, the level and degree of integration and the ideological strife emerging from historical, political and socio-economics reasons. The volume discusses and analyses the concepts of language, religion and ethnic identity, outlines the defined legacies among the people, intra- and inter-community relations, Greco-Yugoslavian relations, the emergence of the *ethnogenesis* amongst those Macedoslavs of former pro-Greek and pro-Bulgarian dogmas. The book received the first award in letters by the Academy of Athens in 1995.

¹² The periodical entitled *Makedonikos Logos (Macedonian View)* was first published during the period 1988 to 1990. In 1999, AIMS decided to republish the periodical sporadically until it joined the National Centre for Hellenic Studies and Research. In 2002, the *Macedonian View* was circulated as a 20-page periodical containing important editorial comments and analysis of political events and developments. For example, vol. 3, April 2002, included a bilingual article (pp. 1–3) criticising the economic advancement of Greek business in

*Bulletin*¹³ distributed to its members and the bi-yearly journal *Publication Series on Macedonia*.¹⁴ The publications were administered by an editorial committee headed by Panagiotis Gogidis. The *Macedonian Bulletin* was also supported by a team of devoted professionals including Theofila Kokovitis, Roussa Rombolas, Eleni Bachtsevanos, Magda Simonis and Paul Kosmidis. The *Macedonian View Periodical* was published with the assistance of Nicholas Katris, Kallirroë Katsigiannis and Theophani Karabatsas.

In 1997, AIMS joined the National Centre for Hellenic Studies and Research (NCHSR), at La Trobe University, as its integral academic entity until the irrational closure of this Centre in December 2008; during its operation as a university establishment, it managed to produce a number of significant publications¹⁵ and important chapters in refereed international journals. For example, in the series *Playing with History* of the journal titled *Journal of Balkan Studies*, edited by Phaëdon Malingoudis, Department of Slavonic Studies, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Prof. A. M. Tamis (1997:35–54) produced a study under the title *Irredentism in the Macedoslav Bibliography*. The paper argued that a significant reason for the existence and discourse of the Macedoslav bibliography had been (a) to support the birth of a nation (*ethnogenesis*); (b) to provide a point of reference for the historical, national and cultural derivation of the ‘Macedonians’ linking them to antiquity, in order to give substance to their claim of being indigenous and having a historical relation with the Balkans; and (c) to proliferate and continue the maintenance of irredentism using it as a means to claim certain territories. The author critically discussed and analysed certain publications of the *Academy of Sciences and the Arts of the National University of Methodius and Cyril* in Skopje

FYROM and the broader political steps undertaken by the successive Greek governments on the content of their negotiations with the leadership of the Macedoslavs; bilingual editorial comments on the propaganda campaign of FYROM and their polemics and territorial claims against the sovereignty of Greece (pp. 4–8); the cultural heritage of Macedonia from the antiquity to the present day (pp. 9–10); the arrival of the Greek Maistors of the Psaltic Art and the Byzantine Choir of the University of Athens under the directorship of Prof. Gregorios Stathis (p. 11); the new publications of the AIMS (p. 12), brief comments on the Macedonian issue (p. 12); the proclamation of the Governor of the State of Alabama, Governor D. Siegelman and the response of the AIMS (pp. 13–18) and an editorial comment on Cyprus and its inter-communal and international problems.

¹³ *The Macedonian Bulletin* (1991–1995) was first published in 1991 as the information and communication organ of the Institute and was distributed to its members and friends as well as to various Greek community organizations and benefactors. Its official Logo was the Sun of the Macedonian Kings, while its shape and its outline varied according to the events and the activities of the Centre. The *Bulletin* appeared consistently in A4 size, varying from 6 to 12 pages according to the demand of the editorial issues. A total 21 editions were published by the editorial committee, depicting the activities of the Institute, important views on Macedonian issues, critical reviews of papers and publications on the Macedonian issue, comments and articles on various cultural and socio-political issues relevant to Macedonian Hellenism.

¹⁴ This journal was produced only for two consecutive volumes in 1997.

¹⁵ P. Gogidis and K. Katsigiannis (2005) (eds.) *Alexander the Great*, NCHSR, La Trobe University, Melbourne. The publication depicts in a very synoptic but concise way the history of Macedonia, blending the content with impressive illustrations and maps.

and the Ministry of Education and the Institute of National History of FYROM. Tamis, on behalf of AIMS, produced another chapter entitled “Macedonian Identities in the Diaspora: The Case of Australia” in Vassilios Gounaris *et al.* (eds.) (2008:323–369). This chapter critically assessed and analysed the Greek Macedonian identities in the Diaspora with specific reference to the Australian situation. Specific emphasis was placed on the evolution and shaping of those identities as a result of the political decisions reached in Greece during the post-Yugoslav era, as the perceived outcome from a number of proposals and the actual discourse which prevailed at both national and international levels.

Since its inception in 1986, AIMS was closely engaged in various activities, in an effort to enhance the cultural, historical and socio-economic features of Macedonian Hellenism. The objectives and the activities of the Institute were not always very popular among a large number of Greek Macedonians; some felt that the Institute’s activities failed to meet their fervent expectations; some claimed that the Institute’s positions were not patriotic enough; some assessed the activities as rather parochial and marginal given the seriousness of the matter and the aggression emerging from a large section of the Macedoslav community in Australia. The AIMS was also targeted by the media and the leadership of the Macedoslav community. The Conferences and Congresses organised by the Institute were treated as politically motivated; certain extremists within the Macedoslav community demonstrated against the objectives of the Institute in 1988 and beyond, rallying an unconvincing campaign of hatred against the AIMS membership; certain moderates among them attempted in vain to dispute and negate the academic and scholarly outcomes of AIMS.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding other external pressures coming unexpectedly even from those who were officially assigned by the Greek State to fulfil their duties in the Diaspora, namely several among the Greek consular and diplomatic representatives, naturally with a few exceptions, the perseverance of the membership, their loyalty to the legacy of Macedonian Hellenism and their dedication to scholarship and research maintained the pace of struggle with vigour and consistency.

Over the years the Institute organised youth visits to Macedonia and other parts of Greece,¹⁶ staged concerts, literature evenings, festivals and musicals;¹⁷ arranged photographic exhibitions

¹⁶ From 8–20 January 1993, 33 youth members of the Institute, most of them students and young professionals, embarked on a program of lectures and tours in Northern Greece, with the objective of learning more about the rich history and culture of Macedonia. During their sojourn in Macedonia, the young members visited the largest cities, and many archaeological and historical sites, including Pella, Dion and Mount Olympus; they attended lectures about the history and culture of Macedonia and had the opportunity to discuss political and social issues with Greek academics and politicians.

¹⁷ AIMS played a key role in the arrangement and coordination of a significant number of concerts, festivals and musicals, as well as theatrical plays. The cultural activities were important to communicate the socio-cultural role of the Institute to its members and to the broader Greek and Australian society. These included:

- In 1988, AIMS under the guidance of Ms Theofani Karabatsas organised a Greek Macedonian Festival at the gardens of the St John’s Monastery in Northcote with the support of the Abbott Ierotheos Kourtessis.

on Greek Macedonian Immigration and Settlement in 1994 and 2006;¹⁸ successfully planned and implemented Australia-wide educational and artistic students' competitions involving over 3,000 students from 400 schools from Australia and New Zealand; promoted events enhancing the history and culture of Macedonian Hellenism; it petitioned the rights of Macedonian Hellenism in Human Rights courts and responded to resolutions and or political stances expressed on Macedonia by foreign senior political entities; it replied to Australian media articles and editorials and organised a constant inflow of world academics organising public lectures and seminars.¹⁹

During the period 1992–2017, the Institute wrote a large number of letters and organised petitions, treatises and submissions to Greek government ministries, world leaders, and politicians as well as to the members of the Security Council of the United Nations regarding the initiatives of the government of Skopje to unilaterally obtain recognition under the nomenclature “Macedonia” and “Macedonian”. The official position of the Institute remains that the unilateral usage of the terms “Macedonia” and “Macedonians” constitutes an act of aggression against Greece and a negation of the identity of Macedonian Hellenes, who had lived and resided in the region more than 2,000 years prior to the arrival of the Slavs and Bulgars. The Institute's stance was always that an ethnogenesis can be possible; however, it should not be realised at the expense of a Hellenic region and against the Hellenic identity and culture. In 1992, AIMS submitted a treatise to the K. Mitsotakis' government in Greece, proposing the term “Macedoslavia” and “Macedoslavs” as a compromising solution between the two states; unfortunately, this proposal was not accepted by the Greek side, despite being well-received by certain experts of the Greek MOFA, including Dr Evangelos Kofos.

During March and April 1994, AIMS submitted a treatise to the Commonwealth and the State governments in Australia explaining why the defining appellative ‘Slavonic’ ought to be inserted in front of the term ‘Macedonian’ to describe and delineate the language of the Macedoslavs. It was argued that the appellative was important to distinguish the language now spoken in the upper Slavonic geographic region of Macedonia from the Macedonian Greek dialects spoken and used in the central and southern geographic region, which was always under the socio-cultural influence of Hellas. The appellative was also necessary to differentiate the

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- In 1991, in collaboration with the theatrical school “Gefyra” it staged the play *Alexander the Great* directed by Nicholas Skiadopoulos.
 - In 1992, AIMS organized a musical concert at the Melba Conservatorium of the University of Melbourne under the directorship of the maestro Valentinos Patrikidis with the participation of violinist J. Lambos.
 - On 29 September 2002, AIMS played a key role in the promotion of the visiting *Byzantine Choir of Athens University* at Melbourne's Concert Hall, under the directorship of maestro of the psaltic art, Professor Gregorios Stathis.

¹⁸ In October 1994, AIMS organised the first photographic exhibition on the Migration and Settlement of Macedonian Hellenes in Australia and New Zealand, covering the period 1890–1990.

¹⁹ For an analytical description of AIMS' activities, the reader is referred to the work of A. M. Tamis (2014) *Macedonian Hellenes in Oceania*, Tziolas Publishing, as well as its website on www.aims.edu.au

Macedonian-Slavonic from the Ancient Macedonian language, which is codified as a language and identified as such by scholars and academics worldwide. Finally, it was argued that the designation/redesignation of nomenclatures is a political decision, and it appears as a common element in world politics to alleviate tense ethnic rivalries and conflicts. The Jeff Kennett Victorian State Government in Australia accepted the recommendations of the treatise and in July 1994 issued a directive to all its ministries to apply the term *Macedonian (Slavonic)* in all government curricula and publications. The Minister for Education, Philip Honeywood also accepted and defended the Kennett Government's stance; however, two years later, the Macedoslavs took the case to the Human Rights Commission in Australia, protesting successfully against the appellative.

As with the case of PEMV, hundreds of letters, petitions and reports have been compiled by the members of the Institute and submitted to the editors of the Australian mainstream newspapers regarding their stance on the Macedonian issue. AIMS targeted the most significant mainstream newspapers in defending the Greek national legacy and ideology.²⁰ During the second decade of the 21st-century AIMS remained industrious and active as a research and academic institution, employing researchers, conducting field research and compiling monographs and collective publications.²¹ Its assets included the building that was purchased in 1987 in Brunswick Road, Brunswick, in close proximity to the University of Melbourne; in 1997, when AIMS joined the NCHSR, the building was offered for rental, generating adequate income for its research and academic activities; over the years substantial support was also given by AIMS to various universities and schools teaching Greek language and culture, and it supported educational and cultural initiatives and in 2014 published its scholarly journal, the only scientific periodical circulated in the Diaspora, entitled *Macedonian Studies Journal* published *in gratis* by Tziolas Publishing in Thessaloniki.

²⁰ Letter to *The Age* newspaper (10 February 1993), a response to a feature article entitled "Macedonia: A State of Siege"; also to Australian ABC television's episode of *Foreign Correspondent*, 20 March 1993; to SBS's *Cutting Edge* episode entitled "Macedonia: The Last Peace" presenting Greece as an aggressor; to *Herald Sun* newspaper on the article "US Troops to Macedonia". See *Macedonian Bulletin*; on 13 July 1993 to *The Age* newspaper and the Australian Press Council; to *The Advocate* newspaper on its article "Macedonia: Culture on Show" (26 January 1994); also to *The Age* newspaper on the article "Greece, Macedonia to Heal Rift" (19 January 1994); also to *The Age* newspaper on its article "Canberra bows to Greeks in Macedonia name row" and "My Enemy my Brother" (12 March 1994); also response from Prof. A. M. Tamis to *The Age* newspaper's editor Russell Skelton and his article entitled "A Ghost of a Life" referring to FYROM and Macedoslav irredentism (21 May 1994); AIMS' response to ABC Television on a documentary entitled "Greek Nationalism" screened Australia-wide on 15 August 1994 and the ABC's reply to the AIMS' response; also AIMS' replies to ABC's explanations. For an analytical list of responses see AIMS' website: www.aims.edu.au

²¹ In 2013 AIMS was collaborating actively with the *Society of Macedonian Studies* in Greece, the School of Modern and Contemporary Greek History and the *Benevolent Society of Men of Thessaloniki* to produce this volume; current research projects include the study entitled: "Macedonian Communities in the Twentieth Century" with the "Society of Macedonian Studies" and the "Bibliographical Atlas on Macedonian Studies".

Almost from its inception in 1986, AIMS was subjected to strong and unfair rivalry from certain leaders of PEMV who wrongly perceived AIMS as a competitive *alter ego*, as well as from certain divisive Greek diplomats and consular representatives under the persistent urging of the Greek Archbishop Stylianos (*the Dyscolus*) and his courtiers.²² Stylianos practised a custom common to almost all political despots. Its pattern was oriental. Upon their arrival in Australia, they perceived Australia as the undisputed dominion of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop, and virtually ignored the will and the power of the laity base; their conviction was that the Greek Archbishop retained universal authority in the Diaspora; he remained the *Millet Bashi*, the *Ethnarch*, with no tolerance for those who would question his monosemantic authority; disputes involving the Archbishop with the communities of Hellenes were met, with a few only exceptions, with open defiance. It was only the incoming Greek Parliamentarians who considered, contrary to certain consular perceptions, that the ambitions of Archbishop Stylianos prevented the Hellenes from becoming a cohesive society.²³ In early 1990, one of the main benefactors of AIMS was the rebellious, yet generous and innovative Archimandrite Ierotheos Kourtessis; the latter was in severe conflict with his Archbishop Stylianos Charkianakis; hence the new Greek consular representatives, Polydoros Kokkonas and Nicholaos Matsis in a gesture of solidarity to the Primate of the Orthodox became enemies of AIMS, who accepted the services of the rebel priest; they refused to endorse its activities and established a regime of segregation, marginalising the leaders of AIMS; this irrational embargo against AIMS and its leaders lasted through the ambassadorship of the controversial diplomat Ioannis Beveratos and beyond, with a few exceptions. Naturally, the Greek diplomats and the Archbishop were almost constantly clashing because they both regarded themselves as sovereigns of Australian Hellenes and because each claimed to be their representative in the Diaspora. A number of charismatic and high-minded diplomats attempted to exercise their care overall Greeks, refusing to be dragged into the intra-communal conflict as a result of Archbishop Stylianos' policies of segregation. Some of them even attempted to reconcile the schism and fight the disunity, with no success, earning the public wrath of the Archbishop.²⁴ The talented and erudite diplomat and poet, Georgios Veis, who claimed to be the "Consul for all Greeks" and questioned the monosemantic authority of the Greek Archbishop in Australia was subjected to

²² Reference is made here, among a few others, to the controversial Greek Ambassador Ioannis Beveratos (1997–2001) and the Greek Consuls, Nicholaos Matsis (1991–1994) and Polydoros Kokkonas (1990–1993); see Tamis, 2014:168ff.

²³ See the public statements and the speeches delivered in the Greek Parliament regarding the so-called ecclesiastic Schism; see statements made by Christos Pachtas, Nicholaos Sifounakis, Stylianos Papatthemelis, even by the President of the Hellenic Republic, Christos Sartzetakis in the Greek newspapers *Vema*, *Kathimerini*, *Ethnos*, and the Australian, *Neos Kosmos* during the period 1988–2008; *Dardalis Archives*.

²⁴ Reference is made here to the prudent governance of Ambassadors Vassilios Zafeiropoulos (1991–1993), Georgios Konstandis (1993–1997), Photios Xydias (2002–2005), and Charalambos Dafaranos (2012–).

ostracism, segregation and even persecution by the circles of the Archdiocese and Stylianos *the Dyscolus*. It was necessary, therefore, for the Greek diplomats to submit to the authority of theocracy if they wished to have a smooth and effortless service in Australia.

Nevertheless, the ruthless diplomacy exercised by Beveratos compelled him to submit fictitious reports to his supervisors in the Greek *MOFA*, claiming fallaciously in 1998 that the building of the AIMS was “sold and the moneys from the sale were embezzled by its leaders”. Such was the inappropriate behaviour of this disgraced diplomat, who was then under prosecution in the Greek courts of justice, against AIMS, that the issue was debated on several occasions in the Greek Parliament; the row even compelled the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece and later Greek Prime Minister, Antonios Samaras to explain in Parliament, that the “significant input of the AIMS for the study of our national issues and its contribution to the Greek community in Australia was not and will not be placed in doubt [by any Greek diplomat or consular representative], but it carries the absolute support of the Greek State”.²⁵

Despite the polemics, the leadership and the members of AIMS remained loyal to their constitutional objectives. In February 2012, AIMS signed a historic *Memorandum of Collaboration* with PEMV for the years 2012–2016; it was the first time in the history of these two collective organisations that a systematic co-operation was agreed to on issues concerning Macedonian Hellenes. The *Memorandum* was fully endorsed by the wider membership at their AGMs, and in March 2012, PEMV offered a spacious office to be fully renovated and refurbished by AIMS.²⁶ Soon after the archives and records of Macedonian Hellenes were classified and documented; new archival material from the US, UK and Australia was monitored and obtained; electronic equipment for digitalisation was purchased, and research assistants were engaged Under the stern presidencies of PEMV by Dimitris Minas, and after 2016, by Panagiotis Jasonides, an Australia-born talented leader, a period of fruitful collaboration began, producing publications and a stream of cultural and academic events. For a number of years, treatises were compiled and submitted in support of the Hellenic stance in various *fora* of influence, including NATO, the European Council, the Human Rights Commission and US government departments; members embarked on a cultural offensive, presenting public lectures, organising seminars and participating in conferences; the AIMS’ secretary, Panagiotis Gogidis, continued to organise his weekly segment in the *Macedonian Program*

²⁵ Speech in the Greek Parliament by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Antonios Samaras, No. 1512, 8 November 1991, *AIMS Archives*.

²⁶ The Society of Friends of the former EKEME decided to donate approximately \$20,000 for the refurbishment and the acquisition of the electronic infrastructure of AIMS. The latter in a display of recognition bestowed upon the Directors of the Society a Certificate of Gratitude (21 October 2012). The recipients of the humble award included: D. Tsolakis, P. Liveriadis, S. Richardson, E. Doufas, E. Rentzis, A. Kouris, L. Alexopoulos, D. Kondoleon, P. Deligiannis, K. Rekaris and Spyros Robotis.

of radio 3XY; scholarships and grants were offered by AIMS to Greek Studies programs at tertiary institutions; Greek daily schools were financially supported as well as students' competitions, sporting entities and benevolent societies.

By 2017, the publication of the *Macedonian Studies Journal* boasted a long line of academic contributors from Europe, America and Australia; the fruitful collaboration of an Australian Macedonian composer, Florinian Christos Ioannidis and the renowned Australian conductor Douglas Heywood, OAM produced a spectacular concert at Melbourne Recital Centre in front of 800 enthusiastic spectators. The concert titled *Alexander the Great: Pioneering Multiculturalism* brought on stage one hundred Australian musicians and chorus performers depicting and narrating the military and cultural campaign that changed the shape of the world's history. Since 1997, the constructive presence of renowned academics as Visiting Professors of the AIMS, on an annual basis, included the influential lectures and seminars of great intellectual, including S. Vryonis, Jr, G. Babiniotis, M. Damanakis, A. Kyriacou-Xanthopoulou, E. Konstantinou, Ph. Malingoudis, Angeliki Laiou, I. Michaelidis, G. Kontogiorgis, Sp. Pavlidis and Ioannis Mourellos.

Prominent for their role and contribution to the AIMS over the last three decades were a number of individuals whose zeal and enthusiasm influenced the development of the AIMS. Their devotion of time and resources created a great deal. These included Nicholas Katris, Kostas Hatzistavrou, Dr Dimitris Tsolakis, Dr J. Dardalis, A. Kasapidis, J. Ninis, H. and V. Giannoulopoulos, I. Kefalidis, Steve Petrou, K. Katsigiannis, and over one hundred other Australia-born and Greece-born members. With the influx of young academics and professionals to its Board of Management, the future of AIMS appears promising. During the last ten years, young and talented members began joining the Board; they were young academics and professionals inspired by the objectives and the mission statement of the Institute. These included Dr Helen Kalaboukas, a lecturer in psychology at Swinburne University, Dr Vassilios Sarafidis, an Associate Professor in Econometrics at Monash University, Associate Professor Anastasios Panagiotelis in econometrics at Monash University, Terry Stavridis, a researcher and expert on Asia Minor, Zissis Kozlakidis, an expert on Information Technology. In 2017 the Board of AIMS comprised: P. Liveriadis (chairman), A. M. Tamis (president), P. Gogidis (secretary), Eleni Kalamboukas (vice-president), Ch. Mantsios (treasurer), A. Panagiotelis (assistant treasurer) V. Sarafidis (publications), Z. Kozlakidis (IT officer), Th. Karabatsas (cultural co-ordinator) and M. Kasnaxis (building maintenance), Demetrios Kondoleon (culture and civilization).