From the perspective of the historian, the great strength of this book is that Hempton’s analysis of the Methodist experience is consistently contextualised within the broader history of this period. Methodism shaped and was shaped by the wider environment of empire-building, trade, urbanisation and secularisation in which it grew. Where many Methodist scholars have examined Methodist theology and practice as though they developed in a vacuum, Hempton takes historical developments and their influence on Methodism seriously. This book challenges religious historians to recognise the need to analyse Methodism within this wider context. It challenges ‘secular’ social and cultural historians to recognise the significance of the Methodist movement within world history. Hopefully these challenges will be accepted.

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Professor Anastasios Tamis, the Director of the National Centre for Hellenic Studies at La Trobe University, has written a good introductory book to the political, economic and cultural history of Australia’s Greek community. This is no easy task.

The Greeks in Australia provides a good overview for the student and non-academic of the history of the Australian Greek community. It is concise and easy to read, except for the erratic structure of some of its chapters. The photos are well selected and give the book lustre.

The strength of the book is the information on the origins of the Greek presence, which is thorough and interesting, and the coverage of the intra-Greek divisions. Tamis’ knowledge of the origins and growth of the Greek presence in Australia is second to none. The intra-Greek divisions have at its core the actions of the Greek Orthodox Church. The pre-World War II Greek communities were independent entities and controlled the establishment of churches, schools and other community needs. This changed in the early 1960s when the church tried to institutionalise itself as the only recognised power to establish churches through canonical laws. This caused a schism between the old Greek communities on the one side and the church and the post-World War II communities on the other. The former was multi-cultural and Orthodox-centric, while the latter was strongly Helleno-centric, to the extent that its leaders, including the Archbishop, strongly supported the fascist
Colonel’s dictatorship in Greece (1967-74). Such divisions, as the author reveals, continue until today. Tamis handles this aspect of the book well.

Clearly the book has limited aims. The audience is the large Greek Australian community, Greek nationals, Philhellene Australians, diaspora Greeks generally, and secondary school and early undergraduate students. For the most part Tamis has successfully addressed the needs of such an audience. It is less valuable for later undergraduate students, postgraduates, researchers and academics.

It is understandable that the book does not grapple with more complex historical issues, although they are within the publication’s scope. Identity is an example. Nothing is said of the progression from a multicultural society (Ottoman rule) to an ethnic and nationalist society (after the creation and expansion of the Greek state) and to a multicultural society in Australia. Tamis is clearly an exponent of the historical continuity of the ‘Greek nation’, something that historians have questioned. He does not mention that the ‘Greek’ nation was a construct of modernity as represented in the Greek Revolution and especially the Greek state and does not examine the implications on Greek Australian identity. Tamis does not examine the identity of the early settlers or those from places outside the Greek state: all are viewed from the Greek nationalist paradigm. Social and cultural ties blurred Orthodox, Latin and Muslim identities in the eastern Mediterranean and the multiple identities of the people needed examination in the Greek Australian context, as did the mechanisms used to suppress ‘alien’ influences on identity. Also Tamis claims that the predominantly Turkish or mixture of Greek and Turkish speaking Orthodox Christians of Asia Minor belonged to the Greek diaspora, but under this criterion any Orthodox Christian following the Eastern rite in the Greek language is a Greek. Thus even the Syrian and Lebanese Arab-speaking Christians of the Greek Orthodox Church are Greek. But according to Tamis they are Syro-Libanese!

A more focused critique can be made of the treatment of Cyprus’s history and the patterns of Cypriot migration to Australia. Aside from the contentious claim that Cypriot people were ‘predominantly Greek in language, culture, history and sentiment’ (p. 24) there are factual errors relative to Cyprus’s history. Tamis claims that diaspora Greeks aided insurrections in Cyprus during Ottoman rule, yet there is no example of this. Almost all of the insurrections were orchestrated by its Muslim community or by Cyprus’s Muslims and Christians together against the state and Orthodox Church that together ruled over them. Tamis also argues that ‘the demand of the Cypriots for enosis (union) with Greece had commenced as early as the Greek War of Independence’ (p. 24). But there is no evidence to suggest that the indigenous Cypriot Orthodox wanted enosis until the turn of the nineteenth century. Even then the demand
only resulted because Greek nationalists born overseas, or to non-Cypriot
c Parentage, or Cypriots educated in Greece, attacked the failings of British rule
and presented *enosis* as the only alternative. Subsequently the author claims large
numbers of Cypriot Orthodox migrated after 1916 because they wanted to seek
refuge after Greece had refused the British offer of Cyprus in October 1915.
Tamis claims that they fled to Greece, the USA and Australia, hoping to be
repatriated once Cyprus joined Greece. There is no evidence that there was any
widespread emigration from Cyprus during this period. In the first Australian
census after World War II the Cypriot population only numbered 681.²
Moreover, emigration was not for political but for economic reasons. British
governments did not promise to cede Cyprus to Greece after 1916 as Tamis
claims. Equally wrong is Tamis’ assertion that Cypriot emigration to Australia
started as an ‘exodus *en masse*’ with Cyprus’s independence in 1960 and that it
was triggered by the granting of independence and the constitution’s
uncertainty. Cypriot migration to Australia was greater between 1947 and 1954
than 1954 to 1961, when the community skyrocketed from 681³ to 5,773.⁴
Cypriots left their homeland because of rural economic hardship and the lack
of work in the aftermath of the boom of World War II. After 1955 they left
because of the unsettling of society and its traditions by the violence of extreme
nationalist terror groups EOKA (Greek Cypriots) and TMT (Turkish Cypriots),
the formation of paramilitary groups and the involvement of Greek and
Turkish army officers, and finally because of the 1974 Turkish invasion. Thus,
the largest wave of Cypriot migrants to Australia occurred between 1971 and
1976 when the population went from 13,211⁵ to 21,595.⁶

Although the publication is not aimed at an academic audience, this does
not justify the absence of Tamis’ sources so that they can be checked and
verified by a scholar, given the errors. More errors were revealed by Dr. Costas
Vitkos in his devastatingly critical review in the Greek newspaper, *Neos Kosmos*
(30 June 2005).

Notwithstanding the criticisms, Tamis has produced a good introduction
to the history of the Greek Australian presence. For the scholastic community
and for students wishing to understand the methodological processes of
history, the publication is less valuable, however.

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²Australian Bureau of Statistics, cat. no. 3105.0.65.001 Australian Historical Population Statistics, TABLE
76. Population, sex and country of birth, states and territories, 1947 census,
³Ibid., 1947 census,
⁴Ibid., 1954 census.
⁵Ibid., 1971 census (usual residence).
⁶Ibid., 1976 census (usual residence).