

Introduction

By Constantine G. Hatzidimitriou, Ph.D.

I am both greatly honored and humbled to try to continue the excellent and important work of my dear friend and colleague, Dan Georgakas who we lost late last year. Dan's editorial and writing skills were legendary, and he was always particularly supportive of all contributors to the Journal, especially those who were young and at the start of their academic careers. I know this from experience, because he edited and improved my contributions many times, and provided me with encouragement and support when I most needed it. I will always feel his absence and miss his wisdom. While I know that I can never hope to reach his level of editing or writing, I will do my best to try to continue his legacy of excellence and accessibility for those disparate voices and views, for which the Journal is an important resource and venue. All voices and ideas, especially those which speak "truth to power," will always be welcome. Above all, the Journal will honor his memory and that of our dear mutual friend, Gene Rossides, by continuing to support Hellenism and the Greek-American community by advocating for justice, human rights, the rule of law, and the values encompassing freedom and democracy.

This is especially important at the present time, when Europe is in the throes of a crisis whose outcome and extent has yet to be seen. Russia's unprovoked war of expansion into Ukraine has resulted in the displacement of innocent civilians, the loss of thousands of lives, and the destruction of cities within the European continent for the first time since WWII. The threat of a more general conflict, and one that may involve nuclear weapons, is a danger that cannot be discounted. Unfortunately, the community of nations ignored precedents such as Cyprus, where the borders of a sovereign nation were violated by Turkey in 1974, also using the pretext of protecting an ethnic minority, and ignoring the rule of law. That invasion and ethnic cleansing, is a human tragedy that has been allowed to remain unpunished for more than forty years. Turkey's illegal, military occupation, destruction of Cypriot cultural heritage, and colonization by tens of thousands of Anatolian settlers continues despite numerous United Nations Resolutions. The self-proclaimed "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" in the occupied territory is recognized only by Turkey. Russia's aggression has also finally made the European Community realize

that depending on the availability of energy resources from a totalitarian regime weakens its ability to defend democracy and encourages aggression. This factor has important implications for oil and gas prospects currently being developed by Greece and Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean according to international law and despite Turkish opposition.

The current issue of the Journal is appropriately dedicated to Dan Georgakas, and is largely the result of his hard work. I need to thank Dr. Van Coufoudakis, Dr. Christos Ioannides, Nick Larigakis, Yola Pakhchanian, and Dan's wife Barbara, for their constant assistance and support in bringing it to completion. Dan left behind hundreds of email communications and attachments related to the authors and articles in this issue going back to at least a year. These individuals helped me cull through this voluminous correspondence, identify submissions and edited versions and create the final table of authors and contributions published here. In many cases, Dan had edited the draft submission but had not finalized it with the author. Although I could not reach everyone, I contacted the majority, and I hope the remainder will be satisfied with the result. Dan had selected approximately ninety percent of the topics and authors in this issue. I added a few others, including my own submission, which I had discussed with Dan but had not sent him.

Based on Dan's selections and my additions, three themes are apparent in this issue which also reflect his strong interest as well as my own: 1) the commemoration of the one-hundred year anniversary of the horrific destruction of Smyrna by the Turks—contributions by Stavrides and Hatzidimitriou; 2) Greek-America and the larger diaspora—contributions by Trimmis and Marini, Diamandis, Gekas, and the review by Karageorge; 3) Democratic values, freedom, the rule of law, and their relationship to Hellenism—contribution by Agelarakis, and the reviews by Smith, Danopoulos, and Kaliambou. As in the past, the Journal also highlights two emerging student voices by Athan and Papoutsis based on their participation on the AHIF Foreign Policy Trip summer program. Two poems, one by Economou and another by Holst, on social issues are included that had been selected and edited by Dan. Finally, we have added a new Letters to the Editor section which relates important information by Dinella on the threat to Greece's security presented by Turkey's development of military drones. As is usual in all academic publications, I will quote the often repeated disclaimer: that the responsibility for any errors that may remain in these fine contributions is mine alone, as the new Journal editor. I am certain that Dan would have found and corrected any that have inadvertently crept in—and I will constantly strive to reach his level of excellence in forthcoming issues.