

## Preface

Flinders University's seventh Biennial International Conference of Greek Studies, held in Adelaide from 28 June to 1 July 2007 attracted 137 participants from four continents and nine countries, giving 129 papers.

The present volume of papers contains 70 scholarly papers on a wide range of subjects. The authors range from eminent professors to young men and women just starting on higher degree work, and their views vary as we would expect them to do from the differences in their experiences and preoccupations; but the focus of all papers is a desire to analyse and comment on the Hellenic world, past and present, in all its complexity.

All of the papers published here were assessed as significant contributions to knowledge, by scholars of international repute who had no connection with the conference, though three of the papers in English were judged to be personal rather than academic contributions. They have been published at the end of the volume because the assessor was particularly anxious that they be published even though they did not satisfy the criterion of adding to scholarly knowledge. They bring a personal dimension to the subjects treated which is immensely valuable in the *Proceedings*, as it always is in discussions at the conference.

The work of editing the papers is a challenge for all editors, as we are taken into so many different areas of expertise, but it is also a privilege to work with such erudite and committed Hellenists.

The papers in this collection cover a number of important areas in Greek studies, and several of them continue themes identified in earlier volumes of *Proceedings*. Foremost among these are studies of the part played by Greek and Cypriot immigrants and their descendents in the creation of the Australia in which we live today. Some of them recount the experiences of individuals, others are historical analyses of the contribution of groups. Together, in this as in past volumes, they reveal some of the many ways in which the Greek contribution to the Australia of today has been crucial but — all too often — unrecognised outside the community itself.

This collection of papers is, however, far from being a simple contribution to the history of Australia, important though this aspect of our conference will always be. We have been able to attract the attention of specialists in modern Greek literature, both postgraduates and established scholars, so that the contributions on literature,

from Byzantine times to the present, constitute a very lively forum for the discussion both of well-known writers and of some who deserve to be better known outside Greece. Papers on recent history have always formed a small but authoritative section of the *Proceedings*, and recently scholars of modern Cyprus have brought a welcome focus on to that country. Scholars of the Greek language have contributed excellent studies of the teaching and learning of the language in Greece and abroad, and have provided detailed analyses of the connections between Greek and English which broaden our knowledge of both languages.

Of increasing importance in the conferences and the *Proceedings* are the contributions on philosophy, which add another and most welcome addition to our examination of Hellenic civilisation. The papers in the present volume deal with a variety of topics in ancient Greek philosophy and science, ranging from the origins of the cosmos to friendship. In recent times, there has been a strong revival of interest in Greek philosophy, particularly in the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato, while there has also been a revival of interest in ancient science. Contributions in this volume reflect both revivals, with papers treating issues such as atomism, ancient debates about the size of the sun, the laws of logic and the nature of the good life. The range of these papers illustrates the rich contribution discussion of Greek ideas can make to modern debates.

We are particularly grateful, as always, to our referees, who give such great care to their reading of manuscripts. Their reports and marginal comments are always of immense help to authors and editors alike and we thank them for the time, effort and enthusiasm they so willingly give us.

Finally we express our gratitude to all our supporters, in particular those listed at the beginning of this volume for their financial contribution towards this publication. This is also the place to pay homage in the most dedicated fashion to the secretary and soul of our international conferences, Mary Skaltsas: without her all these efforts and results could not be achieved. We also extend our sincere appreciation to the typesetter Maria Sakellaridis for her outstanding professionalism in preparing this publication for print. It has been a lengthy trip of two years and Maria has always been with us checking all plans and maps during this long and exciting journey.

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