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Pages on Dionysios Solomos

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**MODERN GREEK STUDIES
(AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND)**

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The periodical welcomes papers in both English and Greek on all aspects of Modern Greek Studies (broadly defined). Prospective contributors should preferably submit their papers on disk and hard copy. All published contributions by academics are refereed (standard process of blind peer assessment). This is a DEST recognised publication.

Το περιοδικό φιλοξενεί άρθρα στα Αγγλικά και τα Ελληνικά αναφερόμενα σε όλες τις απόψεις των Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών (στη γενικότητά τους). Υποψήφιοι συνεργάτες θα πρέπει να υποβάλλουν κατά προτίμηση τις μελέτες των σε δισκέτα και σε έντυπη μορφή. Όλες οι συνεργασίες από πανεπιστημιακούς έχουν υποβληθεί στην κριτική των εκδοτών και επιλέκτων πανεπιστημιακών συναδέλφων.

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*The editors would like to express their gratitude to Andras Berkes
for his heroic efforts to make this journal readable.
This issue is dedicated to Véronica and Andras.*

**The Honourable
MR GOUGH WHITLAM AC, QC, BA, LL.B**

MODERN GREEK STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND,
5th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Great Hall, University of Sydney
23 November 2000, 7.30 pm

My first speech in the Great Hall of the University of Sydney was an occasional address at the conferring of law degrees on 22 March 1975. Allow me to quote from it:

There is now no limit to the positions which can be attained by bachelors of laws from Sydney University. It is just over ten years since a graduate of Sydney University Law School at last became chief justice of Australia. In filling vacancies on the High Court my own Government has preferred Sydney graduates. We have in fact made two appointments, not just the one. It is four years since a graduate of this law school at last became prime minister. Mr McMahon paved the way for me in so many respects. That still left the position of governor-general. In the past it was possible for English governors-general – and monarchs – to get by without university degrees. Only Dunrossil had one. It won't do in the days of good King Charles III, BA. Two of our Australian governors-general had been lawyers, Isaacs and McKell. So what more natural than that I should recommend that at last a Sydney law graduate should be governor-general.

...I count on you to play your parts in ensuring that after the next state election the premier of New South Wales will also be one of our graduates, the first since Bavin.

I was right about the next premier of New South Wales. I confess to some hyperbole about the chief justice and governor-general. Mine has not been the only ministry to last barely three years and it also made a difference. The Pharisees did not win in the end.

It is most unlikely that future Chief Justices, governors-general and premiers will commence their tertiary education, as I did, with three years of English, Latin and Greek. I

do not in any way regret that I did. Now, after existing for 150 years, this University is producing its smallest percentage of students who could translate the mottos of the University and the State. I regret to report that my honourable, gallant and learned friend Sir James Killen, KCMG, a Latinist, monarchist and high Tory Anglican, has suggested a vulgar variant of *Sursum corda* as the motto for this University. The translation in the *Book of Common Prayer* is “Lift up your hearts”. *Sursum*, of course, is not a verb but an adverb. Killen suggests the motto *Sursum se ipsos*. His translation is “Up themselves”.

Last month Dr Vrasidas Karalis, the head of the Department of Modern Greek at this University and the President of the Association of Modern Greek Studies in Australia and New Zealand, asked me for a provisional title of my talk; it could be on anything Greek, Greek-Australian, Australian or global. He gave me a broad brief and a full quiver. I declined to give a title. I drew another ecclesiastical parallel. When John Paul II came to Australia, arrangements for his reception at Royal Randwick Racecourse were entrusted to Sir Asher Joel. He did not announce the title of the Pope’s talk. He simply announced “I’ve got the Vicar of Christ”. When, as Christians believe, Christ returns, Harry Miller, who was born in New Zealand, will not announce the title of Our Lord’s talk. He will simply announce “I’ve got Christ Himself”.

ANCIENT GREECE TO MODERN GREECE

Dr Karalis’s name, however, gives me a starting point. Last July, Ross Burns, the distinguished archaeologist who graduated in history from this University and is our ambassador to the Hellenic Republic, and my wife and I were driven by my Greek Orthodox driver to Pylos and gazed upon Sphacteria. There in 425 BC, 420 occupying Spartans held out against an Athenian force under Cleon and the 292 survivors eventually surrendered. In July 1997 our previous ambassador, Robert Merrillees, another distinguished archaeologist and graduate in history from this University, took me to the truly splendid exhibition of “Treasures of Mt Athos” lent by the 20 monasteries of Mt Athos to the Museum of Byzantine Civilisation in Thessaloniki, the 1997 Cultural Capital of Europe. The Greek navy then took us to Mt Athos itself. Just over 100 kilometres directly north of the Holy Mount is the site of Amphipolis. It had been colonised by Athens in 436 BC to secure the approaches to Mt Pangaion’s timber, gold and silver which were needed to maintain the Athenian maritime empire. In 424 it surrendered to a great Spartan general, the original Brasidas. Thucydides was exiled for 20 years for failing to save the city. Cleon headed an expedition to recapture the area in 422. He retook Torone, which is familiar to Australians through Alexander Cambitoglou’s archaeological expeditions. Cleon and Brasidas were both killed in the renewed battle for Amphipolis.

Greeks everywhere celebrate the anniversary of 21 March 1821 AD, when Germanós, Archbishop of Patra, raised the standard of revolt against the Turks. In the bay of Pylos, then known as Navarino, in October 1827 a British, French and Russian fleet of 26 ships sank 53 of the 82 ships in a Turko-Egyptian fleet. By mid-1832, Greece, south of Epirus and Thessaly, was recognised as an independent state.

Australia and New Zealand, as parts of the British Empire, had closer official links with Greece after the first King of Greece, the Bavarian, Catholic and childless Othon, was deposed in October 1862. Queen Victoria's second son, Alfred, received 230 016 votes out of 241 202 in a plebiscite to choose a new king. In March 1863 Britain, France and Russia nominated and the National Assembly accepted Prince William George of Denmark as the King of the Hellenes. He took the title of George I. In the same month his sister, Alexandra, married Queen Victoria's eldest son, the future King Edward VII. Greek kings, like the other Balkan kings, were responsible for the armed forces and foreign policies of their countries.

WORLD WAR I TO WORLD WAR II

The British Empire brought Greece into World Wars I and II. On 20 October 1915, the government of King Constantine I, who was married to a sister of Kaiser Wilhelm II, declined Britain's offer to cede Cyprus as an inducement to enter the war on the side of the Allies. Britain, France and Russia took control of Thessaloniki on 1 June 1916. Venizelos established a provisional government there in September and declared war on Germany and Bulgaria in November. Constantine I abdicated on 11 June 1917.

In 1920, after the fall of the Russian, German and Austrian emperors, Constantine returned. His fortunes during his restoration brought about the first significant change in the constitutional relations between Britain, Australia and New Zealand. The British Government had always communicated with the Dominion Governments through their governors-general. In 1920 Turkey ceded Smyrna to Greece and allowed the League of Nations to administer the Dardanelles. British Prime Minister Lloyd George sympathised with Constantine's invasion of Turkey. Kemal Atatürk, the hero of Gallipoli, drove the Greeks back and on Saturday 9 September 1922 captured Smyrna. On the following Friday at 11.30 p.m. Lloyd George sent a cable penned by Churchill to the governors-general of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Newfoundland seeking troops to support the British garrison in Chanak at the gateway to the Dardanelles. The cable reached Government House in Melbourne at 12.20 pm on Saturday. Decoded copies were delivered to Hughes at Sassafraas at 5 pm on Sunday. Churchill, however, gave the text to the London Sunday papers. Their readers knew about the cable before Hughes had received it. He wrote a blistering letter to Lloyd George. Constantine abdicated again on 8 September. Lloyd

George resigned on 6 October. Churchill lost his seat on 15 November. Hughes was deposed by the Country Party in February 1923.

In 1926 the Imperial Conference decided that the Dominion prime ministers could communicate directly with the British Prime Minister and could advise the King on the appointment of governors-general. In November 1930 Prime Minister Scullin insisted that King George V appoint an Australian, Chief Justice Sir Isaac Isaacs, as governor-general. It is a shame that some monarchist law graduates from this University, such as ex-Professor David Flint and Judge of Appeal Ken Handley, never read vice-regal commissions. They do not know that a prime minister has the option to advise the Queen to replace a governor-general whenever he wishes. It is no surprise that Sir Harry Gibbs does not know that; he was the first graduate in law from the University of Queensland to become a judge and went on to be the last and the least of the Australians to serve on the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council. This University can be proud of the competent Greek barristers and solicitors it has taught. They know that *demokratia* is the Greek word for republic.

There were few contacts between Australia and Greece when I attended two secondary schools in Canberra between 1928 and 1934. I was taught ancient history, mainly about Athens between 600 and 400 BCE and about Rome from the Punic Wars to Caesar's conquest of the Gauls and Ptolemies. At school I could learn Latin but not Greek. I was able to learn Greek on Saturday mornings in 1933 and 1934 at the home of Leslie Holdsworth Allen. In 1918 he had been appointed professor of English at Duntroon. In 1931, when RMC moved to Victoria Barracks in Sydney, he accepted the post of lecturer in English and Classics at the new Canberra University College. He enabled me to matriculate for the University of Sydney in Greek. He is commemorated by the Haydon-Allen building at the ANU. I shall be indebted to him for the rest of my life.

William John Woodhouse was the professor of Greek at Sydney from 1901 to 1937. He was ailing throughout my three years and could not give lectures. He died in October 1937. In 1938 I commenced to dabble in law but decided to continue Greek lectures under the next professor, the 25-year-old John Enoch Powell. He arrived in February 1938 after a 14-day flight by Imperial Airways flying-boat via all available British outposts as far as Singapore and then by a Qantas de Havilland to Sydney. In the same year Cambridge University Press published his *Lexicon to Herodotus*. His lectures were devoted to identifying the corruptions in our text of Herodotos. It takes uncommon skill to eviscerate Herodotos. I decided to concentrate on law. Robert Shepherd's biography of Powell, published by Hutchison in 1996, states:

Gough Whitlam gave up Powell's lectures because they were 'as dry as dust'. Whitlam is also credited with having dubbed Powell as a "textual pervers".

At that time universities had many sexual maniacs but no sexual perverts. I actually said “textual maniac”. On the outbreak of war Powell left precipitately to save the Indian Empire. After the war, working for the Conservative Party, he failed to set the Thames afire but put a torch to Belfast.

The other anniversary celebrated by Greeks everywhere is 28 October 1940. On that date the dictator Metaxas replied “No” to an ultimatum by Mussolini to allow Italian troops in occupied Albania to pursue Albanian rebels into Greece. The Italians then invaded Greece. In January 1941 the Greeks drove them back into Albania. On 23 January Miss Thelma Cazalet, a Tory MP, asked Prime Minister Churchill “whether he will introduce legislation to enable the Elgin Marbles to be restored to Greece at the end of hostilities as some recognition of the Greeks’ magnificent stand for civilisation”. The Labour leader, Clement Attlee, deputy to Churchill, rose to say:

His Majesty’s Government are not prepared to introduce legislation for this purpose.

In March German troops crossed Bulgaria into Greece. On 6 April, Palm Sunday, German bombers blitzed Belgrade, killing 17 000 civilians. German troops entered Zagreb on 10 April, Belgrade on 13 April and Athens on 27 April.

Most, but far from all, of the Australian and New Zealand troops were evacuated from mainland Greece to Crete by the end of April 1941. The crack Cretan Division had been marooned on the mainland on its way back from Albania. On visits to Crete I have been impressed by the many memorials and constant tributes to the Anzacs who worked with the resistance. Last July, after our visit to Pylos, our ambassador and my wife and I called on Patrick Leigh Fermor at Kardamyli. He was the head of the Empire liaison group with the Cretan resistance and was primarily responsible for the capture and abduction of the German commander, Major-General Heinrich Kreipe. He worked with Tom Dunbabin, who was a student at this University in 1928 and before his death in 1955 had proved himself to be its greatest Greek scholar. They were both made Lieutenant-Colonels and awarded DSO’s for their heroism in Crete.

GREEK CULTURAL PROPERTY

My wife and I first visited Greece in 1962. Since then I have made a couple of dozen visits to Greece and four to Cyprus. On 2 January 1975 I was the first head of government to be received by Constantine Karamanlis after he was installed as President of the Hellenic Republic. A referendum had been carried by two votes to one in December 1974 against the restoration of the monarchy. I have had many opportunities in the last quarter century to

observe the declining British interest and the growing Australian interest in Greece. Britain's interest depended on monarchs. Australia's interest depends on migrants.

When World War II broke out every Balkan country had a monarch and all the Kings and most of the Queens were descendants of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, who were first cousins, or descendants of one of their first cousins. The Americans were not interested in Balkan countries until they had Communist governments and the British lost their expertise in them when they became republics.

Australia's leaders, diplomats, educators and opinion-formers tend to embrace automatically the North Atlantic perspective on the Balkans and to discount the full range of knowledge and tradition available within Australia itself. Australia's *2000 Year Book* estimates the countries of birth of Australia's population in 1998:

Australia	14 356 600
United Kingdom and Ireland	1 230 400
New Zealand	339 300
Italy	251 400
China, including Hong Kong and Macao	204 700
Former Yugoslav Republics	202 200
Vietnam	169 600
Greece	141 600
Germany	121 200
Philippines	111 700
Netherlands	95 300
<i>Total overseas</i>	4 394 400
<i>Total population</i>	18 751 000

There are more people in Australia than in the whole US or UK who are familiar with the politics and traditions of the Balkans. When my wife and I met ex-King Constantine II, an Olympic gold medallist, and his wife, a great-great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria, at the Australian exhibits in the Olympic Museum in Lausanne in 1993, he pleasantly observed that more people spoke Greek in Melbourne than in any city in the world other than Athens and Thessaloniki. The 1996 Australian Census showed that 2 474 600 persons spoke a language other than English at home. Italian headed the list with 367 300 speakers and Greek came next with 259 000 speakers.

In 1983 the Hawke Government appointed me the Australian Ambassador to Unesco. In the opening speeches at the General Conference in October Melina Mercouri was followed by Senator Susan Ryan, Bob Hawke's Minister for Education, who announced that Australia pro-

posed to become a party to Unesco's 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. In September 1984 Australia acceded to the 1954 Convention, but, due to ministerial and bureaucratic bungling, not to the companion Protocol. In pursuit of the 1970 Convention, I went to Athens in April 1985 as an observer at the fourth session of Unesco's Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation. The committee was chaired by Melina Mercouri. I observed the UK's reluctance to discuss the return of the Parthenon Marbles pillaged by Elgin. Australia was elected to the committee at the next General Conference (8 October–9 November 1985).

In the following February Lionel Bowen, Minister assisting the Prime Minister, wrote to a leading Greek organisation:

Australia has shown sympathy in United Nations fora for the broad principle of restitution of cultural property. When the question was raised generally at the United Nations General Assembly in November 1981, Australia voted in favour of the resolution, and was commended for its attitude at the second and third sessions of the Unesco Committee for Promoting Return of Cultural Property in September 1981 and May 1983 respectively.

The Australian Government recognises that the return of the Parthenon Marbles is a matter which the Greek Government, community, and an increasing number of distinguished citizens and professional organisations regard as being of the utmost importance, and has taken a sympathetic position on the question whenever the issue has been raised with the government as, for example, in discussions in 1984 between the Minister of Arts, Heritage and Environment, Mr Cohen, and the Greek Minister for Culture, Ms Melina Mercouri.

Legal advice available to the Australian Government is that the return of the Marbles is essentially a political matter to be resolved between the British and Greek governments rather than a legal one and that, so far as international law is concerned, the title of the British Museum could not be successfully challenged. The government, nevertheless, acknowledges the salience of arguments on aesthetic, technical and moral grounds.

Australia last year was elected Observer to the Unesco Committee for Promoting Return of Cultural Property and would be prepared to use its good offices in support of the return of the Marbles, should the matter be brought before the Committee.

As a member of the World Heritage Committee from 1983 to 1989, I was able to support the inscription of the first Greek sites on the World Heritage List, the Temple of Apollo Epikourios

at Vassai in 1986, Delphi and the Acropolis of Athens in 1987, Epidavros, Mt Athos, Meteora, the Paleochristian and Byzantine Monuments of Thessaloniki and the Medieval City of Rhodes in 1988 and Mystras and Olympia in 1989. Australia was reelected to the Intergovernmental Committee at the Unesco General Conference (17 October–16 November 1989). The Hawke Government had accepted the 1970 Convention on 30 October 1989. The Keating and Howard Governments did not seek election to the committee.

The restitution of the Parthenon Marbles was first raised in the Australian Parliament by Mark Latham a month after he was elected to my old seat in 1994. Knowledge of the Balkans is not among the talents of the most recent Australian foreign ministers, Gareth Evans and Alexander Downer. Evans obsequiously endorsed a superficial and supercilious reply prepared by his Department:

1. The Australian Government considers that the question of the return to Greece of the Elgin Marbles, removed from the Parthenon to the British Museum in the beginning of the nineteenth century, is a matter for resolution by the Greek and British Governments. My Department has not made representations to either the Greek or British Governments, nor in Commonwealth or UN forums on this matter.

2. The fact that Australia and the United Kingdom have the same Head of State is not relevant to the resolution of this matter.

The British were still justifying the retention of the marbles in the British Museum by asserting that they were legally acquired and have been properly safeguarded. Both contentions were demolished when Dr William St Clair, the author of *Lord Elgin and the Marbles* (1967, 2nd edition 1983), wrote in the preface to the third edition in 1998:

My researches have brought to light the facts of how, in 1937 and 1938, while in the stewardship of the British Museum, the Elgin Marbles were, over a period of at least eighteen months, and against the regulations then in force in the Museum, scraped with metal tools and smoothed with carborundum in an effort to make them appear more white. As a result, the historic surfaces of most of the sculptures were severely and irreparably damaged. With recourse to the official records to which access was repeatedly denied to me until 1996, I am here able to present the full account of the circumstances in which the disaster occurred, and of the extent of the damage, which the official inquiry of the time, hitherto suppressed, said "cannot be exaggerated". I also describe the measures subsequently taken by the British Museum authorities to cover up, quite literally, the effects of the mistreatment, and then, by unlawfully denying access to the relevant public documents, to prevent the full facts from becoming known until now.

In 1938 Lord Duveen of Millbank (Hull 1869-1939 London), the millionaire art dealer, undertook to pay for the construction of a new gallery in the British Museum to accommodate the marbles and ordered workers to “spruce them up”. During World War II they were stored in a disused underground station at Aldwych. They were not installed in the Duveen Gallery until 1962, when at last the British Museum acquired proper air filters. Lords Elgin and Duveen were worse barbarians than Alaric the Goth, who sacked Athens, but not the Parthenon, in 396 AD.

Minister Downer has repeatedly stated that the Howard Government’s position on the return of the Parthenon Marbles is the same as the Keating Government’s position stated by Minister Evans. Evans may not have read the 1967 and 1983 editions of St Clair’s book. Downer and his Department do not have the third edition or St Clair’s subsequent articles and speeches. They did not send observers to four significant conferences arising from St Clair’s revelations:

(a) the 10th session of the Intergovernmental Committee in Paris in January 1999, when a recommendation was adopted for “further initiatives to promote bilateral negotiations” between the UK and Greece;

(b) the seminar on “The Parthenon Sculptures: their History and Destiny” in February 1999 in Washington at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, where a paper was delivered by Mr David Walden, the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee;

(c) the two-day conference, “On Cleaning the Parthenon Sculptures”, organised by the British Museum in London in November 1999;

(d) the two-day international conference on the Parthenon Marbles organised in Athens by the Greek Government and the Greek National Committee for Unesco in May 2000.

In October 1999 the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee announced its intention to conduct an inquiry into matters relating to cultural property, including measures to control the illicit trade in such property. In February 2000 Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, announced that the Blair Government would not ratify the two major international conventions operating in this field, the 1970 Unesco Convention and the 1995 Unidroit Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects. The Committee held eight oral evidence sessions between late March and early June.

Downer and his Department did not give evidence, written or oral, to the House of Commons Committee. They ignored the declaration on the Return of the Elgin Marbles,

which received 341 signatures from the 626 members of the European Parliament. They ignored the petition supporting the return by members of the Australian Parliament led by Greek-speaking members Petro Georgiou (Liberal, Kooyong) and Lindsay Tanner (Labor, Melbourne).

The Australian Committee for the Restitution of the Parthenon Marbles sent a memorandum to the House of Commons Committee. It pointed out that the Australian Committee is bipartisan and professional. Former Prime Minister Fraser, Premier Olsen, former Premier Kennett and Sir James Killen belong to the Liberal Party and former Prime Minister Whitlam, premiers Carr and Bracks and former premier Wran belong to the Labor Party. The committee includes the Chairman of the Australian Museum, Malcolm Long, the Chairman of the Sydney Opera House, Joe Skrzynski, and the General Manager of the Australian Council for the Arts, Jenny Bott.

On 4 July 2000 Dr William St Clair briefed me in London at his apartment and then in the Duveen Gallery. On 18 July Dimitrios Pantermalis, the Professor of classical archaeology at the University of Thessaloniki, briefed me in Athens. Many of us met him in Melbourne and Sydney last March. The Greek Government has appointed him for a five-year term as president of the organisation for the construction of the new Acropolis Museum.

On 18 July the House of Commons ordered that its Committee's report be printed. The Committee noted that Australia, Canada and France are State Parties to the 1970 Unesco Convention and Sweden and Switzerland have both announced their intention to accede. It did not recommend that the UK become a party to the Convention. It noted that the 1995 Unidroit Convention had 22 signatories and 12 States Parties. Despite Secretary Smith's announcement, it recommended that the UK sign the Convention and that the government bring forward legislation to give effect to its provisions and facilitate early ratification.

The House of Commons Committee could have noted that other imperial powers like Hungary, Italy, Russia, Spain, USA (with reservations) and China were also States Parties to the 1970 Unesco Convention and that France, Portugal, Netherlands and Russia were among the signatories and Hungary, Italy and China among the States Parties to the Unidroit Convention. On 3 October Downer told Latham that consultations on the Unidroit Convention remain to be taken at the Commonwealth inter-agency level and with State and Territory governments. There is no timetable for accession.

On 2 November the UK Government gave its first response to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee report:

We do not recommend that the United Kingdom become a party to the 1970 Unesco Convention. We recommend that the United Kingdom sign the 1995 Unidroit Convention and that the Government bring forward legislation to give effect to its provisions and facilitate early ratification.

All of us realise that the British Museum, which holds more than half of the surviving sculptures from the Parthenon, is not permitted under its current statute to engage in negotiations to return objects and that the introduction of any legislation to return the Parthenon Marbles is the responsibility of the British Government. The Australian Parliament is entitled and qualified to press the British Government to introduce such legislation.

It is sad that British governments, Labour and Conservative, in the second half of the 20th century have dissipated the affection and admiration that Britain enjoyed in Greece in the first half of the 19th century.

Australians, who are an exceptionally multicultural and multilingual people, should not be deterred by the floodgates argument advanced by some of the rogue elements in the official British campaign. The Greek Foreign Minister, George Papandreou, is a more literate, articulate and erudite person than the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Robin Cook. Every year many more people, from home and abroad, visit the Parthenon than the Duveen Gallery. The Greeks do not ask for the Vassai marbles to be returned from the British Museum or the Aigina marbles from the Glyptothek in Munich.

The Turks do not ask for the return of the Hellenistic marbles from the British Museum to Bodrum or from Berlin to Bergama or from Vienna to Ephesus. They know that, when the first restitution of cultural property took place after Waterloo, the Bronze Horses were not sent back from the Arc du Carrousel to Constantinople, whence Doge Enrico Dandolo had taken them in 1204; they were sent back to the façade of St Mark's, since Venice had been reclaimed by the Austrian Empire, part of the Coalition against Napoleon. If Napoleon had won at Waterloo, the Parthenon Marbles would not have gone back to the Turks in Athens and the Rosetta Stone would not have gone back to the Turks in Alexandria; both would have gone to the Louvre.

The Parthenon Marbles are incomparably the finest examples of classical sculpture. The city of Pericles was also the city of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Athens became the city of Thucydides, Aristophanes, Socrates, Isocrates, Plato, Xenophon, Demosthenes and Aristotle. Athens was the centre of ancient Greek culture and civilisation. Western civilisation and democracy were born in Athens. Since Australians are among the inheritors of those assets, we should do what we can to have the most significant symbols returned to Athens.

THE OLYMPICS OF SYDNEY AND ATHENS

On Easter Monday 6 April 1896 George I and Crown Prince Constantine spoke at the opening of the first Olympic Games of the modern era in the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens. On 30 September 2000, the day before the Olympic Games of Sydney closed, the Mayor of Athens gave a life-size bronze statue of Athena to the Lord Mayor of Sydney. The

prototype was made in 340-330 BCE by Kephisodotos, the father and teacher of Praxiteles. It was found in 1959 during road construction works in Piraeus. The replica is installed on a plinth in Barrack Street in front of a classic building with three tiers of Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns.

Many in this audience will be in the Panathenaic Stadium when the President of the Hellenic Republic opens the Games of Athens celebrating the XXVIII Olympiad in 2004. When I left school in Canberra and came to the University of Sydney I was under the spell of Byron and Shelley. Contemplating the Olympics in Athens in 2004 some Australians are inclined to the view expressed by Byron in 1819:

*The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.*

I incline to the view expressed by Shelley in 1822:

*Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime.*