

EDITORIAL

This issue of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* is special for two reasons: it celebrates forty years of our journal's publication, and it is the first issue to be produced by our new publisher, Cambridge University Press. The issue is dedicated to Anthony Bryer, who was appointed to teach Byzantine History at Birmingham in 1964. Bryer was one of the leading figures in the creation of the journal and has been a member of the editorial board ever since the first issue appeared in 1975; he also served as the Business Editor from 1984 to 1994.

BMGS was conceived as bridging chronological and geographical boundaries: between Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek Studies, and between the scholarly activities in these fields being carried out on both sides of the Atlantic. Both the chronological and the geographical links were symbolized by the fact that the journal was originally edited by the British Byzantinist Donald Nicol and the American Modern Greek scholar Peter Bien. It was appropriate that the first publisher of *BMGS* was Basil Blackwell, who in 1938–9 had published the short-lived journal *The Link: A Review of Mediaeval and Modern Greek* edited in Birmingham by Nicholas Bachtin, younger brother of the (later) more famous Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin. Bachtin, who worked under the auspices of the Hellenist George Thomson, shared Thomson's enthusiasm for viewing the whole of Greek culture, from earliest antiquity to the present day, as a seamless whole.

The transatlantic nature of *BMGS* was not to last long. The Modern Greek Studies Association had been founded in the USA in 1968, and initially a subscription to *BMGS* was included in the MGSA's membership fee. However, its members soon wished to have their own journal devoted to Modern Greek Studies alone. Thus it was that the last transatlantic issue of *BMGS* was vol. 8 (1982/3), which was followed by the withdrawal of the American members of its editorial board, Peter Bien, Edmund Keeley, John Petropulos and Speros Vryonis, Jr. The *Journal of Modern Greek Studies (JMGS)* has been published since 1983, and it immediately became linked to the MGSA membership fee in place of *BMGS*. From vol. 9 onwards (1984/5) the editorship of *BMGS* was taken over by John Haldon, and its publication was transferred from Blackwell to the Centre for Byzantine Studies and Modern Greek (later renamed Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies) at the University of Birmingham.

John Haldon remained editor for twenty years (assisted by Peter Mackridge during the last five years). Haldon admirably fulfilled the task of picking *BMGS* up from the doldrums caused by the haemorrhage of subscribers and the loss of the American members of the editorial board. He ensured that contributions published in *BMGS* would

continue to come from scholars in America and elsewhere in the world as well as the UK. He also encouraged *BMGS* to become a forum for the discussion of theory and method as well as an outlet for more specific scholarly studies. To further this aim, he introduced a section of the journal devoted to Critical Studies. In 2005 *BMGS* introduced a book review section, under the editorship of Dimitris Tziouvas, as an additional forum for discussion. The same year saw *BMGS* move from a single annual volume to two issues per year. In fact, throughout its forty-year life so far, the amount of material published in *BMGS* each year has progressively increased, and it is continuing to do so in 2016.

Since 2004 Maney in Leeds, in collaboration with the CBOMGS in Birmingham, have undertaken the physical production and distribution of *BMGS* as well as managing its publicity and its subscriptions. The present issue marks our amicable parting from Maney, who have worked with us creatively and fruitfully for twelve years. Cambridge University Press, which nearly took on *BMGS* at the outset of its publication, has now taken over Maney's duties.

We assumed the editorship of *BMGS* when John Haldon moved to Princeton in 2005. One of the biggest challenges faced by us and by our predecessors has been the cohesion between Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies. Byzantine Studies have expanded greatly during this period, whereas Modern Greek Studies have remained the province of a much smaller number of scholars. Despite the major imbalance between Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies generally, in terms of chronological range and the number of scholars involved in each of these two areas, *BMGS* has tried to preserve a balance between the amounts of material it publishes in these two areas. In many respects there was no absolute break between Byzantium and 'Modern Greece', if by the latter we mean Greek history and culture from 1453 onwards. The Byzantine administration of various parts of the Greek world was superseded by foreign rule at various times over a period of 250 years, and Byzantine institutions, notably the Patriarchate of Constantinople, continued to dominate many aspects of Greek life for centuries after 1453. In fact, some of the articles that best illustrate the remit of *BMGS* are concerned with topics such as Greek history and culture during the Byzantine period but outside the borders of the Byzantine empire, and Greek history and culture under Ottoman rule, as well as those that straddle the relevant chronological boundaries. However, we continue to believe, as John Haldon stated in his editorial comment in the 1987 issue, that the diversity of the material published in *BMGS* is one of its major strengths.

BMGS has been keen to cover a wide range of disciplines, including history, archaeology, language, literature, culture, art history and anthropology. Perhaps, out of this list, the area that has been least adequately represented is anthropology. One reason for this is that, right from its first issue, *JMGS* has displayed a keen interest in anthropology, leaving the impression that *BMGS* is not the obvious place to publish anthropological articles. The publication of Michael Herzfeld's article in the present issue shows that *BMGS* is indeed interested in anthropology.

In terms of diversity, we are proud of the fact that the 2015 issues of *BMGS* include articles on St Luke as an icon painter, the archaeology of Byzantine Butrint, Oriental borrowings in Medieval Greek, a post-Byzantine account of a journey to the other world, the *karagiozis* shadow theatre, the representation of Greek antiquity in *rebetika* songs, the reception of Cavafy in Poland, the image of Greece in contemporary English travel writing, and the post-colonial presence of British forces in Cyprus.

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The present volume consists mainly of articles which we commissioned from scholars who had published articles in the first ten years of *BMGS*. We invited them to reflect on developments in their particular fields during the last thirty to forty years. Since their first appearance in *BMGS*, these people have become leading scholars in their fields. Between them, their contributions cover various aspects of history, literature and anthropology.

On a personal level, it is pleasant to record that some of these contributors have been connected with *BMGS* and with Bryer for more than forty years. Michael Angold, for instance, had been in discussions with Bryer about a possible journal of this kind since 1968; Sebastian Brock began his teaching career at Birmingham at the same time as Bryer in 1964; and Margaret Alexiou, daughter of George Thomson, contributed to the very first issue of *BMGS*. In fact, the majority of these contributors have worked at some time at Birmingham: Alexiou, Beaton, Brock, Haldon, Herzfeld, Holton, Tziouvas and Ursinus.

We left our contributors free to tackle their chosen topic in their own way. The result is that some have produced a fairly comprehensive and detailed survey of scholarly activity and publications, others have covered the topic in more general terms, while others have chosen to focus on quite a specific topic. The diversity of approaches taken by these authors reflects the policy of intellectual diversity that *BMGS* has fostered over the last forty years.

The other two articles and the short note which, with the book reviews, complete this issue, are contributions by members of a younger generation of scholars; the two articles are devoted to topics addressed by some of the senior contributors.

Peter Mackridge

Ruth Macrides