

Preface

Dealing with issues of cultural property law is not an easy task. This area of law combines aspects from many separate areas of law, which only recently took on a more rigid form under the label of cultural property law. On top of this, the interests at stake as well as the stakeholders (states, museums, galleries, collectors, art dealers and so on) are numerous. On the one hand, some of the issues raised are, strictly speaking, legal; on the other hand, this area of law depends heavily on ethics, morality and personal convictions, which, by definition, do not involve pure objectivity, unaffected by emotion.

My involvement with cultural property law, from different perspectives and on different occasions, has allowed me to develop a considerable degree of understanding of the different views and approaches. I studied this area of law in England, with an emphasis on the common law liberal approach and practised it in Greece, with an emphasis on the protective approach. I have participated in negotiations on the Parthenon Marbles issue; acted as a legal advisor for the return of artefacts to Greece from abroad including returns from the J.P. Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the Leon Levy and Shelby White collection in New York; negotiated bilateral agreements on the protection of cultural treasures between Greece and other states; represented Greece in UNESCO; and participated in the drafting Committee of the most recent Act on Measures for the Protection of Cultural Goods and Other Provisions enacted in Greece (Law 3658/2008).

This book was written while I was pregnant with my son Anastassis: in many ways, its writing may be compared to a pregnancy. For this book to be published, many people have played their part. The first ones to thank are the Initiative for Heritage Conservancy (IHC), Lloyd Cotsen, Evangelos Kyriakides and Edward Elgar Publishing for making the publication of this book possible. I also wish to thank Wendy Addison for editing the manuscript, Maria Tzima for editing other smaller parts and the bibliography of this book and Polyxeni Veleni (Director of the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, Greece) for providing the photo which became the cover of this book. Many thanks also to my two other children, Fotini and Manthos: though they did not always manage to keep quiet and behave themselves during its writing, they did, however, try

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