

Victoria Solomonidis-Hunter, FKC *Curriculum Vitae*

Born in Athens, Victoria Solomonidis-Hunter obtained a BA in Journalism (1975) and a BA in Greek & English Literature from the University of Athens (1976). She continued her postgraduate studies in international relations and history at the University of London, obtaining an MA from UCL/*School of Slavonic and East European Studies* (1977) and a PhD from *King's College London* (1984). In 2008 she obtained an MSc in Scientific Translation from *Imperial College London*.

After joining the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1979, she served at the Historical Archives of the Ministry (1979-1980); the Greek Representation to the European Union in Brussels (1980); the Greek Embassy in London (1981-1991); the Greek Embassy in Bucharest (1991-1992); UNESCO (*International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property* - ICCROM, Rome) and the Greek Embassy in Rome (1992-1995, dual appointment). In February 1999 she was appointed UK Representative of the *Hellenic Foundation for Culture*, a post she held in tandem with her duties at the Greek Embassy in London and continues to hold to date. From 1995 until her retirement in 2015 she was a Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Specialist Consultant on Cultural Affairs, with the rank of Minister Counsellor, serving at the Greek Embassy in London.

During that period, she was in charge of Cultural Affairs at the Embassy, actively promoting all aspects of Greek culture and working closely with UK arts organisations, learned institutions and museums, as well as universities and other institutions of Higher Education, especially those offering courses in Classics, Archaeology, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies.

Part of her brief was the organisation of an on-going series of events under the umbrella title *Greece in Britain*, a rolling programme of cultural events, begun in January 1998 in celebration of the then UK Presidency of the European Union. The series, which continued until 2014, presented to UK audiences the wealth and diversity of contemporary Greek culture through concerts, exhibitions, conferences, film screenings, theatre and dance performances and literature/poetry readings.

Throughout her service in London (1981-1991 and 1995-2015), she was particularly active in the field of the repatriation of antiquities illegally exported from Greece to the UK, securing the successful outcome of numerous cases through the British legal system.

The issue of the Parthenon Sculptures was high on her agenda: she worked in close association with the *British Committee for the Reunification of the Parthenon Sculptures* from its inception in 1983 and actively promoted in the UK all aspects connected with the design, building and completion of the New Acropolis Museum. In 2015 she joined the Governing Body of the *Melina Mercouri Foundation*.

Since 2003 she has been a member of the Advisory Council at the University of London's Institute of Classical Studies. From 2003 until the completion of the project in 2009, she was a member of the Codex Sinaiticus Project Board at the British Library. Since 2004 she has been a member of the Chancellor's Court of Benefactors at Oxford University. In 2006 she was elected Fellow of King's College London. In 2009 she became an Honorary Research Associate at *Imperial College London* and in 2013 a Teaching Fellow at *UCL*.

At present, her research interests are focused in the project for the restoration of the magnificent 19th century Greek Necropolis at West Norwood Cemetery, reconstructing the lives and times of this important Greek community which helped shape shipping and finance in the UK as we know it today. She has recently published an article on John Cavafy, MD FRCP, a UCL School alumnus and prominent member of this community. See: <https://www.fownc.org/pdf/newsletter99.pdf>

She speaks Greek, English, French and Italian.