Preface

The conception, planning, and editorship of this volume have been from the very start a joint project. It has been motivated by philosophical interests that we share and by our common perception of a glaring gap in the study of Greek and Latin philosophical texts. Both of us, independently of each other, have been engaged over the years with contemporary work in the philosophy of mind and, in particular, concepts. Both of us were struck by the vast tensions between rival accounts of concept formation, the disagreements regarding the psychological mechanisms involved in the acquisition and use of different sorts of concepts, and the debates over the epistemology of concepts and the relation between concepts and language in contemporary as well as Greco-Roman philosophy. While we benefitted from valuable publications on such topics, many questions, we thought, remained unanswered, and a comprehensive study was still missing from the secondary literature in Greco-Roman philosophy.

We had many opportunities to discuss these matters in professional as well as in private settings, thus pursuing a philosophical dialogue and an intellectual and personal companionship that stretches back to the years of our graduate studies and the training that we both received in Paris from Jacques Brunschwig and, subsequently, in the Cambridge Faculty of Classics from the specialists in Ancient Philosophy active at that time. The idea of preparing together a collection of essays exploring ancient Greek approaches to the concept of concept (or, more precisely, different concepts of concept) presented itself naturally and quite spontaneously in one of these conversations. In light of what seemed to be the *status questionis*, we agreed that an effort should be made to fill an important lacuna in the relevant scholarship. We began planning the volume in Cambridge, in Lent term of 2016, and we issued invitations to our prospective authors over the course of the next few months.

The completion of the volume took approximately six years plus an additional year devoted to the final revisions taking into consideration the

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comments made by the anonymous referees. This stretch of time is not especially surprising for a work of such complexity, magnitude, and scope. But perhaps the main reason why the preparation of the manuscript took so long to be completed was our determination to do all the editorial work together rather than in parallel with each other. We are still convinced that this was the best way of giving substantial comments to our authors and of preserving a certain level of unity and consistency throughout the volume. We composed the Introduction and our chapter 'Epicurean Preconceptions and Other Concepts' in a similar way: this is genuinely joint writing, not parallel writing.

In addition to reducing the number of stylistic disparities and conceptual tensions between the different chapters, the primary benefit of our method of working undoubtedly derived from our direct and sustained philosophical interactions over the ideas, contentions, arguments, and interpretations advanced by our authors or indeed ourselves. We regret that the participants did not have the opportunity to interact in person with each other and with ourselves in the context of a common venue. We planned to hold a conference about half way through the preparation of the volume at which the contributors could have presented and discussed the first drafts, but this conference never materialised for reasons outside our control.

All in all, this has been a unique and marvellous intellectual journey, and it is time to express our gratitude to those that made it possible. Our first thanks are due, of course, to the authors who participated in the volume for their outstandingly valuable contributions as well as their patience, flexibility, and collegiality. We could not have had a more fruitful and felicitous experience as editors, and we are very grateful to them all. We owe a special debt to David Sedley for advice on practical and procedural matters and for the loving support that he so characteristically and generously gave. We are obliged to Paul Kalligas for his input on the structure of the volume, especially the part concerning Platonism. Our students and colleagues, at the Cambridge Faculty of Classics and at UCSB respectively, have been an inexhaustible source of information, inspiration, and constructive criticism. Of particular importance for the philosophical relevance of our project were two reading groups on concepts and concept-formation organised by UCSB graduate students and attended by members of the faculty as well. They showed us the way towards the most recent literature on the subject, facilitated our deeper engagement with the relevant philosophical issues, and enabled us to better situate ancient and modern views in relation, comparison, or contrast with each other.

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Moreover, we warmly thank the anonymous referees for their detailed and helpful comments and criticisms, which led to substantial revisions of the form and the contents of the collection.

We presented penultimate versions of our own chapter on the Epicurean approach to concepts at a conference held by Alex Long at the University of St Andrews (April 2022) and a conference organised by Stéphane Marchand and Pierre-Marie Morel at the University of Paris I - Panthéon Sorbonne (September 2022). We thankfully acknowledge the feedback we received at those events for our own paper. At the end of the conference in Paris, and after a last day of joint work, we sent off the complete manuscript from Le Rostand, a café across from the Jardin du Luxembourg in the Quartier Latin, familiar to us from our student years and still special to us both.

We extend our warmest thanks for Michael Sharp for his unparalleled expertise and diligence, his wise guidance and advice, and his unstinting support of this project. Also, many thanks to Katie Idle for all her help, to Angela Roberts for the copy-editing, and to Franklin Mathews Jebaraj for the general management of the production of the book.

We have debts of a different kind as well, though no less important. Apart from the hours, days, and indeed, months spent on zoom, we did our most productive writing and editing in the summers, in Voula and Richard's country home in Galaxidi, often in the company of our respective families. We are profoundly grateful to our spouses, Ági and Richard, and our children – Juli, Zsófi, and Eleni – for graciously putting up with our long hours of work and for the gift of their presence, company, and good spirits. Our co-authored chapter is dedicated to them, with all our love.

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