

Acknowledgements

The present volume is the first of the two volumes which comprise most of the papers dealing with the reception of the Ancient Novel originally delivered at the 4th International Conference on the Ancient Novel (ICAN IV), which took place at Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, in Lisbon, from 21-26 July 2008. The ICAN meetings have been important international academic and cultural events both for those involved in the study of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds and for those interested in the history and development of the novel, which is arguably the definitive literary form of Western literary culture. They have, further, been decisive in advancing research on the ancient novel and have steadily attracted the growing interest of classicists. They have also contributed considerably to the advance of classical scholarship, the ancient novel being nowadays one of the fastest growing fields of research and a crucial issue for the interpretation of ancient culture, identity, and reading practices, and an extremely innovative area in the field of classical and comparative studies.

Crossroads in the Ancient Novel: Spaces, Frontiers, Intersections, was the theme adopted for the Conference in 2008. The main focus was the crossing of cultures, languages, races, mentalities: a Hellenistic idea which concentrates in itself a whole range of topics which characterize the genre and are simultaneously at the center of our contemporary cultural debate, since they have played a central role in the history of the modern novel too. For the Congress, we used all of this as a metaphor for a host of concerns and issues, for the exchange and intersection of knowledge. Spaces, frontiers, and intersections were reflected in many of the 280 papers, from the 350 submitted, which were selected for presentation, and in the 76 sessions and two round-tables of the Conference. The organization in Portugal of ICAN 2008 was intended to bring about an effective exchange of knowledge and experience among researchers active in particular areas, and to present a survey of the various problems and directions of present and future research.

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