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# Introduction

*ἵνα οὖν καὶ ὁ δῆμος φαίνηται εὐχάριστος καὶ τιμῶν τοὺς ἀρετῆι διαφέροντας...*
(*IG* XII 9, 234, ll. 38-39)

The idea of publishing a Festschrift in honour of Kostas Buraselis took shape immediately after his retirement from the University of Athens in 2018. As the realization of this project encountered an unfortunate delay due to heavy workloads – teaching and research commitments next to the ever-increasing administrative responsibilities borne by the staff of universities and research institutions –, a fortunate coincidence now allows the publication to coincide with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the honouree's birth, on the 28th of November 1950. We therefore present this volume as a modest and heartfelt birthday gift – an expression of our deep affection for a man who has been an inspiring teacher, a caring senior colleague, and a paternal source of support to all of us.

The editors came to know Kostas Buraselis primarily at the University of Athens, where they were his students, junior colleagues, or both. Universities in Greece in the late 1980s and early 1990s were intellectually vibrant institutions if not always efficiently administered or adequately funded. The faculty building of the School of Philosophy (Φιλοσοφική) at Zographou, on the outskirts of Athens, was barely finished when two of the undersigned joined the department of Ancient History and Archaeology as students (a third one joined a couple of years later). While the building still had various deficiencies, the humanities libraries were organized with the help of volunteers from the students. Miraculously, highly motivated academic staff were not in short supply. The faculty's dynamism manifested itself in part through a tangible rift between the older generation of teachers and the younger ones favouring a more 'modern' approach to history and sharing a penchant for theory, which appealed to students. Ancient history stood somewhat apart from these trends, and attracted relatively little attention. The arrival of Kostas Buraselis at the Department of History and Archaeology in 1989 immediately made a difference. He taught his first class in Roman history, and those of us who attended his lectures never forgot them.

Fresh from a research institution, his intellectual curiosity and love of scholarly debate were immediately evident, as was his genuine interest in our views. He was without doubt a scholar of remarkable erudition –this was obvious even in his first lecture– but, more important, he was a person of extraordinary character, who sought to make a meaningful difference: to share his knowledge without stinting and to spread his infectious enthusiasm for ancient history, for attention to textual details, for sources then outside the Greek academic mainstream of ancient history (inscriptions, papyri, coins), and for meaningful narratives about historical phenomena. His generosity was truly inspiring, creating a space where academic inquiry flourished alongside sincere dialogue. This dialogue was often filled with a torrent of objections: we objected to his arguments (a habit he visibly cherished and encouraged), in an effort to clarify our understanding, which,

in turn, gave him the chance to refine his arguments, to add layers of interpretation, and, most significantly, to present us more evidence in support of his argument.

From the start, it was clear that his commitment extended beyond our academic growth to our development as individuals and our personal well-being. In matters both professional and personal, Kostas Buraselis offered unfailingly generous support. His warmth and genuine concern for his students was matched by his commitment to collegiality and constructive dialogue with his colleagues. For those of us who later became his colleagues at the department which he helped reform, the importance of this environment of friendly camaraderie, free from the divisive disputes that can plague academic departments, was invaluable; this is the reason why the word εἰρήνη is found in the title of this volume, which we offer to him as a small ἀντίδωρον for his constant εὔνοια.

## A short biography of Kostas Buraselis

Kostas Buraselis pursued his undergraduate studies in History and Archaeology at the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Athens between 1968 and 1973. He continued his academic training in Germany, undertaking postgraduate studies at the Philipps-Universität Marburg, where he earned his doctorate (Dr. Phil.) in Ancient History (1973-1979), supported by scholarships from both the German and Greek governments.

His academic career began at Marburg, where he served as a research assistant at the Seminar für Alte Geschichte. Upon returning to Greece, he was appointed researcher (1982-1985) and subsequently Director (1985-1989) of the Research Center for Antiquity at the Academy of Athens. In this capacity, he played a pivotal role in advancing the study of the Roman East, most notably by coordinating the Academy's participation in the international *Tabula Imperii Romani* project.

In 1989, Kostas Buraselis joined the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Athens, where he served with distinction for nearly three decades. Throughout his tenure, he provided consistent and rigorous teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, while supervising a substantial number of doctoral and master's theses in Hellenistic and Roman history. His academic influence extended internationally through visiting professorships and research appointments at numerous universities and research institutes in Greece, Europe, the United States, Canada and China.

His contributions to the Department of History and Archaeology extended well beyond his teaching duties. He served as Deputy Chair and Chair for two consecutive terms and was Director of the Historical *Spoudasterion* for an impressive period of 16 years, during which he played a key role in strengthening the department's academic infrastructure. He was also instrumental in broadening the department's international engagement by initiating and sustaining collaborations with universities abroad and by integrating Ancient History into wider academic and research networks. In 2010, he was elected director of the then Institute of Greek and Roman Antiquity of the National Hellenic Research Foundation (NHRF), an election that was not implemented due to the merger of the three humanities institutes of the NHRF.

His commitment to fostering international academic cooperation culminated in his appointment as Deputy Rector for Academic Affairs and International Relations at the University of Athens (2014-2018). Following his retirement and his appointment as Professor Emeritus in 2018, he continued to serve the university as Advisor to the Rector's Office on Academic Affairs and International Relations. In 2023, he was elected a member of the Academy of Athens.

Throughout his distinguished career, Kostas Buraselis has been a steadfast advocate of expanding opportunities for young scholars. His contributions have been instrumental in providing access to postgraduate and doctoral programs both in Greece and abroad through the establishment of scholarship programs and the fostering of academic networks. His enduring dedication to encouraging the active participation of early-career researchers in scholarly life has been evident in various ways, including facilitating the publication of their work in internationally recognized journals and thus contributing to the global dissemination of Greek scholarship about antiquity.

## Kostas Buraselis' research and scholarly work

Kostas Buraselis' contribution to the study of ancient history, and to historical studies in general, is not limited to his published work (see further below); yet his multifaceted and influential body of work is well worth a brief introduction.

Some common threads run through most of Kostas Buraselis' bibliography. One such thread is the constant interplay between the meticulous analysis of primary sources (mostly inscriptions and literary sources, but also papyri or coins) and the synthetic approach to major phenomena, or a nuanced exploration of complex interactions – between protagonists of the *grande histoire*, between states (be they cities, *koina* or empires), or between ideas and cultural constructs. Another common thread is the constant shift from the Hellenistic to the Roman world, which often led to illuminating comparisons between similar phenomena in both periods. From the very start of his career, Buraselis set his gaze on the *longue durée*, without ever overlooking what was period-specific.

Another such thread is that, although his interests are so varied and his facility in very different research areas so impressive, he does not abandon the research topics he has dealt with, but revisits them, adding nuances or exploring new aspects of the issue at hand. Thus, there are some recurrent topics in his body of published work: monarchy (Hellenistic and Imperial) and its various administrative, political, ideological, geostrategic, cultural structures; diplomacy; the concept of centre and periphery and of geopolitical space; the world of Greek *koina* and the processes of federalization; rhetoric (be it imperial propaganda, the Second Sophistic, a historiographical work, or a civic decree) as performative speech, as 'intentional history' and as a tool to build communal identities; even some more specific topics, to which he returns, from monographs to smaller articles or book reviews, such as the *Constitutio Antoniniana* in its legal and ideological context, or the gymnasium and Greek agonistic culture.

Kostas Buraselis also embraced his responsibility as a public intellectual, working to influence broader perceptions of ancient history. This included reappraising well-known topics like Athenian democracy, the Persian wars, and the Roman empire, as well as pioneering research into modern Greek historiography of the ancient world – a field that remains vastly understudied.

A closer look at his four individual monographs may help illustrate the above remarks more vividly. His first monograph[1] – based on his doctoral dissertation – deals with the relations between the Macedonian kingdom and the Aegean islands from the time of Cassander to the end of the reign of Antigonus Gonatas. The policy of Cassander aimed at creating centers of Macedonian

1 *Das hellenistische Makedonien und die Ägäis. Forschungen zur Politik des Kassandros und der drei ersten Antigoniden (Antigonos Monopthalmos, Demetrios Poliorketes und Antigonos Gonatas) im Ägäischen Meer und in Westkleinasien* (Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung 73), Munich 1982.

influence in western Asia Minor as a bulwark against Diadochi, who might show interest in mainland Greece and the Macedonian kingdom itself. Cassander did not apparently aspire to expand his territories into the coasts of Asia Minor or its interior; for such a policy, he would have needed a fleet, without which he could not have pursued an effective Aegean policy.

Demetrios Poliorketes adopted a different stance; as king of the Macedonians (since 294 BC), he was no longer the liberator of the Greeks, but rather the one who aimed at full control of the Greek cities and the recapture of the old Antigonid territories in Asia Minor, an overly ambitious goal, which was doomed from the outset.

The case of Antigonos Gonatas was quite different. After the experience of the period 288-276 BC, the rejection of his father's goal of recreating a vast Antigonid kingdom was a given. This did not however prevent him from attempting a successful compromise between past Antigonid ambitions with the ever-evolving situation in mainland Greece. The maintenance of a powerful fleet and its orientation towards consolidating Antigonid dominance in the Aegean was perceived as a threat by the Ptolemies, resulting in the Chremonidean War. The Ptolemaic threat made Antigonos realize that a prerequisite for maintaining Antigonid power in mainland Greece was the elimination of Ptolemaic power in the Aegean. The two great victories at Cos and Andros over the Ptolemaic fleet not only crippled Ptolemaic power in the Aegean but also dramatically strengthened Antigonid influence in the Cyclades. Within this framework falls the attempt at a dynastic connection with the Kingdom of Cyrene. Antigonos Gonatas bequeathed this policy to his successors: Demetrios II consolidated relations with Crete, which Antigonos Doson further strengthened, while also occupying parts of Caria. His ambitious successor, Philip V, actively aimed at transforming the Aegean Sea into an Antigonid lake.

This monograph was a major breakthrough in research by offering a re-examination of a substantial number of geostrategic issues in the most poorly documented period of ancient history, the 3rd century BC. Through a minute study of all relevant sources, it provided a synthetic picture of the period, opening new avenues for subsequent research. Apart from offering solutions and new narratives for a number of cruces in research (the chronology and spheres of power of Eupolemos and Pleistarchos, the chronology and significance of the naval battles of Andros and Kos, a new narrative on the *koinon* of the Islanders, the first attempt to unite the islands of the archipelago with an Antigonid stamp, to name but a few), this study provided the new framework for studying the Aegean in the third century BC. Subsequent studies have relied on its robust argumentation, while new epigraphic data have largely confirmed Buraselis' narrative.

Θεία δωρεά, Kostas Buraselis' highly influential monograph on the Antoninian Constitution, was first published in 1989 in Greek,[2] followed by a German translation in 2007.[3] Buraselis' study reinterprets the edict as a calculated ideological instrument rather than a mere administrative or fiscal maneuver. Through this approach, the book diverges from earlier debates on the *Constitutio Antoniniana* (*CA*), which focused on economic motives (e.g., tax revenue) or bureaucratic unification. Moving beyond Cassius Dio's cynical interpretation of the edict as a fiscal measure, Buraselis evaluates an array of literary, epigraphic and papyrological sources, offering persuasive analysis of previously neglected evidence.

2 *Θεία δωρεά. Μελέτες πάνω στην πολιτική της δυναστείας των Σεβήρων και την Constitutio Antoniniana* (Ακαδημία Αθηνών, Κέντρον Ερεύνης της Αρχαιότητος. Σειρά Μονογραφιών 1), Athens 1989.

3 *Θεία δωρεά. Das göttlich-kaiserliche Geschenk. Studien zur Politik der Severer und zur Constitutio Antoniniana* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Akten der Gesellschaft für Griechische und Hellenistische Rechtsgeschichte 18), Wien 2007.

He gives special attention to the Giessen Papyrus (*P.Giess.* 40), which contains fragments of the actual edict, highlighting its religious framing – the citizenship grant is presented as a means of expanding worship of the gods. Buraselis then evaluates Galen's work "On Theriac to Piso" to identify key elements of Severan political ideology. Galen's account of how the Severans made a valuable antidote widely available serves as an illustration of their broader political philosophy. Buraselis connects this to Neopythagorean political thought by demonstrating that the Severans embraced concepts from Pythagorean treatises "On Kingship" that positioned the emperor as ruling "by the gift of the gods" and sharing benefits with all people. In this context, he also emphasizes the role of Julia Domna's intellectual circle and the dynasty's reverence for Apollonius of Tyana in promoting similar ideas. Further, he analyses how the Severan dynasty's multicultural origins, along with its sympathy toward syncretic cults and Caracallas' possible Christian upbringing predisposed the dynasty toward a more inclusive conception of *Romanitas*. Most significant for understanding the *CA*, however, is Buraselis' analysis of Caracalla's intense emulation of Alexander the Great. Buraselis connects Caracalla's Alexander worship with the citizenship decree by demonstrating that Alexander's own vision included ethnic fusion and universal citizenship, quoting Quintus Curtius Rufus' Alexander declaring: "Those who are to live under the same king should have the same rights."

Regarding administrative policy, Buraselis identifies key reforms that demonstrate the dynasty's egalitarian tendencies, including new privileges for soldiers and equestrians, as well as the elevation of Greek cities to colonial status, land distribution policies favoring smallholders, and increased protections for slaves. Following this thread, Buraselis examines the rhetoric of Caracalla's edict of AD 216 (*AnnÉp* 1948, 109) that cancelled fiscal debts for inhabitants of Mauretania Tingitana, framing this concession as a recognition of the provincials' contributions, and discusses the ideological shift evident in the prominence of the concept of *indulgentia* (paternal care), which was even deified with statues and temples under the Severans, as opposed to *clementia* (mercy toward enemies or subjects).

Buraselis' examination of the impact of the *CA* focuses on the prevalence of the *gentilicium* Aurelius in inscriptions and papyri across different regions of the empire. While areas already heavily Romanized (like parts of Spain, southern Gaul, and northern Italy) show fewer Aurelii, provinces in the north, south, and especially the Greek-speaking east show a dramatic increase after AD 212. In many regions, Aurelius became the most common imperial *gentilicium*. Buraselis demonstrates that the *CA* primarily benefited middle and lower social classes, with inscriptions mentioning Aurelii more frequently in rural areas and among ordinary people. Also in connection with the *CA*'s impact, Buraselis examines the relationship between Roman citizenship and taxation, particularly the *tributum capitis* (poll tax), traditionally paid only by non-Romans. The evidence from Egypt shows that the poll tax gradually declined after AD 212, and eventually disappeared. Buraselis attributes this partly to the devaluation of Roman coinage, which made collecting taxes in cash less attractive to the state, and to the rise of the *annona militaris* (payment in kind for military needs), which gradually replaced the old tax system. In addition, however, he points to the difficulty of distinguishing between old and new citizens after AD 212, when so many took the name Aurelius. He concludes that rather than formally abolishing the old tax system, the Roman administration gradually shifted to new forms of taxation based on practical considerations.

In regard to the psychological impact of the *CA*, Buraselis argues that Roman citizenship still held significant prestige in the early 3rd century, as evidenced by military units proudly using the

designation *c(ivium) R(omanorum)* in their titles, and by Cassius Dio's admission that the *CA* was "nominally an honour". Buraselis traces the gradual development of a new Roman identity among provincial citizens following the *CA* from a speech that shows the Senate still distinguishing between Romans and provincials in AD 238, to the early fifth century CE writers like Augustine, Claudian and Rutilius Namatianus, who celebrate the achievement of a unified Roman identity.

Drawing on these sources, *Theia Dorea* successfully situates the edict within a broader strategy of imperial self-representation against the theological and political backdrop of Severan rule. Buraselis provides an extensive catalog of the effects of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* and demonstrates conclusively that large segments of the population, particularly lower classes, were newly included in Roman citizenship through Caracalla's grant. By highlighting the edict's role in consolidating a universal Roman identity, *Theia Dorea* sheds light on the ideological foundations that underpinned the empire's resilience amid third-century crises. Of equal significance was the fact that, by integrating legal history with cultural and religious studies, Kostas Buraselis' analysis of the Antoninine Constitution reinvigorated debates about Roman citizenship as it prompted scholars to reassess its symbolic versus pragmatic implications, and to view imperial policies through the lens of performative benefaction.

In his third monograph, devoted to the study of Late Hellenistic and Roman Kos,[4] Buraselis turns to local history while masterfully interweaving institutional, socio-political, and ideological developments on the island with themes of broader, empire-wide significance. For example, his careful analysis of the inscriptions relating to Caius Stertinius Xenophon, Claudius' Koan physician, establishes both the participation of *Legio VIII Augusta* in the emperor's British campaign and the administrative and logistical duties associated with the posts of *tribunus militum* and *praefectus fabrum* that Xenophon had assumed.

The book comprises a series of partial studies drawing on literary and numismatic sources, but primarily based on detailed examination of Koan epigraphic evidence. Published before *Inscriptiones Graecae* XII 4, the current standard corpus of Koan inscriptions, the work benefits from the author's autopsy of inscriptions. A fragmentary honorific decree introduces the first case study, which illuminates previously overlooked aspects of Koan history in the second and first centuries BC. It reveals how multiple generations of a prominent Koan family sought Ptolemaic intervention to counter Cretan aggression during the Second Cretan War and later worked to repair relations with Rome following the First Mithridatic War. Buraselis shows how the need to appease Rome challenges the traditional scholarly view that Kos maintained a continuous status as a free city in the first century BC.

Buraselis then examines the *Lex Fonteia*, a Roman law issued under Mark Antony's direction that granted Roman citizenship and other privileges to various Greeks, including Koans, as evidenced by the law's publication on the island. His analysis demonstrates that certain Koan families' political Romanization stemmed from connections with Mark Antony – connections that, along with Antony's name, were later deliberately erased from public memory and the stone itself.

The backbone of the book are the studies devoted to the most exceptional political personalities of Roman Kos, the 'tyrant' Nikias under Mark Antony, the aforementioned Caius Stertinius Xenophon and the later, and less well-known, M. Aelius Spedianus and M. Spedius Rufinus

4 *Kos between Hellenism and Rome. Studies on the Political, Institutional and Social History of Kos from ca. the Middle Second Century B.C. Until Late Antiquity* (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Volume 90, Pt 4) Philadelphia 2000.

Phaedrus. Although Nikias and Xenophon had been the subjects of earlier treatments, Buraselis' study offers a much more in-depth analysis. He examines in detail the ideological implications of Nikias' numismatic iconography and Xenophon's family networks. For the first time, he fully exploits a particular genre of Koan epigraphy, the dedications to the paternal gods for the well-being of these persons, which were set up in private residences on Kos. The titles attributed to these outstanding Koans are systematically analyzed, leading to a careful reconstruction of the significant changes in the ways they were officially integrated into Koan civic life and society. In spite of his Roman connections, Nikias is publicly portrayed as holder of local political capital, operating exclusively within local Koan frameworks: he is presented as *philopatris* and *euergetes* of the *polis*, as a living hero and as the son of the deified *Damos*, with no mention at all of his real parentage. Approximately seven decades later the public portrayal of Xenophon is mainly based on the projection of his bonds with Rome, through titles such as *philokaisar*, *philosebastos*, *philoklaudios* and even *philoneron*. Although by now secondary in importance, the local framework is far from absent: Xenophon has accumulated various local priesthoods, he was also *philopatris*, *euergetes* and son of the *damos*, but his popular filiation was now placed in a manifestly honorific context and did not represent a substitute of real parentage. The later M. Aelius Spedianus and M. Spedius Rufinus Phaedrus projected their affiliation not to the *damos*, but to the more constitutionally neutral term of the *polis* and the highly selective local *gerousia*. This change reflects the fading away of the real power of the *damos* and the increasing political and ideological significance of new public actors. But the main contribution that Buraselis has offered in these chapters transcends the limits of local Koan history. Since honorific titles of filial type are widespread in Greek cities of the Roman East, Buraselis' perceptive observations have served as a pioneering starting point for further research.

The book concludes with a very comprehensive account of Koan relations with Rome and the legal status of the city (in terms of *libertas* and *immunitas*) from the Mithridatic Wars to the second and third centuries AD. The merits of the whole enterprise become once more obvious: Buraselis undertakes a microhistorical analysis that transcends purely local topics. Through meticulous examination, he demonstrates how the institutional, socio-political, and ideological transformations on Kos were inextricably linked to broader patterns of development across the Roman Empire, thereby illuminating both regional particularity and imperial dynamics.

In his most recent book, *Οι Τρόφιμοι της Λύκαινας* (*The Foster Children of the She-Wolf*), the only one he published exclusively in Greek,[5] Kostas Buraselis presents a handbook of Roman history that distills the results of both his extensive research and his systematic teaching at the University of Athens since 1989. In this work, Buraselis undertook one of the most demanding tasks a professional historian and educator can face: writing a comprehensive, single-volume manual on the history of a thoroughly studied people and polity. Such an endeavor requires not only long-term scholarly engagement but also deep, well-founded knowledge and an overarching understanding of multiple dimensions of historical development – political institutions, economic and social structures, foreign policy and international relations, as well as ideological and cultural frameworks.

Moreover, the task calls for exceptional skills in historical synthesis and a high level of writing proficiency. The historian must craft a book that transcends the boundaries of a specialized

5 *Οι τρόφιμοι της λύκαινας. Συνοπτική ιστορία των Ρωμαίων και της πολιτείας τους από την ίδρυση της Ρώμης έως και την εποχή του Διοκλητιανού (753 π.Χ. - 305 μ.Χ.)*, Athens 2017 (second edition 2021).

monograph, offering a broad yet coherent account that is both concise and engaging. Kostas Buraselis met this challenge with outstanding success.

Through skilfully designed and excellently interconnected chapters – some following a chronological order and others a thematic one, depending on the requirements of the presentation –, the readers are guided to all the essential topics of Roman History: the historical geography and diverse ethnic composition of Italy, the political structure of the Roman state initially under the kings and then as a republic, the historical process that led to the formation of the classical republican government, the significance of *mos majorum* as the fundamental ideological principle of the *res publica* are presented with remarkable clarity. The book then takes the reader on an exciting journey through Italy and the Mediterranean, narrating the key stages of Rome's expansion and providing an in-depth analysis of the factors that ensured its success. The secret to the Roman pan-Mediterranean triumph, as the author shows, lies within Italy itself, where Rome developed a "scale of different modes of inclusion" for allied, conquered, or annexed communities, which enabled her to utilize the human and material resources of all of Italy while allowing these communities, albeit in a differentiated and varied manner, to integrate gradually into the Roman political system, a process through which they became full Romans. This policy of gradual inclusion serves as the central interpretive framework throughout Buraselis' analysis.

The book goes on to depict in a masterful way the long erosion of republican institutions under the weight of the failure to address the needs of the poorer and impoverished citizens, civil wars and the growing dependence of poor citizens on powerful military and political leaders who acted as "patrons of armed followers".

The final victor, Augustus, is characteristically compared to the two-faced Roman god Janus, symbolizing both the restoration of tradition and the beginning of a new era, in a typical demonstration of Buraselis' ability to capture complex historical phenomena through concise yet meaningful characterizations and analogies, making the book both scholarly and accessible. The imperial period is examined through multiple lenses: the emperor and imperial court, central and provincial administration, city organization, and social developments towards further hierarchisation are treated as evolving interconnected systems, with emphasis on their dynamic nature and internal contradictions. The main interpretative thread of Roman history emerges here again in full clarity: the gradual extension of citizenship rights, culminating in the Edict of Caracalla, was one of Rome's greatest strengths, contributing to both her effectiveness and attractiveness as an imperial system.

The content of the book fulfils the promise of the book's subtitle: "A Concise History of the Romans and their State". Buraselis does not write simply about the history of a city or a state that became an empire. He rather conceives the Romans as a dynamic political body, which evolved and expanded over time – a creator of, and a participant in, a global order. This is where contemporary relevance can be sought, as Buraselis asserts: while Rome's example cannot provide answers for modern questions of democratic governance and global order, the openness of its political structure offers valuable material for reflection about current challenges.

## Kostas Buraselis and the development of ancient history studies in Greece

The contribution of Kostas Buraselis to the promotion and advancement of the study of Ancient History in Greece is multifaceted. It is most notably reflected in his impressive record as a teacher at the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Athens, where he taught from 1989 to 2018. However, by the time Buraselis began his academic duties at the university, he had

already served for many years as a researcher and Director of Research at the Research Centre for Antiquity of the Academy of Athens. This experience undoubtedly shaped his persistent and strenuous efforts to establish meaningful connections between the university and other academic institutions both in Greece and abroad.

In accordance with the prevailing academic structures in Greek universities, Buraselis taught both mandatory general / introductory courses, as well as more specialized elective courses and seminars. His introductory lectures dealt either with the political, social, and economic history of the Hellenistic world or with Roman history during the Republican and Imperial periods – areas largely unfamiliar to students, who had minimal exposure to them during their years at school. Although these lectures were delivered in large amphitheatres with hundreds of attendees, Buraselis consistently sought to incorporate the examination of primary historical sources into his teaching, thereby stimulating student interest. A significant portion of each lecture was devoted to student questions and subsequent discussion. This engagement with previously unfamiliar academic fields captivated students and led many to enrol in his undergraduate seminars. These were offered regularly and covered an impressive range of topics, such as the Eastern Aegean islands under Roman rule, the Mithridatic Wars, the Ptolemaic presence in the Aegean Sea, the deification of Roman emperors; all examined through meticulous engagement with primary sources and embedded within broader interpretive and scholarly debates.

These seminars effectively introduced students to the methods and tools of ancient historical research. Buraselis made a special effort to acquaint them with types of sources with which they were unfamiliar, such as inscriptions, coins, and papyri, at a time when the disciplines of epigraphy and numismatics were not yet represented by specialized faculty at the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Athens. On the conviction that epigraphy is not a mere auxiliary science but an integral component of Ancient History, he organized informal lessons in his office for interested students. His tireless efforts ultimately contributed to the hiring of specialized faculty and the expansion of the undergraduate curriculum to include introductory courses in numismatics and epigraphy.

Buraselis' undergraduate courses functioned as a pool from which future graduate students were drawn. His postgraduate seminars built on the thematic core of his undergraduate courses and evolved in accordance with his research interests, revising familiar subjects through new questions and methodologies. Whether focusing on Roman colonies in the Greek world, the Severan dynasty, the cults of Hellenistic rulers, or Hellenistic federations as experiments transcending the polis model, Buraselis' graduate seminars aimed at fostering student autonomy and instilling in them the importance of rigorous scrutiny of their conclusions. Student presentations formed the core of these seminars and were consistently the starting point for extensive, in-depth scholarly discussions.

In this manner, Buraselis' postgraduate seminars served as true workshops for initiation into the demands of ancient historical research. This, in fact, was his central aim: the cultivation of new researchers equipped with a broad intellectual perspective and solid academic foundations. For Buraselis, achieving this goal was inextricably linked to connecting students with other academic institutions, both within Greece and internationally. Leveraging his own academic prestige and recognition, he ensured that his graduate students attended lectures by researchers at the then Centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity of the National Hellenic Research Foundation and by faculty teaching Ancient Greek and Roman Law at the University of Athens Law School. Recognizing early on the opportunities offered by the Erasmus program, he was a

pioneer in forging agreements with numerous European universities. Once again putting his personal international academic standing at the service of his students, he enabled dozens of undergraduate and graduate students to undertake part of their studies at institutions renowned for their tradition in Classical Studies. Notably, he facilitated the University of Athens' participation in the European Master in Classical Cultures, a program linking universities from eight European countries, allowing graduate students to write their theses under the joint supervision of faculty from two institutions.

It is therefore no surprise that Kostas Buraselis played a leading role in supervising and supporting numerous doctoral candidates. He served on many dissertation committees and reviewed the theses with meticulous care, both during the preparatory stages and in their final formulation. His always incisive and insightful comments were instrumental in achieving high-quality outcomes. Furthermore, Buraselis personally supervised several doctoral dissertations. He perceptively identified gaps in the field and guided his students toward original topics that would make meaningful contributions to scholarly knowledge and debate. Equally important were Buraselis' tireless efforts to ensure that these dissertations were published – not an easy task given the challenges of academic publishing in Greece –, thus enabling their full integration into international scholarship.

Finally, one must not overlook another significant aspect of Buraselis' academic activity that strengthened Ancient History studies in Greece: his participation in the organizing committees of international conferences held in the country (at Athens, Delphi, Aegina, among others), some of them in his capacity as a member of the European Network for the Study of Ancient Greek History (ENSAGH). These conferences brought prominent foreign historians into dialogue with emerging Greek scholars.

The brief outline above cannot fully capture the scale and quality of Kostas Buraselis' contribution to the development of Ancient History studies in Greece. Beyond his institutional and academic activity, Buraselis taught by example. In the 1970s, when he was taking his first steps as a professional historian, Ancient History in Greece was not adequately aligned with international scholarship, despite the commendable efforts of a few Greek scholars. Today, the situation is markedly different, thanks to the determination of individuals like Kostas Buraselis, who had the vision to work with distinguished historians both within and beyond the University of Athens, thereby helping to lay the foundations for a dynamic scholarly community of ancient historians in Greece – one that remains in active dialogue with the international academic world.

## The volume – contents and rationale

The essays offered to Kostas Buraselis in this volume reflect the remarkable breadth of his interests in ancient history over his entire career. We invited the contributors (mostly foreign colleagues, long-time collaborators, and, more important, friends of Kostas Buraselis) to write about topics of their own choice in the areas that have interested Buraselis throughout his career. Thus, some of the issues examined include ruler cult (Chaniotis), Kos in the Imperial period (Adak, Heller, Rigsby), Ptolemaic soft power in the third century BC (Beck), political institutions in the Hellenistic period (Luraghi, Rzepka), the world of the Greek *koina* (Funke, Rzepka), Athenian democracy (Harris, Luraghi, Weber), rewriting the local past and constructing identities (Jördens, Müller, Shipley, Stavrianopoulou), the agonistic culture in the Greek world (Hatzopoulos, Rigsby, Van Nijf, Mann). We also asked contributors either to discuss issues of a more general nature (Athanassiadi, Beck, Camia, Gehrke, Harris, Jördens, Mittag, Funke, van Nijf, Stavrianopoulou)

or to focus on specific texts, old (Dreher, Freitag, Hatzopoulos, Shipley) or new (Chaniotis, Adak, Marek, Armoni). The essays are preceded by three shorter notes, one by John Davies on academic friendships, and two by colleagues of Kostas Buraselis at the University of Athens, Olga Katsiardi-Hering and Anastasia Papadia-Lala, who reminisce about the honorand's career at the University of Athens.

As editors of this volume, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the University of Athens and the Department of History and Archaeology, which provided the necessary financial support for its publication. We are also deeply thankful to the National Hellenic Research Foundation and, in particular, to the Section of Greek and Roman Antiquity of the Institute of Historical Research, who readily agreed to include this volume in the *Μελετήματα* series. Both of these academic institutions responded to our requests promptly and with great enthusiasm. We also thank Sofia Saroglidou and Eirini Kalogridou at the NHRF for administrative coordination and typesetting. We believe that these institutions' support reflects in the most fitting way Kostas Buraselis's tireless efforts to foster a cohesive and mutually enriching academic community for the study of Ancient History in Greece.

Finally, we would like to express our earnest thanks to all the contributors to this volume, who accepted our invitation with enthusiasm and worked diligently to honour their colleague and friend.