## **Preface**

This volume is partly the result of a conference organized at Macquarie University, Sydney on 29-31 March 2019 on Culture and Ideology under the Seleukids: An Interdisciplinary Approach, and partly the result of extending invitations to a number of scholars working on the Seleukids. The editors, Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides and Stefan Pfeiffer, aware of the longstanding methodological challenges associated with the study of Alexander's successors, and particularly the study of the Seleukids,<sup>1</sup> sought to bring together an array of scholarly perspectives representing the current approaches in history, archaeology (including the study of mosaics), numismatics, and epigraphy. To this direction, we actively sought to include alongside the work of scholars working predominantly with Greco-Roman sources, contributions from colleagues who study the Seleukids as part of the history of the ancient Near East and from colleagues, who focus on the interaction of the Seleukids with other political and cultural forces of the Hellenistic world (their periphery, other Hellenistic dynasties, and eventually the Romans). Furthermore, in our view, it is important to acknowledge the different academic cultures that often interfere with our ability to reach out to colleagues working on the Seleukids in different latitudes and in different languages. Thus, in advocating plurality we have decided to publish in more than one language: thus, the volume hosts contributions in English, German, and French. We feel strongly that this is neither an attempt to be exclusionary, nor an attempt to challenge an increasingly "monolingual" academia. Rather, it simply reflects the acknowledgement that modern academia is no less multicultural than the Seleukid Empire and we want to emphatically extend an invitation to colleagues across as many academic environments or "schools of thought" as possible.

Our purpose, however, is not to enforce a new "paradigm" or propose a new model toward eventually achieving homogeneity in the study of the Seleukids but rather to exemplify the issues still palpable in the scholarship and offer a platform for debating them. The inaugural Sydney conference aimed at fostering a network of scholars working across the various layers of Hellenistic cultural output – where culture encompasses texts and artefacts, Greeks and non-Greeks, elites and non-elites, mindsets ascribed to all gender types recognized at the time. We hope that the conference will be followed by further meetings organized at universities across the world which will focus on different aspects of the study of Alexander's successors. Hence, while the first workshop examined the formation and dissemination of Seleukid royal ideology, the second will take place at the Martin Luther University in Halle-Wittenberg in 2023 and will focus on the Ptolemies. We feel that the creation and sustenance of such a platform is crucial to achieve breadth alongside depth in our understanding of the Hellenistic period; by embracing the plurality of the ancient evi-

<sup>1</sup> For an outline of the main methodological issues, see Introduction.

dence and examining the ideologies appended to it, both in antiquity and in earlier scholarship, we may be able to accommodate the versatility of the period, in terms of the embodied experiences and types of agency it encompassed, more accurately in scholarly perspectives.

Melbourne and Halle, October 2020

## A Note on Transliteration

With regard to the transliteration of ancient names in the volume, please note the following:

We have followed the conventions of German and French in the chapters written in these languages. For chapters in English, we have allowed our contributors to choose whether to follow the Romanized/Latinized transliteration of Greek names, typically spelled with c where the Greek has k, and with -us endings where the Greek has -os/-as. An example of this would be Mount Casius/Kasios. Equally, Greek diphthongs could be transliterated with the Latinized ae or the closer-to-the-Greek ai, oe or oi, etc. Generally, but not universally, our contributors have chosen a Greek-style transliteration, and we have focused on uniformity within each chapter with the obvious exception of quoted texts/translations with Latinized endings. However, even this proved challenging since an exact transliteration of the Greek, spelling Antiochos as 'Antiokhos' and Bactria as 'Baktria' would complicate keyword/online searches. To resolve such challenges, we resorted to common sense based on what is currently prevalent in scholarship and what felt right in each case.