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## EDITORIAL

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In the last issue of *Karanos*, I began the Editorial talking about surviving, and the difficulty of such a quest. Then, times went weirdly mad and our world has become seriously ill and almost dystopic since then. But I still feel the pride of surviving, and the need to keep active our research and focused on maintaining our compromise with our own days' worries and threats.

There is pride in surviving, but also grief. But against the pleasure of being still alive, knowing that your dear people is fine and safe too, sorrow is in the air. Live and death, in an endless circle of what existence simply means, has now become a day-to-day concern, and I guess anyone reading these words can feel the common pain of our relatives, friends, comrades and fellow human beings. May hope be with us.

It is time to think in the future. But future is just an imagination, in the sense Spinoza gave to the perception of time. Past is also a construction, a picture composed of many elements, mainly collective but also, to some extent, individual. As historians, our concern is with the past, but our scope, our final target is, consciously or not, with the future. When we study facts, aspects, situations or behaviours in the past, we are feeding collective imagination concerning the possible worlds we can face, and thus, we help our world to build new chances of understanding our reality for the future.

Of course, Arts and Humanities are not involved in saving human lives, in a literal sense, nor to find a cure for dangerous illnesses, as Covid-19, but our compromise with life is essential, and despite we can not save humanity from such menaces, our words in books, classes, conferences or speeches (on-site or online) usually help people to keep themselves alive, to understand the world, to put some meaning or even a few drops of poetical view in their life experience. Our significant mission within the harsh reality many of our communities are living right now is to remember that life is, after all, around us, and while bodies are confined in different kind of levels, our minds still can travel to imagine and understand our world and transform it into a better one.

Covid-19 is, to a great extent, now the principal actor of 2020. How tough these many days have been for everyone of us. I can not forget, not for even a second, not even while writing the Editorial for an academic journal such as *Karanos*, all the people suffering around me and you, all of us also enduring difficult and challenging changes. Weird times now will bring us hard realities, and I can not forget nor avoid mentioning here all the persons around me who are forced to face scarcity, shortage of the principal means of life or painful and emotional thrills. And I know I am not alone, nor it is just a feeling of mine, but of everybody everywhere.

Care must be thus put in the center of our attention. Care in front of the illness. Self-care against the Covid-19, care to keep ourselves and our people out of risk, care in our work, both in teaching our knowledge and in preserving our research at a high level of quality, to still be useful for our audiences in front of the dark that, as the judges of Hesiod, devour the gift life now means.

Care is also a usual topic in the fieldwork of Gender Studies. Since its birth, quite recent indeed, *Karanos* has been strongly compromised with Gender questions. The best example of that double-gender reviews for the choice of the blind peer referees for any paper received at *Karanos*. Thus, I feel happily surprised how this new issue of the journal has a great presence of woman voices. This issue's Flashback is devoted to a masterly paper about Philip of Macedon and the gods by the prominent Prof. Sylvia Le Bohec-Bouhet. The Main Voice in Ancient Macedonian Studies presents an interview with the brilliant Elizabeth Donnelly Carney, who shares her views on the studies about Macedonian women and the future of these perspectives. Finally, a paper of my own, which I guess will have a controversial reception, reviews the rough judgements that historiography has devoted to Olympias of Epirus, frequently observed without a faithful criticism of the sources or the data already demonstrated by scholarship in the last decades. And I am wondering if now we can trace any relationship between the usual binomial of women and care, when Covid-19 and the strong need to attend to the importance of care responsibilities drive us all to a new point of view about what life means and deserves to. Despite the impact of the pandemic, a new better world is still possible, and I want to believe we have already begun to build it.

This issue of *Karanos* has been, however, very difficult to raise. Nor the lack of libraries to work nor the emotional thrills everyone had to face up kept us all off from the clearness of mind needed to think and perceive research. Although each new issue of *Karanos* used to be published every year in the same date, November 8<sup>th</sup> (the date, indeed, when I am writing this lines), this third number of our journal has had to wait some weeks more, until December 1<sup>st</sup>, and it was, in the end, possible thanks to the Herculean efforts of the authors and, mainly, of the Editorial Board of the journal. These people around me are, I promise, the main reason why the journal is alive. And if we have to judge the present volume, I can say there is, one more time, a splendid collection of inspiring papers, and most of this research will surely become referential works in our fieldwork. I don't want to miss the chance to point out our compromise with young scholars with promising research ideas to show and discuss, and in the present number names like Marco Ferrario or Julius Guthrie share our index of contents with some brilliant masters in their fields, as Jeanne Reames exemplifies with her chapter, which I am sure will be the reference concerning Hephaestion for the next decades. Along with them, again, this number is completed with chapters signed by names close to the Editorial Team of *Karanos*, with Marc Mendoza and, of course, Antonio Ignacio Molina. All of them, and the hard work and support of Mario Agudo, help this number become a reality.

The pride to be alive is such a life-giving emotion. It helps to fight against sadness, misery and loneliness, three feelings so linked with death. Of course, death has many faces. Weakness is not a quality very appreciated in our lifetime. But when weakness is a common feature of every one of us, care is, again, the answer. And there is hope in the dark. Many threads weaving in the private spaces of our homes, our schools, our (even digital) communities arise to show how can we care of ourselves and connect our lives, ideas and dreams. Personally, I want to take many of these threads with my hands, so used to write my thoughts, and to feel that these threads can drive me out of the monster's labyrinth. May Ariadna be on my side.

Coming back to the beginning, once more, like in a labyrinth's travel, life and death are nowadays as close as past and future. Our present is at our hands, like the threads I would like to keep close to me. To live is a challenging thrill. This third issue of *Karanos* has been a thrilling experience, and I guess we have succeeded again. And I consider the result as a beautiful clue that, against all odds, research and life together,

hand by hand, is the way we choose for putting some hope and care in the world, so much needed now. So, fingers crossed by every human being, *philoxenos* and empathic, in front of the difficult days we may face, let me say “*for now I just want you not to stand in the sun*”. And let life be fully lived, with care.

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