

PREFACE OF THE SERIES EDITORS

Seleukid Perspectives explores the kingdom that continues to fascinate students of history because of its wide geographical span, multicultural population, and unending dynastic and political turmoil. The Seleukid Empire was the largest successor to Alexander the Great's empire and once extended from Asia Minor to the Hindu Kush.

Hellenistic history is *en vogue*, and it seems that the Seleukids have dethroned the long-time favourite Ptolemies in the recent wave of scholarly production. The number of books on the Seleukids published in the past decade alone dwarfs the contributions to the field made throughout the previous century. This goes along with many conferences and their published proceedings, most of all the *Seleukid Study Days* and the Nancy conferences, both of which have emphasized a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach. The present book series has derived from the loosely defined Seleukid Study Group that had its start in numbered gatherings in 2011 but actually goes back to the Exeter conference in 2008. Some of the conferences coalesced as book projects:

SSD III (Bordeaux 2012) became *The Seleukid Empire 281-222 BC: War Within the Family*, ed. by K. Erikson, Swansea 2018.

SSD IV (Montreal, 2013) became *Seleukid Royal Women: Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, ed. by A. Coşkun and A. McAuley, Stuttgart 2016.

SSD V (Brussels 2015) became *Rome and the Seleukid East*, ed. by A. Coşkun and D. Engels, Brussels 2019.

When faced with the obstacle of the Covid-19 pandemic, a dynamic digital format was created, to continue this international cooperation. Since May 2021, the monthly *Seleukid Lecture Series* (SLS) has offered a popular platform for work in progress and typically involves students, early researchers, and established scholars alike. The online program allows for watching the recordings of past events and announces upcoming lectures (<http://www.altaycoskun.com/seleukid-lectures>).

The idea to streamline the publication of original Seleukid research in a book series was born in summer 2022 when work on the volume *Seleukid Ideology* was nearing submission for peer review and several other book projects were in progress or planning.

Our proposal met with an enthusiastic response from Katharina Stüdemann at Franz Steiner Verlag, whose efficiency and attractive conditions we already knew well. We were likewise pleased that our colleagues Laetitia Graslin-Thomé (Nancy), David Engels (Poznań / Warsaw), and Kyle Erickson (Lampeter) accepted

our invitation to serve on the editorial board, which assists us with advice and the organization of peer review. We were very lucky that Deirdre Klokow (still a PhD candidate at the University of Southern California at the time of writing) was willing to become our editorial assistant. The release of the first volume would have taken so much longer without her diligence and energy.

The first volume of this new series, *Seleukid Perspectives*, is partly a product of SSD VI (North Bay 2017) and partly of SLS (2021–2022), as will be explained in the *Preface of the Volume Editors*. Its focus on matters of ideology is both trendy and traditional in that this area has always represented a major emphasis of Hellenistic research but is now pursued with a growing range of theoretical approaches, sources in more than Greek or Latin, and from diverse international perspectives. We are particularly grateful to Laetitia Graslin-Thomé for organizing anonymous peer review of this first volume.

We already have a line-up of more Seleukid book projects, hoping to publish volumes 2 on military matters and 3 on Jewish perspectives in 2024, and about three further volumes in the two years thereafter. Once we have dealt with the backlog, we shall also accept submissions from outside the Seleukid Study Group. It is our hope that *Seleukid Perspectives* will contribute to the stimulating dialogue that is the hallmark of this field.

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