

DELTOS

Vol 34, No 52 (2024)



Editorial

Athanasios Diamandopoulos

doi: [10.12681/dj.38278](https://doi.org/10.12681/dj.38278)

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Editorial

The inaugural issue of the enhanced Deltos has received highly favourable reviews regarding both its content and presentation. I am deeply appreciative of the contributions from all the authors involved. I also extend my gratitude to Rhyme&Reason Languages Services for their meticulous language editing, and to Technogrammated in Athens for the exceptional quality of the publication.

The Athens Medical College, under the leadership of its President, Dr. Georgios Patoulis, has consistently provided financial support for this initiative. Another notable development is the journal's recent signing of an agreement with the National Documentation Centre (EKT), which will feature Deltos on its website. This collaboration not only significantly enhances the journal's visibility but also assigns a unique DOI to each article, thereby fostering greater interest in submitting scholarly works to Deltos.

Finally, thanks are due to the Editorial Committee, particularly my co-editor Professor Caterina Gardikas and committee member Professor Marios Marselos, for their continuous support in all facets of the publication process.

This issue marks the debut of an innovative feature: The Written Symposium. This section includes a series of articles focused on a single theme, offering comprehensive coverage of various aspects of the topic. Should our readers find this approach beneficial, it may become a regular feature of the journal. In this issue, we feature two Written Symposia. The first explores medical recipes composed in verse. Due to space limitations it is divided in two parts. Part A, which is published in the current issue, starts with the Homeric Epics and ends in the 16th cent. AD. The Part B will appear in the next Deltos' issue and will expand till the 18th century. The geographic scope primarily encompasses the Greco-Roman world, extending slightly to regions influenced by its cultural legacy.

We are grateful to the contributors from Greece, Georgia, and Turkey, whose essays have enriched this issue. Submissions from Morocco, the USA, China, Greece, and the UK are anticipated for our next edition. This endeavour might remind some of the sentiments expressed by Heinrich Oppenheimer in his 1923 work, *Medical and Allied Topics in Latin Poetry*. He

writes: *“this volume forms part of the war work of an enemy alien. The innocent victim of social and—horrible dictu—to some extent of professional ostracism, the Author sought and found comfort in the company of those long-departed friends, the classical writers.”* (1). All our contributors however are successful and content in their professional lives, simply taking pleasure in exploring the enduring fusion of medicine and poetry.

This edition's introductions explore the reasoning behind this fusion. Professor Athanasios Diamandopoulos, in his article “On some ancient Greek and Latin medical recipes in verse. Their position in the world.,” explores examples from Greek literature spanning from ancient Greece to the end of the Roman Imperial period. Professor Petros Bouras-Valianatos offers expert translations of two verse-based medical texts by Niceforos Vlemmydes—a subject dear to my heart. The intertwining of Islamic and Ottoman medical science with poetry is examined by Professors Ayse Balat and Ahmet Acituman from Turkey. From Georgia, Professor Ramaz Shengelia discusses verses from the famous 12th-century Georgian epic, “The Knight in the Panther's Skin”. Although this work has been extensively translated and analysed, Shengelia focuses exclusively on excerpts that depict the treatment of the lovelorn knight, which, consistent with other ballads, eschews pharmaceuticals in favour of therapies like music, horse-riding, and leisurely walks. Professors Marios Marselos and Athanasios Diamandopoulos will contribute an appendix titled “Exegesis”, a term that originates from the Greek verb ‘exego’, meaning to explain. Today, it is primarily used in the sense of interpreting, mainly but not exclusively, biblical texts. This appendix delves into the pharmacological and botanical attributes of all plant agents mentioned in the previous texts and the similar ones to be published into the next Deltos issue, underscoring their clinical significance as described by Dioscorides in the first century AD. Our objective was to underline that the incorporation of these plants into verse was not merely based on folklore but was underpinned by the medical knowledge of the time, which is partially corroborated by contemporary evidence. This “Exegesis” appendix will also appear in the next issue

The second Written Symposium focuses on the

Nicolaos Louros Archive, an extensive collection of documents spanning from the late 19th century to the final quarter of the 20th century. Nicolaos Louros, the founder of the Louros Foundation for the History of Medicine, diligently amassed an array of writings on diverse subjects including medicine, history, politics, ethics, and social connections, meticulously organised by his secretary, Mrs. Kotsi. Upon inheriting this vast repository, the Foundation's Board, including the author of this editorial and the philologist Mr. Christos Marinis, were initially uncertain of how to manage it. Their efforts resulted in a 300-page catalogue listing only the document titles. A meeting was then held at the Foundation, to showcase the Archive. This event was a collaborative effort with the European Association of Professor Emeriti, supported by the Greek Ministry of Culture. Professor Katerina Gardikas presented evidence from the Archive that illustrated Louros' engagement as an active member of society. Dr Agamemnon Tselikas discussed Louros' connections with contemporary literati. The philologist Mr. Christos Marinis with his contribution "Surprises as a bait to work harder – Four cases in the Louros Archive" expresses his feelings while working on the classification of the Archive. Professor Athanasios Diamandopoulos demonstrated how minor references

within the Archive could lead to broader insights. This second Written Symposium includes expanded versions of their presentations.

This issue also includes four independent contributions. Professor Denis Cokkinos contributes with his article on The teaching of the Art and Science of Medicine. Professor John Yfantopoulos provides a technocratic examination of historical fluctuations in survival rates from antiquity to the present. Professor Gregory Tsoukalas explores the efforts of Achilles Rose, a medical doctor and philologist, in his romantic endeavour to see Greek adopted as the official language of medicine. Furthermore, Professor Lawrence Totelin offers a review of Luigi Taborelli's 2022 book, "Stamped Medicine Flasks".

We invite further contributions on the History of Medicine and, specifically but not exclusively, on pharmacological verses for our upcoming issue. The submission deadline is 30 Sept. 2024.

The Editor

REFERENCE

1. Oppenheimer, H. (1928). *Medical and allied topics in Latin poetry*. London: J. Bale., Introduction