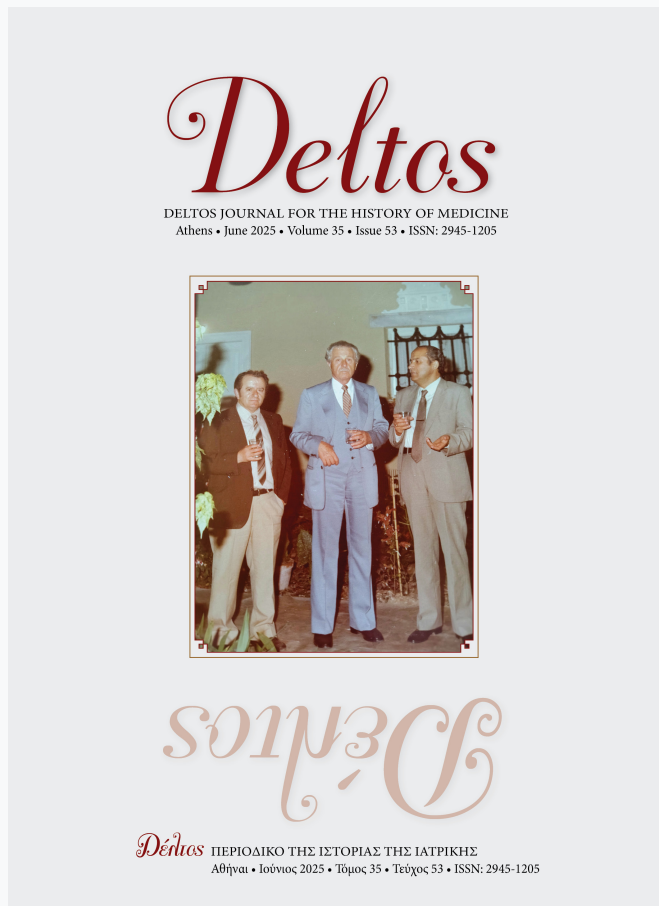


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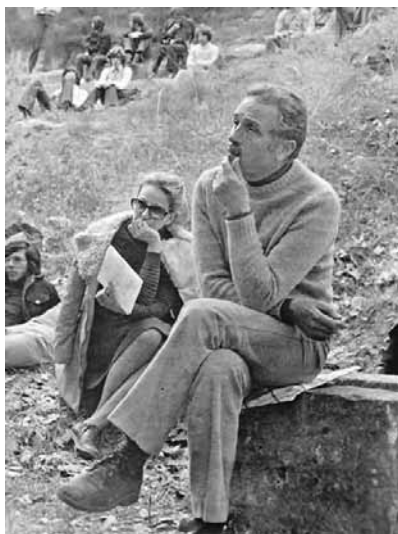
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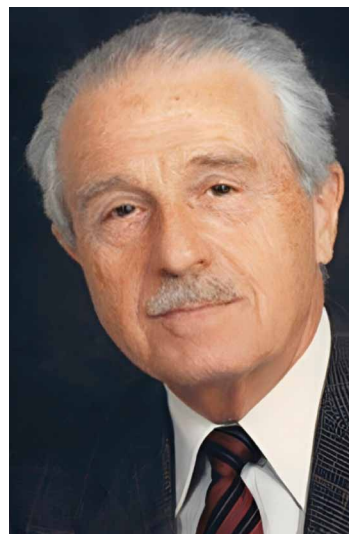
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George K. Daikos (1918 – 2025): In Memoriam

George Daikos¹, George Petrikkos¹



1973. Visiting Amphiareion with his wife Marika and his students.



George k. Daikos, MD (1918 – 2025)
Professor Emeritus, School of Medicine National
and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

Abstract

Obituary for George K. Daikos, Honorary Professor of Medicine at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) and former President of the International Society of Chemotherapy (ISC), who passed away on 10 June 2025, aged 106.

George K. Daikos, Honorary Professor of Medicine at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) and former President of the International Society of Chemotherapy (ISC), passed away on 10 June 2025, two months before celebrating his 107th birthday.

He received his MD from NKUA in 1940. After completing his service in the Greek army and his residency in Internal Medicine, he pursued postgraduate studies in the USA (1947–1951), initially at Harvard Medical School under the renowned microbiologist Professor Sarge Cheevers, and subsequently at Hayne’s Memorial under the legendary infectious disease expert Professor Louis Weinstein. Upon his return to

Greece, he joined the School of Medicine faculty at NKUA as Associate Professor in the Department of Clinical Therapeutics. In 1968, he was elected Professor of Medicine and appointed Chairman of the First Department of Propaedeutic Medicine of NKUA at Laikon Hospital, a position he held until 1985. In 1985, he was awarded the title of Professor Emeritus and in 2017, the NKUA awarded him the title of Honorary Professor.

George Daikos’ professional life spanned five decades in academic medicine devoted to the fields of antimicrobial chemotherapy and infectious diseases. He entered the infectious diseases arena at an excit-

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ing time - the dawn of the antimicrobial era. His early research focused on the pathogenesis of rheumatic fever. He later focused on the pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics of penicillin, using the experimental model of subcutaneously implanted fibrin clots in rabbits. He participated in numerous Phase II and III clinical trials on new antibacterial agents. Daikos was a founding member of the International Society of Chemotherapy (Naples, 1961), serving on the Executive Committee for 20 years (1973-1993), subsequently as Vice President and finally as President (1985-1989). He was also a founding member of the Mediterranean Society of Chemotherapy (Catania, 1976), serving as President and subsequently as Honorary President for life. Daikos was Fellow Emeritus of the Infectious Disease Society of America, Honorary Fellow of the British Society of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy, and member of other International and Hellenic societies. For his contributions in the field of infections and antimicrobial therapy, he was awarded the Hamao Umezawa Award by the International Society for Chemotherapy and the ESCMID Award for Excellence in Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases.

Professor Daikos is widely regarded as the “father” of antimicrobial chemotherapy and infectious diseases in Greece. He founded both the Hellenic Society of Chemotherapy and the Amphiareion Foundation. The latter has supported many young physicians through scholarships and research grants in infectious diseases. Throughout his career, he was recognised by medical students, residents and colleagues alike as a professor dedicated to education. He knew his students by their first names. Direct communication with students and getting to know them personally were goals that he pursued and achieved through continuous effort. He considered this to be a ‘key’ to the best teaching results. He introduced many educational innovations in Greece, including the clinical pathology conferences (CPC),

modelled after what he experienced in Boston. To improve the physical examination skills of his students, together with his group he created audiovisual material demonstrating examination techniques for each system of the body. Due to the limited number of beds at the university hospital and the large number of students, he extended teaching to hospitals of the national health service run by his former colleagues. He left nothing to chance but he used to visit his students at the host hospital to monitor their progress and talk to the teachers. A gifted clinician, leader and mentor, he possessed the charisma that inspired young physicians and, more importantly, helped people become better human beings.

Beyond medicine, he had a number of interests, particularly activities that brought him close to nature, such as hiking, skiing, swimming, and exploring archaeological sites. A lifelong admirer of Hippocratic medicine and classical *paideia*, he organised annual visits for his students to the archaeological site of the Amphiareion (a 5th-century BC sanctuary where pilgrims went to seek healing). There, students analysed selected passages from the Hippocratic Corpus, after which he led discussions providing his own commentary. These visits remain unforgettable for many generations of medical students. The importance of visiting such places was eloquently expressed by the renowned oncologist Jim Holland at the closing ceremony of the 8th International Congress of Chemotherapy at the Asklepieion in Kos, as recorded in Daikos’s memoirs: *‘We usually operate within the limited confines of the present, but here, in the homeland of Hippocrates, we felt the eternity of time and gained a new perspective.’*

He is survived by his devoted wife, Marika, who stood by him throughout his illustrious career. Professor George K. Daikos will be fondly remembered by patients, students, colleagues, friends, and family for his kindness, generosity, and lifelong contributions to science, education, and humanity.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Εις μνήμη Γεωργίου Δαΐκου (1918-2025)

Γεώργιος Δαΐκος, Γεώργιος Πετρίκκος

Νεκρολογία για τον Γεώργιο Κ. Δαΐκο, Επίτιμο Καθηγητή Ιατρικής του Εθνικού και Καποδιστριακού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών (ΕΚΠΑ) και πρώην Πρόεδρο της International Society of Chemotherapy (ISC), ο οποίος απεβίωσε στις 10 Ιουνίου 2025 σε ηλικία 106 ετών.

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