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I first met Professor Athanassoulis when he came to an undergraduate class I was taking and made a presentation about his research interests. He was the only faculty member whose interests included stochastic processes, the area in which I wanted to work. This area was at the time relatively new to him, so when we started working on it we were kind of learning together. He was willing to spend an extraordinary amount of time with me, far more than any other advisor I've ever had—and I subsequently had many other advisors, eight in total. From what I recall, I would normally meet with Makis twice a week. I would go to his office around 7 pm, and we would start working an hour or so later. We would work until the wee hours of the morning, 2 or 3 am, and then he would drive me home to Cholargos. Once he told me that, since I was going home so late, any parents must be thinking that I had gotten a girlfriend: the story that I was working with my advisor was too fantastic to be believed. And he was right: it took me a while to convince my parents that the story was true. This is an illustration of how unconventional an advisor Makis was, unconventional in a good way.

In addition to being my advisor, Makis developed into a sort of a friend. Our discussions during our meetings were not limited to research, but would often cover all sorts of subjects, including philosophical ones. Moreover, I would often go to his home in Ano Petralona to work with him there, and he introduced me to his wife and children. I even went with him and his family to church one Sunday Morning.

I did not know anything about research before meeting Makis, and I've been extremely grateful to him for teaching me how to do research. I am still applying the research principles that he taught me, although now I am doing research in philosophy rather than engineering. Those research principles include the following three. First, the principle of starting with

an exhaustive study of the bibliography on the subject one is interested in. This takes a lot of time but is very important: it is surprising how often people try to publish, and even succeed in publishing, ideas that, unbeknownst to them, have already been published in the literature, maybe 30 or 50 years ago. Second, the principle that research comes in two phases: the expanding phase, during which thinks and gets information about more and more issues related to one's main topic, and the contracting phase, during which one focuses on an ever narrower set of issues, eventually reaching the final research product, usually a paper. Makis illustrated this principle by using the analogy of a rhombus: if two people start from one edge of a rhombus and move with the same speed along the two different sides that intersect at that edge, then during a first phase the distance between the two people will keep increasing, but during a second phase the distance will keep decreasing until it gets down to zero. Third, the principle of not rushing, of taking one's time to do a thorough job when writing a paper. To illustrate this principle, Makis once asked George Makrakis in front of me: "How long does it take to write a paper after you have studied the bibliography and you have all the ideas and the results in phase?" George answered: "A year." Makis then commented to me: "You see? And this is coming from someone who is neither inexperienced nor second-rate." I still remember the endless hours I spent with Makis writing and rewriting every single paragraph of our paper and pondering over every single world, and this is still what I do when I write my papers.

To conclude, I am very happy to have this opportunity to share my recollections of my time working with Makis and to express to him my eternal gratitude for having had such a profoundly positive influence on my life.