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In Memoriam - Loukia Droulia (1931-2019)

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LOUKIA DROULIA
(1931–2019)

In Memoriam

LOUKIA DROULIA

(1931–2019)

On 21 July 2019, the Institute for Historical Research of the National Hellenic Research Foundation bade a final farewell to a pioneering historian who, since the 1960s, achieved a remarkable trajectory in the world of modern Greek studies. The life of Loukia Droulia was linked not only to historical research, but also to the NHRF. She was a close associate of C. Th. Dimaras – the founding figure of modern Greek studies in Greece as well as internationally, and a founding member of the NHRF – and worked in the Centre for Neohellenic Research since its inception, contributing substantially to its growth, first serving as a researcher and subsequently as director (1981–1996) and member of the board of directors of the NHRF (1986–1996).

A stellar scholar and contributor to the international scientific community, Droulia represented the NHRF in the Standing Committee for the Humanities of the European Science Foundation in Strasbourg (1987–1996) and was the national coordinator of the UNESCO programme Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue (1989–1996). In Greece, Droulia was the general secretary of the Circle for the Study of the Greek Enlightenment (1969–1977), and a member of the board of trustees of the General State Archives (1995–1997). Without neglecting her administrative duties, she contributed with her pioneering scholarly work to the advancement of research and historical knowledge, as well as to the consolidation of new fields of academic research, such as the study of the modern Greek Enlightenment and the study of the Greek struggle for independence; philhellenism; the history of the book in Greece; the study of travel memoirs; the history of the Greek press, and the Greek diaspora.

Droulia was a prolific writer, and her publications include books, articles and contributions to collective works, including: Philhellénisme: Ouvrages inspirés par la guerre de l'Indépendance grecque. Répertoire

bibliographique, Athens 1974 (*Prize of the Academy of Athens, 1976*), *Modern Greek Culture: A Selected Bibliography, with C. Th. Dimaras and Catherine Koumarianou, Thessaloniki 1968 (4th rev. ed., Athens 1974)*, *Το ελληνικό βιβλίο, 1476–1830 [The Greek book, 1476–1830], with Catherine Koumarianou and Evro Layton, Athens 1986 (Prize of the Association pour l'encouragement des études grecques, Paris 1987)*, *Η ιστορία του ελληνικού βιβλίου: Προσεγγίσεις και σύγχρονες κατευθύνσεις της έρευνας. Βιβλιογραφία των ελληνικών εργασιών (1965–2000) [The history of the Greek book: approaches and modern research directions. Bibliography of Greek works, 1965–2000], Athens 2001, and Εγκυκλοπαίδεια του Ελληνικού Τύπου, 1784–1974: Εφημερίδες, περιοδικά, δημοσιογράφοι, εκδότες [Encyclopaedia of the Greek press, 1784–1974: newspapers, magazines, journalists, publishers], co-edited with Gioula Koutsopanagou, Athens 2008.*

Droulia belonged to a generation of historians who firmly believed in the significance of pure research, that is, in the collection of various and multifaceted source material appropriate for the advancement and deepening of our understanding of the history of modern Hellenism. A visionary in her own right, Droulia set an example and inspired her associates by continuing after her retirement to contribute to important reference works as well as to expand her research horizons. A pioneering and defining moment for the research conducted by the Institute for Historical Research was her decision to introduce at a very early stage – in the 1980s – the electronic cataloguing of sources, a move that prepared the ground for the digital humanities age. Her work occupies an important place in the research arsenal of any student of modern Hellenism, as well as in the founding of the history of modern and contemporary Greece as a distinct field of study.