

## Obituary: Kalliope Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou

*Antigoni Zournatzi*

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## OBITUARY

### **Kalliope Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou**

November 28, 1959 - January 6, 2024



Kalliope Kritikakou-Nikolaropoulou, a long-time member of the Editorial Committee of *Τεκμήρια*, was deceased on January 6, 2024, one month after her 64th birthday.

Kalliope was born and grew up in Athens. She earned her undergraduate degree in History and Archaeology at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens in 1982, participating concurrently in archaeological excavations and surveys of the University of Athens at Epidaurus, Naxos, Crete, Pylos, Thera and Keos, and the University of California at Berkeley at Nemea. Following two years of service as responsible for the bibliographical updating of the topographical archive at the American

School of Classical Studies at Athens, she undertook a graduate specialization in the epigraphy and history of Roman–Early Byzantine Palestine in the Palestine Program (directed by Yannis E. Meimaris) of the Research Centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity at the National Hellenic Research Foundation. She thereafter held positions in our Institute, first, as Research Fellow and, then, as Functional Associate and Functional Senior Researcher.

Her researches focused on the epigraphy and history of Palestine and Arabia in the Roman and Byzantine periods, with an emphasis on cultural and religious interactions among Greek, Jewish and Arab populations, administrative and economic organization, demographic composition and social stratification, and chronological systems attested in inscriptions and papyri. Her early collaborative work, with Yannis E. Meimaris and Polyxeni Bougia, on *Chronological Systems*

in *Roman-Byzantine Palestine and Arabia: The Evidence of the Dated Greek Inscriptions* (MEΛETHMATA 17), published in 1992 and encompassing some 800 epigraphic documents, is a systematic, erudite treatment of the complex landscape of eras and calendars that (co)existed in these areas spanning the 1st - 8th century AD. Her subsequent work with Yannis E. Meimaris on epigraphic materials from the area of Ghor es-Safi (ancient cities of Zoora, Phaeno and Saint Lot Monastery at Deir 'Ain 'Abata) in Jordan, conducted in collaboration with Konstantinos D. Politis, Sebastian Brock, the Department of Antiquities of Jordan and the British Institute at Amman, led to the publication of a series of epigraphic corpora. The core of the research, about 500 (mostly Greek) inscriptions from Zoora, constitute unique testimony for the history of this mixed Nabataean-Jewish community at the south-eastern end of the Dead Sea during the Early Christian period, and document the use of the Greek language locally up to the 7th century AD.

As co-editor of *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia*, Volume Ia: *The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)* (MEΛETHMATA 41, Athens 2005), she was awarded, together with Yannis E. Meimaris, a Prize of the Academy of Athens in Letters and Fine Arts (2006) for a pioneering contribution to the history of Palestine in the transition from the Late Antiquity to the Byzantine period. Two more co-edited volumes of *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia* appeared in 2008 and 2016: Volume Ib: *The Greek Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora) (Supplement), Khirbet Qazone and Feinan* (MEΛETHMATA 57); and in collaboration with Sebastian Brock, Volume Ic: *The Jewish Aramaic Inscriptions from Ghor es-Safi (Byzantine Zoora)* (MEΛETHMATA 73). A *supplementum* to *Inscriptions from Palaestina Tertia* Volumes 1a and 1b, treating more recent finds of Greek funerary inscriptions of the 4th-6th century from the early Christian cemetery of Zoora, was prepared by her for publication before her death, to be included in a forthcoming volume about Zoora edited by Konstantinos D. Politis. Shorter studies on her topics of interest include: "Epigraphical evidence for professions and crafts related to building activities in Roman and Early Christian Palestine and Arabia", in *Ποικίλα* (MEΛETHMATA 10, Athens 1990) 373-395; "The Greek Inscriptions in the Mu'tah University Museum Collection", *Liber Annuus of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum* 57 (2007) 527-562 (with Y. E. Meimaris and H. M. Mahasneh); "Ch. V.11. The Greek Inscriptions", in *Sanctuary of Lot at Deir 'Ain 'Abata in Jordan. Excavations 1988-2003*, edited by Konstantinos D. Politis, 393-416 (Amman 2012) (with Y. E. Meimaris); "Christian Tombstones from Zoora", *Biblical Archaeology Review* 38.2 (March/April 2012) 57-58; "Chapter 3. Greek-Inscribed Tombstones: A Preliminary Report on the Latest Discoveries", in *Ancient Landscapes of Zoara II: Finds from Surveys and Excavations at the Ghor-as-Safi in Jordan, 1997-2018*, edited by Konstantinos D. Politis, 40-54 (Palestine

Exploration Fund Annual XVIII; London-New York 2022). Her regular, personal contributions to special research projects of the Institute focused, among others, on epigraphic testimonies for investigating the identity, organization, and artistic production of mosaicists active in the provinces of Palestine and Arabia in the 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries AD (with Constantine S.-D. Ananiades) and iconographic evidence for personifications of notions of time depicted in Greek and Palestinian Mosaics of Late Antiquity.

In her forty-year career at the National Hellenic Research Foundation, Kalliope was highly regarded for her devotion to her field, scientific rigor, and collaborative nature. As a person, she will be remembered for her genteel disposition, genuine kindness and care for others. She is survived by her husband Efstathios Nikolaropoulos.

Antigoni Zournatzi  
2025