

# HISTORICAL RESEARCH IN THE TOMBS OF THE THESSALONIKI ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

**Ricardo Luiz de Souza<sup>1</sup>**

**Interviewer:** Prof. Me. Ricardo Luiz de Souza (PhD student in History at Unicamp);

**Interviewee:** Dr. Kalliopi Chatzinikolaou, archaeologist at the Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum, specializing in Epigraphy.

This interview is part of a series of activities organized by the III Summer School in Greece. The 2024 edition of the Brazilian Summer School in Greece took place between June 2 and 14 and focused on the study of the Macedonian Empire, made famous by Alexander the Great and one of the first and most significant globalized cultures of the ancient world. The event was organized by the Center for Theoretical Philology of the IdEA at Unicamp, the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, the University of Volos, Greece, and the Brazilian Embassy in Athens.

**Ricardo Souza:** Kalliopi Chatzinikolaou, could you tell us a bit about your academic and professional career?

**Kalliopi Chatzinikolaou:** I studied at the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Ioannina and continued with postgraduate studies at the School of History and Archaeology of the Aristotle University

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<sup>1</sup> Doutorando em História pela Unicamp.

of Thessaloniki. I received my Master's Degree ("*Cults in Epirus during the Hellenistic period*") and my Ph.D. Degree [*"The Cults of Gods and Heroes in Upper Macedonia during the Antiquity (Elimeia, Eordaia, Orestis, Lyncestis)"*], which was published in 2011 by University Studio Press, Thessaloniki. I participated in the university excavation of Dion in Pieria and in systematic and rescue excavations in Achaia and mostly Macedonia (Thessaloniki and its wider area) for the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports. I am appointed at first in the Department of Sculpture, Metalworking, and Minor Art Collection and for the time being in the Department of Sculpture, Frescoes and Mosaics of the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki. My research interests include Religion, Sculpture, Epigraphy, Iconography, Topography and Corinthian Pottery. I have participated in Greek and international conferences and I have published articles, chronicles, statistical studies, as well as texts and entries in exhibition catalogues of museum collections. I am a member of the International Centre of Ancient Greek Religion Studies (CIERGA/Athens/Liège).

**Ricardo Souza:** How important is the Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum to the academic community and the general public?

**Kalliopi Chatzinikolaou:** The Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki is the central metropolitan museum of Northern Greece. It includes finds from the city of Thessaloniki and the wider region including some of the most important archaeological sites of Macedonia and Thrace. In this context it is considered a reference point for the history of these regions. In the past it was almost the only place where antiquities were collected for Macedonia and Thrace. Later and until today, other museums such as Vergina, Amphipolis etc. collected archaeological material from their neighboring regions. For the

inhabitants of Thessaloniki and Macedonia it is the place of memory of their historical past. Because it is located in a city with school of classical studies with main subjects the history and art of Macedonia, it is a place of constant training and education of students and a place of research for academics from all over the world.



**Image 1:** Side view of a Roman-era tomb.  
1st century AD. Collection of the Thessaloniki Archaeological  
Museum. Photo by Ricardo Souza.

**Ricardo Souza:** The Museum's collection, in general terms, is made up of which types of archaeological collection? You work on research related to epigraphy and tombs. Could you tell us a bit about these archaeological sites and how long they have been researched?

**Kalliopi Chatzinikolaou:** We have collections of Ceramics, Metalworking, Sculpture, Minor Arts, Mosaics and Frescoes dated from the Prehistoric to the Late Antiquity. I am working in the Department of Sculpture, Frescoes and Mosaics. Epigraphy and Burial rituals are included mostly in my research interests as I mentioned above. The finds concerned come from ancient Macedonian sites that is cities and cemeteries with no certain chronological limitations.

**Ricardo Souza:** What can studies and research into tombs and epigraphy from the Greek and Roman eras reveal about this society, its customs, politics and culture?

**Kalliopi Chatzinikolaou:** Burial customs reveal the way of life, beliefs, habits, economy and the most important historical milestones of a society. The inscriptions provide the texts that inform about all the above.

**Ricardo Souza: How important is the exchange between Brazilian students, such as the students at the Summer School in Greece, and museum and scientific institutions linked to Greek Antiquity and Macedonia?**

**Kalliopi Chatzinikolaou:** The summer school is an important institution for intercultural cooperation between the participants from both sides. It concerns and teaches all those who want to approach the Greek Antiquity that influenced the whole modern world spiritually, residentially, administratively and socially.

Thessaloniki, Greece, June 2024.