

ANALECTA ISISIANA
LXX

EVANGELIA BALTA

OTTOMAN STUDIES
AND ARCHIVES IN GREECE



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Born in 1955 in Kavala (Greece), graduated from the University of Thessaloniki, Ph.d. (Paris 1-Sorbonne); Research Director at the National Hellenic Foundation for Scientific Research (Athens) since 1987.

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- *Karamanlidika. Additions (1584-1900), Bibliographie analytique*, Athènes 1987;
- *Karamanlidika. XXe siècle, Bibliographie analytique*, Athènes 1987;
- *L'Eubée à la fin du XVe siècle. Economie et Population. Les registres de l'année 1474*, Athènes 1989;
- *La découverte de la Cappadoce au dix-neuvième siècle*, Istanbul 1994 (avec la collaboration d'Ilias Anagnostakis);
- *Les vakıfs de Serrès et de sa région (XVe et XVIe s.). Un premier inventaire*, Athènes 1995;
- *Karamanlidika. Nouvelles Additions et Compléments I*, Athènes 1997;
- *Peuple et production : Pour une interprétation des sources ottomanes*, Istanbul 1999;
- *Greek Orthodox Communities of Cappadocia. The district of Prokopi (Ürgüp). Sources in the General State Archives and the Centre for Asia Minor Studies*, Athens 2001 (in Greek, with the collaboration of Matoula Kouroupou).

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INTRODUCTION

This book is a collection of texts that comment on issues of Ottoman/Turkish Studies in Greece. They are classed in two units: the first unit, 'Archives', comprises texts relating to the history and the organization of the surviving Ottoman Archives; the second, 'Historiography', includes texts discussing the formation process of this critical field of historical studies in Greece. Both units articulate what we call Ottoman/Turkish Studies in Greece, a relatively recent discipline which is endeavouring to define and to consolidate its domain, both in the body of Neohellenic Studies and in that of Ottoman Studies at an international level.

If we subscribe to the view of history expressed by Jacques Le Goff in his book *Histoire et Mémoire*, namely that 'it constitutes an adjustment of the past and is subject to the social, ideological and political structures in the framework of which the historians live and work', then the belated appearance in Greece of Ottoman Studies as a discipline is a good example of what the above can mean. Since I believe that things are not always self-evident, and that answers are not single or one-sided, in the texts that follow I posit certain problems, not necessarily to resolve them myself as much as to stimulate dialogue by presenting doubts and thoughts. These texts are either approaches to processes of perception, organization and expedience of Ottoman/Turkish

Studies or concern demands and desiderata of research. In other words, they are approaches to individual facets as well as generalizing proposals for understanding overall situations. My concerns were the horizons and changes in the course (practices) of Neohellenic historiography, the ontological dimensions (the events themselves) as well as constraints, conscious and unconscious, of historical memory and historical knowledge about what is Ottoman Occupation/Ottoman period, Asia Minor refugees, Turcophone Cappadocians/Karamanli population, Pomaks, Turks/Muslims in Thrace. I would like to think that in presenting my positions, I have tried in my turn to constrain the subjectivity as well as to avoid the delusion of historical objectivity, *That Noble Dream*, to borrow the title of a book.¹ Because I am fully aware that my interpretations, determined historically by the context of my time, the infrastructure, my convictions and lived experiences, inevitably also become object in the framework of the analytical process.

All the texts in the book correspond to the themes of certain conferences, at which they were presented as papers. One text was written in collaboration with the anthropologist Akis Papataxiarchis, who shared with me the responsibility for a joint presentation of folklore, ethnological and anthropological studies in Greece, which have Turks as their subject. The oral style characteristic of

¹ Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*, Cambridge 1988.

conference papers has been kept intentionally in this publication, precisely because I wanted to convey the conjuncture under which they were written and delivered. The texts are brief and accompanied by a very limited documentation. My decision to publish them in a book was guided by the fact that they have a unity and cohesion, and can inform anyone interested in the subject of Ottoman Studies in Greece and their interconnection with Neohellenic historiography. On re-reading these texts several years later, I realize that they trace my personal progress in the field I chose to serve and my hope is that they be appreciated as cogitations of a labourer/professional historian who has the habit of reflecting on her daily toil.

The texts in the book owe much to my friend Ilias Anagnostakis, who for many years now has been sharing my cares about Ottoman Studies. His presence at my side bolstered my stamina. The idea of the book emerged, like all good things, from the warmth of friendship. It was an initiative of my friend Sinan Kunalp. I persist in believing friendship and its importance, particularly today in these petty and self-seeking times when all sense of collective solidarity that gives meaning to human life is being crushed.

Evangelia Balta