

## **Fighting with our Shadows: Greek and Turkish Historiography**

### Abstract

By focussing on the example of the Orthodox Turkish-speaking Christians, one of the many non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire, the lecture looks at historical research and historical education, as reflected in Greek and Turkish historiography. It raises for discussion aspects of the problems faced by the two national historiographies in the way they dealt with and are dealing with the history of this ethno-religious community. By tracing the conditions that in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century shaped the historiographical views on the identity of the Orthodox Karamanlides, it discusses the persistence in considering language to be a criterion of identity in a multilingual, multiethnic and multicultural Ottoman Empire. The lecture underlines the need to explore the history of this ethnoreligious community both within and outside the context that defined it, in other words to detect within the history of the Orthodox Turkish-speaking Christians the entire history of the Ottoman Empire.

**Evangelia Balta** (Kavala 1955). Emerita Research Director at the Institute of Historical Research (National Hellenic Research Foundation). Her interests focus on subjects related to economic and social history during the Ottoman period, as well as the culture of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox population of Anatolia. In addition to her commitment to various programs in Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey, she has been invited to teach graduate students in Greece and abroad. She conducted seminars on Karamanlidika Studies at the Intensive Summer School of Ottoman and Turkish Studies on Cunda Island, organised by the Ottoman Studies Foundation (2011-2023). During the years 2013-2018 she organised in collaboration with the Orient-Institut and the Swedish Research Institute, several series of international monthly lectures in Istanbul on various themes from Ottoman history.

She has also served as a scholarly advisor for the Museum of Olive and Olive Oil, and the Museums of Wine in Greece. She is a founding member of the planning committee of Οἶνον ἱστορῶ (History of Wine), a scholarly group which has organized seven conferences on subjects related to wine and wine production (2000-2008).

Since 2013, she has been an honorary member of the Turkish Historical Society and in 2014 she was awarded the “Order of Merit (Liyakat Nişanı)” by the Turkish Republic.

[www.evangelialbalta.com](http://www.evangelialbalta.com)

### **Recent Books (2021-2025)**

- *Karamanlidika Studies between the Greek and Ottoman Literary Legacy*, Istanbul, Koç University Press, 2025).
- *Literary and Cultural Crossroads in the Late Ottoman Empire*, edited by Evangelia Balta, Istanbul, Boyut, 2024.

- *Anlatuların Satır Aralarında Mübadele Tarihi/ Η Ανταλλαγή των πληθυσμών ανάμεσα από τις γραμμές των κειμένων [The Population Exchange between the lines of texts]*, (haz.) Evangelia Balta, İstanbul, Literatür, 2023 (Bilingual edition in Greek and in Turkish).
- *Hristoforos E. Misailidis, Protaprilia ya da 1 Nisan Şakası. Anatoli Gazetesinde (1899)Yayımlanmış Tefrika Olarak Karamanlıca Bir Vodvil*, (haz.) Evangelia Balta & F. Murat Demir, İstanbul, Literatür, 2023.
- *Registering Life in a Multicultural City. Late Ottoman Nicosia, The sources and their interpretation (1825-1877)*, Istanbuler Texte und Studien Herausgegeben von Orient-Institut Istanbul, Band 47, Ergon Verlag in Kommission, Baden-Baden 2022.
- *Following the Traces of Turkish-speaking Christians of Anatolia*, 2 vols, Guest Editor: Evangelia Balta, The Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures, no. 150, Published at The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 2021.