

ANALECTA ISISIANA  
CXXVI

EVANGELIA BALTA

MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES  
ON THE KARAMANLIDIKA  
LITERARY TRADITION



THE ISIS PRESS  
ISTANBUL

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*Published by*

The Isis Press

Yazmacı Emine sokak 4/A

Burhaniye-Beylerbeyi

34676 Istanbul

Tel.: 90 (0216) 321 38 51

Fax: 90 (0216) 321 86 66

e-mail: [isis@turk.net](mailto:isis@turk.net)

[www.theisispress.org](http://www.theisispress.org)

First edition 2013

ISBN: 978-975-428-494-2

Baskı: İSİS

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Evangelia Balta was born in Kavala (1955). She studied history at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and on a scholarship from the Alexandros S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation she went on to postgraduate studies in Paris (Paris I – Sorbonne, École Pratique des Hautes Études IV Section), from where she gained her PhD. She worked in the Historical Archive of Macedonia (Thessaloniki, 1979), at the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (1978, 1984-1987) and taught at the Ionian University during the first two years after its foundation (Corfu, 1985-1987). Since 1987 she has worked at the National Hellenic Research Foundation (Research Director of Ottoman Studies Programme).

Her interests are centered on subjects related to economic and social history during the Ottoman period, as well as the Greek culture of Asia Minor. In addition to her commitment to various programmes at the National Research Foundation, she has also served as a scholarly advisor for the Museum of the Olive and Greek Olive Oil in Sparta, the Museum of Industrial Olive-Oil Production in Lesvos, and the Museums of Wine at the Ktima Hatzimihalis and the Ktima Gerovassileiou (Epanomi). She was academic supervisor for the restoration of the Kayakapi neighbourhood (Project Kayakapi) in Ürgüp, Turkey (2003-2008). She is a founding member of the planning committee of ΟΙΝΟΝ ΙΣΤΟΡΩ (History of Wine), a scholarly group which has organized seven conferences on subjects related to wine and wine production (2000-2008).

Evangelia Balta has been invited to teach seminars for groups of graduate students by Universities both in Greece and abroad. Since 2008 she has regularly organized International Workshops of Karamanlidika Studies and since 2011 she has been conducting a Seminar on Karamanlidika Studies in the Intensive Ottoman and Turkish Summer School at Cunda, Ayvalık (Ottoman Studies Foundation).

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## PREFACE

The word “Miscellaneous” accurately describes the coexistence in the same volume of texts varying in type, style, content and the time to which they refer. This volume contains eight studies written over the last three years, products though of research that has been under way for some time. The variety of their subjects indicates the main axes on which my research has been centred for many years, showing at the same time, by way of examples, the wealth of topics, the numerous fields that open up to the researcher wanting to become involved with Karamanlidika studies.

The first study occasioned by the polarization – at least until very recently – of the national historiographies of Greece and Turkey concerning the origin of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox populations of Anatolia, seeks their traces in chronologically older historical sources, in the first Ottoman ledgers, which began to be compiled in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. The study aims to determine whether and to what extent the Anatolian Orthodox communities encountered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were also in existence during the time of the conquest of the region by the Ottomans. It follows them historically over two centuries, from the final decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. It studies their *ad hoc* image and attempts on the basis of this to formulate some research hypotheses concerning the creation process of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox communities in Anatolia in previous centuries, for which we have no historical evidence. Data such as the anthroponyms of taxpayers in the *Tapu Tahrir Defterleri* indicate the complexity of the composition of these population groups and exclude aphorisms that want to support their ethnic homogeneity by using terms of the type *Hristiyan Türkler*.

The second study, the product of collaboration with the linguist Don Stilo and the student Oxana Trandafilova, refers to the alphabets used in Gagauz publications. Its historical part examines the influence exerted by Karamanlidika publications on the Gagauz people, which until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century were their exclusive reading material until the adoption of the Cyrillic and other alphabets in the books printed to meet their religious needs. In addition it attests to the significant role played by Karamanlidika printed matter in the cultural transfer between Turkish-speaking Orthodox Balkan peoples in the Ottoman Empire. The study shows that the change in the alphabet in Turkish texts intended for the Gagauz can be directly linked to the emergence of Bulgarian nationalism. The substitution of the Greek alphabet in Turkish texts too describes the ups and downs that occurred in the Balkans regarding the position and the function of the Greek language, which until recently had prevailed, due to the inclusion of all these Orthodox peoples in the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The two subsequent studies in the volume, the third and the fourth, are about the theatre. The first presents the character of the Karamanli in 19<sup>th</sup> century Modern Greek comedy, which inspired creators who depicted in their

works the picture of the era for the Orthodox Anatolian. The second study, based on the comedy 'Malakoff' by M. Chourmouzis that was written to satirize the excess in the adoption of Western models by the Rum community after the Crimean War, looks at the attitude of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox community in Istanbul with regard to the westernization of Ottoman society. The dialogues spoken by the Turkish-speaking servant Fedai, a central character in the comedy, together with the columns in the Karamanlidika newspaper *Anatoli*, in which the opinions of Karamanli readers on modern customs and the position of the Anatolian woman before the challenges of the era are published, provided the material for writing the study. I think that these two studies show how interesting a study of the image of the Karamanli in literature would be. It undoubtedly opens up an excellent field for comparative literature studies.

The fifth and the sixth studies constitute a continuation of the attempt under way for some time to compile a bibliographic date basis Karamanlidika newspapers and periodicals, a valuable source not only for the history of the Turkish-speaking Orthodox in Anatolia. *Μεκτεπούλ Φεννούι Μεσσηνή* (Mekteb'ül Fennuni Maşrîki = School of Oriental Knowledge) by Evangelinos Misailidis published in Smyrna in 1849-1850, until recently known only from bibliographic references, was discovered in the Arvanitidis collection in the Library at the University of Crete. The study records the contents of this first Karamanlidika periodical, which is the also the first magazine covering assorted topics in the Turkish language that was available in the Ottoman Empire, and comments on its publication, including it in the cultural climate of Smyrna in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The recording of its contents, which began as an exercise in the class of advanced students in 2012 at the Intensive Ottoman and Turkish Summer School at Cunda (Ottoman Studies Foundation), found people to carry it on: two of those students took up the torch and continued compiling the bibliography of the periodical *Αγγελιαφόρος τζοτσουκλάρ ιουσούν* and the newspaper *Νέα Ανατολή* [Nea Anatoli].

The study on the Karamanlidika newspaper *Φανός* [Phostir] or *Φανάρι* [Fener], which was never released, demonstrates the need for systematic research at the Ottoman Archive to uncover data on Karamanlidika publications that elude us. Valuable sources are the folders submitted by publishers to acquire authorization for their books during the Hamidian period with its strict censorship. Information should be systematically sought there that will fill in the blanks.

The necessity of delving into Ottoman archival material is further confirmed by the wealth of data found concerning publications under the title *Κυριακή τερωλερί* (Sunday School Lessons), which circulated for several years, not only in Karamanlidika but also in Armeno-Turkish (*Giragi Mektebi Dersleri*), in an attempt by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to proselytize Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Of the impressive number of unknown editions discovered, a single title alone shows that the Ottoman archives conceal valuable data on unknown publications that lie hidden and copies of them will most likely never be found. Systematic research



must therefore be conducted in the Ottoman Archives to discover and incorporate unknown editions and titles into the relevant bibliographies. This constitutes a desideratum in the history of Karamanlidika and Armeno-Turkish publications.

Delving into Ottoman archival material uncovered the data that produced the 8<sup>th</sup> study in the volume, the one that is dedicated to the work of the Karamanli censor and Secondary School inspector, Avraam Vaporidis, from Ferteke in Nigde. The case of Avraam Vaporidis is the first in a series of studies carried out since 2010 in collaboration with a team of young researchers on writers and translators of Karamanlidika books and periodicals, as well as on Karamanli scholars, who worked as clerks in the Ottoman Empire. This particular study was carried out in collaboration with Dr. Raif İvecan.

The research for the last three studies was carried out in 2010 funded by the Turkish Cultural Foundation. Dr. Nurdan Şafak and Dr. Raif İvecan worked alongside me in researching the Ottoman archival material. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the Board of the Turkish Cultural Foundation for their generous support.

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While I was hastily preparing this collection of articles in order to have it ready before the start of the III International Workshop of Karamanlidika Studies (2 November 2013) so it could be offered to the participants, young and old colleagues, it dawned on me the time that has elapsed since I first became involved with the world of Karamanlidika publications. In the late 1980s, with the exception of a small number of scholars in Greece and Turkey, this world was completely unknown. Few, just an old generation of scholars, knew of Karamanlidika printed matter and the majority of discussions on this topic were restricted to sterile debates on the origin, whether Turkish or Greek, of their reading public. Today, 35 years later, one cannot but recognize that one has come a long way and Karamanlidika Studies have begun to take on an academic profile, with topics spanning many fields, from linguistics to history and literature. Perhaps the most important thing is that Karamanlidika Studies have become the starting-point for approaching further literary production of Muslims and *gayr-i Muslims* in the Ottoman Empire, which also demand their incorporation into mainstream Ottoman studies, whose theme is the multinational Ottoman Empire with its different religions, diverse languages, numerous alphabets.

The road traced out for Karamanlidika Studies is very long and it needs fellow-travellers but primarily people to carry it on. Good and worthy young persons with enthusiasm and love for the topic and respect for the rules of academic ethics are required. The journey promises the joy of discovery and the satisfaction of participating in the establishment of a discipline with multiple aspects for investigation. A trip is meaningless unless it seeks to offer something new to the traveller.

On my journey the search for something new and the pleasure gained from investigation have always been the primary motive and the final goal. I want to believe that it's worth the trouble. Otherwise why write? Otherwise why read?

E.B.

Cunda, 24 July 2013