Overcoming the 'Know Thy Enemy' Syndrome: Turkish Studies in Greece

This presentation aims to explore the history and state of affairs of Turkish studies in Greece. Since the foundation of the University of Athens in 1837, studying the Ottoman Empire and Turkey has been an awkward process, since the Ottoman and the Turk were framed as the "other" of the Greek. The role of Ottoman Greeks as mediators in that process was crucial. The 1923 mandatory population exchange sharply reduced coexistence and empirical knowledge of Turkish culture in Greece, while it brought thousands of Turkish-speaking Orthodox to Greece. Deteriorating diplomatic relations since the 1950s has led to the rise of a type of Turkish Studies which serves as instrument to promote Greek national interests and not knowledge of Turkish culture per se. The Greek-Turkish rapprochement has led to some innovative attempts to overcome this stalemate. Yet results still leave much to be desired.

Referent

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