



Summary :

Son of a merchant from Marseilles, he entered the Phanariot circles of Constantinople and developed significant banking activities there and in Greece. He successively held the Austrian and the Italian nationality.

Date and Place of Birth

1826, Smyrna

Date and Place of Death

1889, Athens

Main Role

Banker

1. Family life

Evangelos or Evangelis Baltatzis was born in 1826 at [Smyrna](#). He was the son of Dimitrios Baltatzis, a merchant from Marseilles, and of Maria Amira, a descendant of a merchant family active in Marseilles. Our sources provide no information on his early years and his studies. Evangelos Baltatzis married Zoi Karatheodori, a descendant of a prominent [Phanariot family](#). Stephanos, her father, was an eminent scholar and a renowned doctor.¹ This was the second marriage between the [Karatheodoris](#) and [Baltatzis families](#). The couple had six children, a boy and five girls. Zoi maintained her family's Phanariot traditions. Their mansions at [Constantinople](#) (Istanbul) and Athens, where the family later moved, attracted the cream of the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals.² In the second half of the 19th century Evangelos Baltatzis played an important role in the economic life of Constantinople and Athens as a banker. He died at Athens in 1889.

2. Entrepreneurial activities




On April 11, 1872 together with his associates, among which were [bankers of Constantinople](#) and businessmen from [Odessa](#), Evangelos Baltatzis founded the 'Credit Bank on Movable Property' (*Trapeza tis epi ton kinton pisteos*). Two days later, his rival Andreas Syngros³ founded his own bank, the 'Commercial and Credit Bank of Greece' (*Emboriki kai pistotiki trapeza tis Ellados*). On May 22, the two organizations were finally merged creating the 'General Credit Bank' (*Geniki pistotiki trapeza*). The type of this enterprise was completely novel for Greece. Its founders wished to promote their financial institution as an industrial investments bank, the main aim of which was to finance industrial activity. The group of Syngros had a clear supremacy in the board of directors and the presidency of the bank.⁴ By founding this bank, Evangelos Baltatzis realized his plans to make investments in Greece.⁵ In 1873, however, he founded another bank, the 'Land Credit Bank' (*Ktimatiki trapeza pisteos*). His relative Epameinondas Baltatzis from Paris participated in this venture (son of Emmanouil Baltatzis and Katerina Petrokokkinou). In the same year Evangelos Baltatzis begun negotiations for his participation in the construction of the railway line connecting Athens-Antirrhion-Vonitsa. Evangelos Baltatzis' role apparently was not confined to the Greek milieu, for he maintained close relations with various Europeans. Moreover, his first nationality was Austrian, according to the certificate issued on May 3, 1859 by the General Consulate of Austria at Marseilles. On August 13, 1865, he became an Italian national, according to a certificate issued at Torino. He remained an Italian national until his death. During his lifetime he was thrice decorated; two times in Italy, in 1868 (Cavaliere) and in 1869 (Officiale);⁶ and once in Greece (Silver Cross of the Saviour).⁷

1. Stephanos Karatheodoris was the sultan's doctor; he was also a professor of Medicine and Botany.



2. Δερτιλής, Γ., *Το ζήτημα των τραπεζών (1871-1873). Οικονομική και πολιτική διαμάχη στην Ελλάδα του ΙΘ' αιώνα* (Αθήνα 1980), pp. 13-14.
3. Andreas Syngros (1830-1899) was an entrepreneur and banker. He was elected a member of the Greek parliament for the electoral district of Syros in 1889 and 1890 and for the electoral district of Athens in 1899. He was one of Greece's national benefactors.
4. Δερτιλής, Γ., *Το ζήτημα των τραπεζών (1871-1873). Οικονομική και πολιτική διαμάχη στην Ελλάδα του ΙΘ' αιώνα* (Αθήνα 1980), p. 43. In the board of directors the group of Syngros controlled seven votes, while the group of Baltatzis only three. The candidate of the Syngros group was elected to the presidency of the bank.
5. Δερτιλής, Γ., *Το ζήτημα των τραπεζών (1871-1873). Οικονομική και πολιτική διαμάχη στην Ελλάδα του ΙΘ' αιώνα* (Αθήνα 1980), p. 32.
6. The reason for the two decorations is unknown, but it is highly probable that he received these honours for services rendered to the Italian state.
7. Δερτιλής, Γ., *Το ζήτημα των τραπεζών (1871-1873). Οικονομική και πολιτική διαμάχη στην Ελλάδα του ΙΘ' αιώνα* (Αθήνα 1980), pp. 301-303.

Bibliography :

	Sturdza M.-D. , <i>Dictionnaire historique et généalogique des grandes familles de Grèce, d'Albanie et de Constantinople</i> , Paris 1983
	Μπενάκης Α.Μ. , "Οι Μπαλτατζήδες. Βιογραφικά σημειώματα Συμυρναϊκών Οικογενειών", <i>Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά</i> , 4, 1948, 325-339
	Δερτιλής Γ. , <i>Το ζήτημα των τραπεζών (1871-1873) Οικονομική και πολιτική διαμάχη στην Ελλάδα του ΙΘ' αιώνα</i> , Αθήνα 1980