

HerCoRe

Hermeneutic Investigation

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1. Main Goal of the Project from Historiographical Aspect

Within the framework of the project HerCoRe we are analyzing the historical work “Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches nach seinem Anwachsen und Abnehmen” (1745) (GOR) and investigate it with regard to the historiography of its time. We evaluate the source usage of Cantemir and also the reliability of his references as a historical work. We also seek to shed more light on the motivation behind the writing-process of this work by taking into account the political and cultural dynamics of the time and the position of Cantemir within the Ottoman elite. To determine the missing or incorrectly translated parts of the work, the German and English translations will also be compared with a copy of the Latin manuscript. This comparative approach serves also to discuss the causes of the (un)conscious mistakes and omissions in the translations.

2. Report of the Activities in the first year June 2017-April 2018

The primary purpose of the work in the period June 2017-April 2018 was to verify the reliability and consistency of Cantemir's references in the GOR. In this regard, we followed the below-mentioned work plan:

- **Reading and Analyzing the GOR:** The GOR consists of two main capitals and four books; the first capital includes three books (pp. 1-408) which are dealing with the growth of the Ottoman Empire. The second capital includes the fourth book (pp. 409-770) which is handling the decay of the Empire. In this period, we explored the introduction of Cantemir (pp. 29-64), the first capital and the first book of the second capital (pp. 1-562) concerning the goals stated above, totally 597 pages.

- **Determination of the sources:** Cantemir gives references to multiple Turkish and European historians and a few times, he mentions only the title of a book without mentioning the author. First, we made a list of these names and titles that he has used as source. Then we checked the

works of these historians for their content and the accuracy of Cantemir's references. In this regard, we tried also to find out the methodology of Cantemir, after the reconstruction of these sources.

According to that Cantemir used the Turkish and Greek manuscripts and also European works on Ottoman history. He deployed generally wide-ranged and well-reputed Ottoman sources which are regarded also by Ottoman scholars as standard-work of the historiography. The Ottoman and European and also ancient scholars mentioned by Cantemir in his three books and in the first part of the fourth book of GOR are as follows:

On the historical facts he mentions the scholars **Mevlânâ Mehmed Neşrî**, **Âşıkpaşazâde Derviş Ahmet Âşıkî** (1400-1484), **Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali**, **Hoca Sadeddin Efendi** (1536/1537-1599) and his work *Tac üt-tevarih*, **İdris-i Bitlisî**, **İbrâhîm Peçevî**, **Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi**, **Yazıcıoğlu Muhammed** by only writing his work *Muhammediye*, **Nikephoros Gregoras**, **Georgios Sphrantzes**, **Laonikos Chalkondyles**, **Philipp Lonicer (Lonicerus)**, **Johannes Löwenklau (Leunclavius)** (1541-1594), **Johannes Gaudier** (Hans Caudir von Spiegel), **Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq**, **Paul Rycaut**.

On the geographical matters he refers to **Johann Wasäus**, **Georgios Kedrenos** (latinized Georgius Cedrenus), **Herodot von Halikarnassos**, **Gaius Plinius Secundus Maior** (23-79), **Pomponius Mela**, **Abu l-Abbas Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Kathir al-Farghani**, **Mohammed ibn Dschâbir al-Battânî**, **Denis Pétau** (Dionysius Petavius), **Joseph Justus Scaliger**, **Sethus Calvisius**, **Michalo Lituanus**.

For the etymological explanations he alludes to the Vocabulars of **Franciscus a Mesgnien Meninski** (1623-1698) and to the vocabulary of **Nimetullah b. Ahmed b. Mübârek er-Rumî** (?-1571) *Tuhfe-i Ni'meti* (Persian dictionary or the vocabulary of **Seyyid Nimetullah Efendi (Nakibzâde)** (1637). He also quotes a poem of **Şeyh Sadi-i Şirazi** by referring to his book *Golistan*.

The German translator of the book used also some additional sources and made some remarks regarding the information provided by Cantemir. He used for the etymological explanations of arabic and persian words **D'Herbelot** and **George Sale**.

We focused in the first year of the project on the accuracy of Cantemir's references on Ottoman history which he claimed to have seen and used. So we examined the works below in order to verify the reliability of Cantemir's HO:

- **Mevlânâ Mehmed Neşrî** (?-1520[?]), *Kitâb-ı Cihânnümâ*

- Nikephoros Gregoras (1295-1360), *Rhomäische Geschichte / Historia Rhomaike*
- Georgios Sphrantzes (1401-1478 [?]), *Chronicle (Χρονικόν)*
- Laonikos Chalkondyles (1430[?]-1470[?]), *Historiarum demonstrationes*
- Âşıkpaşazâde Derviş Ahmet Âşıkî (1400[?]-1484), *Menâkıb-ı Âli-i Osman and Tevârih-i Âli-i Osman*
- Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali (1541-1600), *Künhü'l-Ahbâr*
- Hoca Sadeddin Efendi (1536/7-1599), *Tac üt-tevarih*
- İdris-i Bitlisî (1450[?]-1520), *Heşt Behişt*
- İbrâhîm Peçevî (1574-1649[?]), *Târih-i Peçevî*
- Hezarfen Hüseyin Efendi (?-1691), *Tenkih-üt Tevarih*
- Philipp Lonicerus (1543-1599), *Chronicorum Turcicorum*
- Johannes Löwenklau (Leunclavius) (1541-1594), *Historiae Musulmanae Turcorum, De Monumentis Ipsorum Exscriptae, Libri XVIII; Annales sultanorum Othmanidarum a Turcis sua lingua scripti*
- Johannes Gaudier (Hans Caudir von Spiegel) (?-1579), *Annales sultanorum Othmanidarum a Turcis sua lingua scripti*
- Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq (1522-1592), *The life and letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq* (Original title : Augerii Gislennii Busbequii, Omnia quæ extant. 1. Legationis Turcicæ Epistolæ quatuor. 2. Exclamatio sive de re militari contra Turcam instituenda consilium. 3. Solimanni Turcarum Imp. Legatio ad Ferdinandum Roman. Cæsarem. 4. Busbequii Legationis Gallicæ ad Rudolphum 2. Imp. Epistolæ LIII. Premissa est vita Auctoris)
- Paul Rycaut (1629-1700), *The present state of the Ottoman Empire*

- **Checking the differences between Latin, English and German editions:** In addition to the examination of the Turkish sources, the German translation will be reviewed at the same time. The Latin copy of HO has been also checked for incorrect or missing translations due to the lack of Turkish skills of Nicolas Tindal, the first translator of the work.

- **Lists of persons, historical terms, geographical information, constructions and Turkish sayings or poems:** We prepared lists of the names of persons, terms, geographical information, Turkish sayings and poems used by Cantemir (in order to find out more sources which he used or read by searching for the quoted lines of poems) in their form of appearance in HO in German and HO in Latin as well as in Turkish sources. We gathered different words with same meaning

and reference and also gave their definitions in historical context. This will help to link many different but closely connected words through the digital annotation of the GOR within the framework of the project HerCoRe. It will also help to examine the changes of words in translation of the Work from Latin original into English and then into German.

- List for the Cantemir's network in Istanbul: The network of Cantemir in Istanbul is very important in respect to understand his work and the cultural environment which certainly had influenced his way of thinking. We made a list of his network in Istanbul according to HO and also to the reports of European diplomats at his time. So we got a picture of the academic relations between the diplomatic corps, Ottoman scholars and Cantemir which shows us that the scientific interaction between Ottomans and Europeans was much more intensive as it is usually presumed. To shed more light on his life in Istanbul and the relations between his family and the Ottoman palace and also on his academic environment in Istanbul (we found over thirty names who were in friendship with Cantemir), we made a research in the *Ottoman Archive* and in the *Archive of the Roman-Orthodox Patriarchate* in Istanbul, besides the memoirs of the diplomats who were in Istanbul and had a friendship with Cantemir. The documents which we found in the archives have been also transcribed and translated into German:

- BOA, HR.SFR.3., 365 – 40, M-11-06-1890

- BOA, İE.HR., 15, 1459, H-29-12-1123

- AE.SAMD.III, 21, 2019, H-29-04-1119

- C.MTZ., 7, 303, H-29-08-1121

- A.DVNSMHM., 98, 52

- C.HR., 95, 4719, H-29-12-1124

- İE.HR., 15, 1459, H-29-12-1123

- İE.HR., 15, 1457, H-29-12-1104

- Interviews: In order to be able to compare the Ottoman historiography with the contemporary historiographies in Europe and Balkan countries, we consulted experts. We made an interview with Dr. Marius Diaconescu (University of Bucharest, History, Faculty Member) on Romanian historiography and perception of Dimitrie Cantemir in Romania. We evaluated with Prof. Dr. Markus Friedrich (University of Hamburg, History, Faculty Member) the characteristics of

Cantemir's GOR and he helped us for a comparison between the historiography in Europe and Ottoman Empire in XVIIIth century.

2.1. Findings

We discovered that the Ottoman studies on the GOR until now were very limited and they dealt only with the sources, which Cantemir mentions in the introduction of his GOR. We also observed that these studies did not conduct an extensive research for the reliability of the GOR. Cantemir does not give systematically references to his sources but we can follow the consistency of the information that he provides in the Ottoman chronicles he mentions in the introduction.

One of the noteworthy characteristics of Cantemir's narrative is that the vagueness-rates of his statements get lower when he emphasize the truthfulness of his statement.

The GOR displays the characteristics of the Ottoman historiography and follows the tradition of the genre "Tevarih-i Al-i Osman" (History of the Ottoman Dynasty), which tells the story of the Ottoman house beginning from Süleyman Şah – allegedly the grandfather of Osman – and his arrival to Anatolia at the beginning of XIII. century and brings it to 1711, to the Ottoman-Russian war which marked also the end of Cantemir's life in Ottoman Empire. Cantemir combines in GOR the tradition of Ottoman historiography and delivers a skeptical/ rational perspective of his time, in the early period of the Enlightenment. In many parts of the book he is analyzing the facts in the Ottoman sources due to historical and scientific reasonability which brings the historiographical value of his work to a higher level. In this regard this works stands for one of first examples of historiography of Enlightenment.

The histories such *Kitâb-ı Cihânnümâ* (1288(?)-1494) of Mevlânâ Mehmed Neşrî and *Tâcü't-tevârih* (1288(?)-1520) of Hoca Sadeddin Efendi which provides a chronological narrative for the period 1288-1520 constitute also the main chronological order that GOR until the end of the Sultan Selim's reign (1512-1520) is following. The relative frequency of literal translations from these works in GOR indicates that Cantemir used them as his main sources for the period 1288-1520. The parts which have been took from these Turkish sources without any reference are marked and listed. Cantemir sometimes gave reference to the Turkish historians' works by referring to specific topics although the mentioned content does not exist in those sources. Such citations practices have been also listed as evidence of vagueness.

3. Further Research

3.1. PhD-Thesis on the GOR

In the scope of the project HerCoRe it is planned to write a PhD-Thesis on Dimitrie Cantemir's GOR. A critical comprehensive text edition and a research for reliability, consistency and vagueness of the GOR will not only clarify the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir, but it will also help us to gain insights into the writing process of a historical work in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The rich annotations and comments made by Cantemir on the Ottoman / Islamic culture also allow us to get a clearer picture on the life of Cantemir in Istanbul. At the same time the book provides us with important information about his network among the Ottoman and European circles. This research will provide a new approach to hitherto neglected perspectives on the life of the Ottomans in the late 17th and early 18th century.

4. Academic Activities

- "Analysis of Dimitrie Cantemir's Ottoman History with Combination of Hermeneutic and Computer based Methods", presentation in the seminar "Osmanisches Reich und Digital Humanities" for master students in Asia Afrika Institute/ Turcology
- Acceptance for the presentation "Dimitrie Cantemir as an Ottoman intellectual" at *3rd European Convention on Turkic, Ottoman & Turkish Studies* in 19-21 September 2018.