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The oriental origins of orientalism: the case of Dimitrie Cantemir

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Publication date

2012

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

The making of the humanities: volume II: from early modern to modern disciplines

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Leezenberg, M. (2012). The oriental origins of orientalism: the case of Dimitrie Cantemir. In R. Bod, J. Maat, & T. Weststeijn (Eds.), *The making of the humanities: volume II: from early modern to modern disciplines* (pp. 243-263). Amsterdam University Press.
<http://oopen.org/search?identifier=429447;keyword=9789089644558>

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The Making of the Humanities

Volume II:
*From Early Modern
to Modern Disciplines*

Edited by
Rens Bod,
Jaap Maat and
Thijs Weststeijn

AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY PRESS

This book was made possible by the generous support of the J.E. Jurriaanse Foundation, the Dr. C. Louise Thijssen-Schoute Foundation, and the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

This book is published in print and online through the online OAPEN library (www.oapen.org)

Front cover:

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Cover design: Studio Jan de Boer, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Lay-out: V3-Services, Baarn, the Netherlands

ISBN 978 90 8964 455 8

E-ISBN 978 90 4851 733 6 (pdf)

E-ISBN 978 90 4851 734 3 (ePub)

NUR 685



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The Oriental Origins of Orientalism

The Case of Dimitrie Cantemir

MICHEL LEEZENBERG¹

*He was as good a sovereign of the sort
As any mention'd in the histories
Of Cantemir, or Knolles, where few shine
Save Solyman, the glory of their line.
Lord Byron, Don Juan, V: 147*

Introduction: Post-orientalism and beyond

Edward Said's *Orientalism* continues to set the tone for debates about the political roles and implications of the academic study of the Islamic, and more generally the non-Western, world in the Western humanities, even though its shortcomings have long been known. Specifically, and influentially, Said argues that there is a direct link between knowledge of the Orient and colonial domination; he mostly bases his case on detailed discussion of orientalist scholarship on the Arab-speaking regions of the Ottoman empire in France and England in the nineteenth century, and in the United States in the twentieth. Much can be said about this argument; but for the present discussion, three kinds of problems are most directly relevant.

First, as was already noted at an early stage, Said's argument has a very restricted geographical basis, as he does not take German and Russian orientalism into account; indeed, some have presented the German case as a refutation of his main thesis.² Although German orientalism had a dominant position for much of the nineteenth century, German colonial projects would not materialize until well after the 1870 unification under Bismarck. The Russian case is even more complex: from the sixteenth century onward, the Russian empire incorporated Muslim subject populations that were not necessarily, or unambiguously, seen as radically different from the recently converted Russian peasantry, or from other

subject nations; it was not until the later eighteenth century that a more self-conscious expansion into the Caucasus and Central Asia and a concomitant form of orientalist knowledge developed. In many ways, the Soviet Union reproduced 'bourgeois' orientalist knowledge that had been produced in, particularly, imperial Russia and Germany; but it cannot simply be said to be an empire or colonial enterprise in any but the widest sense. Likewise, scholars in the Ottoman empire and its successor states also developed something like an orientalist tradition of their own.³ Neither in the 1978 edition nor in the Afterword to the 1995 edition of *Orientalism* does Said address the specifics of German, Russian, or Ottoman orientalism at all. In the original edition, he acknowledges the pre-eminent status of German oriental and other scholarship in the nineteenth century, but adds that 'the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical Orient' (1978: 19), that is, an imagined locus that never became really actual as did the French and English colonial Orient; moreover, he adds, German, French and English orientalism all had the same kind of textual or epistemological authority over the Orient in Western culture. That claim, however, leaves open the more general question of how knowledge produced in a particular region, and language, can acquire – or lose – a more universal, or hegemonic, status.

A second problem concerns possible ruptures or discontinuities in orientalist knowledge, and in the humanities more generally. Said himself notes the close conceptual link between oriental scholarship and other branches of the humanities, in particular historical and comparative linguistics as created by the likes of William Jones and Sylvestre de Sacy (1978: 18). Basing himself in part on Foucault's genealogical approach, he then sets out to expose the intimate, or internal, relation between orientalist knowledge and colonial power. In doing so, however, he not only links knowledge much more closely to state power than Foucault ever does; he also, and quite unlike Foucault, appears to assume that the othering of the Orient as something radically different from the West remained essentially unchanged from ancient Greece until the present, claiming that 'certain associations with the East – not quite ignorant, not quite informed – always seem to have gathered around the Orient', and accordingly seeing the first emergence of orientalism in Homer, Aeschylus and Euripides (1978: 55-56). In contrast to this apparently timeless character of Said's orientalism, Foucault famously, and controversially, argued for a radical epistemological rupture in the sciences of man; less contentiously, one may observe a discontinuity of some sort in the nineteenth-century rise of the professionalized modern humanities based on philological methods and the simultaneous growth of political nationalism. Put differently, the interrelations between modern orientalism, and the modern humanities more generally, the rise of the nation state, and the transformation from early modern empires into modern imperialisms largely remain to be explored.

A third question left open by orientalism studies, and a very substantial one in connection with the history of the humanities, is the changing interrelationships of Western and non-Western traditions of learning. It is tempting to view orientalism as a kind of hegemonic discourse, or as an ideology in the Marxist sense of the word, without exploring exactly *how* this discourse became hegemonic; but doing so threatens to deprive non-Western subjects of all agency.⁴ Classically orientalist texts present local interlocutors as at best playing the role of – generally anonymous – ‘native informants’, that is, as sources of oral information whose opinions do not in themselves carry any epistemological authority. It is only recently that early modern non-Western knowledge traditions have started to receive due attention. In the Islamic world, for example, there was a long-standing tradition of learning, ranging from logic and grammar to theology, philosophy and alchemy; moreover, different authors have argued for different forms of innovation and change in these traditions in the early modern era. The advent of modern Western scholars and scientists, schools and universities, and textbooks and curricula did not simply mark the end of these local traditions of learning; but it did profoundly transform them. It is not at all clear how one should assess these developments; but, obviously, one should resist reducing them to the mere passive reception or absorption of a hegemonic Western discourse, as this precludes even the raising of the questions of local agency and the universalisation of locally produced knowledge that are at stake here.

In this contribution, I will address these broader questions through the prism of a single figure, the early eighteenth-century scholar Dimitrie Cantemir. Born and educated in Ottoman lands, he eventually became a major intellectual and political figure in both the Ottoman and Russian empires, and was a precursor of Romanian (and Moldavian) nationalism. As will appear below, he was far more than a native informant, and his work on Ottoman history would come to have a dominant status in Western orientalist scholarship for almost an entire century. Thus, apart from being a fascinating figure in his own right, Cantemir’s *Werdegang* also inspires questions of a broader and more theoretical character, concerning, among others, the origins of modern philological orientalism, and the history of the humanities beyond national and religious confines. Indeed, it reminds us of just how recently these boundaries have been drawn.

Cantemir’s political and academic career

The regions with Romance-speaking populations straddled the border between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires. The Christian populations of the Ottoman provinces of Wallachia (Turkish *Eflâq*) in the South, and Transylvania (*Erdel* in

Turkish, and *Siebenbürgen* in German) in the Northwest, and Moldavia (*Bogdan*) in the Northeast, were generally adherents of the orthodox Byzantine-Slavic church, in which Church Slavonic had long been the liturgical language; but in the wake of the Reformation, the Uniate church also had made inroads here. The Ottoman rulers made few if any concerted efforts to convert the Christian and Jewish subject population of the Balkans to Islam. Instead, the Danube provinces knew a largely autonomous and quasi-feudal rule by so-called hospodars or voyvodes, generally elected from the local landowning and/or military elites, the boyars.

It was into such a boyar family that Dimitrie Cantemir was born, in 1673. In 1685, his father Constantin, himself illiterate, became voyvode of Moldavia.⁵ In his Latin works published in Russia, Cantemir claims that his ancestors were Crimean Tatars who had converted to Christianity in the fifteenth century; in his Romanian-language writings, however, he emphasizes his humble origins, possibly in an attempt to distance himself from the unpopular local boyar elites. The emphasis on a Turkic or Tatar genealogy may have been intended to ingratiate himself with readers in Russia, where it was common practice among the nobility to claim Tatar descent, and take on Tatar names, until the eighteenth century.

After spending his younger years in the Moldavian capital Iași, he stayed in Istanbul as a hostage from 1687 to 1691. Upon the death of his father in 1693, he was elected the new ruler by local supporters; but after a mere three weeks in power, he was dethroned by the Ottoman authorities. When his brother Antioch was granted the Moldavian throne, Dimitrie returned to the Ottoman capital, where he was to stay until 1710. Only once, in 1699, did he return, for his betrothal to Cassandra Cantacuzino (1682-1713), a daughter of the former voyvode of Wallachia, in what was clearly a political marriage.

Reflecting enduring rivalries between Moldavian and Wallachian hospodars more generally, the Cantemir family had a long-standing enmity with Constantin Brancovanu, the voyvode of Wallachia. Also during his years in Istanbul, Dimitrie appears to have been very much involved in the customary court intrigues. He enjoyed the support of several grand viziers and maintained good relations with, among others, the French, Dutch and Russian ambassadors. Cantemir had a high reputation as a court musician; reportedly, upon hearing that he had been named voyvode of Moldavia, he composed a tune to show his gratitude, which he also performed in front of the sultan. His gratitude was not translated into political loyalty, however: shortly after his return to Iași, he entered into secret negotiations with the Russian tsar Peter the Great, and in Peter's 1711 Pruth campaign, an ill-fated military offensive against the Ottomans, he openly sided with the Russians. It was a gamble, and it did not pay off: Peter was defeated in battle, and Cantemir had to flee for his life along with the retreating Russian troops.

Cantemir's defection had far-reaching political consequences, as the failure of the Russian-backed revolt spelled the beginning of the so-called Phanariot period, when the Danube provinces came to be ruled by Greek-speaking families more closely linked to the central Ottoman authorities.

Cantemir's role in Moldavia and the Ottoman empire had ended abruptly, but his career in the Russian empire was about to begin. Soon, he moved among the St Petersburg elites with ease, subsequently remarrying into the Russian nobility. Academically, too, his life in Russia proved successful. In 1714, he was made a member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences; in the early 1720s, he was proposed as the first president of the Russian Academy. Peter the Great had corresponded about the idea of a Russian academy with the German philosopher Leibniz (who had also been instrumental in the creation of academies at Berlin and Vienna); by the time the St Petersburg Academy held its first session, however, both Peter and Cantemir had died. In 1722, Cantemir had joined Peter's expedition headed for the Caucasus and Iran, being in charge of the printing press used to print the tsar's proclamations in Turkish and Persian translation; but he increasingly suffered from diabetes, to which he eventually succumbed in 1723. Peter died in early 1725; rumour had it that he had been romantically involved with Dimitrie's daughter Maria (cf. Lemny 2009). One of his sons, Antioch, would subsequently become one of the most important eighteenth-century innovators of Russian as a language of poetry. As a Russian diplomat, he was also to reside in England and France, where he established friendly contacts with the likes of Montesquieu and Voltaire.

Cantemir as a man of letters

By any standard, Cantemir had an exceptional knowledge of languages, scholarly and literary traditions, musical theory and practice, and – last but not least – politics. According to the *Life* appended to Cantemir's history of the Ottoman empire, he was fluent in Ottoman Turkish, Persian, Arabic, Modern Greek, Latin, Italian, Russian and Moldavian, and had an understanding of ancient Greek, Church Slavonic and French. He received his initial education from the Greek monk Jeremiah Kakavelas, a Cretan-born theologian who had also studied in Cambridge and Leipzig. In Istanbul, he reportedly studied at the Academy of the Orthodox Patriarchate, where Alexander Mavrocordatos, the Great Dragoman, following his studies in Italy, had propagated neo-Aristotelianism.⁶ Thus, Cantemir was brought up in an environment that blended reformed Orthodox learning with Western European humanism; moreover, and more exceptionally, he also acquainted himself with Islamic learning, in particular concerning music and historiography.

Two of Cantemir's early works have a special status, in being among the earliest literary works in Romanian; in fact, Cantemir marks the rise of Romanian as a language of learning and literature. A number of chronicles had already been written in the local Romance vernacular, and in 1688 a Romanian translation of the Bible had been printed in Bucharest (reportedly, Cantemir kept a copy of this work with him all his life); but Cantemir's writings are among the first exercises of a more strictly literary character. His first major work, the *Divanul sau Gâlceava Înțeleptului cu lumea sau Giudețul sufletului cu trupul* (The Divan or The Wise Man's Discussion with the World, or The Judgement of the Soul with the Body) was published in 1698, in a bilingual edition 'in the Greek and Moldavian tongues', as the *Life* has it, with the Moldavian (i.e. Romanian) being printed in Cyrillic script. It is not clear how wide a Romanian-reading audience the book commanded; but it is significant that already in 1705, the work was translated into Arabic, apparently for the benefit of Arabic-speaking orthodox monks in the Levant.⁷ The first part of this work closely follows medieval European disputes between the soul and the body on the relative merits of the worldly and the ascetic life; the second part presents a commentary on the first; and the third part consists of a translation of Andreas Wissowatius's theological treatise *Stimuli virtutum*.⁸

In 1705, he wrote the *Istoria Ieroglifica*, an allegorical tale of how the bees (subsequently revealed to be the poorer rural population) are exploited by the raven (i.e. the boyars). The *Istoria* was not published until long after Cantemir's death, and it is not difficult to see why: not only is it openly critical of the Ottoman rulers, it also expresses sympathy for the local population's uprisings against the oppressive rule and financial extortion by the boyars.⁹ The literary merits of these Romanian-language works have been fiercely disputed, in particular by nationalist authors of the late nineteenth century. Thus, the famous late-nineteenth-century historian and future prime minister Nicolae Iorga considered the *Divanul* a 'clumsily written and aimless compilation,' and the *Istoria* a 'poor imitation of Heliodorus's *Aethiopica*.'¹⁰ Other Romanian authors of the late nineteenth century were equally dismissive of Cantemir's literary merits, in part because of the many Slavonic, Greek, Latin and Turkish elements in his vocabulary and syntax, which they saw as 'alien to the Romanian language.'¹¹ The latter remark in particular indicates that one should perhaps not read such statements as authoritative aesthetic judgements but rather as indications of the enormous intervening changes in the assumed ideologies of what the Romanian language is and what it should be.

These early works appear to have been shaped by local orthodox and Islamic traditions as much as by Western European humanism.¹² They betray a familiarity with ancient Greek, and to a lesser extent Latin, with historians like Herodotus and Thucydides, with Stoic thought, and with popular narrators from antiquity,

like Aesop and Heliodorus; but Cantemir is equally familiar with the Persian poet Saadi. Although Cantemir rarely if ever mentions any Western European contemporaries, he occasionally refers to Renaissance humanists, in particular Erasmus. Far more important than these, however, is the Lithuanian-born Socinian theologian monk Andreas Wissowatius (1608-1678), whose *Stimuli virtutum* is reproduced, as noted, in the third part of the *Divanul*. The irony that a radical protestant author should be incorporated into a work of Orthodox convictions has not gone unnoticed; but Unitarian beliefs in fact had a wider currency among speakers of Romanian and Hungarian, despite Habsburg efforts to spread or enforce Catholicism on both groups.

Cantemir's literary works mark an early stage in the rise of Romanian as a language of religion, learning and literature.¹³ The philosophical and ethical vocabulary of the *Divanul* appears to be shaped less by Greek or Latin than by Church Slavonic (Bochmann (1973: 66); but already in the *Istoria Ieroglifica*, written less than ten years after the *Divanul*, the number of Greek-borrowed neologisms has increased sharply. It is impossible to tell whether this increase reflects a difference in genre or rather a linguistic or intellectual development on Cantemir's part. Appended to the *Istoria* is a lexicon, the *Scara*, which is important for the history of Romanian even if it was never published. Giosu (1973) finds 212 Greek loans in the *Istoria*, versus a mere 42 borrowings from Latin; following Petrovici, he plays down the number and importance of Turkish borrowings.

Remarkably few of Cantemir's coinages have survived into present-day Romanian; in many respects, his linguistic concerns are not quite the same as those of later Romanian-language authors. Cantemir, like the 1688 Bible translation, wrote Romanian in Cyrillic script; in later years, the Latin alphabet would be adopted. At this early stage, his main concern appears to have been the emancipation of Romanian from the influence of Church Slavonic, as witnessed by the increasing number of Greek neologisms in his work. Because of this predominance of Greek-origin neologisms, Cantemir differs from the linguistic reformers of the later eighteenth century, in particular the so-called 'Transylvanian School', who consciously modelled written Romanian on Latin in an effort to approach or assimilate the latter's prestige, and to increase the distance with Greek. In turn, the Romanian romantic nationalists of the 1820s onward, were to take as their models the modern Romance languages, in particular French and Italian, in part in reaction against the Habsburg empire's efforts to impose Latin – seen as the language of the Catholic church – as the language of higher education.

Cantemir's analytical political vocabulary has proved more enduring: it includes coinages for politics (*politie*) (II.204) and democracy (*dimocratie*) (I.11) that are still in use today. Remarkably, however, no term like *liberty* (*libertate* in present-day Romanian) occurs in either work; only once does the notion appear

in the *Istoria*, significantly, as the Greek loan *elefterie* (II: 156); and this occurrence is not political in character. Generally, it seems, Cantemir speaks of human dignity rather than human liberty. Thus, Cantemir appears to share neither the civic Republicanism of Renaissance authors like Machiavelli, nor the liberalism of later Western European authors; rather, he appears to presume, and share, a number of specifically Byzantine and Ottoman conceptions and beliefs about kingship. A detailed discussion of these matters, however, falls outside the scope of the present paper.

It would be instructive to compare Cantemir's literary works with those of his contemporary, Nicholas Mavrocordatos (1670-1730), who would eventually become *voyvode* of Moldavia and Wallachia.¹⁴ It remains an open question in how far political rivalries between the Cantemir and Mavrocordatos families also found a literary reflection, or expression, in works like Dimitrie's *Divanul* and *Istoria ieroglifca*, and Mavrocordatos's *Filotheou parerga*, and especially the latter's influential *Peri kathekonton* (published in Bucharest in 1716).¹⁵ It is intriguing to see, however, that whereas Mavrocordatos's tale expresses praise of the Ottoman rulers, the *Istoria* is openly critical of them. It seems self-evident to present-day readers to see Cantemir as an early Romanian author, and Mavrocordatos as part of a Greek tradition; even this way of phrasing things, however, risks projecting back traditions that were constructed much later onto earlier figures. Thus, for both authors, Greekness (*Hellenismos* in Mavrocordatos, *eliniza* in Cantemir) appears less a matter of birth or national belonging than one of education and refinement. Both Cantemir and Mavrocordatos, then, belong to early modern Ottoman elites that only in retrospect have been claimed by nationalist historiographies.

Cantemir as a scholar

Cantemir also wrote an introduction to logic and a metaphysical study; but these works do not seem to have gained a wider circulation. More important, also for the purposes of the present paper, are his several books on the geography, history and customs of the Romance-speaking peoples of the Danube provinces.¹⁶ Here, I will focus on the names that Cantemir uses for these peoples and on his characterization of their language.

Names appear to be of some importance for Cantemir: in fact, he devotes an entire treatise, *De antiquis et hodiernis moldaviae nominibus* (On the ancient and present names for Moldavia), to the different names for the inhabitants of the Danube provinces.¹⁷ Strikingly absent among these are terms like 'Romanians' or 'Romanian' as a generic indication. Instead, Cantemir generally uses *Valachi* ('Vlachs') as a superordinate term for the Romance-speaking inhabitants of these

regions, and as virtually synonymous with *Dacoromanii* (e.g. p. 356). Likewise, he has no consistently used general geographical term like *România*. Although Neacșu Lupu's 1521 letter from Câmpulung, the oldest document written in a form of Romanian, already speaks of *Țeara Rumânească*, 'Romanian land', the term *România* is in fact a neologism that does not appear to have been used before the nineteenth century. For the geographical regions, Cantemir generally uses terms corresponding to the Ottoman Danube provinces, like *Moldavia*, *Valachia* and *Transylvania*. In the *Historia moldo-vlachica*, he also notes the contemporary Turkish terms *iflâq* and *qarafrah*, 'Vlach' and 'Black Vlach' (cf. Modern Greek *mavrovlakhia*).

Throughout the *Historia*, Cantemir makes brief comments on the modern vernaculars. A more extended discussion on the contemporary Romance vernaculars and their historical background appears in chapter IV of the third part of the *Descriptio* (pp. 362-367), where he emphasizes that Romanian is derived not from Italian, but rather from the most ancient forms of Latin, and preserves Latin expressions that do not appear in Italian.¹⁸ Thus, he is among the first Romanian authors who emphasize the Latinity of Romanian.

The idea that there is an affinity between ancient Latin and the modern vernaculars of the Danube regions was not a discovery of nineteenth-century historical linguistics. Sixteenth-century humanist travellers and scholars had already observed the affinity of the dialects spoken in the Danube provinces with Latin and concluded that their speakers must be descendants of the Romans who had settled in the region in the wake of Trajan's conquests.¹⁹ It is unclear to what extent Cantemir's own speculations on these matters rely on these early modern authors, rather than on ancient accounts of the Roman conquests of the Danube provinces.

Throughout these works, Cantemir emphasizes not only the continuity of the Romance-speaking populations of the Danube provinces with the Roman period, but also their ethnic unity.²⁰ The *Historia* defends the thesis that modern-day Romance speakers are of purely Roman descent rather than the offspring of Roman intermingling with native populations like the ancient Dacians, which he believes to have been completely annihilated. This *Romano-Valacha gens*, he continues, was subsequently dispersed to the regions of Moldavia, Muntenia, Bessarabia, Transylvania and Epirus (*Historia*, p. 420). He continues by claiming that the dialects spoken by these groups changed as a result of interference from neighbouring languages; thus, the dialect spoken by the Moldavians freely uses Greek and Albanian expressions.²¹

Cantemir, in other words, displays no sense of language change as involving a process of organic growth; instead, he treats Romanian as a corrupted form of Latin, resulting from contacts with Greeks, Turks, Slavs and others. Likewise, Cantemir's writings are not informed by any sense of the common people as the

main locus of a pure national culture or spirit, let alone sovereignty. Although he shows attention for folkloric traditions, it would be anachronistic to see this as a kind of Romantic-nationalist glorification of folk culture. In short, Cantemir cannot be said to be a Romanian nationalist in the present-day sense of the word; yet, his work on the history and customs of the Danube regions would in time become a source of inspiration for later generations of authors of a more unambiguously Romanian national character, in particular the abovementioned Transylvanian school that was active in the late eighteenth century regions under Habsburg control. It was only in the nineteenth century that romantic nationalism made substantial inroads among the Romanians: from the 1820s onwards, Romanian was primarily seen as a modern Romance language alongside – and, increasingly, modelled on – French and Italian.²²

Next to these works on the history and customs of the Romanians/Wallachians, Cantemir also wrote a Turkish-language book on musical theory, the *Kitâb-i 'ilm al-musiqî* (Book of the science of music). The manuscript of the *Kitâb* is followed by a *Mecmûa* or *Collection of melodies*, transcribed with his own alphabetical system of notation, and specifying the mode, rhythm and – if known – composer of each piece. Together, these two works are also known as the *Kantemiroglu edvâri* or the *Edvâr*²³ According to Popescu-Judet, one of the major innovations of Cantemir's work on music is its attempt to reformulate music as a script-based practice; this attempt, incidentally, did not meet with much response among Cantemir's Ottoman contemporaries. Generally, in the Ottoman empire, and in the Muslim world at large, music was orally transmitted rather than written down. It may well have been this specific kind of literate practice, rather than any kind of uniquely Western process of 'rationalization', as argued for by the likes of Max Weber, that facilitated the development of Western art music with its particular forms of contrapuntal polyphony.²⁴

Another innovation was the transcription used. Although Cantemir is likely to have been familiar with Byzantine psaltic notation, and although it is quite probable that he was familiar with the Western European staff notation introduced into the Ottoman empire by the Polish convert Ali Ufki, the transcription he developed for this work appears to have been largely of his own making. Next, he based his discussion on the tanbûr, a typically Ottoman instrument, rather than the 'ud, as had been usual in earlier Arabic-language treatises on music. Popescu-Judet (1999: 38-39) argues that Cantemir, in basing himself on specifically Ottoman musical practices, was self-consciously innovative in both theory and practice; indeed, he calls his own approach a 'new theory' (*kavl-i cedit*) as opposed to the 'old theory' (*kavl-i kadim*) of his predecessors. Apparently, it was not only individual innovation: his systematic emphasis on the differences between Turkish (*Rûm*) and Persian (*Acem*) styles of performance, Cantemir's work may

reflect broader cultural patterns in the seventeenth-century Ottoman empire, like the emancipation of Ottoman music from hitherto dominant Persian styles.

Remarkably, here and elsewhere Cantemir repeatedly states his conviction that Ottoman music in some respects is superior to Western European styles:

I may certainly venture to say, that the Turkish Music for metre and proportion of words is more perfect than any European, but withal so hard to be understood, that in [the] spacious city of Constantinople, you will scarce find above three or four, who understand the grounds of this Art.²⁵

That is, Cantemir displays no sense of superiority of Western European cultural practices. In fact, during this period, unlike later times, there was little economic or military reason for such beliefs; it was only towards the end of the seventeenth century that the military balance between the Ottoman, Habsburg and Russian empires was slowly starting to shift, in the wake of the failed Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683. The 1699 Karlowitz peace treaty marked a watershed in Ottoman history: it not only marked the official recognition that the province of Transylvania was lost to the Habsburg Empire, but also ushered in the so-called 'Tulip Age', which saw an unprecedented interest in foreign ideas. But, unlike the nineteenth century, during this era neither the Ottomans, nor the Russians, nor any Western European power had any notion of an inherent or inevitable superiority in military, economic, cultural or civilizational terms.

Cantemir as an orientalist

Strictly speaking, the *Edvâr*, in its theoretical and practical focus on Ottoman music, is not an exercise in the humanities in a generic sense, but already a work of orientalist scholarship. This brings us to the question of Cantemir's works on the Orient. These include, next to his book on music, his two books on Moldavia, an Arabic grammar, which apparently has not been published, and a study of Islam as a religion; but the most important among them is undoubtedly his Ottoman history, the *Historia incrementorum atque decrementorum aulae othomaniae* [History of the rise and decline of the Ottoman Empire]. There had, of course, been several earlier accounts and histories of the Ottoman Empire in various European languages, but Cantemir's work was unprecedented in its systematic reliance on Ottoman sources. The latter chapters, moreover, contain much observational information personally gathered by Cantemir during his lengthy stay in Istanbul. The work is also remarkable for its numerous and often extensive footnotes that provide a wealth of information about contemporary Ottoman society;

some later scholars have even described these footnotes as the most valuable part of Cantemir's history. Generally, apart from occasional vitriolic asides, such as remarks that 'the Ottomans' words are good, but their deeds are evil', or claims that the Turks are superstitious, mendacious and hungry for wealth (e.g. *History*, 35n), the *Incrementa* are remarkably free from polemics.

The *Incrementa* was written under less than ideal circumstances: reportedly, Cantemir started work on it while still in Istanbul, but he wrote the bulk of it while in Russian exile, where he had no access to his personal library – which must have been impressive – or to any extensive local library collections of oriental manuscripts or printed works. In his preface, Cantemir castigates earlier Christian historians of the Ottoman empire for their failure to use Ottoman sources: 'From these troubles Streams of Christian Historians, ignorant, as we observ'd, of the Turkish Learning, have been forc'd to draw what should have been taken from the Fountain-Head' (*History*, p. 2). He claims to have based his own account on the chronicles of authors he identifies as 'Sadi Effendi' and 'Heshri' (*History*, p. xii-xiii); but Franz Babinger has argued that a good many of Cantemir's Ottoman sources are impossible to identify, concluding that either the *Incrementa* relies on a number of hitherto unknown or unidentified works, or Cantemir quotes his sources from a faulty memory – or perhaps even freely invents them. Babinger prefers to postpone judgement on Cantemir's merits as a source on Ottoman history and religious customs, however, until the Latin original of both the *Incrementa* and the *Sistemul* is published.²⁶

More intriguing than the question of which authors Cantemir used appears to be the question of which authors he did *not* use. Rather surprisingly, he makes no mention of reformist authors of the seventeenth century, such as Koçi Bey or the encyclopedist Hajji Khalifa, among whom the notion of Ottoman decline had become a commonplace, and who argued for reforms in the empire. It is unlikely, however, that he was wholly unfamiliar with reformist ideas; and the idea of Ottoman decline already appears in the very title of his work. Lemny (2009: 140) sees the topos of growth and decay in the *Incrementa* as inspired by Western-European humanists; but as seen, Cantemir rarely mentions any such humanists, other than Erasmus. There is just as much reason to trace it, even if indirectly, to Ibn Khaldûn, whose cyclical view of history had become well known in the Ottoman empire by the seventeenth century and informed the seventeenth-century reformers' writings. I have found no indication that Cantemir was familiar with Ibn Khaldûn's more specific doctrine of strengthening and weakening of *asabiyya*, or tribal solidarity, as the main underlying cause of the rise and demise of states. It should be noted, though, that the imagery of the rise and decline of states did not originate with Ibn Khaldûn, and indeed was thoroughly conventional by the time of the major Ottoman historiographers.²⁷

The topic of decline should also caution us to keep in mind that the *Incrementa* is not only a descriptive work, but in part also an apology for Cantemir's 1711 defection to Russia: if, as he argues, the Ottoman empire was in decline, if not on the verge of disintegration, the secession of the Danube principalities was not only feasible but also legitimate. Cantemir makes some more general remarks on the topic of rise and decay in his short *Monarchiarum physica examinatio* [Inquiry into the nature of kingdoms], which, among others, predicts the fall of the Ottoman empire and a glorious future for Russia.²⁸ This work explicitly relies on Aristotle (referred to as the *princeps philosophorum*) rather than Ibn Khaldûn. In fact, this short text complicates the geographical imaginary of orientalism: claiming the authority of Aristotle's division of the world into four corners in *De caelo* (and, implicitly, of Aristotle's idea on generation and corruption), Cantemir argues that the first monarchies arose in the East, among the likes of the Indians, the Assyrians and the Persians; these were followed by Southern monarchies, like those of the Egyptians and the (Macedonian) Greeks, and Western ones like that of the Romans; but now, he continues, the moment has come for a 'Northern monarchy', and in particular Russia, to rise. According to Cantemir, the emergence of Peter the Great, 'the most wise and most warlike ruler', is sanctioned both by divine grace and by the ideas of the philosophers; at the same time, he describes the growth and persistence of the Ottoman empire as 'unnatural'.²⁹

Whatever its sources of inspiration, the *Incrementa* has had a substantial impact in Western Europe. In 1734, Nicholas Tindal published an English translation, thanks in no small measure to the lobbying efforts of Cantemir's son Antioch. This English rendering, in turn, served as the basis for a French translation published in 1743. A German version appeared in 1745, which was to serve as the basis of the Romanian translation published in 1876. Italian and Russian translations were also prepared, but these were never printed.

The large number of editions of these translations gives some indication of Cantemir's status and influence; another indication is the praise expressed by later Western European authors. Famously, Lord Byron twice mentions Cantemir as an authoritative source of information on the Ottoman empire, in canto V:147 and VI:31 of his *Don Juan*; but he was neither the first nor the only one to do so. Thus Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, displays a general, if by no means uncritical, admiration for Cantemir, arguing that his *History* has rendered all earlier Western-language sources outdated. Voltaire disapproves of Cantemir's 1711 switch of allegiance, but he respects him as a historian; thus, in the preface to his *Histoire de Charles XII*, he notes: 'hundred historians reproduce these miserable fables, and the dictionaries of Europe repeat them. Consult the true Turkish annals as collected by prince Cantemir, and you will see

just how ridiculous all these lies are.³⁰ Likewise, William Jones, the pioneer of comparative linguistics, writes that Cantemir's history 'far surpasses, in authority and method, every work on the same subject in any European dialect.'³¹ In a lengthy footnote, Jones further castigates Voltaire for 'deviating knowingly from the truth' in his criticism of Cantemir's political disloyalty to the Ottomans, adding: 'it must have cost this ingenious writer some pains, to have crowded [*sic*] so many errors into so few words.'³² He considers the *Incrementa* almost complete as a history, perfect as a literary performance, and rendering earlier Ottoman histories of Knolles and Rycaut 'entirely useless'. Incidentally, Jones expresses doubts about the edifying usefulness of Ottoman history in general: among 'the numerous events which must be recorded in the general history of any nation,' he writes, 'there are very few which seem capable of yielding either pleasure or instruction to a judicious reader who... hopes to derive from them some useful lesson for the conduct of his life.'³³ These remarks clearly reflect a pre-nineteenth century view of historiography as a source of eloquent edifying literature rather than objective, source-based knowledge; apparently, the historicization and professionalization of knowledge concerning things human, which Jones helped to bring about in linguistics, did not simultaneously change his views on the writing of history.

Earlier enthusiastic reports about Cantemir's paramount importance for later Ottoman historiography, if not Enlightenment political theory, have recently been called into question. Thus, Hugh Trevor-Roper discusses Nicolae Iorga's claim that Cantemir's work on the Ottoman empire shaped Montesquieu's study of the causes of the decline of the Roman empire, arguing that this is rather unlikely for chronological reasons alone, as Montesquieu's study appeared in the very same year that the French translation of Cantemir's history was published; moreover, it was not until 1738 that Antioch established contacts with Montesquieu, and there is no evidence of the latter being familiar with Dimitrie's work at an earlier stage. Trevor-Roper gives a rather more sober assessment of Cantemir's effective influence: concrete evidence of his influence on English historians, he concludes, is surprisingly hard to demonstrate, and appears relatively later than is often held.³⁴

Nonetheless, until Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall published his ten-volume *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, Cantemir's *Incrementa* was widely seen as the standard reference; indeed, in a 1824 discussion of the *Incrementa*, Von Hammer seems to have made a conscious effort to discredit Cantemir with the aim of making room for his own undertaking, opening his polemic with the remark that Cantemir has a quite undeserved reputation.³⁵ Von Hammer brushes aside the praise heaped on Cantemir by the likes of Gibbon and Jones. More specifically, he blames Cantemir for his faulty use of Ottoman and Byzantine sources

– a complaint not altogether surprising, and perhaps not altogether fair, in light of the fact that Cantemir had to work largely from memory, having been forced to leave behind his personal library in 1711, and complaining about the near-total absence of Turkish and Persian books in Russia. Cantemir, Von Hammer concludes, is hardly familiar with the ‘true sources of Ottoman history’, and infinitely less familiar, or ‘eminently ignorant’, with the grammar of Turkish and other oriental languages like Persian and Arabic. Apparently, it was unknown to him that Cantemir had written an entire book in Turkish, and composed an entire work on Arabic grammar.

Is this a purely personal polemic intended to make room for Von Hammer’s own approach to Ottoman history, or should we see it as reflecting the ascendancy of a text-based or philological orientalism over a scholarship based on personal experience as much as on written sources? Although he castigates Cantemir for a faulty knowledge of things, languages and texts Islamic, Von Hammer’s remarks do not reflect a substantially different approach to Ottoman history, either in terms of a radically different methodology or of an awareness of new kinds or ranges of source material, like, most importantly, the Ottoman state archives.³⁶ Thus, Von Hammer’s polemic does not appear to involve any paradigm shift towards historiography as a hard science of historical facts to be unearthed during prolonged searches in archives, towards modern conceptions of history as a unilinear progress towards liberty or civilization, or of the historicity of human phenomena at large.

Equally intriguing, even if historically less influential, is Cantemir’s *System of Muhammadan Religion*, first drafted in Latin, although the original draft was not published until 1999.³⁷ In 1722, it was printed in a Russian translation, reportedly in the face of protests of local Orthodox clergymen, who read an attack on their own church in the work; tsar Peter personally intervened in order to secure the book’s being printed. ‘Publication’ may not be the right word in this context, as the *System* does not appear to have been written for a wider audience, but much more specifically for the tsar and his staff, and perhaps for the members of the Prussian academy.

Given this blending of scholarly and political aims, it is tempting to infer that the *System* aims at providing a theological justification for the eighteenth-century Russian expansion into Muslim-inhabited lands; but this reductionist reading does not do justice to the fact that the *Incrementa*, like Cantemir’s works on the geography and history of the Vlachs, had also been written for a German audience with no apparent (and, more specifically, imperialist) political interests. In fact, it was the Berlin Academy which had repeatedly emphasized the importance of studies of the Balkans, the Ottoman empire, and the Muslim world, and asked Cantemir to write works on these topics. Further, Cantemir was not simply a

native in the service of Russia: he himself wanted to return to Moldavia and reoccupy the throne. It was not until 1718, that is, five years before his death, that these hopes of return were finally dashed.³⁸

The preface of the *System* reproduces some points from medieval orthodox polemics against Muhammad as the Antichrist, alongside Arius and Nestorius; but the main body of the text appears rather less shaped by such polemical concerns. In various places, such as his discussion of the sciences in the contemporary Ottoman empire, Cantemir even expresses a certain admiration for the achievements of the Islamic world. In subsequent chapters, the *System* describes, respectively, the prophet Muhammad; the Qur'an; Islamic eschatology; theology; the main religious rites; and the main sects, Sufi orders, and heterodox groups, or, as he calls the latter, 'heresies' (*yeresi*). The latter chapters, in particular, await a balanced appreciation; being based on personal observations during his stay in Istanbul, they contain much valuable information that is not easily found elsewhere.

Although the character and impact of Cantemir's orientalist writings remain to be assessed, a few points stand out.³⁹ Vaida argues that Cantemir's orientalist work is informed by a humanist conception of civilization, or more correctly, *cultus* or *paideia*, which he sees as universal.⁴⁰ Equally remarkably, it is shaped by Ottoman traditions of learning as much as by Renaissance humanism, let alone any budding modern Western sciences of the Orient. Thus, the introduction to the *System* quotes from Cicero, Saadi and the liturgy of John Chrysostom with equal ease. The *System* and the *Incrementa* display some interesting differences with later orientalist scholarship. Further, despite his humanist background, Cantemir hardly takes textual sources as his main authorities on either Ottoman history or Islamic religiosity; he even appears to quote the Qur'an from memory rather than from any text or translation. Further, he displays a critical but serious appreciation of his Ottoman sources, and does not elevate the textual realm of the scholar to a higher epistemological status than his own lived experience, displaying a confidence in his own observations with respect to the textual authority of others: when the Orthodox synod asked him to supplement his own remarks with written sources, he replied: 'I don't see any necessity to confirm my remarks with the writings of others.'⁴¹ Finally, although Cantemir freely reproduces the topos of military and political decline that was common among reformist Ottoman authors, he does not yet betray any of the generic talk of cultural stagnation or moral decadence of the empire (or of the early modern Islamic world at large) that was to serve as a legitimization for both colonizing powers and national liberation movements – and the orientalist scholarship informed by them – in the later nineteenth century.

Conclusion

It is far too early to even attempt to characterize Cantemir's contribution as a whole, and to assess his place in the development of oriental studies. Indeed, his various writings variously call to mind different traditions and periods of learning; it may well be a serious oversimplification to reify these different strands as Byzantine, Ottoman and Western European (or in religious terms as Greek Orthodox, Islamic, Uniate, Catholic, Protestant and humanist), as these traditions have never been wholly isolated from each other, and have themselves undergone qualitative changes in early modern times. Nevertheless, a few preliminary conclusions may be stated.

As a humanist, Cantemir was shaped by Orthodox and Ottoman traditions as much as by Western European learning. One should be careful, of course, to avoid projecting back present-day nationalist assumptions, or even the nineteenth-century categories of historical and comparative linguistics, onto earlier authors. Nonetheless, Cantemir's literary writings mark an important phase in the emancipation of Romanian as a language of literature and learning; as such, they may be seen as an example of the vernacularization that generally preceded the rise of nationalisms in the strict sense of the word.

As a scholar, Cantemir paved the way for the subsequent unification, and Latinization, of the Romance-language speakers of the Danube provinces; as such, he may be said to anticipate the later preoccupations of romantic-nationalistic research into historical language change and folkloric traditions allegedly preserving a nation's most authentic self-expression; but he did not himself share these concerns.

As an orientalist, Cantemir produced work that is still valuable as a source on the early modern Ottoman empire and Balkans; but his writings also inspire more general theoretical concerns. His account of Ottoman history is much more detailed and based on local sources than the works by contemporary Western European historians and travellers; as such, it is an intriguing example of orientalist knowledge produced by an 'oriental' actor in the Ottoman empire and in Russia well before Western Europe became dominant in terms of (military, political, or economic) power, human-scientific knowledge, and culture. Cantemir hardly qualifies as a 'native informer', as he was not an anonymous and oral source of information, but a written authority for a long period; rather, his Ottoman history was itself an authoritative orientalist text for almost a century.

It remains to be seen to what extent Cantemir's contributions were eclipsed by romantic philological methods, or rather by romantic nationalisms: the nineteenth century saw not only the rise of imperialism, but also the rise of romantic nationalist movements that were shaped by internal dynamics as much as Euro-

pean influences. At this stage, neither the Ottoman nor the Russian empire, of course, qualified as 'imperialist' in the modern sense which the term has acquired since the writings of Hobson and Lenin. In the eighteenth century, however, both empires showed changing attitudes to the role of knowledge in both governing their own populations and managing relations with other empires. This point, which remains to be explored in more detail, suggests that Cantemir reflects the rapidly changing relations between, on the one hand, knowledge and empire, and, on the other, language and nation that occur during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At present, he is hailed as a scholarly pioneer, if not claimed as a national hero, by Romania, Moldavia, Russia and to a lesser extent Turkey. One should not dismiss these later appropriations as nationalistic abuse, as they reflect the crucial shift that the humanities at large underwent long after Cantemir's death: the nineteenth century witnessed not only the professionalization of the humanities, but also their nationalization.⁴²

Notes

- 1 Initial research for this paper was conducted while I was enjoying a fellowship at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies (NIAS) in Wassenaar. I am greatly indebted to NIAS for the facilities and financial support it provided, and in particular for its superb library service.
- 2 Apparently, Bernard Lewis was the first to raise this point; see 'The Question of Orientalism', *New York Review of Books* (24 June 1982), reprinted in *Islam and the West* (Oxford University Press, 1993), 99-118, esp. 112-113. For a less polemical criticism that focuses on the tension between the Marxist and genealogical strains in *Orientalism*, see James Clifford's 'On Orientalism', *History and Theory* 19 (1980), 204-223, reprinted in *The Predicament of Culture* (Harvard University Press, 1988).
- 3 On German orientalism, see Sabine Mangold, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft': die deutsche Orientalistik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2004), and more recently Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Cambridge, 2009). On imperial Russian orientalism, see David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (Yale University Press, 2010), which conveniently recapitulates and synthesizes earlier, more fragmentary explorations. For a kaleidoscopic picture of Soviet orientalism and continuities and discontinuities with the scholarly traditions of imperial Russia, see the various essays gathered in M. Kemper & S. Conermann (eds.) *The Heritage of Soviet Oriental Studies* (Routledge, 2011). For a preliminary account of Ottoman orientalism, see Ussama Makdisi, 'Ottoman Orientalism', *American Historical Review* 107/2 (2002), 768-796.
- 4 For theoretical discussion of these matters, see in particular Hamid Dabashi's *Post-Orientalism* (Transaction Publishers, 2009), which attempts to update Said's critique in and for a post-9/11 constellation. In particular, Dabashi aims for a 'non-Western' or 'colonial' agency, both incorporating and transcending Said's 'residual humanism' and Gayatri Spivak's deconstructivist dismantling of the subaltern (i.e. colonized, working-class, and/or female) subject's ability to speak: both, he argues, fail to transcend the notion of a crisis of

- a sovereign subject implicitly held to be Western. A more detailed discussion of Dabashi's ideas awaits another occasion.
- 5 For an early statement, see the *Life* appended to the English translation of Cantemir's Ottoman history (455-460). For a recent biographical study of Cantemir and his son Antioch, see Stefan Lemny, *Les Cantemir: l'Aventure européenne d'une famille princière au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 2009).
 - 6 Cf. Cléobule Tsurkas's somewhat misleadingly titled *Les Débuts de l'enseignement philosophique et de la libre pensée dans les Balkans: La Vie et l'oeuvre de Théophile Corydalée (1570-1646)* (2nd ed. Thessaloniki, 1967).
 - 7 See the bilingual Greek-Romanian edition by V. Căndeă, as vol. I of the *Opere complete* (Bucharest, 1974); for the text and an English translation of the Arabic version, which shows various divergences from the original, see Iovana Feodorov (ed.), *The Salvation of the Wise Man and the Ruin of the Sinful World [Salāh al-hakīm wa-fasād al-ālam al-damīm]* (Bucharest, 2006).
 - 8 Andreas Wissowatius, *Andreae Wissowatii stimuli virtutum, fræna peccatorum: ut & alia eiusdem generis opusculum posthuma* (Amsterdam, 1682).
 - 9 V. Căndeă (ed.), *Dimitrie Cantemir – Istoria Ieroglifica. Opere complete IV* (Bucharest, 1973).
 - 10 *Istoria literaturii romanesti in sec XVII* (Bucharest 1901), 274, quoted in P. Miron, *Der Wortschatz Dimitrie Cantemirs* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1978), VIII.
 - 11 *Ibid.*
 - 12 For a discussion of humanist themes in Cantemir, see Petru Vaida, *Dimitrie Cantemir și umanismul [Dimitrie Cantemir and Humanism]* (Bucharest, 1972), esp. chapter III, 'Motive umaniste în opera lui Cantemir,' 53-164.
 - 13 See also Stefan Giosu *Dimitrie Cantemir: studiu lingvistic* (Bucharest: Ed. Științifică, 1973).
 - 14 Cantemir's Ottoman history contains a few passing references to the Mavrocordatos family, and in particular to his rival Nicholas; but little can be inferred from these remarks.
 - 15 *Philotheou parerga* was not published until 1800 in Vienna; for an edition and translation, see Jacques Bouchard (ed. and transl.), *Les Loisirs de Philothée* (Athens/Montréal, 1989). *Peri kathekonton* was published already in 1722 in a bilingual edition with a Latin translation by Stephan Bergler below the Greek text, as *Peri kathekonton biblos/De officiis liber* (Lipsiae: ex officina Thomae Fritschii, 1722). See also Lampros Kamperidis, 'Le Traité des Devoirs' de Nicolas Mavrocordatos (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Montréal, 2005).
 - 16 V. Căndeă and D. Slușanschi (eds.), *Dimitrie Cantemir: De antiquis et hodiernis moldaviae nominibus și Historia moldo-vlachica* (Bucharest, 1983); G. Guțu a.o. (eds.) *Dimitrie Cantemir: Descriptio antiqui et hodierni status Moldaviae/Descrierea Moldovei* (Bucharest, 1973).
 - 17 Cantemir, *Historia*, 26-123.
 - 18 'Dialectus ipsa, nempe Valachorum, quae non simpliciter Latinam, sed potissimum illam antiquam Latinam, quam nimirum tempora Traiani gaudebant, redolet et voces iam in Latinismo aboletas ac antiquitas per tot saecula firmiter conservavit conservatque Valachica,' Cantemir, *Historia*, 218.
 - 19 Cf. Claudio Isopescu, *Notizie intorno ai Romeni nell letteratura geografica italiana del Cinquecento* (Bucharest, 1929).
 - 20 Cf. Adolf Armbruster, 'Demeter Cantemirs Ansichten über Romanität und Kontinuität der Rumänen,' *Dacoromania* 2 (1974), 67-76. See also more generally Werner Bahner, 'Zur Romanität des Rumänischen in der Geschichte der romanischen Philologie vom 15. bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts,' *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 8 (1957), 74-94.

- 21 'Linguam eandem cum reliquis Valachis habent, sed longo tempore ita cum Graeca et Albanica corruptam, ut Moldavi vix eorum possint intelligere verba et discursum et praeicipue quod non voces, sed integras Graecas et Albanicas periodus intermiscuant, tum in sermocinando,' Cantemir, *Historia*, 426.
- 22 For more on Cantemir and other linguistic modernizers of Romanian, see the sections on the development of modern Romanian in my *From Coffee House to Nation State: The Rise of New Public Languages in the Ottoman Empire* (forthcoming).
- 23 For the text of the *Kitâb*, see Yalçın Tura (ed.), *Kantemiroğlu, Kitâbu 'İlmî'l-Mûsiki alâ Vechi'l-Hurûfât, Mûsikiyi Harflerle Tesbit ve İcrâ İlminin Kitabı* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001); for the transcriptions, see Owen Wright (ed.), *Demetrius Cantemir: The Collection of Notations*, vol. 1: Text (London: SOAS, 1992), vol. 2: Commentary (Aldershot: Ashgate). See also Eugenia Popescu-Judetz, *Prince Dimitrie Cantemir: Theorist and Composer of Turkish Music* (Istanbul: Pan Yayıncılık, 1999).
- 24 See the passing remarks on the rise of harmonic and contrapuntal music in the early modern West in 'Politische und hierokratische Herrschaft' (Neuntes Kapitel, 6. Abschnitt of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*), and, for more details, Max Weber, 'Die rationalen und soziologischen Grundlagen der Musik,' appended to the second edition of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1925).
- 25 Cantemir, *History*, I: 151-2n14.
- 26 Franz Babinger, 'Die türkischen Quellen Dimitrie Kantemir's,' reprinted in *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen zur Geschichte Südosteuropas und der Levante*, vol. II (Munich, 1966), 142-150. Meanwhile, the Latin version of the text, edited by Virgil Cîndea, has been published in 1999. See also Dan Slusanschi (ed.), *Demetrii principis Cantemirii Incrementorum et decrementorum avlae othman(n)icae sive Aliothman(n)icae historiae a prima gentis origine ad nostra vsque tempora deductae libri tres* (Timisoara: Editura Amarcord, 2002).
- 27 The Ottoman reception to some extent complicates the familiar narratives of the nineteenth-century orientalist 'rediscovery' of Ibn Khaldûn as part of an imperialist project of colonizing Algeria (and, later, Tunisia and Morocco); but I will not explore these matters here beyond pointing to the importance of local agency and locally produced knowledge. On Ottoman uses of Ibn Khaldûn, see e.g. Cornell Fleischer, 'Royal Authority, Dynastic Cyclism, and "Ibn Khaldûnism" in Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Letters,' *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 18 (1983), 198-220. The nineteenth-century orientalist rereading is discussed by Aziz al-Azmeh, *Ibn Khaldun in Modern Scholarship* (London 1981) and Abdelmajid Hannoum, 'Translation and the Colonial Imaginary: Ibn Khaldûn Orientalist,' *History and Theory* 42 (2003), 61-81. For some further discussion on Ottoman and orientalist appropriations of Ibn Khaldûn, cf. my 'Een nieuwe wetenschap of een nieuw publiek? Kentheoretische kanttekeningen bij Ibn Khaldûn,' in: M. van Berkel & R. Kunzel (eds.) *Ibn Khaldûn en zijn wereld* (Amsterdam: Bulaq, 2008), 76-95.
- 28 For the Latin text and a Romanian translation of the *Physica*, see I. Sulea-Firu, 'O scriere inedită a lui Dimitrie Cantemir – *Monarchiarum physica examinatio*,' *Studii i cercetări de bibliologie* V (1963), 267-275.
- 29 'Sive monstrum aliquod naturae legi horrendum subnascitur sive non secundum naturae inceptum atque Ideam crescit. Ita his persimillima considerari potest Othomanorum Monarchia,' Sulea-Firu, *Monarchiarum physica examinatio*, 272.
- 30 'Cent historiens copient ces misérables fables; les dictionnaires de l'Europe les répètent. Consultez les véritables annales turques, recueillies par le prince Cantemir, vous verrez combien tous ces mensonges sont ridicules.'

- 31 William Jones, 'Prefatory Discourse to an Essay on the History of the Turks,' printed as appendix B to Baron John Shore Teignmouth, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of Sir William Jones* (London, 1806), 491-513.
- 32 Jones, 'Prefatory Discourse,' 496.
- 33 Jones, 'Prefatory Discourse,' 512.
- 34 Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'Dimitrie Cantemir's Ottoman History and its Reception in England,' in: *History and the Enlightenment* (Yale University Press, 2010), 54-70.
- 35 Joseph von Hammer, 'Sur l'histoire du prince Cantemir,' *Journal Asiatique* IV (1824), 32-45.
- 36 In fact, the Ottoman archives would not become available for research until after the Second World War. For one of the first statements of their importance, see Bernard Lewis, 'The Ottoman Archives as a Source for the History of the Arab Lands,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (October 1951), 139-155.
- 37 I have employed Virgil Căndeă's bilingual Russian-Romanian edition, published as *Sistemul sau întocmirea religii muhammedane*. Opere complete VIII, Tomul II (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1987).
- 38 Stephane Lemny, *Les Cantemir: l'aventure européenne d'une famille princière au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Complexe, 2009), 141.
- 39 For some preliminary statements, see, among others, G. Cioranescu, 'La Contribution de Démètre Cantemir aux études orientales,' *Turcica* 7 (1975), 205-232; P.V. Gusterin (ed.), *Pervyj russkij vostokoved Dmitrij Kantemir [Dimitrie Cantemir, The First Russian Orientalist]* (Moscow: Vostochnaja kniga, 2008).
- 40 Vaida, *Dimitrie Cantemir și umanismul*, 134.
- 41 Quoted in *Sistemul*, XXXI note 201.
- 42 Cf. Peter Burke, 'Nationalizing Knowledge'. SPIN Lecture, Amsterdam 2011; available at URL: http://www.spinnet.eu/images/2011-08/burke_ams-spin-lect_layout_2.pdf. Accessed 14 September 14, 2011.