Tara Wanda Merrigan

Captive as Orientalist: A Genre Study of Konstantin Mihailović and Bartholomew Georgijević's Sixteenth-Century Texts

MA Thesis in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Central European University Private University
Vienna May 2022

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Tara Wanda Merrigan

(USA / Ireland)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University Private University, Vienna, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts degree in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies. Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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External Reader

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I, the undersigned, **Tara Wanda Merrigan**, candidate for the MA degree in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

Captive narratives are an important source of information for scholarship on European-Ottoman relations in the early modern period. This thesis focuses on sixteenth-century works by two former captives, Konstantin Mihailović and Bartholomew Georgijević, and argues that these texts, along with other so-called captive narratives, should be considered as an inflection point between the thinly factual, polemical writings against Islam seen in medieval Europe and the emergent academic Orientalism and philological study of the seventeenth century. This thesis therefore examines the genre affiliations and literary construction of Mihailović and Georgijević's texts, focusing on historiographical methods, autobiographical limitations, and multilingualism, and thereby adding greater detail to scholarly understanding of the multi-genre qualities of early modern captive narratives.

Acknowledgements

This thesis could not have been written without the mentorship of Julia Verkholantsev, who introduced me to the texts examined in this thesis, or without the valuable support of my thesis advisors Balázs Nagy and Éloïse Adde. I am grateful to the professors whose courses enriched this thesis, especially Tijana Krstić and Katalin Szende. I also would like to express gratitude to my peers in the Medieval Studies program and to department coordinator Zsófia Göde, without whom this year would have been far less manageable. I would like to thank my spouse and partner, Alexandre Paris, and all the family and friends who supported me throughout this past year.

I am thankful for the grant I received from the CEU Medieval Studies Department Student Research Fund to cover the costs of creating facsimiles of the texts I study in this thesis.

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A Note on Textual Sources

My study of primary sources is heavily dependent on the original or earliest extant copies of a given text. Regarding Bartholomew Georgijević's diverse oeuvre, I relied solely on original Latin texts and used the following facsimiles: *De afflictione tam captivorum quam etiam sub Turcae tributo viventium Christianorum* (Antwerp, 1544) held at Leiden University Libraries; *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis* (Antwerp, 1544) held at the University of California; *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum* (Antwerp, 1544/1545) held at the University of Ghent; *De Turcarum moribus epitome* (Lyon, 1553) held at the Austrian National Library; and *De origine imperii Turcorum, eorumque administratione et disciplina ... cui libellus de Turcorum moribus, collectus a Bartholemaeo Georgieviz, adjectus est, cum praefatione reverendi viri D. Philippi Melanthonis* (Wittenberg, 1560) held at the Austrian National Library. Since Georgijević's work has only been translated into English in excerpts, I provide my own translations unless otherwise stated. My study of Konstantin Mihailović utilized a 1975 Czech transcription and English translation by Benjamin Stolz and Svat Soucek as well as a facsimile of the 1565 Czech manuscript held at Národní Muzeum in Prague. Additionally, my study uses a facsimile of *O Začátku Tureckého Cýsařstwij*, a circa 1567 book by Prague printer Jan Jičínský featuring Mihailović's text as well as Georgijević's *De origine imperii Turcorum* (in Czech). The physical copy is held by Národní Knihovna in Prague.

Introduction

Goals and Methods

In this thesis I will examine the diverse short writings of Bartholomew Georgijević[1], an escaped captive of the Ottoman Empire who published several books upon his return to Christendom, and the military-focused account of Konstantin Mihailović, another captive of the Ottoman Empire who served as an auxiliary member to the Janissary Corps. I will consider Mihailović and Georgijević's work within two scholarly conversations: the analysis of *Imago Turci* in medieval and early modern Europe, as exemplified by Noel Malcolm's *Useful Enemies*, and the reevaluation of Orientalism as a scholarly discipline, as seen in the work of Alexander Bevilacqua, Simon Mills, and Paul Babinski.[2] As sixteenth-century figures, Mihailović[3] and Georgijević[4] predate the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century

[1] Georgijević's name has appeared in many spellings both during his time and in modern scholarship, including: Bartol Đurđević, Bartholomaeus Gjorgjevic, and Bartholomaeus Georgievits. I have opted for a commonly used version that maintains a sense of the author's Croatian origins.

[2] See: Noel Malcolm, *Useful Enemies: Islam and The Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought*, 1450-1750 (Oxford ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019); Paul Babinski, "Ottoman Philology and the Origins of Persian Studies in Western Europe," *Lias*, no. 2 (2019): 233–315, https://doi.org/10.2143/LIAS.46.2.3288595; Alexander Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment*, Illustrated edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London, England: Belknap Press: Harvard University Press, 2018); Simon Mills, A *Commerce of Knowledge: Trade, Religion, and Scholarship between England and the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1760* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[3] For an overview of Konstantin Mihailović's text and what little is known of his life, see: Philippe Buc, "One among Many Renegades: The Serb Janissary Konstantin Mihailović and the Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans," *Journal of Medieval History* 46, no. 2 (March 14, 2020): 217–30, https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2020.1719188; the introduction of *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz (Michigan Slavic Publications, 1975); Snezana Petrovic, "Turkish Loanwords in the Czech Manuscript of Konstantin Mihailović's 'Memoirs of a Janissary,'" in Proceedings of the Etymological Symposium Brno 2017, ed. Ilona Janyšková, Helena Karlíková, and Vít Boček (Etymological Research into Czech, Brno: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2017), 339–49.

[4] For an overview of Bartholomew Georgijević's work and life, see: Almut Höfert, "Bartholomaeo Georgius." In *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History: Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America*, edited by David Thomas and John Chesworth, Bilingual edition., 7:321–30. Leiden ; Boston: Brill Academic Pub, 2015; Zrinka Blažević, "Discourse of Alterity: Ottomanism in the Works of Bartol Đurđević," in *Tolerance and Intolerance on the Triplex Confinium 1500-1800. Approaching the "Other" on the Borderlands Eastern Adriatic and Beyond*, ed. Egidio Ivetić and Drago Roksandić, 2007, 45–59; Sundar Henny, "On Not Forgetting Jerusalem: Bartholomaeus Georgievits as a Pilgrim and Ethnographer of Eastern Christianity," in *The Habsburg Mediterranean 1500–1800*, ed. Stefan Hanß and Dorothea McEwan, vol. 145, Archiv Für Österreichische Geschichte (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2021), 175–200; Gregory J. Miller, "Escaped Slaves of the Turks: George of Hungary and Bartholomew Georgijevic," in *The Turks and Islam in Reformation Germany* (Routledge, 2017), 151–76.

Orientalists who have received attention from Bevilacqua et al. Therefore, I aim to introduce the heterogenous contributions of these former Ottoman captives into the ongoing scholarly discussion about the rise of Near Eastern cultural and philological expertise in early modern Europe. My overarching argument in this paper is that the writings of captives such as Georgijević ought to be considered as an inflection point in the intellectual history of European Orientalism; their work represents a middle ground between, on the one hand, the polemical and stereotypical writings prevalent in the premodern period, authored by individuals who had little first-person experience with Islam or Ottoman culture, and, on the other hand, the more disinterested scholarship of academic figures such as Edward Pococke, who gained a considerable amount of specialist knowledge via travel to the Near East.[5,6]

In positioning Mihailović and Georgijević's texts within this broader scholarly conversation on Orientalism in early modern Europe, my study focuses on the multiple genre affiliations and literary fashioning of these captive-authors' accounts. As I argue in this thesis, close examination of textual construction can yield nuanced understandings of a given text's function and significance within its own context.[7] Since scholars have already commented on the ethnographic elements of Mihailović and Georgijević's texts—e.g., Almut Höfert's work in *Christian-Muslim Relations* — I study their texts' historiographical methods (Chapter 1), autobiographical material (Chapter 2), and use of Ottoman languages, often in the form of semi-didactic glossaries (Chapter 3). In my view, these three foci encompass the captive-authors' most significant contributions to the early modern European information

[5] Edward Pococke, a one-time reverend with the Levant Company, became the first chair of Arabic at Oxford in 1636.

[6] This perspective is informed by Noel Malcolm's argument that writings of former captives facilitated a "new view of the Ottoman system" in sixteenth-century European political thought. (Malcolm, *Useful Enemies*, 136) My argument is not as concerned with the changing perceptions of European political thinkers, though Georgijević's writings likely influenced that arena. Rather, I will consider Georgijević's writings discursively.

[7] This approach has obvious methodological debts to New Historicism.

ecosystem.[8] It is worth noting that this approach shifts scholarly attention from *Imago Turci* and the negative representations found in texts such as Mihailović and Georgijević's. Since many such readings *against the grain* have been done previously in the field of premodern Christian-Muslim relations, I seek to build on those politics-focused analyses by providing a reading *along the grain*, as suggested by Ann Stoler and seen increasingly in scholarship in recent years.[9]

In order to offer such an analysis, I approach Mihailović and Georgijević's writing via a methodology that is inspired partly by codicology and history of the book and partly by conceptual studies of premodern historiography and literary conventions. In particular, my interpretations are influenced by Gabrielle Spiegel's work on medieval historiography and Karen Winstead's study of premodern life-writing. An attentive study of this kind is also a worthwhile endeavor for the sake of current scholarship on early modern texts by one-time captives, commonly termed "captive narratives."[10] The multi-genre features of captive-authored texts are often noted in scholarship but only in passing. My goal therefore is to

[8] For an overview of the early modern information ecosystem, see: Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Ann Blair, "Information in Early Modern Europe," in *Information: A Historical Companion*, ed. Ann Blair et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 61–85; John-Paul A. Ghobrial, "Networks and the Making of a Connected World in the Sixteenth Century," in *Information: A Historical Companio*n, ed. Ann Blair et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 86–103; Joad Raymond and Noah Moxham, *News Networks in Early Modern Europe* (Brill, 2016); Nina Lamal, Jamie Cumby, and Helmer J. Helmers, *Print and Power in Early Modern Europe* (1500-1800) (Brill, 2021).

[9] I refer here to Stoler's *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

[10] The study of captive narratives has been especially common in Anglophone literary studies. See, for example: Nabil Matar, "Introduction: England and Mediterranean Captivity, 1577-1704." In *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, edited by Daniel Vitkus, 1–52. Columbia University Press, 2001; Joe Snader, *Caught between Worlds: British Captivity Narratives in Fact and Fiction* (Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 2000); Richard VanDerBeets, ed., *Held Captive by Indians: Selected Narratives, 1642-1836* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994); Teresa A. Toulouse, *The Captive's Position: Female Narrative, Male Identity, and Royal Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); John Demos, The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America, (New York: Vintage, 1995).

provide further details and insight on how captive-authors use multiple genres to construct their accounts.

Finally, I wish to highlight some of the key elements of this study that can contribute to scholarship on early modern European-Ottoman relations focused on captive narratives. I have consciously chosen to focus on texts written by South Slavic authors and that circulated in a mesoregion we would today call Central or East Central Europe.[11] As noted by scholars such as Charles Sabatos, who offers valuable perspectives on "frontier Orientalism," this area of Europe had a different relationship to the Ottoman Empire due to its geographic proximity to Europe's major imperial rival.[12] The "Ottoman threat" was felt on a more visceral level in this region compared to geographically removed Western kingdoms such as France and England. Nonetheless, because of this proximity, intercultural encounters were frequent and enabled cultural cross-pollination to take place.[13] This regional conceptualization leads to questions about the reception of captive narratives in East Central Europe as compared to Western Europe and early America and about the possible existence of material textual differences in the captive narratives of this region versus the captive narratives of other regions. Unfortunately, these questions are not within the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, it is worth pointing out that these texts are situated within a specific geographic region, and

[11] While Mihailović's manuscript circulated in Czech and Polish in the sixteenth century primarily if not exclusively in this region, Georgijević's texts were widely more widely disseminated, circulating in Western and Northern Europe as well as in Central and East Central Europe.

[12] For more see Sabatos's studies of "frontier Orientalism" his monograph *Frontier Orientalism and the Turkish Image in Central European Literature* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2020) and article

[13] Laura Lisy-Wagner's *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453-1683*, Paula Sutter Fichtner's *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526-1850*, and Charlotte Colding Smith's *Images of Islam, 1453-1600: Turks in Germany and Central Europe* are examples of book-length works that situate *Imago Turci* and early modern Christian-Muslim relations in the geographical region of Central/East Central Europe. These monographs represent ongoing efforts in scholarship to localize and nuance studies of how Islam and the Ottoman Empire were perceived throughout premodern Europe, a departure from the generalizing studies of Norman Daniel and R.W. Southern.

further research can be done on how geographic differences within Europe manifest in texts written by former captives of the Ottoman Empire.

Background Information on Bartholomew Georgijević, Captive and Author

An ethnic Croatian born around 1505 near Esztergom in the Kingdom of Hungary, Georgijević received a classical education and was mentored by Ladislaus Szalkay, Archbishop of Esztergom and Chancellor of Louis II, King of Hungary. With his mentor, Georgijević participated in the Battle of Mohács in 1526, which ended in defeat for the Hungarian forces and enabled the Ottoman Empire to take control of parts of Hungary. Szalkay and King Louis II were both killed in this battle while Georgijević was captured and sold as a slave. According to his own account, Georgijević spent the following decade in captivity under six different owners until he escaped to Armenia and then Jerusalem, disguising himself as a Greek Christian. During his time in captivity, Georgijević says he did not convert but participated in the Ottoman campaign against Persia in 1533-4. In 1537 in Jerusalem, he took refuge in a Franciscan convent, and from there found his way to Europe circa 1538.

In 1544, the same year he met Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon in Wittenberg, Georgijević began publishing short texts based on his experience in the Ottoman Empire. These texts, originally written in Latin and first published in Antwerp, included an account of captivity in the Ottoman Empire *De afflictione tam captivorum quam etiam sub Turcae tribute viventium Christianorum* [On the affliction of both captives and also of Christians living under the yoke of Turkey] as well as an ethnographic account of Ottoman daily life *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis* [On the ritual and ceremonies of the Turks]. Though both could be described as a "*libellus*" — *De afflictione* spans thirty-two pages and *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis* spans forty — these works comprise Georgijević's longest, most substantial authorial output.

Georgijević also authored a series of even shorter writings, which typically appeared alongside his two longer works. These include his "Prognoma,"[14] a fifteen-page text that presents a Turkish prophecy about an Ottoman emperor who has conquered a Christian kingdom will have his rule cut short after twelve years, when Christian military efforts best him. "Exhortatio contra Turcas," another fifteen-page work, represents Georgijević's most polemical authorial output ; it calls for a unified Christian army to wage a new crusade against the Ottoman Empire and redeem those Christian nations living under Ottoman rule. Georgijević's oeuvre was republished in two main compilations: *De Turcarum moribus epitome* (first published in Lyon in 1553) and *De origine imperii Turcorum* (first published in Wittenberg in 1560).

These four major texts — *De afflictione, De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis,* "Prognoma," and "Exhortatio" — display Georgijević's range as a conduit of information about the Ottoman Empire. As in the accounts of many one-time captives and early modern European travelers to non-Christian lands, Georgijević's writing offers a mixture of objective observation, analysis comparing Christian and their Muslim counterparts, and sanctimonious evaluation of non-Christian culture. Interestingly, Georgijević's writings more often express grief and pessimism about the state of Europe rather than vociferous denunciations.[15] For example, in the "Exhortatio," Georgijević offers a bleak vision of Ottomans encroaching upon Europe before urging Christian rulers to put aside internal squabbles and join together for a military campaign against the Ottomans:

> *Amisimus Asiam atque Africam: extincta est Graecia: Aegrota est usque ad mortem Hungaria. Occupata est iam nostro tempore Illyuria, subiecta est nuperrime Turcico Imperio*

[14] The full title is: "*Prognoma, sive praesagium Mehmetanorum, primum de Christianorum calamitatibus, deinde de suae gentis interitu, ex Persica lingua in Latinum sermonem conversum.*" [Presage or augury of the Mahometans, first about the calamities of the Christians then about the doom of their people, from the Persian translated into Latin]

[15] Noel Malcolm provides a good overview of Europeans' myriad negative characterizations of Turks in *Useful Enemies* (2019).

> *Sclavonia, debilitata est Austria, vis pestis huius iam Germanorum cervicibus, atque universae Christianitatis dors[is] incumbit.*[16]
>
> [We have lost Asia and Africa. Greece is extinct. Hungary is sick to death even. Even now, in our time, Illyria has been occupied. Slavonia has recently been subjected to the Turkish Empire. Austria has been weakened. The force of this plague now presses on the necks of the Germans and the backs of all of Christianity.]

This dire vision of Christendom — one that has ceded the two other realms of the Isidoran map and has a slipping grip on the third — is supplemented by expressions Georgijević's more concrete consternation as to why the Europeans have not prevailed militarily.[17] With a vision such as this, that taps into unease felt by Christians in Europe about the triumphant and expanding Ottoman Empire, it is easy to grasp why Georgijević's work became so popular in his time. His works were printed throughout European Christendom well into the seventeenth century, appearing in numerous editions as well as in translations into French, Flemish, German, English, Italian, Polish and Czech.[18]

Background Information on Konstantin Mihailović, Captive-Janissary and Author

Though Konstantin Mihailović's account of the Ottoman Empire and his life there circulated extensively in sixteenth-century East Central Europe[19] via Czech and Polish

[16] Bartholomaeus Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum, eorumque administratione et disciplina .. cui libellus de Turcorum moribus, collectus a Bartholemaeo Georgieviz, adjectus est, cum praefatione reverendi viri D. Philippi Melanthonis*. Witebergae: [no publisher], 1560, sig. K8r.

[17] He writes, for example, *"Iam si apparatum videas, armorumque genera, multis rationibus Turcis praestantiores videmur."* [Now, if you look at the equipment, and the kinds of arms, we seem for many reasons far superior to the Turks.] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum*, sig. K5r - K5v.

[18] In a 1938 study, Clarence Dana Rouillard noted thirteen editions of Georgijević's compilation *De Turcarum moribus epitome* published between 1553 and 1600 in Paris, Lyons, Geneva, and Rome, with further editions in 1629 and 1652. (This does not include English or Central European editions.) Clarence Dana Rouillard, "Bartholomew Georgiewitz," in *The Turk in French History, Though, and Literature (1520-1660)* (New York: AMS Press, 1973), 189.
C. Göllner's more expansive 1961 study counted forty-three editions between 1544 and 1600. Via: Piotr Tafiłowski, "Anti-Turkish Literature in 15th- 16th Century Europe," *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi* XXX, no. 1 (2015): 252, https://www.academia.edu/20225603/Anti_Turkish_Literature_in_15th_16th_Century_Europe.

[19] Manuscripts of Mihailović's account circulated in the sixteenth century in Czech and Polish. Czech printed editions were also available in the sixteenth century, but a Polish print edition was not made until the nineteenth century.

manuscripts, relatively little is known about the author's biography beyond the information offered in his account. Based on the memoiristic material included in Mihailović's text, scholars have confidently identified Mihailović as a Bosnian or Serb, and it has been estimated that Mihailović was born in the 1430's.[20] Mihailović narrates the course of his life in such a manner: In 1453, Mihailović, then a young man, participated in the siege of Constantinople on the Ottoman side, as a member of the troops sent by Serbian Despot Đurađ Branković to aid Mehmed II's attack on the Byzantine city. (I will explore Mihailović's interesting rendering of his involvement in the Fall of Constantinople in Chapter 2.) Mihailović was taken captive by the Ottomans two years later, when Serbian forces surrendered at Novo Brdo (today in Kosovo) in 1455. After the siege, the Ottomans captured 74 women as well as 320 boys and young men (including Mihailović, if his account is accurate).[21] After their capture at Novo Brdo, a group of captives including Mihailović attempted to escape but were recaptured. At that point, Mihailović and his fellow captives were transported "across the sea," presumably to Anatolia.[22] Like the other young men and boys captured at Novo Brdo, Mihailović joined the Janissary Corps; however, it is worth noting, as Benjamin Stolz and Svat Soucek do, that Mihailović does not suggest that he himself was Janissary, but presents himself, rather, as attached to the Jannissary Corps, perhaps as the coordinator of supplies.[23] At that point, Mihailović, who already participated

[20] This ethnic identity is also asserted by the title of the oldest extant manuscript of his account, a 1565 copy titled in Czech: *Historia neb Kronika turecká, od nějakého Ráca neb Bosňáka, jménem Michala Konstantina z Ostrovice, někdy od Turkuov zajatého a mezi jenčáře daného, věrně a právě sepsaná*.)

[21] Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York: NYU Press, 1998), 95; Bedri Muhadri, "The Invasion of Kosovo From the Ottomans in the XIV Century," *European Journal of Social Sciences Studies* 2, no. 6 (August 11, 2017): 245, https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.841841.

[22] Konstantin Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz (Michigan Slavic Publications, 1975), 99.

[23] Mihailović describes his role thus: "And among them it is so arranged that some are archers who shoot bows, some are gunners who shoot mortars, others muskets, and still others crossbows. And every day they must appear with their weapons before their hetmans. And he gives each one a gold piece per year for a bow, and in addition a tunic, a shirt, and large trousers made, as is their fashion, of three ells of cloth, and a shirt of eight ells. And this I myself distributed to them for two years from the imperial court." Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 159.

in the fighting at Constantinople, was likely too old to undergo the extensive training conscripted children received prior to becoming a Janissary.[24] Furthermore, Mihailović states that he participated, just a year after his capture, on the Ottoman side in the Siege of Belgrade in 1456, which again suggests that Mihailović did not receive the years of training to become a Janissary. After Belgrade, Mihailović took part in several more Ottoman campaigns, including the Siege of Trebizond in 1461 and a campaign against the Wallachian Voivode in 1462. Mihailović's time attached to the Janissaries ended during the Ottoman campaign in Bosnia in 1463, when King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary captured the garrison at Zvečaj where Mihailović was stationed. Mihailović offers no further information about his life following 1463. Scholars have speculated that after Zvečaj Mihailović spent the remainder of his life in Hungary, Poland, and/or Bohemia and Moravia — guesses that are largely based on the language of the earliest extant copies of Mihailović's text (Czech) and the epilogue of his text, which makes a direct appeal to the Polish and Bohemian-Hungarian kings, Jan I Olbracht and Vladislaus II, respectively. Based on textual content and paratextual information, scholars have also suggested that Mihailović wrote his text in Serbo-Croatian Cyrillic sometime around 1500.[25]

Like many captive narratives of the early modern period, Mihailović's account features a blend of history, eye-witness report, theological explication, and memoir.[26] The text in its entirety comprises forty-eight chapters, a brief appendix on "Imperial Names in the Turkish Language," and the aforementioned exhortatory epilogue.[27] The first eight chapters

[24] For more information on devşirme practices and the Janissary corps, see: Gulay Yilmaz, "Becoming a Devshirme: The Training of Conscripted Children in the Ottoman Empire.' In Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller Eds.. *Children in Slavery Through the Ages* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2009), 119-134.
[25] Benjamin Stolz and Svat Soucek, "Introduction," in *Memoirs of a Janissary* (Michigan Slavic Publication, 1975), xxvii.
[26] Recent scholarship has offered explorations of the genre hybridity of early modern captive narratives, mainly deriving from the Anglophone tradition. For example, see: Joe Snader, *Caught between Worlds: British Captivity Narratives in Fact and Fiction* (Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 2000).
[27] This structure is seen in the earliest extant manuscript of Mihailović's account, a 1565 Czech manuscript. The question of textual primacy was a matter of debate in the twentieth century, and for some time a Polish version of Mihailović's text was believed to be a predecessor to the Czech version. I find Stolz's arguments, grounded

concern Islamic religious belief and customs (e.g., chapter two is titled "Concerning Mohammed and His Helper Ali"). Chapters nine through twenty-four narrates Ottoman history via a genealogical structure, describing Ottoman emperors from Osman I through Murad II. (For more on Mihailović's historiographical techniques, see Chapter 1.) Chapter twenty-five brings the text to the reign of Mehmed II and Mihailović's own time period. Mihailović's personal account provides the primary structure for chapters twenty-six through thirty-four, focusing on the rule of Mehmed II and his successor Bayezid II. This material covers the Siege of Constantinople through Zvečaj, Mihailović's return to Christendom, and Bayezid II's rise to power in 1481. The last ten chapters of the text (chapter thirty-eight through chapter forty-eight) provide an overview of Ottoman governance, imperial practices, military capabilities, and the treatment of Christians living under Ottoman rule.

in the extensive philological analysis by Czech scholars, convincing in proving the primacy of the Czech text, and therefore I treat the Czech text thus. For more details on this scholarly debate, see the introduction of *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz (Michigan Slavic Publications, 1975).

Chapter 1

Konstantin Mihailović and Bartholomew Georgijević's Dynastic and Racial History of the Ottoman Empire

In this chapter I will explore how the captive texts of Konstantin Mihailović and Bartholomew Georgijević render Ottoman history. During the sixteenth century, both texts were positioned by editors and publishers as a history or chronicle, Konstantin Mihailović's narrative under the title *Historia neb Kronika turecká* ("Turkish history or chronicle") and Bartholomew Gerogijević's second compilation appeared under the name *De Origine Imperii Turcorum* ("On the origins of the Turkish Empire"). I intend to follow the explicit historiographical claims of these works, analyzing how these texts construct Ottoman history. This project utilizes existing scholarship on medieval and early modern historical practices, such as that of Gabrielle Spiegel, Marcus Bull and Justin Lake.[28] With an approach such as this, I seek to extend existing scholarly discussions of captive narratives. Current scholarship has often noted the mixed-genre qualities of texts authored by captives, especially their similarities to travelogues and early modern reports.[29] However, I would like to take this

[28] Spiegel's "History, Historicism and the Social Logic of the Text," "Theory into Practice," and "Genealogy: Form and Function in Medieval Historical Narrative" provided a critical intellectual foundation for this chapter. Also important are Marcus Bull, "Eyewitness and Medieval Historical Narrative," ed. Erik S. Kooper and Sjoerd Levelt, *The Medieval Chronicle* 11 (January 1, 2017), https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004351875; Justin Lake, "Current Approaches to Medieval Historiography: Current Approaches to Medieval Historiography," *History Compass* 13, no. 3 (March 2015): 89–109, https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12222.

[29] For an overview of medieval and early modern travel literature, see: Mary B. Campbell, "Medieval Travel Writing (1): Peregrinatio and Religious Travel Writing," in *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, ed. Nandini Das and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 33–47, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316556740; Mary B. Campbell, The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Sharon Kinoshita, "Medieval Travel Writing (2): Beyond the Pilgrimmage," in *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, ed. Nandini Das and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 48–61, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316556740; Gerald MacLean, "Early Modern Travel Writing (1): Print and Early Modern European Travel Writing," in *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, ed. Nandini Das and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 62–76, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316556740.

thesis as an opportunity to more explicitly study the historical nature of the so-called captive narratives of Mihailović and Georgijević. Such an analysis is important not only because it nuances and adds specificity to how scholars regard early modern captive texts, but also because it contributes to scholarly understandings of how Europeans sought to understand their imperial neighbor and rival. Notably, focusing on *how* Georgijević and Mihailović's texts constructed Ottoman history makes more apparent a basic regard these texts (and Europeans more broadly) had for Ottoman civilization: as a well-organized empire with a developed theology, a chain of rulers connected by familial bonds, and serious military capabilities, not unlike those seen on a smaller scale within European kingdoms. (Such representations of the Ottoman Empire, in fact, arguably put the fractious and decentralized Holy Roman Empire to shame. It is perhaps for this reason that European descriptions of the "Ottoman threat" oftentimes urge Christian rulers to put aside their differences and cease squabbling.[30]) I should point out, though, that this study does not present a comprehensive analysis of the historical information presented in Mihailović and Georgijević's texts. Nor do I want to present these texts as highly reliable sources for modern scholarship. Other scholars, such as Svat Soucek, Benjamin Stolz, and Almut Höfert, have presented valuable assessments on the historical accuracy of these writings. Rather, I aim to examine the ways in which Ottoman history was constructed by one-time captives. Furthermore, while I will note the authors' engagement with *Imago Turci* and negative attitudes toward Ottomans, excavating this material, evaluating its uncharitable qualities, and comparing it to representations from other early modern sources will not be the focus of my exploration since there is an abundance of scholarship with this focus. Rather, I aim to refocus engagement with such material along the lines of Geraldine Heng's important innovations in premodern

[30] See, for example, Georgijević's own use of this rhetoric, discussed at length in this chapter's section on Ottoman-Scythian associations.

critical race studies, which I will discuss at length in this chapter. The following study uses the original *De Origine* (1560) and the earliest extant copy of *Historia neb Kronika turecká* (1565) as well as *O Začátku Tureckého Cýsařstwij* (c. 1567) by Prague printer Jan Jičínský, which combines *Historia neb Kronika turecká* and *De Origine* (translated into Czech) into one single volume.

My study of these Ottoman histories will focus on the genealogies of the Ottomans and Ottoman rulers offered by Georgijević and Mihailović's texts. As scholars of medieval chronicles such as Gabrielle Spiegel have shown, royal genealogy served as an organizing principle for premodern historians' texts. As Jan Assmann notes, the genealogy is a "form that bridges the gap between the present and the time of origin, legitimizing a current order or aspiration by providing an unbroken link with the very beginning."[31] In medieval chronicles, the medieval present is often related to the past via a genealogy or chain of rulers whose dynastic origins are elevated to the mythic (thus justifying rulership). This genealogy is often accompanied by speculative legends of ethnogenesis, in which the chronicler links a current population or its rulers to prehistoric peoples known to medieval historians via classical literature.[32] Charlemagne's successors, for example, became descendants of the Trojans. As Margaret Meserve notes, medieval histories typically offered genealogies that identified Ottomans as the descendants of the Scythians, a people who were "inherently barbarous, beyond the pale of any civilization, European or Asiatic."[33] However, according to Meserve, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries began to see an increased appetite — perhaps due to

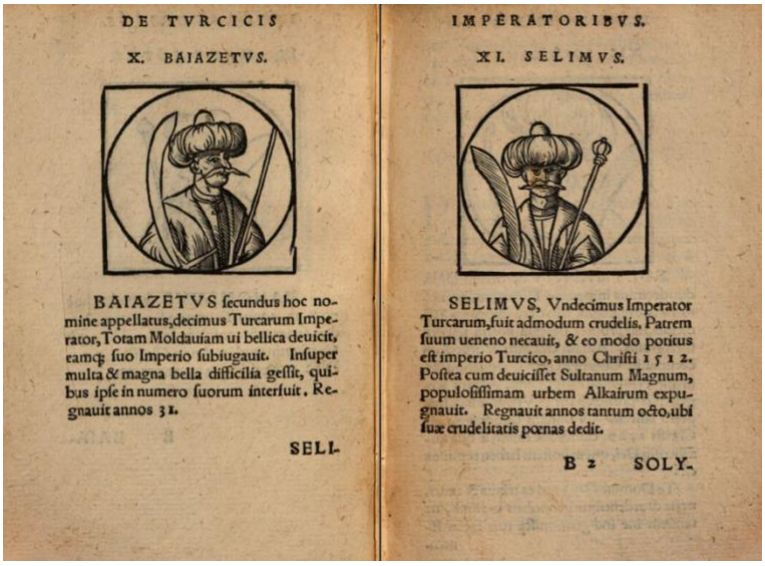
[31] Jan Assmann, Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 35.
[32] For further details, see: Patrick J. Geary, "Imagining Peoples in Antiquity," in *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 41–62.
[33] Interestingly, this identification of the Turks with the Scythians arose in the fourteenth century according to Meserve. Prior to that, Turks were often identified as descendants of the Parthians. This "demotion," as Meserve calls it, meant that the Ottomans were no longer the inheritors an ancient empire but the offspring of a "barbarian race." My discussion about the role of genealogy in medieval chronicles makes the implications of such a demotion obvious. Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008), 218.

political and military necessary — for information about the imperial inner workings of the empire, thus giving rise to dynastic genealogies and genealogical histories such as Niccolò Sagundino's *Otthomanorum Familia, seu De Turcarum Imperio Historia* (1456), which was composed for Enea Silvio Piccolomini, and Feliks Petančić's *Genealogia Turcorum imperatorum* (1502). The genealogies presented in the *Historia neb Kronika turecká* and *De Origine* reflect the trend observed by Meserve. In the following sections I will argue that the Ottoman histories of these texts signal the imminent rise of a more academic Orientalism and establish captive narratives as authoritative sources for historical information within their original sixteenth-century context.

Royal Genealogy and Ottoman Governance

The dynastic succession of the Ottoman Empire plays a significant role in Mihailović's *Historia neb Kronika turecká* and Georgijević's *De Origine*, as well as the Czech print compilation *O Začátku Tureckého Cýsařstwij*, both in shaping the structure of the texts and in terms of the major informational gains provided to readers of the text.

Georgijević's *De Origine* provides a visual catalogue of Ottoman rulers, in which each ruler receives a woodblock print depiction and a short paragraph of description.[34] This catalogue also appears in *O Začátku Tureckého Cýsařstwij*, albeit without the visual depictions seen in *De Origine*. (It is worth noting that no authorship is given for the catalogue.) Notably, this catalogue provides a fairly accurate list of Ottoman sultans, faltering only during the fifteenth-century interregnum period. The brief descriptions accompanying each ruler (see the examples shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2) seemingly emphasize the importance of recounting each genealogical link rather than offering detailed information on each ruler. As with the genealogies of the rulers of European kingdoms, the manner of succession is emphasized — sultans are explicitly named as the son of the prior sultan. Interestingly, these descriptions tend to use language that is more frequently vehement and degrading than what is seen in many of Georgijević's longer accounts. For example, Osman I is


DE TVRCICIS

X. BAIAZETVS.

BAIAZETVS ſecundus hoc nomine appellatus, decimus Turcarum Imperator, Totam Moldauiam ui bellica deuicit, eamq; ſuo Imperio ſubiugauit. Inſuper multa & magna bella difficilia geſſit, quibus ipſe in numero ſuorum interfuit. Regnauit annos 31.

SELI.

IMPERATORIBVS.

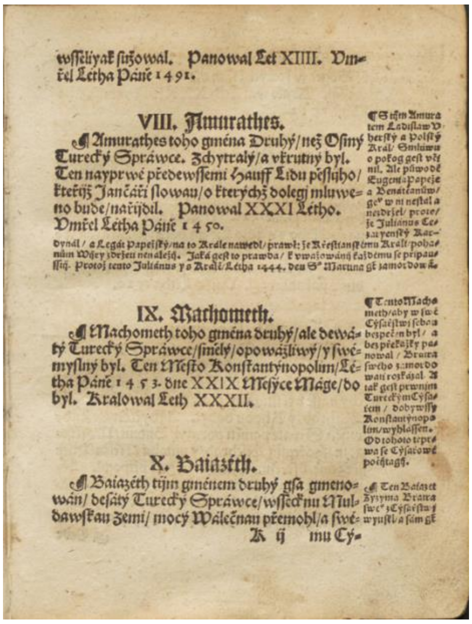
XI. SELIMVS.

SELIMVS, Vndecimus Imperator Turcarum, fuit admodum crudelis, Patrem ſuum ueneno necauit, & eo modo potitus eſt imperio Turcico, anno Chriſti 1512. Poſtea cum deuicíſſet Sultanum Magnum, populoſiſſimam urbem Alkairum expugnauit. Regnauit annos tantum octo, ubi ſuæ crudelitatis pœnas dedit.

B 2 SOLY.

Figure 1. A spread from the visual genealogical catalogue in Bartholomew Georgijević's De Origine. Sig. B1v-B2r.

[34] Charlotte Colding Smith suggests that these medallion portraits of sultans mirror the portraiture done by Italian artists who visited Mehmed II's court — a style which is also emulated in the illustrated genealogy of Felix Petančić. Charlotte Colding Smith, *Images of Islam, 1453-1600: Turks in Germany and Central Europe*, 1st edition (London: Routledge, 2015), 260.


wſſeliyak ſiżowal. Panowal Let XIIII. Vmřel Letha Páně 1491.

VIII. Amurathes.

Amurathes toho gména Druhý/ než Oſmý Turecký Spráwce. Zchytralý/ a vkrutný byl. Ten nayprwé předewſſemi Hauff Lidu pěſſyho/ kteřijž Jančáři ſlowau/ o kterýchž dolegj mluweno bude/ nařijdil. Panowal XXXI Letho. Vmřel Letha Páně 1450.

IX. Machometh.

Machometh toho gména druhý/ ale dewátý Turecký Spráwce/ ſmělý/ opowážliwý/ y ſwémyſlný byl. Ten Měſto Konſtantýnopolim/ Letha Páně 1453. dne XXIX Měſýce Máge/ dobyl. Kralowal Leth XXXII.

X. Baiazéth.

Baiazéth tijm gménem druhý gſa gmenowán/ deſátý Turecký Spráwce/ wſſecknu Multawſkau zemi/ mocý Wálečnau přemohl/ a ſwé-

K ij mu Cý-

Figure 2. A page from the genealogical catalogue in O Začátku Tureckého Cýsařstwij. Sig. K2r.

described as a "*valde crudelis Tyrannus*,"[35] Bayezid I as "*insignis and crudelis*"[36] and Murad II as "*callidus ac crudelis*."[37] Such insistent negative descriptors read as the inverse of a typical medieval chronicle's catalogue of royal genealogy, which feature copious praise for the piety and wisdom of a given nation's rulers. In offering a genealogical portrait of stability and continuity in Ottoman rulership, it seems that *De Origine* seeks to minimize these positive qualities (which not all European kingdoms were able to achieve) via condemnation. This catalogue of Ottoman rulers, which also includes references to major victories over Europeans each ruler achieved, ends with Suleiman I, the Ottoman sultan at the time of *De Origine*'s publication.

Mihailović's *Historia neb Kronika turecká*, also included in *O Začátku Tureckého Cýsařstwij*, provides a less explicit but still notable genealogy of Ottoman sultans. As previously mentioned, chapters nine through thirty-four of Mihailović's text narrate Ottoman history via the succession of rulers from Osman I through Bayezid II. The majority of these chapters are explicitly framed around the a given sultan's rule. For example, chapter twenty-two is titled "*[O] Czisarzi tureczkem Moratowi kterak se Ge-u [sic] potom wedlo*."[38] The genealogy provided by Mihailović's text is far less accurate than that of Georgijević's; its

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[35] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum*, sig. A5r.
[36] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum*, sig. A6v.
[37] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum*, sig. A8v.
[38] Original appears in Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 68. In English: "Concerning the Turkish Emperor Morat: How He Fared Later." Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 69.

oversights include the omission of Orhan and Mehmed I. Nonetheless, it provides the major organizing principle for his account, which as the original Czech title suggests, offers a considerable amount of historical information. The genealogical structure provided by Mihailović seems to have attracted at least one reader of the 1565 Czech manuscript of Mihailović's text: a later hand condenses the chapter-genealogy structure into a simple list of rulers (see Figure 3). This annotation, which is clearly copied from Mihailović's book since it reproduces the same omissions of Orhan and Mehmed I previously mentioned, offers a glimpse into how a contemporary reader may have found Mihailović's text useful: for the acquisition about historical knowledge of the Ottoman imperial court in addition to (or perhaps even in favor of) the polemical and autobiographical material offered by the captive-author.

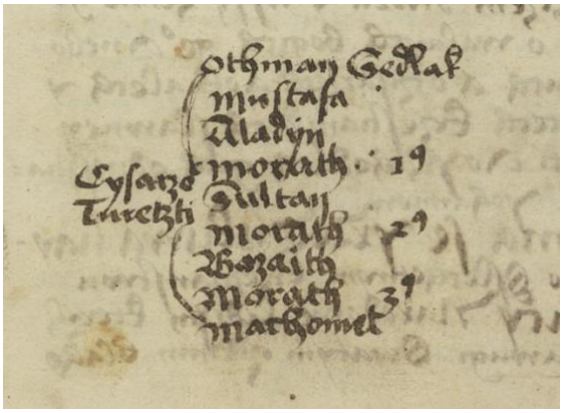


Figure 3. An annotation from the 1565 Czech manuscript of Konstantin Mihailović's Historia neb Kronika turecká.

Ottomans as Descendants of the Scythian Race

While both *De Origine* and *Historia neb Kronika turecká* are structurally influenced by Ottoman dynastic succession and do provide a considerable amount of information about past sultans, associations with the barbarous Scythian race are notable in *De Origine*.[39] In addition to the royal genealogies previously discussed, the connection of the Ottomans to the Scythians, though such references are oftentimes brief, have a significant function in historicizing the Ottoman Empire for sixteenth-century European Christian readers, since

[39] Mihailović's narrative shows similar tendencies to cast the Ottomans as a barbaric race; however, the text does not provide an *origo gentis* history as Georgijević's does. This omission of any mention of the Scythians may in part be due to his poor level of education, which likely would not have introduced him to classical and medieval historiography.

representations of Scythians as the Asiatic barbarians of the ancient world in European historiography date as far back as Herodotus.[40] As noted by François Hartog, the Scythians were understood as a bellicose non-European people, notable for their nomadism and mobility, who did not comprehend the difference between Asia and Europe and therefore passed "from one continent to the other without even fully realizing what they are doing."[41] Features such as the crossing of (imagined) boundaries and militaristic exploits have obvious resonances for sixteenth-century Europeans thinking about the Ottoman Empire.[42]

Georgijević's *De Origine* offers multiple connections between the Ottomans and Scythians. In fact, the question posed by the compilation's title — *what are the origins of Ottoman Empire?* — is answered in part by the aforementioned dynastic genealogy, presented in a visual catalogue form, and in part by a short essay on the Ottomans' Scythian roots. This two-page essay, unattributed but likely written by Georgijević, prefaces the catalogue of Ottoman sultans. It explicitly links sixteenth-century Ottomans to the "*gentem Scythicam*" and to the history of that race as told by the "*historiographi veteres.*"[43]

> *Turcos gentem Scythicam esse non solum historiographi veteres testantur, Verum etiam eorum mores, facies, vultus, superbia, temeritas, magnaque securitas, denique tota ipsorum pugnandi ratio, modusque clarem demonstrat.*[44]
>
> [Not only do the ancient historians attest that the Turks are a Scythian nation. In truth, their manners, their faces, their countenance, their pride, their rashness, and great carelessness, and, finally, their entire rational and manner of fighting clearly also demonstrate this.]

[40] See, for example, François Hartog's book-length study *The Mirror of Herodotus* or Patrick Geary's *The Myth on Nations.* For an overview of recent archeological studies of the Scythians, see the edited volume *Masters of the Steppe: The Impact of the Scythians and Later Nomad Societies of Eurasia*.
[41] François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History* (University of California Press, 1988), 32.
[42] It is worth noting that alleged Scythian origins were not only applied to Ottomans in the premodern period, and the Scythians were presented as an *origo gentis* for multiple European peoples. There was a strong association in medieval chronicles of Eastern and East Central Europe with the Scythians. The *Gesta Hungarorum*, for example, suggests that the Hungarians descended from the Scythians. For more, see: Leonid S. Chekin, "Lower Scythia in the Western European Geographical Tradition at the Time of the Crusades," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 15, no. 3/4 (December 1991): 289–339, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41036434.
[43] It is worth noting that this section is unattributed. It seems likely, though, that Georgijević may have written this section as its content aligns with Georgijević's references elsewhere in the *De Origine* compilation to Turks as descendants of "barbarous" Scythians. (More details on those other references in the following analysis.)
[44] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum,* sig. A4r.

Implicit within such portrayals of Ottomans as "Scythian barbarians" — a lineage that can be discerned by *"eorum mores, facies, vultus, superbia…"* — is a more fundamental European (mis)understanding the ethnic/religious makeup of the Ottoman Empire. As discussed by Zsuzsa Barbarics-Hermanik, European publications refer almost exclusively to the residents of the Ottoman Empire as "Turks," which according to Barbarics-Hermanik suggests that early modern Europeans viewed the empire as homogenous and monocultural.[45] This, of course, was far from the Ottoman reality. The empire's ruling class was heterogenous and spoke a variety of languages. Internally, Ottoman elites used the word "Turk" to disparage Anatolian peasants.[46] As Christine Isom-Verhaaren and Kent F. Schull point out, subjects of the multiethnic Ottoman Empire came to understand themselves as Ottoman through political loyalty rather than ethnic origins.[47] Thus, Europeans' "obsession," as Verhaaren and Schull call it, with origins as they relate to ethnicity and religion should be understood as a European phenomenon, important to the way Europeans perceived their world.[48]

With this context in mind, I conceptualized my study in accordance with compelling recent scholarship on premodern race thinking, put forward by academics such as Geraldine Heng.[49] Heng provides a useful framework for modern scholars to think about premodern racial regimes, which are unlike today's but in the view of Heng et al. should nonetheless be taken into account by twenty-first-century scholarship. With European concepts of the "Saracen" as a case study, Heng usefully defines premodern racial thinking as "[p]ractices of

[45] It is worth pointing out that "Saracen" was another term applied non-Christian Arabs, regardless of whether they lived in the Ottoman realms or not, in the premodern period.
[46] Zsuzsa Barbarics-Hermanik , "Facing the 'Turk' in the Book Culture of Central Europe," in *Print Culture at the Crossroads: The Book and Central Europe*, ed. Elizabeth Dillenburg, Drew B. Thomas, and Howard Louthan (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2021), 198–99.
[47] Christine Isom-Verhaaren and Kent F. Schull, "Dealing with Ottoman Identity in the Ottoman Empire," in *Living in the Ottoman Realm: Empire and Identity, 13th to 20th Centuries*, ed. Christine Isom-Verhaaren and Kent F. Schull (Indiana University Press, 2016), 6.
[48] Ibid.
[49] See, for example, Heng's *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages*; the October 2021 special issue of the journal *Literature Compass*, especially Ayanna Thompson and Dorothy Kim's contributions; Cord J. Whitaker's *Black Metaphors*; and Sujata Iyengar's *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England.*

generalization" in which an individual or people are described as displaying a set of "collective personality traits," which often tip into the biological, because of a shared culture or religion.[50] Such an orientation is obvious in the generalizing portrayal of *De Origine* discussed above and in passages such as "*in Scythiam unde origine traxit*,"[51] which display the monocultural perception analyzed by Barbarics-Hermanik. My study therefore understands these treatments of Ottomans Scythian racial origins not only in the limited *gens*/*natio* sense conventionally used by premodern scholars but also in Heng's more precise and expansive framing.[52]

Elsewhere in *De Origine*, Georgijević invokes the Ottomans' Scythian heritage as a way to explain their military prowess and European defeats. In a passage of his "Exhortatio Contra Turcas," Georgijević expresses what seems like frustration at the Ottoman military's ability to best Christian armies, despite the latter having "more outstanding" military capabilities: "*Iam si apparatum uideas, armorumomque genera, multis rationibus Turcis præstantiores videmur…. Sunt equidem et Musulmannis sui bombardarii, sed rariores et indoctiores….*"[53] Nonetheless, the Christians suffer losses such as Constantinople inexplicably yet because, according to Georgijević's logic, the Turks originate from the Scythians (*"Scythas"*) who have not "Italian wisdom, or Spanish industry, but a certain inhuman savagery, barbarism, the greatest ignorance of the mind, unlearned, stupid."[54] The Ottomans' military victories are not only aided by this lineage but also, it seems, their ability

[50] Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 116.
[51] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum,* sig. H7v-H8r. In English: "In Scythia from which it [Turkey] originated."
[52] Though Mihailović does not mention Scythian origins, he similarly treats Turks as a unified cultural group. He most often refers to them as *"pohani"* (in English "pagans"). As will be discussed in the next chapter, Mihailović may have converted to Islam and therefore dismissing Islam may have been a priority for him.
[53] In English: "Now if you look at the kinds of equipment, and the kinds of arms, we seem to be more outstanding than the Turks for many reasons… And indeed, the Muslims do have their bombarders, but they are comparatively rare and stupid." Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum,* sig. K5r-K5v.
[54] The original Latin reads: "*in quibus non sapientia Italica, aut industria Hispanica, sed inhumana quædam feritas, barbaries, animi summa inscitia, indocta, stolida…"*Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum,* sig. K5v.

to act as a single *gens*. Christians, as Georgijević sees them, are separated into many nations and thus unable to coordinate their efforts against Ottoman campaigns. (In Georgijević's perspective the Holy Roman Empire's authority is not in any way equivalent to that of the Ottoman Empire.) He writes that all Christian nations perish because of their heterogeneity and are involved in "infinite calamities" since "when one nation fights against the Turk, the other is engaged with domestic fights, supplications, and circumstances of their own," thereby aiding the Ottomans.[55]

As we see in these examples, Gerogijević's historical framing of the Ottomans as Scythian descendants operates in several ways. First, it creates a historical lineage that shores up European opinions of Ottoman barbarism. Second, it serves to homogenize Ottomans as a single race. Third, it helps explain why Christians fail to triumph militarily. However, this Othering of Ottomans based on their *origo gentis* does not function as an erasure of the Ottoman culture or history. While these claims of Scythian descent are tendentious and simplistic, they nonetheless create an ancient lineage for the Ottomans akin to the ones assigned to European kingdoms in premodern chronicles.

[55] The original Latin reads: "*Pereunt igitur omnia, et infinitis cladibus involuuntur et cum una gens contra Turcam pugnat, alia vero, vel in domesticis versatur bellis, advocatis et adiunctis sibi in auxilium infidelibus Paganis…"* Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum,* sig. K6v.

Chapter 2

The Limits of Autobiography and Life-Writing in Bartholomew Georgijević and Konstantin Mihailović's Accounts

In this chapter I will explore how the texts of Bartholomew Georgijević and Konstantin Mihailović are shaped by the captive-authors' recounting of their own lives in the Ottoman Empire. In the case of Bartholomew Georgijević, I analyze his autobiographical output in the context of the Reformation life-writing practices of Wittenberg Circle in light of Georgijević's significant connection to Philip Melanchthon. With Konstantin Mihailović's text, I consider how Mihailović's experience with Janissaries, one of his text's main attractions, is carefully managed to avoid presenting Mihailović as an enemy of Christendom. Overall, I suggest that the captives' presentations of their own lives provide important framing for the captives' arguments about the Ottoman Empire. I show how Georgijević and Mihailović's texts are seemingly influenced by conventions surrounding life-writing in the transitional sixteenth century, between late medieval and early modern literary practices, by drawing attention to the limited amount of autobiographical material that in fact appears in these accounts. I argue that this authorial reticence aligns at least in part with my view that objective information was a major offering of what are today called captive narratives and that these texts and authors function as forerunners to the academic Orientalism that emerged in Europe in the seventeenth century and flourished to an even greater extent in the eighteenth century.

Between the Medieval and Early Modern: Situating Georgijević and Mihailović's Life Writing in Historical-Literary Context

Writing in the beginning and middle of sixteenth century respectively, Konstantin Mihailović and Bartholomew Georgijević's personal account of Ottoman history and imperial life appeared at a turning point in European literary history.[56] Temporally, these two texts stand at the beginning of a two-century period that would see increased volume in life-writing — to the extent that by the end of seventeenth century, the criteria for "lives worth writing" had come to include men without military or political experience, women, and children.[57] (It is worth noting that the term "autobiography" was not widely used until the end of the eighteenth century.[58]) As Karen Winstead's valuable study of medieval life writing suggests, the centuries prior to Mihailović and Georgijević's saw a very limited amount of autobiographical writing.[59] Medieval life-writing, as Winstead notes, was often biographical rather than autobiographical, focused on high-ranking clergy, kings, and saints; there was no unique textual genre for the life of authors.[60] Given this lack of a freestanding literary genre for literary autobiography, when autobiographical writing does appear in medieval texts, it is

[56] There is a longstanding, prevailing critical position that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw a "boom" due to an evolution in individuals' understanding of selfhood. Philippa Kelly, Lloyd Davis, and Ronald Bedford push back against this neat narrative in their edited volume *Early Modern Autobiography: Theories, Genres, Practices*; instead, they stress the "continuities and changes" in autobiographical writing in the medieval and early modern periods. Ronald Bedford, Lloyd Davis, and Philippa Kelly, "Introduction," in *Early Modern Autobiography: Theories, Genres, Practices*, ed. Ronald Bedford, Lloyd Davis, and Philippa Kelly (University of Michigan Press, 2006), 2.

[57] For more on this development, see: Alan Stewart, "Introduction," in *The Oxford History of Life Writing: Volume 2. Early Modern*, ed. Alan Stewart (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1–20.

[58] Stewart, "Introduction," in *The Oxford History of Life Writing: Volume* 2. Early Modern, 5.

[59] Winstead compellingly argues against the easy categorization of medieval autobiography as being an "alien" form radically distinct from modern autobiographical conventions, due to differences in our understandings of the premodern "self" and modern "self." She rightly pushed back against Burckhardtian notions and points out that the "modern self" is not a unitary conceptual or experiential phenomenon that began sometime after the Renaissance and has continued smoothly into our twenty-first-century present. She highlights the contrasts between the "postmodern self" and "modern self" as well as the rich, ongoing philosophical debate regarding the constructedness and possible baselessness of the "self." Furthermore, Winstead highlights that in addition to the conforming tendencies of hagiography and *vita(e)* sanctorum, many medieval autobiographies or biographies also features particularizing tendencies, focusing on experiences and achievements unique to a given subject. For more detail, see the introduction of Karen A. Winstead, *The Oxford History of Life-Writing: Volume 1. The Middle Age*s (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[60] Winstead, *The Oxford History of Life-Writing: Volume 1. The Middle Ages*, 142.

often as a digression or an appendage (prologue or epilogue).[61] "Historian autobiographers," as Winstead calls them, such as Bede and Orderic Vitalis, provide good examples of such "inserted" writing, which are brief in length and containing what one might consider "vital information"— date and place of birth, place of education, and sometimes important books that contributed to the author's intellectual development.[62]

Mihailović and Georgijević's autobiographical tendencies align more with the medieval conventions described by Winstead, even though their first-person experiences in Ottoman captivity were a major draw, as is suggested by the fact that the authors are often described as former captives on the title page of their respective texts. Georgijević's composite publications provide an especially interesting example of how minimally autobiographical information was shared by these captive-authors. For example, Georgijević's short texts generally exhibit third-person narration only minimally involving the author-narrator's specific experience. *De afflictione tam captivorum*, for example, offers a highly generalized account of captivity in the Ottoman Empire, with chapters on topics such as *"Quomodo reliqui Turcae cum mancipiis agant,"*[63] *"Quomodo venalitii tractentur"*[64] Georgijević's experience as a captive is mainly discussed in a prologue addressed to Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.[65] Mihailović's text shows a similar tendency, focusing on general and historical information as opposed to the captive's own autobiography.

[61] Ibid.
[62] Winstead, *The Oxford History of Life-Writing: Volume 1. The Middle Ages*, 119.
[63] In English: "How the rest of the Turks deal with slaves." Bartholomaeus Georgijević, *De afflictione tam captivorum quam etiam sub Turcae tributo viventium hristianorum*. Antverpiae: typis Copenii, 1544, sig. A4v.
[64] In English: "How they are treated at sale." Georgijević, *De afflictione tam captivorum*, sig. A6r.
[65] The prologue reads: "*Ego … qui Turcicam captiuitatem tredecim annos expertus sum, septies venditus sum…"* [I who have experienced Turkish captivity for thirteen years and was sold seven times…] Georgijević, *De afflictione tam captivorum*, sig. A2r. Scholar swho have studied Georgijević have suggested that this claim is somewhat exaggerated and that Georgijević spent about ten years in captivity and was sold six times. See, for example: Almut Höfert, "Bartholomaeo Georgius." In *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History: Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America*, edited by David Thomas and John Chesworth, Bilingual edition., 7:321–30 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill Academic Pub, 2015), 321.

Nevertheless, as discussed in the following sections, Georgijević and Mihailović's life experiences do inform their texts in a significant way, distinguishing their texts from those written by Europe-bound historians such as *Nuremberg Chronicle* compiler Hartmann Schedel or better-traveled diplomats such as Feliks Petančić, whose personal history could neither be used as fodder to support arguments about Ottoman wickedness nor engender suspicion of religious disloyalty.[66]

Bartholomew Georgijević's Compilations and the Life Writing of the Protestant Reformation

Bartholomew Georgijević's textual self-presentation evolves dramatically after his first book *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum,* published in Antwerp circa 1544, becoming increasingly less autobiographical.[67] In this section, I will suggest that Georgijević's association with key Reformation figures likely influenced how Georgijević included autobiography in his later publications, namely, *De afflictione tam captivorum*, *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis, De Turcarum moribus epitome,* and *De origine imperii Turcorum*.

Georgijević's connections to Reformation thinkers were quite concrete: he met Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon in Wittenberg in 1544, the same year he began published his writing. It is possible that this meeting influenced his choice of publisher. In a recommendation letter for Georgijević dated August 11, 1544, Luther and Melanchthon wrote that at their meeting the one-time captive described "[w]ith skill…the names of the

[66] For more on how conversion to Islam was viewed in the early modern period, see: Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

[67] The full title is *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum, tum etiam de captivitate illius, ac caeremoniis Hierosolymitanorum in die Paschatis celebrandis libellus. Additis nonnullis vocabulis etc. in lingua vernacula sua Hungarica*.

places and the character of the regions and inhabitants" in the Ottoman Empire.[68] They found in him "agreeable trustworthiness" and therefore encouraged "good men everywhere to take care of this guest."[69] Georgijević's first three books *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum, De afflictione tam captivorum* and *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis* were published in Antwerp, an important center of Reformation thinking. [70] The first two (*De ritibus* and *De afflictione*) were printed and sold by Gillis Coppens van Diest, a well-connected printer and bookseller who published a wide range of academic texts and Turcica, as well as Luther's sermons.[71] The third book, *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis*, was printed by Coppens van Diest but sold by another Antwerp bookman, Grégoire de Bonte. Georgijević's second compilation of *De afflictione tam captivorum* and *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis*, titled *De origine imperii Turcorum*, again shows the author's affiliation to Reformation milieux: published in Wittenberg in 1560, the book features a preface by Philip Melanchthon.[72]

Georgijević's association with Melanchthon and Luther comes as little surprise since the Ottoman Empire and Islam were major themes for Reformation leaders. Islam, or as it was more commonly called in that period, "Muhammedism," functioned as an important reference point in intra-Christian arguments in the sixteenth century.[73] As Noel Malcolm and

[68] Gregory J. Miller, *The Turks and Islam in Reformation Germany* (Routledge, 2017), 191–92.
[69] Ibid.
[70] For more on Antwerp's role in the Reformation, see Guido Marnef's *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation*; Renaud Adam, "The Emergence of Antwerp as a Printing Centre. From Earliest Days of Printing to the Reformation (1481-1520)," *Gulden Passer (De)* 92 (2014), https://orbi.uliege.be/handle/2268/172791.
[71] Coppens van Diest, for example, published a vernacular version of Martin Luther's "last sermons" (*Dat Leste Sermoon*, c. 1566) For more information on the printer, see: Gemma Phrysius, "Antwerpen, Gillis Coppens van Diest, 1540," in *Post-Incunabula En Hun Uitgevers in de Lage Landen / Post-Incunabula and Their Publishers in the Low Countries*, ed. Hendrik D. L. Vervliet (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1978), 90–91, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-4814-8_42; Paul Dijstelberge and A.R.A. Croiset van Uchelen, eds., "Gillis Coppens van Diest as an Underground Printer, 1566 to 1567," in *Dutch Typography in the Sixteenth Century*, by Paul Valkema Blouw (BRILL, 2013), 227–44, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004256552_011. For an overview of printing's importance to the Reformation, see: Jean-François Gilmont's *The Reformation and the Book* (Routledge, 1998).
[72] *De Origine* was published the same year that Philip Melanchthon died. It is unclear whether or not the book appeared before or after the day of his death, April 18, 1560.
[73] It is important to note that at this time, few Christians, Protestant or Catholic, considered Islam a legitimate religion. "Muhammedism" thus emphasizes Christians' claims that Islam was heresy, i.e., Muslims were merely

others have shown, the loss of Constantinople ignited religious-political debate in Europe, prompting "diagnoses" to explain how Christendom could have lost its Eastern center.[74] Blame was cast on the alleged indolence or corruption of Eastern Christians, but Latin Christendom also received similar scrutiny. Luther and his contemporaries attacked Catholicism by likening it to Islam, calling both false religions.[75] Meanwhile, thinkers who sympathized with Rome, such as Guillaume Postel, linked emerging Protestant sects, especially radical anti-Trinitarian ones, to Islam.[76] Georgijević does generally suggest that Ottoman military victories were facilitated by shortcomings and infighting within Christendom; however, he avoids explicitly siding with the Wittenberg camp or Rome in regards to which sect of Christianity was corrupt and enabled the fall of Constantinople in most of his works. The one notable exception to this is *Specchio della peregrinatione*, published in Rome in 1554, the last text Georgijević wrote (though it predates the 1560 Wittenberg *De Origine* text). As Sundar Henny has discussed, Georgijević explicitly sympathizes with Rome and argues for a Catholic Reformation.[77]

The evolution of Georgijević's textual self-portrayal offers interesting insight into how a one-time captive expanded or minimized his involvement in his own narrative, in accordance with contemporary literary convention and likely under the influence of

followers of a false prophet and should be called thus by that false prophet's name. The intra-Christian debate of the period also took note of the fact that Islam recognized Jesus as a prophet, but not the "son of God" or the Holy Trinity. Thus, Muslims were enticing prospects for conversion, since they adhered to a religion that already involved Jesus.

[74] Malcolm provides a good survey of the variety of responses the fall of Constantinople triggered in: Noel Malcolm, "The Fall of Constantinople, the Turks, and the Humanists," in *Useful Enemies: Islam and The Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought, 1450-1750* (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), 1–29.

[75] For more on how Islam formed a triad in Catholic-Protestant disputes, see: Noel Malcolm, "Protestantism, Calvinoturcism, and Turcopapalism," in *Useful Enemies: Islam and The Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought, 1450-1750* (Oxford ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), 76–103.

[76] Postel's expresses such perspectives in *Alcorani seu legis Mahometi et Evangelistarum concordiae liber* (Paris, 1543).

[77] Henny, "On Not Forgetting Jerusalem: Bartholomaeus Georgievits as a Pilgrim and Ethnographer of Eastern Christianity," in *The Habsburg Mediterranean 1500–1800*, ed. Stefan Hanß and Dorothea McEwan, 193, https://boris.unibe.ch/160221/.

Reformation contacts. Georgijević's first book, *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum*, offers extensive autobiographical information. In this account, positioned as a more general report on the various Eastern Christian communities living in the Ottoman Empire, Georgijević also reveals significant autobiographical information. For example, he states that he was first sold for 40 ducats (*"me emit quadraginta ducatis"*),[78] the difficulties of remaining a Christian despite effort to convert to Islam, and how resisting conversion (and the attendant circumcision) helped him escape. This work displays a markedly greater amount of autobiographical information — both in the details shared as well as the position of the narrative from a first-person perspective — than following works, including his subsequent work *De afflicitione tam captivorum*, which reprises a highly similar topic. *De ritibus et differentiis* does not offer much of an ethnographic report and instead centers on Georgijević, presenting a rather limited amount of cultural information to perspective readers. Georgijević's use of autobiography in his reports recalls the dynamic described by Karen Winstead, in which autobiographical information was "smuggled into" other forms and genres in the medieval period; however, due to the extent of autobiographical information, *De ritibus et differentiis* should also be considered as an "ego document" in its own right, a textual source in which "the writing and describing subject…has a continuous presence in the text" and "an ego deliberately or accidentally discloses or hides itself."[79]

How then can Georgijević's lesser presence in his following books be understood? It is possible that authoring this first book was a sufficient "catharsis" for the former captive,

[78] Bartholomaeus Georgijević, *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum, tum etiam de captivitate illius, ac caeremoniis Hierosolymitanorum in die Paschatis celebrandis libellus. Additis nonnullis vocabulis etc. in lingua vernacula sua Hungarica* [Antwerp]: [Gillis Coppens van Diest], 1544/1545, sig. A4v.

[79] For more on ego-documents, particularly Jacques Presser's original formulation of the concept and its development since then, see: Volker Depkat, "Ego-Documents," in *Handbook of Autobiography / Autofiction*, ed. Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf (De Gruyter, 2019), 262–67, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110279818-031; James R. Farr and Guido Ruggiero, "Introduction: Historicizing Life-Writing and Egodocuments in Early Modern Europe," in *Historicizing Life-Writing and Egodocuments in Early Modern Europe*, ed. James R. Farr and Guido Ruggiero (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022), 1–16, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82483-9_1.

who thus was no longer so eager to include his own experience in his texts. Regardless of such possibilities, it is worth noting that Georgijević's future texts more closely align with Wittenberg Circle values regarding education and life-writing. As a "birthplace" for the Reformation — Luther's famous Ninety-Five Theses were delivered to the archbishop of a church in Wittenberg in 1517— Wittenberg acted as a hub for the cultivation of Reformation thinking, both at the university and via printing operations located there. (Both Luther and Melanchthon, as well as many other German humanists sympathetic to Reformation ideas, taught at the university at Wittenberg.) As has been discussed by a number of scholars, the printing press played a significant role in the dissemination of Reformation theology.[80] Scholasticism, Reformation zeal, and distributive technologies combined in Wittenberg to produce works such as the so-called Luther Bible, which was first printed in Wittenberg in 1534, as well as a substantial amount of Turcica. (As Stefan Hanß notes, some of the earliest European attempts at Oriental Studies were made by Lutheran scholars and Protestant educational movements.[81]) These printing operations can be interpreted in light of the fact that Luther and Melanchthon, both professors at the university in Wittenberg, were staunch advocates of humanistic education. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the Wittenberg vision of education was not entirely disinterested. Both Luther and Melanchthon believed that the insights gleaned from education were for the benefit of the Christian church — according to Gábor Almási, Melanchthon often claimed in his correspondence that "churches cannot flourish without sciences and erudition."[82]

[80] For more on the role of printing in facilitating the Reformation, see: Mark U. Edwards, Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (University of California Press, 1994), https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft3q2nb278;brand=ucpress; Allyson F. Creasman, "Martin Luther and the Printing Press," in *Martin Luther in Context*, ed. David M. Whitford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 108–16, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316596715.014.

[81] Stefan Hanß, "Ottoman Language Learning in Early Modern Germany," *Central European History* 54, no. 1 (March 2021): 1–33, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008938920000011.

[82] Gábor Almási, *The Uses of Humanism: Johannes Sambucus (1531-1584), Andreas Dudith (1533-1589), and the Republic of Letters in East Central Europe* (Brill, 2009), 41.

Thus, Georgijević's *De Origine* — the 1560 Wittenberg compilation of *De afflictione tam captivorum, De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis,* "Prognoma, sive praesagium Mehmetanorum," and "Exhortatio contra Turcas," along with detailed descriptions of the Ottoman imperial dynasty and court structure (as described in Chapter 1) — fit nicely with the range of theological, academic and informational texts being printed at Wittenberg. However, and perhaps more significantly, the compilation's autobiographical reticence mirrors the prevailing Wittenberg tendency to mold life-writing for polemical ends. As Mayer and Woolf discuss, Reformation authors used life-writing not only to "immortalize" their subjects but also to advance arguments within (intra)confessional disputes regarding theology.[83] This approach can be seen in Melanchthon's posthumous biography of Luther *De vita et actis Lutheri,* which as Irena Backus suggests painted Luther as "a sort of God's *Werkzeug* used by the Almighty to implement His eschatological design."[84] However, Melanchthon's biography of Luther was a far more typical genre than still-emerging autobiography — and Luther as a figure had ascended to such a rank and importance that Melanchthon and Luther's other biographers had little need to justify that their subject had earned biographical treatment. Memoiristic writing was infrequent among the Wittenberg Circle. As Zachary Purvis, Casey Carmichael and Timios Cook note, Melanchthon did not write his own memoir; his most autobiographical writing comes in a preface to his collected works, in which Melanchthon describes his intellectual development.[85]

With the literary tendencies of Wittenberg in mind, it is interesting that Georgijević's more expressive *De ritibus et differentiis* did not appear in either of Georgijević's later

[83] Thomas F. Mayer and Daniel R. Woolf, eds., "Introduction," in *The Rhetorics of Life-Writing in Early Modern Europe: Forms of Biography from Cassandra Fedele to Louis XIV* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 10.
[84] Irena Backus, *Life Writing in Reformation Europe: Lives of Reformers by Friends, Disciples and Foes* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2013), xvii.

[85] Zachary Purvis, Casey Carmichael, and Timios Cook, "Philip Melanchthon on Himself and His Books: The Preface to His Operum Tomi Quinque , 1541," *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 22, no. 2 (May 3, 2020): 158–75, https://doi.org/10.1080/14622459.2020.1754592.

compilations (*De Origine* or the earlier *De Turcarum moribus epitome*) and had a much less significant distribution than the captive-author's other works. Extant copies, which are far less numerous than those of Georgijević's other work, indicate that the autobiographical *De ritibus et differentiis* may have never left its original quarto first printing.[86] Almut Höfert has suggested that *De ritibus et differentiis* could have been excluded from those later compilations because the memoiristic book "adds a few light touches" in its recounting of Georgijević's time in captivity and thus does not offer the wholly bleak portrayal that would have better served Christian polemicists.[87]

Nonetheless, though it is relatively less significant in his later works, Georgijević did not disappear altogether as a textual figure. At times he emerges in the text quite suddenly, as a narrator-observer. For example, while discussing slavery in the Ottoman Empire in *De Afflictione* (which was later used in compilations), Georgijević writes: "*Multa sunt ibi inaudita exempla miseriae. Ceterum homines iugo copulatos aratrum ducere (non) nunquam vidi*."[88] In this instance, as in others in his later work, Georgijević presence is used to validate the information offered without making his own experiences the focus of a passage. This approach — one in which Georgijević the narrator looms but does not interfere — is also depicted visually. The final page of *De Afflictione* shows a woodcut a Christian in the Holy Land featuring a crucified Jesus. (See Figure 4.) Georgijević, who escaped the Ottoman Empire via Jerusalem, is explicitly named in the text around the image's perimeter as a

[86] It is worth noting that most of Georgijević's other books appeared in the more commercial and affordable octavo.
[87] Almut Höfert, "Bartholomaeo Georgius." In *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History: Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America*, edited by David Thomas and John Chesworth, 328.
[88] In English: "There are many unheard-of miseries there. Moreover, I have never seen elsewhere men lead a plow having been bound together by a yoke." This passage appears in: Georgijević, *De afflictione tam captivorum*, sig.A6r; Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum,* sig. G4r. Interestingly, *De Afflictione* does not include the "non" (placed in parentheses) whereas *De origine* does.

"pilgrim of Jerusalem." His faithfulness to Christianity — unlike George of Hungary, Georgijević did not convert — is confirmed: "*Deus Israel dux eius fuit et non erat cum eo Deus alienus*."[89] Likewise, the genuflecting Christian declares "*ficabo hostiam laudis*."[90] This woodcut is not used in *De Origine*; nonetheless, appearing in the book that sets the standard for how Georgijević's texts will use his autobiography, the woodcut provides a helpful visual for thinking about Georgijević's role as author-narrator. His bleak experience as a captive sold multiple times is optimistically transformed as an event that reaffirmed his faith and presented an opportunity to deepen it via a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.[91] Thus, his own misery is no longer the focus on the text — he has become a traveler and man of God, who offers rare insight (and copious arguments) about the Ottoman Empire.

Figure 41. A woodblock print depicting Bartholomew Georgijević the pilgrim in De ritibus. Sig. E4v.

[89] In English: "The God of Israel was his leader and there was no foreign God with him." Georgijević, *De afflictione tam captivorum*, sig. E4v.
[90] Ibid. In English: "I will make an offering of praise."
[91] For more on Bartholomew Georgijević as a pilgrim, see Sundar Henny, "On Not Forgetting Jerusalem: Bartholomaeus Georgievits as a Pilgrim and Ethnographer of Eastern Christianity" in *The Habsburg Mediterranean 1500–1800*. Henny also offers an intervention against current scholarship's tendency "to ignore Jerusalem during the early modern period, or to present it as slumbering, only irregularly disturbed by a belated medieval pilgrim." Henny, 176.

Autobiography and Group Belonging in the Czech Manuscript of Konstantin Mihailović's Account

Unlike most of Bartholomew Georgijević's short writings and compilations, Konstantin Mihailović's sole text includes a considerable amount of autobiographical information and first-person narration. In this section, I will explore how the text's use of the first-person plural subtly balances the author-narrator's group affinities. At times, the use of "we' suggests a strong affinity to a military group, such as the Janissary corps or the Serbian Despot Đurađ Branković's troops. At other times, the use of the first-person plural seemingly affirms Mihailović's belonging to Christendom.[92]

Mihailović's *Historia neb Kronika turecká* explicitly positions itself as an aid to Christian Europe. A lost son returned to Christendom, Mihailović suggests that he wants to share this information for the sake of the Christian cause, so that Christendom will be prepared and equipped for future military engagements with the Ottoman Empire. More broadly, acts of intercultural knowledge transfer in the early modern period can be understood as a way trans-imperial subjects negotiated alterity and/or created alliances. Eyewitness accounts were seen as valuable sources for historical information: first-hand accounts figured prominently in the historiographical texts and travelogues that preceded Mihailović's own late fifteenth-century *kronika*.[93] However, in situations such as Mihailović's, information sharing could be fraught. As Natalie Rothman suggests, early modern trans-imperial subjects—dragomans, renegades, redeemed captives, and merchants, among others—could not be slotted into a single group with a concomitant single political

[92] There has been extensive debate about the early modern "self"; however, I see that discussion as tangential to the arguments I am making. Therefore, references to "Mihailović" in the text should be understood as how the narrator (who has a direct but not 1:1 to relationship with the author) operates within this source.
[93] For an extensive study on the significance of the eyewitness in medieval historiography, see: Marcus Bull, *Eyewitness and Crusade Narrative: Perception and Narration in Accounts of the Second, Third and Fourth Crusades* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2018).

allegiance. Thus, acts of information sharing can be interpreted as vital to maintaining the interests and comfort of the trans-imperial subject. Allegiance may have been of special concern for Mihailović, who derived his privileged information from being a member of the empire that posed the greatest threat to the East Central European regions where his text circulated. Studying *Historia neb Kronika turecká,* one is left with the impression that Mihailović carefully managed the way in which he shared knowledge of the Ottoman Empire, especially information closely related to his personal experience. In the text, Mihailović refers to himself as an individual very rarely; the authorial first-person singular only appears in four scenes in the text. More frequently, the text refers to his own participation in a historical episode as a member of a group: a first-person plural "we."

A Christian "We," a Military "We"

In the first several chapters of his text, Mihailović's text offers its Christian readers a basic overview of key Muslim religious practices. Holidays are explained. An (inaccurate) story of Muhammad and Ali is related. Washing and prayer rituals are described. Throughout these explanations, the narrator Mihailović restates his allegiance to Christianity through the use of the first-person plural. Describing, for example, observance practices, he writes: "And they keep holy Friday in the week as the Jews do the Sabbath and **we Christians** Sunday."[94] On the role of religious scripture: "Now the heathens have small books by the name of hama hely and keep them as a sacred thing, just as **we** have the Holy Scripture."[95] And on Muslims' rejection of Christian Trinitarian doctrine: "And they consider the Christians a sinful people because **we** extol and profess the Holy Trinity, saying, 'There are not three Gods but one.'

[94] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 3.
[95] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 9.

The Busromane therefore have named the Christians kaury which means 'lost' or 'confused' people." [96] (Emphasis in each quotation is mine.)

Mihailović text's use of comparisons aligns with the way in which many of his European contemporaries approached Islam and the Ottoman Empire in their writings. As Noel Malcolm points out in *Useful Enemies*, direct comparison between Christian and Muslim customs and practices was an oft-used explanatory tool for Christian thinkers writing about the Ottoman Empire and Islam.[97] The Ottoman Empire's capture of Constantinople in 1453 triggered sustained, prominent discourse in Christian Europe about Ottoman culture and Islam as a faith, conversations that would continue and evolve in the succeeding decades and centuries. In a departure from medieval Christian discourse, which focused on the aspects of Islam most anathema to Christian theology,[98] early modern discourse on the Ottoman Empire and the "Mahometans," as followers of Islam were called at that time, often took a more conciliatory, cultural approach to understanding a neighboring empire. Nonetheless, many of these early modern scholarly efforts still viewed Islam as a "forgery." As authors suggested themselves, information about Islam and translation of the Qur'an would help prevent Christians from converting to Islam and also help Christians better understand the Muslims they sought to convert. Captive narratives such as Mihailović's add valuable, first-person detail to the more rhetorical and philosophical debates about Islam waged by humanist thinkers, who often came to their studies with the ulterior motive of proving that their sect of Christianity was superior to all others.[99] Mihailović's own goals do not seem religious but

[96] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 5.
[97] For a detailed study on this topic, see Chapter 3, "A New View of Islam" in: Alexander Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment*, Illustrated edition (Cambridge (Mass.): Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 2018).
[98] Examples include medieval Christians' focus on Muslim notions of Paradise and bigamist marriage practices.
[99] See, for example, Martin Luther's writing on Islam such as "Preface to the *Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum*" (1530), and "Preface to *Bibliander's Edition of the Qur'an*" (1543). These texts have been translated to English and can be found in: S. Henrich and J.L. Boyce, "Martin Luther—Translations of Two Prefaces on Islam: Preface to the Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum (1530), and Preface to Bibliander's Edition of the Qur'an (1543)," *Word & World* XVI/2 (1996): 250-266.

political. His narrative notably lacks the professions of faith espoused in other early modern captive narratives, and the text's epilogue makes a direct appeal to Vladislaus II and Jan I Olbracht, the king of Bohemia and Hungary and the king of Poland, respectively. Thus, his comparisons of Muslim and Christian practices can be read as attempts to massage his life history into a form acceptable to his Christian readers.

Though Mihailović never states this explicitly in his text, it seems probable that as a captive associated with the janissary corps he converted to Islam. It is also worth emphasizing that, unlike notable Ottoman captives such as George of Hungary or Bartholomew Georgijević, the other subject of this study, Mihailović did not return to Christendom through conscious action. He neither escaped nor raised funds for his redemption, typical means by which Christian captives were able to return to Europe.[100] Rather, according to his own narration, Mihailović returned to Christendom after King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary seized the garrison in Zvečaj (in modern-day Croatia) where Mehmed II had left the Janissary corps stationed. As with many of the battle scenes described, Mihailović recounts this episode in vivid detail:

> The King [Matthias Corvinus] lay there eight weeks attacking them and sent another man with guns to assault Zvečaj. And in that fortress the wall was bad, for they had battered it so much with cannon, that we ceaselessly worked day and night repairing it again. So long did this continue that the Jajce fortress was taken before Zvečaj. And King Matyas, having taken Jajce with a treaty immediately marched back to the Hungarians at Zvečaj, and we also had to surrender; and whatever Turks were at Jajce and Zvečaj, few of them returned to the Turks, for King Matyas wished to keep them with him. And I thanked the Lord God that I had thus got back among the Christians with honor. And thus did King Matyas take Jajce and also Zvečaj.[101]

Here, Mihailović offers a subdued description of his return to Christendom. Compare, for example, Michailović's announcement that he "got back among the Christians with honor" to George of Hungary's *Tractatus de moribus, condictionibus et nequicia Turcorum* (1481), in

[100] For an extensive study of early modern ransom slavery practices in the Ottoman Empire, focused on its borderlands, see: Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, *Ransom Slavery Along the Ottoman Borders: Early Fifteenth - Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Brill, 2007).
[101] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 141.

which the author recounts his multiple escape attempts and joyfully recalls how he finally "walked out a free man" and left the Ottoman Empire.[102] In contrast to George of Hungary's view of himself as an alienated individual and slave, Mihailović seems to have seamlessly integrated himself in the Ottoman Empire as a member of the Janissary corps. In this passage, as in others, Mihailović allows his own identity to melt into the "we" of the Janissaries — who "ceaselessly worked day and night" to repair the wall after the attacks of Corvinus's cannons and who "had to surrender" after Jajce was taken. This group identity only gives way to the first-person singular, Konstantin Mihailović's "I," when the battle's outcome has forced him to individuate from the Janissary corps. Interestingly, he suggests that his return was not entirely of his own volition since Matthias Corvinus "wished to keep [the captured Turks] with him." However, it does seem like Mihailović may have had some degree of choice since, according to his narration, "few" (rather than none) of the captives returned to the Ottoman Empire. One of the few narrative scenes in which Mihailović uses "I," this passage demonstrates how Mihailović's use of the first-person plural connotes broader group affiliations.

Mihailović's use of the first-person plural in this battle scene at Zvečaj is representative of the way he describes most of his military exploits. As a member of the Janissary corps, Mihailović's text suggest he participated in a number of Mehmed II's conquest efforts, including aggressive campaigns against the Morean Despot Demetrios Palaiologos, Emperor David of Trebizond, Aq Qoyunlu King Uzun Hasan, Wallachian Voivode Vlad Dracula (Vlad III), and the Bosnian King Stefan Tomaš. In these scenes, Mihailović most often describes the preparations for battles or marches from one battle site to the next. Rarely does he describe himself in the middle of the battle, and never does he

[102] Georgius de Hungaria, *Tractatus de moribus, condictionibus et nequicia Turcorum*. Translated by D. R. Stevenson, 100.

describe himself as taking aggressive military actions against his foes, even non-Christian foes — such depictions would have been less likely to offend Mihailović's west Slavic readers. Instead, Mihailović offers military narrations that resemble the following passage, taken from his account against the Wallachian Voivode Dracula:

> And when it was already night we boarded the boats and shoved off downstream in the river so that oars and men would not be heard. And we reached the other side some furlongs below where the Voivode's army lay, and there we dug in, having emplaced the cannon and having encircled ourselves with shields and having placed stakes around ourselves so that cavalry could do nothing to us. Then the boats went to the other side until the Janissaries had all crossed to us.[103]

Mihailović's narrative is filled with many such scenes of action and military maneuvering. As in this passage, Mihailović describes himself as one member of a larger group of Janissaries working hard to execute the orders of Mehmed II: e.g., "we boarded the boats" and "there we dug in." Based on the frequency Mihailović uses this military "we," in this passage and elsewhere, it can be said that Janissary Corps membership is a group identity he adopted with relative ease. Janissaries were often men of South Slavic origin, who had been taken from their homes as boys, converted to Islam and trained to be highly skilled soldiers and advisors to the emperor. Thus, as a member of Janissary corps, the Serbian Mihailović would have been among other men from a similar region, in a similar situation — i.e., that of a soldier but also a slave of the emperor.[104]

Mihailović's comfortable use of a military "we" can be interpreted in several different ways. First, it may suggest that Mihailović was a keen soldier and enjoyed belonging to Janissary corps. Second, Mihailović's use of "we" may have helped inflate his own standing within the Ottoman Empire's military. Previously scholarly treatments of this narrative have

[103] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 131.
[104] For further information on the Janissary corps, see: Gilles Veinstein, "On the Ottoman Janissaries (Fourteenth-Nineteenth Centuries)," in *Fighting for a Living: A Comparative Study of Military Labour 1500-2000*, ed. Erik-Jan Zürcher (Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 115–34, https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt6wp6pg.7.

suggested that Mihailović wrote this text for personal gain. Given the narrative's afterword, which features a direct address to the Polish and Bohemian-Hungarian kings, Philippe Buc has argued that Mihailović wrote this narrative after Zvečaj in order to secure a position in the advisory circle of one or both of the kings.[105] As Benjamin Stolz and Svat Soucek point out in the introduction to the English critical edition of the Mihailović text, Mihailović never explicitly states that he was a Jannissary and given the age at which he was captured, it's unlikely he would have had time to complete Janissary training. Thus, "we" allows Mihailović to obfuscate his marginal involvement — as perhaps an attaché — in the prestigious corp. Third, the use of the first-person plural minimizes the extent to which Mihailović takes personal responsibility for the military actions he describes, several of which were attacks against Christian lands.[106]

This last point is worth further consideration. Mihailović's autobiography differentiated his text from the many polemical, theological texts about Islam and the Ottoman Empire circulating in Europe in the sixteenth century. However, his autobiography, if not appropriately managed, could have opened him up to criticism and social ostracization. This "managing" is evident in his recollections of the fall of Constantinople, in which Mihailović participated on the side of the Ottoman Empire, as a solider of the Serbian Despot Đurađ Branković, a vassal of the Ottoman emperor. This episode comes after twenty-four expository chapters on the customs, governance, and history of the Ottoman Empire and marks the first time Mihailović emerges as an actor in the text.

[105] In his recent article on Mihailović's narrative, Philippe Buc suggests that the existence of early Polish and Czech version of this text "refracts how the author tried both to sell this knowledge and his services to two royal courts, Poland and Bohemia-Hungary." Philippe Buc, "One among Many Renegades: The Serb Janissary Konstantin Mihailović and the Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans," *Journal of Medieval History* 46, no. 2 (March 14, 2020): 229, https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2020.1719188.

[106] This includes the campaign against Bosnian King Stefan Tomaš, who converted to Roman Catholicism in 1459.

Using the oft-repeated tropes of characterizing the Ottoman Emperor Mehmed II, Mihailović describes the Ottoman victory as a product of Mehmed's cunning and dishonesty as well as the indecision and miscalculations of a Christian ruler (in this case, Constantine XI Palaiologos). In the leadup to the battle, Mihailović writes, Mehmed built a fortress "five Italian miles" from Constantinople. This causes fear among the Byzantines, despite their truce with Mehmed, and they begin to prepare for battle. Mehmed, aware of these preparations, sends a message to the Byzantines assuaging their fears — he is only building this fortress in order to protect merchants, who have been recently attacked by the Catalans. In Mihailović's rendering, the fearful Byzantine emperor, trusting in his truce with Mehmed, acquiesces: "And so the Greek emperor let the Turkish emperor carry on in this manner so that he would finish the fortress."[107] At the same time, according to Mihailović, Mehmed pretends he needs reinforcements for a planned campaign against the Karamanids. He requests cavalry from the Serbian Despot. Once the fortress is finished, Mehmed sends raiders toward Constantinople. The troops dispatched from Serbia—which includes Mihailović—are forced to join the battle against Constantinople. Writing about the siege, Mihailović presents himself as an unwilling, coerced participant:

> And those same troops whom the Despot had sent to the aid of the Turkish emperor, having heard on the road that the Emperor had surrounded Stambol, wanted to go back home; but being warned by certain men that they should not return under any circumstances, telling us, "For you will be killed by the Turks—so it has been ordered for you." Therefore we had to ride forward to Stambol and help the Turks conquer [it]; but the city would never have been conquered by our help[108]

In this passage, Mihailović minimizes his involvement in the famous battle in two ways. First, and more explicitly, he suggests that the involvement of the Serbian troops did not make a significant difference in the outcome of the siege of Constantinople. Second, Mihailović presents himself as a member of a larger group which, as a unit, was forced to partake in the battle. The alternation between third person — the distant narratorial rendering

[107] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 89.
[108] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 91.

of “those same troops” — and the first-person plural — “we had to ride forward” — materializes the previously discussed autobiographical tension in Mihailović’s historical project. Thus, it seems, Mihailović has chosen to disappear into a “we” rather than offer himself as a responsible individual actor.

Chapter 3

Multilingualism and Near Eastern Languages in Bartholomew Georgijević and Konstantin Mihailović's Texts

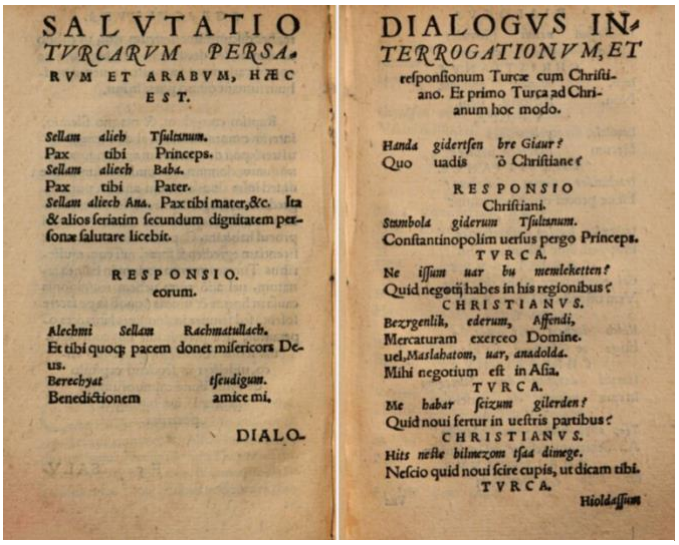
In this final chapter, I turn to the most concrete way in which Georgijević and Mihailović function as early Orientalists, predating seventeenth-century philological experts but still offering texts that were far richer in information and learning than those of polemicists who had never left Europe. As suggested in previous chapters, captive-authors brought to their texts a wealth of experience and insight into Europe's most significant sixteenth-century rival. Nonetheless, writing about the Ottoman Empire, even for the sake of sharing knowledge with fellow Christians, was a fraught undertaking — information about the Ottoman daily life, religious customs, etc. needed to be framed with dismissal, in order to ensure that Christian norms were not threatened and to make clear that the captive-author was not attempting to convert readers to Islam, a major anxiety of sixteenth-century Christian-Muslim relations. This dynamic is most apparent at those moments or sections where Georgijević and Mihailović share samples of Oriental languages — Turkish in the case of Mihailović and Turkish, Arabic, and "*lingua sclavonica*" in the texts of Georgijević.

Bartholomew Georgijević's Turkish, Arabic and 'Lingua Sclavonica'

In this section I will focus on the short language guides that appeared across Georgijević's four published books and particularly those language texts appearing in the last known compilation of Georgijević's work, *De origine imperii Turcorum*, published in 1560 under the auspices of Melanchthon. *De Origine* contains two bilingual Latin-transliterated Turkish dialogues: the one-page "Salutatio Turcarum Persarum et Arabum" and the three-

page "Dialogus Interrogationum." (It is worth noting that all Turkish and Arabic *De Origine* is transliterated.) The book also features bilingual editions of the "Dominica Oratio" in Latin and Turkish, Arabic and "*lingua sclavonica*," a sixteenth-century predecessor to modern-day Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian.[109] A "Dialogus Salutationum Linguae Sclavonicae" rounds out the bilingual language guides appearing in *De Origine*.[110]

Interspersed throughout the book and appearing between *libelli*, these short bilingual texts work in concert with Georgijević's explications on Ottoman slavery and society (which also feature Turkish and a few Arabic words), framing how readers could interpret his larger work in a few specific ways. First, these bilingual texts establish Georgijević's authority as an expert on Ottoman culture. This projected bilingualism, albeit a shallow one, differentiates Georgijević from contemporaries such as Martin Luther, whose keen interest in Islam and Turks translated into polemical diatribes that quoted biblical passages rather than Turkish terminology, as seen in his prefaces to the 1530 *Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum* and Theodor Bibliander's



SALVTATIO
TVRCARVM PERSA-
RVM ET ARABVM, HÆC
EST.

Sellam alieh Tſulznum.
Pax tibi Princeps.
Sellam aliech Baba.
Pax tibi Pater.
Sellam aliech Ana. Pax tibi mater, &c. Ita & alios feriatim ſecundum dignitatem perſonæ ſalutare licebit.

RESPONSIO.
eorum.

Alechmi Sellam Rachmatullach.
Et tibi quoq; pacem donet miſericors Deus.
Berechyat tſeudigum.
Benedictionem amice mi.

DIALO-

DIALOGVS IN-
TERROGATIONVM, ET
reſponſionum Turcæ cum Chriſtiano. Et primo Turca ad Chriſtianum hoc modo.

Hanâ gidertſen bre Giaur?
Quo uadis ô Chriſtiane?

RESPONSIO
Chriſtiani.
Stumbola giderum Tſulznum.
Conſtantinopolim uerſus pergo Princeps.

TVRCA.
Ne iſſum uar bu memleketten?
Quid negotij habes in his regionibus?

CHRISTIANVS.
Bezrgenlik, ederum, Affendi,
Mercaturam exerceo Domine.
uel, Maslahatom, uar, anadolda.
Mihi negotium eſt in Aſia.

TVRCA.
Me habar ſeizum gilerden?
Quid noui fertur in ueſtris partibus?

CHRISTIANVS.
Hits neſſe bilmezom tſaa dimege.
Neſcio quid noui ſcire cupis, ut dicam tibi.

TVRCA.
Hioldaſſum

Figure 5. An example of the bilingual texts included in Georgijević's De Origine. Sigs. F5v-F6r.

[109] The Arabic version of the "Lord's Prayer" seems to have been new to the 1560 *De Origine*. The 1560 book mostly recycled material from the earlier 1553 *De Turcarum moribus epitom*e, first published in Lugdunum. This 1553 edition featured Slavonic and Turkish versions of the "Lord's Prayer." It is possible that Georgijević added this version on the request of Philip Melanchthon.

[110] As previously mentioned, *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum* does not appear in *De Origine*. Curiously, though, the Hungarian-Latin instructive texts of *De ritibus et differentiis Graecorum et Armenicorum* were not salvaged and recycled for *De Origine* or Georgijević's other compilation. This may suggest a lack of appetite for Hungarian in the packaging of an Oriental or eastern language, but further research is needed.

1543 edition of the Qur'an.[111, 112] They similarly set him apart from Philip Melanchthon, the author of the preface in *De Origine,* who militantly calls for a defense of Christendom and the demise of the Ottomans while engaging little with the substantial material Georgijević presents.[113] Second, these short bilingual texts, along with the Turkish words appearing in the *libelli*, offer curious readers a "taste of the exotic" perhaps more directly than Georgijević's narratives and explications. A conceit such as this seems to inform the "Dialogus Interrogationum," which stages a bilingual conversation between a Christian merchant on his way to Constantinople and a Turk, who wants to know why the Christian is traveling. In an almost too-perfect embodiment of European anxiety, the merchant breathes a sigh of relief (in Turkish, then in Latin) when the Turk lets him pass. (See Figure 5.) Finally, in the case of bilingual prayers, they remind readers of *De Origine* how the information offered by Georgijević should be interpreted — as a buttress for one's belief in Christian tenets. Thus, in the case of *De Origine* and in Georgijević's other works, these bilingual texts promise "authoritative information" for concerned Christian readers who want to educate themselves about the Ottoman Empire, without risking conversion.

However, this education had limits. The bilingual Latin-Turkish texts of *De Origine* were not meant to serve as tools that facilitate language acquisition, as the grammars of

111 For more, see: Sarah Henrich and James Boyce, "Martin Luther—Translations of Two Prefaces on Islam: Preface to the Libellus de Ritu et Moribus Turcorum (1530), and Preface to Bibliander's Edition of the Qur'an (1543)," *Word & World* XVI, no. 2 (Spring 1996): 250–66.

112 Georgijević's linguistic abilities should not be overstated. As Nil Palabiyik points out, Georgijević's knowledge of Turkish is limited; in particular, the fictitious "Dialogus Interrogationum," features grammatical mistakes, confusing the suffixes denoting possession. Palabiyik 144-5. However, it is equally worth pointing out that, as a captive, Georgijević may not have had access to formal education, and upon returning to Europe Georgijević would not have had access to Turkish grammars. As Palabiyik points out herself, it was not until the seventeenth century that Turkish linguistic resources became available (via print). Resources such as the rare manuscripts used by the Orientalist scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth century seem unlikely to have been available to Georgijević, whose death (c. 1569) predates the birth of Thomas Erpenius, a founding figure in the scholarly study of Near Eastern languages.

113 Melanchthon, for example, urges readers of *De Origine*: "*Ab hoc agmine non deficiamus admiratione potentiae Turcicae, aut metu crudelitatis ullorum Tyrannorum."* [Let us not abandon this marching column due to an admiration of the Turkish power, or a fear of the cruelty of any tyrants.] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum,* sig. A3r.

seventeenth-century Orientalists would. Georgijević explicitly recognizes this orientation in a small commentary following the Turkish-Latin interrogation dialogue, writing "Haec pauca Turcicae linguae vocabula tibi non necessitatis sed delectationis gratia generose lector adiunxi: ut scias quam sint crassa atque barbara."[114] (See Figure 6.) Curiously, earlier materials published by Georgijević which could have been used for language acquisition purposes, namely the Turkish-to-Latin dictionary of over two hundred words or the Turkish-Latin list of numbers (up to 1,000) that appeared in the earlier editions of *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis*, were not used in this compilation. Yet, directly subsequent to those lexicographical works in *De Turcarum*, Georgijević presents a similar characterization of the "crassa atque barbara" Turkish language. Addressing his "candide lector," the captive-author suggests that these language texts give the interested reader a sense of "the Ottoman language" — which he alternatingly calls Persian and Turkish.[115] However, Georgijević diminishes his offering, saying that it is not worth learning such a language since the people who speak it are barbaric.He moves quickly from dismissing the language to dismissing Ottoman culture and religion. Echoing Luther's preface to Bibliander's Qur'an, he writes that

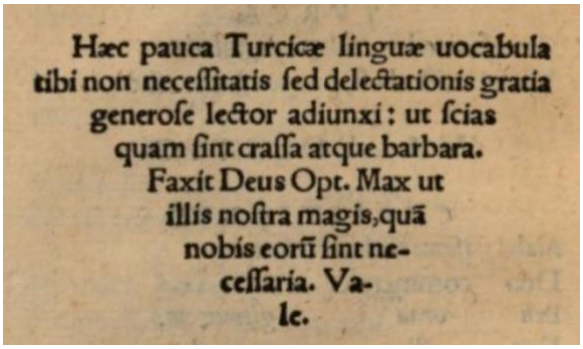

Hæc pauca Turcicæ linguæ uocabula
tibi non neceſſitatis ſed delectationis gratia
generoſe lector adiunxi: ut ſcias
quam ſint craſſa atque barbara.
Faxit Deus Opt. Max ut
illis noſtra magis, quã
nobis eorũ ſint ne-
ceſſaria. Va-
le.

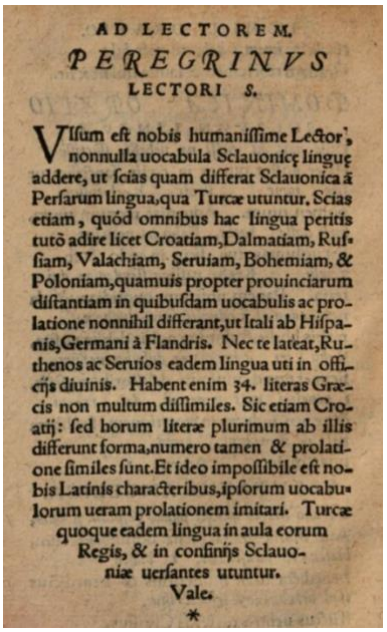
Figure 6. Bartholomew Georgijević discourages his readers from learning Turkish in De Origine. Sig. F7v.

> [S]ed ob hanc causam potissimum visum est nobis haec pauca omissis deterioribus, (quae non solum scriptu aut lectu sed etiam auditu essent turpia) explicare, ut his lectis, discernerent (maxime si qui extitissent eorum operum commendatores) quantum lux differat a tenebris, hoc est, quantum vera Christianorum religio, a nefandissima illa Barbarorum superstitione.[116]

[114] Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum*, sig. H8v.
In English: I have conferred upon you these few words of the Turkish language, not as a favor borne out of necessity but one of pleasure, generous reader: that you may know how crass and barbaric they are.
[115] Bartholomaeus Georgijević, *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis. Antverpiae: Gregorium Bontium*, 1544, sig. F4r.
[116] Ibid.

> [But for this reason it seemed especially worthwhile for us to explain these few things, worse ones having been omitted, (which were base not only in writing or in reading but also in hearing), so that, these things having been read, [Christians] would discern (chiefly if some recommenders of those works might have arisen) to what extent light differs from shadows, that is, how much the true religion of the Christians differs from that abominable superstition of the Barbarians.]

This perspective stands in stark contrast to Georgijević's attitudes regarding *lingua sclavonica*, which he recommends travelers learn a few words of, so that they can easily navigate Eastern Europe. "Slavonic," as he suggests, "differs from the Persian language" and a mastery of this language would allow a traveler to communicate with the residents of East Central and Eastern Europe.[117] Furthermore, he notes that the "Slavonic language" is worthwhile to learn because it is also used in the Ottoman palace at Ergis.[118] This hearty recommendation follows the "Dialogus Salutationum Linguae Sclavonicae," as Georgijević's disclaimer follows the Turkish-Latin dialogue. (See Figure 7.) As suggested by this contrast, the use of an Ottoman language was a highly fraught act in the sixteenth century, even in a textual space



AD LECTOREM.

PEREGRINVS

LECTORI S.

Vlsum est nobis humaniſſime Lector, nonnulla uocabula Sclauonicę linguę addere, ut ſcias quam differat Sclauonica ā Perſarum lingua, qua Turcæ utuntur. Scias etiam, quód omnibus hac lingua peritis tutō adire licet Croatiam, Dalmatiam, Ruſſiam, Valachiam, Seruiam, Bohemiam, & Poloniam, quamuis propter prouinciarum diſtantiam in quibuſdam uocabulis ac prolatione nonnihil differant, ut Itali ab Hiſpanis, Germani à Flandris. Nec te lateat, Ruthenos ac Seruios eadem lingua uti in officijs diuinis. Habent enim 34. literas Græcis non multum diſſimiles. Sic etiam Croatij: ſed horum literæ plurimum ab illis differunt forma, numero tamen & prolatione ſimiles ſunt. Et ideo impoſſibile eſt nobis Latinis characteribus, ipſorum uocabulorum ueram prolationem imitari. Turcæ quoque eadem lingua in aula eorum Regis, & in confinijs Sclauoniæ uerſantes utuntur.

Vale.

*

Figure 7. Georgijević's recommendation that readers learn lingua sclavonica in De Origine. Sig. H2v.

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117 *"Visum est nobis humanissime Lector, non nulla vocabula Sclavonicae linguae addere, ut scias quam differat Sclavonica ab Persarum lingua, qua Turcae utuntur. Scias etiam, quod omnibus hac lingua perititis tuto adire licet Croatiam, Dalmatiam, Russiam, Valachiam, Serviam, Bohemiam et Poloniam."*
In English: It seemed to us, most polite reader, worth adding some words to the Slavonic language, so that you may know how Slavonic differs from the Persian language which the Turks use. Be assured, too, that it is safe for all experts in this language to approach Croatia, Dalmatia, Russia, Wallachia, Serbia, Bohemia, and Poland. Georgijević, *De origine imperii Turcorum*, sig. H2v.

118 The entire passage seen in Figure 7 translates thus: "It seemed to us, most polite reader, to add some words to the Slavonic language, so that you may know how Slavonic differs from the Persian language which the Turks use. Be assured, too, that it is safe for all experts in this language to approach Croatia, Dalmatia, Russia, Valachia, Serbia, Bohemia, and Poland, although, on account of the distance of the provinces, they differ somewhat in some names and pronunciation, as the Italians from the Spaniards, the Germans from the Flanders. Don't forget that the Ruthenians and Serbians use the same language in the divine services. For they have 34 letters not very different from those of the Greeks. So also the Croatians: but their letters differ very much from them in form, yet they are similar in number and in pronunciation. Therefore it is impossible for us to imitate the true pronunciation of the Latin characters of these words. The Turks also use the same language in their palace at Ergis and on the borders of Slavonia."

specifically demarcated for the conveyance of information and despite the ample demand for Georgijević's writing.

Georgijević's language abilities were a significant part of his informational offerings as a European former captive of the Ottoman Empire. And yet his Oriental linguistic skills needed to be managed and deprecated. Interestingly, Georgijević's condemnations of the Turkish language are considerably more vehement than his attitudes toward Ottoman life and customs seen in some of his longer accounts, such as the ethnographic *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis.* Even the rhetoric of his more polemical works, *De Afflictione* and *Exhortatio,* is not as strong as that seen in the writings of Martin Luther, though Georgijević is clearly disgusted by the institution of slavery. Georgijević's careful dismissals of Turkish seem to be intentional and purposeful, especially when contrasted with his enthusiastic recommendation of *lingua sclavonica*. This dynamic suggests that, as vernacular languages have been important political tools in building national consciousness, Near Eastern languages were perceived in the sixteenth century to hold the opposite possibility: the dissolution of a European Christian identity and the conversion to "false" Islam. Therefore, a one-time captive writing about his experience had to carefully negotiate this tension while sharing information that, despite its connections to heresy, was sought after by literate Europeans.

"In Our Language": Konstantin Mihailović's Use of Turkish and Arabic

As with his autobiographical disclosures, or Bartholomew Georgijević's bilingual texts, the inclusion of Oriental languages is carefully managed in Konstantin Mihailović's narrative.[119] As has been noted by scholars such as Nabil Matar, captive-authors often make use of foreign terms, in the language of their captors, to describe their experiences in

[119] It is again worth noting that by "Mihailović" I mean the author-narrator as he is present in the text. This "character" can be considered a construction of Mihailović the historical person but also the translator/scribe who rendered this text in Czech.

captivity and the culture, religious beliefs, and norms of their captor-state.[120] Mihailović's text makes liberal use of Turkish and Arabic; however, it does not offer the bilingual texts seen in Georgijević's work. (Previous scholarship has shown that Mihailović's Arabic and Turkish are badly rendered/transliterated in the text and that terms used in his text were not adopted by the Czech vernacular tradition.[121]) Interestingly, though, Mihailović's presentation of Near Eastern languages does not seem so neutral as Georgijević's. While Georgijević offers Turkish or Arabic as an example of "*eorum lingua*" — e.g., "*Elephantes eorum lingua* Phil *dictos*"[122] — Mihailović tends to oppose a Turkish or Arabic word or phrase with the commensurate he denotes as belonging to "our language" (*"nassy yazikem*"). (See Figure 8.) In this section, I will adopt the same critical approach used in Chapter 2 and thus pay special attention to the use of the first-person plural in connection with Turkish or Arabic terms in Mihailović's text.

Samples of Near Eastern languages are usually presented in Mihailović's text via the following rubric: "[Turkish or Arabic word], which in our language means [Turkish or Arabic word in translation]." This pattern repeats so frequently it reads almost like a mantra. The formula tends to appear when Mihailović is explaining a foreign custom or convention, such as in the following, which attempts to depict an Arabic prayer:

> The heathen priest comes out on the tower by day and by night seven times and calls; walking on the gallery, having placed one finger in one ear and the other in the other, in a great voice he says "Lay lacha illalach Machomet resullach esse duenne lay lacha illalach." In our language it is translated thus: "God of Gods, Mohammed is God's emissary; hear me, God of Gods.[123]

[120] Nabil Matar, "Introduction: England and Mediterranean Captivity, 1577-1704." In *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, edited by Daniel Vitkus, 1–52. Columbia University Press, 2001

[121] Snezana Petrovic, "Turkish Loanwords in the Czech Manuscript of Konstantin Mihailović's 'Memoirs of a Janissary,'" in Proceedings of the Etymological Symposium Brno 2017, ed. Ilona Janyšková, Helena Karlíková, and Vít Boček (Etymological Research into Czech, Brno: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2017), 339–49

[122] In English: "Elephants, called *Phil* in their language." Georgijević, *De Origine*, sig. E8r.

[123] Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, ed. Svat Soucek, trans. Benjamin Stolz, 11.

This switching between Arabic or Turkish to "our language," seen here and in so many other instances in Mihailović's text, seems to act as more than a simple explanation for unknown words or phrases. But what to make of this demarcation of "our language" and "their language"? Perhaps this oft-used phrasing can be seen as a tangible, literary product of a European political mentality that imagined and thereby created a firm division between the Ottoman Empire and Christendom, despite the permeability of the two polities, as evidenced by the fall of Constantinople, the expansion of the Ottoman Empire into the Balkans, and, of course, books authored by former captives. It seems to reflect the "Othering" mentality described by scholars such as Iver B. Neumann and Albrecht Classen, who argue that premodern European identity was formed in contrast to notions of an Ottoman Other.[124] Furthermore, it is worth noting that this formulation of "our language" is particular to Mihailović's text — Georgijević tends to refer to Latin by its name rather than by some group affiliation. For example, in a comparable instance when Georgijević is describing a transcription on the wall of a temple, he offers far less framing. The inscription belongs to "*Arabica lingua*" and the temple is called "*ipsorum lingua Meschit*."[125] The difference between Mihailović and Georgijević's treatments likely reflects a difference in the status and use of Latin as a transnational language and Czech as a vernacular

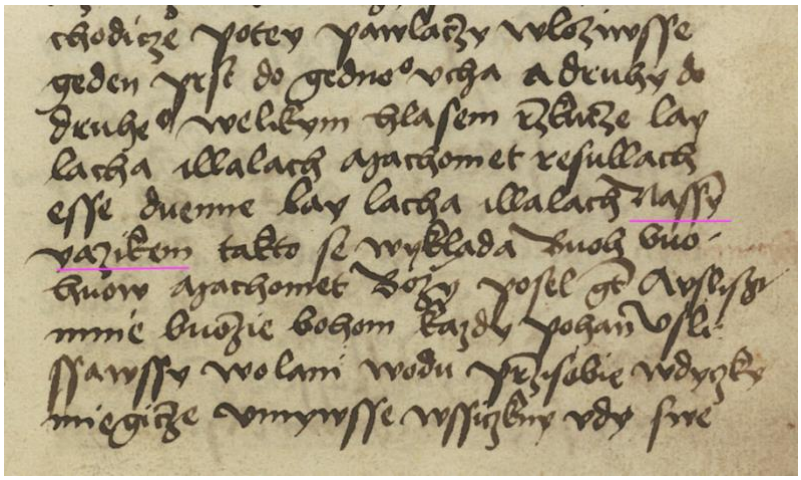

Figure 8. An example of the use of "nassy yazikem" ("our language"), which is underlined in pink, in 1565 Czech manuscript of Mihailović's Historia neb Kronika turecká.

[124] See for example: Albrecht Classen, ed., *East Meets West in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times* (Berlin ; Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2013); Albrecht Classen, ed., *Meeting the Foreign in the Middle Ages*, (New York: Routledge, 2002); Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: "The East" in European Identity Formation* (U of Minnesota Press, 1999).
[125] Georgijević, *De Origine*, sig. D2v.

belonging to a specific *gens* or nation. As has been discussed by previous scholarship, vernacular languages could serve as political instruments in the medieval and early modern periods and were used by rulers to shore up support and unify the stakeholders of a given kingdom or realm during times of change.[126] In this broader context, the use of "our language" in Mihailović's text takes on a political importance, suggesting that this constant affirmation of what is and is not "our language" operates in his text in the manner of Georgijević's disclaimers about the "*crassa atque barbara*" qualities of Oriental languages. Thus, I read this framing as a way in which Mihailović as narrator negotiates a desire to share information and prove expertise while avoiding any appearance of treachery or allegiance to his former captors — a matter of no little importance for Mihailović, since he did not escape from captivity as Georgijević did.

[126] See for example: Marie Bláhová, "Vernacular Historiography in Medieval Czech Lands." *Medievalia* 19, no. 1 (April 2017): 33–65. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.5565/rev/medievalia.422; Adrian Hastings, The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Conclusion

In this thesis I have analyzed the ways in which the texts of Konstantin Mihailović and Bartholomew Georgijević used existing genres of *historia* and life writing to offer information to European readers with limited awareness of Ottoman culture and daily life. Furthermore, I have explored how the conveyance of this information often includes attempts to degrade Ottoman history, governance, religion, and tradition even though, and perhaps because, the material being shared suggested a society that was in many ways on the same footing as the most developed European kingdoms. This dynamic is especially strong in Georgijević's work, which was disseminated via print. That Mihailović and Georgijević had lived among Europe's primary imperial rival, and could have provoked suspicions of treachery, especially around conversion, likely added to the careful balancing of Ottoman information and Christian political views seen in their texts. Nonetheless, as scholars who have studied premodern writing point out, the value of a first-person witness was considerable in the premodern European informational ecosystem. Georgijević and Mihailović's texts clearly take advantage of their time in Ottoman captivity to establish authority — nowhere is this more apparent than in their use of Turkish and Arabic. Having the background to work with Near Eastern languages sets Georgijević and Mihailović apart from medieval predecessors and near contemporaries, such as Martin Luther, who wrote polemically about Islam and the Ottoman Empire with little actual knowledge of the culture or society they were dismissing.

Stepping back, the overarching goal of this thesis has been to offer a close reading of two captive-authors accounts in order to draw attention to the intellectual frameworks within which one-time captives offered their hard-won expertise. Oftentimes, scholarly discussions of texts by early modern captives pay inadequate attention to the complexity of these texts,

focusing rather on the former captives' representations of their captors, the popularity of these texts in their own time, and the ways in which such texts contributed to (unsuccessful) efforts to drum up a new crusade. Additionally, the autobiographical element of these texts is often overrepresented in contemporary scholarship, while studies of these texts' methods and genre affiliations have not been a priority. Therefore, it is my hope that the previous study will help accentuate the construction of the so-called "captive narratives" of early modern Europe, particularly insomuch as their methodological qualities places them forerunners to the academic Orientalism that emerged in seventeenth-century Europe.

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