

CIRCULATION AND VERSIONS OF THE BIOGRAPHY OF DIMITRIE CANTEMIR. FROM PARATEXT TO INDEPENDENT TEXT. A FRENCH – ENGLISH – GERMAN – ROMANIAN ROUTE

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Abstract This paper intends to present the way in which the biography of the Moldavian prince Dimitrie Cantemir entered the Romanian culture at the beginning of the 19th century. Written in English, as an abridged version of a French prototext, the biographical text about Dimitrie Cantemir reached the Romanian culture through a German intermediary, the preface to the second German edition of *Descriptio Moldaviae*. Almost simultaneously it appeared in Romanian translation in two versions: as foreword to *Scrisoarea Moldovei* (1825) and as independent text, in the periodical *Biblioteca românească* (1829). The purpose of this paper is to identify the circulation of the biographical text from French to English, German, and Romanian, with a focus on the textual changes along this route. Furthermore, this paper also concentrates on the versions of the biography, initially designed as afterword, then as foreword, and which also circulated as independent text in Romanian. The analysis of these versions focuses on the intentionality of each translation: a paratextual element with an informative scope, and an autonomous text, published in a periodical, whose purpose was the education of the Romanian readership, and the creation of a national identity.

Keywords Dimitrie Cantemir, text circulation, translation, paratext, independent text.

Dimitrie Cantemir (1673 – 1723) was ruler of Moldavia for a very short period yet remained known in history as a representative of the European Enlightenment, being highly regarded for his vast knowledge in various fields. The first written information about Dimitrie Cantemir was drafted by his own son, to promote his works in Western Europe. This biographical text

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eventually reached the Romanian culture, yet circulated in various languages, being constantly adapted, abridged, or completed.

The biography of Dimitrie Cantemir, an 18-page handwritten afterword entitled *La Vie du Prince Dimitrie Cantemir écrite de la main propre d'Antiochus Cantemir son fils cadet, ministre plen[ipotentiaire] de sa Majeste Czarienne à Londres*, accompanied the Latin manuscript of Cantemir's monumental work *Incrementorum et decrementorum Aulæ Othomannicæ libri tres*. The manuscript was discovered in the mid-20th century at Houghton Library of Harvard University, nowadays being available online.¹ One may clearly notice the different handwriting between the main text belonging to Dimitrie Cantemir, and the afterword attributed, as mentioned in its title, to his son, Antioch Cantemir. Furthermore, the fact that this afterword was written in French, as opposed to the main text, written in Latin, clearly suggests that the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir was drafted separately and added to the original manuscript. Since there is no proof that the biographical text written by Antioch Cantemir was intended to circulate as an independent text, one may assume that this biography was written with the purpose of supporting and popularizing the translations of Dimitrie Cantemir's works in Western Europe, a task which had been assumed by his son. Since the biography is not dated, one could only assume the approximate period when it was drafted, namely around the year 1730, most probably before 1732, when Antioch Cantemir was appointed Russian ambassador in London.

Up until the discovery of the manuscript from the Houghton Library, it had been believed that the original version of Cantemir's biography was an English text, *The Life of Demetrius Cantemir, Prince of Moldavia*, an afterword to the English translation of Cantemir's work *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire*, first published in 1735 and then in a second edition in 1756 in London, translated from Latin "from the Author's own manuscript," as mentioned on the inner cover of both editions and in *The Translator to the Reader* preface: "[...] the Author's Latin Manuscript History was communicated to the Translator by his Son, Prince Antiochus Cantemir, Minister Plenipotentiary from the Czarina, to his present Majesty King George."² The English translation, done by Nicolas Tindal, was facilitated and in fact financially supported by Antioch Cantemir. However, as demonstrated by Virgil Căndea in his 1985 article³, the English version of Cantemir's biography, signed by Tindal, appears to be in fact an abridged form of Antioch Cantemir's French text.

¹ *La Vie du Prince Dimitrie Cantemir écrite de la main propre d'Antiochus Cantemir son fils cadet, ministre plen[ipotentiaire] de sa Majeste Czarienne a Londres*, available online in the digital collection of Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Lat. 224:
<https://digitalcollections.library.harvard.edu/catalog/990093980420203941>.

² "The Translator to the Reader," Demetrius Cantemir, *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire* (London, 1735), 1.

³ Virgil Căndea, "La Vie du Prince Dimitrie Cantemir écrite par son fils Antioch. Texte integral d'après le manuscrit original de la Houghton Library," *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes* XXIII (3) (1985): 203–221.

When comparing the two versions of the biographical text, one may notice, in the English version, several omissions, clearly visible from the length of the two texts, the French manuscript having 18 pages front and back, whereas the English printed version had only a total of six pages. To give only one example, even from the beginning, the English version of the biography mentions the birth of Dimitrie Cantemir in 1673 and then moves rapidly to the year 1684, whereas the French manuscript contains a detailed description of the period 1673 – 1683 (approximately three pages). Similarly, the French text contains complete information about the death of Cantemir, whereas the English version states only the date and reason of Cantemir’s death. The English version also contains some alterations or even additional information, presumably with the purpose of adapting the text to the English readership of the time. Some examples of differences between the French prototext, belonging to Antioch Cantemir, and the English version, signed by Nicolas Tindal, are presented in the following table, the omissions or adaptations being marked as such in the quotes:

French prototext ⁴	English version ⁵
<p>Ses enfants avoient tous suivi a Petersbourg excepte sa fille Smaragda, qui empira de jour en jour et enfin mourant le 4 juillet de’la même année, âgée de 17 ans.</p> <p>Le Providence lui en donna une autre à la place de sa seconde épouse le 8 novembre de la même année. Pierre Premier avec le mère de l’impératrice régnante la tinrent sur les fonts de baptême, et l’appelèrent aussi Smaragda.</p> <p>(f. 13)</p>	<p>His children had now followed him to Petersburg, except his daughter Smaragda, who daily growing worse, died the fourth of July, in her seventeenth year. But her loss was supplied by a daughter which his second wife bore him the eighth of November, the same year, to whom the Czar and Czarina stood Godfather and Godmother, and named her also Smaragda.</p> <p>(p. 458)</p>
<p>A peine étoit-il parti de Colomna qu’il commença à sentir quelques douleurs de reins, et une petite fièvre continuelle, accompagnée de tems en tems d’un foiblese qui l’obligeoit a garder le lit pour quelque jours.</p> <p>(f. 14)</p>	<p>He had but just left Colomna, when he begun to feel a pain in his reins, with a light fever, attended now and then with such a weakness, that he was forced to keep his bed three or four days.</p> <p>(p. 458)</p>
<p>Enfin il arriva sur ses terres le 23 de mars en assez bonne santé. Il y employa son tems avec</p>	<p>However, he arrived at last, in March, in pretty good health. He spent his time in the</p>

⁴ The examples are taken from: *La Vie du Prince Demetrius Cantemir écrite de la main propre d’Antiochus Cantemir son fils cadet, minister plen[ipotentiaire] de sa Majeste Czarienne à Londres*, available online in the digital collection of Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Lat. 224: <https://digitalcollections.library.harvard.edu/catalog/990093980420203941>.

⁵ The examples are taken from: *The Life of Demetrius Cantemir*, 455–460.

<p>le divertissements ordinaires de la campagne, à régler ses affaires domestiques et à bâtir une église de pierre dédiée au St Demetrius, lorsque sa sante lu lui permettoit. Car de tems a tems y ressentoit son mal, et le flux de l'urine augmentoit et diminoit par intervalles. Enfin, le 15 d'Aout, après avoir entendu la messe et assiste au festin qu'il donnoit tous les ans a l'occasion de nom de sa fille ainée, il fut attaqué d'une fièvre lente, sa maladie ordinaire étant aussi augmentée au dernier point. Il mourant le 21 à 6 heures du soir. (f. 15-16)</p>	<p>usual diversions of the country, in settling his domestic affairs, and in building a Church, dedicated to St. Demetrius, when his health permitted him. At last, on the fifteenth of August, he was seized with a slow fever, and his Diabetes increased to such a degree, that he died the twenty-first of the same month, aged forty-nine years, seven months, and five days⁶. (p. 459)</p>
<p>Il eut du premier lit 6 fils et deux filles et du second une seule fille; une des filles et deux fils, comme nous avons dit, moururent de son vivant, et il en laissa après sa morte deux filles, Marie et Smaragda, et quatre fils: Matheus, Constantinus, Serbanus et Antiochus, tous vivants. (f. 17)</p>	<p>He had by hist first wife six sons and two daughters, and by his second an only daughter. One of his daughters and two sons died in his life-time, and he left behind two daughters, Maria and Samaragda; and four sons, Mathew, Constantine, Serban and Antiochus, who are all alive. The last is now Minister Plenipotentiary from the Czarina to King George, and brought with him into England the Latin manuscript of his father's <i>Othman</i> History, from whence the English translation was made. (p. 459)</p>
<p>Son fort étoit l'Histoire, quoique il s'étoit beaucoup applique à tous les cours de la Philosophie. El entendoit passablement les Mathématique, autant qu'il auroit pu l'apprendre dans un pays ou on ne connoit pas le perfections que l'Algèbre et les observations des savants modernes ont donne a cette Science. De toutes les parties de la Mathématique, l'Architecture étoit celle qu'il aimoit le plus. (f. 18)</p>	<p>His principal study was History, though he made a good progress in Philosophy and the Mathematicks, of which Architecture pleased him most. (p. 460)</p>

⁶ This aspect is mentioned in the French text at the end of the following paragraph, which was completely omitted in the English version.

Not long after the first English edition, Dimitrie Cantemir's *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire* was translated in French (1743, Paris), by M. de Jonquieres, at a time when Antioh Cantemir was acting as Russian ambassador in Paris. Two years later, in 1745, at Hamburg Cantemir's monumental work was translated in German by Johann Lorenz Schmidt. The German version, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reichs*, was published as translation from English, according to the mention on the inner cover "Aus dem Englischen übersetzt", the German translator stating in the Preface that the French version was in fact a translation from English, as well.⁷ Following the structure of the English text, both the French and the German versions contained an afterword with the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir, entitled *Vie de Demetrius Cantemir Prince de Moldavie*⁸ and *Das Leben Demetrie Kantemirs, Fürsten von Moldau*⁹, respectively. Comparing the English version to the French and German translations, one may notice some minor errors present in German, which are marked in the following table:

English version ¹⁰	French version ¹¹	German version ¹²
The next year his father died on the thirteenth of March. (p. 455)	L'année suivante le 13 de Mars il perdit son père. (p. 318)	Im folgenden Jahre, und zwar am vierzehnten des Monats März, starb sein Vater. (p. 842)
By this marriage, Demetrius had a daughter in Moldavia, and shortly after was forced to quit that country, and return with his brother, who	[...] il en eut une fille qui naquit en Moldavie: son frère peu après fut déposé, & il le suivit encore à	Aus dieser Ehe wurde Demetrie in Moldau eine Tochter geboren. Kurz hierauf war er genöthiget, dieses Land zu verlassen, und mit seinem Bruder, der abgesetzt

⁷ Original text in German: "Aus dieser englischen Übersetzung verfertigte Herr Jonquieres, Commendur und Domherr des Hospitalierordens vom Heiligen Geiste zu Montpellier, eine französische [...]" in: Dimitrie Cantemir, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches nach seinem Anwachsen und Abnehmen, beschrieben von Demetrie Kantemir, ehemaligem Fürsten in Moldau. Nebst den Bildern der türkischen Kaiser, die ursprünglich von den Gemälden in dem Seraj durch des Sultans Hofmaler sind abgenommen worden. Aus dem Englischen übersetzt – Vorrede des deutschen Übersetzers* (Hamburg: bey Christian Herold, 1745), 17.

⁸ Included in: Demetrius Cantemir, *Histoire de l'Empire Othoman, où se voyent les causes de son aggrandissement et de sa décadence. Avec des Notes très-instructives. Par S. A. S. Demetrius Cantimir, Prince de Moldavie. Traduite en François par M. de Jonquieres* (Paris: Jacques Nicolas le Clerc, 1743), tome II, 318–324.

⁹ Included in: *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, 841–852.

¹⁰ The examples are taken from: *The Life of Demetrius Cantemir*, 455–460.

¹¹ The examples are taken from: *Vie de Demetrius Cantemir, Prince de Moldavie*, afterword to: *Histoire de l'Empire Othoman*, tome II, 318 – 324.

¹² The examples are taken from: *Das Leben Demetrie Kantemirs, Fürsten von Moldau*, afterword to: *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, 841–852.

<p>was deposed, to Constantinople, where he became the father of another daughter and four sons. (p. 456)</p>	<p>Constantinople, ou il devint pere d'une autre fille & de quatre fils. (p. 319)</p>	<p>wurde, nach Constantinopel zurück zu kehren; da derselbe ein Vater von noch vier Töchtern und vier Söhnen wurde. (p. 843)</p>
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The errors present only in the German version, presumably done by the translator or the editor, are relevant in tracing the route of Cantemir's biography, since precisely these errors were afterwards included in subsequent versions of the biography, be those re-editions or translations to other languages.

For instance, only a few years later, this first German version of the biography was used with a similar title (*Das Leben Demetrius Kantemirs, Fürsten von Moldau*) as foreword to the second German edition of Cantemir's *Descriptio Moldaviae*, namely *Demetrii Kantemirs, ehemaligen Fürsten in der Moldau, historisch-, geographisch- und politische Beschreibung der Moldau*, edited by Anton Friedrich Büsching, at Frankfurt and Leipzig in 1771. In fact, it was also Büsching who had previously enabled the publication of the first German edition of Cantemir's work *Descriptio Moldaviae*, in his periodical, in two parts, in the period 1769 – 1770.¹³ The 1771 second edition, being a compact volume, contained not only the main text (as the version published in the periodical), but also several paratextual elements (prefaces, illustrations, and a map of Moldavia). Additionally, though a paratext, accompanying the main text, the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir was included in this volume as foreword, whereas the editor mentioned in a footnote the complete source of the biographical text, namely the German version from 1745, in its turn a translation from the English version from 1734. Furthermore, the explanatory footnote alluded to the author of the biographical text, identifying him as “the English translator,” who had received the information from “Antiochus [...] and presumably Professor Bayer from St. Petersburg.”¹⁴

Comparing the two German versions of the biography, one may notice minor differences, such as the spelling of proper names: “Constantinopel” versus “Konstantinopel”, or “Demetrie” versus “Demetrius”. A more notable difference, however, is the fact that in

¹³ “Demetrii Kantemirs Beschreibung der Moldau” in: *Magazin für die neue Historie und Geographie angelegt von D. Anton Friderich Büsching*, vol. III (Hamburg: Verlag Johann Nicolaus Karl Buchenröders und Ritters, 1769), 537–574 and “Beschreibung der Moldau von Demetrio Kantemir, ehemaligem Fürsten derselben” in: *Magazin für die neue Historie und Geographie angelegt von D. Anton Friderich Büsching*, vol. IV (Hamburg: Verlag Johann Nicolaus Karl Buchenröders und Ritters, 1770), 1–120.

¹⁴ Original quote in German: “Diese Lebensbeschreibung Kantemirs ist den teutschen Uebersetzung der Osmanischen Geschichte des Fürsten, die der Gelehrte Wehrtheimer Bibelübersetzer Schmidt an 1745 aus der Englischen Uebersetzung in einer prächtigen Ausgabe geliefert hat, angehängt. Der Englische Uebersetzer [...] scheint Verfasser dieser Lebensbeschreibung zu seyn, und hat den Stoff dazu von dem Sohne Kantemirs, dem Prinzen Antiochus, und [...] auch von dem Petersburgischen Professor Bayer erhalten.” In: Demetrius Kantemir, *Demetrii Kantemirs ehemaligen Fürsten in der Moldau, historisch-, geographisch- und politische Beschreibung der Moldau* (Frankfurt und Leipzig: 1771), 1.

Büsching’s version, the years and dates of the events were no longer written in the margins of the page but were included in the main text, a detail which enables us to trace the subsequent route of the biography.

Nonetheless, the most visible difference between the two German versions concerns the list of Cantemir’s works presented towards the end of the text. Whereas all the other earlier versions, including the first German one, simply listed ten of Cantemir’s works, Büsching classified these works into two categories: “published works” and “not yet published works.”¹⁵ Furthermore, he added, removed, or adapted information and even titles of these works, showing a preoccupation with the activity of Dimitrie Cantemir. Some examples are provided in the following table, in which the differences were marked in each version and briefly commented upon:

First German version (1745, translated from English by Johann Lorenz Schmidt)	Second German version (1771, edited by Alfred Büsching)	Comments on the two versions
Der gegenwärtige Stat von Moldau, in lateinischer Sprache, nebst einer großen Landcharte von diesem Fürstenthume; wird itzo in Holland in Quart gedrückt. (p. 851)	Der gegenwärtige Staat von Moldau, in lateinischer Sprache, nebst einer Landcharte, ins teutsche übersetzt, und von D.Büsching erstmals edirt. 1769-70. (p. 21)	Whereas the first version mentions the fact that the work was at the time being published in Holland, Büsching’s version removes this information. By the year 1771 the project of publishing Cantemir’s work <i>Descriptio Moldaviae</i> in Holland had already been abandoned, so instead Büsching chose to mention about the first German edition of this work.
Die muhämmedische Religion in einer ordentlichen Lehrverfassung, in russischer Sprache geschrieben und gedruckt auf Befehl Peters des Großen, dem es auch von dem Verfasser ist zugeeignet worden, in Folio. (p. 851)	Systema oder Zustand der türkischen Religion, in rußischer Sprache Petersburg 1722, in Fol. (p. 21)	In Büsching’s version the title is changed. Also, he removed the original mention of the work having been written at the order of Peter the Great, yet instead added the year.

¹⁵ Original terms in German: “gedrückte Werke” and “noch nicht gedruckte Werke.”

This second German edition of Cantemir's *Beschreibung der Moldau (Descriptio Moldaviae)* was most likely used for the first Romanian version of this work, the 1825 manuscript entitled *Scrisoarea Moldovei*, whose translation had started much earlier, in 1806.¹⁶ Following the structure of the German text, the Romanian translation contained not only the main text, but also some paratextual elements, among which the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir, as foreword, entitled *Viața lui Dimitrie Cantemir, Domnului Moldaviei*. Not only the structure of the text and its linguistic particularities, but also the footnotes and the classification of Cantemir's works suggest that this Romanian translation of the biography was based exclusively on the second German version, i.e. Büsching's edition.

Subsequent Romanian versions of Cantemir's *Descriptio Moldaviae* were based on this first Romanian translation and thus also included the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir. The second Romanian edition, entitled *Descrierea Moldaviei de Prințul Dimitrie Kantemir*, edited by Costache Negruzzi and published in 1851, contained an abridged version of the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir. This abridged version presented no information about the source of the original text and no list of works, however being signed by C. Negruzzi. The same abridged version, also signed by Negruzzi as author, was published in the 1923 edition of the journal *Adevarul literar si artistic*,¹⁷ commemorating two hundred years since the death of Cantemir.

The third Romanian edition of *Descriptio Moldaviae*, published in 1868 and edited by T. Boldur-Lățăscu, contained the complete version of the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir, with all footnotes and explanations regarding the source and circulation of the text, as initially translated from German. In the year 1875 the Romanian Academy published the works of Dimitrie Cantemir for the first time translated directly from Latin, after having identified some of Cantemir's original Latin manuscripts in the Library of St. Petersburg. This edition, as well as other subsequent editions based on it, no longer included a translation of the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir, but instead several other prefaces focusing primarily on the main text. However, the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir appeared in the 1909 edition of *Descrierea Moldovei* published by Socec, which was supposed to be a re-edition of the first Romanian edition from 1825, as stated in the editor's bibliographical foreword;¹⁸ in fact, the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir was the abridged version from the 1851 edition, bearing the signature of C. Negruzzi as author.

Nevertheless, the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir also entered the Romanian culture accompanying the Romanian translation of Cantemir's monumental work *Incrementorum et*

¹⁶ The Romanian translator is not mentioned and it has long been believed to be Vasile Vîrnav; yet, the linguist N.A.Ursu supported the theory according to which the Romanian translator of *Scrisoarea Moldovei* was, in fact, Ioan Nemișescu. In: N.A.Ursu, "Ioan Nemișescu, autorul primei traduceri românești a operei lui Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*," *Arhivele Moldovei*, III-IV (Iași: 1996/1997), 7 – 21.

¹⁷ "Prescurtare din viața Principelui Dimitrie Cantemir," *Adevarul literar și artistic*, v. 4, no. 134 (17 iun. 1923): 3.

¹⁸ Original quote in Romanian: "Această edițiune am redat-o după edițiunea românească tipărită la 1825 în Mănăstirea Neamțului." In: Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei* (Bucharest: Editura Librăriei Socec & Co., 1909), 10.

decrementorum Aulae Othomannicae. The first Romanian translation of this work, published at Bucharest in 1876 – 1878 by the Romanian Academy, was done by Iosif Hodos, after the German version, and included an afterword entitled *Vietia lui Demetriu Cantemiru fostu domnu alu Moldavie*.¹⁹ Analyzing the German version and this Romanian version of the biography, one may notice minor adaptations done by the Romanian translator, mostly visible in footnotes, with the purpose of providing additional explanations that could have been of interest to the Romanian readership of the time. For instance, in what regards the list of Cantemir's works, the Romanian translator, when mentioning about *Descriptio Moldaviae*, added the fact that the work had been translated only in German and Romanian.²⁰

As one may notice from the aspects mentioned so far, the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir circulated from French to English to French and German, and then to Romanian as a paratextual element, initially as afterword and then as foreword, accompanying two different works of Dimitrie Cantemir, and fulfilling primarily an informative purpose. But the same biography of Dimitrie Cantemir entered the Romanian culture also as an independent text. In 1829 the first Romanian periodical, *Biblioteca românească*, edited by Zaharia Carcalechi and published at Buda, included an article entitled *Viața lui Dimitrie Cantemir, Domnului Moldaviei, și Prințip în Înperăția Rusească*. Even though the article was published anonymously, the author was identified to be the Transylvanian scholar Damaschin Bojincă, a representative of the Enlightened ideological movement Transylvanian School.²¹ Furthermore, the text was identified to be a translation from German, more precisely the already mentioned 1771 foreword to the second German edition of Cantemir's *Descriptio Moldaviae*.²² Despite some adaptations, represented mostly by glosses or interpolations used in order to explain certain unfamiliar words or enrich the language with neologisms, this Romanian version of the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir clearly follows the structure of the 1771 German text,²³ which enables us to consider it yet another version of the original biography, in the form of an independent text. Furthermore, Bojincă's version included the ten works of Cantemir classified

¹⁹ See Demetriu Cantemiru, *Istoria Imperiului Ottomanu. Crescerea si scaderea lui*, trans. by Dr. Ios. Hodosiu, part II (Bucharest, Edițiunea Societatei Academice Române: 1878), 795 – 807.

²⁰ Original quote in Romanian: "Starea presenta a Moldaviei (descrierea Moldaviei) in limba Latina cu o charta mare a tierei. (Acesta e tradusa pene acumu in limba germana si cea romana)". In: "Vietia lui Demetriu Cantemiru," *Istoria Imperiului Ottomanu*, 807.

²¹ The following studies focus on the identification of the author of this text: Traian Topliceanu, *Damaschin Bojâncă (1802 – 1869)* (Oravița, 1933); Vasile Cristian, "Opera istorică a lui Damaschin Bojincă," *Analele Științifice ale Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași. Secțiunea IIIa Istorie*, XVII (1) (Iasi: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 1971), 47-73,

²² More about this in: Nicolae Bocșan, "Studiu introductiv," in Damaschin Bojincă, *Scrieri. De la idealul luminării la idealul national* (Timișoara: Editura Facla, 1971).

²³ An analysis of the text from a translational point of view may be found in: Alina Bruckner, *Modernizarea culturii române prin traduceri laice. Trei scrieri istorice ale lui Damaschin Bojincă din perspectivă traductologică* (Iași: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2022).

as published and not yet published works, this aspect suggesting that Bojincă used the 1771 German version exclusively.

The fact that Bojincă published the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir as an autonomous text has a double implication. On the one hand, any information on the origin of the text (as provided in the first footnote of other versions) is missing, the text being regarded as a personal writing; however, other footnotes from the German version were kept throughout the text, either as paratextual elements, or as information inserted in the body of the text. On the other hand, the biography as autonomous text supports the idea of the instrumentalization of this writing, which was supposed to present the image of an ideal Romanian ruler. True to the ideological principles of the Romanian Enlightenment, as promoted by the Transylvanian School and its followers, among whom Damaschin Bojincă as well, the text about Dimitrie Cantemir published in this periodical was supposed to serve a double purpose: educate large masses of Romanian readers, as well as contribute to the creation of a Romanian historiography mainly by presenting the deeds and lives of emblematic rulers who had impacted the Romanian culture throughout the centuries.²⁴ Therefore, it is only in this version of the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir that his Romanian origin is particularly emphasized, an aspect revealed mostly by the final paragraph of the text, in which Bojincă, while presenting all the positions held by Cantemir during his lifetime (as stated in all other versions of the biography), also inserted the mention that Cantemir was “a highly educated Romanian.”²⁵

In conclusion, either as paratextual element, be that afterword or foreword, or as independent text, the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir is relevant from a historical and cultural point of view, being symptomatic for the way in which texts and translations circulated in various languages and cultures during the Enlightenment and in the pre-modern period. This process of cultural transfer can be better visualized in the following scheme, which presents the circulation of the biographical text about Dimitrie Cantemir on its way towards the Romanian culture:

²⁴ In the period 1829 – 1830, in the periodical *Biblioteca românească* Damaschin Bojincă published three texts presenting emblematic rulers: one about Dimitrie Cantemir (1829), one about Radu Șerban (1829) and the amplest about Mihai Viteazul (1830, in two parts).

²⁵ Original quote in Romanian: “... înalt învățatul fiu de român, Dimitrie.” In: “Viața lui Dimitrie Cantemir, domnul Moldaviei și prințip în împărăția rusească,” *Biblioteca românească* tom I. (Buda, 1829): 27 – 38, 38.

The process of cultural transfer, as illustrated by the biography of Dimitrie Cantemir, is relevant for the way in which the Romanian culture during the pre-modern period emerged as a result of the intersection of several foreign cultures, thus creating its own identity from a series of multi- and intercultural elements.

