

DIMITRIE CANTEMIR

THE HIEROGLYPHIC HISTORY

GLOSSARY

A

advocate	Lat.	One hired to bring accusation against another.
agonia	Gk.	Struggle in which the body pitted itself against the soul in the hour of death.
akolouthos	Gk.	There followeth; subsequently; thereafter.
activitas	Lat.	Execution, carrying out of works.
alarum	Turk.	Noise and bustle, assembling of troops, accoutrement.
allophulos	Gk.	One of another race or nation, the foreigners.
anankeon	Gk.	Needful in such degree as to be utterly indispensable to existence.
anatomist	Gk.	One versed in the workings of the human body, one who cleaveth corpses.
anthrax	Gk.	Red-coloured gem; large ruby; carbuncle.
anagnostis	Gk.	One who, as he readeth, others are listening.
anonimous	Gk.	One who, having created aught, is not known by name; nameless.
anthepathia	Gk.	Incompatibility, natural rejection, that which excites spontaneous loathing.
anthipharmakos	Gk.	Remedy against poison.
antidote	Gk.	Medicine given to counteract disease.
apothecary	Gk.	One who keepeth shop, particularly, one who tradeth in herbs, medicine.
apophasistikos	Gk.	Nonpareil; excellent; terse, pithy saying that in no wise can be gainsaid.
atheopholeia	Gk.	Irreverence towards God.
apelpisia	Gk.	Hopelessness, anxious giving up of all hope.
aplos	Gk.	Yea, verily, simply, purely.

aporia	Gk.	Perplexing question that requests to be unravelled.
apophthegma	Gk.	Word, select utterance philosophic in character.
alkamistre	Arab.	One who endeavoureth to change copper into gold; one able to transmute the forms of matter.
argument	Lat.	Proof, word, reason advanced in a debate.
armistice	Lat.	Cessation from hostilities agreed upon for go-betweens and envoys to settle on the choice of either war or peace.
aromatics	Gk.	All seeds, herbs and ointments possessed of pleasant fragrance.
articules	Lat.	The joints of bones and endings of a word.
arêtes	Lat.	A kind of boulders by the which breaches are pounded in the walls of forts.
aneuspahnos	Gk.	Unmerciful, one who cannot show mercy.
Asia	Gk.	The fourth part of the world, comprised of reaches lying to the east.
astrolabe	Gk.	Contraption made of copper or of wood in which the course of stars is plainly shown.
atomists	Gk.	Philosophers of the Epicurean set, who claim that in the world all comes about by hap.
atomoses	Gk.	That thing which in no wise can be divided, split or severed into any further parts; uncut.
aphthadia	Gk.	Impudence, reckless, demented boldness.
autocrator	Gk.	Sole ruler, sharing not his reign with any other.
axiom	Gk.	A philosophic maxim that follows not decree but evidence.
atheist	Gk. and Lat.	Without God; one who worshipeth no god.
Aphroditis	Gk.	The first star rising early in the evening; the shepherd's star; goddess of love and whoredoms.
aphrodiser	Gk.	Whoremonger; womanizer.
achortatos	Gk.	One who is never satisfied, content; covetous beyond measure.
4 anomaly	Gk.	Frowardness; a thing or word contrarious to nature.
apsiphisia	Gk.	Utter contempt, setting at nought.
auster	Gk.	The south wind; Notos.
B		
barbara	Lat.	It is a form of syllogisms comprised of all protases and apodoses.
bases	Gk.	Socket in which a pillar is set.

blagoutrobni	Slav.	Merciful, charitable, full of lovingkindness.
battologie	Gk.	Poetic device by the which the selfsame words are iterated in inverted sequence.

V

vessels unto ingestion	Mold.	The stomach, maw, entrails and all the other innards the which allow ingress to victuals.
---------------------------	-------	---

G

galactea	Gk.	The way seen in the sky.
generalis	Lat.	Of high descent, chiefest of all, heading a class of kindred objects.
geomancie	Gk.	Divination, when they divine by cracks upon the earth.
gnomon	Gk.	Sundial, the shadow of the sun showing time.

D

diathesis	Gk.	Constitutional predisposition, habit or inclination, constitutional idiosyncrasie.
dialektik	Gk.	The one who knoweth to ask questions according to the canons of logic.
dialogos	Gk.	Utterance thus made as to consist of questions and answers.
democracie	Gk.	Government of no elected ruler, where people may take counsel all together.

E

eugenie	Gk.	Noble lineage, fine offspring, high-born.
eudemon	Gk.	Benevolent demon, angel, godly benevolence.
eulabie	Gk.	Reverent devotion tinged with shamefastness, shamefacedness.
Europe	Gk.	One of the parts of the earth, smallest in size, and lying to the west.
eusebie	Gk.	Devotion to God; righeous pietie.
Ethna	Gk.	Name of a mountain in Sicilie, the which, igniting from itself, doth burn with fire.
eklipsis	Gk.	Darkening of the sun or of the moon.
ektoncharismon	Gk.	Of the mysteries pertaining to the gifts of grace, to prophecies.
elegies	Gk.	A kind of verses mixed in character.

Ellada	Gk.	The Hellenic land; the Grecian countrie lying Europewards.
energie	Gk.	The abilitie to do, doing, working.
enthymen	Gk.	Rhethorical syllogism.
exegesis	Gk.	Interpretation, explication, declaration of a parable.
experience	Lat.	Proof, attempt involving the actual doing, or the participation of the senses.
excentrum	Lat.	Place lying outside the middle.
epithumie	Gk.	Coveting, desire to possess what one hath not.
epiphonem	Gk.	A word the which is called out with a loud voice more than once.
epiorkie	Gk.	Renouncing of an oath.
epitrope	Gk.	Steward, one who in aught keepeth the place of another.
epichirima	Gk.	Aught that one embarketh upon doing; beginnings.
etimologie	Gk.	Interpretation of a natural name.

Z

zizanie	Gk.	Tares, bearded darnel, wild seed mixed among the good.
Zeus	Gk.	The god believed to be the god of all gods. Planet ruling the day of Thursday. Said to have come from the isle of Crete.
zelotipie	Gk.	Fear of a lover towards his mistress, and the other way round.

I

izganie	Slav.	Expulsion against will to other lands, banishment.
ithics	Gk.	Teaching stablising the manners of peoples, of citizens.
idea	Gk.	The appearance of things as conceived in the mind and shaped in accordance with that image.
idol	Gk.	Image of god graven in stone or cast in metal.
ielcovan	Turk.	Wind chaser in interpretation, kind of birds which without respite fly high and low at sea.
interjectie	Lat.	In grammar, one of the eight parts of speech.
ironik	Gk.	Word by the which we praise him who is worthy of disdain, and disdain him who is worthy of praise, in jest.
isomerie	Gk.	The hour when the day and night are equal.

C

cabala	Hebr.	Superstitious teaching by the which the Jews interpret as they will the Holy Scriptures.
cacodemon	Gk.	Evil demon; Satan's angel; the wrath of god.
catholic	Gk.	All-inclusive, over all, gathering of the whole world.
cathegories	Gk.	There are ten of them, under the which Aristotle arrays the entire being of all things.
catalogue	Gk.	Record, ledger, entering numbers in a certain order.
catarracts	Gk.	Underwater ledges causing a sudden drop in a course of water, or the dam of a mill-pond.
centre	Gk.	The aim, the point found at the very middle of the round thing.
colakie	Gk.	Flattery, speaking in such a way as to give pleasure.
comedie	Gk.	Characters, words conducive to mirth while appearing to enact a true story.
cometis	Gk.	Maned star. Star that is born to vanish.
conditions	Lat.	Agreements, relations, terms of peace.
correspondents	Lat.	Having a secret exchange of answers with each other.
cvartana	Lat.	Fever on the fourth day.
cvidittas	Lat.	The only inner being of a thing, that which is.
chronical ailment	Gk.	Affliction lasting years, such as tuberculosis, dropsie and the like.

L

lavirinth	Gk.	Underground gaol under a mountain on the Isle of Crete, dug in such wise as to allow whoever enters to move freely in, yet never more to come out.
lakerda	Gk.	Kind of fish in the sea.
laringa	Gk.	The neck, the throat, the gorge.
lembyk	Gk.	Vessel for distilling brandie or flower-water.
lemargie	Gk.	Gluttonie, covetousness of the belly.
lira	Gk.	Lute.
Livia	Gk.	The countrie of the bank of the Nile, down to the Southern Ocean.

M

mataiologie	Gk.	Vain talking, gabbling, idle word.
-------------	-----	------------------------------------

matter	Lat.	Any thing that is subject to form – the matter of a candle, say, is wax or tallow.
megalopsichie	Gk.	Greatnesse of soul, fearlessness.
Mediterranean	Lat.	The sea from the Pillars of Erkuless to the Ellispont.
melancholie	Gk.	Disease caused by bad humour; the torment of despondencie; black gall.
melodie	Gk.	Elaborate musick, sweetly, pleasantly wrought.
merick	Gk.	Pertaining to a part, fragmentary, partial.
Mesopotamia	Gk.	Countrie compassed by the rivers Tigris and Euphrate, the Babylon.
metalon	Gk.	Any hard matter yielded by the earth, such as gold, silver, copper, tin.
metamorphosis	Gk.	Change of appearance; transfiguration; contortion.
meteris	Turk.	Ditch, mound, dug-out in which people abide in war time, at a stronghold.
metaphysik	Gk.	One who hath knowledge of things above nature.
mechanics	Gk.	Contraptions of use during war, devices for taking a fortress.
mehlem	Arab.	Ointment of the which kheirourgicals serve themselves for dressing wounds.
meheng	Arab.	Stone for testing silver and gold whether they be true.
modul	Lat.	Way, means, solution to difficult matter.
monomachie	Gk.	Struggle, war of two only, each against the other, single combat.
Manochero-leopardalis	Gk.	Unicorn – lion – leopard, of three names joined together under one name.
monarchie	Gk.	Rule of one ruler alone such as the Turk, the German and the Muscovite.
The Muses	Gk.	Seven sisters said to be goddesses of song and instruction.

N

navarch	Gk.	One who is chief over a ship, captain.
nafaca	Turk.	Measure, portion, daily provision.
nedieresit	Gk.	Unseparable, a thing that cannot be turned in any other direction.
neistselit	Slav.	Unhealed, incurable. A thing that cannot have a remedie.
necromandie	Gk.	The magic performed upon dead bodies; held by all tongues for a sin.

O

oniocrit	Gk.	Interpreter of dreams.
omofil	Gk.	Of the same tribe or nation; of a kind.
orizon	Gk.	The edge of the earth, the rims of the sky, line at which earth and sky appear to meet.
omonie	Gk.	The joining together in counsel, the coming together of hearts in one accord.
ochendra, echidna	Gk.	Viper, adder, breed of most venomous snake, the which when it bursts, its offspring issue from its belly.

P

padzerh	Agem.	A kind of stone but rarely to be found within the serpent and within the stag's heart.
palate	Gk.	Royal or kingly court.
palestra	Gk.	Weapon of war, bow with a cross-piece, discharged musket-like from in front of the cheek.
palinodie	Gk.	The song, or word, the which is oftentimes repetead without change.
paradigme	Gk.	Ensample, simile of a word, employing what is known to set forth the unknown.
paradosis	Gk.	Unwritten teaching, handed down by word of mouth, that which a son learns from his parent.
parachorisis	Gk.	Casting out, turning of the face by one, who is God's elect.
Parmie	Gk.	Conundrum, word of divers interpretations; proverb.
parisie	Gk.	Present, before the entire people, revealed.
parigorie	Gk.	Succour, remedy for heaviness of heart.
parola	Ital.	Word, word given, abiding, which one cannot go back on.
perigrapse	Gk.	To relate, write in sequence, write down a thing the way it is.
period	Gk.	Road the which, turning back, returneth to the point of its inception, surrounding, circumabulation.
peristasis	Gk.	Condition of being circumjacent, any thing found close to another.
Pithian	Gk.	Of Pithii, the place of the magick of Apollo.
Pithii	Gk.	A place where Apollo was renowned for his magick.

0	pilule	Lat.	Pill, pellet, bolus, of the which doctors give to be swallowed for remedy.
	pyramids	Gk.	The graves of the emperors of Egypt, exceeding costly, the like of which can be no longer made this day.
	platane	Gk.	A kind of tree, the which groweth much too large and liveth exceeding long, is like unto the plane-tree.
	planete	Gk.	Star out of course, moving against the course of other stars.
	pleonexie	Gk.	Greed, coveting possessions from all others.
	pollipichilie	Gk.	Condition of being dappled, thing of divers aspects and decorations.
	politie	Gk.	The entire people of the city, the city, the town, the foremost, the most noble of the people.
	pomp	Lat.	Wassail, procession, dazzling array of the imperial army.
	pores	Gk.	Tiny holes in man's skin, through the which issue sweats.
	porphyrie	Gk.	A kind of precious marble, exceeding dappled in appearance and florid, and also purple garment that only kings would wear.
	praxis	Gk.	The doing according to teaching, the consequence of things.
	poslanie	Slav.	A written message, the which is sent, a letter, pistol.
	presencie	Lat.	Existing state, that which lieth in front, before our eyes.
	presents	Lat.	Sheweth, setteth forth, exposeth.
	pretencie	Lat.	Displaying before, the thing shewing the reckoning of the end beforehand.
	private	Lat.	Outlandish, different, one who is not from amongst them.
	privilege	Lat.	Writs, edicts, grants, ordinances of the nobilitie.
	provlem	Gk.	Question, word set forth, the which demands an answer or solution.
	proimion	Gk.	Foreword, prologe, the which makes known the compleat whys and wherefores of the work.
	providets	Lat. and Slav.	One who, by reason of his wisdom, ere things do come to pass findeth within his mind the way they be.
	prodrom	Gk.	Teaching, forerunner.
	prothumie	Gk.	The heart's desire, paramour, strong yearning.
	probe	Lat.	Temptation, proof, quest, proven thing.

prognostic	Gk.	Foreknowledge, conundrum, foretelling.
profess	Gk.	Impart knowledge, testifie to what is glorious, preach.
procathedrie	Gk.	Sitting in the highest room, the highest place, the head of the table.
polos arctic	Gk.	Star that moveth not, its axis, the which is visible to us.
polos antarctic	Gk.	Fixed star opposite to the one visible to us.
provatolicoelefas	Gk.	Sheep – wolf – olifaunt, name consisting of three names.
pronie	Gk.	Godly foreknowledge, ordinance eternal.
proposit	Lat.	The word we set forth in the beginning, so that we prove it subsequently; thing we embark upon.
protasis	Gk.	Setting forth, proposition three of those make up a dialectical syllogismos.
public	Lat.	Policie, the council of the city, the nobilitie.

R

referendar	Lat.	Bearer of imperial answers. Investiture with the office of giving and receiving answers. Telhisçi (Official at the Ottoman Court charged with presenting to the Sultan the report of the Grand Vizier, who also transmitted the imperial firman by which rulers were appointed in subject countries).
rhetor	Gk.	One who knoweth the art of speaking well; able-mouthed.
rhomphaia	Gk.	Two-edged sword, straight broad-sword.
ricetta	Ital.	List of remedies, the which doctors send to apothecaries for to prepare the cure of an ailment.

S

savoanes	Gk.	Grave-clothes, swathings wrapped round a corpse.
salamandra	Gk.	A kind of creature of the which poetizers fable that it dwelleth in the fire.
sam	Arab.	A kind of poisoned wind, the which, on striking man, instantly turns him to ashes, and causes his garment to rot.
samsun	Arab.	Large and extremely sturdy canine beast, that outmatches the bear.
senator	Lat.	Counsellor, counselling boyar, noble of high rank.

sententia	Lat.	Most ultimate advice; word that cannot be turned otherwise, a choice word.
sycophandie	Gk.	Tattle, tattling, idle talk.
skandal	Gk.	Stumblingblock, haunting, offence, thwarting of will.
Scythians	Gk.	The entire Turanian nation; Tartary.
scepsis	Gk.	A word under perpetual doubt, of the sceptic philosophers, that doubted all things.
sceptre	Gk.	Tiny little staff, the which emperors are wont to bear in their hand.
soloikismos	Gk.	Word offending against the canons of grammar.
stemma	Gk.	Garland, wreath, imperial headgear.
stoicheia	Gk.	Beginning of material thing, said of some to be four, of some-three, of some-more, of yet others-one only.
strophee	Gk.	Hesitant word, turning oft, also deception.
sophisma	Gk.	Deceptive science, lying science sold in the stead of true one.
sphygmus	Gk.	Soft vein in constant pulsation, the pulsing of the which reveals the foundation of character.
sphere	Gk.	Bullet, figure round on all sides, such as the earth, the sky.
schisma	Gk.	Rent, decline from the true faith.
schemates	Gk.	Ways and manners, fashions, appearances of countenance.
sylogismos	Gk.	True reasoning, which dialectiks make up out of three protases.
symptomatic	Gk.	Coming about by hap, haphazard, not done of prior counsel.
synod	Gk.	Council, confederacie of counsellors, general assembly.
symperasma	Gk.	Conclusion of discourse, the movement from unknowing to knowing.
sympathie	Gk.	In agreement as touching humours; fellow-feeling in adversity.
synonim	Gk.	Namesake, brethren, of different breed and same name.
symphonie	Gk.	In unison, agreement in word, in voice.
synchorisis	Gk.	Remission, sufferance, allowance.
sustatikos	Gk.	Commending, committing, enduring.
systema	Gk.	Setting, persistence, estate.
sirena	Gk.	Maid of the sea, said to send seafarers to sleep with her song.
siurmea	Gk.	Kind of bluish stone for painting the eyelashes.

T

talent	Gk.	Weight equal to 6,000 drachms. The great talent equals 80 minas, a mina – 100 drachms.
temperament	Lat.	The exercise of control upon one's nature, wholesomeness.
tyrannie	Gk.	Oppressive rule, enmitie, might.
title	Gk.	Honour of name, famous name, appellacioun.
topographic	Gk.	Pertaining to place, field, countrie, land.
traghelaf	Gk.	Goat-deer, that is to say a non-existing beast.
tragodie	Gk.	Song, lamenting verse, howling, dirge.
tracties	Lat.	Drawing of words, the turmoil thereof, choice of peace.
trigon	Gk.	The figure of three corners, of three angles.
tripos	Gk.	Of three legs, three legged stool.
tropi	Gk.	Manners, means, ways, rhethorical adornments.
tropical	Gk.	Pertaining to tropi.
tropic	Gk.	Name given to the line of the sky from the which the sun returns either as it ascends or as it descends, the Cancer, the Capricorn.

F

fantasie	Gk.	Appearance, imaginatioun of the mind.
figure	Lat.	Fashion, shape, division of the body.
filaphtie	Gk.	Highmindedness, self-love.
filoprosopie	Gk.	Hypocrisie, wrongful satisfioun of will.
fizic	Gk.	One who knows the science of nature.
fisiognomie	Gk.	Intimation of character from the appearance of the face and of the entire body.
fishkie	Turk.	Manure, horse-dung, cow-pat.
filochrisos	Gk.	Lover of gold, covetous.

Th

theatron	Gk.	Place of assembly for to behold a show, a gazingstock.
theological	Gk.	Thing pertaining to the word of God; of theologie.
theorie	Gk.	View, science, sight, what is compassed by the mind.
thronos	Gk.	Imperial seat of honour, seat of a ruler.

H

haiesie	Gk.	Perversion of the law; one who commences to spread false doctrine.
harmonic	Gk.	Sweet melodie, masterfully wrought.

hermaphrodite	Gk.	One who is both man and woman and lusts with the lusts of both.
himera	Gk.	Creature not found in the world, wondrous beast never seen.
hirograph	Gk.	Writing of the natural hand, written in one own's hand.
hiromandie	Gk.	Divination by the cracks and lines of the hand.
heros	Gk.	One who after many a deed of valour laid down his very life for the land.
hersonisos	Gk.	Isle having its back appended to mainland, bay, cape.
hyeroglyphia	Gk.	Figures of birds, beasts and other creatures and animals, of the which the ancients served themselves in the stead of letter.
hrismos	Gk.	Divination, profecie, revelation of mysteries, afore they come to pass.

O

oxia, varia and the others	See the line marked grammatic.
organ	Gk. Art, masterie, things by the which other things are made.

Ts

tsircumstacies	Lat.	Peristases, Gk. The things abiding by other things.
tsirulik	Pol.	Doctor healing wounds, fractures.

C

cira	Turk.	Pine-like kind of tree, the twigs of which the poor use as candles.
------	-------	---

Ş

şerbet	Arab.	Beverage for medicine, and all that is drunk.
--------	-------	---

Ia

iasimin	Agem.	A kind of little tree, that climbeth like the vine and maketh white flowers mixed with a little red, smelling exceeding sweet.
---------	-------	--

Ps

psifisi Gk. To mark for honour, for exaltation of rank, to elect.

I

ipervolicals Gk. Praise beyond measure of nature, when we say: beautiful as the sun, angry as the fire, earthly angel.

ipogees Gk. The ones who live on the face of the earth underneath, and see the soles of our feet against the soles of theirs.

ipothetica Gk. Supposed question, when we say: if that shall be so, so shall it be.

ipokimen Gk. Thing lying underneath another, such as matter under form, wool under dye.

ipochondriac Gk. Disease affecting fantasie, the ailment of those parts of the body around the heart.

ipohesis Gk. Supposition, the thing other things are built upon. Likewise, ipohesis means form and matter, the which includes erstwhile principles. While with rhetors it stands for the question compleat and unchanging, around the which the margins of the question all rotate.

English version by Florin BICAN



DIMITRIE CANTEMIR (1673-1723) was the first Romanian cultural figure with a broad European profile. A hostage to the Turkish court in Istanbul, Cantemir was later on crowned as a king of Moldova but, subsequently to his rebellion, he was deposed and ended in Russia as a refugee and protégé at the court of Peter the Great. He possessed the encyclopaedic mind of a humanist historian, philosopher, writer, musicologist, anthropologist and geographer. Cantemir wrote in Romanian, French, Latin, Turkish and Russian. *The Divan or The Quarrel between the Wise and the World* (1697-1698) is practically an anthology or digest (the first of this kind in Romanian literature), a kind of literary thesaurus comprising religious and secular texts of oriental and occidental, ancient and medieval provenance. Cantemir was concerned with the introduction of the late medieval model of knowledge into Romanian culture, and he published in 1705 a compilation of logic, the *Little Compendium of General Logic*. Written between 1714-1715, his *Descriptio Moldaviae* (*The Description of Moldavia*) is an ample, encyclopaedic work focusing on his kingdom from a historical, geographic, linguistic and ethnologic standpoint. He analyses the origins of his people, the politics of the time, the ceremonies and customs, the laws and the economy of the country. Religion, education and language are treated with acute perception and great literary abilities. Cantemir's European reputation is due to his *Incrementa atque Decrementa Aulæ Othomanicæ* (*The Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire*), one of the pioneering, seminal studies of the Ottoman Empire that intertwines a historical and anthropological approach. He was the very first European to investigate and theorise on oriental music, and his knowledge of Islam theology and ottoman customs made him an authority for other researchers.

The Hieroglyphic History was written in Romanian between 1703-1705. It is apparently a hermetic writing, presenting the agitated events of king Cantemir's own time in an allegorical way. The fighting aristocratic factions and the influence exerted by the two great powers, Russia and the Ottoman Empire, are depicted in a vivid (very personal and passionate) fashion, employing birds and animals as protagonists of the story. The book is a political manual and a philosophical essay at the same time, a reflection aiming to identify the forces behind historical movements.