

Özel Sayı “Polonya ve Türk Dünyası”, Kasım 2019

Polish Eighteenth Century Sources on Turkey and the Turkish Language

Türkiye ve Türkçe Üzerine 18. Yüzyıl Polonya Kaynakları

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Abstract

The eighteenth century brought abundance of Polish literary works related to Ottoman Turkey and Turkish subject matter. These works were various regarding the character and literary kind. Thus, there were descriptions of the Ottoman state, descriptions of journeys and legates to Turkey, memoirs, diaries, letters and others. From the midst of those works one can mention the memoirs written by Salomea Pilsztynowa, the reminiscence from journey to Turkey by Jan Potocki, the descriptions of Ottoman state by Józef Mikosza and Franciszek Bohomolec, Franciszek Gościecki's a rhymed description of the legation to Turkey by Stanisław Chomętowski, a description of Rafał Leszczyński's legation to Constantinople, Karol Boscamp Lasopolski's diary from his journey to Turkey and last but not least the correspondence of Piotr Potocki – the last Polish legate to Turkey. The present works constitute a good sample of Polish literature which comprises information about administration, political issues, customs, history, culture and religion of Ottoman state. These sources give also possibility to get acquainted with Turkish vocabulary included in those texts.

Keywords

Polish eighteenth century literature about Turkey, memoirs, diaries, description of legations and journeys.

Özet

On sekizinci yüzyıl, Osmanlı Türkiyesi ve Türklere dair Lehçe edebî eserlerin bol bulunduğu bir dönemdir. Söz konusu eserler karakter ve edebî tür bakımından çeşitlilik arz eder ve bunlar Osmanlı ülkesinin tasvirleri, buraya yapılan seyahatlere ve elçiliklere dair betimlemeler, hatıralar, günlükler, mektuplar ve benzerleridir. Adı geçen eserler arasında, Salomea Pilsztynowa tarafından yazılan hatıralar, Jan Potocki'nin Osmanlı Türkiye'sine yolculuğundan anılar, Józef Mikosza ve Franciszek Bohomolec'in Osmanlı ülkesine ilişkin tasvirleri, Franciszek Gościecki'nin kaleme aldığı Stanisław Chomętowski'nin Osmanlı Devleti'ndeki eşlik görevini manzum olarak anlattığı eseri, Rafał Leszczyński'nin İstanbul elçiliğinin tasviri, Karol Boscamp Lasopolski'nin Osmanlı Türkiye'sine yaptığı yolculukta tuttuğu günlüğü ve nihayet Osmanlı Devleti nezdindeki son Leh elçisi Piotr Potocki'nin yazışmalar zikredilebilir. Osmanlı Devleti'nin yönetimi, siyasi meseleleri, gelenekleri, tarihi, kültürü ve dini gibi konularda bilgiler içeren Polonya kaynaklarının iyi birer örneği olan bu eserler, aynı zamanda, metinlerinde geçen Türkçe kelimelere de aşinalık imkânı sunar.

Anahtar kelimeler

Polonya'da 18. yüzyılda Türkiye ile ilgili literatür, hatıralar, günlükler, elçilik ve seyahatlerin tasviri.

From 14th and 15th centuries onwards growing in its power Ottoman Turkey became for many European countries an object of unabated interest. Among them there was also Poland. In consequence of this fact in a Polish literary works Turkey appeared as a subject.

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In particular, 18th century bears abundance of literary works which by their character and differentiation of their kinds confirm complexity of contacts between Poland and Turkey. From this very period date both memoir literature, diaries, letters, some descriptions from legations to Turkey and the descriptions of the Ottoman state itself.

To start with, a few words on memoir literature. As a good example of this sort of a literary output one can name both memoirs by Salomea Pilsztynowa and diary by Jan Potocki which is written in a form of letters to his mother when he was travelling to Turkey and Egypt.

Salomea Pilsztynowa – the lady doctor who spent several years of her life in Istanbul and acquired her fame for healing some Ottoman officials and the members of sultan’s family.

She wrote her memoir in Istanbul in 1760. Only part of this hand-written work was published but not before the second half of the 20th century (Pollak 1957: 24)

Her work consists of seven chapters in which she describes in details her travels from the first journey to Istanbul about 1732 until her return there in 1760 during the reign of the sultan Mustafa III. The chapters of her memoirs contain not only the descriptions of journeys and places she visited but also her medical activity and the patients she healed. In her memoirs the descriptions of travels alternate with descriptions of local customs, the places she visited, some historical facts and so on. She describes towns, cities she visited during her journey to Turkey also some particular districts in Istanbul such as: Balat, Fener, Yeni Bahçe, Galata, Arnaut Köy. She gives description of such places as harem, which she calls *Eski Saray*, and sultan’s palace she visited when healing sultan’s sister – Ayşe.

She also includes in her memoirs several descriptions of Moslem holidays such as: *Ramadan*, *Kurban Bayramı* and some customs referring to wedding and funeral, However, her knowledge on rules of Moslem religion is naïve and incomplete. In her memoirs one can find also some accounts about local events. For example, when the wife of the ruling sultan gave birth to her daughter the whole Istanbul and Pera, which at that time was presumably a separate town, celebrated this event. This fact must have made a strong impression on Pilsztynowa since she described in details the course of this festive occasion, city decoration and the parade of several trade guilds who came to pay homage to a new born sultan’s child.

In the contrast to the descriptions of some places, events, customs, Pilsztynowa is very precise in presenting names of her patients, sometimes also ranks or functions they had. In each case she practically includes information concerning the gratuity she received. Thanks to these data we can even form the list of patients she healed.

From Pilsztynowa’s work we can get some knowledge concerning the language.

Although, she admits that she knows the Turkish language quite well the Turkish words she uses in her work are quite often incorrect in their forms. However, the Turkish vocabulary used by her in the memoirs is quite numerous. There are more than 130 words comprising both appellatives (93) and the proper names (44).

The vocabulary collected in her work represents various semantic groups such as: geographic names: countries: Misir (Mysyr; 51)¹; cities, towns, districts: Bursa (Brusa; 40), Izmir (Izmier; 226), Fener (48), Pera (223); anthroponyms, such

¹ Since Pilsztynowa presents Turkish vocabulary in Polish orthography and often in incorrect forms therefore we give the examples of the Turkish vocabulary included in her work in proper literary version however in parantheses we quote her original writing.

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as: Abdul ağa (Abduğa; 262), Ayşe Hanım (Aisze Hanım; 222), Ali Paşa (Ali Pasza 39), religious terminology *ikindi* (kindy, kindyja; 244), *Kurban bayramı* (Kurban Bajram, Kurban-bajram; 247), names of places *han* (68), *harem* (62), terminology referring to some customs *bahşış* (bakszys; 55), *ziyafet* (ziafet; 41), names of ranks and posts *ağa* (aga; 249), *bostancı* (bostandy; 238/239), *çavuş* (czausz; 37, 45), names of plants, herbs, fruit: *karpuz* (harbuz; 121), *ud ağacı* (ud agaczy; 231), names of textiles, clothes: *fez* (50), *kaftan* (235), *yaşmak* (yaszmak; 183), terminology referring to administration and law: *ferman* (48), *haraç* (haracz; 226), *ulufe* (lafa; 70)]

When discussing Pilsztynowa’s work we should point out several aspects of advantage of this work. First of all, it should be underlined that this sort of literary output at that time in reference to lady writers has remained innovatory and rather unique. Secondly, this work provides many important data for all researchers studying some data concerning Turkish lifestyle and history of Turkish society from that epoch.

Last but not least, for the linguists working on the Turkish language, especially Ottoman Turkish, Pilsztynowa’s memoirs provide quite abundant material for research.

Another Pole who wrote his reminiscence from travel to Turkey was already mentioned Jan Potocki – the writer, traveler, the great connoisseur of the Orient. First time he travelled to the East in 1784. He stayed in Istanbul six weeks and then after an unexpected quarantine caused by the epidemic of the fever he went to Cairo (Egypt). In twenty letters addressed to his mother he included his impressions from places he visited. Those letters written in French, became the ground for the book published in Paris in 1788 under the title “Voyage en Turquie et un Egypte...”. Next year his work was translated into Polish and published in Warsaw. In his remarks and opinions concerning Turkey and Turks he pays attention to various elements, such as Istanbul and its beauty, some forbidden places and places of ill fame; religious places like *tekke*. He was also interested in people, their features, behavior, customs, lifestyle, etc. (Rosset 2006: 11-12). In comparison with Pilsztynowa’s memoirs his work contains not many Turkish words.

Another group of literature sources constitute works which describe Turkish state, its administration, law, lifestyle, customs.

In this class of sources one can place Franciszek Bohomolec’s „Opisanie krótkie państwa tureckiego” [A short description of the Turkish State] published in Warsaw in 1770.

A Polish Jesuit, Franciszek Bohomolec the reformer of learning and education, an academic teacher in Vilnius Academy and later on in Warsaw, also the editor of two Warsaw newspapers, that is: „Wiadomości Warszawskie” [Warsaw News] and „Kuryer Warszawski” [Warsaw Courier]. He is reputed to be the father of Polish comedy, the author of numerous comedies patterned upon Moliere’s comedies (PSB 1936: 224-225). His work constitutes, as the title says, the presentation of the Turkish state. This not large book comprises 189 pages + 18 unfoliated ones. The text of the book is divided into 37 small chapters, where in each chapter separate problem is discussed, e.g. chapter I (p.1) „O początkach państwa tureckiego” [About the beginning of Turkish state], chapter XXXII (p.151) „O małżeństwie i rozwodzie u Turków” [About marriage and divorce among Turks]. In those chapters where Turkish realities are presented, for example: functions, authorities, offices, the structure of state administration, customs, Bohomolec

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includes their Turkish names together with their explanations. As for the example in the chapter XV entitled „O urzędach saraju, które samym tylko eunuchom białym i czarnym służą” [On some offices in the serai intended for white and black eunuchs only] one can find such Turkish terms: *chasnadar basza* ‘mający dozór nad skarbem cesarskim prywatnym’ [someone who takes care of private imperial treasury] – cf. Tur. *hazinedar* ‘treasurer’; *kilar agasi* ‘przełożony nad jej apteką, cukrami i serbetami’ [superior of the storeroom] – cf. Tur. *kiler ağası* ‘head butler’. Three unfoliated pages include the list of chapters and next 15 unfoliated pages constitute the index of various words included in the work. There are both Turkish words and also some toponyms together with historical anthroponyms. There are also such designation as: Alkoran [the Quran], Arabia [Arabia], Carogrod [Istanbul], Deli, Emir, Grecy [Greeks], jazda turecka [Turkish cavalry], etc.

In the introductory part the author admits that the motivation for writing this very book he found in political situation and some current circumstances. Bohomolec also adds that when writing his book he used such sources as books by: Ricaut, Wyrwicz, Mably, de Real.

Similar both in its subject matter and the structure is Józef Mikosza’s work

„Obserwacje polityczne państwa tureckiego” [Political remarks on the Turkish State] published in Warsaw in 1787.

Józef Mikosza – a nobleman presumably descending from Belorussia a courtier of the Polish king Stanislaus August Poniatowski who sent him in 1782 to Istanbul to teach Polish language and Polish history in the Polish Oriental School established there to educate future dragomans. He was supposed also to acquire some information on tentative future commercial cooperation between Turkey and Poland. As early as a year after his arrival to Turkey Mikosza began to send to royal chancellery his detailed reports on Turkish realities. Those reports constituted the ground for preparing his book. His work was evaluated very high therefore just five years later it was translated into German and published in Lipzig (Siemieniec-Gołaś, Filipowska 2018: VIII-X, XII) This 415 paginal book is divided into two parts which altogether comprise 15 chapters. Each part has the register of the chapters included. Thus, first part comprises the chapters from I to VII and the second one chapters from VIII to XV. At the end of the book, on unfoliated pages there is a chapter called „Przydatek” [Supplement], in which the author discusses the question of education of the Polish youth. Each chapter has its individual title which announce the content of the chapter, e.g.: the chapter X „O religii. Jaka duchowna hierarchia, jakie urzędy, jakie sekty i derwiszów klasy, ceremonie publiczne, edukacja, szkoły lub akademie, jakie biblioteki i rozporządzenie?” [About religion. Religious offices, authorities, sects, public ceremonies, education, school and academies, libraries]. Mikosza’s descriptions concerning subject matters related to Turkish State, its administration, offices, the sultan’s court, army, religion, education, customs are very thorough and corresponding to the facts of that time. He often inserts into the text Turkish words that constitute the names of described phenomena. In his work there are also many geographic information not only related to the Turkish state but also to the regions and lands conquered by Ottoman empire. There is no doubt that Turkish lexical material together with onomastic terminology included in Mikosza’s book enriches educational value of this work, however it is not rare that identification of Turkish appellative or proper words presented in the text is sometimes difficult and time consuming. However, one cannot ascertain the references of both Turkish vocabulary and historic or geographic data the author used in his book. One cannot exclude that Mikosza could use Bohomolec’s book published seventeen years

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before him or he could use these same bibliographic sources. Still, Mikosza consciously or unconsciously does not bring to light the sources he used when writing his book.

The peace treaty signed up in Karłowice in 1699 roku between Turkey, Austria, Venice, Russia and Poland began a new stage in relations between Turkey and Poland. Since that time Turkey did not wage wars with Poland and according to Karłowice treaty Poland regained Podolia with its city – Kamieniec (Reychman 1973: 111). This peaceable situation among both countries induced renewed animation of diplomatic contacts. In relation to these circumstances in Polish literature output appeared again Turkish subjects. Thus, there were the descriptions of legations to Turkey, reports from diplomatic missions, diaries written by Polish legates travelling to Turkey and even some pieces of poetry describing those facts.

As the first from the eighteenth century documents of this kind one can mention the diary of Rafał Leszczyński describing his legation to Constantinople in 1700 (Czamańska, Zydorek, 1998). The aim of Leszczyński's mission was ratification of Karłowice treaty and renewal peaceful relations. Besides, the envoy was to negotiate the conditions of free trade for Polish merchants, the return of Polish military equipment taken by Turks after the seizure of Kamieniec, the release of Polish prisoners taken to prison by Turks and last but not least the release of Polish civilians kidnapped by the Tatars.

From the political point of view the legation of Leszczyński did not accomplish the task. Nevertheless, for propaganda purpose it was perceived as a success. That is why the legation was described both by Leszczyński himself and also by some participants of the mission. Besides, in course of time some descriptions of his mission were compiled and written in various versions both manuscript and printed. Presumably, the original version of Leszczyński's diary one should recognize in the manuscript preserved in the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków entitled: „Opisanie legacji do Porty Otomańskiej Jaśnie Wielmożnego Jmci Pana Rafała Hrabi na Lesznie Leszczyńskiego, Wojewody Łęczyckiego, generała Wielkopolskiego Posła Wielkiego króla Jmci Augusta II y Rzeczypospolitej do cesarza tureckiego sułtana Mustafy y całej drogi prawdziwy diariusz w Roku Pańskim 1700” [A description of the legation to the Sublime Ottoman Porte by the count Rafał Leszczyński to the Turkish emperor sultan Mustafa in 1700]. However, since this manuscript is largely damaged, its reading and studying is practically impossible. Luckily, some other mentioned already diaries which refer to Leszczyński's mission give plenty of information about journey to Constantinople, mission itself, the audience at the sultan's court and local customs. In those texts one can find quite a large number of Turkish words related to administrative terminology, Turkish titles, names of arms, textiles and culinary terms.

In 1732 Franciszek Gościecki published in Lwow a rhymed relations of the legation to Turkey by Stanisław Chomentowski in years 1712-1714. Gościecki's work has the title „Poselstwo wielkie jaśnie wielmożnego Stanisława Chomentowskiego wojewody mazowieckiego od najjaśniejszego Augusta II króla polskiego księżęcia saskiego elektora i Rzeczypospolitej do Ahmeta IV – sołtana tureckiego wielkiego z pełną mocą posła z szczęśliwym skutkiem przez lata 1712, 1713, 1714 odprawione. Potomnych czasów pamięci i wdzięczności podane rzetelnym jegoż opisaniu” [The legation of the magnate Stanisław Chomentowski on behalf of Polish king Augustus II to Ahmet IV – Turkish sultan...in

Açıklama [Y1]: ska

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years 1712, 1713, 1714...]. The present relations has 347 pages and is divided into five part where the author with full particulars describes the legation. After the main parts the author placed a sort of not big dictionary entitled „Wykład słów trudniejszych” [Explanation of some words of more difficult character] containing also some Turkish words.

Another eighteenth century written source that refers to Turkish subject matter is Karol Boscamp Lasopolski’s diary from journey to Turkey in 1776-1778. The diary was written originally in French. There is also its Polish translation. Some parts of this diary together with its Polish translation are preserved in AGAD [Main Archive of Old Acts] in Warsaw (Cz. Szrednicki 2004: 109-130). Karol Boscamp is perceived as a controversial person. At first, as a subject of Prussian king he had a function of deputy at the Prussian embassy in Constantinople. Later on, he was in service with Polish king Stanisław August Poniatowski and during this time he undertook some diplomatic mission to Constantinople. His first journey to Istanbul he carried on in 1765. The main goal of his mission was to persuade Turkish authorities to acknowledge Stanisław August Poniatowski as a legal Polish king. Other aims were: to establish official Polish embassy, to set up a Polish post office and also Polish School for dragomans what was accomplished in 1766. For accomplishment of his tasks Karol Boscamp found royal approval and the king confers on him a nobleman title together with a Polish name Lasopolski (Łątka 2005: 56)

Another Boscamp Lasopolski’s mission to Turkey took place 1776 and had among the others the task to clear up a misunderstanding between Turkey and Poland related to alleged lack of regard to the resolution of Karlowice treaty. Another aim was to negotiate for Poland the terms of trade on the Black Sea.

The Boscamp Lasopolski’s mission not altogether finished with success. In 1778 he was dismissed from the diplomatic service.

In the 90. he began to collaborate with Russian embassy which was hostile to Polish affairs, he also supported confederation of Targovitians which was against the constitution of May 3rd 1791. During the Kościuszko Uprising suspected of disloyalty in favour of Russia he was hung.

Boscamp Lasopolski’s diary from years 1776-1778, similar to diaries of other authors, also includes plenty of information concerning places he visited, Turkish customs, personage from sultan’s court or state officials.

The last person whom I would like to mention here is Piotr Potocki, the last legate to the Sublime Porte (Waliszewski, 1894) He left very abundant correspondence which constitutes very valuable source of information on the eighteenth century Turkey, its interior policy, customs, and also about some coulisses of international politics of those days. In 1788 the Polish Parliament appointed him a legate to Turkey. However, due to the death of Turkish ruler – sultan Abdulhamid I the official entry permit to Turkey he received a year later - in 1789, but in consideration of a long journey by land he reached Constantinople in 1790. His aim was to sign an agreement on commercial cooperation between Turkey and Poland and also his aim was to revitalize a deteriorated Polish School of Oriental Languages in Istanbul. Potocki’s mission in Turkey cannot be considered successful because of difficult home situation in Poland and strained relations between Turkey and Russia. The only advantage of his mission was the establishment of post connection between Warsaw and Istanbul (via city of Podolia Kamieniec) which has been planned for many years

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before. This connection shortened considerably time of postal matter. Piotr Potocki left Constantinople in 1792 (Łątka 2005: 260).

All presented here works compose sufficiently thorough image of Turkey and Turkish realities comprising both information about administration, politics subject matter and those related to the customs, history, culture and religion. Also, each of these sources remarkably or only to some extent, gives possibility to get acquainted with Turkish vocabulary related to described phenomena, notions or people.

However, it is worthy of mentioning that the present works differ to each other both in terms of kind of Turkish words they include and also in reference to their amount. Thus, in some texts one can find very formal Turkish words whereas in others the Turkish vocabulary is related to ordinary, everyday things. Therefore, the authors of descriptions of travels or legations include in the texts those Turkish words which refer to local titles, ranks, offices, administration although they rather insert them when it is needed as a detailed supplement to the description they focus on. In this kind of work the number of Turkish vocabulary is rather minimal. A good example of this kind of work can be Jan Potocki's *Podróż do Turek i Egiptu*, Boscamp Lasopolski's diary or Piotr Potocki's correspondence. On the other hand, those works that constitute the description of Turkish state and realities are based on another assumption. Their aim is to provide very comprehensive and detailed information about phenomena or things which are the object of the description. Since, from the nature of things they are to be educational. Thus, the Turkish vocabulary included in those works is not a complementary element but it is used purposely as a tool of information. Mikosza's and Bohomolec's books can constitute a good example of this kind of literature.

For present-day scholars Turkish lexical material included in the present works constitutes very valuable source for studies on Ottoman Turkish. Nevertheless, we should be conscious that the linguistic qualifications of the authors of the mentioned works were differentiated. The analysis of Turkish words excerpted from those works confirms frequent errors and deformations what may bring us to the supposition that the authors presented here were surely more interested in the state where the Turkish language was in use than the language itself.

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