Learning Oriental Languages in the Ottoman Empire: Johannes Heyman (1667–1737) between Izmir and Damascus

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Johannes Heyman was the first Professor of Oriental Languages at Leiden who had properly mastered both colloquial and Ottoman Turkish and he co-authored the section on Oriental manuscripts in the catalogue of Leiden's University Library which circulated widely in the eighteenth century. In his own time Heyman's scholarly capabilities appear to have been held in high regard. His international fame rose even further as the co-author of an account of travels to the eastern Mediterranean published in Leiden after his death by his nephew, which was translated into English almost immediately.¹ Nevertheless, Heyman's lack of academic productivity has adversely affected his modern reputation; in the history of Dutch Oriental studies Johannes Heyman is now considered a relatively marginal figure.²

In his official capacity as chaplain to the Dutch consul at Izmir (Smyrna), Heyman resided there for almost seven years, from June 1700 until May 1707. At his own request, Heyman was dismissed by the Directors of the Levant Trade on 30 September 1705, but he only gave his official farewell sermon on 6 July 1706.³ Even then it took almost another year before he set off on his second tour of the Fertile Crescent, the first having taken place from the end of June 1704 until early January 1705. As Dutch pastor in Izmir, Heyman was part of the consul's so-called 'family', the consular household, whose members lived in the consular house and ate at the consular table. Although the Dutch community in Izmir was one of the largest in the Levant, in an absolute sense the group

- 1 *Reizen door een gedeelte van Europa, klein Asien, verscheide Eilanden van de Archipel, Syrien, Palestina of het H. Land, Ægypten, den Berg Sinai, enz.*, Leiden, 1758; *Travels through part of Europe, Asia Minor, the islands of the Archipelago; Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Mount Sinai, &c. ... by... J. Ægidius van Egmont ... and John Heyman ... Translated from the Low Dutch. In two volumes*, London, 1759.
- 2 A. Vrolijk and R. van Leeuwen, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands. A Short History in Portraits, 1580–1950*, Leiden, 2014, p. 64.
- 3 O. Schutte, *Repertorium der Nederlandse vertegenwoordigers residerende in het buitenland 1584–1810*, The Hague, 1979, p. 338.

was limited and their spiritual care did not claim all of Heyman's waking hours. The pastor therefore had enough time to maintain a correspondence with friends at home, to collect antiquities – a pastime for almost all Europeans in the Ottoman Empire in this period –, and to study Oriental languages. The sources about Heyman's life allow us to analyse where and how he acquired these languages, while the manuscripts he purchased in Izmir also shed light on the texts he used in the process.

Johannes Heyman

Heyman was born in the German town of Wesel on the River Rhine, close to the Dutch border, on 1 January 1667.⁴ After studying theology at the University of Franeker, where he registered as a student in 1691,⁵ Heyman became a Protestant minister in the villages of Urmond and Grevenbricht, both in the Dutch province of Limburg. In August of 1699 the Directors of the Levant Trade in Amsterdam appointed Heyman to the post of minister to the Dutch mercantile community in the Anatolian seaport of Izmir. Heyman had wanted to travel to Turkey overland, but the authorities appear to have insisted that he make the journey by sea in a protected convoy. In December 1699 Heyman therefore set out from Amsterdam, where his brother lived, for the island of Texel where all Dutch ships destined for the Levant departed from.⁶ Before he left the Dutch Republic, Heyman had offered his services to Gisbert Cuper, the scholar-politician at Deventer who was one of the most prominent Dutch citizens of the Republic of Letters at the time and a potential patron. Heyman explicitly emphasized his willingness to collect inscriptions, as well as medals and other classical artefacts for Cuper, whom Heyman also promised a full account of his journey to Izmir.

Cuper accepted Heyman as a correspondent and would eventually help him to obtain the professorship in Leiden. In return, Heyman occasionally sent

4 Heyman's exact date of birth is mentioned in the original caption to his portrait ("Natus 1 Ianuarii A.º 1667") and in the revised caption after his death ("Natus 1/1 MDCLXVII"). P.C. Molhuysen, ed., *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche universiteit. Vijfde deel: 10 Febr. 1725 – 8 Febr. 1765*, The Hague, 1921, p. 53* [the asterisk marks the second pagination in the volume].

5 S.J. Fockema Andrae and T.J. Meijer, *Album studiosorum academiae Franekerensis (1585–1811, 1816–1844)*, Franeker, [1968], p. 256.

6 Nationaal Archief, Den Haag: 1.10.24 [Collectie Cuperus]: vol. 10, p. 374 (First Letter), undated. Heyman's brother Dirk was a wine merchant in Amsterdam; A.H. Huussen Jr. and C. Wes-Patoir, 'Hoe een ambitieuze predikant te Smirna professor te Leiden werd', *Holland 31* (1999), pp. 87–100, esp. 91.

Cuper a letter from Izmir and he collected antiquities for him too. In 1705, for example, Heyman dispatched a box of reportedly extremely rare coins and medals, but the ship was lost in a fire at Texel. Cuper wrote to another correspondent that 'it depresses me to think of these rarities, all the more because they included some [items] which had never been seen before in any cabinet [of curiosities]'.⁷

When Heyman arrived at Izmir, he had no Oriental languages except some ancient Hebrew, but he eventually studied colloquial Hebrew, Turkish, and Arabic in the Ottoman Empire. Some of the evidence is found in the correspondence leading to his appointment at the University of Leiden, where Heyman formally began his professorship of Oriental Languages on 21 March 1710. Three days later, he held his inaugural lecture, *Oratio inauguralis de commendando studio linguarum Orientalium*, which had taken up so much of his time that he obliged the States-General to postpone an official audience with an Ottoman delegation from Istanbul which he had been asked to listen in on – hidden behind a screen – to double-check that the interpreters did their work properly.⁸ Accepting assignments of this kind was an attractive way of supplementing his university salary (of 800 Guilders per annum), because, for assistance with the delegation from Turkey in 1710 alone, the Directors of the Levant Trade paid him 500 Guilders.⁹

Heyman's employers did not forget the reason why they had originally appointed him and, to expedite his work on Leiden's Oriental manuscripts, in November 1711 they temporarily reduced his normal teaching load of four classes per week to two, on the condition that the curators receive a progress report three months later. Heyman worked principally on a new catalogue for the manuscripts, which was part of a larger project at the library. It was not until 1716 that the *Catalogus librorum tam impressorum quam manuscriptorum*

7 Cuper to Van den Bergh, 26 January 1706; A.J. Veenendaal, ed., *Het dagboek van Gisbert Cuper, gedeputeerde te velde, gehouden in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden in 1706*, The Hague, 1950, pp. 274–5.

8 M.H. van den Boogert, 'Redress for Ottoman Victims of European Privateering. A Case against the Dutch in the *Divan-i Hümayun* (1708–1715)', *Turcica*, 33, 2001, pp. 91–118, esp. 103. Heyman had already mentioned the Ottoman government's intention to send this delegation in his letter to the curators of the university dated 5 June 1709, in *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche universiteit. Vierde deel: 18 Febr. 1682 – 8 Febr. 1725*, ed. P.C. Molhuysen, The Hague, 1920, p. 121*.

9 *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Levantschen handel. Tweede deel: 1661–1726*, ed. K. Heeringa, The Hague, 1917, doc. 127, Resolutiën van de directeuren te Amsterdam, betreffende het Turksche gezantschap in Nederland, 1709–1712 ('Decisions of the Directors [of Levant Trade] in Amsterdam regarding the Turkish envoy in Holland, 1709–1712'), p. 350.

Bibliothecae Publicae Universitatis Lugduno-Batavae was published, the credits for which were shared by Wolferdus Senguerdus (d. 1724), the university librarian, Jacobus Gronovius (d. 1716), and Johannes Heyman. The Leiden catalogue was modelled on those of Cambridge and Oxford and circulated widely.¹⁰ In 1717 Heyman, who seems to have been held in much higher regard by his contemporaries than by later historians, was one of the three candidates for the position of Rector Magnificus of Leiden University, but he was not elected.¹¹

In 1716, the year the Leiden catalogue was published, Heyman married Johanna Constantia de Planque. At this time Heyman lived on the Koepoortgracht in Leiden, while his wife had lived in the house on the Nieuwe Herengracht she had inherited from her late first husband.¹² The couple does not appear to have had any children. Johannes Heyman died on 7 April 1737.

10 K. van Ommen, 'The Legacy of Josephus Scaliger in Leiden University Library Catalogues, 1609–1716', in *Documenting the Early Modern Book World: Inventories and Catalogues in Manuscript and Print*, Leiden, 2013, pp. 77–9. Heyman had worked on the catalogue together with Carolus Schaaf (d. 1729), who had been the Reader in Hebrew and Other Oriental Languages since 1680. Schaaf had been passed over for the chair of Oriental languages in 1710, but he continued to lobby for a professorship. In 1719 Schaaf complained to the university administration that Heyman also offered courses in Hebrew, which was Schaaf's prerogative. Although initially rebuked for having had the audacity to file a formal complaint against a professor, Schaaf was awarded a special chair in Leiden in 1720. *Bronnen ... Vierde deel*, ed. Molhuysen, pp. 255, 303, 309, 310.

11 *Resolutiën van de Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende Westfrieslandt... in den jare 1717*, Delft?, 1718?, 34: Letter from the governors of Leiden University dated Wednesday 3 February 1717. One of the few students of Heyman we know by name is Willem van Irhoven (d. 1760), the reformed theologian and author of *Conjectanea philologico-critico-theologica in psalmorum titulos*, Leiden, 1728. Van Irhoven, who accepted a professorship of theology in the University of Utrecht in 1737, was a respected citizen of the Republic of Letters.

12 Regionaal Archief Leiden, Doop-, trouw- en begraafboeken Leiden, Archiefnr. 1004, no. 31 (1715–1718) fol. 130^r (entry dated 15 August 1716). At the beginning of 1728 Heyman was registered as the official seller of a complex of buildings for the considerable sum of 2,500 Guilders. Although located close to Heyman's house, just outside the city gates (but officially the nearby village of Zoeterwoude), these buildings were used in the cloth industry (a bleaching house, two washing houses, a watermill, etc.). It therefore seems likely that they (had) belonged to Heyman's wife, who had probably inherited them from her first husband, who was a merchant in Leiden. *Ibid.*, Notarieel register, 1728: Akte no. 13: 26 February 1728.

Acquiring Oriental Languages

Heyman arrived at Izmir on 8 June 1700. Initially he does not seem to have been particularly keen to acquire any Oriental languages, because the first language he began to study soon after his arrival in the Ottoman Empire was colloquial Greek. In a letter from December 1701 to Cuper he announced that he also intended to take lessons in Turkish, Arabic, and colloquial Hebrew from 'some rabbi'.¹³ Those surviving Oriental manuscripts which can be connected to Heyman confirm the chronology; a manuscript of a linguistic manual which he had had copied in Izmir contains a handwritten note by him on the verso side of the title page which reads '*Vocabulario Turcico. Sm[irna] 10/1 [17]02*'.¹⁴ It contains Turkish words and phrases with Italian translations. The manuscript itself was not necessarily executed especially for Heyman, for some of the other volumes he acquired had been produced by the same copyist a decade earlier. For example, Heyman also bought an anonymous, rhymed Arabic-Turkish dictionary copied by the same scribe in Izmir. That manuscript was completed on a Sunday in the month of Muḥarram 1104 AH, which can only have been 3, 10, 17, or 24 Muḥarram, corresponding to 4, 21, or 28 September or 5 October 1692 CE.¹⁵ The colophon of yet another manuscript by the same scribe which was acquired by Heyman at Izmir is dated to the year 1102/1690–1691.¹⁶

Heyman also used a translation into simple Turkish of Æsop's fables, the manuscript of which was completed during the first ten days of the month Dhu l-Qa'dah 1114, i.e. 19–28 March 1703.¹⁷ Each page of Turkish text was faced by a blank page, on which Heyman wrote a three-column glossary, with transcription and translations (into Latin and Italian, or Dutch and Italian). This suggests that the copy was deliberately produced in this way, probably at Heyman's request.

In 1704 Heyman wrote to Cuper that

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- 13 Huussen Jr. en Wes-Patoir, 'Hoe een ambitieuze predikant te Smirna professor te Leiden werd', p. 92.
 - 14 The manuscript is now kept in the Leiden University Library as Acad. 80. J. Schmidt, *Catalogue of Turkish Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and other Collections in the Netherlands. Minor Collections*, Leiden, 2012, p. 172.
 - 15 Ibid., p. 168. Now held in Leiden as Acad. 76.
 - 16 Ibid., pp. 176–7: Acad. 87.
 - 17 LUL, MS Cod. Or. 1289; J. Schmidt, *Catalogue of Turkish Manuscripts in the Library of Leiden University and other Collections in the Netherlands*, vol. 1, Leiden, 2000, pp. 588–90. Cf. J. Schmidt, 'Johannes Heyman (1667–1737). His Manuscript Collection and the Dutch Community in Izmir', in *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies* vol. 2, eds C. Imber, K. Kiyotaki, and R. Murphey, London, 2005, pp. 75–90, esp. pp. 79–81.

I brought hither [i.e. to Izmir] in addition to the languages of Latin, Greek and Hebrew, acquired in school, and my two mother tongues of German and Dutch, the following: French, Italian, English, and Spanish. For each of these [languages] my every-day contacts with members of various nations here at Izmir gave me the best opportunity for practice, so much so that I am now equally conversant in all of them. Since [arriving here] I have also taken up contemporary Greek as well as Turkish, and I have made a start with Arabic, to which I will devote the fifth year of my chaplaincy [in Izmir].¹⁸

Heyman did not consider one year of private tuition in a turcophone environment sufficient to learn proper Arabic, so when it seemed that the University of Leiden was willing to offer him the chair of Oriental languages, Heyman insisted that he first be allowed to travel two or three more years in the eastern Mediterranean to hone his linguistic skills. This would allow him to visit Egypt, Palestine and Syria, where he had already travelled for five or six months at the end of 1704 and the beginning of 1705.

By the time Heyman's term in Izmir drew to an end, Cuper had begun to arrange an academic position for him. He put in a good word for Heyman with Count Flodorff Wartensleben in Dordrecht, presumably for an appointment as Professor of Oriental languages at the city's Athenæum Illustre, and to 'Baron' Nicolaas Witsen, the mayor of Amsterdam, to get Heyman appointed in a similar capacity there. Cuper even wrote to some of his contacts abroad on Heyman's behalf, and that indirectly seems to have helped convince the University of Leiden. It was Leiden's mayor and Secretary to the Board of Curators of the University, J. van den Bergh, who suggested Heyman as a candidate for the chair of Oriental languages on 12 January 1707. For some time already the university had been looking for a suitable person to translate the manuscripts collected by Scaliger, Golius, and Warner into Latin with the aim of publishing them. Van den Bergh had been informed by 'reliable sources' about Johannes Heyman, who

18 Heyman to Cuper, 23 June 1704; 'Ik bragt hiernevens de schooltalen Lat[ijn], Gr[ieks] en Hebr[eeuws] ende mijne bejide Moedertalen Hoogduitsche en Nederduitsche, noch dese volgende: Fransche, Ital[iaanse], Engelsche ende Spaansche. In alle die hebbe ik hier tot Smijrna door den dagelijksen ommegang met allerlei naties de beste occasie van de wereld ontmoet, [en] mij dermaten geoeffent, dat het mij tusschen de eene ofte andere weinig verschilt. Zedert hebbe ik daarbij aangenoomen de hedendaagsche Griekse alsmede de Turkse, endo so veel als een begin gemaakt met de Arabse, tot welk laatste ik nogh dit vijfde jaar van mijnen Predikdienst stelle.' Also quoted in Huussen Jr. en Westpatoir, 'Hoe een ambitieuze predikant te Smirna professor te Leiden werd', p. 94.

is not only familiar with the vulgar Greek and Turkish, but who is also said to have made considerable progress in the Persian and Arabic languages, having left his chaplaincy, with the consent of the congregation and the Directors of the Levant Trade, to perfect his knowledge of these languages in Damascus. The aforementioned Rev. Heyman had also studied medals and other antiquities, of which he had acquired an outstanding collection during a journey which he made to Palestine and Jerusalem, about which he has corresponded with Mr. Cuper, mayor of the city of Deventer, for many years, who had recommended him [Heyman] to the Secretary [van den Bergh]; and [told him] that the Rev. Heyman has hopes of obtaining an annual pension from the King of Prussia for the duration of his stay in Asia and, after the conclusion of his studies, of being appointed professor of Oriental languages at the University of Halle. But he [Heyman] had intimated to his friends that he would prefer such a calling at a university in this country. For this reason it seems necessary to act quickly, before he [Heyman] has committed himself elsewhere.¹⁹

Heyman's intention to study Arabic at Damascus must partly have been influenced by the virtual absence of Westerners in that city in this period. With the exception of some Franciscan friars who lived there, Damascus had no Western consulates in the eighteenth century and very few European residents. Because only the most affluent pilgrims to the Holy Places could afford to make the

19 *Bronnen ... Vierde deel*, ed. Molhuysen, p. 226: '[...] als welke niet alleen ervaren was in het vulgaire Grieks ende Turcx, maar ook reets daarenboven vrij groote progressen soude hebben gedaan in de Persise en Arabise talen, hebbende hy met goedvinden van sijne gemeenten ende Directeurs van den Levantsen handel sijne voors. predickdienst tot Smyrna verlaten, om tot Damascus sigh in alle de voors. talen beter te kennen perfectioneren; dat den gemelten D. Heyman sigh mede geappliqueert had tot de kenisse van medailles ende andere outheden, waarvan hy een treffelycke collectie had gemaakt in een reyse, die hy naa Palestina ende Jerusalem gedaan heeft, waar ontrent den heer Cuper, burgermeester der stad Deventer, met wien den meergeseyden D. Heyman lange jaren gecorrespondeert had, aan hem, secretaris, seer loffelyke getuygenisse hadde gegeven; dat den voors. D. Heyman hope had, om van de Koningh van Pruyssen gedurende zijn verblijf in Asia een jaarlycx pensioen te bekoomen, ende na 't voltrecken van sijne studien de professio linguarum Orientalium op de Universiteyt tot Hal; dogh dat hy mede aan sijne vrunden genoegsaem had te kennen gegeven, dat hy sodanige beroepinghe op een Universiteyt alhier te lande voor alle andere praeferen soude; om alle welke redene het nodigh was dat men sigh hierontrent spoedigh quam te verklaren, eer denselven sigh aan andere mogte geengageert hebben.'

extra journey to Damascus, Heyman would not have fallen prey there to all the distractions he was familiar with from Izmir.

The university administrators decided to offer Heyman an allowance of 500 Guilders per year for two years, and the chair of Oriental languages at Leiden upon his return to the Dutch Republic on the explicit condition that he translate into Latin and publish the manuscripts collected by his predecessors. A few weeks later the offer was sent to Heyman 'at Damascus', but he had not yet left his post. Heyman eventually received the letter on 2 June 1707 on the island of Chios, having just arrived there from Izmir. In his reply to Leiden, written at the end of June, he announced that he was on his way to Syria, where he intended to settle in Damascus for some time 'or elsewhere among the Arabs and then somewhere among the Persians'. He explained that he had studied both these languages on the basis of texts, but that he had not been able to practice speaking them sufficiently. His colloquial Turkish was fine, but 'at the court of the Grand Signor and in all official writing the language of the scholars and courtiers is that which is mixed with Arabic and Persian words and phrases'. For this reason Heyman intended also to spend some time in Istanbul at the end of his journey to study this more difficult type of Turkish. The prospect of his appointment in Leiden, which he gladly accepted, merely strengthened his resolve to continue his travels, Heyman assured the curators in Leiden.²⁰

One of the manuscripts Heyman may have used in his studies of written Ottoman Turkish is a mid-seventeenth-century copy of a collection of fatwas (legal rulings) by a mufti from Skopje called Pîr Meḥmed Efendi b. Ḥasan Efendi. A note in Heyman's handwriting on the title page shows that Heyman initially misidentified the language of the manuscript as Arabic, but he later corrected this into *Turcice*.²¹ He clearly also studied his (undated) copy of the *Vaṣṣıyetnâme* by Birgili Meḥmed Efendi (d. 981/1573), in which he added marginal notes, transcriptions into Latin script and glosses in Dutch and Latin. This time he did not mistake Turkish for Arabic in his Latin translation of the title page.²² In a letter dated 5 June 1709, Heyman informed the University that he had returned to Istanbul and that he intended to travel back to the Dutch Republic overland:

20 For the original letter from the university to Heyman, dated 3 February 1707, see *ibid.*, pp. 109*–10*. For Heyman's reply, dated 25 June 1707, see *ibid.*, pp. 111*–13*, and 113*–14* for the university's confirmation of receipt of Heyman's response and a reconfirmation of the agreement.

21 The manuscript was completed in 1067/1656–7. Schmidt, *Catalogue...*, vol. 1, pp. 568–70.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 586–8.

At the start of this year I arrived overland from Syria in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, Constantinople, and I have turned my attention again to the Turkish tongue, having predominantly practised reading the most difficult texts, just as I have previously studied Arabic as much as I could in both the written and the spoken language in Egypt, Syria and Palestine; this, with God's blessing, now enables me not only to translate texts in these languages, and to speak them, but also to write letters and other texts [...] I have also been able to build on my earlier efforts to learn Persian; in addition, I have had some practice in the extinct languages of Syriac and Samaritan [...]²³

Heyman regretted having been unable to travel to Persia, as he had intended: 'Had I been able to spend time in Persia, this journey would have been perfect.' Heyman wrote the letter from Edirne ('Hadrianopol'), where he awaited the company of a number of Dutchmen and Englishmen with whom he intended to travel, because 'in Turkey one can only travel safely in a well-armed group'. They were all still in Istanbul, but Heyman hoped that the company would be able to leave Edirne 8 or 10 days later. The journey overland, via Belgrade and Vienna, would probably take two or three months.²⁴

Gisbert Cuper, who had received fewer letters from Heyman than he had reason to expect, was anxious to meet Heyman and expected him to call at Deventer before continuing to Leiden. Cuper may well have hoped to strengthen his connections with Heyman, who was after all in his debt for his patronage. Cuper also had specific questions for Heyman. For example, he had received rubbings of medals with Arabic script on them from Berlin, one of which he liked in particular. Cuper had asked for help from Adriaan Reland, the Professor of Oriental languages at Utrecht, but to no avail, while Jacob Rhenferd, who held the same position at the University of Franeker, had not replied yet. On 12 November 1709 Cuper wrote to the Abbé Jean-Paul Bignon, the French ecclesiastic and librarian to King Louis XIV, that

Mr. Heyman, qui a été voyager pendant plusieurs années & apprendre les Langues Orientales tant mortes que vivantes, & qui a été fait à ma recommandation Professeur en ces Langues à Leyde, est malade à Vienne en Autriche. Il doit venir ici avec le fils de Mr. Le Consul de Hochepied,

23 Heyman to the curators of the University, 5 June 1709, in *Bronnen ... Vierde deel*, ed. Molhuysen, pp. 120*–21*, doc. 970.

24 Ibid.

chargé d'Antiquitez, & c'est alors que je m'entretiendrai avec lui, sur une Médaille si extraordinaire.²⁵

Less than two months later Cuper wrote to the Abbé Bignon that Heyman had stopped at Halle, with plans to make a detour to Berlin. He had been informed about this by Justinus Constantinus de Hochepped, the abovementioned son of the Dutch consul in Izmir and Clara Catharina Colyer, who had accompanied Heyman up to that point. Leaving Heyman in Halle, De Hochepped junior had travelled to Deventer, finding Cuper away from home, but bringing with him, on behalf of the English consul at Izmir, William Sherrard, 'de magnifiques Inscriptions Grecques anecdotes, une liste de Médailles où il y a des noms de Villes qui nous sont inconnuës, & d'autres raretez [sic] assez singulieres'. From the Dutch consul too Cuper was expecting soon to receive 'beaucoup de Reliques Profanes'.²⁶ To Cuper's great disappointment Heyman did not stop at Deventer at all on the last leg of the journey home. This perceived display of ungratefulness and disloyalty to Cuper on Heyman's part has been held against him,²⁷ but in the summer of 1714 Heyman had plans to visit Cuper at long last – once again with Justinus Constantinus de Hochepped, who had settled in The Hague by that time.²⁸ Whether Cuper and Heyman ever met is unclear.

Fables and Stories as Instruments for Language Acquisition

Beginners learning a foreign language often need simple texts to familiarize themselves gradually with the object of their studies. This applies as much to modern students as it does to those in the pre-modern era. Heyman, as we have seen, used a Turkish translation of Æsop's fables for this purpose at the beginning of the eighteenth century.²⁹ Since Heyman was a novice to Oriental

25 G. Cuper, *Lettres de critique, de littérature, d'histoire, &c. écrites à divers savan[t]s ...*, 1743; reprinted 1755, p. 233; Cuper to M. l'Abbé Bignon, 12 November 1709.

26 Ibid., p. 236, Cuper to M. l'Abbé Bignon, 1 January 1710.

27 Huussen Jr. en Wes-Patoir, 'Hoe een ambitieuze predikant te Smirna professor te Leiden werd'.

28 Cuper, *Lettres de critique*, p. 147, Cuper to M. [Maturin Veyssière] La Croze, 10 April 1714.

29 The John Rylands Library in Manchester also holds a copy of a Turkish translation of Æsop's fables with 'marginal corrections and readers' notes in French and English', but the manuscript is undated and the readers are unidentified. See J. Schmidt, *A Catalogue of the Turkish Manuscripts in the John Rylands University Library at Manchester*, Leiden, 2011, pp. 256–7 (MS 152).

studies at the time, he may well have been unaware of the first Latin edition of the Fables of Luqmān on the basis of Arabic manuscripts by Erpenius already in 1615.³⁰ Later in the eighteenth century William Jones included some explicit recommendations on methods for learning a language in the Preface to his *Grammar of the Persian Language*, which was first published in 1771:

When the student can read the characters with fluency, and has learned the true pronunciation of every letter from the mouth of a native, let him peruse the grammar with attention, and commit to memory the regular inflexions of the nouns and verbs: he needs not burden his mind with those that deviate from the common form, as they will be insensibly learned in a short course of reading. By this time he will find a dictionary necessary.

Jones then sings the praises of the *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium* by François de Mesnien Meninski (d. 1698), which was first published in Vienna in 1680. Its four volumes included a dictionary of Turkish, Arabic, and Persian with Latin translations and explanations, as well as a Turkish grammar. Meninski had copied many of the Arabic and Persian words in the vocabulary from the dictionaries in these languages by Jacobus Golius, Johannes Heyman's predecessor as professor of Oriental languages in Leiden, while Meninski had added the Turkish vocabulary himself. Golius's *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* was published in Leiden in 1653, while Edmund Castell included Golius's *Dictionarium Persico-Latinum* posthumously in the *Lexicon heptaglotton* (1669). The two dictionaries were invaluable instruments for students of Oriental languages, but many also compiled glossaries of their own. For example, the French diplomat Laurent (Chevalier) d'Arvieux, composed a Persian-Latin dictionary in 1666, which he copied in the margins of his copy of Golius's Arabic dictionary ('jusques au Dal'), saving the margins on the opposite side of the page for a Turkish vocabulary he was still planning to produce six years later.³¹ In this period Antoine Galland was working on his Turkish-French dictionary in

30 T. Erpenius, *Locmani sapientis Fabvlæ et selecta qvædam arabvm adagia cum interpretatione latina & notis Thomæ Erpenii*, Leiden, 1615.

31 On early European dictionaries and grammars for both Persian and Turkish, see A. Hamilton and F. Richard, *André Du Ryer and Oriental Studies in Seventeenth-Century France*, Oxford, 2004, pp. 73 et seqq.

Istanbul, finishing the first part in March 1672.³² Albert Schultens (d. 1750), who was appointed Professor of Oriental Languages at Leiden next to Heyman in 1732, also drew up an Arabic vocabulary on the basis of the Fables of Luqman and other texts.³³ It is difficult to say for which purpose these dictionaries were compiled, because none of them was ever published.

William Jones continues his advice to language students as follows:

He [the student] may proceed by the help of this work to analyse the passages quoted in the grammar, and to examine in what manner they illustrate the rules; in the meantime he must not neglect to converse with his living instructor, and to learn from him the phrases of common discourse, and the names of visible objects, which he will soon imprint on his memory, if he will take the trouble to look for them in the dictionary: and here I must caution him again condemning a work as defective, because he cannot find in it every word which he hears; for sounds in general are caught imperfectly by the ear, and many words are spelled and pronounced very differently.

The references in these quotations to 'the grammar' must refer to Jones's own *Grammar of Persian*, but what he says also applied to such teaching tools in other languages. As for elementary reading, Jones advised that the student of Persian start with Sa'di's 'Gulistan or *Bed of Roses* [...] of which there are several translations in the languages of Europe'.³⁴ A comparison between manuscripts,

32 A. Galland, *Voyage à Constantinople (1672–1673)*, ed. C. Schefer, Paris, 2002, p. 70 (d'Arvieux), p. 78 (Galland).

33 LUL, MS Cod. Or. 1951. See J.J. Witkam, *Inventory of the oriental Manuscripts of the Library of Leiden University*, vol. 2, Leiden, 2007, pp. 291–2.

34 In 1773, the Dutch Orientalist H.A. Schultens travelled to England, where he became close to William Jones. It was in London and Cambridge that Schultens started studying Persian under Jones' guidance. The Dutchman recorded that 'I have passed the grammar of Persian, and have advanced enough to continue with reading. Jones has advised me to start immediately with Sa'di, of which he will lend me his copy. He has now copied an eulogy by Hafez for me with a literal translation and a paraphrase.' ('Het grammaticale van 't Persisch ben ik door, en ver genoeg om met leezen voorttegaan. Jones heeft mij geraaden direct aan Sadi te beginnen waarvan hij mijn zijn exemplaar zal leenen. Hij heeft mij nu eene elegie van Hafez uitgeschreeven met eene woordelijke vertaaling en paraphrase.' Letter by H.A. Schultens to his father, J.J. Schultens, London, 23 February 1773, in *Een alleraangenaamste reys. Eigenhandige Dagelijksche Aanteekeningen van Hendrik Albert Schultens nopens zijn verblijf in Engeland in the jaren 1772 en 1773. Met de Oorspronkelijke Bijlagen*, eds C. van Eekeren and E. Kwant, Leiden, 1999, consulted online: <<https://sites.google.com/site/haschultens/>>.

which were easy to find, and the printed works was recommended so that the student would become familiar with various styles of handwriting.

It will then be a proper time for him to read some short and easy chapter of this book, and to translate it into his native language with the utmost exactness; let him then lay aside the original, and after a proper interval let him turn the same chapter back into Persian by the assistance of the grammar and dictionary; let him afterwards compare his second translation with the original, and correct its faults according to that model. [...] When he can express his sentiments in Persian with tolerable facility, I would advise him to read some elegant history or poem with an intelligent native, who will explain to him in common words the refined expressions that occur in reading, and will point out the beauties of learned allusions and local images. The most excellent book in the language is, in my opinion, the collection of tales and fables called *Anvab Soheili* by Aussein Vaéz, surnamed Cashefi,³⁵ who took the celebrated work of Bidpai or Pilpay for his text, and has comprised all the wisdom of the eastern nations in fourteen beautiful chapters.³⁶

In India Jones read Bidpai's tales – which he considered the most likely source for the fables attributed to Æsop which Heyman had used for his studies – in his efforts to teach himself Sanskrit, so there is some evidence that Jones actually practised what he preached.³⁷

35 The Persian writer and preacher (*wā'iz*) Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, known as Kāshifi (d. 910/1504–5) was the author of *Anwār- i Suhaylī*, the Persian version of the story of *Kalila wa Dimna*. The Leiden University Library holds a copy of a manuscript of this text with notes by an unidentified 18th-century European scholar (Cod. Or. 102), which suggests that Jones was not alone in considering this a suitable text for studying Persian. J.J. Witkam, *Inventory of the oriental Manuscripts of the Library of Leiden University*, vol. 1, Leiden, 2007, pp. 50–1.

36 All quotations from *Grammar of Persian*, in: *The works of William Jones in six volumes*, London, 1799, vol. 2, pp. 129–31.

37 In a letter to Patrick Russell (who also owned a manuscript with fables by Æsop, i.e. John Rylands Library, MS Ar. 653) dated 28 September 1786, Jones wrote: 'My present study is the original of Bidpai's fables, called *Hitopaesa*, which is a charming book, and wonderfully useful to a learner of the language.' *The Letters of William Jones*, ed. G. Cannon, Oxford, 1970, vol. 2: no. 440, pp. 706–8, esp. p. 706. Copying out manuscripts by hand was also part of Jones's methods of (self-)teaching languages, but he does not mention it as part of the learning process in his *Persian Grammar*. For copies of Arabic manuscripts in Jones's own hand, see the John Rylands Library, Manchester, MSS Ar. 264–5, two volumes of *Sukkardān al-Sultān* ('The King's Sugerbowl'). Jones copied the first volume in

Other eighteenth-century scholars too were interested in fables. For example, the German philologist Johann Jakob Reiske (d. 1774), a student of Albert Schultens who also lived at his house, made a copy of the Leiden manuscript of al-Maydānī's *Majma' al-amthāl* in 1745. Excerpts from Reiske's handwritten copy were later copied by Joannes Willmet (d. 1835) under the title *Fabulae Arabicae*. Interestingly, Willmet's copy has blank opposite pages, just like the Turkish manuscript of Æsop's fables Heyman had used for his studies a century earlier.³⁸ In 1746 Denis Dominique Cardonne made a French translation of the Fables of Æsop while he was still an interpreter (*dragoman*) in the service of the French consulate in Tripoli in Syria.³⁹ It seems doubtful, however, that this was a language exercise for Cardonne, because he had lived in the Ottoman Empire since 1730, having arrived there at the age of nine.⁴⁰

Although stating that 'this is the exercise so often recommended by the old rhetoricians', Jones's advice about language acquisition appears to be based on the assumption that the Western student of Oriental languages himself resided abroad. More specifically, it is evident that his *Grammar of the Persian Language* was written as a text book for British officials in India who were expected to employ a *munshi* (language teacher) to train them. In fact, for some time the reimbursement of a salary for one's *munshi* was the East India Company's only way to stimulate junior British scribes to study Indian languages. Jones's foundation of the (later Royal) Asiatic Society gave an important impetus to the study of Indian languages and cultures, both ancient and contemporary, but the education of British officials was only properly formalized with the establishment of the Fort William College in Calcutta in 1800. The College employed various native speakers of the 'Asian' languages that were on the curriculum, and one of them was Shaykh Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Shīrwānī, who was originally from Yemen. Shīrwānī also became responsible for editing a number of

December 1766, the second about a year later. Jones had borrowed his exemplar from A. Russell, MD. *The Letters of Sir William Jones*, ed. Cannon, pp. 776–7.

38 J.J. Witkam, *Inventory of the Oriental Manuscripts of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in Amsterdam*, Leiden, 2006, pp. 51–52. Willmet's copy is MS Acad. 160; Reiske's manuscript is now MS Deventer, 1824.

39 The autograph copy of the translation is now LUL, MS Cod. Or. 1589, 1. It is dated 1159 AH, i.e. 1746 CE. Witkam, *Inventory ... Leiden University*, vol. 2, p. 186.

40 After he had been appointed the Professor of Arabic at the Collège Royal in Paris, Cardonne published several volumes of translations of fables and stories: *Mélanges de littérature orientale, traduits de différens manuscrits turcs, arabes et persans de la Bibliothèque du Roi*, par M. Cardonne, 2 vols., Paris, 1770, and *Contes et fables indiennes de Bidpai et de Lokman. Traduites d'Ali Tchelebi-ben-Saleh, auteur turc. Ouvrage commencé par feu M. Galand, continué et fini par M. Cardonne*, 3 vols, Paris, 1778.

Arabic texts for the College's printing press, which principally produced text books for the College's own students. For example, Shīrwānī supervised the publication of Ibn 'Arabshāh's *ʿAjāʾib al-maḡdūr fi nawāʾib Tīmūr*, Calcutta, 1818.⁴¹

Another important project Shīrwānī was involved in was the first printed edition of the Arabian Nights, which Muhsin Mahdi has described as 'a textbook for teaching Arabic to Company officers'. Shīrwānī's textual source for what came to be known as the Calcutta One Edition of the Nights was an Arabic manuscript from Syria. According to Shīrwānī that manuscript had itself been copied with the intention of facilitating the teaching of spoken Arabic. For this reason, Shīrwānī took the liberty to remove all traces of Syrian Arabic from the text, in the process of which he made additional editorial interventions.⁴² There is scholarly consensus that the Calcutta One Edition was based, directly or indirectly, on the manuscript acquired by Alexander Russell, the Levant Company physician at Aleppo around 1750.⁴³ If this is correct, then the Arabian Nights were already used for teaching purposes in Ottoman Syria in the 1750s.

Conclusion

Johannes Heyman's private correspondence shows that, when he arrived in the Ottoman port of Izmir in the year 1700, he had no knowledge of either Arabic or Turkish. In the course of his seven-years' residence in Izmir he did acquire these languages, as well as some Persian, first by taking private tuition from a local rabbi, and by studying texts. Some of the manuscripts he bought in Izmir

41 Cf. H.H. Wilson, *Mackenzie Collection: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental Manuscripts ... collected by the late Lieut.-Col. Colin Mackenzie*, vol. 2, Calcutta, 1828, p. 117.

42 M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights (Alf layla wa-layla): From the Earliest Known Sources. Part 3*, Leiden, 1994, p. 91.

43 D.B. Macdonald, 'Alf Laila wa-Laila', *Encyclopaedia of Islam [First Edition] Supplement*, Leiden, 1934, pp. 17–21, esp. p. 19. Macdonald erroneously implies that it was Patrick Russell, Alexander's half-brother and successor, who acquired the manuscript. On the Russell brothers, see M.H. van den Boogert, *Aleppo observed: Ottoman Syria through the Eyes of two Scottish Doctors, Alexander and Patrick Russell*, Oxford, 2010; id., 'Patrick Russell and the Republic of Letters in Aleppo', in *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, eds A. Hamilton et al., Leiden, 2005, pp. 223–64; and id., 'Antar Overseas. Arabic Manuscripts in Europe in the Late 18th and Early 19th Century', in *O Ye Gentlemen: Arabic Studies on Science and Literary Culture in Honour of Remke Kruk*, eds A. Vrolijk and J.P. Hogendijk, Leiden, 2007, pp. 339–52.

in the early 1700s appear to have been produced specially for the purpose of learning. Heyman's copy of Æsop's *Fables* is a case in point. According to the Arab editor of the Calcutta One Edition of the Arabian Nights, manuscripts of that text were also being adapted for the purpose of language teaching in Ottoman Aleppo around 1750, while, towards the end of the eighteenth century, William Jones recommended fables and stories as the most suitable texts for students to start learning languages with. Other European scholars of this period – J.J. Schultens and Reiske, as well as Patrick Russell who acquired one of the largest collections of Oriental stories in European hands in Aleppo in the 1750s and '60s – also used fables and other kinds of stories to acquire Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

According to Vrolijk and Van Leeuwen, Thomas Erpenius had already 'translated and edited numerous basic Arabic texts especially for the purpose of teaching and for the Protestant missions.'⁴⁴ If his first publication, the edition of Luqmān ('the Arab Æsop'), was intended for educational purposes too, then perhaps the use of fables and other simple stories in teaching Oriental languages in Europe has a much longer history. It would certainly help to explain why so many European scholars were interested in Arabic manuscripts containing fables despite the fact that these and other stories and epics were not held in high regard in the Middle East itself.

44 Vrolijk and van Leeuwen, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands*, pp. 33–40, esp. p. 33 and p. 38.