

Ottoman Eurasia in Early Modern German Literature

Cultural Translations (Francisci, Happel, Speer)

Even a casual perusal of seventeenth-century European print production makes clear that the Turk was on everyone's mind. Europe's confrontation of and interaction with the Ottoman Empire in the face of what appeared to be a relentless Ottoman expansion spurred news delivery and literary production in multiple genres, from novels and sermons to calendars and artistic representations. The trans-European conversation stimulated by these media, most importantly the regularly delivered news reports, not only kept the public informed but provided the basis for literary conversations among many seventeenth-century writers, three of whom form the center of this inquiry: Daniel Speer (1636-1707), Eberhard Werner Happel (1647-1690), and Erasmus Francisci (1626-1694). The expansion of the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries offers the opportunity to view these writers' texts in the context of Europe and from a more narrowly defined Ottoman Eurasian perspective.

Ottoman Eurasia in Early Modern German Literature: Cultural Translations (Francisci, Happel, Speer) explores the variety of cultural and commercial conversations between Europe and Ottoman Eurasia as they negotiated their competing economic and hegemonic interests. Brought about by travel, trade, diplomacy, and wars, these conversations were, by definition, "cross-cultural" and diverse. They eroded the antagonism of "us and them," the notion of the European center and the Ottoman periphery that has historically shaped the view of European-Ottoman interactions.

Gerhild Scholz Williams is Barbara Thomas and David M. Thomas Professor in the Humanities, Vice Provost, Associate Vice Chancellor at Washington University in St. Louis.

"*Ottoman Eurasia in Early Modern German Literature* not only expands research on the image of Turks in 17th-century literature but also makes literary texts fruitful for historical questions. In addition, it sheds new light on three authors who have so far been little noticed by literary scholars."

—Victoria Gutsche, Friedrich-Alexander University

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Gerhild Scholz Williams

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