

**Pázmány Péter Catholic University**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Short Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**

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**Machumetis Saracenorum principis, eiusque successorum vitae, ac doctrina**  
**(Sources of the image of the Islam in the early modern Hungary 1543-1613)**

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## Part I.

### The subject of the research

Subject of the thesis is the image of the Islam and its sources in the early modern Hungary. I would like to exhibit that people - who live in Hungary between 154 and 1613 - what kind of knowledges obtained through protestant and catholic authors.

The thesis has two parts:

- In the first contains the exhibition of Theodor Bibliander's 1543 collection (*Machumetis Saracenorum principis eiusque successorum vitae, ac doctrina, ipseque Alcoran*). Collection of Bibliander was the most important Islamic encyclopedia in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Help with this collection make a comparison between the Hungarian and European image of the Islam
- In the second part the Hungarian authors' (Imre Ozorai, András Batizi, István Benczédi Székely, Péter Melius Juhász, Péter Károlyi, Ferenc Dávid, István Basilius, István Szántó and Péter Pázmány) knowledge about the Islam is exhibited. The research investigated the time between the publication of Bibliander's Collection (1543) and publication of Péter Pázmány's Kalauz (1613).

### History of the research

At the beginning of the investigation the opinion of the modern authors about the Islam is well known, they used and repeat earlier catholic authors' works. Only the writing style meant the difference. We can make difference by the authors whose works about Mohamed or the Koran. Moreover, another difference is the purpose of the author, because most of the writers tried to convince the truth of the Christianity and the false of the Muslims in their works, after the Reformation as the protestants as the catholics used their works against each other. On the other way, this content hardly be caught, because in the anti-Islamic works from the 12<sup>th</sup> till the 17<sup>th</sup> we could read the same about Mohamed and the Koran. The catholic authors thought that the Islam as heresy, they indicated mentors of Mohamed nestorian, arian heretic monks and jews, who have significant influence to Mohamed. In these works Mohamed was introduced as an illiterate, sly, crook, juggling, false prophet, lewd and violent person. Because his qualities and his actions – especially, against Jesus Christ – often mentioned Mohamed as an evil, Satan's messenger, Anti-Christ and featured his advices these features, too. The catholic authors found only evidences as investigated the Koran, they have seen Islam as the enemy of the Christianity, and it was thought the Islam's false instructions poses a threat to the people's salvation. These prejudices fundamentally influenced the relationship between the Islam and the Christianity. The influenced by prejudices view was confirmed, furthermore it became more distorted if background of an event was thought the Islam's false instructions and violence by those who wrote about it.

Comprehensive studies were written about certain topics. For example: *Islam and the West és The Arabs and Medieval Europe* by **Norman Daniel**; *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* by **Richard William Southern** and *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam* edited by **John Victor Tolan** studies from middle-aged Europe which shaped the view about the Islam which formed in Europe. In the late middle-aged and early modern age comprehensive works was written about the Islamic: *Martin Luther and Islam* by **Adam S.**

**Francisco**; *Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation* by **Hartmut Bobzin**; *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations* by **Hugh Goddard**; *The Islam and the Reformation* by **Viktor Segesváry**, *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* by **Michael Frassetto** and *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* by **David Blanks & Nancy Bisaha**. Moreover, in 1990 a scientific journal (*Islam and Christian-Muslim*) was published about the relationship between Christianity and Islam. A recently published collection *Christian-Muslim Relation: A Bibliographical History* summarize in a study those works which affect the Islam-Christianity relationship and published until 1600. The collection contains short bibliographical summary each works.

### **Aim of the study**

1.: Introduce the European image of the Islam help with Theodor Bibliander's collection (1543). In the collection contains *Summula quaedam brevis contra haereses et sectam diabolicam fraudis Saracenorum, sive Ismaelitarum* by Petrus Venerabilis; the Latin translation of the Koran (1143); disproof of the Koran by Riccolodo da Monte Croce and Nicolaus Cusanus, II. Pope Pius's letter to II. Sultan Mehmed. Bibliander's work has Hungarian aspects: the first publish of the collection is Georgius de Hungaria and Félix Petancius acquisition, and in the second one Bertalan Georgievics's reports can be found. The statement of the collection has many reasons. The most important is that the collection gives a great overview about the middle aged and modern anti-Islamic works from 1143 to 1543. That is the main reason why this work became great source for the European authors (protestants and catholics) in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and Hungarian writers used the collection, too. In addition, justify Norman Daniel conclusion, that the Islam view which shaped in the 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century did not changed until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

2.: Islam view of the early modern Hungary: I considered important the examination of the Hungarian Islam view, because the country has been occupied by the Ottoman Empire for long time, and the Kingdom of Hungary have been already at war with the Ottoman Empire since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and during the 16<sup>th</sup> century a substantial part of the territory came under Ottoman rule. Working protestant missionarities and pastors at the territory of the Occupation had chance up close observation of the musulmans. This means that the Hungarian authors can make observation empirically, while their European "colleagues" only read the enemy's belief. Two of authors – which have been mentioned before - Georgius de Hungaria and Bertalan Georgievics were in turkish captivity. After the released they wrote their experiences and these works were very „popular” in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and it is no coincidence that these works take part in Bibliander's collection.

3.: Less known works: this is the third part is totally permeated my thesis, it can not be separated as well as the first and the second part. As I mentioned before, this topic less attention paid to Hungarian literature. As I mentioned before this topic received less attention has been paid in the Hungarian literature, only few comprehensive studies have been published even the European Islam view like Hungarian authors. The work of Péter Pázmány is the only expectation. There are two reasons why I present the less known works: first of all i would like to blow away their unknown. Therefore those works which have been written in Latin and translation did not exist until today, I tried to translate. Secondly, interpretation of these writings was necessary to present

the Hungarian image of the Islam. Only the detailed analyses of each works show that the authors of the later ages how used the written knowledge. It will become important especially when the examined authors wrote about the belief of the enemy without marked their references. We can make conclusion only their mentions which work have been used.

Three questions of the thesis:

- 1. Is the European image of the Islam differs from the Hungarian one?**
- 2. What were the references or sources of the Hungarian writers?**
- 3. Is there any difference between the protestant and catholic image of the Islam?**

## **Part II.**

### **Methods**

Main part of my study deals with introduction of works and translation of writings which have not been published in Hungarian yet. This method has been chosen by the topic and my objectives earlier. In the Hungarian literature only few study have been published in this topic, moreover the most important Islam critics writings have not been translated from Latin to Hungarian. For example: *Corpus Toletanum* by Petrus Venerabilis (contains the latin translation of Koran by Petrus Venerabilis and works of Robertus Ketensis and Hermannus Dalmata); disproof of Koran by Riccoldo da Monte Croce and Nicolaus Cusanus; letter of II. Pope Pius. Only two Hungarian writers, Georgius de Hungaria and Bertalan Georgievics, writings have been translated from the Bibliander's collection. From the examined writers István Szántó was the only author whose works have been published in Latin yet until today. The translation, introduction, analysis and comparison of the works have been carried out with help of text editions. This was necessary because that was the only way to imagine some authors how relied their predecessors or their own knowledge. For example in case of Riccoldo da Monte Croce - who spent years in Bagdad learning Arab language - it has been clear that although he translated some parts of the Koran by himself, his work not only writing by own experiences, but knew the *Corpus Toletanum* (1143). In the study introduce not only the works, but its authors and its era, too. It was justified because accurate assessment and explanation about the work can only be made if we know the author. For example: in the letter of II. Pope Pius in Bibliander's work the Pope asks the II. Sultan Mehmed convert to Christianity. The letter contrast with the Pope's anti-Turkish mentality. Resolving of this seeming contradiction not just the letter but other works of the Pope has been examined. The second example is that although the content of the anti-Islamic works show great similarities, but these works were created for different reasons in different eras. Works of the Middle Age have been written to protect the Christianity, declare Mohamed false Prophet and his sect heresy. In the Modern Ages these works serve as not only against the Muslims but it is part of the disputation between denominations. The protestants thought that Mohamed is punishment from the God for the sins of the Catholics, while the Catholics saw same heresy in the teachings of the Protestants like the Muslims.

### Part III. New results

#### Answers for the questions:

##### 1. Is the European image of the Islam differs from the Hungarian one?

Norman Daniel's statement that European image of the Islam – formed 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century – did not changed until the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century. The same could be said about the Hungarian authors. Although Georgius de Hungaria and Bertalan Georgievics mentioned at the Bibliander's Collection but we have to rank them among Hungarian writers. They were in Ottoman captivity, whereas their works were inspired by their experiences but they only repeat the European writers' statements and indictments about the Islam and Mohamed. Description of the Turkish weekdays and habits meant the novelty. In the Hungarian protestant authors' works only few words mentioned about the Islam and also the same as the statements of earlier writers. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century two refutations of Koran have been written. But not in Péter Pázmány's either in István Szántó's works born new approach about the belief of the Muslims. Difference could be found only in the literary style and purposes. The two imprisonment writers wanted to record the Ottoman's cruel and wretched destiny of the prisoners. Moreover, Georgius wanted to warn that the Islam seems to be moral and decent in fact it brings to damnation. The works of the Protestant have not been written against the Islam but the expounding and defending of their own teachings or wrote new angle of world's chronicle. There are more purposes in the Koran refutation of two Jesuits. First of all, they wanted to refute Mohamed teachings and intended it for denominational debate. It suggests that the beginning of the refutation Pázmány compared the evangelists and the protestants to the Turkish. Content of the anti-Islamic works of Hungarian writers are same as the Europeans', Norman Daniel's findings are true to Hungarian authors.

##### 2. What were the references or sources of the Hungarian writers?

To answer this question all Hungarian authors' path of life, studies and knowledge about the Islam have been examined.

**Georgius de Hungaria** was a slave in Ottoman Empire from 1438 to 1458. In his work, *Tractatus de moribus, religione, conditionibus et nequitia Turcorum*, that two decades have been recorded. His sources about the Islam were own experiences, but the Calabrian abbot, Fiorei Joachim, had a great effect on him.

**Bertalan Georgievics** was in captive from 1526 to 1539. After the released he wrote several works which were very „popular” in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He declared, that the knowledge about the Turkish comes from own experiences and earlier wise writers and scholars. But he did not mention the names of these earlier wise writers or scholars. Erik Fügedi found out that Georgievics used works of Georgius de Hungaria and Riccoldo da Monte Croce.

**Imre Ozorai** wrote few about the belief of the Turkish in the *De Christo et eius ecclesia, item de Antichristo eiusque Ecclesia*. His knowledge may come from different works and we do not know them.

**András Batizi** in his chronicle, *Meglött és megleendő dolgoknak...*, mentioned Mohamed in only few verses. But this description is same as Melancton's opinion. Both of them associated Mohamed to the horn

which have been written by Daniel Prophet. Moreover, it is known that he went Wittenberg more times, and studied under Melanchton, and his chronicle have been written by the view of the Wittenberg's historical approach. His source about the Islam was completely from Melanchton.

**István Benczédi Székely** in the *Chronica: Ez világnac yeles dolgairól* wrote, longer, a whole chapter, about the Islam. It is known that source of his chronicle were *Chronicon Carionis*, Sebastian Münster, János Thuróczy and works of Antonio Bonfini. If we compare Benczédi's work and the parts of the Chronicon Carionis which say about the Islam it will become clear that the writer's knowledges about the Islam is in this chronicle.

In his own work **Péter Melius Juhász** - *Szent Jánosnac tött jelenésnec...* -, thought there are two anti-Christ the Pope and Sergius. Melius called Sergius Mohamed's teachings. All of them are not enough to identify source of Melius. Bertalan Georgievics taught him for a year at the Nádasdy's, but he also studied in Wittenberg.

**Péter Károlyi's** *Antitheses veri et Turcici Christi* was lost. Only at his contemporary, Ferenc Dávid, found a reference to his work. From this we know only that the Turkish do not admit Jesus as the son of God. Unfortunately we do not say any strict thing about Péter Károlyi's knowledge about the Islam.

**Ferenc Dávid's** works (*A Rövid magyarázat mikeppen... és Az Egy ő magatol valo...*) mentioned the belief of the Turkish. Both of two works he wrote that Mohamed taught monotheism and against the Trinity in the Koran. This statement is tight-lipped, that means sources of Ferenc Dávid have not been identify clearly.

**István Basilius** *Az apostoli credonac rövid ...* wrote few words about the Islam. He wrote that Mohamed professed that he follows lawns of Moses. It was mentioned that the „priest” of the Turkish proclaims the one God from a tower. Basilius wrote that Koran promises physical and earthly pleasures after the death to the Muslims. The shouting „priest” appears in work of Georgius de Hungaria, Bertalan Georgievics and Imre Ozorai. Sources of Basilius could not known for sure.

**Péter Pázmány's** refutation of the Koran which published in two works, *Tíz bizonyág* and *Kalauz*, considers a complete anti-Islamic work. The knowledges have been listed in the refutation were clearly identify, but Pázmány mention all of his sources separately. Work of Theodor Bibliander, Juan Luis Vives, Nicolaus Cusanus and Joannes Andreas (Juan Andres) have been found. So we mentioned early Byzantine and European writers works as sources of Pázmány's work.

**István Szántó** mentioned 36 authors in the *Confutatio Alcorani* who wrote against Mohamed and his teachings. For example: **Raffaello Maffei (Volaterranus)**, **Alphonso de Spina**, **Vincentius Bellocensis**, **Riccardo da Monte Croce**, **Nicolaus Cusanus**, **Joannes Andreas**, **Aeneas Sylvius és Georgievics Bertalan (Bartholomeus Ungarus)**. His work certified that he used the listed writers' works. Furthermore, it was introduced with the help of the word „musca” that not the original work of Riccardo have been used, but a 17<sup>th</sup> translation. And Bibliander's Collection was not mentioned but all of the works have been listed from it.

**Summarize the Hungarian writers' knowledge about the Islam, it is clearly that the two captured authors use their own experiences but also they used earlier works. Those Protestants and Catholics where the sources can be identify clearly, proved that they took over earlier authors' knowledge. Theodor Bibliander's Collection was used by the two Catholic authors Péter Pázmány and István Szántó.**

### **3. Is there any difference between the protestant and catholic image of the Islam?**

We cannot answer this question clearly. First of all there are no content differences. Both the protestants and the Catholics thought Mohamed heretic who taught by heretics. It was known that the belief of the Turkish is the Muslim and believe in one God, but do not admit Jesus as the son of the God. Secondly, there is an essential difference between the Protestants and the Catholics knowledge about the Islam: the Protestant authors wrote less about Mohamed, while the Catholic writers wrote two Koran refutations. In the study it was tried to find out the reasons. The first one is the fear. They tried to avoid the religious debate with the Turkish, because otherwise they have to “choose between the death by fire or the circumcision” as mentioned by Pál Thuri. They fear to disrupts the apparent peace with the Turkish, because Protestant conventor work only by the Turkish permission at the field of the Occupation. The second reason is that the purpose of the Protestant authors works, they did not want to refute teachings of Mohamed. They wanted to introduce their own teachings and react the charge brought against the denomination. On the other hand, the purpose of the two Catholic authors was not only the Islam refutation, they charged the Protestants. Pázmány and Szántó while prove the false of Mohamed teachings, did not forget link the Turkish belief with the Protestant denominations.

**Part IV.**  
**Publications in this topic**

BALÁZS József: Nicolaus Cusanus és az iszlám. *Egyháztörténeti Szemle* 12 (2011) 39–53.

BALÁZS József: II. Pius pápa levele II. Mohamed török szultánhoz. In: GÉR András László – JENEI Péter – ZILA Gábor (szerk.): „Hiszek, hogy megértsem”! Konferenciakötet. Károli Gáspár Református Egyetem, L’Harmattan Kiadó, Budapest 2015. 289–295.

BALÁZS József – SZUROMI Kristóf (szerk.): Az európai iszlámkép Theodor Bibliander gyűjteményének tükrében. PPKE BTK Történelemtudományi Doktori Iskola, Budapest-Piliscsaba 2016.

BALÁZS József: II. Pius pápa és Nicolaus Cusanus bíboros ellentéte a török kérdés kapcsán. PPKE BTK Történelemtudományi Doktori Iskolája Eszmetörténeti Műhelyének Konferenciája 2012. A konferencia kötete megjelenés alatt.