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The Pompeii Column: The Lost Monument of Istanbul *

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Abstract:

This study analyzes information from German travel books to unveil the Pompeii Column, constructed in the Byzantine capital but reportedly torn down at the end of the 17th century. The written descriptions of the travelers and the engravings and maps drawn by the artists accompanying them provide comprehensive details about the ruined works. Firstly, the location of Öreke Rocks near Rumeli Feneri, the site of the Pompeii Column, is examined in terms of mythology and the legends surrounding it. The details of the votive altar and the column are presented in this context. Travel books authored by German-speaking travelers who saw the structure's appearance during their visit to Istanbul in the 16th and 17th centuries were studied in-depth for a thorough examination. Through these accounts, it seeks to gather novel data on the Pompeii Column, which has not survived to the present day and has not received thorough study yet. Travelers made this trip despite the challenging conditions because they wanted to see and study the Pompeii Column and maybe even have their names etched on it. Upon compiling the data from German travel books, it becomes evident that the Pompeii Column is a Byzantine-era signal column and an ancient altar as a base situated on the largest of the rocks known as Öreke Rocks, a short distance from Rumeli Feneri. The single piece of White marble column is composed of three distinct components stacked on top of one another. The top of the column is shaped like a wreath, while the middle section and base are diverse from the upper piece.

Keywords:

Pompeii Column, German Travelers, Istanbul in Travel Books, Öreke Rocks, Roman Votive Altar

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Introduction

The Pompeii column is a unique structure in terms of its position and purpose. It is situated near the Rumeli Feneri (Rumeli Lighthouse) in Istanbul and is classified as a Byzantine structure. By looking through the travel books of German visitors who were in Istanbul in the 16th and 17th centuries and witnessed the structure, it is expected to obtain novel information about the Pompeii Column, which has not survived to the present day. Travel accounts are a valuable resource for learning about monumental constructions that have not been preserved for modern times. Comprehensive data about the collapsed monuments is provided by the written accounts of the travelers who observed the buildings and the engravings and maps made by the writers or their accompanying painters. There are numerous travel accounts written in German that have not received enough attention from art and architecture historians.

The research is based on a building that was initially constructed as a votive altar, and later a pillar known as the Pompeii Column was placed on it. Remarkable details appear regarding the rocks underlying this construction. The mythical tale of Öreke Rocks' significance in mythology dates to ancient times. Before delving into the unique features of the Pompeii column—which will be scrutinized through travel reports published in German during the 16th and 17th centuries—the content of the rocks it is situated on will be assessed.

Öreke Rocks / Symplegades Rocks / Kyanea Islands

At the northern mouth of the Bosphorus, opposite the “Rumeli Feneri”, near the European side, there is a cluster of a dozen islets that rise. These rocks were called “Öreke Kayaları, Öreke Taşı / Röke Taşı” by the Turks during the Ottoman period (Eyice, 2007, p.59). In Anadolu Feneri Village, these rocks are known as “Kocataş” and “Körtaş” (Soysal, 1997, p.42). It was formerly referred to as the “Kyaneai Islands” or “Symplegades” (Blue Rocks). An old rumor states that these islands were once capable of movement. For sailors, this situation made the area highly unsafe. In fact, according to a legend, the Argonauts, a band of heroes in Greek mythology, had difficulty passing through the middle of these floating or moving islands during their expedition to Kolkhis (An ancient kingdom in the western part of present-day Georgia). They tried to cross the islands when they were far enough away from each other (Emir, 2009, pp.19, 21). The work Argonautika describes the Argonauts' tough sea voyage on their ship Argo, their expedition to Kolkhis to retrieve the Golden Fleece, and the incidents they encountered. Apollonios of Rhodes composed the epic Greek poem Argonautica in the third century BC. (URL-1). According to the legend's explanation, the floating islets are an optical illusion caused by the sea's recurring enclosing and unveiling of them. This tale can never be accepted, according to Pierre de Tchihatchef. Through topographic investigations of the Bosphorus, Tchihatchef provides a scientific explanation for the data that gave birth to the legend of the Symplegades, or Kyaneai roaming islands (Tchihatchef, 2018, pp.79 - 86). The tremendous noise the sea makes as it gets into the cracks between the rocks could be the source of the myth that they are hitting each other (Eyice, 2007, p.59).

Greek mythology claims that every ancient writer describes the presence of two floating islands called Symplegades (Colliding Rocks), one close to the European side and the other near the Asian side. The islet on the Asian side has disappeared as of the present day. Other than a few fragments of rock occasionally visible among the waves, there is no longer any evidence in the water between Yom Burnu and Anadolu Lighthouse. However,

the islet on the European side now appears as two massive rocks (European Kyaneais) surrounded by eleven other rocks rather than as a “single” mass. (Tchihatschef, 2018, pp.85-86).

Dionysios Byzantos As he describes in his book from the second century AD on the Bosphorus, the name “Symplegades” refers to the rocks “colliding with each other”: Strong currents flow over the Bosphorus. Eddies constantly accompany the intermittent movement of the sea. The narrowness of the strait compresses the stream, causing it to flow downward at regular intervals. The capes of the rocks overlap one another in this manner, giving mariners the impression that the route ahead is blocked. The way they seem to separate while sailing towards the clashing rocks (Kyaneai) and reunite when sailing away is deceptive. Furthermore, according to Dionysios Byzantios, the sea's reflection and the conflicting rocks' higher elevation above the water allow them to retain their deep blue (cyan) hue. He also says that the Romans built an altar to Apollo atop Kyaneai. (URL-2).

There are depictions of the legendary Symplegades (Blue Rocks) or Kyaneai Islands (Colliding Rocks). Among these is the engraving by the French printer and publisher Pierre Mariette II (1634–1716) that shows the Argonauts passing over the Symplegades / the Clashing Rocks (Fig. 1). The Argonauts are depicted in a 1754 painting by French painter Bernard Picart, crossing the Symplegades. (Picart, 1754) (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1: Floating islands known as Cyaneae or Symplegades (URL-3)



Fig. 2: Floating islands known as Cyaneae or Symplegades (Picart, 1754; URL-4)

Votive Altar and The Pompeian Column

During the Roman Empire, a round altar stone was placed on Kanlıkaya, the largest and highest of the Öreke Rocks (European Kyaneaisi / Kyaneai island), at the entrance of the Black Sea, a few hundred meters away from *Rumeli Feneri*, in the part where the Bosphorus opens to the Black Sea, in front of a dangerous bay that catches the northern winds. Later, a column was erected on this pedestal, most likely to guide the ships by indicating the rocks and preventing potential hazards from afar. This column, known as the Pompeian Column, stood as a warning symbol during the Byzantine and early Turkish periods. The column stood until 1680. However, in 1680, it collapsed due to a strong wind, and its pieces were scattered into the sea (Eyice, 2007, p. 60).

The accounts state that the column was around 4 meters high, with a radius of about 3 meters, and featured a Corinthian head. The column stood atop a round, white marble altar that measured around 90 centimeters in diameter and 1.5 meters in height. In the estimation of C. Mango (1993, p. 315), this altar was the same as the Apollo altar that Dionysius Byzantius reported. There have been four depictions of bucraniums on the altar, with wreaths hanging over them. The wreaths included four circular medallions: the first displayed an animal with four legs, the second portrayed the sun, the third had rays, and the fourth contained an undefined image facing north. There is also an inscription on the altar (Lajtar, 2000, p. 44). The Latin text on the column, based on what the epigraphers could read and the details provided by the travelers, reads as follows:

*Caesari Augusto
f(e)c(i)t L. Annidius*

L. f. Cla(udia) Fronto

It was built for Caesar Augustus by Lucius Annidius Fronto, son of Lucius of the Claudia tribe. (*Dem Caesar Augustus hat Lucius Annidius Fronto, Sohn des Lucius, aus der tribus Claudia, (dies) errichtet.*) (Dethier & Mordtmann, 2000, p.44).

A column consisting of a single piece of large marble stone dating from 302 AD is located in Alexandria, Egypt. This column is called the Pompeius Column or the Diklityânûs Obelisk (Gök, 2017, p.202). Presumably, the standing Pompeii column in Alexandria is a replica of the destroyed Pompeii column on the Öreke cliffs. However, as previously mentioned, the base of the column on the Bosphorus is an older altar (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3: The Pompeius Column in Alexandria, Egypt (Gök, 2017, p.202).

Pompeian Column in Historic Engravings and Maps

Nearly every Western visitor to Istanbul during the Ottoman era made their way to this column on the Rreke Rocks. Maps, engravings, and travel books often include drawings and information about these rocks and the column on top. The Freshfield Album, drawn by a German engraver and dated to 1574, contains a very detailed engraving of the altar and column on the Kyaneai/Öreke rock island (Fig. 4). The text appearing in the engraving is as follows:

Columna marmorea in rupe Insulari prope littus Europaeum in quo Pharos sita: Ea rupes una est Cyaneorum petrarum secundum Gyllium. In columnae Basi nomen Caesaris Augusti tantum apparet. Reliqua verba vetustate et aspergine maris deleta sunt: A marble column in an insular rock near the European shore where the lighthouse is situated: That rock is one of the Cyanean rocks, according to Gyllius. On the base column, the name of Caesar Augustus appears only. The rest of the words have been obliterated by age and the wave erosion of the sea. (Yavuz, 2013, p. 14; Mango, 1965, pp. 313-315).

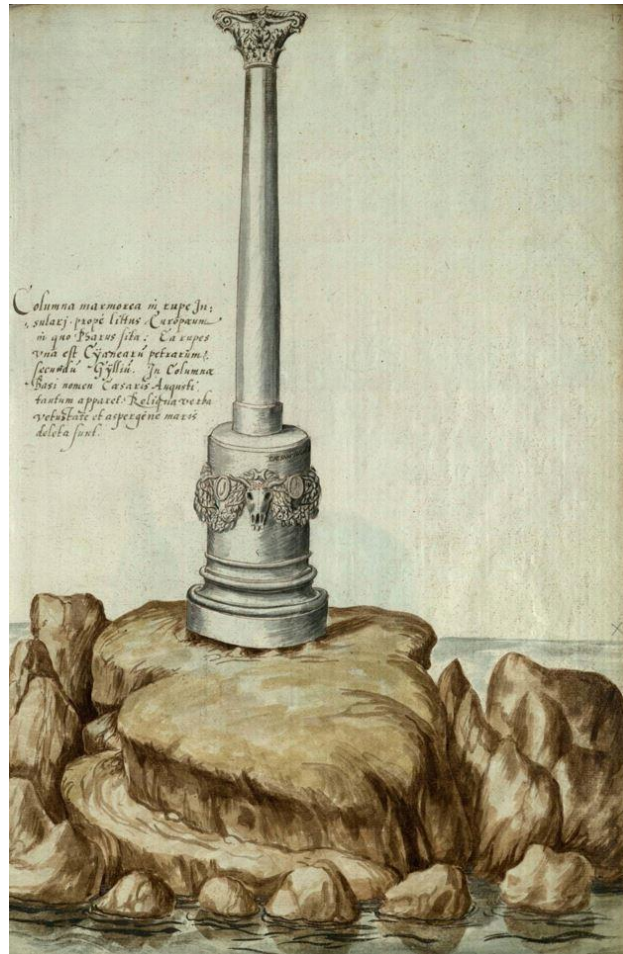


Fig. 4: Drawing of the Pompeian Column on Öreke Rocks (Freshfield, 1574).



Fig. 5: Colliding Rocks—an engraving of the Öreke Rocks and the Pompeian Column (Chatelain, 1710).

The Historical Atlas published by Dutch cartographer Henri Abraham Chatelain (d. 1684–d. 1743) contains three engravings that depict the Bosphorus and Thrace, the Pompeii Column, and the view of Istanbul from the Bosphorus. The following note in the explanatory text of the Pompeian Column engraving provides significant information about the column: There is an island-shaped rock around Pont Euxin, where the Bosphorus is at its narrowest, approximately fifty-four steps away on both sides of the strait. The Pompeian Column is a white marble column situated atop the rock. It is commonly believed that Mitrades built this monument here as a tribute to Pompeii, who was victorious. Its height is merely three and a half meters. A violent storm around April 1680 knocked the Pompeian Column into the sea (Chatelain, 1710; URL-5) (Fig. 5).

An engraving from Inciciyan's book depicts the altar stone or plinth, and the Öreke Rocks (Fig. 6). The altar stone on Öreke Rocks is illustrated in the 1817 book by Pertusier, a notable author of works on Istanbul and its environs (Fig. 7).

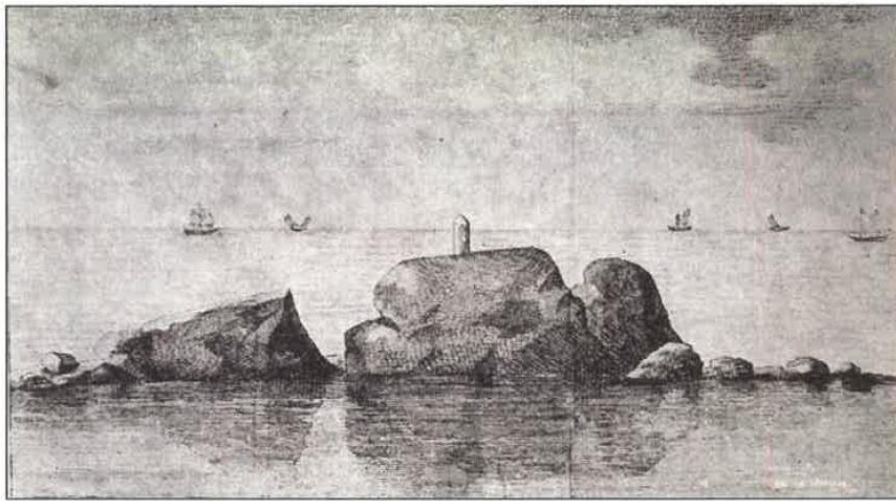
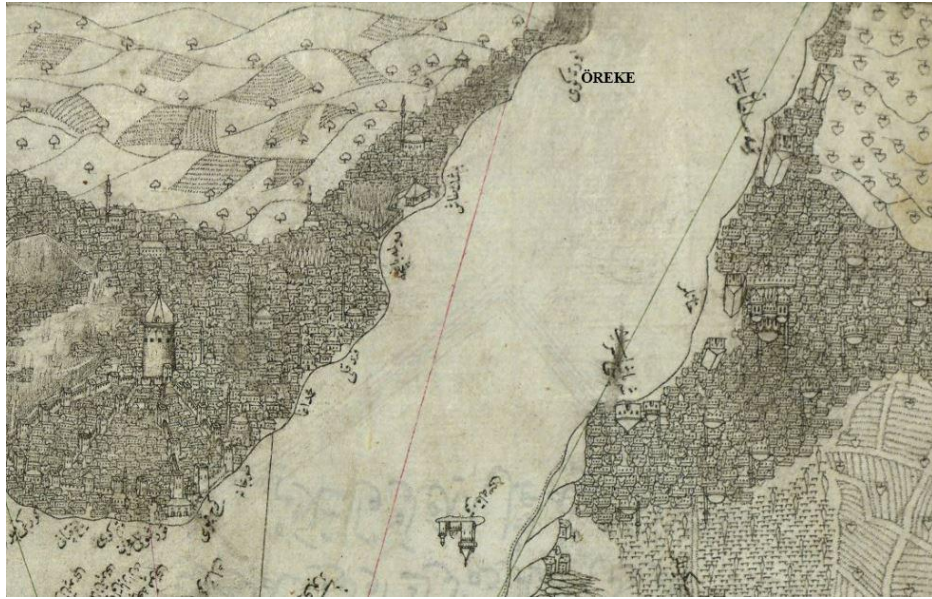


Fig. 6: Engraving showing the Öreke Stone and the column (İnciciyan, 1831, p.230)



Fig. 7: Rumeli Feneri and Öreke Rocks, with the base of the altar stone as the plinth of the Pompeii Column (Pertusier; URL-6).

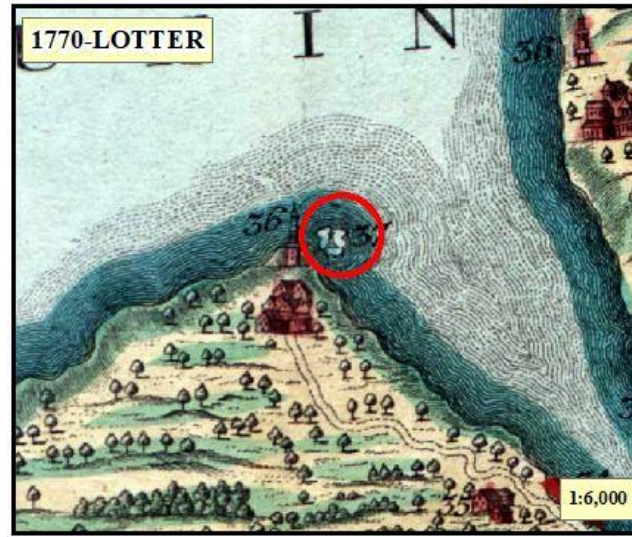
16th-century Ottoman Turkish sailor and geographer Piri Reis (Muhyiddin Piri Bey) mentioned the Öreke Rocks on his map, in his work Kitab-ı Bahriye. (Map 1) The Pompeii Column is shown as “Columna Pompei” on the Bosphorus map of Hungarian cartographer Johann Baptist von Reben from 1764 (Map 2). In 1770, the item marked with the number 37 on the Istanbul map of German cartographer Tobias Conrad Lotter (1717–1777) was designated as “Pompeius Column” (Map 3). The location of the column is shown as the Öreke Stone on the historical Ottoman map of 1909 (Map 4).



Map 1: Öreke Rocks, Piri Reis (URL-7).



Map 2: Reben, 1764 (URL-8).



Map 3: Lotter, 1770 (URL-9).



Map 4: Ottoman Map, 1909 (IMM Corporate GIS Web Application).

Pompeii Column Today

Based on the information at hand, it appears that the altar and the column were not intended to be together. Later on, a column was placed over the votive altar. The drawings show that the capital of the Pompeii Column is in the Roman Corinthian style. It is unknown if this capital is the same as the one that was formerly visible in Rumeli Feneri's garden. This column capital is taken from Rumeli Feneri's Garden. Since the Pompeii Column was toppled by the wind in the 1680s, the only ancient ruin located on the largest of the Öreke rocks today is a white marble votive altar decorated with a wreath relief (Fig. 8). The circular altar, approximately one and a half meters high and 90 cm in diameter stands in its place today, heavily damaged (Fig. 9). The names of many modern and pre-modern sailors are written on it. There is a Latin inscription on the altar.

According to some scholars, this circular altar might be the Apollo altar that Byzantine Dionysius mentioned. It is acknowledged that the person who provided information about this altar, Dionysios Byzantios, lived before Septimius Severus invaded and destroyed Byzantium (193–196 AD). Thus, it can be inferred that the altar was constructed by the Romans at some point between 27 BC and 193 AD (Yavuz, 2013, p. 10).



Fig. 8: The votive altar and the Colliding Rocks as they appear today (Photo taken by: the author, January 7, 2024)



Fig. 9: The Altar on the Öreke Rocks (URL-10).

Travel books: Their Significance as Source Documents

The evolution of Ottoman cities, the buildings that mark different eras, and those ‘ancient monuments that need to be preserved’ have all been written about in travel books. Important sources that can provide insight on numerous research projects include the state of these works at the time travel accounts were published (Madran, 1985, p. 1303). Scholars can benefit from the information travelers have given regarding the monuments that are no longer known, particularly since they have been able to firsthand report their overall opinion of the city.

It should be noted that what these travelers describe is like images reflected from a flawed mirror. However, even if this image is incomplete, it is a faithful reflection of the original. It is possible to find the unchanging lines of Istanbul among the impressions they convey, most of the time without going through the filter of criticism, and to obtain some new information that sheds light on the city (Ebersolt, 1996, p. 2).

Travel books are sources that can illuminate the points where historical data is insufficient. Therefore, research conducted without consulting travel books, which have versatile material and contain important documents, or by neglecting to benefit from travelogues, will be relatively incomplete.

The German travelers examined in this study are shown in Table 1:

GERMAN TRAVELERS	YEARS SPENT IN ISTANBUL
Ogier Ghiselin de BUSBECQ	1554-1562
Salomon SCHWEIGGER	1578-1581
Hans Jacob BREUNING	1579
Michael HEBERER	1585-1588
Reinhold LUBENAU	1587
Baron Wenceslaw WRATISLAW	1591
Johann WILD	1611
Adam WERNER	1616-1617
Hans Ludwig von KUEFSTEIN	1628-1629

Table 1: German travelers and the duration of their stay in Istanbul

Firstly, it is necessary to clarify the country of origin of the travelers included in the article and why they are called “German”. Some of them were Imperial Ambassadors (Busbecq and Kuefstein), some of them were in the embassy delegation (Schweigger, Lubenau, Wratislaw, Werner), and some of them were people who happened to be in Istanbul during their travels or were captured by the Ottoman Empire and had the opportunity to visit Istanbul after they were liberated (Breüning, Heberer, Wild). The common feature of these travelers is that they are citizens of the Holy Roman Empire. The Austrian Habsburg Dynasty (1415–1806) ruled the Holy Roman Empire (962-1806) beginning in the fifteenth century. The term “German” (Deutsche Nation) was added to the Holy Roman Empire. Therefore, according to its usage among travelers in this article, it should be understood that when a Turk is mentioned, it means a person from the Ottoman Empire, and when a German is mentioned, it refers to a person from the Habsburg Empire.

The Column of Pompeii from the Narration of German Travelers

Among the travelers included in this study, the first traveler to visit the Pompeii Column on the Colliding Rocks was Ambassador Ogier Ghiselin von Busbecq. Ogier Ghiselin von Busbecq (1522-1592), of Flemish origin, who was in Istanbul between 1554 and 1562 as the Ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire, had the opportunity to visit the city frequently during his stay in Istanbul. In the midst of where the waters enter the Bosphorus, Busbecq discovers a rock with a column on it while sailing to the Black Sea. Busbecq, who examined the Pompeii Column closely, reports that the name “Roman Octavian” is engraved. Busbecq, who seems to know about the Cyanean islets, also called Colliding Rocks, particularly emphasizes that he did not find any trace of such islets in the few hours he spent in this region. He states that these islets drifted away in the water (Busbecq, 2005, p. 44–45). Probably Busbecq did not realize that these islets were the rock with the column on it.

Salomon Schweigger (1551–1622) came to the capital of the Ottoman Empire as a Protestant preacher in the embassy of Ambassador Joachim Freiherr von Sintzendorff in 1578–1581 (Schweigger, 2014, p. 14). In his travelogue, Schweigger stated that they entered Istanbul at 9 a.m. on a day in January of 1578 and gave information about the Pompeii Column. Schweigger also included his drawings on paper (wood engravings). One of these drawings is an engraving showing the Öreke Rocks and the Pompeii Column (Fig. 10). In the epilogue of Salomon Schweigger's travelogue, Heidi Stein states the following:

The drawings in Schweigger's travelogue had a great impact on its popularity at that time. In his drawings, Schweigger describes what he saw in detail and faithfully in this regard; at least, it is superior to the mostly unrealistic pictures in other writings about Turkey published in the first half of the 16th century (Schweigger, 1986, p. 244).

In his travelogue, Schweigger provides the following information about the Pompeii Column: On the Black Sea coast, one and a half German miles from the city of Constantinople, there is a high tower (Rumeli Feneri) twenty steps from the coastline. Directly opposite this tower, a steep rock rises from the sea. A column made of a single

piece of marble was erected on this rock. A column made of a single piece of marble was erected on this rock. This column was called "Columna Pompeii". However, there is no information about the source of its name or the reason why it was placed there (Schweigger, 2014, p. 164).

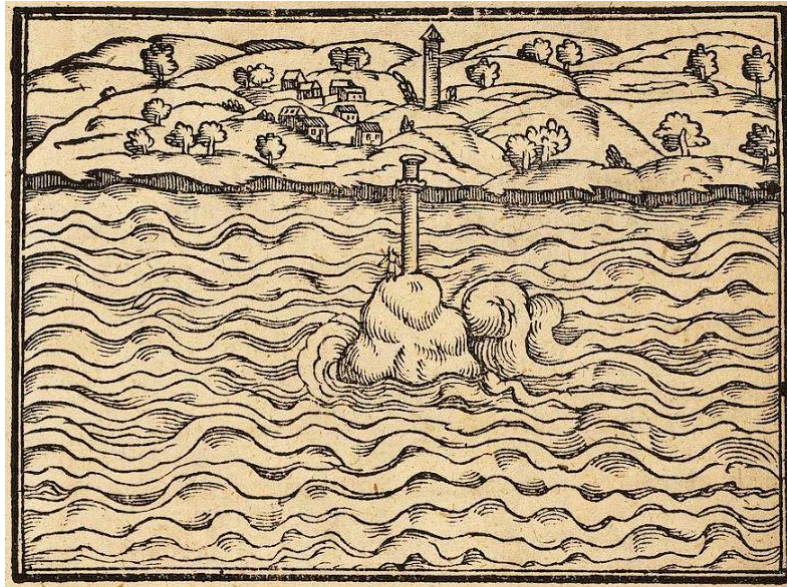


Fig. 10: Pompei Column (Schweigger, p. 134a; URL-11).

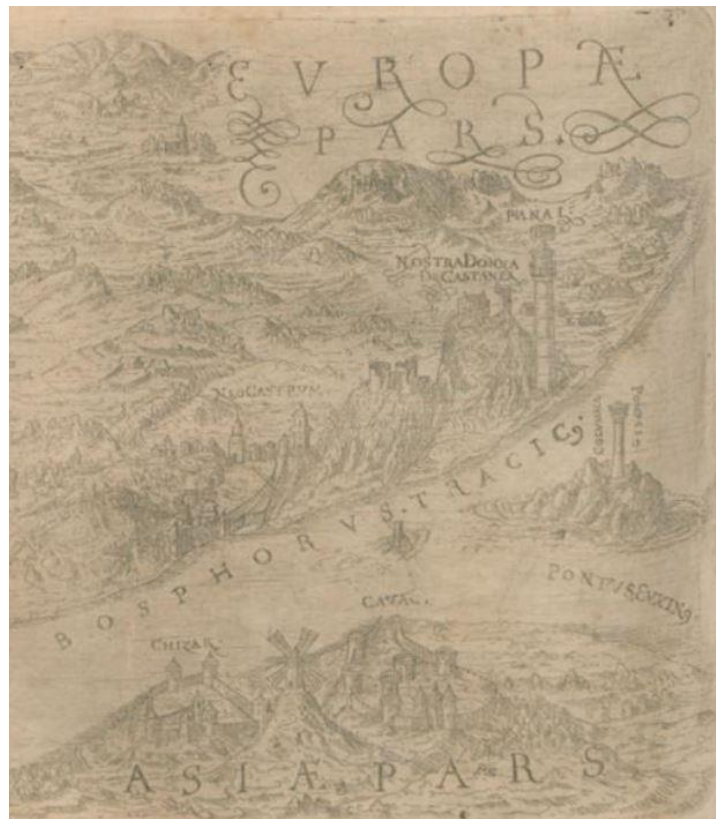
Traveler Hans Jacob Breüning von Buchenbach (1552-1616), who came to Istanbul on June 22, 1579, and stayed for a month, mentions his trip to the Pompeii Column in his travelogue. On a trip with his friends to the waterway known as the Black Sea Strait or the Thracian Strait on July 15, Breüning conveys his impressions about the Pompeian Column as follows:

There is a rock in the sea, a rifle shot away from the shore. A stalagmite called "Columna Caesaris" rises on top of this rock. They named this column "Columna Pompeio". When the column is examined carefully, this name is written on its base. This column, made of white marble, consists of three separate pieces placed on each other. The top of the column is in the form of a wreath. The middle part and its base are different from the upper part. Therefore, it appears that the top of the column is made of a special stone. The column is actually not very high. Nonetheless, it is visible from a distance due to its placement on a massive stone. We left after engraving our names on the column (Breüning, 2020, p. 183).

Michael Heberer of Bretten, who was captured by the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean in 1583, has been a slave in Ottoman galleys for years. Heberer, who gained his freedom with a ransom, had the opportunity to visit Istanbul before returning to his country. After his return, he wrote a travelogue (Afyoncu, 2009, p. 90). In his travelogue, Heberer describes his journey to see the Pompeii Column as follows:

Joining forces, six of us ventured across the Bosphorus to view Columna Pompeii, located atop a rock at the mouth of the Black Sea. When we reached the rock on which the column was located, we climbed the rock and examined the column. The column was not very high. The upper and lower parts of the pillar were slightly wider. I don't know who erected the column here since nothing like this was reported in previous publications. Many claim that the construction of this column was done as a tribute to Pompeius, whose conquest gave the Roman Empire control over the Black Sea. I noticed numerous names inscribed on the column when I examined it (Heberer, 2003, p. 304).

During his trip to the Bosphorus, the entrance and exit route to the Black Sea, Heberer prepared a Bosphorus engraving introducing both sides of the Bosphorus and its surroundings. In this engraving, the Pompeian Column can be seen on a rock in the sea, in the upper part of the Rumelian side of the Bosphorus (Map 5).



Map 5: Pompeius Column on the Öreke Rock (Heberer, 1588; URL-12).

Like other European visitors, Reinhold Lubenau from Königsberg, who arrived in Istanbul between 1587 and 1589 as a pharmacist accompanying the entourage of Holy Roman Empire Ambassador Bartholomaeus Petz, took a maritime excursion to see the Pompeii Column. In his travelogue, Lubenau provides the following details regarding the Pompeii Column:

The Great Column of Pompeii (Columna Pompei Magna) rises on a rock in the middle of the sea a short distance from the land and is made entirely of white marble. Marble is so tough that we could not engrave names on it with an iron rod. In 66 BC, the King of Pontus and Asia (Pompeius Magnus, regem Ponti et Asiae) erected the column here after defeating Mitrdates and annexing his country to the Roman Empire. One can come across columns about this triumph in numerous locations. Even though it was quite risky, we climbed the cliff. Getting off the rock was even more difficult. In fact, we could only get down by sitting down and sliding down on our butts. The waves were constantly hitting and undermining these rocks. Since these cliffs consist of two pieces close together, many people claim that they are "Symplegades" or "Cyaneae insulae" (floating islands). Polybios (203-120 BC; Ancient Greek historian) also describes them as floating rocks. It appears as though these two rocks are moving toward one another and sometimes away from each other as the ship approaches them. I found a herb called "umbilicum veneris" at the bottom of the rock. We left here after examining this place (Lubenau, 2012, p.398).

In 1591, Emperor II. Bohemian Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw von Mitrowitz (1576-1635), who served as an officer in the embassy delegation of Ambassador Friedrich von Kreckwitz sent to Istanbul by Rudolf, was imprisoned along with the other members of the embassy delegation when war broke out between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire. The prisoners, who were first imprisoned in the Shipyard in Galata, were later

imprisoned for two years in the Rumeli Fortress, which they called the Black Tower. When Sinan Pasha passed away, III. Mehmed forgave Wratislav. Wratislav's travelogue was published in Latin in 1597 (Afyoncu, 2009, p. 191). Semavi Eyice states that the original of the travelogue was written in Czech (Eyice, 1978, p. 72). In his travelogue, Wratislaw gives brief information about the Pompeii Column in the section where he describes his Bosphorus tour with a boat prepared by the ambassador: A column with Latin inscriptions on its base is situated atop a large rock near the European coast and in the center of the zone where the sea flows into the Bosphorus (Wratislaw, 1981, p.69).

Traveler Johann Wild from Nuremberg, who had been captured by the Ottomans in Hungary, saved money and went to Istanbul after his release. When he returned to Nuremberg in 1611, he wrote a travelogue. This travel book is significant because it describes the folklife in Egypt, the Mecca caravan, and the holy sites of Islam (URL-13). During his time in Istanbul, he visited the Pompeii Column, like other European travelers. Providing information about a long marble column on a rock rising in the sea, right across from the lighthouse (Rumeli Feneri) on the coast of the Black Sea, Wild states that he does not know for what purpose this column has been (Wild, 1964, p. 337).

Adam Werner, who was in Istanbul as ambassador secretary in Hermann Czernin's embassy delegation between 1616 and 1617, describes in his travel book his experiences while going to the Pompeii Column with several people in the embassy delegation. Their journey, which started in beautiful weather and a calm sea, suddenly turned into a dangerous adventure among terrible waves, yet they reached their destination safely. Werner provides the following information about the Pompeii Column he saw on this journey:

There are two natural rocks at the entrance of the Black Sea, close to the European side. Although these rocks are not large, they are considered islands because they are surrounded by water. These rocks are called Cyaneas, meaning sky blue. These rocks are also called Symplegades and Planeas (Öreke Stone). Indeed, those who look at these rocks from a distance think that they are moving, approaching, and moving away from each other. There is no such situation; The rocks appear that way from a distance because of their colors. We also experienced the same occurrence. Because the first rock was so steep and the seawater was battering it so forcefully, I did not dare climb it. So I went up to the second rock. On the larger rock lies a temple that was built during the era of polytheistic faith. The unique seal used by Emperor Augustus is etched in Roman characters on the temple's stones. But this particular sign has become illegible over time. The temple has a circular, very tall column of white marble. In honor of the person who erected the column here, the Greeks and Italians named it the Pompeii Column (Werner, 2011, pp.68-69, 98).

II. Hans Ludwig von Kuefstein, the Holy Roman Empire's envoy, spent almost a year in Istanbul after Ferdinand sent him there in 1628 to renew the Treaty of Zitvatorok. Along with historical and diplomatic observations, he includes details about the locations he visited during his stay in his travelogue, which is written in the format of a diary. On August 2, 1629, Kuefstein embarked on a ship cruise down the Bosphorus and recorded the following observations: On a tiny rocky island near the Bosphorus's mouth, the "Pompeius/Pompei Column" sprang up into the Black Sea. It was extremely risky and tough to get up and down there. But with all of my strength, I managed to reach there and had my name engraved on the column (Teply, 1976, p.42).

CONCLUSION

Upon compiling the data from German travel books, it becomes evident that the Pompei Column is a Byzantine-era signal column on an ancient altar base situated on the largest of the rocks known as Öreke Rocks, a short distance from Rumeli Feneri. This monument was destroyed in the seventeenth century, leaving only the votive altar intact. The column was built of a single piece of white marble. It was composed of three distinct components stacked on top of one another. The top of the column was shaped like a wreath, while the middle section and base were diverse from the upper piece.

It appears that visitors to Istanbul were aware of the existence of the Pompeii Column atop the Öreke Rocks, as well as myths or rumors surrounding it. Travelers made this trip despite the challenging conditions because they wanted to see and study the Pompeii Column and maybe even have their names etched on it.

After carefully examining the column, Busbecq reports that the Roman Octavian's name is carved. According to Schweigger, a single piece of marble was used to construct the column. Breüning reports that the white marble column is titled "Columna Pompeio" and comprises three distinct parts stacked on top of one another. The top of the column is shaped like a wreath, and the base and middle sections of the column are distinct. He adds that because the column is perched on a rock, it is visible from a distance even though it is not particularly tall. According to Heberer, the column is marginally wider at the top and bottom. Heberer adds that he has been informed by numerous sources that Pompeius, who presented the Black Sea to the Roman Empire, is the reason for the erection of this column. In contrast, Lubenau claims that the column was built to commemorate the King of Pontus and Asia's victory over Mitrdates in 66 BC. Wratislaw claims that the column's base contains Latin inscriptions. According to Lubenau, the column was made entirely of white marble and was so hard that an iron rod could not even be used to engrave an inscription on it. Despite all the risks, Kuefstein claims that he managed to make his way out and get his name inscribed on the column. According to Werner, there once stood a temple atop the larger rock. Roman letters and the Emperor Augustus' seal were etched on the temple's stones, but with time, these markings vanished. Additionally, he states that this temple had a very tall, round, white marble column known as the Pompeii Column—named for the man who had ordered its erection.

These details, which were provided in written and graphic form in travel reports written in German throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, provide remarkable data about the Pompeii Column, much of which is currently lost. Travel accounts can be valuable sources for lost works, as demonstrated by this study, which also provides little-known details about the work as subject matter. There may be inaccurate information provided on some points. On the other hand, more objective data can be obtained by comparing information gathered from various sources. This approach is further illustrated by the filtrated information on parallel and distinct data that this study achieved.

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