

"The Turk" in the Czech Imagination (1870s-1923)

Jitka Malečková



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By

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Why Czechs and Turks?

“Do you like the Turks? Do you like those heathen dogs? You don’t, do you?” the Good Soldier Švejk says to Palivec, the innkeeper, in Jaroslav Hašek’s famous novel. Palivec replies: “One customer is as good as another, never mind a Turk. For tradesmen like us politics doesn’t enter into it. Pay your beer, sit down in my pub and jabber what you like. That’s my principle. It’s all the same to me whether our Ferdinand was done in by a Serb or Turk, Catholic or Moslem, anarchist or Young Czech.”¹ The views that Švejk and Palivec express here are reflective of the ways many Czechs felt about the Turks in the first decades of the 20th century. But Švejk’s words are particularly significant because, love him or hate him, the amiable, servile “idiot” Švejk is Czech literature’s most emblematic figure and for many the embodiment of the Czech national character. That Hašek even mentions the Turks in his brilliant anti-war novel and has Švejk voice strong anti-Turkish sentiments therefore demands an explanation. And that is what this book tries to do: explain why the Turks remained a persistent and often quite prominent image in early-20th-century Czech society, which for generations had had little direct contact with the Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants. For although it was not only in times and places of conflict that Europeans turned their attention to the Turks, direct contact with the Ottoman Empire naturally increased the level of interest in Turkish themes.

Between the 14th and 17th centuries the battlefields on which European armies clashed with the usually victorious Ottomans moved from Southeastern Europe to the regions controlled by the Italian states, and from there to Central Europe and further East. In the aftermath of these conflicts large areas of Southern, Eastern and Central Europe came under Ottoman rule. The Ottoman army was still able to threaten Vienna in 1683, but Ottoman power then started to recede, and only the Southeast of Europe remained in Ottoman hands. Another important watershed in Europeans’ relations with the Ottoman Empire and their interest in the Middle East was Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798. By the early 19th century, the Ottoman army was no longer a threat to the modern states of Europe, and despite the Ottoman Empire’s attempts to reform itself, the balance of power between the former rivals shifted to Europe’s advantage. The Ottoman army continued to wage war, but its major

1 Jaroslav Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk and His Fortunes in the World War*, trans. Cecil Parrott (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 9.

rival was now Russia, and in the mid-19th century Western states went so far as to support the Ottoman Empire militarily in a war against Russia. In the decades that followed, the Ottoman army was involved in further armed conflicts, including the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–1878, the war with Italy over Tripoli in 1911–1912 and the Balkan Wars in 1912–1913. Even when not at war, the government had to face rebellions and protests from discontented segments of the population in the empire, sometimes instigated or supported from the outside, especially by Russia, often exploited by European statesmen, and always closely followed and debated by the European public. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire grew closer to Europe in areas of the economy, trade, diplomacy, and culture, and in the way of life among the elites in Istanbul. Accompanying these developments was that the Ottoman government became increasingly dependent on the help and capital of European powers, just as the struggle between these powers for influence in the empire and for its territory was starting to accelerate. Modernization continued, and in some respects culminated, under Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876–1909), whose reign coincided with a large part of the period that this book is concerned with, even though by contemporaries his rule was considered the epitome of autocracy and tyranny.² In the empire, the opposition movement, spearheaded by Ottoman intellectuals, spread at the turn of the century through the ranks of army officers and some bureaucrats and resulted in the Young Turk Revolution in 1908.³ The Young Turk government established after the revolution allied itself with the Central Powers and brought the Ottoman Empire into World War I, which precipitated the dissolution of the empire.

The Ottoman Turks were for centuries viewed as a major threat to Europe and “the souls of Europeans.” They were also a source of fascination and figured centrally in European perceptions of “the Other.” Turkish themes have abounded in European literature, art, and thinking. They can even be found in countries that are separated from the Turks by an ocean.⁴ Earlier scholarship has tended to argue that a fairly uniform image of “the Turk” held sway across Europe and has highlighted how from the late middle ages the Turks were

2 On the rule of Abdülhamid II see Benjamin C. Fortna, “The Reign of Abdülhamid II,” in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, ed. I. Metin Kunt, vol. 4, *Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 38–61.

3 On the Young Turks see M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Stefano Taglia, *Intellectuals and Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Young Turks on the Challenges of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2017).

4 See Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America: Creation of an Enduring Prejudice* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010).

regarded as the enemy of Christendom.⁵ This opinion has been challenged by more recent scholars, who see variety in the views of the Turks that existed around Europe at any given time and place,⁶ and there is moreover an increasing awareness among historians today that the Ottoman Empire was also a part of Europe, and not merely its foe.⁷ How the Turks were portrayed and what image of them prevailed was affected by various factors, such as particular power relations or whether or not Europe was at war with the Ottoman Empire at the time, and in areas controlled by the Turks these images also responded to the Turks' position as rulers and oppressors.

The imagery further reflected a fear of and a curiosity about religious and cultural difference. Islam and the Ottoman Turks occupied an important place in the discourses of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. But religious animosity was not the only lens through which the Turks were viewed. The humanist historians in the Italian states that were threatened by Ottoman military power in the 15th century were driven by political considerations when, in their shock at the fall of Constantinople in 1453, they tried to find an explanation for the Ottomans' success by studying Ottoman history.⁸ In the 16th century, when Ottoman power and expansion on European territory culminated, the Turks were not only viewed with fear but also with a sense of awe; this sentiment was expressed in the epithet *Magnifique* or "Magnificent" that was used in Europe to refer to Sultan Süleyman (called *Kanuni*, "The Lawgiver," by the Ottomans), who embodied Ottoman glory at its peak. Even in the border regions between Christendom and Islam, the relationships and interactions between the rulers and inhabitants of the Ottoman and Holy Roman Empires were very diverse, as Charlotte Colding Smith, among others, has shown using manifold forms of depictions and descriptions of Ottoman Turks that existed

5 See, e.g., Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453–1517)* (Niewkoop: B. De Graaf, 1967); Richard William Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).

6 James G. Harper, "Introduction," in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450–1750*, ed. James G. Harper (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 1; Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 6ff.; David R. Blanks and Michael Frassetto, "Introduction," in *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of Other*, ed. David R. Blanks and Michael Frassetto (New York: St Martin's Press, 1999), 2.

7 See, e.g., Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman, eds., *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Pascal Firges et al., eds., *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

8 Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 3–4.

in the 15th and 16th centuries.⁹ This imagery could also serve various symbolic functions. Ivan Kalmar, for example, interprets the 17th-century depiction of Turks as savants on the astronomical clock in Prague as symbolizing the futility of knowledge when unaccompanied by Christian faith: “If you have worldly wisdom, but not the Holy Faith, then you might as well be a Turk.”¹⁰

It has long been established that the European perception of Ottoman rule as despotic, a judgment that began to be even more salient in European thought in the 17th and then especially in the 18th century, played an instrumental role in the debates on European political institutions at that time, which included conceptions of Enlightened despotism.¹¹ The European debate on Oriental despotism was moreover in reality directed at Europe itself, while the Orient mostly figured in it just rhetorically.¹² Larry Wolff has argued that in the long 18th century, from the 1680s to the 1820s, when the Ottoman Empire was no longer viewed primarily in religious terms and was not yet being looked on as the “Sick Man of Europe,” it “inspired a balance of fear, interest, curiosity, titillation, entertainment, and even sympathy.” This made “the Turk” an appealing character to introduce into European opera, “through which Europeans explored what it meant to be European.”¹³ Wolff illustrates the seemingly obvious, but often overlooked fact that France’s experience with the Ottoman Turks was very different from that of Venice and the Habsburg Monarchy, the Ottoman Empire’s traditional military foes. As a result, they had an entirely distinct attitude toward the Turks, and this was reflected even in opera.¹⁴

Images of the Turks in any given country were linked to the specific situation in that country. Thus, despite the strong influence of Enlightenment notions of

9 Charlotte Colding Smith, *Images of Islam, 1453–1600: Turks in Germany and Central Europe* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), 2ff.

10 Ivan Kalmar, “The Turks of Prague: The Mundane and the Sublime,” in *Orient-Orientalistik-Orientalismus: Geschichte und Aktualität einer Debatte*, ed. Burkhard Schnepel, Gunnar Brands, and Hanne Schönig (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2011), 272. In his book on early Orientalism, Kalmar argues that “the Orient illustrates man’s inability or unwillingness to recognize the presence of God in the world.” Ivan Kalmar, *Early Orientalism: Imagined Islam and the Notion of Sublime Power* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 44.

11 Michael Curtis, *Orientalism and Islam: European Thinkers on Oriental Despotism in the Middle East and India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 51–71. See also Alain Grosrichard, *The Sultan’s Court: European Fantasies of the East*, trans. Liz Heron (London: Verso, 1998), 26–50.

12 Joan-Pau Rubiés, “Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 9, no. 1–2 (February 2005): 111.

13 Larry Wolff, *The Singing Turk: Ottoman Power and Operatic Emotions on the European Stage from the Siege of Vienna to the Age of Napoleon* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 2.

14 Wolff, *The Singing Turk*, 4.

Oriental despotism that to a certain degree unified the European perception of the Ottoman Empire, the ways the Turks were viewed around Europe continued to vary. The best-known and most studied opinions on the Turks in the modern period were those of the French and British, and generalizations about the “European” relationship to the Turks are therefore based on the views of two countries for whom, incidentally, the Ottoman Empire was never a major foe or mortal danger.¹⁵ Unlike the French and the British, who were further away, the people who lived under Ottoman rule or in the border areas that were for centuries the stage of fighting between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires saw the Turks as a more imminent threat. In a richly documented account of Habsburg-Ottoman relations and of views on the Turks in German-speaking Central Europe between the 16th and 19th centuries, Paula Sutter Fichtner highlighted the Austrian population’s extremely hostile opinion of the Turks. This dislike affects even the author herself, who declares to have written her book as a warning to those “who wish at all times to communicate productively with dangerous, persistent and abidingly distasteful enemies.”¹⁶ The prevalence of negative attitudes toward the Turks in the Austrian regions is similarly revealed in the work of Andre Gingrich, which offers a critical perspective on modern Austrian opinions about the Turks and the Muslims of Bosnia.¹⁷ The Ottoman Turks were also viewed as the enemy by Southeast Europeans, who were living under Ottoman rule or in fear of it. But even among the Southern Slavs the images of the Turks were more diverse. They did not just allude to the “Turkish yoke,” but reflected also a more positive relationship with the Ottoman Turks, especially among the Muslim population.¹⁸

15 See Aşlı Çırakman, *From the “Terror of the World” to the “Sick Man of Europe:” European Images of Ottoman Empire and Society from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002); Christoph Bode, ed., *West Meets East: Klassiker der britischen Orient-Reiseliteratur* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Karl Winter, 1997); Rana Kabbani, *Europe’s Myths of Orient* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

16 Paula Sutter Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526–1850* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 71.

17 Andre Gingrich, “Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim World in Public and Popular Cultures of Central Europe,” in *Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School*, ed. Bojan Baskar and Borut Brumen (Ljubljana: Inštitut za multikulturne raziskave, 1998), 2:99–128; Andre Gingrich, “Blame It on the Turks: Language Regimes and the Culture of Frontier Orientalism in Eastern Austria,” in *Diskurs – Politik – Identität / Discourse – Politics – Identity*, ed. R. De Cillia et al. (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2010), 71–81; Andre Gingrich, “The Nearby Frontier: Structural Analyses of Myths of Orientalism,” *Diogenes* 60, no. 2 (2015): 60–66.

18 See Srđan M. Jovanović, “The Ottoman Empire as Friend and Foe: Perceptions of Ottoman Rule in Serbia and Bosnia and Thereupon Based Nationalisms,” *Review of Social Studies* 4,

The Czechs were never under Ottoman rule. Yet, the wars with the Ottoman Empire had a significant impact on Czech history: “the Turkish threat” helped propel Ferdinand of Habsburg onto the Czech throne in 1526, making the Czech lands part of the Habsburg Empire, whose ruling dynasty cast itself as the defender of Christianity against Islam. The Turks thus at that time became a relevant Other in the eyes of the Czechs and the influence of the wars continued to shape Czechs’ attitudes toward the Turks into the modern era.¹⁹ There was no single “Czech image of the Turks” in the early modern period, as Tomáš Rataj and, more recently, Laura Lisy-Wagner have shown.²⁰ According to Lisy-Wagner, the introduction of “the Turk” into the early modern construction of Czechness destabilized the German/Czech dichotomy.²¹ Early modern Czechs used the Turkish subject to establish a place for themselves within or in relation to Europe, and their views on the Turks were affected by their ambivalent relationship to Catholic Habsburg rule and to the Germans. By the 19th century, the Turks were no longer an immediate concern for the Czechs, but “the Turk” remained present in Czech public discourse and notions about the Turks were expressed in travel writing, scholarship, and journalism, as well as in literature and the arts. Nevertheless, Czech opinions on the Turks in the modern era have been left largely unexplored. While Czech scholars have dealt with Czech attitudes toward Islam and the Middle East more generally,²²

no. 1 (Spring 2017): 71–89; Božidar Jezernik, “Imagining ‘the Turk,’” in *Imagining “the Turk,”* ed. Božidar Jezernik (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 1–16.

- 19 Early modern Czech perceptions of the Turks have received correspondingly detailed attention by scholars. See, e.g., Zdeňka Tichá, *Jak starší Čechové poznávali svět* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1985); Josef Kinský, *Čeští cestovatelé*, 2 vols. (Prague: Orbis, 1961); Tomáš Rataj, “Obraz Turka v české renesanční společnosti ve světle cestopisné literatury,” *Folia Historica Bohemica* 17 (1994): 59–83; Jiří Hrubeš and Josef Polišenský, “Turecká otázka, uherská povstání a veřejné mínění předbělohorských Čech,” *Historický časopis* 7, no. 1 (1959): 74–103; Eduard Petrů, “Das Bild der Türkei in Reisebeschreibungen des 16. Jahrhunderts,” in *Studien zum Humanismus in den böhmischen Ländern*, ed. Hans-Bernd Harder et al., vol. 3, *Die Bedeutung der humanistischen Topographien und Reisebeschreibungen in der Kultur der böhmischen Länder bis zur Zeit Balbíns*, ed. Hans-Bernd Harder et al. (Cologne: Böhlau, 1993). Another line of research deals with the Turks in the context of Czech relations with other Slavs and the Balkan countries. For an older but rather comprehensive overview of these relations see Václav Žáček et al., *Češi a Jihoslované v minulosti: Od nejstarších dob do roku 1918* (Prague: Academia, 1975); Růžena Havránková, “Česká veřejnost na pomoc protitureckým povstáním jižních Slovanů,” *Slovanské historické studie* 6 (1966): 5–53.
- 20 Tomáš Rataj, *České země ve stínu půlměsíce: Obraz Turka v raně novověké literatuře z českých zemí* (Prague: Scriptorium, 2002); Laura Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453–1683* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013).
- 21 Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity*, 171.
- 22 See, e.g., Miloš Mendel, Bronislav Ostřanský, and Tomáš Rataj, *Islám v srdci Evropy: Vlivy islámské civilizace na dějiny a současnost českých zemí* (Prague: Academia, 2007).

mainstream Czech historiography tends to avoid uncomfortable questions, such as those that touch on Czech Orientalism or colonial ambitions. Notable exceptions can be found mainly in the works of the younger generation of scholars, who have studied, for instance, Czech travelers to the Middle East and Czech images of Egypt and the Balkan Slavs.²³

This book examines Czechs' views of the Turks in the last half century of the existence of the Ottoman Empire, from the 1870s, marked by uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans that were closely watched by the Czechs, up to 1923, when the Turkish Republic was founded.²⁴ The establishment of an independent Czechoslovak state in 1918 was a major turning point in Czech history, and immediately after the emergence of the Czechoslovak Republic interest in foreign countries, including all things Turkish, temporarily decreased. Writings about the Turks that appeared between 1918 and 1923 drew on knowledge, travels, and stereotypes from an earlier period and reflected the reality of the time in which the Ottoman Empire existed. In this sense, 1923 was a more important watershed than 1918. The book asks what motivated Czechs at the turn of the century to take an interest in the Turks and their country. The relatively long period covered here has been chosen so that it is possible to examine whether one hegemonic stereotype of the Turks survived from earlier times, or whether diverse views existed in parallel to each other, not all of which were necessarily based on the binary opposition between the Czechs and the Turks. Is it possible to identify a specific "Czech" perception of the Turks, or, to put it differently, how did the views of the Turks reflect the fact that they were produced by Czechs, citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and members of a Central European nation struggling for national rights?

23 Lucie Storchová, ed., *"Mezi houfy lotrův se pustiti...": České cestopisy o Egyptě 15.-17. století* (Prague: Set out, 2005); Adéla Jůnová Macková et al., *"Krásný, báječný, nešťastný Egypt!" Čeští cestovatelé konce 19. a první poloviny 20. století* (Prague: Libri, 2009). See also several chapters in the conference-based edited volume, Kateřina Piorecká and Václav Petrbok, eds., *Cizí, jiné, exotické v české kultuře 19. století: Sborník příspěvků z 27. ročníku sympozia k problematice 19. století; Plzeň, 22.-24. února 2007* (Prague: Academia, 2008); Hana Navrátilová, *Egypt v české kultuře přelomu devatenáctého a dvacátého století* (Prague: Set out, 2001); František Šístek, *Junáci, horalé a lenoši: Obraz Černé Hory a Černohorců v české společnosti, 1830–2006* (Prague: Historický ústav, 2011).

24 This book does not deal with the history of Czech relations with the Balkans. For this history see Žáček et al., *Češi a Jihoslované v minulosti*; Šístek, *Junáci, horalé a lenoši*; Miroslav Šesták et al., *Dějiny jihoslovaných zemí*, 2nd ed. (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2009); Ladislav Hladký et al., *Vztahy Čechů s národy a zeměmi jihovýchodní Evropy / Relations between Czechs and the Nations and Countries of Southeastern Europe* (Prague: Historický ústav, 2010); Ladislav Hladký et al., eds., *České a slovenské odborné práce o jihovýchodní Evropě: Bibliografie za léta 1991–2000 / Czech and Slovak Scholarly Works on Southeast Europe: Bibliography from 1991–2000* (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2003).

Over the course of the period analyzed here and especially in the late 19th century, the meaning and uses of the terms “Czech” and “Turk” were not self-evident, or at least they were less clear than they are today. The complicated history of both terms cannot be given justice in a brief note and has already been described elsewhere,²⁵ but a word of explanation is necessary at this point. Whose views on whom are we inquiring into? For centuries, Ottoman Turks identified primarily with the Ottoman Empire’s ruling dynasty and Islam, although other allegiances existed as well. Only in the late 19th century did the educated Ottoman-Turkish elites start to reflect on their “Turkishness,” of which they had been previously aware, but which only became significant at the turn of the century and especially after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. And it was even later, after World War I and the formation of the Turkish Republic, that Turkish identity became more widespread. “Turk” was a term that Western authors used to refer not just to the Ottoman Turks, but also to other Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, and occasionally to Muslims who were not even the subjects of that Empire. Conversely, both “Muslim” and “Ottoman” were used to denote a Turk.²⁶ The terminology was not consistent and in some European languages usage oscillated also between words with different connotations. The Czechs, like other Europeans, called the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire “Turks” (*Turci*), but they used also other terms, as the chapters below will show. The book marginally refers to Muslims more generally and to other ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire but focuses on Czechs’ views of the Ottoman Turks and those who were called Turks in Bosnia-Herzegovina.²⁷

“Czechness” is not much easier to define than “Turkishness,” although the percentage of the population of the Czech lands who by the 1870s identified as Czechs was immeasurably greater than the level of Turkish identification

25 For a concise overview of the emergence of Turkish nationalism see David Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism, 1876–1908* (London: Frank Cass, 1977); on more recent perspectives on Turkish nationalism and its history see *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce*, vol. 4, *Milliyetçilik*, ed. Tanil Bora and Murat Gültekinil (Istanbul: İletişim, 2008). For the Czech case see Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848–1948* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

26 The Turks themselves were slow to adopt the denomination Turk. On the ethnonyms of the Turks see Kushner, *Turkish Nationalism*, 20–26; see also Mehmet Kalpaklı, “Turk and Ottoman: A Brief Introduction to Their Images in the Ottoman Empire,” in *Historical Image of the Turk in Europe: 15th Century to the Present; Political and Civilisational Aspects*, ed. Mustafa Soykut (Istanbul: The ISIS Press, 2003), 13–18.

27 The inconsistency of the sources is reflected in the terminology applied in their interpretation: “Turks” appear even where “Ottomans” or “Ottoman Turks” and occasionally “Muslims” might be more precise, but effort has been made to make the meaning clear from the context.

among Ottoman Turks. Scholars have often too easily attributed Czechness to those for whom ethnic identity was either not very relevant or whose identification could even change depending on the situation and the perceived advantages to this identification. Many Czechs and the Germans who lived in the Czech lands and at their borders (or perhaps more precisely many Czech-speakers and German-speakers²⁸) were throughout the 19th century flexible about their national belonging, as Tara Zahra has convincingly demonstrated.²⁹ Speaking about “Czech” views is thus a generalization employed to avoid qualifying the word each time it appears. While this book analyzes works written in Czech by “Czechs,” it does not suggest that everybody who wrote in Czech was deeply concerned with his or her Czech identity. Most Czechs, including the authors mentioned in this book, were loyal subjects of the Habsburg Empire and some did not identify solely as Czechs, although intellectual elites tended to consider national belonging important and often worked tirelessly to spread and strengthen their compatriots’ allegiance to the Czech nation. In the book, “Czech” refers to views expressed by authors who wrote in Czech on Turkish themes and whose works, each in its own idiosyncratic way, integrated the Turks into modern Czech culture, especially educational non-fiction.

Given the position of the Czech population within the Habsburg Empire, mainstream Czech attitudes toward the Turks in the late 19th and early 20th centuries will necessarily diverge at least somewhat from the prevailing outlook of both the imperial powers, including the views of the German-speaking Austrian elites,³⁰ and the peoples who experienced direct Ottoman rule. Czechs’ views were shaped not just by the early modern “Turkish wars,” the armed conflicts that occurred between Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire, but also by the location of the Czech lands. The territory inhabited by the Czech population did not, for the most part, neighbor on the Ottoman Empire, but at the same time Czechs were not so remote from Ottoman Turks as to pay no attention to them at all. It is my contention that Czechs’ views of the Turks are illuminative not despite the relative distance between the Turks

28 On the broader context of Czech-German relations and identification in Bohemia at that time see Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press / The Belknap Press, 2016), 292–99.

29 Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008). See also Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 1–18.

30 Compare with the views of Austrians as described by Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 21–72.

and the Czechs, but precisely because of this distance. They reveal how people construct Others irrespective of and sometimes especially in the absence of direct contact with them.

The Turks were not the most relevant Other for the Czechs in the early 20th century, nor did the Turks play a major role in the master narrative of Czech history.³¹ Nonetheless, Czech views of the Turks touch on and expose phenomena that transcend the framework of Czech history. Politically, the Czechs exemplify the response of a Central European people to the different and the unknown and their early-20th-century attitudes can shed light on the persistence of stereotypes whose effects can be felt even today. When, in 2016, Czech politicians rejected the European Union's proposal to abolish visas for the Turks, they justified their position by citing human rights abuses in Turkey. The discussion in the Czech media, however, alluded to the Turkish wars and newspaper articles quoted Švejk's words about the Turks, which almost every Czech knows.³² The growing importance placed on relations between Europe and its neighbors in the 21st century makes it ever more important to better understand the different trajectories along which attitudes like this are constructed. People in Central or East-Central European countries are often at odds with the viewpoints espoused in what is commonly understood to be "Europe," especially with respect to attitudes toward immigrants and the Muslim world, but the sources of anti-immigration opinion in each country differ.³³ The reactions of Central European peoples to non-European Others are usually interpreted as responses to a perceived threat,³⁴ and an analysis of the way Czech views on the then most important "non-European" Others, the Turks, were

31 In the master narrative of Czech history, which well into the 20th century was based on the work of František Palacký, the medieval Bohemian state was portrayed as the state of the Czech nation and the recurring encounters and confrontations with the Germans were identified as the defining feature of Czech history. For more on the Czech master narrative see Gernot Heiss et al., "Habsburg's Difficult Legacy: Comparing and Relating Austrian, Czech, Magyar and Slovak National Historical Master Narratives," in *Contested Nation: Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories*, ed. Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 367–404.

32 "Máš rád Turkey? Máš rád ty pohanské psy?," *iDnes*, February 26, 2016, accessed July 10, 2017, <http://martinkavka.blog.idnes.cz/blog.aspx?c=496883>.

33 See, e.g., "Special Eurobarometer 469: Integration of Immigrants in the European Union," accessed December 5, 2019, http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2169_88_2_469_ENG.

34 On the differences between East European countries and for various explanations of East European attitudes toward Muslims see Alexander Yendell, "Understanding and Explaining Islamophobia in Eastern Europe," *Connections: A Journal for Historians and Area Specialists* (December 15, 2018), accessed December 5, 2019, <https://www.connections.clio-online.net/article/id/artikel-4658>.

constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries can add nuance to the explanation of these attitudes.

Analytically, the Czechs are an example of a large but understudied type of society that is seldom included in inquiries into the relationship between the West and the Muslim world: they were neither colonizers nor colonized; they were never under the Ottoman thumb, but had participated in wars with the Ottoman Empire and were close enough to the Turks for the latter to play a role in Czech culture and self-identification. In this respect, the Czechs were not unique. The Turks were a relevant but not the most important Other for large parts of Europe. Research on Czech attitudes to this Other may help broaden the range of approaches to exploring the relationship between the West and societies outside Europe, beyond the colonizer/colonized binary that still often dominates analyses of Europe's relations with the Muslim world.

This book tells two stories. It can be read from the perspective of European approaches to the Turkish and Muslim Others, and it is in this light that it presents Czech images of the "terrible Turk," the more nuanced views of travelers and scholars, and the Czechs' attitudes toward those whom some called "our Turks" – the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. But the book does more than provide a local variation on "the Turk in Europe" theme. It tells the story of an emancipating Czech nation who referred to the Turks in various ways while constructing Czech national identity within Europe, highlighting an understudied aspect of modern Czech history: as the Czechs searched for their place in Europe, they positioned themselves in relation to others whom they perceived to be inferior to them or in a less favorable situation. Distinguishing themselves from the Turks could be a way of demonstrating to themselves and to others how European they were, while what "Europe" actually meant was still being constructed. In this respect, the Turks were convenient Others, who were not central to emerging Czech national identity, but were salient enough to be employed toward various ends.

It has become a custom that any scholarship touching on Europe's attitudes to Muslim (and "Oriental") Others must adopt a position in relation to Said's "Orientalism," its later revisions, and critiques of it, even though there is an increasing feeling that Orientalism is a concept whose time has passed. According to some scholars, this is because Said got it mostly wrong in the first place.³⁵ Others, while accepting the basic tenets of Said's arguments, either criticize some of his views or are convinced that scholarship has moved beyond "Orientalism," which has therefore lost its usefulness as an analytical concept.

35 See, e.g., Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents* (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 2008), esp. 3–5.

In the words of R. Stephen Humphreys, “at least within the guild of professional historians of Islam and the Middle East, ‘Orientalism’ is a very dead horse. It is time to stop beating it.”³⁶

This book is not meant as a polemic with Orientalism, and perhaps could have been written without reference to it. Nonetheless, as it deals with the period of “high Orientalism,” the analysis can draw on the insights that can be derived from the debate Said’s arguments continue to prompt.³⁷ The Czechs, as we shall see, were inspired by “classic” Western Orientalism, but their attitudes shared some features of what Andre Gingrich has called “frontier” Orientalism, while they also differed both from its Austrian and Southeast European embodiments.³⁸ However, rather than inventing a new sub-type, an idiosyncratic “Czech version of Orientalism,” the book confirms that a variety of approaches to Muslim Others, specifically the Turks, existed in Europe. Edhem Eldem has argued that the Turks of the late Ottoman and early Republican period were viewed less “orientalistically” than other inhabitants of “the Orient” because they were better known to Europeans than other Muslims, and the Ottoman Empire was ethnically and religiously too diverse to enable simplified stereotyping.³⁹ The Turks themselves, under the influence of Western Orientalism, created in the late 19th century their own version of Orientalism. “Ottoman Orientalism” is a term coined by Ussama Makdisi to denote the attitude of the Ottoman-Turkish rulers to the peripheries of the empire as it was undergoing a process of modernization.⁴⁰ The imperial centre, Istanbul, was closer to the West than its peripheries, both temporally, as it had introduced

36 R. Stephen Humphreys, “The Historiography of the Modern Middle East: Transforming a Field of Study,” in *Middle East Historiographies: Narrating the Twentieth Century*, ed. Israel Gershoni, Amy Singer, and Y. Hakan Erdem (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 31. Humphreys continues: “It is a word that is well on the way to losing whatever specificity and analytic value it once had, and it is now hardly more than a term of abuse for scholarship that one dislikes.”

37 See François Pouillon and Jean-Claude Vatin, eds., *After Orientalism: Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-appropriations* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

38 See Gingrich, “Frontier Myths of Orientalism”; Bojan Baskar, “Ambivalent Dealings with an Imperial Past: The Habsburg Legacy and New Nationhood in ex-Yugoslavia,” paper presented at the Institut für Ethnologie, Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie, Vienna, November 11, 2003.

39 Edhem Eldem, “The Ottoman Empire and Orientalism: An Awkward Relationship,” in Pouillon and Vatin, *After Orientalism*, 89–90. See also Edhem Eldem, “An Ottoman Traveler to the Orient: Osman Hamdi Bey,” in *The Poetics and Politics of Place: Ottoman Istanbul and British Orientalism*, ed. Zeynep İnankur, Reina Lewis, and Mary Roberts (Istanbul: Pera Museum Publications, 2011), 183–95.

40 Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 768–96.

reforms earlier than the rest of the empire, and spatially. According to Makdisi, the strongest expression of an Orientalist attitude among the Ottoman-Turkish ruling elites was directed at the Arab provinces of the empire, and Ottoman Orientalism helped to justify Ottoman-Turkish rule over the as yet “unmodernized” Arabs.⁴¹ Eldem notes, though, that the Turks’ view toward the Arabs, while based on a sense of Ottoman-Turkish superiority, was nevertheless influenced by the fact that the Arabs and the Turks shared the same religion, which made Ottoman Orientalism distinct from its European model(s).⁴² The Czechs, like other Europeans, were of a different faith than the Turks and the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the dilemma they faced with respect to the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who were Slavs like themselves, may have been similar to the one that the Turks experienced in their relationship to their Arab co-religionists. In other words, the Czechs might have regarded the Muslim Slavs in the same way that the Turks viewed the Arabs, as a people related to them, in this case by ethnicity rather than by religion, and as less advanced and waiting to be civilized.

One of the most common ways in which European perceptions of the Orient, Muslims and Ottoman Turks have been studied is through travel, because travel highlights how during encounters between two cultural systems concepts of cultural, ethnic, racial, and gender differences are constructed and perceived.⁴³ Postcolonial studies, with their critique of European views on former colonies and their emphasis on the relationship between travel, the imperial project, and racial theories, have provided further impetus to the increasing

41 Makdisi makes the point that the Arabs on the peripheries of the empire were cast in an ambivalent role. They were seen at once as “members of an inferior ‘minority’ who were to be civilized, disciplined, and (ultimately, perhaps) fully integrated, and at the same time as markers of a foreign Orient, above which the modern empire was struggling so hard to rise.” Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” 794. Building on Makdisi’s work, Selim Deringil sees the “civilizing mission” mentality of the late Ottomans as a result of the conflation of the ideas of modernity and colonialism and as a strategy of borrowing the colonialists’ concepts and methods in order not to become a colony themselves. This “borrowed colonialism” led to a perception of their (predominantly Arab) peripheries as a “colonial setting” and targeted especially those elements of the empire which were considered unruly, savage, anti-modern, and hard to subjugate – the nomads. Selim Deringil, “‘They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery’: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 2 (2003): 311–42.

42 Eldem, “The Ottoman Empire and Orientalism,” 96.

43 Tim Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 10. See also Sachidananda Mohanty, “Introduction: Beyond the Imperial Eye,” in *Travel Writing and the Empire*, ed. Sachidananda Mohanty (New Delhi: Katha, 2003), IX–XXI.

interest in travel writing.⁴⁴ Rather than authentic, unbiased depictions of what the traveler saw, travel writing has been analyzed as a tool of imperial politics.⁴⁵ The colonial context remains in the forefront of inquiries into modern travel literature, but other types of travels have started to be considered as well.⁴⁶ In her analysis of travelers from East European peripheries to Western Europe, Wendy Bracewell pointed out that their travelogues were characterized by a different relationship between knowledge, representation, and power than is typical of Western travel writing.⁴⁷ She noted that the real theme of the travelers' accounts was often their own country, not the country they were visiting, and that they sometimes adopted the perspective of Western travelers who evaluated East European countries from the point of view of their "Europeanness."⁴⁸ Even though Czechs' journeys into the Ottoman Empire were not undertaken with the same aims as East Europeans' travel to Western Europe, which Bracewell has analyzed, a question worth asking is whether Czech travelers shared some of the characteristics of other East European travelers that Bracewell points out in her analysis.

It seems obvious that there was a difference in the way Czechs traveled to the Ottoman Empire and the British to their colonies. The position of the Czechs as a non-ruling nation in the Austro-Hungarian Empire arguably absolved them of any connection with colonialism. Despite the rapid growth that Czech industrial, commercial and financial enterprises witnessed in the second half of the 19th century and especially at the turn of the century, the Czechs had limited economic and political interests in the Middle East. Economic advancement and the progress of the Czech national movement nevertheless had an effect on Czechs' expectations, and some of them started thinking about catching up with the more advanced Western nations by exporting Czech goods, skills, and capital. It thus makes sense to question the Czechs'

44 They have drawn attention to the fact that travel accounts are neither objective nor value-free because even before setting out on their journey travelers were influenced by the cultural representations of the countries they were visiting and of the countries' inhabitants. See Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 12–13.

45 Mary Louise Pratt argues that travel accounts are internally and necessarily connected with the act of colonization and understands them primarily as a part of the ideological apparatus of empires. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 1–11.

46 See Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis, eds., *Under Eastern Eyes: A Comparative Introduction to East European Travel Writing on Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008).

47 Wendy Bracewell, "The Limits of Europe in East European Travel Writing," in Bracewell and Drace-Francis, *Under Eastern Eyes*, 66–67.

48 Bracewell, "The Limits of Europe," 101–10.

alleged lack of colonial ambitions, whether or not these were directed toward the Ottoman Empire, and to inquire into whether their travel writing expressed a sense of belonging to Austria-Hungary and the interests of the empire.

In a special issue of *National Identities* devoted to the cultural components of colonialism the editors Barbara Lüthi, Francesca Falk, and Patricia Purtschert ask whether countries that were dependent on imperial powers should be considered colonies or contextualized within the European colonial metropolises.⁴⁹ They pay attention also to countries that at first sight seem to have no colonial connections, such as Iceland or Switzerland, and they show the continued pervasiveness of colonial structures and power relations and their racializing effects.⁵⁰ Lüthi, Falk, and Purtschert argue that representatives of countries without colonies reproduced the racialized, gendered, sexualized, and classed imagery prevalent in Europe, and by replicating the racist and dehumanizing standpoint they became aligned with the colonizers and took part in colonialism.⁵¹ Without denying that Czechs were as prone to racism as other nations in Europe, this book does not simply assume that their attitudes toward the Turks and other non-Europeans were driven by racism, but asks whether and how Czechs viewed the Turks in racial terms.

The question about colonial complicity is particularly relevant in analyses of the history of the academic fields known today as Middle Eastern and Turkish studies,⁵² inasmuch as in the West the emergence of the modern disciplines that deal with the Middle East coincided with the age of imperialism.⁵³ Early Czech experts in the Middle East were undoubtedly influenced by the development of academic studies of “the Orient” in the West and by Western intellectual trends and schools of thought more generally, but their position differed from that of their Western counterparts in that there was no Czech state whose interests they could support through their scholarly undertakings. Therefore, if their works had purposes other than pure scholarship – and most Czech scholars wrote, for example, also popularizing literature – they cannot be automatically put in the

49 Barbara Lüthi, Francesca Falk, and Patricia Purtschert, “Colonialism without Colonies: Examining Blank Spaces in Colonial Studies,” *National Identities* 18, no. 1 (2016): 1.

50 *Ibid.*, 3.

51 *Ibid.*, 2. See also Sarah Lemmen, *Tschechen auf Reisen: Repräsentationen der außereuropäischen Welt und nationale Identität in Ostmitteleuropa 1890–1938* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2018), 295–96.

52 The terminological issues of Oriental/Middle Eastern/Turkish Studies are addressed in Chapter Four (“Our Mission in Oriental Studies”), where the historiography on this subject is also discussed. On this historiography see, e.g., Gershoni, Singer, and Erdem, *Middle East Historiographies*.

53 See Humphreys, “The Historiography of the Modern Middle East,” 22.

same box as their British or Austrian counterparts. What, then, inspired their interest in the language, literature, and history of the Turks?

In general terms, the first generations of Czech experts in the Middle East in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were motivated in their writing by an effort to advance and spread Czech culture, which included developing scholarly literature written in Czech. National concerns affected a large part of the intellectual and political activities of the Czech elites and “the nation” was for them one of the most relevant categories; hence the attention this book pays to Czech national awareness and the ways Czechs identified as Czechs and Slavs. This, however, should not imply that it looks at Czechs’ views of the Turks through the prism of nationalism and solely within the framework of national history. Like Orientalism, though for very different reasons, “nationalism” is a concept that is criticized and considered to have run its course as a basis from which to analyze history, being replaced by various forms of non-national and transnational approaches, *histoire croisée*, *Transfersgeschichte*, and entangled histories.⁵⁴ Topics such as the ones addressed in this book cannot be studied and understood in isolation, within the confines of national history, whether it be comparisons with attitudes toward the Turks in other European countries, the movements of bodies across national borders in Europe and all the way to the Ottoman Empire, or the impact of ideas that were circulating internationally at that time. Conceptually, the book belongs to the strand of historiography that strives “to move beyond reductive national-historic and Eurocentric perspectives” and to point out trans-local, transnational, and transcultural associations in societies without colonies.⁵⁵ Showing how Czechs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries used images of the Turks when they were addressing contemporary issues of relevance to Czech society, the book sheds light on the darker side of Czech national discourse, touching on how it connects to racism, Orientalism, and xenophobia, and in this way it also tries to bring

54 For examples of this approach to Ottoman history see Firges et al., *Well-Connected Domains*. See also Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison: *Histoire Croisée* and the Challenge of Reflexivity,” *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 30–50; Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung: Der Ansatz der *Histoire croisée* und die Herausforderung des Transnationalen,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28, no. 4 (2002): 607–36.

55 See Lüthi, Falk, and Purtschert, “Colonialism without Colonies,” 2; Sönke Bauck and Thomas Maier, “Entangled History,” *InterAmerican Wiki: Terms – Concepts – Critical Perspectives*, 2015, accessed September 18, 2018, https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/cias/wiki/e_Entangled_History.html; Anna Amelina et al., eds., *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-Border Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

Czech history-writing, which is often overly self-absorbed, into the transnational field.

Describing various aspects of Czech national identification, the book moves from the political frame of Pan-Slavism, which defined the Czechs' renewed interest in the Turks in the 1870s, to images more in the cultural sphere as observed in the writings of travelers who visited the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Next, the book looks at the more self-assured version of Czech nationalism that developed in the late 19th century and had its own implicit and occasionally explicit colonial ambitions. Finally, it examines the scholarly discourse and the validation of stereotypes by experts involved in the establishment of Czech Oriental studies, focusing on the Turks. In other words, the book is concerned with the political, cultural, scholarly, and colonial discourses that in some way touch on the Turks, rather than drawing on a clearly defined body of literature devoted to the Turks. It primarily analyzes non-fiction texts – travelogues, treatises, reference books, textbooks, histories, and other scholarly texts of the time – while it refers to literary works and popular writings intended for the amusement of the wider public solely as illustrations of the views expressed in these texts.⁵⁶ Most of the authors of these works were intellectuals, scholars, and writers, well-known to and respected by the general audience, and they were often active in public life and able to influence public opinion. The analysis, however, does not try to trace how these views were received among the wider Czech audience; instead it focuses on the construction of the images of the Turks, looking at these images against the backdrop of broader European trends.

Images of the Other or Others (including the Turks) in the eyes of European nations are the subject of analyses in imagology, a specialism of comparative literature that studies cross-national perceptions and images expressed in literary discourse from a transnational point of view.⁵⁷ Imagology is concerned with representations as textual strategies and as discourse. As Joep Leerssen explains, literary texts have a privileged position in imagology research because national stereotypes are articulated and disseminated first and with most

56 Translations of Western literature and popular trash literature, which undoubtedly influenced Czech readers, are left aside here; although they could contribute to or even alter some of the arguments presented here, to discuss them would require a separate analysis (and another book).

57 Joep Leerssen, "Imagology: On Using Ethnicity to Make Sense of the World," in "Les stéréotypes dans la construction des identités nationales depuis une perspective transnationale," ed. Géraldine Galéote, special issue, *Iberic@l*, no. 10 (2016): 13–31.

effect in poetical texts.⁵⁸ Although this book does not examine the Czechs' views of the Turks from the perspective of comparative literature⁵⁹ and is not foremost focused on literary texts, it shares some of the key premises of imagology studies, especially the assumption that images of Others are constructed by texts and are used to explain the Others' behavior. The processes whereby stereotypes of Others are constructed in non-fiction resemble those in literary texts, but while a fictional character always possesses more attributes than just ethnicity,⁶⁰ the sources analyzed in this book often view the Other as an undifferentiated whole (with the exception of writing that deals with women).

Representations of Others change over time, partly in response to developments within the field of literature, but also to political and social circumstances. Nedret Kuran-Burçoğlu has summed up the evolution of "the image of the Turk" that emerged in the Western world in the 11th century and divided it into three distinct stages: In the early period of Ottoman expansion, up until the late 17th century, the image of the Turk was that of an alien, cruel, and tyrannical Muslim Other. In the next stage, which in Western Europe coincides with the decline of Ottoman power, the spread of Enlightenment thought, and an increasing interest in the exotic Orient, the images became less Turkophobic. Finally, the proclamation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 resulted in a

58 Joep Leerssen, "Imagology: History and Method," in *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters; A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 27. According to Leerssen, "images do not reflect identities, but constitute possible identifications."

59 Imagology approaches are considered useful, for instance, in international relations, cultural history, and the study of national policy and national character. See Daniel-Henri Pageaux, "La péninsule ibérique et l'Europe: Ouvertures, fermetures, dérives," in *Komparatistik und Europaforschung: Perspektiven vergleichender Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft*, ed. Hugo Dyserinck and Karl Ulrich Syndram (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1992), 253; Davor Dukić, "The Concept of Cultural Imagery: Imagology with and not against the Early Völkerpsychologie," in *Discontinuities and Displacements: Studies in Comparative Literature; Proceedings of the XVIII. Congress of the ICLA*, ed. E.F. Coutinho (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano, 2009), 78. In the introduction to the *Imagology* handbook, Manfred Beller states that it is based on a variety of methodological approaches, whose main aim is to analyze the origin and function of the images of a foreign and one's own nation. See Manfred Beller, "Perception, Image, Imagology," in Beller and Leerssen, *Imagology*, 13. See also Hugo Dyserinck, "Komparatistik als Europaforschung," in Dyserinck and Syndram, *Komparatistik und Europaforschung*, 37; and Leerssen, "Imagology: History and Method," 17–32. Leerssen, who has focused on the methodology of studying national character, stresses that in modern times, nations view their character and individuality namely in those aspects in which they differ most from others. Joep Leerssen, "The Poetics and Anthropology of National Character (1500–2000)," in Beller and Leerssen, *Imagology*, 69.

60 Leerssen, "Imagology: On Using Ethnicity," 26.

partial separation of the image of the Turk from the stereotypes of the Ottoman past.⁶¹ Kuran-Burçoğlu notes that in the second period or stage the image of “the Turk” started to move in a different direction in Southeastern Europe, where “Ottoman rule continued to inspire strong national enmity and where earlier practices (such as the enlisting of Christian boys and girls for the janissary troops and harems, or cruel modes of corporal punishment) gained mythical proportions and cast the Turks into the very opposite of Christian familial values.”⁶² In a more detailed study of the evolution of “the image of the Turk” in Europe from the 15th to the 21st century, Kuran-Burçoğlu distinguished no less than eight stages in its development. According to her, the sixth stage was marked by a shift toward more positive imagery in German-speaking regions due to the influence of the Enlightenment, and the seventh stage saw the emergence of a variety of images in individual European countries over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries.⁶³

Other authors have examined the differences in how the Turks were viewed within one region. Mustafa Soykut, for instance, contends that from the Renaissance to the 17th century the image of the Turk in Venice, which had important political and commercial contacts with the Ottoman Empire, differed from images that prevailed in the rest of Italy and specifically from Rome as the primary source of Catholic anti-Turkish rhetoric.⁶⁴ Davor Dukić in his detailed analysis of the images of the Turks in early modern Croatian literature, *Sultanova djeca* (Children of the Sultan),⁶⁵ explored the specific features of images connected with the Turks that appeared in different literary genres and how they changed both over time and across regions which had different relations with the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁶ Dukić shows that at first these images were

61 Nedret Kuran-Burçoğlu, “Turkey,” in Beller and Leerssen, *Imagology*, 254–55.

62 Kuran-Burçoğlu, “Turkey,” 255.

63 Nedret Kuran-Burçoğlu, “A Glimpse at Various Stages of the Evolution of the Image of the Turk in Europe: 15th to 21st Centuries,” in Soykut, *Historical Image of the Turk*, 24. According to the author, 19th-century paintings representing the Turks associated them with mystery and wealth, sensuality and sexual freedom for men, beautiful women, laziness, idleness, and a relaxed atmosphere, a lack of discipline, and a slight backwardness. Kuran-Burçoğlu, “A Glimpse,” 30.

64 Mustafa Soykut, “The ‘Turk’ as the ‘Great Enemy of European Civilisation’ and the Changing Image in the Aftermath of the Second Siege of Vienna (In the Light of Italian Political Literature),” in Soykut, *Historical Image of the Turk*, 45–116, esp. 55.

65 Davor Dukić, *Sultanova djeca: Predodžbe Turaka u hrvatskoj književnosti ranog novovjekovlja* (Zagreb: Thema, 2004).

66 The author points out the differences between the Ottoman vassal Dubrovnik (Ragusa), Dalmatia along with Venice, which was often at war with the Ottoman Empire, central Croatia, which was furthest from the Turkish threat, and Slavonia, which was under Ottoman rule from the 16th to the end of the 17th century.

expressions of fear and the need to mobilize against an enemy, but they later also reflected an interest in the culture and way of life of the new neighbor with whom the Croats now lived and did business; this interest even led to occasional expressions of tolerance of the Turks.

Works dealing with images of the Turks⁶⁷ have tended to pay more attention to several European regions that were of particular relevance with respect to this imagery: the regions of Italy, where there were various responses to the Muslim Turks in the early modern period; Southeastern Europe, where both daily experience and literature offered steady reminders of the Turkish presence there; and the parts of Western Europe where writings emerged that especially from the Enlightenment period onward had an undeniable impact on literary representations produced on the rest of the continent. This focus, although understandable, leaves a lot of blank spots on the map of Europe. Without further study, the opinions and imagery in other countries can only be seen as expressing some general trends or be subsumed within one of the two main types distinguished by Kuran-Burçoğlu – the West or Southeastern Europe. For the Czechs, however, the Ottoman practice of supplying the janissary corps or their harems with Christians did not gain the kind of “mythical proportions” it assumed in the areas of Southeastern Europe under Ottoman rule, nor was the Ottoman Empire ever the subject of fundamental reassessment in the Enlightenment era as it was in the West.⁶⁸

Another possible framework in which Czech images of the Turks can be analyzed is the context of Central, or East-Central, Europe. Although the region that today comprises the Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, and Polish states is perceived as relatively uniform largely because of its communist past, the Czech lands shared with other non-Austrian areas of Central Europe two features that are relevant for the way in which Turks were viewed in the 19th and early 20th centuries: first, they had faced the imminent threat of Turkish occupation and for centuries their population had participated in wars against the Turks, and second, they were dominated by the Habsburgs (in the case of the Poles part of the territory was) – and this was during a period that was important for the construction of national identities and histories. In other respects, the situation of the four Central European nations differed. While parts of Hungary, including both the Magyar- and Slovak-speaking populations, were under direct Ottoman rule, Poles fought and coexisted with Ottoman Turks and Crimean Tatars, and the Czech lands were for the most part separated from Ottoman territories by their neighbors. The Czech, Slovak, and

67 See, e.g., the edited volumes *Imagining “the Turk”* and *Historical Image of the Turk*.

68 Kuran-Burçoğlu, “Turkey,” 255.

Polish populations were all Slavic, and this allegiance grew in importance during the 19th century. The Hungarians (or Magyars)⁶⁹ differed from their Slavic and German-speaking neighbors and their 19th-century search for national identity gave rise to a theory about the common origins of Hungarians and Turks.

Individual national historiographies do not approach the period of the Turkish wars and the times in which the country was in close contact with the Ottoman Empire in the same way. Mainstream Slovak historiography has traditionally referred to Ottoman rule as the “Turkish yoke” – which is how Turkish power is often described in the histories written in the areas it dominated. The depiction of Ottoman rule in Slovak historiography is not entirely negative: the Ottomans’ occupation of large parts of Hungary and southern Slovakia temporarily made the Slovak regions that remained free the economic, political, and cultural center of Hungary, whereby they became much more important.⁷⁰ Yet, popular, non-scholarly works today still often employ the kind of emotional language that was typical of 19th-century discourse, where “the Turk” is used as a synonym for cruelty or something evil.⁷¹ Slovak relations with the Turks and images of the Orient are only rarely the subject of theorizing. One notable exception is Charles Sabatos’s comparative study of Czech, Slovak, and Hungarian literary images of the Turks, which argues that Slovak literature is more remote from Said’s Orientalist paradigm than the other two because Slovaks were not in a position of power, either in relation to the Turks or within the Habsburg Empire.⁷²

In contrast to Slovak historiography, Hungarian and Polish historians point to the importance of the Orient in their own country’s national self-identification. Hungarian historians explain Hungarian intellectuals’ interest

69 Although Hungary and Hungarian can refer to the territory and administrative unit within the Habsburg Empire inhabited by people of different ethnic origins, including the Magyars, in English Magyar and Hungarian are used as equivalents. This book also uses both terms as interchangeable, often depending on the sources that are being described.

70 A major recent historical work, for instance, speaks of the “unpleasant neighborhood of the Ottoman Empire with all the negative and positive [aspects] resulting from this coexistence.” See Viliam Čičaj, “Úvod,” in *Turci v Uhorsku*, vol. 1, *Život v Uhorskom kráľovstve počas tureckých vojen od tragickej bitky pri Moháči až do Bratislavského snemu* (Bratislava: Literárne informačné centrum, 2005), 13.

71 See, e.g., Ján Mäsiar, *Turecká podkova: Dedičstvo tureckých čias v Honte a Novohrade* (Martin: Vydavateľstvo Maticy slovenskej, 2014), 6.

72 Charles D. Sabatos, *Mit ve Tarih Arasında: Orta Avrupa Edebiyat Tarihinde Türk İmgesi* (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat Yayın Dağıtım San. ve Tic. Ltd. Şti, 2014), 16; Charles D. Sabatos, *Frontier Orientalism and the Turkish Image in Central European Literature* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2020), XIX.

in the Orient, or Asia, in the early 19th century as a part of the construction of national identity and the search for the nation's roots, and they show that Hungarians in the 19th century were ambivalent about the Turks. Ildikó Bellér-Hann contends that this ambivalence derived, on the one hand, from the history of the Turkish wars and Ottoman occupation, resulting in the Hungarians' perception of themselves as a "bastion of Christendom" against the Turks, and, on the other hand, from the 19th-century myth about the shared roots of the Hungarians and the Turks and from the awareness that the Ottoman Empire had served as a safe haven for famous Hungarian revolutionaries, owing of which the Turks were seen as relatives or friends.⁷³ Margit Köves has explored how images of the Orient in Hungarian literature and intellectual life changed over time: while in the first half of the 19th century they were used to emphasize how the Hungarians were a unique people within Europe and thus served the nation-building project, in the second half of the century they helped to present Hungarian identity as both Oriental and Western at once.⁷⁴

In Poland, self-orientalization followed a different path. According to Jan Reychman, the prominent Polish Turkologist, in early modern times close contact between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ottoman Turks and the Tatars led to the appearance of strong Oriental influences in Poland directly received from the East. Then in the 18th century elements of Oriental culture reached Poland through Enlightenment thought that spread from Western Europe. On Polish territory, these Oriental elements underwent significant transformations and were affected by the image of the Orient that had formed in earlier times. The resulting synthesis was, in Reychman's words, "creative."⁷⁵ Jan Kieniewicz, whose views are often quoted by historians studying Polish Orientalism,⁷⁶ argued that Poland, unlike other countries, was characterized by an "Orientalness" and that "Poland was certainly closer to the Asiatic East in the 16th century than any other European country, including Portugal. She understood and appreciated the East..."⁷⁷ He described how the attitudes and

73 Ildikó Bellér-Hann, "The Turks in Nineteenth-Century Hungarian Literature," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 5, no. 2 (1995): 225–26.

74 Margit Köves, "Modes of Orientalism in Hungarian Letters and Learning of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History: From Germany to Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. James Hodkinson et al. (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013), 166.

75 Jan Reychman, *Orient w kulturze polskiego oświecenia* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, 1964), esp. 7 and 359.

76 See, e.g., Karolina Rak, "The Story of Polish 'Orientalness' – Researching Islam in Poland," *UNNES International Conference on Research Innovation and Commercialization 2018: KnE Social Sciences* 3 (2018): 716–22, doi: 10.18502/kss.v3i18.4761.

77 Jan Kieniewicz, "Polish Orientalness," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 49 (1984): 79.

values adopted by the Polish gentry in the 17th century became intertwined with Western influences in a unique Polish synthesis. This Orientalness made it possible for the Polish gentry not to have to choose between the East and the West, whereas the Oriental influences that came through the West in the 18th century became a source of internal conflict in Poland.⁷⁸ In the 19th century, according to Kieniewicz, the Poles' bifurcated attitude toward the Orient had other sources as well: A number of well-known Poles immigrated to the Ottoman Empire, which cast the Orient in a positive light, but the Poles' views were even more importantly determined by their animosity toward Russia, which occupied a part of Poland. Because Russia was regarded as Asiatic, i.e. Oriental, the Poles saw themselves as the bulwark of Western Christianity and an outpost of Europe.⁷⁹

Early modern Czech images of "the Turk" based on religious antagonism did not particularly differ from the notions prevalent in most of Christian Europe. With the decline of Ottoman military power and the emergence of the Czech national movement the Turkish threat gradually lost importance in Czech imagery. As Czech memory of the wars faded, the picture of "the Turk" as a fierce and cruel fighter and archenemy of Christianity lost its salience. The first chapter of this book, "The Return of the "Terrible Turk,"" shows how, just as these developments induced a transition to a secular and more neutral view of the Turks, the events in the Ottoman Balkans resuscitated older, negative stereotypes. Examining non-fiction writings that reacted to the suppression of the 1870s uprisings of the Southeast European Slavs, the chapter reflects on the role religious, national, and racial concerns played in Czech views of the Turks.

The number of Czechs who in the late 19th century had personal experience with Ottoman Turks, while rising, was still rather limited. Chapter Two, "Czechs Abroad," looks at the travel writings of the Czechs who traveled to the Ottoman Empire and former parts of it and who were thus able to provide what was considered a true account of the character and life of the Turks. Although a first-hand encounter with the Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants had the potential to modify the views of Czech travelers, and some of them indeed expressed sympathy for the Turks and Islam, they did not regard the local population as their equals. The chapter asks on what grounds the Czechs based their feeling of superiority over the Turks and how the journey reflected and affected the travelers' own identification as Czechs, as citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and as Europeans. It situates Czech travel writing in the framework of European travel literature on the Ottoman Empire and inquires

78 Ibid., 85–90.

79 Ibid., esp. 95–101.

into whether and how Czech travels differed from their West and East European counterparts.

The Ottoman Empire was not the only space in which Czechs encountered “Turks,” or what they thought were Turks. After the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878, many Czechs visited the former Ottoman provinces whose population included a large Muslim community whom the Czechs referred to as “Turks.” Compared to the German-speakers of Austria-Hungary,⁸⁰ the Czechs’ relationship to the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina was complicated by the fact that most of these Muslims were Slavs, with whom the Czechs felt a kinship-like affinity. In view of the essentially secular nature of Czech nationalism, the third chapter, “Civilizing the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina,” examines to what extent it mattered that these Slavs were of a different religion. Although not all the Czechs who settled in, worked for, or traveled to Bosnia and Herzegovina were in the service of the state, their presence in the provinces was underpinned by the fact that Bosnia-Herzegovina was controlled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The chapter asks how this fact influenced the way Czechs viewed the Slavic Muslims and whether they identified with the empire that backed their presence in the provinces.

While encounters with the Turks in the Ottoman Empire and “the Turks” in Bosnia-Herzegovina gave visitors the opportunity to confront their pre-existing stereotypes of the Turks with personal observations, scholarly writing fleshed out the image of the Turks with information and explanations based on expert knowledge. The fourth chapter, “Our Mission in Oriental Studies,” focuses on the emerging field of study of the Turkish language, literature, and history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which had initially been encompassed within scholarship on the Middle East or even “the Orient” more broadly. Since Czech intellectuals were in the late 19th century deeply concerned with national issues and there were no obvious impulses for research on the Ottoman Empire in Czech society to develop, the chapter seeks to identify the motives for a professional interest in the Turks. It explores the factors that structured the scholars’ writings, embedding Czech academics’ work on the Turks into international scholarship on the one hand and the opinions of the “lay” Czech public on the other.

Jaroslav Hašek’s popular literary hero the Good Soldier Švejk claimed that the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand was killed by the Turks (“because of Bosnia and Herzegovina”), and that the Austrian emperor would undoubtedly respond by declaring war. “War is certain. Serbia and Russia will help us in it. There won’t half be a blood bath,” he argued. “It may be,” he said, continuing his

80 See Gingrich, “Frontier Myths of Orientalism,” 106–11.

account of Austria's future, 'that if we have war with the Turks the Germans'll attack us, because the Germans and the Turks stick together. You can't find bigger bastards anywhere.'⁸¹ Hašek thus brings together the two Others whom the Czechs had since the early modern period (though in very different ways) been using to define their identity. The war that indeed followed the attack in Sarajevo led to the dissolution of both the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, creating a new constellation of international relations. In these new circumstances the Czechs had to find their place in Europe again. The concluding chapter, "The New Republics," summarizes Czech views of the Turks described in the previous chapters and briefly outlines how they changed after the independent Czechoslovak state and the Turkish Republic were established.

81 Hašek, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, 12.

The Return of the “Terrible Turk”

It seems that they [the Turks] were made only to murder and destroy. In the history of the Turkish nation you will find nothing but fighting, robbery, and murder. Every nation has turbulent times in its past, but alongside them also times that are crowned with the marvelous fruits of quiet effort and beneficial work; our nation, for example, has the age of the Hussites, but also the era of the Fathers of Our Country – the unforgettable Charleses. But in the history of the Turks you would search in vain for even a short period devoted to quiet, useful patriotic work. That is also why the images compiled here, in which only fear and terror and gloomy desolation reign, might seem chilling. Nevertheless, the history of the Turks is important, for the fight that Europe has conducted in its defense against the nations of this race has been waged by Christians alone and by the nations of our monarchy in particular. For this reason, the main consideration is given to the scenes that unfolded either in the countries of the Balkan Peninsula or those of Austria-Hungary.

KODYM, 1879¹

There have been few other non-Christian figures in European history that have been the object of such a vast range of visual representations as “the Turk.” From the warrior depicted in medieval and early modern German woodcuts, to the Turk as a symbol of wealth woven into the patterns of Renaissance French carpets, the captive Sultan who appeared on the stages of 18th-century Venetian opera houses, not to mention the pipe-smoking Turk on the signboards of coffee shops in many European cities and the harem women pictured in 19th-century Orientalist paintings, images of the Turks have accompanied Europeans for centuries. Print materials that in some way dealt with Turkish issues, such as religious treatises, war propaganda, ballads, comic plays, and scholarly essays, displayed a similar heterogeneity of form, tone, and purpose. This chapter’s introductory quote, from a book by a secondary school teacher named František Kodym intended for young people, represents just one end of the

1 Frant. Vl. Kodym, *Obrazy z dějin Turků dospělejší mládeži* (Prague: Nákladem kněhkupectví Mikuláše a Knappa, 1879), 7–8.

spectrum, reflecting the situation during the Russo-Turkish war at the time the book was written. Whether they appeared in famous works by Shakespeare, Molière, and Byron, in genuine and fictitious travelogues, or in anonymous pamphlets, Turks were depicted in a variety of ways, both negative and positive, or simply as objects of curiosity and fascination. Different images of "the Turk" were produced in different media, periods, and regions, but the variety was not limitless, and seldom, for instance, were Turks portrayed as readers and workers or as mothers and fathers. Turkish men fought, ruled, tortured their enemies, and made fools of themselves, while the women reclined on sofas and captivated viewers with their exotic beauty.

The different ways in which scholars have interpreted Europeans' views of the Turks reflect Europe's varied relations with the Ottoman Empire.² As well as fundamental divisions grounded in different ideological relationships to Orientalism, discussed in the Introduction,³ a focus on a particular period, region, or source produced different perceptions of these relationships. Any attempt to summarize "European" views of the Turks over several centuries more generally is almost necessarily destined to flatten, if not outright distort, the rich variety of viewpoints that existed across time and countries. Aslı Çırakman argues that "multiple, diversified, incoherent and sometimes even paradoxical" images of "the Turk" coexisted in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries,⁴ and this variety was a response to Ottoman strength, which in Europeans inspired both fear and interest. In her opinion, it was only with the decline of Ottoman power in the 18th and 19th centuries that a more uniform image of "the Turk" took shape in Europe, one that focused on the Turks' character and associated them with slavery and despotism.⁵ By contrast, other scholars see shared features in the different images that existed of the

2 The relations between individual European rulers and the Ottoman Sultans were influenced by the balance of power in Europe and the aspirations of and rivalries among European states: French kings were keen to collaborate with the Ottomans against the Habsburgs, who were a more important adversary for France than the Ottoman Empire. In Britain, the country's maritime ambitions made the Ottomans a factor they had to reckon with, while there were economic motives behind Elizabeth I's well-known ties to the Sultan. For the Habsburgs, the Ottomans were an immediate threat and a rival on the Southeastern borders of their nascent empire, and in the 16th and 17th centuries a threat even to its heartland.

3 On the one hand, depictions of the Ottoman Turks' violence or their rule as despotic can be interpreted as reflecting reality (see Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 9–11; for a somewhat different view see also Curtis, *Orientalism and Islam*, 6–7). On the other hand, travel writing on Muslim societies can be interpreted as expressing just a drive for domination (see Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient*, 86–112).

4 Çırakman, *European Images of Ottoman Empire*, 185.

5 *Ibid.*, 184.

Turks very early on, or claim that the diverse images continued to exist even in the 18th and 19th centuries.⁶

Earlier works in particular, such as Norman Daniel's classic study *Islam and the West*, maintained that a special Western way of looking at Islam developed in Europe between the 12th and 14th centuries, which viewed Islam as a form of Christian heresy, Muhammad as a false Prophet and schemer, Muslims as violent and lascivious, and their Paradise with its *houris* as absurd.⁷ When the Ottomans advanced into Europe, their Empire was increasingly seen as a military and political as well as a religious threat. There was a strong fear of Ottoman expansion even in England, where the Turks were called "the scourge of God" and "any news of a Christian victory against Islam was a cause for rejoicing."⁸ According to Fichtner, the Turks, who gradually came to be seen as synonymous with Muslims, were regarded as idolaters whose religion supported indulgence and lasciviousness and encouraged polygamy.⁹ Anti-Turkish rhetoric was particularly strong in the Habsburg Empire because it expressed the interests of both the state and the church, though this dual concern about the Turkish threat did not prevent more neutral curiosity about or fascination with the Turks from being expressed in writing and visual imagery.¹⁰ In short, the early modern picture of "the Turk in Europe" consisted of a variety of images that mirrored diverse circumstances across time and countries and whose unifying features result from the emphasis put on religious difference and military threat.

The 18th century was a transitional period in the development of views about the Turks, and this is perhaps why the interpretations of it differ. Çırakman says that "the image of the Ottomans deteriorated in the eighteenth century" when "one finds the emergence of a stereotypical image of Ottomans as a stagnant, backward and corrupt people, governed by arbitrary regime."¹¹ Wolff, in contrast, sees the 18th century as an intermezzo in the long tradition of prevailingly negative images of the Turks, and that was what made it possible

6 See Kuran-Burçoğlu, "A Glimpse," 29–32.

7 Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009), esp. 302–6. See also Curtis, *Orientalism and Islam*, 31.

8 Daniel J. Vitkus, "Introduction," in *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk, and The Renegado*, ed. Daniel J. Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 7.

9 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 25.

10 Smith, *Images of Islam*, 1; Larry Silver, "East is East: Images of the Turkish Nemesis in the Habsburg World," in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450–1750: Visual Imagery before Orientalism*, ed. James G. Harper (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), esp. 208–9.

11 Çırakman, *European Images of Ottoman Empire*, 1 and 105ff.

for "the Turk" to appear as a character on Europe's opera stages.¹² Kuran-Burçoğlu also considers the imagery of this period less Turkophobic.¹³ Positive views of the Turks were indeed far from rare even in the 18th century, despite the undeniable impact of the image of the Orient, and specifically the Ottoman Empire, as despotic, a notion that spread and grew stronger throughout Europe during the Enlightenment under the influence of the writings of Montesquieu. In Montesquieu's rendering, the basic characteristics of Oriental despotism are rule based on the will and caprice of a single person, arbitrary decisions, cruelty, and corruption; its regime serves only the preservation and pleasure of the rulers, in whose hands every type of power is concentrated, while the population is passive. Consequently, Oriental (despotic) states are weak and static, and held together solely by fear.¹⁴

In the 19th century, when Europe and the entire world became more interconnected, views on the Turks were affected by events and developments on the international scene. However, even then images of "the Turk" were neither similar nor equally relevant everywhere in Europe: they were much sharper in the regions that were either under direct Ottoman rule or had been through long wars with the Ottoman Empire than they were in countries where the Turks were viewed as just more of those exotic peoples who were not European. With Russia's accelerating turn to the East, inhabited by Turkic peoples, and with its claims on Ottoman territory, Russia's interest in the Turks grew in the 19th century. In the West, changes in the images of Ottoman Turks were intertwined with the colonial aspirations of European powers. For the modernized West, the 19th-century Ottoman Empire was becoming both the target of colonial ambitions and an area of exotic escape and a destination for organized tourism.¹⁵ Teresa Heffernan argues that 19th-century Western visitors to the Ottoman Empire were no longer worried about the risk of religious conversion, but were instead disturbed by the Empire's cosmopolitan mix and the fluidity of race and ethnicity; according to her, British travelers in particular were obsessed with questions of hybridity and mixed-race unions.¹⁶ Although

12 Wolff, *The Singing Turk*, 2.

13 Kuran-Burçoğlu, "Turkey," 255; Kuran-Burçoğlu, "A Glimpse," 29.

14 Curtis, *Orientalism and Islam*, 101–2.

15 See Susan Nance, "A Facilitated Access Model and Ottoman Empire Tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research* 34, no. 4 (2007), 1056–77, <https://doi:10.1016/j.annals.2007.06.006>; A. Arslan and H.A. Polat, "The Ottoman Empire's First Attempt to Establish Hotels in İstanbul: The Ottoman Imperial Hotels Company," *Tourism Management* 51 (December 2015), 103–11, <https://doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.05.016>.

16 Teresa Heffernan, "Traveling East: Veiling, Race, and Nations," in İnankur, Lewis, and Roberts, *The Poetics and Politics of Place*, esp. 158–60.

the racialization of the Turks was less central than fear of racial contamination in the colonies, race became one of the lenses through which the Ottoman Empire's inhabitants were described. Even those who wrote favorably of the Turks sometimes used race in their defense, as when one British traveler claimed the Turks to be Arians, civilized by having been mixed with "white blood."¹⁷

In the 19th century, Western powers began to cooperate more with the Ottoman Turks, not only in commerce, but also in the political and military spheres, especially in light of Russian ambitions and involvement in the Ottoman realm. During the Crimean war, the Ottoman Empire fought on the side of Great Britain, France, and Austria (and Italy) against Russia. These developments were reflected in a gap between the opinion of the public, which was prevailingly negative, and the pragmatic nature of state policy toward the Ottoman Empire in some countries. In Britain, the strong anti-Turkish sentiments that existed in the 19th century were influenced by the public's passionate support for the Greek uprising in the 1820s, and the fervently anti-Turkish Gladstone then drew on these negative feelings during the revolt in Bulgaria in 1876 to criticize British Ottoman policy. In Austria, the recurring and more decisive victories over the Ottoman army from the 18th century onward, while they had little impact on public perceptions of the Turks, led to a dramatic change in Habsburg policy toward the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Turks went from being the enemy to an object of interest, which was followed by increasing efforts to build economic ties and diplomatic relations.¹⁸

Czech images of "the Turk" were during the wars in the early modern period based on religious antipathy. With the decline of Ottoman military power, the amount of attention the Czechs paid to the Turks dwindled. Turks became a minor theme in folk culture and appeared in history books only in chapters devoted to what were called the Turkish wars. In the 19th century, the emerging Czech press followed the Greek liberation struggle with interest, but Czechs did not participate in the philhellenic movement or actively support the Greeks' fight.¹⁹ Consequently, the Greek uprising did not influence Czech public opinion on the Turks the way it did in Britain, and comparably little attention was paid to the Ottoman Empire in the early 19th century.²⁰ It was not

17 Ibid., 160.

18 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 88–92.

19 Pavel Hradečný and Konstantinos Tsivos, "Česko-řecké vztahy," in Hladký et al., *Vztahy Čechů*, 263–74.

20 For some exceptions see Jiří Bečka, "Turkish Literature in Czechoslovakia," *Archiv Orientální* 52, no. 2 (1984): 174–76.

until the second half of the 19th century that the Turks resurfaced in Czech public discourse.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a background for a better understanding of Czech views of the Turks in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and to identify some of the factors that shaped these views. It is intended as another piece in the mosaic of "European" perceptions of the Turks, which (unlike Çirakman) I believe continued to differ both among and within European regions even in the 19th century. The development of Czech perceptions of the Turks is outlined here with a focus on the effects of the events in South-eastern Europe in the 1870s. New uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans erupted in 1875, initially as protests against tax collectors during a difficult time when there were widespread crop failures. The revolts started in Herzegovina and Bosnia, spread to Bulgaria, and gained a more anti-Ottoman dimension under the instigation of Russia. Serbia and Montenegro, who supported their revolting kin in the Ottoman Empire and declared war on the Sultan, were quickly defeated, but Russia's reaction led to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878.

There ensued a revival of interest in Turkish issues in the Czech public discourse: the Czechs followed the situation in the Balkans with the kind of animated concern that events abroad seldom generated in them.²¹ A large number of writings dealing with the Turks were then published in Czech, ranging from histories to descriptions of the current Russo-Turkish war, poetry, and stories for young people. If the Greek uprising of the 1820s interested some Czechs, the wave of revolts in the Ottoman Balkans in the mid-1870s moved them strongly and brought "the Turk" back to center stage. Unlike the Southern Slavs for whom "the Turk" remained a major Other from the medieval period up to and beyond the time of the 19th-century national movements, this image was not of central significance for Czech nationalism. Nonetheless, the Czech search for national identity included from its late-18th-century beginnings the germs of "Slavic" identification and solidarity (*vzájemnost*),²² and this in turn affected how much attention the Czechs paid in the 19th century to the Turks as the oppressors of their Slavic brethren. The concept of Pan-Slavism was interpreted differently: as a cultural or political unity, as just a community of shared interests, as an emphasis on the common roots of the Slavs, or as a kind of utopia. Pan-Slavism went through some turbulent phases in the 19th century,

21 During the 1860s, though, the Czechs were already developing an interest in the fighting in Montenegro and Herzegovina. Václav Žáček and Růžena Havránková, "Srbové a Češi v době řešení východní krize," in Žáček et al., *Češi a Jihoslované v minulosti*, 357–69.

22 See, e.g., Zdeněk Hojda, Marta Ottlová, and Roman Prahel, eds., *"Slavme slavně slávu Slávov slavných": Slovanství a česká kultura 19. století* (Prague: KLP, 2006).

not to mention its (ab)uses in the 20th century. It was looked on favorably by some and unfavorably by others, especially with respect to the role of Russia in the imagined Slavic brotherhood. Nevertheless, a concern for their Slavic brothers was shared by many Czechs and survived political fluctuations.

The decline of Ottoman military power and the emergence of Czech national awareness gradually weakened the perception of the Turks as a religious and military threat. This chapter argues that just as this development opened up space for a secularized and more neutral image of the Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants, the uprisings in the Balkans and their suppression revived and gave new strength to older anti-Turkish prejudices. While with the rise of the Czech national movement the image of the Turk as the Muslim enemy of Christendom was gradually supplanted by a more secular view, the events of the 1870s not only strengthened the role of national identification – and particularly its Pan-Slavic elements – in how the Turks were seen, but also reignited past animosities that had been expressed mainly in religious terms.

In order to set the imagery of the 1870s in a broader context, this chapter outlines the prevailing attitudes that had existed since early modern times. The first part of the chapter presents a brief overview of Czech relations with the Ottoman Empire and perceptions of the Turks up to the 18th century. Then more attention is paid to mainstream views of the Turks as expressed in historical writings and dictionaries published between the 1800s and 1860s. In this period, older stereotypes in some cases gave way to a less hostile representation of the Turks. The main part of the chapter analyzes images of the Turks in non-fiction, contemporary propaganda, and historical works that appeared as a direct consequence of the uprisings in the 1870s in the Balkans and the Russo-Turkish war,²³ and that point to the return of “the Turk” as a terrifying figure and a cruel fighter. The chapter also asks about the role of race in how Czechs viewed the Turks. The last part of the chapter shows how stereotypes about the Turks associated with the 1870s survived into the early 20th century in examples as diverse as trivial portrayals of “the Turk” as a comic figure and comments in serious political considerations.

1 The Turkish Wars and Czech Variations on the Turkish Theme

The Czech relationship to the Turks was formed in periods of war. Like elsewhere in Europe – except in the southeastern part, which had already begun to

²³ The question of Bosnia-Herzegovina is left aside here as it is addressed in Chapter Three (“Civilizing the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina”).

feel the effects of Ottoman expansion in the 14th century – the Ottoman Empire gained importance for the Czechs when it advanced into European territory in the 15th century. The earliest record of Czechs participating in the wars against the Turks comes from 1437.²⁴ The most important turning point in the early period of war was the battle of Mohacs in 1526 when the defeat and death of the Jagiellonian king Louis, who had been the Czech king since 1509, led to the installation of the Habsburgs on the Czech throne. After that, the way the Czechs viewed the Turks was influenced by the position the Czechs occupied within the Habsburg Empire and was shaped in particular by the wars between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans, even though the regions inhabited by the Czechs lay for the most part outside the borderland between the two empires.

From the 1540s to the 1680s, the Czech populace regarded the Ottomans as a constant threat because of the latter’s presence and expansion in neighboring regions, most notably Slovakia, and because they conducted raids on the adjacent territory of eastern Moravia. Life in the borderland areas was made difficult by the raids, the fighting, and the movement of armies, and occasionally the peasant population was doubly impacted when an area was claimed by both Ottoman and Habsburg lords. The Ottomans, under the Sultan’s direct command or at the initiative of the governors of Ottoman-held Buda and local administrators, captured extensive areas in the south and center of the Hungarian Kingdom, which became divided into three parts: the Ottoman province with Buda as its capital; the Transylvanian Principality as a vassal state; and Royal Hungary, which was reduced to a narrow strip of land in western Hungary and present-day Slovakia.²⁵ The Ottoman armies were victorious in most battles throughout the 16th century and in 1606 the peace of Zsitvatorok (Zsitvatörök) established the borders between the empires for the next half century. The 17th century was a time of anti-Habsburg rebellions in Central Europe. The success of the Ottoman campaign in the 1660s, when the Ottoman army seized the Slovak fortress Nové Zámky in 1663, was offset by a Habsburg counter-attack, but the Vasvár Peace treaty of 1664 that ended this war left the captured Slovak territory under Ottoman rule. The year 1683 witnessed the famous Ottoman siege of Vienna, the defeat of Kara Mustafa Paşa, and the triumph of Eugene of Savoy (or, for the Slavs, particularly that of Jan Sobieski). The Austrian emperor Leopold I considered the failure of the siege his victory over Islam and this achievement “would become the foundational epic of the

24 Rataj, *České země ve stínu půlměsíce*, 26.

25 See Vojtech Kopčan and Klára Krajčovičová, *Slovensko v tieni polmesiaca* (Bratislava: Osveta, 1983), esp. 25–62.

Habsburg monarchy.”²⁶ In 1686, Austrian armies succeeded in conquering Buda, which was followed by the expulsion of Ottoman garrisons from Eger and Szolnok in 1687 and the end of Ottoman rule in Slovakia, i.e. just outside the borders of Moravia.

Although the 18th century is generally viewed as the time when the might of the Ottoman Empire declined, in the eyes of the Habsburg government the Ottomans were still a dangerous enemy. After the Austrian victories in the early 18th century, including the conquest of Belgrade, the 1737–1739 war deprived the Habsburgs even of some territories they had obtained in the 1718 peace of Passarowitz (Požarevac). Over time, however, the Ottoman army was less and less successful in military conflicts with the Habsburgs, and the Ottoman Empire was only saved from incurring more substantial losses in the wars it was engaged in simultaneously with the Habsburg (1788–1791) and Russian (1787–1792) Empires by the revolution and events in France, which then came to preoccupy all of Europe. In this period it was possible to find individual Czechs in the Austrian army and serving as engineers, interpreters and technical staff, while the general population continued to be affected by the financial costs of the Habsburg Empire’s defense and potential expansion.

For the Czechs, as a part of the Habsburg Empire, there were various connotations attached to the Turks, all of which had something to do with war: they were associated with the religious processions, services, and prayers that were organized to support the success of the army in battles and with the selling of “indulgences”; they were associated with the recruiting of soldiers from among the Czech population, with the anti-Turkish propaganda asserted by the state and the Church, and, no less important, with the collecting (and in the case of the nobility the approval) of taxes for the Turkish wars. The population in eastern Moravia was also affected by Turkish raids in its borderlands when areas of southwestern Slovakia were under Ottoman rule, though the raids tended to be small in scale. Diplomatic missions to the Sultan and Ottoman legacies in Prague brought yet another type of contact with the Turks. Also among the Czech nobility, it became popular to give a captured Turk as a gift; some of them were even baptized,²⁷ imitating a similar practice in Vienna.²⁸

Throughout the centuries of Turkish wars Czechs were subjected to intense preaching by the Catholic Church against Muslims in an effort to unite

26 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 67. Fichtner mentions that Leopold himself wrote part of the music for the opera “The Paladin in Rome” after the Ottoman siege of Vienna; in Prague, nobility celebrated Habsburg victories and this mood is reflected also on the walls of their palaces – for example, Troja Palace in Prague.

27 Rataj, *České země ve stínu pŕlmešice*, 26.

28 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 69.

Christians against Islam. As well as sermons, there were many publications with anti-Turkish propaganda that spread through the Habsburg Empire, which told the Czech population that Islam was wrong and harmful and that its Prophet was false. Illiterate subjects were presented with anti-Turkish propaganda in sermons and in various forms of art, statues, pictures, and church wall paintings, as well as in songs. Habsburg propaganda was expressed in visual images of the Turks that served "to airbrush out embarrassing setbacks and harsh realities, in this case the military stalemate between imperial and Turkish forces,"²⁹ and these images appeared in paintings by famous artists and in prints that were seen by elites and the ordinary populace alike. In order to strengthen anti-Turkish sentiment among their literate subjects, the Habsburgs promoted the travel accounts of envoys to the Sultan and captivity narratives, and there were also accounts of Turkish atrocities reported in broadsheets and anonymous publications. Fichtner notes that among the most famous such texts in the Habsburg realm were the diary of Stephan Gerlach, the chaplain-advisor to embassies, a captivity narrative by the Croatian-Hungarian humanist Bartholomew Georgiewicz, and a travel account by Ogier de Busbecq.³⁰ Gerlach, Busbecq, and Georgiewicz were also known to the Czech public: parts of both Busbecq's and Georgiewicz's works were translated into Czech in the 16th century and Busbecq also served as a model for a famous Czech travelogue. According to a 19th-century Czech literary historian, Josef Jireček, the Czechs in the 16th and early 17th centuries learned about the Turks mainly from the "Turkish chronicles" that were written by Paul Jovius, Georgevič (Georgiewicz), Löwenclau, and Busbecq, and from the *Anti-Alkoran* penned by Czech nobleman Václav Budovec z Budova.³¹

Over time Czechs began writing and publishing their own texts on the Turks and the Turkish wars – this included news reports, religious treatises, outright anti-Turkish propaganda, and travel writings by Czechs who had visited Ottoman territory. The early modern images of the Turks that Czechs produced were mainly connected with the Turkish wars. During the war and especially after the fall of Belgrade in 1521 there were many writings by anonymous authors that bore such titles as "The Terrible News" and "News about Victories" and reported on the events of the war, which shows that there was a strong interest in Turkish issues among the Czech public.³² Military events were described in songs – one

29 Silver, "East is East," 208.

30 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleraton*, 47–58.

31 Josef Jireček, *Anthologie z literatury české doby střední*, 2nd ed. (Prague: Fridrich Tempský, 1869), 2:126.

32 Rataj, *České země ve stínu půlměsíce*, 26–58.

Czech song, for example, was about the battle of Mohacs.³³ Czech readers were also able to learn about the Turks from travel books that were already being published in the early modern period and that described diplomatic missions sent to the Ottoman Sultan, in which some Czechs participated, or travels to the Middle East for religious and other reasons.³⁴

The impact of the early 15th-century Hussite movement, the Czech forerunner to the Protestant Reformation seeking to purify the Catholic Church, began in the 16th century to align the views of many Czechs more closely with those of German Protestants, who used the Turkish threat for polemical purposes, claiming the Turks had been sent by God to punish mankind – Christianity – for their sins.³⁵ In the 17th century, Jan Amos Komenský, the well-known Czech pedagogue and thinker who had to emigrate after the failure of the uprising of the Czech Estates against the Habsburgs in 1618, adopted a more conciliatory tone toward Islam and the Turks, praising their religiosity and charity. He believed that the Turks could be converted to Christianity and wrote the Sultan to suggest that the Bible be translated into Turkish.³⁶

Early modern Czech views of the Turks have received detailed attention from both Czech and international scholars, notably Tomáš Rataj and Laura Lisy-Wagner.³⁷ Searching for images and stereotypes of “the Turk,” Rataj analyzed printed texts on the Turks (*turcica*) that emerged in the Czech lands between the 15th and 18th centuries, which included contemporary news coverage, histories, educational literature, travelogues, military and religious propaganda, and polemical writings against Islam and the prophecies.³⁸ He showed that, like

33 Hana Hynková, “Staré české cestopisy jako prameny pro etnografi, folkloristiku a toponomastiku Bulharska,” *Český lid* 55, no. 2–3 (1968): 79; Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity*, 5.

34 Hana Hynková, “Staré české cestopisy,” 85–87. These works became part of the Czech literary canon in the 19th century: travelogues by Martin Kabátník (published in 1539, about a trip carried out in 1491–2), Václav Budovec z Budova (author of the noteworthy anti-Turkish pamphlet *Antialkorán*), Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic (written in 1599 about a 1591 journey), Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Bezdružic (published 1608) and the not so well-known travel account of Heřman Čermín z Chudenic from 1644. Mitrovic’s travelogue was particularly popular and was largely based on the work of Busbecq, but differed from it in the account it gave of Mitrovic’s personal experiences during his stay in the Ottoman Empire.

35 See Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 32–33.

36 See Noel Malcolm, “Comenius, the Conversion of the Turks, and the Muslim-Christian Debate on the Corruption of Scripture,” *Church History and Religious Culture* 87, no. 4 (2007): 477–508.

37 Furthermore, some images related to the Czech milieu are also discussed by Kalmar (*Early Orientalism*), Silver, (“East is East”), and Fichtner (*Terror and Toleration*).

38 Rataj, *České země ve stínu pülmešice*, 24–216.

elsewhere in Europe, the prevailing image of "the Turk" was as the Antichrist, the "deadly enemy of all Christianity," and, in political terms, as an aggressor and usurper whose main characteristic was cruelty. He argues that, initially, religious and political images were not always combined. He also notes a difference between Czech Protestants and Catholics: while Catholics were in favor of a holy war against the Turkish threat, Protestants only supported defending the homeland and the king.³⁹

Rataj's analysis makes clear how mixed and contradictory the images of the Ottoman Empire were. While descriptions of the "real life" of the Turks and the Turkish state were consistent in their emphasis on the Turks' inborn savagery, the Ottoman Empire was also perceived as a powerful state and its army was respected and even admired. Ottoman criminal law was seen as strict, but fair. Educational literature noted the absolute power of the Sultans, the absence of hereditary nobility, and the resulting high social mobility, which the humanists viewed as positive, but which pro-Habsburg propaganda criticized. The variety of information on the everyday life of the Turkish people was, according to Rataj, broad. Much was written about religious rites, ritual washing and prayers; Turkish music and eating habits were described as "weird," but the Turks were commended for their temperance and this was contrasted with European habits. Rataj points out that people were criminally prosecuted for expressing support for the Turks, but adds that it is difficult to analyze the occurrence of pro-Turkish feelings because anti-Turkish propaganda might have exaggerated the extent of such feelings.⁴⁰ Rataj believes that partisan support for the Turks probably had more to do with a discontent with their own Christian suzerains and opposition to the taxes and other duties that the elites imposed on their subjects than it did with pro-Turkish sympathies. Despite these instances of more positive views, the prevailing image of the Turk, Rataj concludes, was one of cruelty. Rataj found no evidence of the steady secularization of the image of the Turk during the 17th and 18th centuries, but he claims that the Turks did come to be viewed increasingly in political terms. The sense of religious enmity then began to weaken in the 18th century, when the Habsburgs decided to make it their mission to defend Christianity against the Ottoman Empire, whereby the Turks came to be newly envisioned as the enemy of the emperor or the state.

Lisy-Wagner worked with similar types of sources as Rataj (and also with the so-called Habaner ceramics that incorporated elements of Turkish decorative motifs) and interpreted them as evidence of cross-cultural contact that

39 Ibid., 164–69 and 219–21.

40 Ibid., 230–31 and 400–403.

reflected the position the Czech lands occupied from the early 16th to the late 17th centuries within the large border zone between Christian and Muslim Europe. She argues that Czech literature on the Turks is consistent with wider processes at work in Europe that underpinned images of the Turks, in which the authors used the Turks to serve their own ideological agendas, and “Czech interactions with Islam and Christianity were key components in the making of Czech identity in early modern period.”⁴¹ Her analysis focuses on how ideas of Czechness were constructed in texts about the Turks through interactions with the cultures that surrounded the Czechs.⁴² These cultures included the Ottomans and the Germans and Lisy-Wagner maintains that although Czech authors mostly commented on the religious differences between themselves and the Ottoman Turks, the notion of religious difference in the Czech lands was not limited to Christians versus Muslims, and there is evidence of both a supra-confessional Christianity and strong and increasing confessionalism in writings about the Turks.⁴³ Whereas Rataj tried to identify common trends and features in Czech depictions of the Turks, Lisy-Wagner notes that both because of the variety of voices that existed at any given moment and the persistence of some consistencies over time “there are no clear trends or major shifts in attitudes toward the Turk that are easily explained by chronology.”⁴⁴

Rataj’s and Lisy-Wagner’s in-depth analyses suggest that the Czechs’ views of the Turks, affected as they were by their specific circumstances, whether that meant their Hussite heritage, their position within the Habsburg Empire, or their dissatisfaction with their rulers, were constructed and developed along lines similar to those in other Central European areas. Compared to Hungarians and Slovaks, the Czechs lacked direct experience with Ottoman occupation and fewer of them witnessed actual fighting with the Turks. Nevertheless, some Czechs did participate in anti-Turkish struggles. The Poles, who at that time were living in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, had the most idiosyncratic relationship to the Turks. In the 17th century, the perception of Poland as a bulwark of Christianity and of Polish noblemen as Catholic warriors increased in response to the Turkish threat. But it was around this time also that the values, costumes, weaponry, and material culture of the Polish gentry were being influenced most by Oriental and specifically Ottoman imagery.⁴⁵ Religious animosity was a constant in Central Europe, but it was accompanied

41 Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity*, 177.

42 *Ibid.*, 4.

43 *Ibid.*, 172.

44 *Ibid.*, 174.

45 See Kieniewicz, “Polish Orientalness,” 77–87.

by other, mostly negative, but sometimes neutral or almost admiring images of the Turks and their habits.

2 "The Turk" as a Proxy

By the 18th century, the Ottoman Empire had ceased to be perceived as a major threat to Europe. Even in Vienna, the center of anti-Turkish propaganda and campaigns, instead of being an everyday concern in high politics the Turks were becoming a subject of popular songs and stories. The defeat of the Ottoman siege of Vienna and the liberation of Buda were followed by a gradual shift in attitudes toward the Turks. As Fichtner notes, the image of the terrifying invaders was replaced by one that portrayed Turkish visitors peacefully drinking coffee with their hosts.⁴⁶ For large parts of Europe, by the early 19th century the Ottoman Empire had gone from being an aggressor to a potential target of exploitation and the object of long-term international rivalries. In addition, the 19th century witnessed an increasing interest in the Orient, and Oriental literature, fashion, and arts came into vogue in the West, a trend that also took in the "near" Ottoman Orient. The changing balance of power and the Ottoman Empire's proximity to Europe made it a popular destination of developing European tourism.

For the Czechs, the Turkish wars were by the early 19th century a part of the past. Folk culture, however, reflected Turkish themes not just during the wars in the 16th and 17th centuries, but again in the late 18th century when Habsburg armies fought with the Ottomans, and this led to a revival of the earlier folk tradition. Oriental themes can be traced in the folk tales that were collected by Czech intellectuals in the first half of the 19th century and contemporaries discussed the possibility that several stories published by the famous writer Božena Němcová (1820–1862) were inspired by *The Thousand and One Nights*.⁴⁷ Turkish themes figured in historical legends and in broadsheet and tragic ballads in Bohemia and Moravia as well as Slovakia. But they were more common in the eastern part of Moravia, which had experienced Turkish raids, and in Slovakia, which had been under direct Ottoman rule. Folk songs in these regions tended to focus on Turks abducting women and children, the separation of families, and fights with the janissaries, while in the rest of Moravia and in Bohemia the stories were less tragic, or were even

⁴⁶ Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 71.

⁴⁷ Karel Horálek, "Orientální prvky ve slovanských pohádkách," *Český lid* 55, no. 2–3 (1968): 92–101.

comical, and the conflicts were often peacefully resolved. They told tales, for example, of how a young woman defeated a superior Turkish force or how a young bride tricked a Turk who wanted to marry her.⁴⁸ In the Czech case at least, Turkish themes in 19th-century ballads and folk tales primarily served the purpose of entertainment.⁴⁹

Although reminiscences on traditional Turkish themes and the image of “the Turk” as the archenemy of Christendom continued to appear, earlier imagery survived in a somewhat diluted form as the real fights and the Turkish wars moved further into the past. “The Turk” surfaced as a comic figure in 19th-century dramas and epic poetry, and it does not seem that the ridicule was being used as a strategy to tame a feared enemy or that it fulfilled some other defensive task.⁵⁰ It was around this time that Turkish folk poetry was first published in Czech, particularly the stories of Nasreddin Hoca.⁵¹ Turkish themes also served as settings or props in Czech literature. For example, in “The Bagpiper from Strakonice,” a famous play by Josef Kajetán Tyl (1808–1856) from the 1840s, Švanda the piper is so successful with his charmed bagpipes that he is able to bring laughter to Princess Zulika in a distant Oriental country, which was clearly based on the Ottoman Empire.⁵² The epic poems of Vítězslav Hálek (1835–1874), “Beautiful Leyla” (*Krásná Lejla*) and “Meyrima and Huseyn” from 1859, though not considered his best works, reflected the writer’s interest in the Orient even before he traveled to the Ottoman Empire in the 1860s.

Like in other European countries, Oriental inspiration found its way into Czech art and architecture. Art’s interest in the Orient also embraced more remote areas, both in time and space, but until World War I the artistic image of the “near Orient” remained more closely associated with the Balkans than with Istanbul. Czech artists in the 19th century often studied in France and sometimes lived there, and generally were strongly influenced by famous French

48 Oldřich Sirovátka, “Rozšíření balad s tureckou tematikou v české a slovenské tradici,” *Český lid* 55, no. 2–3 (1968): 102–8.

49 On Slovak views see Charles Sabatos, “Slovak Perceptions of the Ottoman Legacy in Eastern Europe,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, no. 5 (2008): 735–49.

50 In a novel from 1822, the Czechs and the Turks even fought side by side against a common enemy. See Bečka, “Turkish Literature,” 176.

51 The first translation was published in 1834. See Bečka, “Turkish Literature,” 174. Translations of high literature appeared only with the emergence of Oriental studies toward the end of the century.

52 The text does not mention the Ottoman Empire, but there are some indications that “the Oriental city” by the seaside was Istanbul, and the story may have been based on a stay of a Czech musician in the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century. The first night of the play, which is considered one of the most important Czech dramas of that time, was in November 1847.

painters. It is therefore no surprise that the motifs in some of their paintings were "Orientalist." However, the works of the most famous Czech "Orientalist" painter, Jaroslav Čermák (1830–1878), took as their subject matter not so much the harems of the Ottoman elites but Ottoman-Turkish rule over the Balkan Slavs. The best known of these paintings, "Kidnapping of a Montenegrin Woman" (*Únos Černohorky*), first exhibited in Paris in 1861, is a typical example of this hybrid form of Czech Orientalism. In the Czech national tradition, the transfer of the exotic Orient to the near Orient of the Balkans in Čermák's work has been interpreted as Čermák linking his interest in exoticizing motifs to his even deeper interest in the fate of the Slavs under Ottoman rule. Today, some art historians suggest that it merely reflects the influence of French painters, such as Théodore Valerio, whose Montenegrin works Čermák would certainly have known.⁵³ Čermák's younger colleagues at the turn of the century, also influenced by French Orientalist artists, focused on large "academic" paintings, often directly inspired by more famous French models. Karel Záhorský (1870–1902) was one of the few Czech painters to ever visit the Ottoman Empire⁵⁴ and he created a painting depicting the hash-induced *kef* of a Muslim dreaming of *hours*.⁵⁵

Although the harem and the odalisques were not an uncommon subject among a broader range of Czech painters, Orientalism is not considered a specific stream of Czech art.⁵⁶ Roman Prahel argues that in Czech culture the use of exotic elements in architectural projects, ranging from landscape gardening to monumental buildings, may have been envisioned as a way of mastering the world in an ideal, spiritual sense.⁵⁷ He also shows that the exotic motifs that were used in Czech architecture and that drew inspiration from various Muslim architectonic styles were seen as a useful way of distinguishing Czech work from German styles. Late 19th-century Czech industry used Oriental motifs as a marketing tool, which Prahel interprets as a cultural parallel to the Western domination of the non-European world.⁵⁸ On the whole, the Orient came into fashion in the Czech lands later than in Western Europe and often indirectly

53 Marek Krejčí, "Daleký či blízký? Evropský Balkán očima malířů z Česka," in Piorecká and Petrbock, *Cizí, jiné, exotické*, 171.

54 Czech painters traveled more often to the (formerly) Ottoman Balkans and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

55 Petr Šembera, "Orientální banket u Samsona: Orientalistická malba v Čechách na konci 19. století," in Piorecká and Petrbock, *Cizí, jiné, exotické*, 443–53.

56 Šembera, "Orientální banket u Samsona," 453.

57 Roman Prahel, "Osvojování 'exotismů' v příležitostné architektuře dlouhého 19. století," in Piorecká and Petrbock, *Cizí, jiné, exotické*, 432. Prahel adds that this was due to the fact that "real" mastering of the world was not possible.

58 Prahel, "Osvojování 'exotismů,'" 426–27 and 432.



FIGURE 1 “Únos Černoorky” (Kidnapping of a Montenegrin Woman), replica of a painting by Jaroslav Čermák, 1865

and marginally; organized tourism to foreign countries, for instance, became more common only in the last third of the 19th century and was not at first directed outside Europe.⁵⁹ Thus, because there were no new impulses in the

59 Individuals of course traveled to the Middle East and specifically to the Ottoman Empire and their travels are the topic of the following chapter.

form of official relations or personal experience with the Ottoman Empire, 19th-century perceptions of the Turks drew on older stereotypes that had been created in times of war.

Along with the legacy of the wars with the Ottoman Empire in the 16th–17th centuries and the withdrawal of Ottoman power from East-Central Europe, 19th-century Czech views on the Turks were shaped by the growing Czech national movement. This movement had developed from modest beginnings in the late 18th century, when it was limited to an intellectual “revival” and a newly discovered interest in Czechness, into a mass movement with self-confident political representation in the last third of the 19th century. Between the late 18th century and the mid-19th century, Czech intellectuals focused on more local and more immediate issues and the Turks remained of marginal interest to Czechs; Turkish themes were often employed as backdrops in literature and theater or were used to support arguments about the courage of the Czechs, but they were not the focus of any attention in their own right. As a small nation without a state of their own, the Czechs, or more accurately their intellectual and political elites, searched for various ways in which to strengthen their identity and position within the Habsburg Empire, to which most of them still felt loyal. The Czech national movement saw its major Other in the Germans, but at the same time the more advanced German milieu served in many ways as a source of inspiration.⁶⁰ Influenced by the ideas of Pan-Germanism, the Czechs began to pursue the idea of Slavic solidarity and Pan-Slavism.⁶¹

Pan-Slavism, according to Radomír Vlček, was a set of ideas that searched for and advocated the cultural-civilizational, religious, and potentially also political unity of the Slavic nations; it was related to the broader concept of Slavic solidarity, but had a more concrete aim: a union of the Slavs.⁶² Pan-Slavism combined a strong emphasis on the common origins of the Slavs and the closeness of their languages and original national character(s) with visions of future collaboration between the Slavs or their actual unification. Notions of Slavic affinity stressed either cultural or political aspects, and they diverged mainly

60 Vladimír Macura, *Znamení zrodu: České obrození jako kulturní typ* (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1983), esp. 44–46.

61 The idea had a longer prehistory though and was first put forth by the late 18th-century scholar Josef Dobrovský.

62 On the Czech Pan-Slavism in the 19th century see Radomír Vlček, “Panslavismus či rusofilství? Pět tezí k otázce reflexe slovanství a panslavismu českou společností 19. století,” in Hojda, Ottlová, and Prah, “*Slavme slavně slávu Slávov slavných*,” 9. Masaryk argued that political Pan-Slavism would be unable to fulfil the dreams of the Slavs, who were too devoted to their individual nations. T.G. Masaryk, *Svět a Slované*, 2nd ed. (Prague: Nové Čechy, 1919), 6–7.

over opinions on the role that the strongest, independent Slavic state – Russia – should play within the envisaged cultural, linguistic or political union of Slavs.⁶³ The views on Slavic unity and on Pan-Slavism as a political ideology differed substantially over time and across various Slavic societies; the Poles, for instance, did not idealize but dreaded Russia. Even among the Czechs, there were various types of Pan-Slavs. Many Czechs favored closer collaboration between the Slavs within the Habsburg Empire, an idea that gave rise to the ideology of Austro-Slavism. The term Pan-Slavism itself has always been problematic as it was often used by opponents of the idea. In František Ladislav Rieger's *Slovník naučný* (The Encyclopedia), "Pan-Slavism" was defined in 1867 as "the alleged effort of the Slavs for the political unity of all their tribes, a unity which they are in more recent times attributed with having mainly by the Germans, who are thereby constructing their own bugbear."⁶⁴ The next Czech encyclopedia published, *Ottův slovník naučný* (Otto's Encyclopedia) had no entry on Pan-Slavism, but in the entry on the Slavs in 1905 it devoted ten pages to "Slavic solidarity (Pan-Slavism)" – *Slovanská vzájemnost (panslavismus)*.⁶⁵ In the context of Czech views on the Turks, Pan-Slavism as a political ideology played a marginal role, whereas the idea of Slavic solidarity was fundamental, especially in the 1870s.

For small nations like the Czechs there were various advantages to be had from associating themselves with the broad family of Slavs. In political debates, the card of the stronger Russian brother could be played against the Habsburgs. In the cultural sphere, Slavic solidarity served to bolster the Czechs' confidence and self-esteem. Although the Czech elites often thought of themselves as the avant-garde of Slavdom, their recent history (in contrast to the glory days of the medieval Czech kingdom, Charles IV and the Hussite movement) had offered little that could be used as evidence of Czech courage and military strength. By identifying with the long struggles of the Southern Slavs against Ottoman rule, the Czechs were able to share in Slavic bravery. Among the Slavs fighting the Ottomans, the Montenegrins held a special attraction for the Czechs. František Šístek argues that the Czechs projected their own conflict with the Germans onto the fight of this small South-Slavic nation with the Turks.⁶⁶ An image of the Montenegrins took shape that bore an Orientalist subtext, was awash in Romanticism, and reflected the perceived absence of certain values in Czech society, most notably courage and belligerence, and

63 Vlček, "Panslavismus či rusofilství?," 11–16.

64 F.L. Rieger, ed., *Slovník naučný* (Prague: I.L. Kober, 1867), 6:77.

65 *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1905), 23:438–47.

66 Šístek, *Junáci, horalé a lenoši*, 9.

this image came to play an important role in Slavic ideology more generally. The positive image of Montenegrins that dominated Czech national discourse was, according to Šístek, the purest example of the positive stereotype of Southern Slavs. It appealed to Czechs for its romantic combination of elements such as patriarchy, tribalism, and independence, its colorful folk costumes and culture, the presence of a local ruling dynasty, and a history of struggle against the Turks; the Montenegrins were seen as the only Slavs who had never submitted to Turkish power.⁶⁷

The Czech press did not limit its attention to the Montenegrins. In the early 1860s, it informed its readers about the uprisings in Herzegovina and the role of Montenegro and the Serbian principality in anti-Turkish fights.⁶⁸ Slavic immigrants who settled in the Czech lands throughout the 19th century, even more so in its second half, also left an impression on patriotic Czech society and especially its intellectuals, teachers, and students. Such immigrants included Serbs, Slovenians, and a number of Bulgarians, many of whom studied in Prague and other cities, such as Písek, Tábor, and Hradec Králové. Some founded revolutionary and cultural organizations, others made friends among the Czechs. For example, Josef Holeček (1853–1929), who would eventually become a famous Slavist and began writing about the Southern Slavs in the 1870s and would continue to do so for years, attended secondary school in Tábor with some Bulgarians.⁶⁹ Direct personal contact with South Slavic immigrants living in Czech society would likely have influenced Czechs' opinions on their Turkish enemies as well.

We can get some idea about the views on the Turks that prevailed among Czechs in the 19th century from non-fiction educational publications, dictionaries, textbooks,⁷⁰ and encyclopedias. Educational publications like these were major undertakings of the patriotic intellectuals at that time. The Czech-German dictionary that Josef Jungmann wrote in the 1830s, which is considered the beginning of modern Czech explanatory lexicography,⁷¹ defined the

67 Ibid., 9–10.

68 Žáček and Havránková, "Srbové a Češi," 357–69.

69 Růžena Havránková, "Mladí Bulhaři v českých městech v 19. století," in *Češi a jižní Slované*, ed. Mirjam Moravcová et al. (Prague: Institut základů vzdělanosti Univerzity Karlovy, 1996), 165.

70 Late 19th-century history textbooks mostly only mention the Turks briefly and the general image of the encounters with the Turks they present corresponds to the official Habsburg interpretation.

71 Zdeňka Hladká and Olga Martincová, "Tradice a současnost české lexikografie," in *Teoriya i istoriya slavyanskoy leksikografii: Nauchnye materialy k XIV s'ezdu slavistov*, ed. Margarita Chernysheva (Moscow: Institut russkogo yazyka im. V.V. Vinogradova RAN, 2008), 261–86, www.phil.muni.cz/cest/lide/hladka/CJA014_Tradice.rtf.

word Turkish as “a) of the Turks, originating in Turkey (*Türkisch*)” and “b) ferocious (*barbarisch, wild*)”; Turkishness then meant, as well as the Turkish religion, also tyranny and brutality (*Tyranei*). The examples the dictionary gives of idioms using the words Turk and Turkish employ the same imagery: “Fierce as a Turk – run away from him”; “He mastered language like a Turk his sabre” (he speaks easily, sharply); and “a boy like a Turk, i.e. healthy, strong.”⁷²

Anthologie z literatury české (The Anthology of Czech Literature), which contains samples of medieval and early modern writing, including translations, compiled by the literary historian Josef Jireček (1825–1888), shows that older, religiously based stereotypes were still alive in the mid-19th century. The section of the anthology that deals with the early modern period devotes considerable attention to the Turkish theme in literature because, Jireček notes, “[o]ur ancestors tended to enjoy treatises about Christendom’s archenemy at that time.”⁷³ It is hardly surprising that the Turks are mainly dealt with as subjects in texts that do not describe the Turks in favorable terms, as the texts were written during the time of the early modern Turkish wars. More telling is the fact that even the excerpts Jireček drew from works that did not deal specifically with the Turks are still ones that portray them in a markedly negative light. Also, the author himself in his comments on the texts called the Turks “the archenemy of Christendom” and celebrated the Czechs’ contribution to the Habsburgs’ fights both on the battlefield and by ideological means – for instance, by producing anti-Turkish pamphlets.⁷⁴

In history books, the Turks were referred to primarily, and sometimes exclusively, within the context of their wars with the Habsburgs, but there was no uniform image of the Ottoman Empire in historical works. “A General Civic History” written by the priest and scholar Josef František Smetana (1801–1861) in 1846, in which substantial attention is devoted to the Turks,⁷⁵ dealt with the “Turkish Empire” in a section on “East European States,” together with Russia, and in the 19th century in a section entitled “Other States of Europe,” and the Ottoman Empire received more space here than Scandinavia, the Netherlands, or Belgium did. For Smetana, the Turkish invasion of Europe was a “horror.” But the founding of the Ottoman Empire was the most important event of the time, the Turkish army was “no less brave” than the Christian troops, and Süleyman

72 Josef Jungmann, *Slovník česko-německý* (Prague: Václav Špínka, 1838), 4:673.

73 Jireček, *Anthologie*, 2:126.

74 *Ibid.*, 2:251, 126, 291, and 375. The anthology, intended for secondary schools (*gymnasia*), was first published in 1858.

75 Josef František Smetana, *Všebecný dějepis občanský*, vol. 1 (Prague: České Museum, 1846).

was a ruler who appreciated the courage of his enemies and allowed them to retreat with honor.⁷⁶ The Turkish wars were generally not depicted by Czech historians as a pivotal event in Czech history. Václav Vladivoj Tomek (1818–1905),⁷⁷ author of the extensive history of Prague and the first president of the Czech University after the division of the Czech and German University in Prague in 1882, in his repeatedly republished *Děje království českého* (Events of the Czech Kingdom), wrote about the wars with the Turks mostly in neutral terms.⁷⁸ When describing the upheaval of Czech peasants against the oppression of their feudal lords in the 1680s, he quoted the peasants’ complaint that their lords “treat them worse than the Turks or Tatars treat their slaves, leaving them barely alive with hunger.”⁷⁹ The Turks are used here as the equivalent of a generalized evil, which corresponds to the way Rataj notes the Czechs viewed the Turks in early modern times. The most famous 19th-century Czech historian František Palacký (1798–1876) did not diverge from the mid-19th-century mainstream descriptions of the wars with the Ottoman Empire,⁸⁰ but his portrayal of Süleyman is perhaps worth noting: “he was an educated barbarian, a brute with the capacity for fine and noble feelings, a crude oppressor given to both justice and deceit.”⁸¹

Even in the 19th century, views on the Turks did not develop in one direction. There is a “History of the Czech Nation” published in 1864 that shows signs of being slightly more influenced by older anti-Turkish stereotypes than the works by Tomek and Palacký had been. The book was written by Jakub Malý (1811–1885), a prolific Czech writer, journalist and translator.⁸² In his “History,” Malý writes about the Turkish threat, the Turkish yoke, and the horrors of the wars with the cruel “archenemy of Christendom.”⁸³ He also

76 Ibid., 1:655 and 697.

77 Originally published as Václav Vladivoj Tomek, *Děje Království Českého* (Prague: F. Řivnác, 1850).

78 Tomek occasionally wrote about Czech participation in the wars against the Turks, including the taxes the Czechs paid, but he mostly just described alliances, the events of the war, and peace treaties, without any evaluations. Václav Vladivoj Tomek, *Děje království českého*, 3rd ed. (Prague: František Řivnác, 1864), 363.

79 Ibid., 302.

80 First published in Czech as František Palacký, *Dějiny národu českého w Čechách a w Moravě*, 10 vols. (Prague: J.G. Kalve, 1848–76).

81 František Palacký, *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě* (Prague: B. Kočí, 1907), 1278.

82 Malý wrote on Czech grammar and history and was appreciated for his mastery of the Czech language, his broad knowledge of history, and his patriotism. See *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1900), 16:736–37.

83 Jakub Malý, *Dějepis národu českého*, vol. 2, *Od přijetí Sigmunda za krále až do nynějších dob* (Prague: Jaroslav Pospíšil, 1864), esp. 82, 253, and 364.

devotes attention to the Ottoman Empire whenever it intersects with Czech affairs – for instance, in regard to the taxes that the Habsburgs required the Czechs to pay to finance the wars against the Turks. There is no strong sense of anti-Turkish sentiment on the part of the author, although he uses older stereotypes of the Turks as good fighters and cruel enemies and notes the courage of the Czechs in defending Vienna.⁸⁴ The celebration of the Czechs' role in fighting the Turks in this as well as other history books from that time is just a marginal topic and not a major argument in the master narrative of Czech history.⁸⁵

Just as important as the interpretations the history books offered of encounters with the Turks were the depictions of the Turks in the first Czech encyclopedias. It was a major project of the Czech patriotic community in the 19th century to produce encyclopedias in the Czech language, and eminent scholars, teachers, and journalists contributed to these works. Although inspired by famous foreign encyclopedic works, in particular the *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie*, some entries in the Czech encyclopedias were scholarly articles in their own right and were later translated into other Slavic languages and to German.⁸⁶ In 1872 the first Czech encyclopedic work (*Slovník naučný*), edited by František Ladislav Rieger together with Malý, author of the above-mentioned “History,” distinguished the Turks more broadly, as “one of the most important tribes of the Altay family [*čeled'*] of the Mongolian race [*plemeno*],”⁸⁷ from the Turks in the narrow sense, “a nation ruling in the Turkish Empire” who were called Osmanli.⁸⁸ The brief entry on “the Turks,” written by Malý, recounts the history of the Turks from the earliest times, mentioning Chinese sources on the ancestors of the Turks and later dynasties of Turkish origin, in a way that is generally reflective of the style of scholarship in the late 19th century, and without any evaluative comments. The longer entry on “Turkey” covers the country's geography, demographic and economic situation, education, the military, and history, for which Hammer-Purgstall's, Ubicini's, Zinkeisen's, Lamartine's, and other 19th-century historians' works are cited as sources.⁸⁹ Although the author of the entry is not given, it reproduces (at times to the letter) the depiction of the Turks from the *Názorný atlas* (Illustrated Atlas) that accompanied the encyclopedia, which was published earlier, in 1866, and the text of which was

84 Malý, *Dějepis národu českého*, 2:253.

85 On the Czech master narrative see note number 31 in the Introduction.

86 See Dagmar Hartmanová, “Historie československé encyklopedistiky do roku 1945,” *Národní knihovna: Knihovnická revue* 11, no. 1 (2000): 15–21.

87 Rieger, *Slovník naučný*, 9:639–40.

88 *Ibid.*, 9:640.

89 *Ibid.*, 9:651.

written by Malý. One section of the Atlas was devoted to the Turks,⁹⁰ and many later descriptions of them seem to have been based on this text.

According to Malý, modern-day Turks were not the “original” Turkish nation because they had mixed with other nations.⁹¹ The Turks, as he depicts them, have shapely bodies, a serious and imperious look, and are perceptive and quick-witted, but lazy and apathetic because they are so blindly fatalistic. He describes them as strictly observant of their religious duties and the moral commands of Islam. He goes so far as to ascribe Turkish hospitality to the obligation of charity set out in the Koran, and explains that they extend this charity even to animals and look after them (which he claimed was why there were so many street dogs in Istanbul).⁹² As was common in descriptions of the Turks, their character was portrayed as full of contradictions: they are polite and hospitable to foreigners, but furious religious fanatics who see Christians as dogs; they are steadfast in their friendship but immune to feelings of warmth; they can be modest in needs when necessary, but in times of plenty they are lecherous and devote themselves to various, and even “unnatural,” pleasures. Malý, and many Czechs after him, attributed to the Turks a passion for good food and sensual pleasures, as reflected in the harem. Although women lived in segregation, according to Malý, they were able to plot against their husbands and have love affairs. He also explained that polygamy, which allowed a man to have four wives and as many concubines as he wished, was limited to the upper classes because it was costly, and most lower-class Turks had only one wife.⁹³ Slavery, a topic that figured prominently in Western writings on the Turks and the Ottoman Empire, was mentioned only once by Malý and described as “moderate.” He likewise briefly commented on the Turkish form of governance, which he likened to despotism or absolute monarchy, headed by the Sultan or Padishah, whose power, considered unlimited, Malý acknowledged to be restricted by the supreme religious authority, the sheyh ul islam. Malý’s views are perhaps best expressed by his assertion that a Turk, even if educated in Paris, remains in his true thinking a barbarian. He “corroborates” this by claiming that a Turk can never develop refined tastes because he is naturally lacking in an appreciation for beauty (*krasochut*).⁹⁴

90 See Malý’s text on the Turks: “Turci,” in *Názorný atlas k slovníku naučnému*, ed. Frant. Lad. Rieger and Václav Zelený, vol. 2, *Národ- a dějepis*, ed. Frant. Lad. Rieger and Václav Zelený with the text by Jakub Malý (Prague: I.L. Kober, 1866), 74–80.

91 Malý, “Turci,” 74.

92 *Ibid.*, 75 and 79.

93 *Ibid.*, 75.

94 Malý, “Turci,” 76 and 74. Interestingly, this claim does not seem to have been widely shared by other authors, unlike other of Malý’s assertions – for instance about Turkish superstitions.

These examples show that throughout the second half of the 19th century both negative images of the Turks connected with the wars of the past and a more mixed perception of Turkish character and military skills survived. The Turks were sometimes presented as the enemies of Christianity, but there was no new substance behind the formally religious rhetoric. The anti-Turkish sentiment these works expressed was not especially strong or emotional. The Czechs' contribution to the defense against the Turks was praised, but not presented as a key element of Czech history, and thus it did not play any substantial role in the formation of Czech national identity and the construction of national history. In the 1870s, the situation changed.

3 The Oppressors of Our Slavic Brethren

The Czechs followed with real anxiety the daily news in the newspapers about the uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans, their suppression, and the ensuing Russo-Turkish war of 1877–1878. Their unanimous and enthusiastic support of the anti-Turkish struggle reflected both a keen interest in the national liberation of the Southern Slavs and various political concerns, including the Czechs' feelings about Austrian rule, as for some people a demonstration of Slavic solidarity was a gesture of defiance against Vienna.⁹⁵ The Czech preoccupation with the anti-Turkish struggle also expressed itself in the collections that were taken up in support of the insurgents and the volunteers who went off to participate in the fighting or to help treat the wounded, and on a more mass scale there were also anti-Turkish political demonstrations.⁹⁶ The atmosphere of the time and the Czechs' deep concern for the fate of the Southern Slavs is reflected vividly in a short story by the popular 19th-century Czech writer Karolina Světlá (1830–1899). The story, centered on the dilemma of a young woman who is in love with the wrong man, draws a parallel between a man's betrayal of a woman and of his nation – in this case represented by all Slavs and their fight against the Ottoman Empire. Its title, “Plevno,” is the name of a fortress besieged by Russian troops during the war, and the story opens with the question “Did Plevno fall?,” a question repeated daily as the patriotic family of the young heroine eagerly seeks and discusses news about the Russo-Turkish war.⁹⁷ A number of pamphlets and books were published in 1877–1878 about the suffering of the Slavs under Ottoman rule and about the war. This lively interest in

95 See Žáček and Havráňková, “Srbové a Češi,” 379.

96 Ibid., 379–86.

97 Karolína Světlá, “Plevno,” in *Časové ohlasy* (Prague: J. Otto, 1903), 17–118.

the events in the Ottoman Balkans was accompanied by a surge of Pan-Slavic sentiment and expressions of allegiance to the Slavs. The Czechs became directly interested in the fate of the Bulgarians, Serbs, and Montenegrins living under Ottoman rule, at which point images of the Turks ceased to be just historical allusions to a long-ago threat or a general symbol for an enemy figure and acquired a more immediate and current significance for the Czech populace.

Publications from the second half of the 1870s voiced hostility toward "the atrocious Turk"⁹⁸ and called the Turks "savage creatures"⁹⁹ and "half-mad berserks."¹⁰⁰ These views, which were common in 19th-century sources, have already been described in modern-day scholarship.¹⁰¹ It is indicative of the nature of anti-Turkish sentiment at that time that many authors who wrote with hostility about the Turks had no personal experience with the Ottoman Empire and its population and often even admitted that they did not know much about the Turks or their past.¹⁰² One of the exceptions was Holeček, who, having befriended some Southern Slavs while a secondary school student in Tábor, became in 1875 the Balkan correspondent for newspapers in Prague and was thus able to provide firsthand observations.¹⁰³ Others relied on works by Czech and foreign experts, such as the aforementioned literary historian Josef Jireček and his son Konstantin Jireček (1854–1918), a historian who specialized in the past of Southern Slavs,¹⁰⁴ or they quoted the Austrian Darwinist Friedrich Heller von Hellwald (1842–1892). In his "Cultural History in Its Natural Development" from 1875, Hellwald applied Darwin's theory to history, which he interpreted as a struggle between unequal races.¹⁰⁵ Several works by Hellwald were translated into Czech in the late 1870s and early 1880s by well-known intellectuals,

98 Eduard Rüffer, *Válka rusko-turecká* (Prague: Alois Hynek, n.d., ca. 1878), 3.

99 Kodym, *Obrazy z dějin Turků*, 81.

100 Vojtěch Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika války východní* (Prague: V. Nagl, 1879), 567.

101 Žáček and Havránková, "Srbové a Češi," 380.

102 There were always some Czechs reporting on the Balkans, however, especially journalists, and some volunteers and experts who took part in the events. See Žáček and Havránková, "Srbové a Češi," 357–69 and 377–82.

103 Josef Holeček, *Černá Hora* (Prague: Nákladem Spolku pro vydávání laciných knih českých, 1876), 27.

104 Konstantin Jireček was the son of Josef Jireček, who wrote the above-mentioned "Anthology of Czech Literature," and the grandson of Pavel Josef Šafařík, one of the leading intellectuals of the early Czech "national revival." Konstantin Jireček wrote extensively on the history of Bulgaria and on Serbian history. In the 1880s, he was a minister in the Bulgarian government and the director of the Bulgarian National Library.

105 Friedrich Anton Heller von Hellwald, *Kulturgeschichte in ihrer natürlichen Entwicklung bis zur Gegenwart* (Augsburg: Butsch, 1875). On Hellwald see Richard Weikart, "The Impact of Social Darwinism on Anti-Semitic Ideology in Germany and Austria: 1860–1945," in *Jewish*

such as Malý, Justin Václav Prášek, a historian of the ancient Middle East, Jan Herben, a historian and journalist, and Jaroslav Vlček, a literary historian.¹⁰⁶ Hellwald also wrote a shorter text on the Turks and the Slavs (*Der Islam: Türken und Slaven*)¹⁰⁷ and his views, as we will see, had an impact on Czech authors who were writing about the Turks in the late 1870s.

Although Czech interest in the Turks was motivated by national concerns and sympathy with the Slavs, the Turks were still largely depicted in religious terms as the enemies of Christians and as fanatical Muslims.¹⁰⁸ More rarely, their negative features were ascribed not only to Islam but also to the fact of being Turkish.¹⁰⁹ Most writings on the Turks at that time espoused the view that humanity would benefit from the annihilation of the Ottoman Empire or at least from the expulsion of the Turks from Europe.¹¹⁰ During the Russo-Turkish war, they expressed their hope that the war would finally bring an end to the Ottoman Empire.¹¹¹ Because concerns about the Turks resurfaced in connection with revolts and wars, it is not surprising that the image of the Turks that came to prevail in writings in the 1870s drew on the older stereotype of “the Turk” as a fighter whose ferocity made him the “terror” and “scourge” of Europe.¹¹² Most people writing at that time about the Turks explicitly or implicitly shared the view that the Turks were born to kill and destroy, a sentiment captured in the opening quote to this chapter by the schoolteacher Kodým.¹¹³

Tradition and the Challenge of Darwinism, ed. Geoffrey Cantor and Marc Swetlitz (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006), 99–100.

- 106 See, e.g., Friedrich Anton Heller von Hellwald, *Země a obyvatelé její: Ilustrovaná zeměpisná, dějepisná a národopisná kniha domácí; Evropa* (Prague: Fr.A. Urbánek, n.d., ca. 1879); Friedrich Anton Heller von Hellwald, *Země a obyvatelé její: Ilustrovaná zeměpisná, dějepisná a národopisná kniha domácí; Asie* (Prague: Fr.A. Urbánek, n.d., ca. 1880); Friedrich Anton Heller von Hellwald, *Přírodopis člověka*, 2 vols. (Prague: Fr.A. Urbánek, 1881–86).
- 107 Friedrich Anton Heller von Hellwald, *Der Islam: Türken und Slaven; Acht Capitel aus der Culturgeschichte in ihrer natürlichen Entwicklung* (Augsburg: Lampart, 1874).
- 108 Růfner, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 3 and 105; Kodým, *Obrazy z dějin Turků*, 5 and 7; Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 30; Karel Adámek, “Jihoslované a Turci: Kulturní obzor,” pt. 1, *Podřipan*, April 8, 1878, 2. Even a scholarly article dealing with Harant’s travel book repeatedly wrote about the Turkish “terror” and described the Turks as “the mortal enemy” of Christianity. Matěj Rypl, “Úvaha o cestopisu Harantově,” *Listy filologické a paedagogické* 13 (1886): 259.
- 109 Adámek, “Jihoslované a Turci,” pt. 1, 2; Kodým mentioned that the instinct to conquer was inborn to the Turks, but it was further inflamed by their religious fanaticism (Kodým, *Obrazy z dějin Turků*, 7).
- 110 Adámek, “Jihoslované a Turci,” pt. 2, *Podřipan*, April 22, 1878, 2; Růfner, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 560–61.
- 111 Josef Procházka, “Zápas Evropy s plemenem mongolským hledíc obzvláště k válkám Rusův s Turky,” pt. 9, *Osvěta*, December 1877, 891.
- 112 Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 30.
- 113 Kodým, *Obrazy z dějin Turků*, 7–8.

The warrior image of the Turks was painted in slightly more complex terms by writer and editor Vojtěch Mayerhofer (1845–1899), who warned against any tendency to underestimate the Turkish army, because “the Turkish soldier has long ago distinguished himself by his valiance, courage, and endurance.”¹¹⁴ Mayerhofer claimed that, while the courage of the Turks may be fired by religious fanaticism, they had the same qualities as their ancestors, who had managed to get as far as Vienna – namely, a fighting spirit and valor, but also what he called a “cruel and bestial nature.”¹¹⁵ According to Mayerhofer, Turkish soldiers and the infantry especially were among the best fighters in Europe – he described them as brave, courageous, obedient, and abstemious.¹¹⁶

Among the Turks’ characteristics as fighters, Czech writers of the 1870s highlighted first and foremost their cruelty. They wrote about the violence of the Turks with striking frequency and intensity. For example, Kodym, in a text intended for youths, described the “cadavers of murdered men, disfigured women, old men, and children,”¹¹⁷ and the writer and journalist Eduard Růffer (1835–1878) wrote about the fanaticism and brutality with which the Turks murdered, plundered, and burned, cut the heads off the dead and mutilated their bodies.¹¹⁸ Similar images and vocabulary appeared even in the work of a woman, Eliška Krásnohorská (1847–1926), a respected writer and one of the leaders of the Czech women’s movement in the 1870s and 1880s. A collection of poems she wrote in 1880 entitled *K slovanskému jihu* (To the Slavic South) features only cruel, perfidious Turks, graphic descriptions of dead bodies, and blood that “licks the sky’s brows” and “flows in rivers.”¹¹⁹ Perhaps the most striking example of this is her poem “Vděk” (Gratitude), which paints the Turks as remorseless monsters: a Turk loses both arms in battle, a Christian woman takes pity on him, takes him to her poor dwelling, puts him in her own bed, and gives him the last cup of milk she has in the hope that his suffering will make him more compassionate in the future. The Turk repays her kindness by setting the house on fire, using his teeth to set alight the sheaf his bed is made of. Krásnohorská likens the Turk to a mordacious beast, wide-eyed and white-fanged, with a look of bestial lust on his face when he “lunges at the baby in the cradle, sinks his teeth into the soft little body, and tears it from the bed in his bloody

114 Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 30.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid.

117 Kodym, *Obrazy z dějin Turků*, 36.

118 Růffer, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 12, 234, 240, and 260–61. Růffer was a German writer who settled in Prague and wrote in German, Czech, and French.

119 Eliška Krásnohorská, *K slovanskému jihu: Básně* (Prague: Dr. Grégr a Ferd. Dattel, 1880), 9.

jaws.”¹²⁰ The Turk dies, too, but not before swearing that the Turks “will bite into the sore spot of haughty Europe’s decrepit body...”¹²¹

This contrast between the mercifulness of the Slavs and the mercilessness of the Turks, so dramatically expressed by Krásnohorská, appears in more prosaic accounts as well. Ruffer contrasted Turkish cruelty with the humane conduct of the Russians during war, and argued that the Turks deserved the highest contempt for their bestiality and cowardice because they tortured and killed wounded Russians and would not hesitate even to cut the limbs and heads off the bodies of the dead. In a similar vein to what we read in Krásnohorská’s poem he wrote about how the Turks, because of their fanaticism, hurt even those who were trying to help them. And he claimed that despite this, Russian officers made sure that their men did not reciprocate and that they treated captured Turks decently, which was confirmed by the large number of Turks they took prisoner after each fight.¹²²

Kalpana Sahni in her work on Russian Orientalism notes that Russian witnesses of the battles with Muslims in Central Asia and the Caucasus often ascribed the violence committed by their army to the enemy.¹²³ Other historians, especially those studying Austrians’ experiences with Ottoman attacks, claim that the descriptions of violence were not the result of anti-Turkish prejudices, but reflected the real brutality to which the Austrian population was subjected.¹²⁴ Czechs writing about the revolts in the Balkans and the Russo-Turkish war in the 1870s were rarely eyewitnesses to any combat. But they read about the violence that occurred during the war and were shocked by it, and therefore attributed the cruelty solely to the Turks. The writer and journalist Holeček, who unlike many others was a witness to events in the Balkans, wrote that the “opioid visions” of the Turks led them to come up with the cruelest tortures, such as hanging people by their ribs.¹²⁵ Trying to explain the violence on the side of the Slavs, Holeček wrote that after the Turks went about decapitating the bodies of Montenegrins left on the battlefield, the Montenegrins started to do the same, but “[t]heir Slavic tenderness [*jemnocit*] prevented them from acquiring the Turks’ barbaric habits”; whereas the Turks pitched everybody they captured alive on poles, the Montenegrins often let the captives go.¹²⁶ The

120 Ibid., 195.

121 Ibid., 196.

122 Ruffer, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 234–36.

123 Kalpana Sahni, *Crucifying the Orient: Russian Orientalism and the Colonization of Caucasus and Central Asia* (Bangkok: White Orchid Press, 1997), 83–84.

124 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, esp. 9–11.

125 Holeček, *Černá Hora*, 65.

126 Ibid.

Turks Holeček describes were certainly cruel, but the way he has constructed his narrative suggests that the examples of cruelty he used may have been intended more to highlight the great courage and humanity of the Montenegrins, than to condemn the Turks. There was certainly violence on both sides, but focusing on the enemy's cruelty, as Sahni argues, could be a way of getting past the violence committed by the Slavs, whom the Czechs wanted to exculpate from any accusations of "barbaric" cruelty.

Most writings that dealt with the Turks in the late 1870s and early 1880s regarded them as aggressive, violent, and cruel. Some, however, also added other characteristics, calling the Turks perfidious and lazy and their country dirty and smelly, and commenting on their lack of education and inability to become civilized. These authors criticized the state of the education system in the Ottoman Empire and depicted the Turks as too superstitious to be able to participate in European learning and civilization.¹²⁷ But in the writings that responded directly to the events of the 1870s, these criticisms were only sidelines in larger narratives about Turkish vileness, which mostly regurgitated older stereotypes that associated the Turks with belligerence, fanaticism, and sexuality. Like other Europeans, Czechs were fascinated with polygamy and the harem, which the 1870s anti-Turkish writing did not regard as exotic and mysterious but as a sign of the Turks' weakness. According to Růffer, polygamy contributed to the mental decline of the Ottoman population and paradoxically was the reason why the Turks were dying out.¹²⁸ Mayerhofer claimed that Islam was responsible for the lasciviousness of the Turks: "Mohammed has in the Koran certainly promised all soldiers who fall on the battlefield a direct path to Turkish heaven, where, among other heavenly delights, the plump embrace of beautiful odalisques awaits them."¹²⁹ Krásnohorská employed similar imagery in her poems: the Turkish pashas are often dreaming of or succumb to the charms of their female slaves, who in most cases are Slavic women; lust is presented as more important than honor to the Turks, who covet Slavic women more than gold, and in some poems salaciously kiss Slavic beauties.¹³⁰ Krásnohorská showed great sympathy for South Slavic women; her Slavic heroines are brave fighters against the Turks, capable of inspiring men, but she was unable to extend her interest in the fate of women to Muslim or Turkish women.¹³¹

127 Růffer, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 560–61; Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 110–11; Krásnohorská, *K slovanskému jihu*, 205; Holeček, *Černá Hora*, 104.

128 Růffer, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 560.

129 Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 30.

130 Krásnohorská, *K slovanskému jihu*, 17–18, 128–29, 135, 156, 209, and 214.

131 See the poem "Snake" (*Had*) in Krásnohorská, *K slovanskému jihu*, 22–40, esp. 33–35. The poem "Roses of Bulgaria" (*Růže Bulharska*) describes the suffering of young Bulgarian

In the anti-Turkish climate of the late 1870s rarely any attempt was made to provide readers with broader and less biased information. Mayerhofer quoted a French author who argued that the Turks are not a lower race to Europeans, just different. Mayerhofer wrote that the true and original character of the Turks could be found in their old homeland, Asia Minor, far away from European influence, which he claimed had allowed them to preserve their character in its pure form. He portrayed them as brave and having a feeling for social equality. Yet, Mayerhofer hastened to add that even the good qualities of the Turks resulted from their weaknesses, their politeness and dignity being a product of their laziness, and their hospitality, required by their religion, not free from self-interest, but provided with the expectation of gifts in return, which often cost more than what they had given in the first place.¹³²

Although in the 1870s the Turks were most often mentioned in the context of the events on the Balkan Peninsula, they were also talked about in connection with Czech history and the fate of the Slavs more generally. Some writings on the Turks indirectly criticized the situation of the Slavs under Austrian rule in the Habsburg Empire or drew a parallel between the Turks and the Hungarians as oppressors of Slavs.¹³³ The Turks also served as a contrast, as the opposite of the Slavs. The vivid depictions of Turkish cruelty described above were often used to underscore how humane and compassionate the Slavs are. Kodym, as we saw in the introductory quote, wrote that in Christians' battles against the Turks, the role played by the inhabitants of the Habsburg Empire deserved to be acknowledged.¹³⁴ But more often Czech authors emphasized the important role of the Czechs and specifically the Moravians in these wars.¹³⁵ According to one of them, Vienna and the Habsburg dynasty were saved from the Turks "by the mighty Slavic arm," embodied in the person of Jan Sobieski.¹³⁶ It was particularly common to stress the virtues of the Montenegrins, which were made

women ("roses"), who serve as objects in a harem. In it, Krásnohorská refers to slaves and odalisques and Muslims' lasciviousness; the women-roses symbolize the situation of their nation. Krásnohorská, *K slovanskému jihu*, 128–30. Also other authors celebrated the courage of Slavic women; see, e.g., Kodym, *Obrazy z dějin Turků*, 36–37.

132 Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 110–12.

133 Adámek, "Jihoslované a Turci," pt. 2, 2.

134 Kodym, *Obrazy z dějin Turků*, 82.

135 František Kameníček, "Účastenství Moravanů při válkách tureckých od r. 1526 do r. 1568: Příspěvek k dějinám Moravy v XVI. století," pts. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, *Sborník historický* 4, no. 1 (1886): 15–29; no. 2 (1886): 65–77; no. 3 (1886): 157–75; no. 4 (1886): 193–206; no. 5 (1886): 271–84; Josef Šimek, "Jak Kutnohorští roku 1529 proti Turku zbrojili," *Sborník historický* 4, no. 5 (1886): 310–13; Josef Šimek, "O účasti Kutnohorských proti Turku l. 1532," *Sborník historický* 4, no. 6 (1886): 376–78.

136 Procházka, "Zápas Evropy," pt. 3, *Osvěta*, March 1877, 169.

more evident when contrasted with the vices of the Turks.¹³⁷ The Montenegrins were seen as “Slavic Spartans” and tireless “Turk-beaters” (*Turkobijci*).¹³⁸ Ruffer tells a story of a Montenegrin hero who promised to capture a Turk in the next fight; he succeeded, and when he was wounded he forced “his Turk” to carry him on his back, making the formerly feared enemy his obedient servant.¹³⁹ The Turkish theme thus served as a vehicle through which to celebrate the Slavs. This tendency, which was already evident in history books dating from earlier in the 19th century, became more pronounced later in the century: apart from a genuine interest in the fate of the Slavs fighting against Ottoman rule, Czech writings reflected a desire to highlight the courage of the Slavs and by extension the Czechs.

4 The Turkish Race

Compared to the Pan-Slavic framing of Turkish themes in the 1870s, references to race in relation to the Turks were significantly rarer. The medieval and early modern views of the Turks that have been summarized earlier in this chapter reflected primarily religious concerns. Nevertheless, scholars studying the racialization of Muslims suggest that racial discourses had a long (pre)history and that religious and racial Othering were far from mutually exclusive. According to Nasar Meer, “the category of race was co-constituted with religion.”¹⁴⁰ At the same time, it is important to remember, as Michael Omi and Howard Winant note, that “[a] racial project can be defined as racist if it creates or reproduces structures of domination based on racial signification and identities.”¹⁴¹ For Czechs, representing the Turks through racial categories reflected a perception of difference between the Czechs and the Turks (as in the reference to race by Kodym), but did not serve to legitimize any position of dominance over the Turks.

The term race, or its equivalents in circulation at the time, was used in descriptions categorizing various populations according to their racial origins. Rieger’s encyclopedia, as we could see, in 1872 characterized the Turks as “one of the most important tribes of the Altay family of the Mongolian race

137 Ruffer, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 124.

138 *Ibid.*, 121.

139 *Ibid.*, 124–28.

140 Nasar Meer, “Racialization and Religion: Race, Culture and Difference in the Study of Antisemitism and Islamophobia,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 3 (March 2013): 389.

141 Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 3rd. ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 128.

[*plemeno*].” According to the encyclopedia, “[s]ome earlier ethnographers counted them among the Caucasian race, and some Turkish nations do indeed bear a strong physical resemblance to the Caucasian nations, but more recent science has confirmed with certainty that they have no connection with Caucasian tribes.”¹⁴² Whereas the encyclopedia makes no further conclusions about the Turks’ belonging to the “Mongolian race,” other texts offered more elaborately racialized views of the Turks. Czech discourse on the Turks that employed racial categories was strongly influenced by the work of Hellwald. According to Richard Weikart, Hellwald viewed human history as an unavoidable struggle between unequal races.¹⁴³ In his “History of Culture,” Hellwald warned that mixing “higher” and “lower” races would result in mediocre offspring. Weikart notes that Hellwald was mainly preoccupied with whites mixing with blacks or American Indians, but there was also evidence of anti-Semitism in his work.¹⁴⁴ Some of Hellwald’s views were shared even by authors who did not explicitly quote him, such as Mayerhofer and Kodým. Hellwald, for instance, claimed that the Ottomans were lazy and childlike, culturally backward and barely a part of human history, that they did not build things but destroyed them, purely for entertainment and out of a destructive instinct in their blood. The good qualities that survived in their homeland, Anatolia, he said, sprang from these forenamed faults, and vanished all the same when the Turks came under European influence.¹⁴⁵

In 1877, a popular Czech journal *Osvěta* (Enlightenment) published a long article in several installments entitled “The Struggle of Europe against the Mongolian Race, with Particular Attention to the Wars of the Russians with the Turks.” Its author, Josef Kubišta (1840–1907), writing under the pen name Josef Procházka,¹⁴⁶ was a secondary school teacher and popularizer of history, who is all but forgotten today. He was neither the first nor the most important person to write about the Turks in racial terms. Nonetheless, his article deserves special attention because it is a more extreme example of the impact of the racial discourse on attitudes toward the Turks, published, moreover, in a then mainstream Czech magazine.

142 Rieger, *Slovník naučný*, 9:639.

143 According to Weikart, Hellwald in this respect presaged Hitler’s social Darwinist ideology. Weikart, “The Impact of Social Darwinism,” 99.

144 *Ibid.*, 100.

145 Heller von Hellwald, *Přírodopis člověka*, 2:623–25.

146 Procházka, “Zápas Evropy,” pts. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, *Osvěta*, January 1877; February 1877; March 1877; April 1877; July 1877; August 1877; September 1877; October 1877; December 1877.

Procházka's article was a variation on the narrative celebrating the merits of the Czechs or Slavs in saving Europe from the Turkish threat. In the article, the saviors were all Slavs, most notably Southern Slavs and imperial Russia; at the time the article was published Russia was allegedly engaged in its "tenth war with Turkey,"¹⁴⁷ and the entire "Mongolian race" was seen as posing a threat. The term Procházka used to describe the Turks and their Mongolian relatives was *plemeno*, which literally means "tribe" or "breed," but in the way the term was commonly employed in Czech in the later part of the 19th century it also referred to race.¹⁴⁸ Procházka maintained that the uprising in Herzegovina that spread to other Slavic nations under Ottoman rule marked the start of a new age – the age of the Slavs. He associated the Russo-Turkish war at that time with the old religious and national antagonism that existed between Europe and the Turks and presented the Ottoman Empire as the antithesis of Europe.¹⁴⁹ He claimed that Europe celebrated personal freedom, while in the Ottoman Balkans rough serfdom prevailed; in Europe nations were struggling to extend political rights, while in Turkey Asian despotism ruled; in Europe equality before the law was a given, while in Turkey a Christian could not testify against a Turk; and in the West, despite its political conflicts, society was becoming increasingly humane, but in the East, the ruling nation committed atrocities that could only be described as "Turkish brutality."¹⁵⁰

Procházka argued that the Turks are the opposite of the Slavs also in racial terms: the Turks are Mongolians, whereas the Slavs are Caucasians of the Indo-European race. He acknowledged that the seeds of religious, moral, and scholarly education came from Asia, but argued that they blossomed in Europe, which then matured, while vast Asia remained a child, and only Europe could provide the spiritual food necessary for Asia's elevation. The author presents European history as the history of the "Mongolian" invasions, which included Magyars and Tatars as well as Ottoman Turks. It is worth noting that a subject of debate in Hungary at that time was whether a relationship of kinship existed between the Turks and the Magyars. Leaving aside the origins of this theory and its later developments, in the second half of the 19th century some scholars, including the traveler and Turkologist Ármín Vámbéry (1832–1913),

147 Ibid., pt. 9, 891.

148 See Michal Frankl, *Emancipace od židů: Český antisemitismus na konci 19. století* (Prague: Paseka, 2007), 31–36; Michal Frankl, "Česká společnost a veřejné vyjednávání o Židech," in *Habsburkové: Vznikání občanské společnosti, 1740–1918*, ed. Ivo Cerman (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2016), 655.

149 Procházka, "Zápas Evropy," pt. 1, 7–8.

150 Ibid., 9.

argued that the Hungarian language was related to Turkish. As a response to Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism, Turanism emerged as a political concept, which claimed that the common roots of the Hungarians and the Central Asian peoples, especially the Turks and Mongols, meant they should forge political ties.¹⁵¹

Procházka wrote that the Mongolian race had made no contribution to the progress of humanity and represented a “demonic force” that sought to destroy everything of beauty that had been created by good and noble people.¹⁵² The author expressed the belief that brute material force would have to give way to a higher moral and spiritual force, and that was why, he claimed, the Mongolian race was on the retreat in Europe and the number of Magyars as well as Turks was decreasing – the law of nature would make sure that the Mongolian race had neither a past nor a future among the Iranian tribes of Europe: “The science of cross-breeding seems to have demonstrated its validity even here; crossbreeding between individuals of the same species refines the race, [while] crossbreeding between heterogeneous persons can in a moment lead to sterility.”¹⁵³ Procházka contended that Turkish rule had managed to last for five centuries because of Islam, a religion that had to be taken seriously. He argued that while Islam had gained numerous adherents among the Semitic, Hamitic, and Turkish races, its appeal was lost on the Arian tribes, just as Christianity could only take root among the Arian nations. Thus, according to the author, the religious difference is a major antagonism between Arians and Turkish Mongolians, as if each race had, apart from physiological and consequently mental characteristics, also a separate religion.¹⁵⁴

Similar views were expressed in 1878 by Karel Adámek (1840–1918), a writer, mayor of the East Bohemian town Hlinsko and a member of parliament, in an article titled “South Slavs and the Turks.”¹⁵⁵ Adámek discusses the views of Hellwald and uses similar phrases and images as Kubišta-Procházka’s article published a year earlier, suggesting Hellwald’s views were popular and influential among some Czechs. Adámek also highlighted the lack of any contribution

151 On these linguistic theories see Susan Gal, “Linguistic Theories and National Images in 19th Century Hungary,” *Pragmatics* 5, no. 2 (1995): 155–166; see also Köves, “Modes of Orientalism,” esp. 166–71; Gábor Ágoston, “The Image of the Ottomans in Hungarian Historiography,” *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 61, no. 1–2 (March 2008): 15–18.

152 Procházka, “Zápas Evropy,” pt. 1, 9–16.

153 *Ibid.*, 17.

154 *Ibid.*, 17–18.

155 Adámek, “Jihoslované a Turci,” pt. 2, 2. Adámek was also a journalist and author of numerous historical, economic and travel writings.

by the Turks to the intellectual progress and noted the declining number of "real" Turks of the Uralo-Altay race in Europe, arguing moreover that the preservation of the Ottoman Empire in Europe contributed neither to peace nor to culture.¹⁵⁶

In the same vein, Rüffer quoted Hellwald extensively in a chapter titled "The Annihilation of Turkish Rule – the Benefit of Learning" (*Záhuba panství tureckého – prospěch vzdělanosti*). He claimed that the English and the Jews opposed the dissolution of the "Turkish" Empire for economic reasons, and the Hungarians feared losing their influence over the non-Magyar population in Hungary. Some Austrian Germans allegedly agreed with them, but others, more educated ones, believed that the end of Turkish rule would benefit civilization. According to Rüffer, Hellwald, who applied a scholarly approach in his writings on the Turks and the Slavs, had proved that the Turks were completely incapable of participating in European learning and intellectual life, and had shown that polygamy was responsible for the decline in the number of the Turks. Rüffer (and Hellwald) claimed that whenever the Turks conquered an Arian nation, they destroyed its civilization, like other Mongolian nations had done before them.¹⁵⁷

The Czechs were thus no exception when it came to the appeal of racial discourse in the late 19th century. Race was not, however, the dominant lens through which the Turks were viewed. The racial perspective was reserved primarily for the Jews, although occasionally links were made between the two groups of Others.¹⁵⁸ Both groups were also mainly perceived in terms of their difference from the Czechs.¹⁵⁹ Interestingly, the entry under the word "Turkish" in Jungmann's Czech-German dictionary from 1838 talks about "furious Turkish, Jewish words."¹⁶⁰ Later observers of the Ottoman Empire sometimes expressed both anti-Turkish and anti-Jewish opinions.¹⁶¹ In 1901, the anti-Semitic journal *Naše zájmy* (Our Interests) announced that (too) many children had been born in the Sultan's family and that the Sultan's wife had died, but commented that the Sultan would luckily be able to find solace in the fact that he

156 Ibid., pt. 1, 2, and pt. 2, 2.

157 Rüffer, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 560–61.

158 Rypl, "Úvaha o cestopisu Harantově," 265. According to Rypl, Harant was prejudiced against both the Turks and the Jews because he believed that the Turks oppress Christians and the Jews cheat on Christians and are responsible for Christ's suffering.

159 On the Czechs' views on the Jews at the turn of the century see Frankl, "Česká společnost," 652.

160 Jungmann, *Slovník česko-německý*, 673.

161 See Chapter Two ("Czechs Abroad").

still had 364 other wives left.¹⁶² Yet, there was a major difference in how the Turks and the Jews were understood in racial terms. Given the lack of Czech ambitions to control the Ottoman Turks and the absence of any Turks in Czech society (unlike the Jews), the racialization of the discourse on the Turks was not used to argue for Czech superiority over the Turks; it remained a way of Othering.

5 The Longevity of Stereotypes

The Congress of Berlin in 1878 after the Russo-Turkish war brought independence or increased autonomy to the Balkan nations, including some of the Slavic ones. Continued tension and conflict in the Balkans nevertheless ensured that the Turks did not disappear from the news or from the Czechs' awareness. One of the consequences of the congress that was of relevance for the Czechs was the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is dealt with in another chapter of this book. Although in the three decades following the Berlin Congress there was no scarcity of other news associated with the Ottoman Empire, leaving aside the occupation and later annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, it was not until the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 that the Czechs were strongly drawn into the events in the Balkans once again. The First Balkan War was followed passionately not only by Czechs in the cities but also throughout the countryside, where lectures were held on current issues and their historical roots and were accompanied by protests against the planned Austro-Hungarian invasion of Montenegro. The success of the fundraising organized in order to send Czech physicians and other staff to help the wounded Southern Slavs demonstrated the Czechs' unfading interest in the situation in the Balkan Peninsula.¹⁶³ The victories of the Balkan Slavs in the First Balkan War, in which Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia, and Greece united to expel the Ottoman Empire from its remaining territory in the Balkans, and especially the triumph of the Montenegrins at Skadar in April 1913, were celebrated enthusiastically. This enthusiasm contrasted with the Czech response to the Second Balkan War: When Bulgaria, in its effort to get hold of Macedonia, assailed the Serbian and Greek armies, which led to Turkish and Romanian attacks on Bulgaria and a fight among Slavic countries, the Czech public became disillusioned.¹⁶⁴

162 "Něco stydlivého z Turecka," *Naše zájmy*, November 1, 1901, 5.

163 Jaroslav Pánek, *Češi a Jihoslované: Kapitoly z dějin vzájemných vztahů* (Prague: Tribun EU, 2015), 289–90.

164 *Ibid.*, 293 and 297. See also Milada Paulová, *Balkánské války 1912–1913 a český lid* (Prague: Nakladatelství Československé akademie věd, 1963).

The ongoing turmoil on the Balkan Peninsula helped to prolong the life span of the anti-Turkish sentiment and the stereotypes about the Turks that had emerged, or resurfaced, in response to the events of the 1870s. Their lingering influence on Czechs' views of the Turks was manifested in a variety of forms, from literary production to non-fiction and the visual arts. It might appear at first glance that the stereotype of Turks as fighters and the enemy had grown weaker and softer by this time, and this is indeed what the (re)appearance of "the Turk" as a comic figure seems to suggest. But on closer inspection, it is evident that among some parts of the Czech population a deeper animosity toward the Turks survived and was present even in contexts where the Turks and their fate were not the center of attention.

The Balkan Wars ushered in a new, though weaker, wave of anti-Turkish publications. In 1913, a respected historian and ethnographer named Čeněk Zíbrt (1864–1932) published an article titled "The Turks as Warriors in Old-Czech Literature," which he introduced with a comment on how appropriate it was to remind ourselves today, in a time of renewed fighting with "the hereditary enemy of Christianity," of the literature devoted to the Turkish wars written in the 15th–17th centuries.¹⁶⁵ Even more widespread were the stereotypical representations of the Turks that existed in pulp culture, such as popular vaudeville-type songs and poems aimed at a broad audience, as the number of such works exploded during the Balkan Wars. In the context of the war, the image of "the Turk" as a fighter reappeared, along with all the scary attributes of this stereotype. Yet, given how quickly the Ottoman Empire was losing the war, images of "the Turk" were in fact far from frightening and his terrible attributes were described ironically or mocked. A characteristic example of this is a play that was originally written by the German author Franz Pocci (1807–1876) and was adapted into a short comic puppet show in Czech titled *Zajatý Turek* (The Captive Turk), which featured Czech characters and reacted to current events. The Czech version of the play is set during the First Balkan War, when the Ottoman armies were defeated by the Slavs and many Turks were captured. It has Kašpárek, a Czech comic figure reminiscent of Punch, pretending to be a captive Turk in order to frighten and ridicule the innkeeper whom he owes money.¹⁶⁶ The characters in the play express a fear of the Turks and liken them to wild animals who "could eat us."¹⁶⁷ In the story there is a rumor that a captured Turk, wearing wide trousers and a turban, broke out of his metal chains and

165 Čeněk Zíbrt, "Turci válečníci v literatuře staročeské," pts. 1 and 2, *Světlozor*, November 15, 1912, 285; November 22, 1912, 309–10. Zíbrt was extraordinary professor of cultural history at Charles University in Prague and director of the library of the National Museum.

166 František Pocci, *Zajatý Turek*, adapt. F. Vysoký (Prague: České lidové knihkupectví a antikvariát Josef Springer, 1912.)

167 *Ibid.*, 7.

while escaping killed six people and wounded twelve more; he bit a woman's nose off and ate her little child. The innkeeper says that when the Turk is captured he will put him on display for money, certain that Czechs will be curious and willing to pay to see a real Turk from Constantinople, because, he claims, "[i]t is well-known that Czechs are obsessed with news! And even more obsessed with news about the war of the Southern Slavs against the Turks! How good it is that they are so patriotic because they will pay to see a real Turk!"¹⁶⁸ Kašpárek, posing as the Turk, is thus put in a cage where he mumbles words "in Arabic." Despite his faults, this alleged Turk was a character that the viewers could identify with and his "Turkishness" clearly contributed to the farcical character of the play.

"The Turk on Charles Bridge" is the name of a statue Ferdinand Maxmilián Brokoff created in 1714 to symbolize the then still real fear that existed of the Turks, but in the early 20th century it became a recurring figure in popular culture.¹⁶⁹ In one well-liked song titled *Turek z Kamenýho mostu* (The Turk from the Stone Bridge), the statue of the Turk on Charles Bridge serves as a comic symbol of Ottoman power: The song tells the story of a Turk who carries with him the quirks that he had used to do "good deeds" in Turkey. It then goes on to describe how the Old Turks have been treacherously defeated by the Young Turks (because women preferred Young Turks to Old Turks), all the while "the melancholy Sultan," the chorus chants, just drinks English tea and eats German liver, cares only for his harem, and doesn't give a damn about the fate of his empire.¹⁷⁰ Another song about the defeat of the Ottoman Turks in the Balkans refers to various aspects of the stereotype of "the Turk": the statue of the Turk on the bridge, a Turk with a pipe, of the type commonly seen on coffee shop signs, and a Turkish musical band. In the Balkans, so the song goes, the Turks are being defeated by the Slavs and the Greeks, which is what they have long deserved, and even the girls in the harem are wondering who's going to kiss them now that the Sultan has been defeated. In the song, God is punishing the barbarians responsible for the enslavement of Christians; "the Arnavut" (Albanian) has been beaten by the Serbs and Bulgarians – sons of the Goddess Sláva – and once the Turks, to the sound of the Turkish march, are finally expelled from Europe and forced to go to Asia, where they belong, peace will prevail in the Balkans and all Slavs will celebrate their South Slavic brethren.¹⁷¹

168 Ibid., 11–12.

169 Some songs were written by a popular song-writer Josef Heřman Zefi. See also Karel Krejčí, *Praha legend a skutečnosti* (Prague: Orbis, 1967), 241.

170 Josef Heřman Zefi, *Turek z Kamenýho mostu* (Prague: Tiskem a nákladem Jul. Janů, n.d.).

171 Václav Knoflíček, *Jak dostali na chrám páně dole Turci na Balkáně* (Prague: J. Heřman-Zefi, n.d.).



FIGURE 2 Illustration from *Turek z Kameného mostu* (The Turk from the Stone Bridge) by J. Heřman Zefi, n.d. (Artist unknown)

Although the farcical nature of these examples of popular culture made the Turks appear tame and the imagery trivial, the images drew on anti-Turkish stereotypes that were widespread in the late 1870s. Similar views were expressed throughout the 1880s and up to the 20th century in works touching on the

historical relationship between the Czech lands and the Ottoman Empire.¹⁷² Their authors wrote about the terrifying Turkish “destroyers”¹⁷³ and called them a bloodthirsty and villainous lot.¹⁷⁴ A short text called “The Military Solution to the Eastern Question,” published in 1902, used the same language as writings from the 1870s: “From the beginning till this day Turkey represents in Europe but a camp of Asian intruders among the Balkan tribes. It is well known that artificially sustaining this monster does nothing to contribute to the maintenance of peace...”¹⁷⁵ An extensive and exquisite publication titled *Devatenácté století* (The Nineteenth Century), which covered the century from various perspectives, paid attention to the Turks only in connection with political events and wars, and omitted them from the sections on culture.¹⁷⁶ Although the opinions on the Turks varied between the authors of different chapters, the tone was prevalently negative: the journalist Karel Jonáš (1865–1922), the author of one chapter, presented an inventory of acts of violence committed by the Turks, such as blinding people and roasting Serbian youths on grills,¹⁷⁷ and Josef Jakub Toužimský (1848–1903), another journalist, described how the cruel Turks plundered and murdered the Serbs.¹⁷⁸

Anti-Turkish sentiment based on such notions about the Turks as bloodthirsty enemies found their way into political thinking. Even a figure like Tomáš Guarrigue Masaryk (1850–1937), a professor and politician and future president of Czechoslovakia, shared some of these sentiments. His opinions on the Turks developed over time and were certainly not central to his political and philosophical thinking. Mostly they related to immediate political issues, such as Austro-Hungarian foreign policy. He was particularly concerned with the fate of the Southern Slavs and was involved with their situation both as a thinker and a member of the Austrian Parliament.¹⁷⁹ In this framework

172 Šimek, “Jak Kutnohorští roku 1529 proti Turku zbrojili,” 310–13.

173 Rypl, “Úvaha o cestopisu Harantově”; Josef Janko, “O stycích starých Slovanů s Turkotatary a Germány s hlediska jazykozpytného,” pts. 1 and 2, *Věstník České akademie císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění* 17, no. 2 (1908): 100–131; no. 3 (1908): 139–92.

174 Kameníček, “Účastenství Moravanů,” pt. 1, 15.

175 J. Vojenský, “Válečné řešení východní otázky,” *Hlídky* 19, no. 10 (1902): 714.

176 Jan Klecanda, ed., *Devatenácté století slovem i obrazem: Dějiny politické a kulturní*, vol. 1 (Prague: Jos. R. Vilímek, n.d.).

177 Karel Jonáš, “Události na Balkáně,” in Klecanda, *Devatenácté století*, 58.

178 Josef J. Toužimský, “Východní otázka,” in Klecanda, *Devatenácté století*, 464–66.

179 For an overview and analysis of older scholarship on Masaryk’s opinions and activities on behalf of Southern Slavs see Ladislav Hladký, “T.G. Masaryk a jižní Slované: Konstanky a proměnné v rámci starého příběhu,” in *T.G. Masaryk a Slované*, ed. Vratislav Doubek, Ladislav Hladký, Radomír Vlček et al. (Prague: Historický ústav, 2013), 237–52.

Masaryk saw the Turks as oppressors of Slavs alongside Germans and Magyars (Hungarians).¹⁸⁰ The Russians, Masaryk argued in 1916, had suffered for a long time under the Tatar and Mongolian yoke, the South Slavs were oppressed by the Turks and Magyars, the Czechs were nearly crushed by the Germans and Austrians for their religious reform and were bothered also by the Magyars (here he was probably also referring to the Slovaks when he said "Czechs"), and the Poles suffered at the hands of the Germans.¹⁸¹ He praised Russia's role in defending the Slavs, especially in the war of 1877–1878, which Russia carried out "to free the Bulgarians," and later to help the Serbs and Montenegrins.¹⁸² The way Masaryk wrote about the Turks shows how strongly he was affected by stereotypes about the despotic empire and of the Turks as violent fighters and, even more important, as the cruel oppressors and torturers of the Slavs. After the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 Masaryk stated that the Young Turks were not supported by the masses of the population, their country had neither large industry, nor commerce and historical ties, and all that held the state together was military power: "Turkey today is the military state it has always been; a military state will not embark on decentralization because it is afraid of disintegrating, and that is why military absolutism rules in Turkey."¹⁸³ Masaryk drew attention to reports that accused the Turks of committing atrocities against the Serbs, battering and beating them so cruelly that their victims went mad, were mutilated, or committed suicide, violating women, and desecrating cemeteries.¹⁸⁴ It is important to note that Masaryk expressed these views as part of his dispute with the Austro-Hungarian minister of foreign affairs, Count Aehrenthal, whom Masaryk had accused of pursuing a pro-Turkish policy. Masaryk's anti-Turkish line of argument here thus had more to do with his criticism of Austro-Hungarian policy than it did with any interest in the character of the Turks. Masaryk's opinions are nevertheless evidence of the survival of anti-Turkish sentiment and of the longevity of earlier images of the Turks, which continued to appear in the 20th century.

180 Masaryk, *Svět a Slované*, 6. The text is a translation of Masaryk's lecture in Paris in 1916.

181 *Ibid.*, 12.

182 *Ibid.*, 8.

183 T.G. Masaryk, *Rakouská zahraniční politika a diplomacie: Annexe a zahraniční politika, zejména na Balkáně; Bosna a Hercegovina; Nedostatky rakouské diplomacie; Falšování bělehradského vevylsaneectví; Hr. Aehrenthal a falšovací soustava zahraničního úřadu* (Prague: Pokrok, 1911), 27.

184 *Ibid.*, 28.

6 Conclusion

The 19th-century Czech version of anti-Turkish prejudices drew on attitudes from the early modern period and was affected by the specific type of relations that the Czechs had with the Ottoman Empire, which was that they had participated in wars with the Turks in past centuries and had witnessed the effects of Turkish raids, but they had no direct experience of Ottoman rule. This was reflected, on the one hand, in the strength of the stereotype of “the Turk” as a fighter even throughout the 19th century. On the other hand, the lack of direct Ottoman rule and the temporal and spatial distance from the wars gave rise to a wide range of images, in which “the Turk” was not always presented as terrifying, but was sometimes a more neutral or even a comic figure. This mocking view of the Turks spread in some parts of Europe in the 18th century, when the Ottoman Empire ceased to be perceived as an immediate danger, and it surfaced in the Czech lands in the early 19th century. The most important factor that in the second half of the 19th century altered the generally lukewarm anti-Turkish imagery of the late 18th and early 19th centuries was the sense of solidarity the Czechs had with the Slavs who were living in the Ottoman Empire. In the second half of the 19th century, the Czechs, looking for support in their own national movement and for a way of buttressing their self-confidence, sympathized with the Southern Slavs and identified with their suffering and fights against Ottoman rule, a feeling supported by pre-existing ideas about the Turks.

In the 1870s, interest in the Turks, who by then were no longer just mythical enemies remote to the Czechs in both time and space and had come instead to represent a real threat to the Czechs’ Slavic brethren, led to the revival of older stereotypes, images, and vocabulary, which were then enriched with new elements. The imagery did not fulfil the same function as it had in the past, but without the historical backdrop, the animosity toward the Turks in the 1870s might not have been as strong as it was or might have been expressed differently. In the atmosphere of the late 1870s, there was little room for objective information or for the emergence of a new, modern type of exotic interest in an “Oriental” country and its inhabitants. Many publications devoted to the fate of the Slavs and the Turks in the 1870s and early 1880s, or under the impact of the events of these years, featured surprisingly bloody and violent images of the cruel and bloodthirsty Turks. Stereotypes of the Turks as uncivilized, lacking in education, lazy, and fatalistic appeared as well, but the Ottoman Empire was not as deeply an engraved symbol of Oriental despotism in Czech political thinking as it was in Western Europe; consequently, Ottoman despotism or the Ottoman political system more generally were not usually cited as reasons to criticize the Turks.

Nationalism, and specifically the idea of Slavic solidarity, had a strong effect on Czech views of the Turks. The Czechs identified with the Slavs fighting against Ottoman rule and thus portrayed the Turks as their archenemies. The heroic fight of the Slavic brethren against the formidable Turkish foe gave the Czechs a sense of pride that they could not feel otherwise given their own submissive status within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They also drew a parallel between Ottoman and Habsburg rule, both of which, though in different ways, exercised oppression on the Slavs. As the lawyer and politician Karel Mattuš (1836–1919) argued in 1877, the struggle in the Balkans was neither merely a fight between the Christians and the Turks (i.e. Muslims) nor one just between the Russians and the Turks and concerned instead a much more important issue – the Slavic question. It was connected with equilibrium in Europe and with the situation in the Austrian Empire, where the Slavs needed to be able to participate in the running of the state alongside the Germans and Magyars. Mattuš concluded, "The Slavic question has to be solved and the emancipation of the Slavs in the Turkish Empire is only its first act."¹⁸⁵

Although Czech nationalism was constructed as secular, it borrowed from the older, prevailingly religious antagonism against the Turks to emphasize the Slavs' merit in defending Christendom from Islam. References to religious difference seem to have just copied older imagery: they lacked any current content. Alongside nationalism, racial theories also found their way into anti-Turkish treatises from this period and were often tied up with anti-Turkish religious rhetoric and frequently expressed in a limited set of arguments inspired by the same sources. Such views, however, were not particularly widespread and racialization did not become central to the way the Turks were perceived. Given the lack of Czech ambitions in the Ottoman Empire, there were no political grounds for fomenting racism against the Turks.

Anti-Turkish stereotypes did not disappear after the 1870s, but other factors started to affect the Czechs' views of the Turks, such as the personal experience of individual Czechs who traveled to the Ottoman Empire. The next chapter will show to what extent encounters with the Ottoman Turks altered the existing imagery.

¹⁸⁵ Karel Mattuš, "Slovanská otázka: Politická studie," *Osvěta*, January 1877, 4.

Czechs Abroad

Once again the memory creeps in of the strange landscapes that my imagination fabricated after reading any of the Arab tales *Hezar efsane* [sic] – a thousand stories. And it seems to me that the memory itself assumes the form of the alluring and sharp-witted Scheherezade, who was able to entertain King Shahriyar for so many nights not only with her fairy tales but also with her charms, and that the beautiful Scheherezade not only tells me about the magic of the towns in which Alladin's lanterns shone, in which Leilas and Medjims [sic] raved of their love, in which wise Omars and powerful and cruel sultans and viziers ruled, but also shows me breath-taking marvels of nature, and leads me through silent, but endless cemeteries of stone turbans and golden lilies, and then stays standing with me before the thick grilles and mysterious life of the harems and reveals to me which way history has rolled out of the Bosphorus...

SVÁTEK 1909¹

References to *The Thousand and One Nights*, also called “The Arabian Nights” in English, are among the tropes and clichés that abound in 18th- and 19th-century travel writing on the Ottoman Empire.² Czech travelers were familiar with these tales, but hardly anybody mentioned them more than Josef Jan Svátek (1870–1948), a prolific author who wrote everything from novels and travel books to legal treatises. Svátek graduated in law in Prague and then

1 Josef Jan Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce: Cestovní causerie* (Prague: Fr. Řivnáč, 1909), 1.

2 See Billie Melman, *Women's Orient: English Women and the Middle East, 1718–1918; Sexuality, Religion and Work* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 63–67 and 99–123; Fatma Moussa-Mahmoud, “English Travellers and the *Arabian Nights*,” in *The Arabian Nights in English Literature: Studies in the Reception of the Thousand and One Nights into British Culture*, ed. Peter L. Caracciolo (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1988), 95–110; Armelle Girinon, “Constantinople de Théophile Gautier et Edmondo De Amicis ou la ville ineffable,” *Viatica*, no. 4 (2017), accessed May 3, 2020, <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-02070365/document>; Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum, “Introduction,” in *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West*, ed. Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 1–24; Reinhold Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama: British Travellers in 19th Century Turkey* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), esp. 144.

studied at the Ecole des sciences politiques in Paris. He lived in London and Berlin and later worked as a journalist, translator, and civil servant in Prague, and he traveled extensively.³ Scheherezade appears in a book in which Svátek describes his journey to Istanbul, and she accompanies him as his Muse throughout the travelogue. But Svátek's Ottoman Empire is more than a land of exotic fairy tales. Contemplating the breathtaking views of Istanbul, he exclaims: "On the beautiful Bosphorus! One indeed forgets that one is in the country of such darkness, such degeneracy, of a lazy, almost cowardly fatalism, and of a barbaric regime, which from the very first step erect not merely the Wall of China but the seven walls of Constantinople between the European and the Turk."⁴

Words expressing both enchantment and disgust with Istanbul, much like Svátek felt, had been written by many travelers before him.⁵ Although Czech travel writing on the late Ottoman Empire did not differ in this respect from travelogues published in the 19th century elsewhere in Europe, the use of the same tropes and metaphors does not necessarily mean the purpose and context of the travel writing were also the same. Travel constructs a relationship between the Self and the world⁶ and is instrumental in creating images of Others, not only in the eyes of the individual traveler but also on a collective level, and this process cannot be separated from the broader social and political conditions that shape the very meaning of the concepts of Self and Other. Travel writing is thus a reflection of the views that exist in the author's own society, and the images of other places and peoples are being produced with the readers at home in mind. Czechs traveled from the Czech lands, which belonged to the Habsburg Empire and from 1867 the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and one of the questions this chapter asks is how this fact affected what relationship Czech travelers adopted toward the Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants.

The most productive analysis of modern travel has been performed within the framework of (post)colonial studies, which seek to reevaluate the relations between colonial powers and their (former) colonies.⁷ Postcolonial studies have shed light on the way 19th-century travel writing identified primarily with the interests of the people in European societies who aspired to influence,

3 *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: Jan Otto, 1906), 24:413.

4 Svátek, *V zemi púlmésice*, 24–25.

5 See Girinon, "Constantinople"; Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 151.

6 Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 9 and 12.

7 Peter Hulme and Russell McDougall, "Introduction: In the Margins of Anthropology," in *Writing, Travel and Empire: In the Margins of Anthropology*, ed. Peter Hulme and Russell McDougall (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 5–7.

exploit, or directly control the non-European world.⁸ Views on the travelers' complicity in the imperial project differ: while some scholars are critical of any work that romanticizes or rationalizes the Middle East,⁹ others try to differentiate between discourse that is more overtly imperialist and Orientalist and that which is more neutral in this respect.¹⁰ In either case, postcolonial theory invariably associates travel in the 19th and early 20th centuries with the existence and aims of empires; there is even "a sense in which all travel writing, as a process of inscription and appropriation, spins webs of colonizing power..."¹¹

Because the 19th century was so much in the grip of imperial projects and the imperial mentality, it is often assumed that all travel was either "colonial" or "reverse" travel¹² from the (former) colonies to the metropolises. Even when the colonial framework was absent, there was what Vesna Goldsworthy calls "narrative colonization" or "textual colonization." Analyzing Western exploitation of the literary construction of the Balkans, she argues that "[t]he process of literary colonization, in its stages and its consequences, is not unlike real colonization. It begins with travel writers, explorers and adventurers undertaking reconnaissance missions into an unknown area."¹³ Although Western countries had no colonies in the Balkans, the Western producers of colonial discourse examined by Goldsworthy nonetheless actually were citizens of colonial powers. Travels that lie outside the colonizer/colonized dichotomy are often neglected in theoretical analyses within postcolonial studies. Travel literature, including examples of "non-colonial" travel, has been dealt with in studies in the area of imagology;¹⁴ some of these studies explore (post-)Enlightenment and Romantic travel writings, which increasingly began to talk in

8 Roy Bridges, "Exploration and Travel outside Europe," in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 53.

9 Ussama Makdisi, "Mapping the Orient: Non-Western Modernization, Imperialism, and the End of Romanticism," in *Nineteenth-Century Geographies: The Transformation of Space from the Victorian Age to the American Century*, ed. Helena Michie and Ronald R. Thomas (Rutgers: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 40–54.

10 Geoffrey Nash, "Politics, Aesthetics and Quest in British Travel Writing on the Middle East," in *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling the Blank Spaces*, ed. Tim Youngs (London: Anthem Press, 2006), 55–69.

11 James Duncan and Derek Gregory, "Introduction," in *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing*, ed. James Duncan and Derek Gregory (London: Routledge, 1999), 3.

12 Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 10–11 and 115–30.

13 Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 2–3.

14 Albert Meier, "Travel Writing," in Beller and Leerssen, *Imagology*, 446–50. See also Daniel-Henri Pageaux, *Images du Portugal dans les lettres françaises (1700–1755)* (Paris: Fondation Gulbenkian, 1971).

terms of the Self and the Other, and which became an important source of national stereotypes.¹⁵

In their pioneering work on East European travel writing, Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis note the absence of any discussion of East European travel from general analyses of both literature and travel writing.¹⁶ In the introduction to the book, the editors point to various shared features of the travel writing on Europe that emerged from Central and East European countries. East European travelers reacted in their writing to their home societies' contested place in Europe; they were confronted with the realization that "Europe is elsewhere," and they sought to address this in their work and engage with others' assumptions about their alleged lack of Europeaness. For East European travelers, Europe could thus mean an encounter with both Self and Other and their travel writing served as a means by which they tried to integrate their homeland into this Europe.¹⁷ Izabela Kalinowska has similarly argued that for some Polish and Russian writers, "travel to the East provided a way to assert their own westernness and hence Europeaness."¹⁸

The centrality of the concept of Europe in travel literature was not limited to Eastern Europe. Gayle Nunley has shown the importance of "the idea of Europe" for 19th-century Spanish travelers to both European and non-European destinations: Spanish travelers "took on an essential European traveler identity," but this identification was complicated by the common conceptualization of Europe in the terms of a North–South divide, in which Spain was perceived as part of the traditional, less modern South.¹⁹ Spanish writers, including those who described journeys to the Eastern Mediterranean, thus found it difficult to locate their culture in the East–West paradigm that was typical of European writing on travel to the "Orient."²⁰ Europeanization and modernization were common topics in their travel chronicles, and they were usually discussed when authors were trying to persuade their readers of the virtues of these projects. The Spanish case differed from the "classical" model of the colonial empire:

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- 15 Alida Johanna Louise Coenen, *The Image of Spain in Dutch Travel Writing (1860–1960)* ('s-Hertogenbosch: Uitgeverij BOX Press, 2013), 6–12. See also Elke Mehnert, ed., *Imagologica Slavica: Bilder vom eigenen und dem anderen Land* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997).
- 16 Alex Drace-Francis, "Towards a Natural History of East European Travel Writing," in Bracewell and Drace-Francis, *Under Eastern Eyes*, 1. See also Wendy Bracewell and Alex Drace-Francis, "Foreword," in Bracewell and Drace-Francis, *Under Eastern Eyes*, vii.
- 17 Bracewell and Drace-Francis, "Foreword," ix.
- 18 Izabela Kalinowska, *Between East and West: Polish and Russian Nineteenth-Century Travel to the Orient* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 3.
- 19 Gayle R. Nunley, *Scripted Geographies: Travel Writings by Nineteenth-Century Spanish Authors* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 123–34.
- 20 Nunley, *Scripted Geographies*, 20.

Spanish travelers were painfully aware of the diminishing status of Spain as a colonial power, and, as Nunley points out, the Spanish version of Orientalism was primarily, though not exclusively, directed at Spain's own "Orient," i.e. the South of Spain.²¹

A sense of the Orient's proximity was felt in Southeastern Europe, too, but it had different connotations. Bracewell notes that in Southeastern Europe Ottoman-Turkish subjects served as a negative mirror: when travelers praised the Ottoman Empire it was in order to criticize problems in their home societies. Although East European authors followed (West) European literary models and cultural patterns, they did not portray Ottoman reality as exotic because it was very familiar to them.²² The Czechs, who never experienced direct Ottoman rule, did not feel the same "ethnic closeness and familiarity with Ottoman ways of life," which in some East European societies "put an added emphasis on religion as the crucial factor that differentiated these travelers' societies from that of the Turk."²³ Czechs represented the West in the eyes of Eastern Slavs,²⁴ but as Slavs themselves they were still seen as "Eastern" by many West Europeans, and among the other things they shared with East European travelers was the importance of "Europe" for their identity. The question then is whether Czech travel writing on the Ottoman Empire was indeed trying to establish or confirm a place for Czech society in Europe, which, according to Bracewell, was a common objective of travel literature from Eastern Europe.²⁵

Czech travel and travel literature have been explored from various points of view and through various disciplinary approaches, but mainly within the framework of national history and without attempts at broader comparisons. Many studies of Czech travel and exploration writing have described the travelers' hardships and emphasized their passion for discovery and the results of their explorations.²⁶ Literary scholars and historians have looked at travel accounts as an important form of early modern and modern Czech literature and

21 Nunley, *Scripted Geographies*, 17 and 127–30. Nunley (131) writes though that most Spanish works describing travels to the Orient at the time were produced in the service of the Spanish colonialist enterprise and were aligned with the pursuit of empire.

22 Bracewell, "The Limits of Europe," 78.

23 *Ibid.*, 80.

24 *Ibid.*, 120.

25 *Ibid.*, esp. 81.

26 Kunský, *Čeští cestovatelé*; Simona Binková and Josef Polišenský, *Česká touha cestovatelská: Cestopisy, deníky a listy ze 17. století* (Prague: Odeon, 1989); Miloslav Martínek and Jiří Martínek, *Čeští cestovatelé a mořeplavci* (Prague: Albatros, 2006). For a different perspective see Vladimír Rozhoň, *Čeští cestovatelé a obraz zámoří v české společnosti* (Prague: Aleš Skřivan ml., 2005); Jůnová Macková et al., "Krásný, báječný, nešťastný Egypt!"

as historical sources,²⁷ while studies on the formation of Czech national society have focused on the 19th-century travelers who were part of the Czech “national revival.”²⁸ Attempts to analyze Czech travel to non-European countries as reflections of power relations, hierarchies, and Orientalist attitudes are, however, rare.²⁹ One of the exceptions is Sarah Lemmen’s recent book on the role that travels outside Europe had in the construction of Czech national identity. Dealing with travels to the entire non-European world from 1890 to 1938, Lemmen situates Czech nationalism in the framework of globalization and shows the importance of Czechs’ attitudes to the colonial system.³⁰

The Czech relationship with the Ottoman Empire can hardly be described in colonial terms.³¹ In the late 19th century, the emerging Czech industrial and financial sectors had limited interests in the Ottoman Empire. However, up until 1918, Czechs traveled as citizens of the Habsburg Empire and some of them explicitly embraced its imperial outlook. Czechs who traveled to areas outside Europe (or to Europe’s Southeastern peripheries) enjoyed privileged status in relation to most of the local population. While critical of the Habsburgs’ expansionist plans and with no colonies of their own, Czechs nevertheless figure among the European travelers whose travel writing, in the words of Mary Louise Pratt, produced “the rest of the world” for European, in this case Czech, readers and Europe’s various conceptions of itself in relation to this putative “rest of the world.”³²

This chapter examines how Czechs who visited the late Ottoman Empire viewed the Turks and their country and shows what interested them during their trip. Although their travelogues contained intriguing information, some of which is new for us, too, in most cases their authors did not stay in the Ottoman territories long enough to gain insight into important issues in the turn-of-the-century Ottoman Empire; the information is therefore mainly anecdotal and

27 Michael Borovička, *Velké dějiny země Koruny české: Tematická řada Cestovatelství* (Prague: Paseka, 2010).

28 Jana Šormová, *Náprstkův dům a čeští cestovatelé* (Prague, 1953).

29 See, e.g., Hana Navrátilová and Lucie Storchová’s essays in Storchová, “Mezi houfy lotrův se pustiti...”; Vladimír Rozhoň, “Zámoří v povědomí české společnosti,” in Piorecká and Petrbock, *Cizí, jiné, exotické*, 38–53; Adéla Macková and Hana Navrátilová, “Egypt a čeští cestovatelé na přelomu 19. a 20. století,” in Piorecká and Petrbock, *Cizí, jiné, exotické*, 67–78.

30 Lemmen, *Tschechen auf Reisen*.

31 The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be dealt with in the following chapter (“Civilizing the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina”). For the Czechs’ relationship to other non-European territories at the turn of the century and in interwar Czechoslovakia see Lemmen, *Tschechen auf Reisen*.

32 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 5.

focuses on people and things that were expected to amuse Czech readers. This certainly did not prevent the travelers from expressing firm views on the country and its inhabitants, and we will see in this chapter whether the images presented from their first-hand experience diverged from the images promulgated in the brochures on the Turks published at that time and analyzed in the previous chapter. This chapter asks how Czech travel writing on the Ottoman Empire reflected the position of dominance that is typically identified in European travelogues on the non-European world, and whether and how it was an expression of the imperial context. Without a colonial empire and even a state of their own, on what did the Czechs base their sense of superiority over the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire? Did they travel and write as West Europeans, as representatives of the Habsburg Empire, or as East/Central Europeans?

This analysis focuses on travel accounts published between the late 1860s³³ and the establishment of Turkey in 1923. It examines descriptions of journeys that were made at different times and to different destinations, though most travelers also visited the Ottoman capital, and the purposes of the travel and the reason each author had for writing about it varied, as did the form of the work and its literary quality. The chapter does not attempt to offer a systematic survey of travels or a typology of travel narratives,³⁴ nor does it analyze travel accounts as literary texts; whatever differences in form and content, they are all treated as sources on their authors' attitudes to the Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants. For the purpose of this analysis travel writing is thus broadly defined as "predominantly factual, first-person prose accounts of travels that have been undertaken by the author-narrator."³⁵

The chapter first introduces the context of Czech travels and the travelers' preparations for their journeys, including their knowledge of available literature on the Ottoman Empire, and then it shows the first impressions that travelers came away with from an Ottoman Empire constructed as an Oriental space. It examines where Czech travelers located the Ottoman Empire on the mental map of human development, divided as it was at the turn of the century between the "pre-modern," or "backward," and the "modern" world. The second

33 A few examples of travel narratives from the late 1860s are included because they were written by famous writers and were widely read and cited.

34 For an overview of Czech travels see Kunský, *Čeští cestovatelé*; Borovička, *Cestovatelství*.

35 Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 3. David Chirico proposed a "provisional definition" of travel narratives in the volume on East European travels: "A non-fictional first-person prose narrative describing a person's travel(s) and the spaces passed through or visited, which is ordered in accordance with, and whose plot is determined by, the order of the narrator's act of travelling." David Chirico, "The Travel Narrative as a (Literary) Genre," in Bracewell and Drace-Francis, *Under Eastern Eyes*, 39.

part of the chapter focuses on Czech perceptions of the Ottoman population: Turkish men and women and people from other ethnic groups.

1 Getting Ready to Travel

Although traveling became a popular middle-class activity in the Czech lands later than it did in Western Europe, by the early 20th century the number of Czech travelers to and travel accounts about the Ottoman Empire was on the rise.³⁶ Many travelers, especially the ones who published accounts of their journeys, were intellectual elites: writers and journalists, teachers and scholars, lawyers and medical doctors. The social spectrum of travelers gradually broadened, but with a few exceptions the authors of travel books were all men. Czech women did travel, and some even wrote accounts of their experiences, but they did not publish travelogues about the Ottoman Empire in the time before its dissolution.³⁷ Apart from the women who visited the non-Ottoman Balkans,³⁸ some Czech women worth noting who traveled in the former Ottoman realm include Vlasta Kálalová (di Lotti), who worked as a physician in Baghdad in the 1920s and early 1930s and whose short travelogue published in 1933 described also her stay in Istanbul,³⁹ and Ludmila Matějková (Matiegková), an Egyptologist and the author of a travel book on Egypt that was published in

36 The authors of the travelogues included writers, journalists, and scholars, many of whom were famous personalities. The potential impact of their works on readers, however, is left aside here. In general terms, the readership of Czech non-fiction works was becoming wider in the second half of the 19th century; as well as higher and middle classes, members of the lower-middle classes and women also started to appear among readers of popular non-fiction works. See Milena Lenderová, "Čtenáři a četba," in *Z dějin české každodennosti: Život v 19. století*, ed. Milena Lenderová, Tomáš Jiránek, and Marie Macková (Prague: Karolinum, 2009), 328–46. One travelogue to Monte Negro (Holeček, *Černá Hora*) was published by a society whose aim was to spread non-trivial works among the poor (*Spolek pro vydávání laciných knih českých, zaměřený na šíření kvalitnější literatury mezi nemajetnými vrstvami*).

37 Most women who published travel books in the first decades of the 20th century were writers; their travel accounts often described journeys to Central Europe (Božena Viková-Kunětická, Anna Řeháková) and to Southern Europe (Anna Řeháková), but also to Scotland (Julie Procházková) and America (Marie Zieglerová). Barbora Markéta Eliášová, who traveled to Japan and made a journey around the world, stands out among the first generation of Czech women traveling outside Europe. See Barbora Markéta Eliášová, *Rok života mezi Japonci a kolem zeměkoule* (Prague: printed by author, 1915).

38 Some of these women will be mentioned in the following chapter.

39 Vlasta Kálalová–di Lottiová, *Cařihradské a bagdádské kapitoly* (Prague: printed by author, 1933).

1927.⁴⁰ In general, however, the Czechs resembled other East Europeans, among whom, as Bracewell and Drace-Francis remark, “this genre does not seem to have been as attractive as it was to women in the Anglophone world, for instance.”⁴¹

Before embarking on a trip, as well as planning the route and choosing the means of transportation, travelers had to get a travel document. For citizens of many European states in the 19th century, passports were becoming less important for traveling within Europe,⁴² but until 1867 inhabitants of the Habsburg Empire had to have a passport for domestic as well as international travel. In the late 19th century, there were no passport controls at the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire anymore, and passports were only needed to visit countries that required travelers to have them; the Ottoman authorities not only requested passports but also expected travelers to have a visa.⁴³ Rail and ship were the most common means of transportation throughout the period and each of these modes had its fans. Both means of transport sometimes also played a role in the travelogues, as the authors used the description of their journey by rail or ship as an opportunity to establish their position as an observer – and in some cases to tell a story of the suffering they had endured.⁴⁴ Most Czechs visited Istanbul and some parts of what either used to be or still were the Ottoman Balkans, and a few traveled to more remote parts of the empire – for example, expeditions to explore Asia or Africa passed through Ottoman territory. Some travelers went to the Ottoman lands on an official mission, while others pursued semi-scholarly aims, but the majority traveled for leisure.⁴⁵

40 Ludmila Matiegková, *V objetí sfingy* (Prague, 1927).

41 Bracewell and Drace-Francis, “Foreword,” xi.

42 Andreas Fahrmeir, “Governments and Forgers: Passports in Nineteenth-Century Europe,” in *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. Jane Caplan and John Torpey (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 233.

43 Jan Rychlík, “Pasové předpisy v habsburské monarchii a v Československu,” in *Cestování Čechů a Poláků v 19. a 20. století*, ed. Petr Kaleta and Lukáš Novosad (Prague: Masarykův ústav, 2008), 9–11.

44 Svátek traveled by boat (Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 3), and Klaus compared the advantages of traveling by boat and train. Alois Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce* (Prague: Nakladatelství E. Beaufort, n.d., ca. 1910), 5.

45 Klement (Quido Mansvet) writes as a tourist giving advice to other tourists (František Klement, “O Turkyních,” *Národní listy*, November 29, 1895), 1; Wagner implies he is a tourist. Jan Wagner, *Na evropském východě: Črty z cest po Bulharsku, Turecku, Řecku, Německu a Rusi* (Třebíč: Nakl. J.F. Kubeš, n.d., ca. 1889), 186. Klaus repeatedly identifies as a tourist (Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 5). Some of the travelers also visited Egypt, but given the separate tradition of Egyptian travels, the descriptions of that part of their journeys are for the

Regardless of their destination, Czech travelers in the Ottoman Empire did not “discover” any new places on the map. Some scholars make a distinction between travelers, explorers, and tourists. Sachidananda Mohanty notes that while explorers seek places not yet discovered, travelers visit places that they learn about from their own research and that are known from history, and tourists go to places targeted by travel businesses and ready for group tours; the explorer is attracted by the risk of the unknown, the tourist prefers the safety of the known, and the traveler is somewhere in between these two poles.⁴⁶ Only a few travel writers mentioned in this chapter were explorers, traversing the Ottoman Empire on their way to less familiar regions or at the start of a journey around the world.⁴⁷ Most trips made by Czechs to the Ottoman Empire were touristic, but none of them took the form of organized tourism. While in Britain tourism had become so common by the late 19th century that it almost acquired negative connotations,⁴⁸ for Czechs tourism still bore the whiff of something new and exciting. One Czech traveler, a teacher named Alois Klaus, proudly identified himself as “a modest Czech tourist” who wrote a travel book in order to show that it was possible even with little money, using contacts with Czechs abroad, to make interesting touristic journeys to the Orient.⁴⁹

Modern Czech travelers to the Ottoman Empire started their journeys equipped with some knowledge of the vast literature on the region, much like travelers from any other country,⁵⁰ and their travel impressions were influenced by the preconceived notions and ideas they had about the places and peoples they were going to visit and by what others had written about them. References to guidebooks on the Middle East were rare before World War I;⁵¹ Czech travelers instead cited famous foreign and Czech authors who had described their trips to the Ottoman Empire. Some of them even copied parts

most part not included here. See Jůnová Macková et al., “Krásný, báječný, nešťastný Egypt!,” esp. 9.

46 Mohanty, “Introduction,” x1. One of the travelers to the Ottoman Empire, Jiří Guth, also reflected on the difference between a traveler and tourist. See Macková and Navrátilová, “Egypt a čeští cestovatelé,” 72 (note 13).

47 Josef Kořenský, *Asie: Kulturní obrázky z asijského jihu a západu; Malajsko, Cejlon, Indie, Persie, Palestina, Arabie, Mesopotamie, Armenie, Malá Asie* (Prague: A. Storch syn, n.d., ca. 1921).

48 Youngs, *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*, 59.

49 Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměsíce*, [279].

50 Duncan and Gregory, “Introduction,” 7; Tim Youngs, “Introduction,” in Youngs, *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century*, 6.

51 Perhaps the number of Czech travelers to the Middle East was not sufficient to make publishing guides in Czech worth the cost. Czech travelers to Istanbul therefore often depended on German Baedekers.

of earlier travelogues into their own, often without acknowledging the original author. In keeping with the notion widespread among 19th-century Europeans of “the Orient” and its inhabitants as changeless, an important source of information for Czech travelers were Czech travelogues written between the 15th and early 17th centuries that described visits to the Holy Land and diplomatic missions to the Ottoman Sultan. These works, which were published for the first time or reissued in the 19th century in response to the new national interest in the Czech language and literature, became part of the national literary canon and were well known among the educated public. Lucie Storchová, who writes about Egypt, considers the travelogue by Kryštof Harant, a Renaissance nobleman, to be a text of great significance that influenced “the specific form of Orientalism” that the modern Czech nation came to espouse. As Storchová sees it, modern Czech Orientalism was essentially based on a revised version of the premodern Orientalism that Harant had introduced.⁵²

The Czechs who traveled in the 19th century to the Ottoman capital, however, referred more often to the travel account of Václav Vratislav z Mitrovic, who as a young man in the 1590s accompanied Rudolph II’s mission to the Sultan. Although less learned than Harant, Mitrovic wrote a highly readable and very popular account of his journey. He complained about the way he was treated by the Turks, who imprisoned him, and told stories that reflected the stereotypes of his day, and he portrayed the Turks as violent and cruel. But in his description of the life and habits of the Ottoman Empire’s inhabitants he proved to be an unbiased and keen observer. He often praised what he considered to be the Turks’ virtues – their humility and religious fervor, their love of animals and flowers and their innocent forms of entertainment – and showed that they could be humane and tolerant. He wrote, for example, that the much-feared janissaries, who were considered generally to be “atrocious beasts,” also protected the local population, and did not indulge in lustful behavior.⁵³ Late 19th-century and early 20th-century travelers to the Ottoman Empire often referred to Mitrovic’s work when describing some phenomenon that he had mentioned, while other travel accounts, such as Harant’s travel book or Martin Kabátník’s account of his late 15th-century journey to Jerusalem and Egypt, were quoted less.⁵⁴

52 Storchová, “Mezi houfy lotrův se pustiti...,” 444.

53 See *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw of Mitrowitz: What He Saw in the Turkish Metropolis, Constantinople, Experienced in His Captivity, and after His Happy Return to His Country, Committed to Writing in the Year of Our Lord 1599* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), 4–6.

54 Jan Neruda mentioned Harant when describing Egypt. Jan Neruda, *Obrazy z ciziny* (Prague: F. Topič, 1909), 191. Prášek quoted Kabátník when he wrote about Istanbul. See Justin V.

Turn-of-the-century Czech travelers were perhaps influenced most by the travel narratives of two 19th-century Czech writers, Vítězslav Hálek (1835–1874) and Jan Neruda (1834–1891), who had visited the Ottoman Empire in 1865 and 1870, respectively. Both were prominent Czech literary figures in their time and their travel notes, which appeared first as columns (feuilletons) in newspapers, were widely read and cited. When one traveler named Josef Štolba visited a place that Neruda had described with admiration, he declared that “whatever Neruda has put his poetry to, I daren’t apply my own pen,”⁵⁵ but most travelers were not shy about using poetic descriptions penned by their famous predecessors. Even when they did not mention Neruda or Hálek explicitly, travelers still used their metaphors and words, visited the same places, and paid attention to the same subjects as the two famous writers.⁵⁶ Toward the end of the century, travelers began to prepare for their trip by searching for more detailed information about the places that were to be visited and by studying travel guides⁵⁷ and, later, scholarly treatises written by experts, such as Alois Musil’s works on Arabia.⁵⁸

Czech travelers were also familiar with European travel literature on the Ottoman Empire,⁵⁹ though they tended to mention just a few famous writers more frequently, most notably Lord Byron.⁶⁰ Only several of Byron’s works

Prášek, *Dunajem do Cařihradu: Črty a vzpomínky z roků 1885 a 1886* (Prague: Alois Wiesner, 1901), 89. Kaminský among others referred to Mitrovic. See Bohdan Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže: Causerie z cesty* (Prague: Jos. R. Vilímek, n.d., ca. 1909), 45 and 81.

- 55 Josef Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy: Vzpomínky z menších cest* (Prague: Unie, 1918), 129.
- 56 This mainly involved references to the Bosphorus and the view of Istanbul, Hálek’s contrast between the appearance of the city and its internal character, and also the bridge and cemetery as symbols of certain Turkish or “Oriental” qualities.
- 57 Klement (“O Turkyňích,” 1) mentioned reading the Baedeker and other guides.
- 58 Kořenský, *Asie*, 153; Vladislav Forejt-Alan, *Za karavanou mrtvých* (Prague: Nakladatelství Pražské akciové tiskárny, 1938), 14. Schwarzenberg noted that many people in the Arab regions of the Ottoman Empire knew and respected Alois Musil. See Adolf Schwarzenberg, *Pod praporem tureckého púlměsíce: Válečné vzpomínky na Syrii a Palestinu* (Prague: Rudolf Březina, 1926), 92.
- 59 Hálek, in accordance with his own views, chose to mention Dumas, who, according to him, was critical of Istanbul. Vítězslav Hálek, *Cestopisy: Články z let 1861–1874* (Prague: Nakl. Borový, 1925), 155.
- 60 Byron himself wrote: “Of Constantinople you have of course read fifty descriptions by sundry travellers, which are in general so correct that I have nothing to add on the subject.” George Gordon Byron, *The Complete Works of Lord Byron: Including the Suppressed Poems, and Others Never Before Published* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 2009), 4:XXXIII. In 1870, the literary scholar, philosopher, and translator Josef Durdík published a 200-page book on Byron’s works with his own translated excerpts from Byron’s texts. See Josef Durdík, *O poesii a povaze lorda Byrona* (Prague: J.S. Skřejšovský, 1870).

were available in Czech translation at the end of the 19th century, but educated Czech readers would have understood the German translations or the English original.⁶¹ *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* was translated into Czech by the writer Eliška Krásnohorská (whose poems on Southern Slavs and Turkish oppression were mentioned in the previous chapter) and published in 1890 and again in 1918.⁶² David Katz recently showed that the allegedly anti-Turkish Byron in fact tended to have positive views of the Turks: in the notes to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, he praised their financial honesty, their generosity, and the safety of their country, and he depicted them as brave, faithful, and devout.⁶³ In the introduction to her translation, Krásnohorská noted Byron's impact on Slavic literature (Pushkin, Lermontov, Słowacki, Krasiński, Mickiewicz, as well as on the Czech authors Mácha and Hálek), his fight for freedom and against injustice, and his support for oppressed nations, especially the Greeks.⁶⁴ Most travelers, however, quoted Byron's enchanting words about the view of Constantinople.⁶⁵

Among writings by other famous visitors to the Ottoman Empire, Lady Montagu's *Letters* did not appear in Czech translation until 1909,⁶⁶ and Edmondo De Amicis' *Constantinopoli*, despite the popularity of the author's other works among the Czech public, was not translated into Czech at all, but Czechs would have been able to read it in German or Croatian.⁶⁷ As well as travel literature, French exotic novels and the works of Pierre Loti in particular were taken as true depictions of the Orient. One traveler, Jiří Guth, a proponent of the Olympic idea who is remembered today for his famous handbook on etiquette, translated Loti's *Les Désenchantées* (The Disenchanted) into Czech under the title "Harems Deprived of Magic," and travelers cited Loti's other

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- 61 See, e.g., George Gordon Byron, *Nevěsta z Abydu: Pověst turecká*, trans. Josef Václav Frič (Prague: Tisk a náklad Jaroslava Pospíšila, 1854) and George Gordon Byron, *Vězeň Chillonský*, trans. Antonín Klášterský (Prague: Alois Wiesner, n.d., ca. 1900). *Don Juan* was not translated to Czech until the early 20th century. See George Gordon Byron, *Don Juan lorda Byrona: Satirický román ve verších*, trans. Václav Alois Jung, 2 vols. (Prague: J. Otto, 1904–5). However, it was set to music by Zdeněk Fibich already in 1882, with the libretto by Anežka Schulzová. Anežka Schulzová, *Hedy: Zpěvohra o 4 jednáních* (Prague: Fr. A. Urbánek, 1896).
- 62 George Gordon Byron, *Childe-Haroldova pouť*, trans. Eliška Krásnohorská, 2nd ed. (Prague: Otto, 1918, first published 1890 by F. Šimáček).
- 63 David Katz, *The Shaping of Turkey in the British Imagination, 1776–1923* (Milton Keynes: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 99.
- 64 Byron, *Childe-Haroldova pouť*, 8–11 and 14; Katz, *The Shaping of Turkey*, 93.
- 65 See, e.g., Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 10; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 20.
- 66 Mary Wortley Montagueová, *Dojmy evropské a turecké*, trans. Adolf Gottwald (Prague: J. Otto, n.d., ca. 1909).
- 67 Edmondo De Amicis, *Carigrad*, trans. Adolfo Veber (Zagreb: Dion. tiskara, 1883); Edmondo De Amicis, *Konstantinopol*, trans. Agnes Burchard, 2nd ed. (Rostock: W. Werther, 1884).

novels as well.⁶⁸ Sometimes travelers tried in their writing to evoke exotic images by making explicit or implicit references to non-Western literary works, in most cases *The Thousand and One Nights* or other Oriental stories (*Leyla and Mejnun*), as we saw in Svátek's travel narrative.⁶⁹ Travelers to Istanbul thus set out to encounter the Orient with a clear expectation as to what its "orientalness" was.

2 Entering the Orient

Travelers to the Ottoman Empire had to cross borders that were often as much conceptual as they were geographical. They sometimes did not find crossing a state border to be important enough to be worth describing. Traveling through the Balkans in the early 20th century, for instance, Josef Zdeněk Raušar noted rather matter-of-factly how he transferred from a Bulgarian to a Turkish train and then crossed the border into Turkey, but then he went on to describe in great detail the process of going through customs at Mustafa Pasha.⁷⁰ Most travelers associated borders primarily with customs, which gave them an occasion to complain about the inefficiency of Turkish officers and their universal expectation of receiving *baksheesh*. The poet and translator Bohdan Kaminský referred back to what Mitrovic wrote in the late 16th century about the Ottoman habit of bribery: "And, in truth, whoever wishes to dwell amongst the Turks cannot help himself, but, as soon as he enters into their territories, must immediately open his purse, and not shut it till he leaves them again, and must constantly be sowing money as a kind of seed, since for money he can procure himself favour, love, and everything that he wants."⁷¹ Unsurprisingly, Kaminský's own experience on the trip he made in the early 20th century then confirmed Mitrovic's words.⁷² Svátek complained that when he arrived in Istanbul, the police checked the boat for ill or suspicious people, something he found

68 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 106–9, 1, and 20; Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 223; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 14.

69 Hálek also wrote poems with Oriental themes (*Krásná Lejla* and *Mejrma a Husejn*), even before he traveled to the Ottoman Empire. See Vítězslav Hálek, *Sebrané spisy* (Prague: Nákladem Jana Laichtera, 1905), 2:249–59 and 261–337; see also Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 45; Růžena Svobodová, *Bary Jugoslavie: Obrázky z cest 1911* (Prague: Unie, n.d.), 82.

70 Jos. Zd. Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné: Z potulek po Srbsku, Makedonii a Turecku* (Prague: Dr. Eduard Grégr a syn, 1903), 122.

71 Mitrowitz, *Adventures*, 43.

72 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 45.

absurd given the amount of dirt and the number of disreputable characters he claimed visitors encountered in the Ottoman Empire itself, but at least, he added, this provided foreigners with a convenient introduction to the rotten empire, whose only way of communicating with foreigners was through *baksheesh*.⁷³ Detailed instructions on how to pass *baksheesh* (the Czech translation of the word is never used) to a customs officer so that no one else notices and so that a semblance of order is preserved appear in many travel accounts, although the tone the authors take ranges from amused to annoyed.⁷⁴ One traveler complained that, since he did not respond to an obvious hint at a request for a bribe, he was forced to endlessly make the rounds of different Ottoman authorities in Skadar – who, it turned out, were not able to read Latin script – before he was finally able to get his residence permit.⁷⁵

Despite the many anecdotes about first encounters with the Ottoman officials, travelers clearly considered equally important as state borders the conceptual border between Europe – the West, or in one case the North⁷⁶ – and the Orient. “Entering the Orient” was a moment many travelers deemed worth commenting upon. And the moment of “entering” the Orient could occur on arrival in Istanbul, or even while the traveler was still in the Balkans: Hálek claimed to have entered the Orient in Albania, Klaus and Raušar in Serbia.⁷⁷ The Orient had various connotations, much like the ones readers could find in travelogues written by other Europeans. Travelers captured the Orient by dwelling on its bazars, harems, and palaces, and its smelly narrow streets and shabby wooden houses.⁷⁸ They portrayed it through its contrasts: it was the cradle of civilization and the home of the terrible hordes threatening Europe,⁷⁹ its harems resembled barred prisons but equally sparked fantasies about the delights and passions hidden behind the lattice,⁸⁰ the strength of the Oriental faith was contrasted with its fanaticism, the readiness of the local people for

73 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 5.

74 Jiří Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj: Feuilletony z cest* (Prague: Dr. Frant. Bačkovský, 1896), 132; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 16; Jiřík mentions that, when he arrived in Alexandria, he gave the customs officer his first *baksheesh*, which saved his clothes from being tossed all over the place. V. Jiřík, *K pyramidám: Zápisky z cest* (Prague: Nakladatel Fr. Švejda, 1913), 33–34.

75 Viktor Dvorský and Jiří Čermák, *Albánské a černohorské obrázky: Cestopisné črty z bývalých tureckých hranic* (Prague: Nakladatelské družstvo Máje, n.d., ca. 1913), 28–30.

76 Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 186.

77 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 140; Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 58; Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 11.

78 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 51; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 6–7, 126, and 185–86; Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 154.

79 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 3.

80 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 51 and 91. See also Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 130.

sacrifices with their greed and stubbornness.⁸¹ In this vein, a beautiful evening outside accompanied by the romantic sound of the cicadas would almost necessarily be spoiled by the danger of being robbed, forcing the tourist to spend the evening at home with the bedbugs.⁸²

In a recurring metaphor, the Ottoman Orient was likened to a bridge and was symbolized in particular by the Galata Bridge as the bustling meeting place of countless ethnicities. It was as though, in Svátek's words, the bridge contained within just a few square meters all sorts of languages and colors, people young and old, men and women of different classes – from rich to poor, pachas as well as beggars, with fezes, turbans, cylinders, and the colorful costumes of the Balkans and Asia.⁸³ The bridge metaphor was not invented or used only by the Czechs. Edmondo de Amicis wrote in his *Constantinopoli* in 1878 that standing on the bridge between Galata and the opposite shore of the Golden Horn, one can see all of Constantinople go by in an hour. "Try to imagine the most extravagant contrasts of costume, every variety of type and social class, and your wildest dreams will fall short of the reality; in the course of ten minutes and in the space of a few feet you will have seen a mixture of race and dress you never conceived of before."⁸⁴ Baskar describes how the Slovenian poet Aškerc, who found Istanbul the most interesting city in the world owing to its geographic position and its ethnic diversity, portrayed the Galata Bridge as an "ethnographic kaleidoscope" and a "real ethnographic exposition."⁸⁵ But Czech travelers were primarily influenced by Hálek⁸⁶ and Neruda. In his own writing Raušar cited Neruda's "poignant observation" that it is enough to

81 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 47–48.

82 Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 186.

83 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 29. Wagner (*Na evropském východě*, 187) wrote that a wild Circassian, a sober Bedouin with a white burnus, a black man, various Europeans, as well as starving, half-naked Turkish women could all be found on the bridge.

84 Edmondo De Amicis, *Constantinople*, trans. Maria Hornor Landsdale (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston, 1896), 1:46.

85 According to Baskar, the description of ethnic diversity on the Galata Bridge contained also specific Habsburg features, reflecting the increased colonial ambitions of the Habsburg Empire toward the end of the 19th century. See Bojan Baskar, "Oriental Travels and Writings of the *Fin-the-Siècle* Poet Anton Aškerc," in *Figures pionnières de l'orientalisme: Convergences européennes; Monde Anglophone, Europe Centrale et Orientale*, ed. Isabelle Gadoin and Živa Vesel (Bures-sur-Yvette: Groupe pour l'Étude de la Civilisation du Moyen-Orient, 2011), 226–27.

86 Hálek emphasized that one could see representatives of all world nations on the three bridges of Constantinople. Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 166.

stand for a while near the bridge over the Golden Horn to be able to see all the nations of the world, except perhaps for the inhabitants of Patagonia and Australia.⁸⁷

Bill Ashcroft argues that concealed within any attempt to describe a foreign place is the ambition to “own” it.⁸⁸ Yet, although knowledge is indeed associated with power, not all description is necessarily a step toward ownership. Descriptions of foreign lands served various functions, and impressing readers was not the least important of them. Pratt notes that in exploration writing, the verbal artist must take what is essentially, from a narrative point of view, almost a non-event, and make it into something of momentous significance.⁸⁹ Although Czech travelers were for the most part not explorers, they used a strategy much like that employed by explorers when they tried in their own words to capture the Oriental space they were traveling through in a way that allowed them to share with the reader back home either the kinds of extraordinary places they were able to visit or the various obstacles, discomforts, and outright dangers they had to face. The former aim applied particularly to descriptions of landscapes and especially the views of Istanbul and the panorama of the Bosphorus and the surrounding nature. Hálek and Neruda once again set the tone. Their praise of Istanbul was quoted or tacitly accepted by all subsequent Czech travelers.⁹⁰ Hálek claimed it was a well-known fact that as far as its location, visual charm, and the general impression it creates are concerned, “Constantinople ranks first among all the cities of Europe” (while Prague comes fourth).⁹¹ He described the city as a unique garden with an extraordinarily beautiful panorama of the Bosphorus, crowned by a sense of harmony between Istanbul and its environs, making it a truly poetic city: “I saw Constantinople from every possible perspective, I saw it at sunset and sunrise, I gazed upon it in the bright light of the day and on moonlit nights, and from whatever angle I looked at it, it always appeared to me with an ever new charm and unfailing beauty...”⁹²

Neruda compared the view of Istanbul to an extraordinary sight, a vision impossible to describe:

87 Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 131. See also Neruda, *Obrazy z ciziny*, 12.

88 Bill Ashcroft, “Afterword: Travel and Power,” in *Travel Writing, Form, and Empire: The Poetics and Politics of Mobility*, ed. Julia Kuehn and Paul Smethurst (New York: Routledge, 2009), 231.

89 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 202.

90 Perhaps also Byron’s praise might have affected their descriptions. See Katz, *The Shaping of Turkey*, 93.

91 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 153.

92 *Ibid.*, 154.

Whatever the imagination may have conjured up about the view of Constantinople, Constantinople itself surpasses it, it does not deflate the imagination the way Rome and Paris do, but transports it to unexpected heights. Constantinople is in its own way unique, it cannot be compared to any other place. To describe Constantinople would be like writing the most wonderful poem; all of history and all of nature have made poetry here, as if the whole universe and all its sounds and color, all its forms and thoughts have converged here to create a poem.⁹³

Later travelers were similarly captivated by the view of Istanbul. Only one traveler, on his way to Africa in the 1880s, confessed that, having seen Istanbul on a previous trip he preferred to go to a casino, where he lost all his money and left without paying any attention to the city.⁹⁴ Others considered Istanbul one of the most beautiful places in the Orient⁹⁵ or even the world,⁹⁶ repeating Hálek and Neruda's eulogy in similarly or less poetic words.⁹⁷ They likened the silhouette of Istanbul to a poem, a fairy tale, a dream, a fantasy, or a *fata morgana*,⁹⁸ and agreed that the city's unique location on two continents and at the crossroads of civilizations, connecting the fantastic East with the sober West, added to its attraction.⁹⁹ Istanbul's charm drew from the beauty of nature, but travelers also praised its architecture,¹⁰⁰ the mosques with their slender minarets, the marble palaces and their emerald gardens, and the quiet dignity of the Muslim cemeteries, which Byron also had admired. A number of Czech travelers, perhaps inspired by Neruda's respectful panegyric on the grave of a dervish and on the view of Istanbul from a hill above Scutari (*Üsküdar*), appreciated the simplicity and democratic character of Ottoman cemeteries and wrote that, compared to Christians, the Turks have a more accepting attitude toward death, which they regard as a part of life.¹⁰¹ One traveler

93 Neruda, *Obrazy z ciziny*, 8.

94 Vilém Němec, *Má cesta do Afriky přes Balkán* (Prague: Nákladem a vydáním Ústředního děnického knihkupectví a nakladatelství Ant. Svěcený, 1916), 68–71.

95 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 176.

96 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 84.

97 Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 136; Prášek, *Dunajem do Cařihradu*, 64–75 and 90–94; Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 151.

98 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 14; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 84–85.

99 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 208; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 9–10; Prášek, *Dunajem do Cařihradu*, 76.

100 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 84–85; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 84–94; Prášek, *Dunajem do Cařihradu*, 73–74 and 89.

101 Neruda, *Obrazy z ciziny*, 7; R. Merš, "Procházky Cařihradem: Hřbitov ve Skutari," *Venkov*, December 12, 1909, 1–2; Jan Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie: Od Sarajeva do Dubrovníku* (Prague:

concluded his description of Istanbul by claiming he felt fortunate to have seen a part of this paradise on earth.¹⁰²

The second strategy travelers used to add drama to the descriptions of their journey involved emphasizing the discomfort and hardships of travel, especially for those of lesser means, and underscoring or playing up the hunger, filth, and smells they encountered along the way, the narrowness of the streets, too small for their carriage to pass through, and recounting the harrowing adventures they experienced when they went off the beaten path.¹⁰³ Hálek wrote an entire travel sketch on how he barely escaped being murdered when he got lost outside Istanbul and asked a couple of villagers to show him the way back at night.¹⁰⁴ Another famous Czech writer, Svatopluk Čech (1846–1908), traveled from Istanbul to Varna on a boat and wrote that, while traveling in the third class on an Asian boat certainly has its wilder charms, it requires that the traveler have a strong spirit and excellent nerves in order to endure the brutality, the stench, the dirt, and the close proximity of other people at night: “a Breughel-like mix of bodies” that would frighten a person during the day.¹⁰⁵ The hardships of traveling on a boat with the poor were, it seems, made more bearable if the traveler was under the cheering influence of wine.¹⁰⁶

These visitors to the Ottoman Empire clearly had different agendas, but they all discovered the Orient they had expected. Sometimes they liked it more than they had imagined, but they tended to dwell on their suffering in order to foreground their own status as travelers.

3 Backward or Exotic?

According to some travelers, the difficulties of traveling were the result of the backwardness of the Ottoman Empire. As well as by boat, Svatopluk Čech also

J. Otto, 1897), 16; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 129–31; Svátek, *V zemi pŕlměsíce*, 192. Occasionally, a cemetery is used as a metaphor for the decaying Ottoman rule – in Serbia, for instance. See Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 55.

102 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 131. Kaminský also likened Istanbul (or part of it) to an earthly paradise. Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 84–85.

103 Dvorský and Čermák, *Albánské a černohorské obrázky*, 32; Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 137; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 18. Guth (*Letem přes řecký kraj*, 134) mentioned having to use a special powder on everything for hygienic reasons. Třeštík (*Ku břehům Adrie*, 15–16), in contrast, claimed that the dirt in the streets that Westerners considered an Oriental specificity had completely disappeared from Sarajevo.

104 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 283–93.

105 Svatopluk Čech, *Upomínky z Východu: Obrázky z pouti po Kavkaze a z cesty zpáteční* (Prague: Nakladatelství F. Šimáčka, 1885), 186–87.

106 Jiřík, *K pyramidám*, 6.

traveled by train. Commenting ironically, Čech recounted that it was supposed to be a fast train, but it dragged, and it had no carpets or pillows and had probably been brought to Turkey after a well-deserved retirement in Britain. He nevertheless acknowledged that Turkish railways had to overcome many obstacles, from the population's resistance to new things to collisions with buffaloes on the tracks.¹⁰⁷ Raušar thought that the old trains he saw were ones that had been put out of use in Germany or Austria, but seemed good enough for the Turks.¹⁰⁸ Travelers also commented on how out of date the Ottoman military equipment, arms, and ships seemed to them. While the writer and journalist Karel Mečíř, writing under the pen name Merš, described this in neutral terms and without condescending remarks,¹⁰⁹ Svátek took the state of the armed forces as a symbol of the whole "Turkish economy" and remarked that the soldiers were probably so used to it that they had ceased to be ashamed.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, the railway, though newly constructed or under construction, seemed a particularly apt symbol of the backwardness of the Ottoman Empire. Josef Kořenský, an explorer who traveled through Ottoman territory, stated that "Old Asian Turkey" never prided itself on its order and security, or particularly on its public roads, and it was up to foreign entrepreneurs to build the railways. "As long as the Turkish government was itself trying to arrange the construction [of the railway] to Ankara, the project did poorly, but as soon as German capital took over the task, the work started to progress, and in November 1892 the first train left for Ankara via Eskishehir."¹¹¹

Ussama Makdisi distinguishes several stages in the Western relationship to the Ottoman Orient. The first stage was represented by an early romantic escape from European modernization to the very different and exotic Orient. This gave way to the pragmatic notion that the Orient needed to be modernized along Western lines. This was sometimes followed by a neo-romantic reaction to the Orient's own attempts at modernization. In Makdisi's words, the West responded to the way the Ottoman Empire challenged the idea of dividing the world into the premodern East and the modern West by rejecting the possibility that there could be any local form of modernity and defending the pristine Orient from its Oriental modernizers, which was often accompanied by claims of Europe's cultural and racial superiority.¹¹² Duncan and Gregory somewhat differently contrast the early stage of romantic travel and its passion for wilderness, cultural difference, and a desire to be immersed in local

107 Čech, *Upomínky z Východu*, 198–99.

108 Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 124.

109 R. Merš, "Procházky Cařihradem: Po Zlatém Rohu v říjnu," *Venkov*, November 3, 1909, 1–2.

110 Svátek, *V zemi pŕlměšice*, 9–10.

111 Kořenský, *Asie*, 209.

112 Makdisi, "Mapping the Orient," 41–42.

color, in a time when travel was slow, unregimented, and solitary, with the later part of the 19th century when “the sheer number of tourists present in some places made the illusion of discovery, or even immersion in the local, harder to sustain. The romantic’s idea of an unsullied world was replaced by the image of a world overrun by industrialism.”¹¹³

Czech travelers only started to discover the Ottoman Orient on a larger scale in the last third of the 19th century and thus harbored a mix of these European views. Every type of attitude toward the Orient identified by Makdisi and Duncan and Gregory could be observed in Czech writing at the same time – in the late 19th century – or even in the work of a single author a specific blend of these views might be found. Kořenský, as we saw, considered modernization to be successful only when it was implemented by foreign, German, capital.¹¹⁴ Klaus, in contrast, had mixed views about modernization, praising it in the Balkans and when achieved by the Balkan Slavs, but expecting the Orient, namely Istanbul, to remain Oriental. However, rather than advocating European superiority, he criticized the European impact on the Ottoman Orient. Furthermore, some travelers also welcomed modernizing efforts that did not come from the West (or the Slavs): Klaus expressed his appreciation of the art school that was established in the 1880s by Hamdi Bey (Osman Hamdi), which he considered a turning point away from the old ways that had been completely defined by Islam. By the time of his visit, the school had 200 students, most of them Turks, studying painting and sculpture.¹¹⁵ Merš, who condemned the state of the Ottoman army’s equipment, in another article wrote positively of his experience meeting young graduates of a new police school at Yildiz (*Yıldız*) in their new uniforms, who were serious and impeccable in their appearance, and respectful and reserved in their behavior.¹¹⁶

Ottoman backwardness was often contrasted with the modernity of the West, whose railways and electricity, in Svátek’s words, brought light into every dark corner of the Ottoman Empire.¹¹⁷ In the 1890s, Guth used a similar contrast for Izmir – a city both modern and barbarian at the same time, with its old Turkish neighborhoods and a modern European cosmopolitan area where “the West, represented by the tramway ... touches the East, which in long, slow

113 Duncan and Gregory, “Introduction,” 6–7.

114 Kořenský, *Asie*, 209.

115 Klaus, *Do říše pŭlmesíce*, 262. The school was *Sanayi-i nefise mekteb-i*, founded by the famous Ottoman painter, archeologist, art historian, and museum curator Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910).

116 R. Merš, “Slavnostní jízda k zahájení druhého zasedání parlamentního v Cařihradě,” *Venkov*, November 23, 1909, 1.

117 Svátek, *V zemi pŭlmesíce*, 24.

caravans of camels strung together marches in single file across the tracks of the tramway, bringing for a few moments the feverish advancement of our civilization to a halt ...”¹¹⁸ While travelers mostly sided with the progress brought by the West, given the feverish advancement of Western civilization (or, in Duncan and Gregory’s words, the “world overrun by industrialism”), the slow pace of the Orient did not seem to be such a bad thing.

The contrast between Western modernity and Eastern backwardness appeared as a side note in many travelogues. It was prominent in travel accounts of journeys through the Balkan countries that had recently been emancipated from Turkish rule; in these countries, the Ottoman heritage was associated with backwardness and juxtaposed with the positive changes brought about by the independent states. Klaus described the disappearance of the Oriental character of the Bulgarian Rushchuk after the Turks moved away. Rushchuk quickly recovered, especially its Bulgarian neighborhood, with its commerce and schools, bookstores and printing press, not to mention its beerhouses. The Turkish neighborhood, by contrast, was poor, and although it had twenty *camis* (mosques), its streets grew deserted as the Turks moved away, and the town began to lose its Oriental features and to acquire a Western character.¹¹⁹ Similar remarks appeared in descriptions of other Balkan countries, including Albania¹²⁰ and Serbia. Raušar observed that in Belgrade and Nish, the physical appearance of the dirty old Turkish towns, with their curvy empty streets and shabby Eastern houses, was being lost to broad avenues and beautiful buildings.¹²¹ The backward/modern dichotomy was sometimes extended to depictions of the changing power relations and the position of the Turkish and local, Slavic, populations vis-à-vis each other. Prášek, and Klaus after him, commented on the changing hierarchy: the previously subjugated Bulgarian was now an officer and represented the official authorities, while the barefoot Turkish porters bowed beneath the heavy loads they had to carry.¹²² More generally, in the Balkans, purportedly Slavic traits (clean, organized, neat, rapidly developing, and modernizing) were contrasted with allegedly Turkish attributes (dirty, picturesque, backward, and decaying).¹²³

The link between backwardness and modernity was also conceptualized in temporal terms: Svátek described his travel along the coast of Asia Minor to

118 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 135.

119 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 138.

120 Dvorský and Čermák, *Albánské a černohorské obrázky*, 4 and 25.

121 Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 50.

122 Prášek, *Dunajem do Cařihradu*, 46; Klaus (*Do říše půlměsíce*, 129–30) uses the same image and almost the same words.

123 Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 50.

Istanbul and further West as a trip from the past into the present and toward a brighter future – although it remains unclear where this bright future was coming from.¹²⁴ Knotek reflected that in the Ottoman Balkans “[e]verything is keeping pace with the times. The situation on the Balkan Peninsula cannot be solved at once, development is necessary here. West European progress and civilization even here, on this hot land, are slowly making their way toward the liberation of the nations that are groaning under the yoke of the Turkish Empire.”¹²⁵

The development was not always linear, nor was it always welcome. The disappearance of Oriental features was seen by some writers as a genuine loss and made them nostalgic for the past. Klaus, who applauded the passing of the Oriental heritage in Bulgaria, saw it differently when it concerned Istanbul, the “real” Orient:

Yet even here, the poisonous breath of the West seeps at least as far as the shores of the Golden Horn and particularly to the suburb of Pera, and it has the young Turks especially in its grip. They have long set aside their local attire and donned our tailed coats, they have long ceased to meet here in simple coffee houses, in imitation of their ancestors, [and] instead they gather in West European wine cellars, beerhouses, chantans, and gambling houses around a table on which a disgusting card game begins... Constantinople is changing quickly, but to its detriment; everything is undermined by European civilization, with all its passions, and with its public sale of bodies and alcohol, the effects of which are as damaging here as they are in our countries. The Stambul lanes still stand strong, but how long they will endure, God knows... And it will be a great pity [when they are gone] as something poetic emanates through them, especially in the evening, when everyone, particularly the old-believers in white and green turbans and long caftans, rushes to the mosque.¹²⁶

Eight years later, Štolba commented upon the retreat of the East and the growing influx of the colder “European blood,” and urged Czech tourists to “hurry up if you want to see *Turkish* Istanbul.”¹²⁷ Czechs were like other tourists who,

¹²⁴ Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 244–45.

¹²⁵ A. Knotek, *Balkán: Poměry v Makedonii* (Most: O.J. Bukač, n.d., ca. 1909), 5. Dvorský and Čermák found one of the few differences between Catholics and Muslims in Skadar to be that the former were more open to progress (and to Austrian visitors). Dvorský and Čermák, *Albánské a černohorské obrázky*, 32–33.

¹²⁶ Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 198–99.

¹²⁷ Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 68.

as Gregory noted about travelers to Egypt, had to be reassured that modernity had not yet destroyed the very object of their journey and that “the Orient,” as they had imagined it, was still there for them to explore.¹²⁸

The same image could be used by different authors or in different contexts as proof of backwardness, or as a sign of the romantic, exotic East. A curvy street, as a remnant of the past, could be presented as either an obstacle for modern travelers or a picturesque setting for European visitors to stroll through. Complaining about the lack of comfort or emphasizing how bravely they had coped, travelers sought out the most different and exotic sites. They drew attention to the variety of smells and colors, multifacetedness of the architecture and the diversity of the people, and the fairy-tale or dream-like character of the places they visited. The exoticism of the Ottoman Empire was further evoked by inserting Turkish words in the text. Almost every travel account contained at least some Turkish words. Next to *baksheesh*, *harem*, and *bazar*, the most common words were terms used to refer to different kinds of people, such as “*kadun*” (*kadın*, i.e. woman) and “*effendi*” (sir), professions (*hamal*, porter), items of clothing (Turkish *yaşmak*, veil, transcribed in Czech writing as *jašmak*, or *terlik*, slipper), and idioms (in Turkish *çok yaşa*, in Czech as *çok jaša*, Long live!). Some travelers even included whole Turkish sentences and sayings,¹²⁹ often reproduced incorrectly or in garbled form, to underline the Oriental atmosphere and demonstrate their own “expertise” as a traveler – the translator of a distant culture.¹³⁰

As well as the exotic, travelers also looked for things that reminded them of home. They almost always mentioned meeting Czech immigrants and other Czechs who were working in or traveling through the Ottoman Empire – for instance, some Czech teachers employed in the Sultan’s harem.¹³¹ Those who traveled in the early 20th century highlighted, among Istanbul’s attractions, the *dragoman* (interpreter) Mr Vincenc Zámečník, their “guardian angel” and

128 Derek Gregory, “Scripting Egypt: Orientalism and the Cultures of Travel,” in Duncan and Gregory, *Writes of Passage*, 119.

129 Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 152; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 48; Schwarzenberg, *Pod praporem*, esp. 22. Unlike many other travelers, Schwarzenberg (40) admitted that his Turkish was poor.

130 One of the first Czech Middle Eastern scholars, Jan Rypka, who wrote a series of articles about Istanbul during his stay there in 1922, also included in his writing Turkish phrases and excerpts from poems in Turkish (with their Czech translations). The Turkish was of course correct, but Rypka chose similarly exoticizing images of Istanbul as other travelers; for instance on the superstitiousness of the Turks he wrote: “there is still much in the way of superstition in Stambul and perhaps all the Orient...” Jan Rypka, “Z Cařihradu,” *Národní listy*, March 30, 1922, 1.

131 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 158.

compatriot who helped them to get acquainted with life in the Ottoman capital and showed them around the city.¹³² The travelers always looked up Czech businesses, hotels and restaurants and never failed to mention any Czech products they came across,¹³³ most notable among these being the *fez* – as fezes were manufactured in Southern Bohemia.¹³⁴ Hálek devoted a lot of attention to describing the compatriots he encountered in Istanbul; he remembered with particular gratitude a Czech restaurant in the city and even described the Czech dish it served during his visit.¹³⁵ One of the oddest “patriotic” references is found in Guth’s 1896 account of his trip: in a bar in Smyrna (Izmir), Guth noticed that the young women working there reminded him of Bohemian factory girls, and, indeed, the “chanteuses” at the bar turned out to be Czech. Guth wrote that they were dressed like Czech working-class girls and there was generally nothing offensive about their behavior. But, with a sigh he added, “[t]he whole East is flooded with these ‘German’ singers who even here everyone knows are from Bohemia, and the Czech lion must roar in pain when he recalls how little these dear children of his contribute to his honor and glory...”¹³⁶

Duncan and Gregory compare travel to translating and argue that translation is performed either using “a domesticating method,” which adapts the foreign text so as to accommodate the target language’s cultural values and thus brings the author back home, or “a foreignizing method,” which registers the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text and sends the reader abroad.¹³⁷ Czech travelers used both methods: on the one hand, they exoticized their narratives by employing Turkish words or stereotypical Oriental images and, on the other hand, they domesticated their observations from abroad. They likened what they saw in the Ottoman Empire to familiar sites at home in order to bring them closer to the reader. A villa suburb of Istanbul reminded Kaminský of the outskirts of Prague, writing that it was as if the Czech town of Řevnice near Prague had been transplanted to suburban Istanbul.¹³⁸

132 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 38; Merš, “Procházky Cařihradem: Po Zlatém Rohu v řijnu,” 1; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 44; Václav Moravec, *Cesta do Orientu* (Prague: printed by author, 1925), 125.

133 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 156–58; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 4; Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 184; Máša Absolonová, “Přes hranice Černé Hory,” *Ženský svět*, December 20, 1912, 305; Merš, “Procházky Cařihradem: Po Zlatém Rohu v řijnu,” 1; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 59; Čech, *Upomínky z Východu*, 195; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 184.

134 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 4; Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 143; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 59.

135 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 157–58.

136 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 139–41.

137 Duncan and Gregory, “Introduction,” 4–5.

138 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 43.

A post office on the Asian shore of Istanbul resembled, according to Štolba, some of “our post offices, especially the rural ones.”¹³⁹

Sometimes there was a critical objective behind the comparisons made with Czech places and phenomena. A comment on the lack of a reading culture or any booksellers in Istanbul¹⁴⁰ was clearly meant to show the superiority of the Czechs; interestingly, according to one traveler, even in carpet weaving the Czechs were almost as good as the Turks.¹⁴¹ Although the Turks mostly came out unfavorably in these comparisons, there were cases in which they were presented as a model for the Czechs.¹⁴² Kaminský ironically contrasted the Turks’ “uncivilized” policy toward tenants, which gave the tenants more rights, to the “civilized” Czech practice that allowed women and children to be thrown out of their home and onto the street.¹⁴³ He even portrayed the constant presence of *baksheesh* as having some positive aspects – at least it is open and clear, whereas the Czechs expected bribery, too, but concealed it behind various other names they had for it.¹⁴⁴ Štolba admired the craftsmanship of Muslim stonemasons, whose work at the cemeteries he found infinitely superior to the Czech variety, and deemed Turkish cemeteries more egalitarian than those at home.¹⁴⁵ According to Bracewell, praise of the Ottoman Empire in East European travel accounts was commonly used as a way of criticizing something in the home society¹⁴⁶ and sometimes a similar purpose could be discerned behind the admiration for Ottoman practices expressed by Czech travelers. It is interesting how much Czech travelers nevertheless insisted on the essential differences between the Ottoman Empire and Europe.

In Czech, the contrast between the Ottoman Empire and Europe assumed two forms: the term Orient or East (*Orient, východ*) often had exoticizing or fairy-tale connotations, while, when dealing with the political situation and the position of the Ottoman Empire from an international perspective, Czech travelers tended to locate the Ottoman Empire in Asia and emphasize its Asian character. Svátek argued that Ottoman rule brought Asian culture to Constantinople and the Turks then extended that culture to Europe through their brutal occupation, implying that the Turks had no place in Europe and would be

139 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 124.

140 *Ibid.*, 101.

141 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 147.

142 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 198 and 223.

143 On this and other examples of Ottoman habits being deemed superior to Czech practices see Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 104–8.

144 *Ibid.*, 177.

145 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 51.

146 Bracewell, “The Limits of Europe,” 78.

expelled from it.¹⁴⁷ Wagner wrote that the Asian “heathens” were always crossing the Bosphorus to try to expand and battle their way into Europe, and he associated Asia primarily with fanaticism.¹⁴⁸ Or, as Štolba put it, visitors to Constantinople witnessed a constant and quiet fight between “the brutal, fanatical, and sterile violence of the Asian East and the European West, procreative in the cultural sphere,” a fight that had already been decided in favor of the West.¹⁴⁹ A trip to Izmir brought Guth to Asia, “from where terrible winds and storms swept over Europe, from the Tatar invasions to the river of Chinese that threaten to overwhelm Europe in the future.”¹⁵⁰ For other writers, too, an important distinction was between Asia, often as the home of barbarian tribes ready to invade Europe, and Europe, rather than between the Orient (or East) and the West.¹⁵¹ In this juxtaposition, the Czechs are naturally considered a part of modern Europe, sometimes implicitly, often explicitly, but without emphasizing the point in any special way, as when the authors refer to “our” European ways and languages or speak about “European travelers” and clearly mean themselves.¹⁵²

4 Turkish Men (To Say Nothing of the Dogs)

The Bosphorus, which connects Europe and Asia, offers breathtaking visual splendor on a narrow strip of land, wrote Svátek in 1909. But, he added, these natural marvels had done nothing to refine the men who live surrounded by this beauty, nor had it inspired them to achieve higher aims. It was, he said, hard to believe that these gorgeous flowered slopes could give birth to a people who delighted in “flowers of blood” and the “groans of the tortured.”¹⁵³ The contrast between the country’s nature and its people that authors from many countries alluded to is particularly striking in Hálek’s travel account. Hálek concluded his description of how magnificent Istanbul appeared on the outside with harsh condemnation of what was inside the city: “All this applies to its external

147 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 24 and 79.

148 Wagner (*Na evropském východě*, 189) mentions fanaticism in relation to a performance of dervishes that he saw in Scutari.

149 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 68.

150 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 128.

151 Klaus (*Do říše půlměsíce*, 160) described the Danube as a natural divide between Asia and Europe, a route of commerce and of barbarian inroads to the heart of Europe – the Huns and then the Turks, who had gotten close to the Czech borders.

152 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 165; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 105 and 117–18.

153 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 201.

appearance. It is a different matter on the inside. People say that if one does not want to spoil one's illusion of Constantinople, one should never even enter the city."¹⁵⁴ He notes that Alexandre Dumas on one of his visits allegedly spent several days looking at Constantinople – from a boat, never disembarking. He likens Constantinople to a person endowed with sparkling spiritual and physical charms, to which everyone is attracted at first sight. But it is a person without morals, distinguished by excesses and vices that repel the viewer. "For Constantinople's beauty is not artificial, it is not false; she is so rich in nature itself that she can feel like a queen among her companions; but on the inside she manifests such a dearth of all taste, such utter decrepitude, that one stands before her as astonished as one was a moment before by her beauty."¹⁵⁵ Hálek's successors often felt compelled to reproduce this contrast that he made, but without Hálek's strong condemnation of the city and the Turks.¹⁵⁶ Štolba, for instance, presented the beautiful appearance of Istanbul in opposition to its dirt and smell, which he found typical of the Orient as a whole, but he hastened to add that visitors to Istanbul would immediately find more than enough compensation in watching the life that unfolds on the smelly streets.¹⁵⁷

Travelers' opinions of the Ottoman Turks clearly varied and at times seem confused or contradictory. This is reflected in the terms that the Czechs used to refer to the Turks: the neutral designations included Turks (which was sometimes employed also for other Muslims of the Empire),¹⁵⁸ Ottomans (*Osmani*, *Osmanlı*)¹⁵⁹ and various forms of Muslims (*muslímové*, *moslemíni*, *mahometáni*, *mohamedáni*);¹⁶⁰ occasionally, all these terms appeared side by side, even in works by authors who demonstrated considerable knowledge of the history and origins of the Ottoman Turks,¹⁶¹ suggesting that the confusion was not necessarily a matter of ignorance, but resulted from a lack of interest in using precise terms. Other words had judgmental connotations, such as the somewhat

154 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 155.

155 *Ibid.*, 156.

156 Jiřík (*K pyramidám*, 75) said in 1913 he was glad to be leaving Egypt – a country full of natural beauty and wonderful monuments, but inhabited by annoying and obtrusive people, constantly asking for *baksheesh*.

157 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 18.

158 The term "Turk" included also the Muslim Slavs of the Balkans who were also called *Turčini*. See Knotek, *Balkán*, 44; Antonín Zavadil, *Obrázky z Bosny: Trappisti – Turci – Židé – cikáni* (Prague: Nákladem Josefa Pelcla, 1911), 28 and 32.

159 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 24; Ruffer, *Válka rusko-turecká*, 3, 125, and 561; in another context also Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 110.

160 Kořenský, *Asie*, 208; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 41; Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 224–25. See also Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 110.

161 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 100–105, 41, and 52.

derogative *Turčini*,¹⁶² a name that referred to both Muslim Slavs and Ottoman Turks. Often, the writer's negative stance was expressed by the use of the singular form *Turek* (the Turk) in instances where the meaning called for the plural.¹⁶³ A less common diminutive form of this word, *Tureček* (little Turk) did not necessarily express hostility, but it did imply a sense of superiority on the part of the speaker.¹⁶⁴

Although Czech travelers accepted the views about non-Europeans that had been formulated by European philosophers and intellectuals in the previous centuries, their travel accounts did not reflect some of these earlier ideas – for instance, on the impact of climate on the character of the country's inhabitants – perhaps because Czechs did not start traveling to the Ottoman Empire in larger numbers until the second half of the 19th century. They also paid little or no attention to two phenomena that had figured prominently in European views on the Ottoman Empire and often survived in Western travel literature throughout the 19th century, namely the despotic character of Ottoman rule and Ottoman slavery.¹⁶⁵

Czech travelers were certainly not immune to the influence of older stereotypes, especially the ones that were stoked back to life in Czech anti-Turkish pamphlets in the 1870s. They called the Turks hostile, and they claimed that the Turks see an enemy in every stranger, and even when polite and obliging they remain suspicious of foreigners.¹⁶⁶ Travel writers commonly referred to the Turks' violence and cruelty,¹⁶⁷ sometimes in almost absurd circumstances: Čech described how he watched some proud scribes, with a spiritual mien, holding containers filled with ink, which, he wryly remarked, had not been spilt in the land of the Padishah as much as blood had been.¹⁶⁸ In spite of the general decline in Ottoman power, many travelers agreed that the position of the Turks in the Ottoman Empire still made them haughty and complacent,

162 Knotek, *Balkán*, 44.

163 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 167, 179, and 195; Zavadil, *Obrázky z Bosny*, 28; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 60, 80, 100, and 105.

164 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 48, 67, and 103.

165 On the impact of these ideas in the West see Çirakman, *European Images of Ottoman Empire*, 132–56; Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 186–90, 234–40, 308–17; Melman, *Women's Orients*, 145–48.

166 Svátek, *V zemi pŕlmesíce*, 103.

167 Wagner (*Na evropském východě*, 174) described how he watched, while sitting in a café, as an Englishman was stabbed and robbed on the street. Štolba (*Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 55) called the murder of a sultan a common Turkish habit. Kaminský (*Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 89) wrote in the same vein about Abdülhamid who, when he murdered his brother, was, claimed Kaminský, only following an old habit of his ancestors.

168 Čech, *Upomínky z Východu*, 190–91.

and, some travelers claimed, this was reflected in a saying that attributed beauty to the Circassians, trade and wealth to the Greeks and Armenians, science to the Europeans, but stateliness to the Turks.¹⁶⁹ Comments about the Turks' lust were often directed at the past, and lust was regarded as a symbol of Ottoman rule, not only over women but also over the Balkan peoples.¹⁷⁰ Most accusations of fanaticism that appeared in various travelogues also referred to the past; now, Raušar explained, the Turks' fanaticism had become milder.¹⁷¹ Old stereotypes had a long life: jannissaries represented the atrocious past of the Turks, when they were responsible for the widespread image that emerged of the Turk as bloodthirsty, violent, and vengeful – an image that unfortunately, Svátek noted, had survived into the present, even though the source of the bloodshed had vanished.¹⁷² Gradually, the old stereotypes were disappearing, but were giving way to new ones.

Writing about the Turks they actually met, Czech travelers complained most about their “corruption” and the constant expectation of *baksheesh*.¹⁷³ Gregory has noted that around roughly the same time tourists in Egypt were grumbling about the local population's demands for *baksheesh* and increasing ability to take financial advantage of visitors.¹⁷⁴ The Czechs shared the double standard of the British travelers who saw nothing wrong in getting a bargain, but criticized the local population for trying to do the same. Some Czechs, however, found the experience entertaining and illuminating and considered it a cheap way of solving problems.¹⁷⁵ Most travelers also described the Turks as lazy, apathetic, indolent or sleepy,¹⁷⁶ but sometimes did so with a degree of sympathy or even envy. They found their relaxed attitude contagious and noted that it

169 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 102; Kořenský (*Asie*, 207) quotes the same proverb. Guth (*Letem přes řecký kraj*, 154) described this attitude as the complacent dignity of a mighty host.

170 Such comments often appear in reference to the Turks' interest in Slavic women in the Balkans. See Knotek, *Balkán*, 40. According to Raušar (*Na půdě sopečné*, 52), such behavior manifests how terrible Turkish rule “used to be.”

171 Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 132.

172 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 68–69.

173 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 34, 47, 49, 53, 73, 127, 148, and 177; Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 167; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 26–27; Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 187; Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 138; Knotek, *Balkán*, 13 and 29–33; Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 156–57; Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 41.

174 Gregory, “Scripting Egypt,” 124.

175 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 132.

176 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 103; Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 129 and 133; Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 163 and 177; Čech, *Upomínky z Východu*, 190; Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 197–98; Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 136; Dvorský and Čermák, *Albánské a černohorské obrázky*, 38–39.

made people happy.¹⁷⁷ The Turks were also depicted as uneducated, resistant to change, and unable or unwilling to accept progress.¹⁷⁸

Similar characteristics were ascribed to the Turks by other European visitors to the Ottoman Empire. Like other European travelers, the Czechs distinguished city-dwellers from villagers and occasionally discovered what they called “true” Turkishness among the Anatolian people, unspoiled by civilization. But since only a small number of Czechs traveled more extensively in Anatolia, comments like these seem to have been drawn more from Western writings, rather than being the authors’ own observations. Although some Czechs praised the egalitarianism of Turkish society,¹⁷⁹ class did not figure prominently in Czechs’ reflections on the Ottoman Empire, unlike, according to Schiffer, those of British travelers, for whom “[t]he description along the demarcations of class was certainly the one most commonly applied.”¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, compared to British travelers, Czech authors did not pay much attention to the physical appearance of Turkish men, and certainly did not write about the Turks’ beauty, dignity, and resemblance to ancient figures.¹⁸¹ Scholars see the reasons for the Turkophile positions of 19th-century British travelers as lying in their sense of commonality with the Turks as “an ancient imperial race,” with whom the British shared such characteristics as being stoic and taciturn, as well as in a declining sympathy for the Greeks after they gained independence.¹⁸² The Czechs, who had no imperial past, at least not one they could easily identify with, did not feel a similar kinship with the Ottoman Turks.

Nonetheless, the Czechs who visited the Ottoman Empire did not see the Turks as an undifferentiated and unchanging group. They found some Turks more like Europeans than others. They distinguished the “old-Turks” – uneducated, backward, and clinging to Islam – from the “new-Turks,” whom they described as modern, educated, and open to progress and to foreigners. Svátek made a distinction between the “very advanced intelligentsia” and the

177 Dvorský and Čermák, *Albánské a černohorské obrázky*, 38–39; Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměsíce*, 197–98.

178 Svátek, *V zemi pŭlměsíce*, 103; see also Neruda, *Obrazy z ciziny*, 9; Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 163.

179 Most notably Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměsíce*, 223. Svátek (*V zemi pŭlměsíce*, 55) noted the nonexistence of nobility in the Ottoman Empire. Others wrote approvingly about the egalitarianism of Turkish cemeteries; see, e.g., Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 51.

180 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 245; on views about social fluidity in Ottoman society see also Heffernan, “Traveling East,” 159.

181 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 242–45.

182 *Ibid.*, 243–50; Nash, “Politics, Aesthetics and Quest,” 59–60.

average uneducated Turks, who just dreamed about “kéf” (*keyif*, i.e. bliss) and spent their time in coffee houses and mosques.¹⁸³ Wagner contrasted the “old-Turk” fanatics with a “new-Turk” bookseller ready to sell books to nonbelievers, and found similar distinctions even among sultans – namely, between the “old-Turk” Sultan Abdülhamid and the modernizing Sultan Murad.¹⁸⁴ Thus, while the Turks as a whole seemed backward compared to the Europeans, including the Czechs, individual examples of “enlightened” Turks as well as references to “the spirit of time and progress,” which affected even the Turkish censors,¹⁸⁵ suggest that the Turks were not considered unfit for modernization and progress.

A frequently mentioned obstacle on the path to progress was Islam, at least amongst those Muslims who were too devout. Statements about how Islam leads to fatalism, prejudice, and hostility to non-believers were still appearing in travel accounts published around the turn of the century.¹⁸⁶ Kaminský wrote about Islam (and most other topics, including Czech customs) in tones of contempt and ridicule: he expressed a mocking admiration for the imagination of Muslims, who believe that an angel in Paradise has a million heads with which to praise Allah, and who thank Allah for not giving camels wings.¹⁸⁷ Štolba wrote in the same spirit that Muslim hell is better than ours because even the worst peccant will, after he is punished, enter Paradise, where all the beautiful *houris* are; he moreover ridiculed the notion that women cannot enter Paradise, although some animals can.¹⁸⁸ Most travelers, however, had ambiguous views of Islam and appreciated at least some of the principles and behaviors of its followers.¹⁸⁹ Neruda wrote admiringly about the grave of a dervish that he saw: “[w]hat a man he must have been, so matured by his solitude, so refined

183 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 104. Also Kořenský (*Asie*, 212) points out “more enlightened” men among the average phlegmatic Turks.

184 Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 154 and 162. Sultan Murad V (1876) was the brother and predecessor of Abdülhamid II, who was considered liberal, but was deposed after just three months on the throne on the grounds of his mental illness. Raušar (*Na půdě sopečné*, 53–54) described the head of the local Turkish community in Leskovec, which had remained in Serbia after 1878, as a “European man,” dressed in European clothes (apart from the fez), enlightened, not prejudiced, and open to foreigners.

185 Knotek, *Balkán*, 21.

186 Kořenský, *Asie*, 207; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 103.

187 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 58. Also Hálek (*Cestopisy*, 334) described a praying Muslim as performing comical exercises, which made many observers laugh.

188 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 49–50.

189 Even Hálek was sometimes impressed by the seriousness with which Muslims prayed, but he noted that not everybody was so devote, pointing to the vendors who pursued believers even inside mosques. Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 177.

under the constant effect of a sublime scene [the view of Constantinople]!”¹⁹⁰ Later travelers respectfully described Muslim funerals,¹⁹¹ the Muslims’ devotion and observance of religious duties,¹⁹² and the positive effect Islam had on the Turks’ character and its encouragement of good deeds.¹⁹³

Although some authors expressed a consistently negative or positive opinion of the Ottoman Turks, most travelers’ views were more equivocal and mixed. Neruda, for instance, wrote that “the Turkish period was not worse than the Byzantine times, the Turks have never defiled graves, church vessels, etc., as did the Latins themselves, who took dead bodies from the crypts and let their horses drink from chalices – but history marches quickly onward and the Ottoman walks slowly.”¹⁹⁴ Others noted that many of the shortcomings ascribed to the Turks could also be found among other peoples but were perhaps just less obvious, and they argued that one ought not to make generalizations about the awfulness of Turkish administration based on a single observation.¹⁹⁵ Czech visitors to the Ottoman Empire, like travelers from other countries, recognized that the Turks had some good qualities. They praised Turkish hospitality¹⁹⁶ and the unobtrusiveness of Turkish shopkeepers.¹⁹⁷ Jan Wagner, writing in the 1880s, applauded the Turks’ willingness to accept refugees and argued that this, and the Turks’ tolerance of minorities, could serve as an example for many “civilized nations.”¹⁹⁸

Perhaps the most positive image of the Turks was painted by Klaus. He described the social life of the Turks as much friendlier, more intimate, and more sincere than what he knew at home, and portrayed their social relations as free from class hierarchies and hereditary nobility (there was no such thing as an aristocrat by birth!). He deemed Turkish society to be less awash in hypocrisy, deceit, and falsehood than its Czech counterpart, and the Turkish people more just, charitable, and hospitable in character. And he felt they were also more

190 Neruda, *Obrazy z ciziny*, 7.

191 Merš, “Procházky Cařihradem: Hřbitov ve Skutari,” 2.

192 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 41.

193 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 224–26.

194 Neruda, *Obrazy z ciziny*, 9.

195 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 129 and 133; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 104–8 and 117–18. See also Schwarzenberg (*Pod praporem tureckého půlměsíce*, 82) for a somewhat different comparison between Europeans and the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire.

196 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 154; Wagner (*Na evropském východě*, 183) noted that it is most strongly felt in “pure,” unmixed Turkish areas. Svátek (*V zemi půlměsíce*, 103) was more ambivalent; he wrote that the Turks are perfect in hospitality, but that does not mean they relinquish their fear of foreigners.

197 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 101; Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 223–24.

198 Wagner, *Na evropském východě*, 193–94.

content. Isn't the carefree enjoyment of a cup of coffee better than drinking spirits in our pubs?, he asked.¹⁹⁹ In these instances praise of the Turks was coupled with criticism of the Czechs, but not all such praise contained a message directed at the society back home. Klaus attributed many of the Turks' good qualities, such as trustworthiness, to the rules of the Koran, which touches on not just religious, but also everyday concerns, and which the Turks observed to the letter,²⁰⁰ and he highly praised the Turks' charity, care for the poor, and love of animals.²⁰¹ Although his work was not free from stereotypical views and a sense of nostalgia for traditional society as well as occasional criticisms of the Turks, he seemed to be motivated by a genuine interest in "the Orient." According to his own words, he wrote his travel book in order to inspire young Czechs to travel to the Orient, get to know it, and become its life-long friend.²⁰²

Klaus praised the Turks also for the way they treated street dogs. Istanbul's dogs were one of the topics mentioned by most foreign visitors to the Ottoman capital. As Hálek put it, Constantinople's dogs are so noticeable that "perhaps not a single traveler has omitted them from his notes."²⁰³ Like other phenomena, here again the Turks' attitudes toward dogs were interpreted in opposite ways: Klaus contrasted the miserable dogs in the European neighborhoods of Constantinople, where they were driven out of stores, with the fatter and healthier dogs in the "Turkish" neighborhoods, where they were treated well,²⁰⁴ but other writers considered the street dogs another sign of the shambles that was Istanbul.²⁰⁵ Istanbul's dogs made such a powerful impression that Čech used them as the subject for a short story: a dog called Žoli, inspired by a German essay on freedom that he read, runs away from Prague and goes to Constantinople, and there he writes letters to his former master. In these letters,

199 Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměšice*, 197–98.

200 *Ibid.*, 223–25.

201 *Ibid.*, 223–26.

202 *Ibid.*, [279]. Also Klaus sometimes criticized the Turks, but he praised them more than other travelers did.

203 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 163. See also Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 71; Girinon, "Constantinople."

204 Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměšice*, 192.

205 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 71. Štolba (*Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 135–41) on the one hand remarked that street dogs could not wish for better "owners" than the Turks, who treated them in an almost fatherly manner, but on the other hand he dwelled on the dirt and smells that the dogs lived in. Guth (*Letem přes řecký kraj*, 141) wrote similarly about dogs in Izmir. Svátek (*V zemi pŭlměšice*, 113–18) devoted over four pages to this topic and compared the characteristics of Istanbul's street dogs to the character of the Turks (114).

the dogs of Istanbul have characteristics that resemble the stereotypes of the Turks: they are honest, proud, and straightforward, but also jealous, unrefined, and incredibly dirty. They do not recognize different social classes, which the observer at first appreciates but later finds excessive. Life is quiet, neither noise nor the expectation that they should work disturbs the dogs' sleep. In his first letters, Žoli enthusiastically describes the free life of Constantinople's dogs, but he eventually starts to miss his old life. Žoli's adventure ends when he encounters a European traveler who is about to write derogatory things about Constantinople's street dogs, and then is attacked by other dogs for trying to persuade the traveler that at least some dogs in Constantinople are educated. Hurt, Žoli returns home to his old master, and to the safety of his servitude.²⁰⁶

Istanbul's dogs figured frequently in European or – thinking of Mark Twain's famous diatribe about Constantinople's street dogs²⁰⁷ – world travelogues on the Ottoman Empire. Images of these dogs spread across countries and were passed on over the centuries, but they were interpreted and used in different ways – just like images of the Ottoman Empire and the men and women who lived in it were.

5 Women

If there was a topic that attracted the attention of Czech travelers even more than Istanbul's dogs, it was Ottoman women. Svátek was expressing a widely held opinion when he wrote that “the Turkish woman of whom we hear and read so much in Europe is certainly something particularly attractive to every foreigner in the land of the crescent.”²⁰⁸ Initially, there seems little original about Czechs' views on the life of Ottoman women: they, like other European travelers, saw Turkish women as the embodiment of the Oriental, the exotic, and the different. Czech travelogues on the Ottoman Empire likewise represent a masculine view of Oriental eroticism and the masculine experience of this eroticism. But Czech writers did not equate the Ottoman Empire or the Orient with femininity and the West with masculinity, as British travelers commonly did. As Nash notes, especially “[r]omantic Orientalism, influenced by

206 Svatopluk Čech, “Žoli,” in *V cizích zemích, dalekých krajích: Výbor z povídek českých spisovatelů 19. a počátku 20. století o exotice a dalekých cestách*, ed. Lucie Kořínková (Prague: Knižní klub, 2014), 85–100. I would like to thank Olga Lomová for bringing the story to my attention.

207 Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad, or the New Pilgrim's Progress* (New York: Signet, 1980), 265–67.

208 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 51.

the *Arabian Nights*, represented the Turk as barbarous, cruel and effeminate.”²⁰⁹ Leaving aside a few brief remarks on eunuchs, who are not associated ethnically with the Turks, Czech travelogues do not connect the Turks or “the Orientals” with effeminacy. Perhaps memory of the strength and violence of the Ottoman army, which was revived in connection with the fights of the 1870s, prevented Czechs from characterizing Ottoman men and their society as effeminate.²¹⁰

Two viewpoints mingled in the descriptions of Turkish women: a focus on the subordinate position and oppression of women, and an emphasis on the women's exotic appeal as objects of the imagination.²¹¹ These two outlooks came together in images of the harem, which could be described both as a prison and as a realm of (sexual) fantasies.²¹² Although many Czech men hinted at the sexual appeal of Turkish women, in their travelogues they devoted more attention to the conditions of women's lives. The image produced in these men's writings was quite similar: women lived in the harem completely segregated from the world, they depended on men, and their position was comparable to slavery; consequently, they were uneducated, as only rich families hired female governesses for their daughters; they could not choose their husbands, were considered men's property, and had to obey their spouses and spend their time in idleness or devoting excessive care to their appearance. The travelers who took an interest in women's and family life provided details on marriage as a contract, weddings, relations between husband and wife, and divorce, noting that the laws on inheritance were rather favorable to women and that Turkish women had extensive rights regarding their own property.²¹³ Some observers remarked that polygamy was becoming increasingly rare because it was too expensive and difficult to deal with more than one wife. Occasionally eunuchs²¹⁴ and slavery²¹⁵ were mentioned in connection with a discussion of women's lives in the harem, but such notes are rare and incidental enough to suggest that these subjects were not of paramount interest to the Czechs.

209 Nash, “Politics, Aesthetics and Quest,” 59; Vesna Goldsworthy, “The Balkans in Nineteenth-Century British Travel Writing,” in Youngs, *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century*, 30.

210 However, as we could see in the previous chapter, some hints at Turks as effeminate appeared in the late 1870s and early 1880s in Krásnohorská's poems.

211 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 192–96; Svátek, *Vzemi půlměsíce*, 1 and 7.

212 Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 94–95; Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 137; Svátek, *Vzemi půlměsíce*, 51–57 and 166; Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 229; Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 52 and 130.

213 Svátek, *Vzemi půlměsíce*, 53.

214 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 232; Kaminský, *Návštěvou u chorého muže*, 101.

215 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 232.

Czech travelers sometimes used exactly the same images and examples, which they copied from each other or drew from the same sources; intertextuality was a common device in European travel writing more generally and in descriptions of travels to Istanbul specifically.²¹⁶ Klaus and Svátek, for example, both argued that despite their general subjugation some Turkish women were able to attain a position in society that was almost equal to that of European women.²¹⁷ But they also both pointed out that there was no family life among the Turks and no closeness between husband and wife in the way Europeans knew these things; women could not accompany their husbands out in public, and men and women did not eat together.²¹⁸ Similar imagery notwithstanding, overall evaluations of the position of women varied: Klement, writing in the 1890s, said that despite their deplorable status, akin to that of slaves, and their segregation and dependence on men, women in the Orient to him seemed happier than their half-free counterparts in Western Europe.²¹⁹ Svátek offered inconsistent depictions of the position of Ottoman-Turkish women, suggesting that there were contradictions in their status (or perhaps differences among the sources on which he based his remarks), and Klaus argued that some women were now reluctant to sell their bodies into marriage: emancipated women began to appear in Turkey who had been educated in European culture and thought for themselves, and they understood very clearly the miserable position that Turkish women were in.²²⁰

Travelers who regarded the position of women as deplorable tended to see this as a reflection of the conditions – whether backward or slowly improving – that existed in the empire more generally. Descriptions of the treatment of women, with examples of how they are looked upon as hens and sheep,²²¹

216 Girinon, “Constantinople.”

217 Svátek, *V zemi pŭlměšice*, 53; Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměšice*, 228. It is unclear whether both Svátek and Klaus used the same source or whether Klaus copied the information from Svátek, whose travelogue was published earlier. Svátek certainly devoted more attention to this topic (*V zemi pŭlměšice*, 53–56). He wrote, for instance, that men stay in the harem from sunset to sunrise, the ease of divorce means that many men divorce repeatedly, even 20 times, some men are underfoot and women are stronger, especially if they come from more important families than their husbands. Klaus (*Do říše pŭlměšice*, 226–28) described the same phenomena and sometimes in exactly the same way.

218 Svátek, *V zemi pŭlměšice*, 56; Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměšice*, 228 and 235.

219 Klement, “O Turkyňích,” 2.

220 Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměšice*, 231.

221 Čech (*Upomínky z Východu*, 190) wrote of women being led to a boat in a manner that reminded him of sheep-herding, and described them being kept in a small space covered by a piece of fabric, resembling a poultry mew. Hálek (*Cestopisy*, 338) claimed that women themselves complained that they were treated like animals.

were only rarely used as proof of the Turks' heartlessness. The most notable instance of the use of this imagery is provided by Hálek, who traveled to Istanbul in the mid-1860s and, as we saw above, strongly disliked the Turks; he twice told the same story (with different details, but in the same spirit) about how he met some "Turkish" women on a boat and learned from them about the life of women in the Ottoman Empire. Drawing a parallel between the Turkish oppression of women and that of the Slavs, he likened Ottoman Turks to a vampire "drinking the blood of our [i.e. Czechs'] brothers"²²² – or sisters. The women on the boat spoke "a Slavic language" and were at one point identified as Serbian, but Hálek nevertheless called them "Turkish women" and claimed to have learned from them what the fate of almost "all Turkish women" was: they were poorly treated by their husbands, beaten, starved, and used as sexual objects; the women, in turn, hated their husbands and wished them dead.²²³

As for the descriptions of what Ottoman women were like, they were portrayed by Czech travelers in a way that in many respects resembles depictions of Ottoman women in British travelogues, such as allusions that were made to Turkish women's sensuality and indolence, the attention given to veiling, or references to women's morals and chastity.²²⁴ In her classic work on British female travelers to the Middle East, Billie Melman argues that a dramatic change occurred in these travelogues in the 19th century – "the desexualisation of the Augustan notion of liberty and the domestication of the Orient."²²⁵ According to Melman, female travelers, increasingly from the middle class, projected onto the harem a bourgeois gender ideology with its concept of domesticity, femininity, and autonomy. Czech men (and women, for that matter, although they do not figure among our travelers) generally did not share the Victorian concepts of gender relations and differed from their British counterparts in their views on the role of women in society. Rather than "Victorian notions on the civilizing influence of women on the individual and society,"²²⁶ which British travelers felt applied also to the Ottoman Empire, Czech men expected Czech women to contribute to the nation and its progress. They did not, for the most part, transfer these views to the Ottoman Empire or compare Turkish and Czech women, but their belief that the position of women was an indicator of how advanced a society was could explain why they were more

222 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 332–33.

223 *Ibid.*, 332–40. For a shorter version of the same story see Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 192–96.

224 It is important to note, though, that the views of British travelers also varied and developed over time. On the difference between the 18th and the 19th centuries see Melman, *Women's Orients*, 59–162.

225 *Ibid.*, 99.

226 Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 284–85.

concerned with the status of Ottoman-Turkish women than with other aspects of their lives.²²⁷

On the whole, male travelers were less interested in the character of women than in their position, though occasional comments that women were lazy, had loose morals, and lacked education do appear in various travelogues. While these characteristics could be seen as women's faults, they were more often interpreted as a reflection of the generally poor level of education in the Ottoman Empire. Some images that were common throughout Europe were introduced in Czech writing by references to the early modern travelogue of Mitrovic. Knotek pointed out that the only form of entertainment open to women who lived secluded lives and grew bored was to have a love affair, for which they used to be punished severely. He quoted Mitrovic's description of how adulterous women used to be sewn into a bag with a cat and thrown into the sea.²²⁸ He went on, however, to say that Sultan Abdülmecid had put an end to these practices²²⁹ and allowed the harem women to meet European women, learn foreign languages, and attend theater performances, though they had to remain hidden during the performance. "He was a Turk half-changed by European civilization," and, Knotek concluded, he gave women some freedom and dignity.²³⁰

Melman notes that even such themes as clothing, eating habits, and hygiene had a symbolic function (for instance, dress was used as a symbol of women's status in society) and were increasingly associated with feminine sexuality.²³¹ In Czech men's travel writing these themes, perhaps with the exception of veiling, appear only marginally. Most men found Turkish women's faces and their clothes exotic, though Klaus likened Turkish women's dresses to those of "our nuns,"²³² and Hálek claimed that Turkish women and their harems were not much different from the monasteries of the Barnabites.²³³ Most travelers agreed that Turkish or Muslim and Oriental women more generally were beautiful, at least when they were young, like "princesses from a fairy tale,"²³⁴ with

227 On these views see Jitka Malečková, *Úrodná půda: Žena ve službách národa* (Prague: ISV, 2002), esp. 86–109.

228 Knotek, *Balkán*, 37–38.

229 When he learned that one of his wives was cheating on him, instead of killing her, he allegedly divorced her and forced her lover to marry her, which was believed to be the best punishment for them both. Knotek, *Balkán*, 38–40.

230 *Ibid.*, 38.

231 Melman, *Women's Orients*, 102.

232 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 229.

233 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 332.

234 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 121; see also Schwarzenberg, *Pod praporem tureckého půlměsíce*, 22. Schwarzenberg also mentioned that many Turkish women were educated and were fluent in French and some also spoke German.

gorgeous ivory faces beneath their veils, soft lips, and bright eyes full of longing;²³⁵ travelers also noted that they devoted a lot of time to their appearance.²³⁶ The more modern or coquettish women wore only very light veils, which allowed the traveler to admire their exotic beauty, as Jiřík and other European travelers before him observed; and he reckoned that the old and ugly ones perhaps wore thicker veils, because he did not recall seeing any ugly women.²³⁷ Others claimed that an idle life gradually affected women's appearance so that the older ones were fat and unattractive.²³⁸ Some travelers after 1908 mentioned having seen women without veils on promenades near villas and in parks.²³⁹

The place of sex in the travelogues varies. While more indirect allusions to the unknown pleasures hidden behind the veil and the harem walls are present in most, if not all, travelogues, direct references to prostitution or sexual experiences are less common. Several travelers mentioned being approached by prostitutes or their pimps when they were walking through the streets, but they had different views on the ethnic and religious identity of the prostitutes. Guth claimed that Muslim women used to come to some parts of Izmir to earn their dowry through prostitution, and that they were not ashamed of this; while, by contrast, women in the Greek and Armenian neighborhoods would be seated modestly alongside their husbands in front of their houses, a picture of family harmony.²⁴⁰ Another writer boasted having spent nights in Istanbul with three Greek sisters who took turns in his bed night after night.²⁴¹ Few travelers hinted at unusual sexual experiences or made comments to suggest that pederasty and sodomy were common in the Orient; Jiřík claimed, alongside other unusual sexual adventures, to have observed a woman having sex with a donkey in Alexandria,²⁴² but such remarks are extremely rare.

Even Svátek, whose whole travel book is imbued with the spirit of and explicit references to the exotic Orient and the tales of *The Thousand and One*

235 Svátek, *Vzemi půlměsíce*, 49.

236 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 23; Svátek, *Vzemi půlměsíce*, 57. According to Hálek (*Cestopisy*, 201), Turkish women used too much make-up.

237 Jiřík, *K pyramidám*, 34. Jiřík's comment referred specifically to Alexandria in 1913. Svátek (*Vzemi půlměsíce*, 56) also mentioned that young and coquettish women wore light veils.

238 Klement, "O Turkyních," 2.

239 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 229–30. Schwarzenberg (*Pod praporem tureckého půlměsíce*, 85) saw women without veils in Beirut during the war; he thought that one of them was Halide Edib.

240 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 149–50. Also Klement ("O Turkyních," 2) described the morals of Turkish women as loose.

241 Moravec, *Cesta do Orientu*, 118–20.

242 Jiřík, *K pyramidám*, 50–67.

Nights, and who devoted more attention to Turkish women than most, if not all, of the other Czech travelers, does not describe them in sexual terms. Svátek's Turkish women are attractive, but they are depicted as interesting paintings, rather than living women or objects of the author's lust. Svátek does not seem to take possession of the women he writes about and the story of how he watched a group of about 200 Turkish women near the railway station in Bursa is quite telling. He recounts that he was so fascinated by their number, their sincere cheerfulness, and the beauty and coquetry of some of them that he could not stop watching them, and as a result – and as symbolic punishment for his voyeurism – he missed his train.²⁴³ The whole scene, though it includes references to the women's beautiful skin and to them gazing lustfully at him, is mostly humorous in tone and does not portray the author as a male hero and conqueror. If Western male travelers take possession of the Orient by exerting control over its women, as Said and many after him have suggested,²⁴⁴ Czech men, by generally avoiding scenes in which they describe or imagine themselves sexually possessing Ottoman women, in this sense showed a lack of aspiration to control the Ottoman Orient.

Czech authors' use of the tropes and views about women that were common in European travel books points to the popularity of Western Orientalist literature in the Czech milieu. Svátek suggested this himself when he wrote about the Turkish women “of whom we hear and read so much in Europe.”²⁴⁵ This similarity with European travel literature, however, should not overshadow the deeper difference between the use and framing of gendered images of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish women: Czech writings seem in most cases to be free from this desire to “possess” the Orient that is observed in the Western works they were often modeled on.

6 The Turks and Others

Like similar writing produced elsewhere in Europe, Czech works on Turkish themes written in the late 19th and early 20th centuries contained references to figures that were more important Others for the Czechs – namely the Jews and

243 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 226–29.

244 Ulrike Stamm, “Oriental Sexuality and Its Uses in Nineteenth-Century Travelogues,” in Hodkinson et al., *Deploying Orientalism*, 230; on older examples of such attitudes see Harrigan, *Veiled Encounters*, esp. 171.

245 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 51.

the Roma – and they sometimes mixed ethnic and racial stereotypes.²⁴⁶ In an early 19th-century drama by Josef Linda, *Jaroslav Šternberg v boji proti Tatarům* (Jaroslav Šternberg in Combat against the Tatars), the Tatars are associated with “bloodthirstiness, ferocity, and cruelty,” but the main villain and traitor, an alleged “Tatar,” turns out to be a Roma.²⁴⁷ Czech visitors to the Ottoman Empire showed little interest in the Roma, except for some passing remarks that were usually made by travelers in the Ottoman Balkans, and their views on the Roma were generally negative. According to Knotek, the Gypsies in Macedonia, described as short with white teeth and black hair, were the true embodiment of every negative saying about Gypsies: to steal like a Gypsy, to beg like a Gypsy, to lie like a Gypsy, and to swear like a Gypsy.²⁴⁸ In the same vein, the Middle Eastern scholar Jan Rypka wrote in a footnote to his translation of Muallim Naci’s autobiographic novel *Ömer’in Çocukluğu* (Omar’s Childhood): “[i]n Turkey, Gypsies do not enjoy a better reputation than in our country. Neither Christianity, nor Islam has changed them. They are engaged everywhere in the same honorable and dishonorable crafts that immediately come to our mind when we hear the word ‘Gypsy.’”²⁴⁹

The Jews, who were important Others for late 19th- and early 20th-century Czechs, occupied a more prominent place in travelogues than the Roma. Ottoman Jews sometimes received brief mention in the parts of a text in which they were not the main subject, but they were usually described in detail in the parts of the travelogue devoted to the empire’s heterogeneous population. The Jews are presented either alongside the Greeks and Armenians as merchants and moneylenders²⁵⁰ or in relation to their idiosyncratic way of life and habits. In the late 1890s, Guth wrote that in Izmir, Jews lived in poor conditions in their

246 Jonathan Boyarin, “The Other Within and the Other Without,” in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity*, ed. Laurence Jay Silberstein and Robert L. Cohn (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 424. Hálek connected “Gypsy, Armenian [and] Moor women and beggars” in the very title of one his travel sketches (*Cestopisy*, 200–203), where only the beggars appear in a gender-neutral form; he considered Arab and Moor women in attractive compared to the beautiful Armenian women.

247 Josef Linda, *Jaroslav Šternberg v boji proti Tatarům* (Prague: Nákladem České akademie věd a umění, 1930), 163, 16, and 29. In her collection of poems devoted to the Balkans and the Slavs, Krásnohorská (*K Slovanskému jihu*, 156) mentions briefly, but perhaps more symptomatically for its matter-of-factness, a sly Gypsy woman with a shallow soul – a harlot, empty, and without country or faith.

248 Knotek, *Balkán*, 67–69.

249 See Rypka’s notes in Mu’allim Nádží-Effendi, *Omarovo dětství: Až do jeho osmého roku*, transl. (with introduction and comments by) Jan Rypka (Prague: J. Otto, 1913), 116 (footnote 117).

250 Knotek, *Balkán*, 7; Kořenský, *Asie*, 206; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 101.

own filthy neighborhood, where their dirty progeny toddled through litter, while fat formless women chirped in a Spanish dialect and the men tried to cheat foreigners. Instead of Mustafas, Ismails, and Mohammeds, he went on, the *çarşı* (market) was full of Isaacs, Abrahams, and Salomons, but since anti-Semitism was in fashion, they pretended to be Turks. He alleged that the local Greeks envied the Jews and spread stories about them: as well as accusing them of blood libel, they would say, for instance, that wherever a Jew sowed his seeds the land went to waste, and when a Jew wanted to paddle the boat would not move.²⁵¹ According to Knotek, the Jews in Macedonia resembled the local population in every respect, but clung stubbornly to their own religious habits. “Every respect” was probably just a hyperbolic flourish, as Knotek then described the Jews as short, with red hair and yellow eyes, as smart but superstitious, as abhorring hard work, but happy to trade in anything and lend money. Knotek claimed that a Jew, even if rich, would walk around in dirty and ragged clothes with garlic in the pocket of his caftan, pretending to be poor. Recycling an accusation against the Jews common in the Czech lands, he wrote that, like everywhere else, they were able to persuade the local population that they sell things at a cheaper price than others, while in fact they found ways to cheat the people.²⁵² Other travelers paid less attention to the Jews in the Ottoman Empire, but they revealed how widespread anti-Semitic prejudices were simply by means of their casual comments about the Jews as heartless²⁵³ moneylenders,²⁵⁴ or as a sign of God’s trial (of the traveler).²⁵⁵

When it comes to casting aspersions on other ethnic or religious groups, the Jews were but one of a number of targets of Czechs’ criticism. The Czechs expressed similarly unsympathetic views about Greeks and Armenians. It was not uncommon for other Europeans to compare and lump these three groups together, too: in the early 20th century, Germans called the Armenians and the Greeks the “Jews of the Orient” and branded them exploiters, usurers, and

251 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 152–54.

252 Knotek, *Balkán*, 70–74.

253 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, esp. 38–39.

254 Němec, *Má cesta do Afriky*, 70–71.

255 Raušar (*Na půdě sopečné*, 124–25) described a young Jew in a European style of dress, who looked, however, completely Eastern, and he wrote about “a Jewish invasion” of a train he was riding on. Jiřík (*K pyramidám*, 20) in the same vein remarked that for one good deed done by a Jew on a boat he had forgiven the Jews the crucifixion of Jesus. Numerous negative Jewish figures appear in Hořica’s writing about the Balkan struggles and the resulting impression of the Turks is certainly more positive than that of the Jews. See Ignát Hořica, *Smutné i veselé z Bosny a Hercegoviny* (Prague: J. Otto, 1909), esp. 13–16.

politically disloyal inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire.²⁵⁶ Czechs often mentioned these three ethnic groups in one breath and depicted them as exceptionally skilled and sly merchants, cheating and growing rich through moneylending.²⁵⁷ Their character, according to travelers, could be summed up with the saying: “A Jew can trick three Christians, a Greek three Jews, but the Armenian three Greeks.”²⁵⁸

The Greeks in particular were associated with trade and considered liars, cheats, and boasters.²⁵⁹ Knotek claimed that they were deceitful and were ready to use any means to control the Slavic population, and thus ingratiated themselves with the Turks, who rewarded them with special treatment.²⁶⁰ Even the propagator of Greek Olympic ideas, Jiří Guth, who came to visit and admire ancient Greek monuments, was ambivalent in his views about contemporary Greeks. He wrote that owing to their agility and quick-wittedness the Greeks in Izmir were able to drive the Turks out of many professions; they fraternized with the Turks and even accepted posts in the government. They formed the intelligentsia of Izmir and were more open to European mores and innovations. Nevertheless, Guth considered even those Greeks who had moved to Izmir from their homes in Paris or London and who spoke perfect French or English unable to rid themselves of their “Oriental customs,” claiming they had bad manners and left a mess everywhere.²⁶¹ The Armenians fared little better: although Kořenský, writing after the war, considered them hard-working,²⁶² earlier travelers had described them as domineering and sly, incapable of hiding their Asian origin, and hated by others due to their financial skills.²⁶³ Čech

256 Eric D. Weitz, “Germany and the Ottoman Borderlands: The Entwining of Imperial Aspirations, Revolution, and Ethnic Violence,” in *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands*, ed. Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 162.

257 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 103; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 101; Knotek, *Balkán*, 42; Kořenský, *Asie*, 206. Wagner (*Na evropském východě*, 195) mentions that the Greeks, Armenians, and Bulgarians have an inborn trade spirit.

258 Kořenský, *Asie*, 206; Knotek, *Balkán*, 8.

259 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 101; J.V. Daneš, *Balkán po válce roku 1913: S mapkou poloostrova s dnešním politickým rozdělením* (Prague: J.R. Vilímeck, n.d., ca. 1914), 40. See also Němec, *Má cesta do Afriky*, 22–23.

260 Knotek, *Balkán*, 8, 42, and 60.

261 Guth, *Letem přes řecký kraj*, 127 and 150–52. It is perhaps worth noting that Guth was known as the arbiter of etiquette.

262 Kořenský, *Asie*, 206.

263 Knotek, *Balkán*, 62; Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 101; Kořenský, *Asie*, 206.

summed up his opinion on the Armenians of Istanbul by saying that they resembled spiders waiting to catch a fly.²⁶⁴

As well as the Jews, Armenians, and Greeks, who also interested travelers from other European countries,²⁶⁵ Czechs devoted attention to the Slavs and other ethnic groups who were living under Ottoman rule. The Slavs were depicted in a more positive light than the Jews or the Greeks, but not as faultless, and travelers were less unanimous in their opinions on various Slavic groups than they were on the Greeks, who were clearly disliked, in part because of their perceived mistreatment of the Slavs. Knotek described the Bulgarians in Macedonia as hard-working, forthright, cordial, and hospitable (a Bulgarian is “not like a Greek or an Armenian”²⁶⁶), but Daneš judged the Bulgarians to be debased, in contrast to the moral strength of the Serbs.²⁶⁷ Pomaks, the “Turkified Bulgarians,” were believed to get preferential treatment from the Turks and Knotek considered them to be even worse than the Turks themselves.²⁶⁸ In contrast, he depicted the Tatars as good farmers, honest, and patient, but prone to “breed like rabbits” because they practised polygamy.²⁶⁹ Svátek claimed that the Circassians and Kurds had disreputable morals and that the Levantines combined the good and bad qualities of the East and the West and were flirtatious, sly, and cunning.²⁷⁰

It is thus clear that the Turks were far from the only object of negative stereotyping. In fact, when travelers compared the Turks with other ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire, the comparison was not necessarily to the detriment of the Turks. For instance, Daneš considered the Turks comparable to the Greeks and Albanians in terms of their ability to boast and in terms of their moral strength.²⁷¹ Štolba appreciated the Turks and the Persians as unobtrusive and honest merchants and explicitly contrasted them with the glib and dishonest Greeks, Armenians, and Jews.²⁷² The Turks were often seen as exotic and were sometimes mocked, but they were generally not described as

264 Čech (*Upomínky z Východu*, 187) spent all his money in Istanbul and held the Armenians responsible for this.

265 On British travelers' views of the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews see Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, 265–73; on German views see Weitz, “Germany and the Ottoman Borderlands,” 162. See also Božidar Jezernik, *Wild Europe: The Balkans in the Gaze of Western Travellers* (London: Saqi Books, 2004), esp. 209.

266 Knotek, *Balkán*, 52.

267 Daneš, *Balkán po válce roku 1913*, 33.

268 Knotek, *Balkán*, 7 and 58.

269 *Ibid.*, 63 and 66–67.

270 Svátek, *V zemi pŕlmešice*, 101–2.

271 Daneš, *Balkán po válce roku 1913*, 40.

272 Štolba, *Ze slunných koutů Evropy*, 103.

qualitatively different from other ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire with whom they shared, first and foremost, an “Oriental” or “Asian” character.

7 Conclusion

If the pamphlets of the late 1870s depicted “the Turk” primarily as a violent and cruel warrior and an enemy of Christians and above all the Slavs, Czech travel writing does not create any uniform image of the Turks. The general impressions drawn from visiting the empire varied and views on the Turks also ranged from strongly negative (Hálek), to ambivalent (Neruda) and to prevalently positive (Klaus). A single author could even express wildly varying opinions about the Turks. The inconsistencies in the depictions of the Turks are occasionally the result of the authors’ inability to resist using a fitting or clever image created by somebody else, even when it contradicted their overall opinion on the Ottoman Empire. Their personal encounters with Ottoman reality only rarely inspired travelers to question and alter the preconceptions with which they had set out on their travel. Sometimes, however, they did change their mind, adding nuances to their views of the Turks, for instance, when they made a distinction between the educated intellectual elites they met, and the general masses of the population who fit the stereotype of uneducated Turks.

Czech travel writing on the Ottoman Empire was in dialogue with past and present works on the Turks, both Czech and foreign. This made Czech travel accounts rather eclectic, a characteristic they shared with travel literature on the Middle East at the time.²⁷³ They reproduced stereotypes and prejudices that can be found in older Czech travelogues and contemporary pamphlets – for example, images of the Turks as lazy, fatalist, violent, and cruel (more seldom also fanatic) and prone to bribery. The overall image that this travel literature produced, however, differed from the image generated by the anti-Turkish pamphlets in the 1870s; it was more heterogeneous and less one-sidedly negative; it was more nuanced and less unequivocal. Travelers seemed less persuaded of the negative impact of Islam, which they mostly described with interest and sometimes respect rather than hatred, and they wrote less about the Turks as the Slavs’ oppressors.

Czechs also “picked up” ideas and images from Western works. The various types of attitudes toward the Orient that had evolved gradually and had long been articulated in Western Europe found their way into the works of Czech

273 Deborah Manley, “Introduction,” in *Knowledge Is Light: Travellers in the Near East*, ed. Katherine Salahi (Oxford: ASTENE and Oxbow Books, 2011), VIII.

writers in the late 19th century. Some Czech authors shared the dismissive attitudes toward Ottoman attempts at modernization already expressed by Western travelers, while others praised such efforts; some wrote nostalgically about the loss of traditions, while others considered their continued existence to be a sign of backwardness. Czech accounts of journeys to the Ottoman Empire resembled West European travel literature in their tendency to both exotimize and domesticate what they had seen, in the way they described the panoramic views of the Bosphorus and the streets of Istanbul, including its street dogs, and in their evocation of a general Oriental setting on the one hand, and specific Orientalist images on the other. Svátek, the cosmopolitan writer whose words introduced this chapter, is a striking example of such an impact and of the Orientalist rhetoric and imagery borrowed from Western works.²⁷⁴

But Czech travelers did not simply reproduce Western literature. Unlike West European travelers, who often showed little interest in the contemporary inhabitants of the Middle East,²⁷⁵ Czech visitors to the turn-of-the-century Ottoman Empire paid attention not only, and often not particularly, to historical sites, as they also took an interest in the people around them. They evidently had limited contact with the ordinary Turkish-speaking population and they mostly interacted with foreigners or minorities who spoke European languages, but they still commented on contemporary intellectuals, imams, and others whom they observed or met. Furthermore, in contrast to their Western counterparts, Czech travelers paid no or little attention to Oriental despotism or to racial issues and racial mixing. Even their depictions of Ottoman women, including the Orientalist images in Svátek's travel book, were focused less on women's morals and sexuality than on their position in the family and society. This is linked to a deeper difference between Czech and Western travelers – a lack of Czech colonial interests in the Ottoman Empire. For the Czechs, who had no independent nation-state of their own, colonial expansion to the Ottoman Empire was not a real prospect, nor even a dream that they harbored. Before the war their attention was focused on more local problems and aims that lay within the Habsburg Empire and if they dreamed about a colonial enterprise at all, they did not locate it in the Ottoman realm. They did not have to justify any historical intervention in Ottoman affairs by criticizing despotic Ottoman rule, and they did not care about racial mixing in the Ottoman Empire, which did not concern Czech society.²⁷⁶

274 This "Orientalization" distinguished Czech travel writing from that of Southeast Europeans who, as Bracewell noted, did not find Ottoman reality exotic but rather familiar.

275 Gregory, "Scripting Egypt," 145; see also Nash, "Politics, Aesthetics and Quest," 56.

276 Racial mixing bothered some nationalists when it concerned the Jews in Czech society, but this was not reflected in travel literature on the Ottoman Empire.

It can be discerned in the writing of Czech travelers that there was not so much at stake for the Czech nation in the Ottoman Empire and Czech travel and travel writing were often motivated by simple curiosity, rather than by any political interests. What was “political” for the Czechs was the question of Ottoman rule over the Balkan Slavs, which occasionally influenced their thoughts about the fate of the Ottoman Empire and its expulsion from Europe. But despite their lack of expansionist plans Czech travelers clearly felt superior to the local population. Their sense of superiority stemmed from their identification with Europe. The travelogues helped to reaffirm this sense of superiority over the Ottoman Turks, a feeling that derived from the perceived preeminence of Europe, to which the Czechs unanimously felt they belonged, over the “Orient,” the realm to which they assigned not just the Turks but also other inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. Czechs’ opinions on the Turks thus should not be viewed in isolation; the accounts of their travel to the Ottoman Empire reveal the prejudices and various negative views they held of other ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire as well.

While their works resembled other East European travelogues in terms of the importance they placed on being European, the Czechs did not use the Ottoman Empire as a mirror against which to establish their society’s place in Europe, and instead seem to have taken their Europeanness for granted, at least in relation to the Ottoman Empire. They did not extol the virtues of Christianity over Islam and felt no need to show how different they were from the Ottoman Turks, though they did stress the difference between the Ottoman Empire and Europe. They traveled primarily as Europeans. The travelers’ Czechness was most visible when they compared what they observed on their journey with similar phenomena at home and when they focused on their compatriots in the Ottoman Empire. They did not represent the Habsburg Empire: those who called for the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkan territories were mostly speaking in the name of the Slavic brotherhood, and not from the perspective of the Habsburg Empire. The Czechs’ allegiance to the Habsburg Empire and to its mission and interests does not figure in their travel writing on the Ottoman Empire. This does not mean, as we will see in the next chapter, that Czechs could not identify with Austria-Hungary or have colonial ambitions of their own.

Civilizing the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Although in almost every European state women have for many years been allowed and encouraged to study at university, and female physicians are nothing new, especially for women's and children's diseases, the Austro-Hungarian government has outrun all other empires and countries by appointing the first female state physician on this continent and by installing her in this important office in the same genuine and binding way in which state officials are generally appointed. It is a Slavic land that has been designated as the place where the first female state physician is to work, and it is three times the pleasure for us that she is our countrywoman, like us in her opinion and spiritual outlook, a noble-minded and highly educated patriot, Miss Anna Bayerová, MD, from Bern, known to our readers, if not otherwise, from previous years as a spirited contributor to our paper. We shall keep in festive memory the date on which the Austro-Hungarian state appointed this graceful-minded Slavic woman as the most desired assistant of her Slavic sisters, the Mohammedan Serbs in Bosnia, protector of their physical health and moral sensitivity.

ŽENSKÉ LISTY, 1892¹

On January 8, 1892, in the Bosnian city of Tuzla, for the first time ever in history a Czech woman swore before government officials the solemn oath that would allow her to become a physician in the service of the Austro-Hungarian state. The paradox of a government that did not allow women to study or to practice medicine in the Austro-Hungarian Empire hiring a female physician to serve in occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina was not lost on contemporaries. A Czech women's journal reporting on the event, however, rejoiced especially at the fact that the physician was a Czech and emphasized her role as a guardian of the health and "moral sensitivity" of Slavic Muslim women. Anna Bayerová had studied medicine in Switzerland. In 1891 she applied for the position of state physician in Bosnia, hoping that this would eventually enable her to practice medicine in Bohemia. On the way to her new post, she stopped in Vienna to meet Benjamin

1 "První státní lékařka v Evropě," *Ženské listy*, February 1892, 35.

Kállay, the joint minister of finance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, who since 1882 was responsible for the administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina. His encouragement raised Bayerová's hopes for the future: she believed that the government was going to allow women to practice medicine also in Austria.²

Female physicians became part of Austro-Hungarian attempts to find the best way to govern the former Ottoman provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which Austria-Hungary had occupied in 1878. The occupation presented the Austro-Hungarian administration with the challenge of ruling in a different type of setting where the population included a large proportion of Muslims:³ according to the 1879 census, 43 percent of the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina were Orthodox/Serbs, 18 percent were Catholic/Croats, and nearly 39 percent Muslims.⁴ The complex ethnic make-up of Bosnia-Herzegovina made it the target of territorial claims from Serbia and Montenegro, as well as the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary. To prevent identification and potential alliances with the ethnically close Slavic states, Kállay supported the creation of a "Bosnian nationality."⁵ In his search for allies, apart from the small Catholic minority, which was supposed to be naturally aligned with the Catholic Habsburg Empire, Kállay looked for allies among the Muslim elites who had been in power in the Ottoman provinces before the occupation.⁶ His administration supported the Bosnian-Muslim press and schools for Muslim children, and by employing female physicians it sought to reach out particularly to Muslim women and present itself as a bearer of progress.⁷

The nature of Austria-Hungary's relationship to the occupied territories has been a matter of controversy.⁸ Although scholars focus primarily on the

2 Unable to get her diploma recognized in Austria-Hungary, Bayerová went to practice in Bern. See Ctibor Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami: Působení úředních lékařek v Bosně a Hercegovině v letech 1892–1918* (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1992), 27–30.

3 After acquiring control of areas with a Muslim population, the Habsburgs tried to present themselves as the governors of Oriental peoples and territories: already at the 1882 exposition celebrating the anniversary of Austrian rule in Trieste the government presented a "Turkish style" Bosnian pavilion. See Baskar, "Oriental Travels," 226–27.

4 Srećko M. Džaja, *Bosnien-Herzegowina in der österreichisch-ungarischen Epoche (1878–1918): Die Intelligentsia zwischen Tradition und Ideologie* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1994), 39.

5 Ladislav Hladký, *Bosna a Hercegovina: Historie nešťastné země* (Brno: Doplněk, 1996), 47–49.

6 According to Daneš, the new government tried to gain the support of the "Mohammedan nobility" by giving them access to modern culture, but most Mohammedans felt no affection for the new administration. See Jiří V. Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina* (Prague: Český čtenář, 1909), 92.

7 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 122. On the Habsburg cultural mission see Robin Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism: The Habsburg "Civilizing Mission" in Bosnia, 1878–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

8 On the history of Bosnia-Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian occupation see Clemens Ruthner et al., eds., *Wechselwirkungen: Austria-Hungary, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the*

attitudes of the Austro-Hungarian administration's representatives, intellectuals, and writers, and the institutions of governing and Austro-Hungarian enterprises have not yet been sufficiently analyzed, existing literature as well as early 20th-century sources suggest that there are grounds to raise the question of colonial dominance over Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁹ The Austro-Hungarian government looked for inspiration in the policy of more established colonial empires, particularly British rule over the Muslims in India,¹⁰ and at least some contemporaries viewed the Austro-Hungarian regime as a colonial power, as the words of Jiří V. Daneš, a Czech professor of geography, from 1909 suggest: "Bosnia and Herzegovina have become a colony, the management of which has been modelled on the example of European settlements in other continents. The domestic population was meant to remain passive targets of care coming from the higher-ups, grateful for everything that the government introduced."¹¹ While Czech historians tend not to view Bosnia-Herzegovina as a former colony, Pieter Judson calls it "the empire's lone colony – or protectorate,"¹² and others speak of a quasi-colonial relationship¹³ or consider the occupation in 1878 to be "pure colonialist expansionism"; the justification for it, according to Stijn Vervaet, may have come from the perceived backwardness and Oriental

Western Balkans, 1878–1918 (New York: Peter Lang, 2008). On Austro-Hungarian colonial ambitions and a postcolonial perspective on Austrian literature see Alexander Honold, "Kakanien kolonial: Auf der Suche nach Welt-Österreich," in *Kakanien Revisited: Das Eigene und das Fremde (in) der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie*, ed. Wolfgang Müller-Funk, Peter Plener, and Clemens Ruthner (Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag, 2002), 104–20; Clemens Ruthner, "K.(u.)k. postcolonial? Für eine neue Lesart der österreichischen (und benachbarter) Literatur/en," in Müller-Funk, Plener, and Ruthner, *Kakanien Revisited*, 93–103.

- 9 Daneš (*Bosna a Hercegovina*, 138–39) stated that the Austro-Hungarian administration supported the settlement of "German peasants"; foreign "colonists" (including German, Czech, Italian, Polish, Magyar, and Ukrainian families) received 21,892 hectares of land, but this practice was interrupted after 1905 due to protests from the local population. Also Benno Gammerl in his comparative study of British and Habsburg imperial policy regarding ethnic diversity calls Bosnia-Herzegovina the only colonial possession of the Habsburg Empire. See Benno Gammerl, *Staatsbürger, Untertanen und Andere: Der Umgang mit ethnischer Heterogenität im Britischen Weltreich und im Habsburgerreich 1867–1918* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2010), 151 and 214.
- 10 Gammerl (*Staatsbürger, Untertanen und Andere*, 214, note 220) quotes Milojković-Djurić, according to whom Bosnia was by contemporaries called "our European India."
- 11 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, [3].
- 12 Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*, 378.
- 13 Raymond Detrez, "Colonialism in the Balkans: Historic Realities and Contemporary Perceptions," *Kakanien Revisited* (2002): 3, accessed December 20, 2017, <http://www.kakanien-revisited.at/beitr/theorie/RDetrez1.pdf>.

character of Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹⁴ And the Austro-Hungarian project is also viewed as imperialist by Robin Okey, who has devoted extensive attention to Austria-Hungary's "civilizing mission," whereby it sought to compete with the civilizing missions of the Southern Slavs and to protect the empire from them.¹⁵ Some scholars argue that the occupation gave rise to a specific type of Orientalism that originated in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹⁶ Andre Gingrich coined the term "frontier Orientalism" to describe the attitude that constructs a contested border, where the eternal "we," the Austrians, are contrasted with the Oriental "Turk," later transformed into a Bosnian colonial subject: in the Austrian imaginary, the Turks were a metaphor for "the Bad Muslims," the former dangerous invaders and later defeated and humiliated opponents. Bosnian Muslims, in contrast, had by the end of the colonial period become "the Good Muslims," loyal, armed allies, who fought for Austria-Hungary against the Serbs.¹⁷ Johann Heiss and Johannes Feichtinger suggest that after the occupation, a dichotomy started to develop between "good Orientals" – the Christian and Muslim Slavs of Bosnia-Herzegovina living in the Orient "close to home" – and "bad Orientals," i.e. the Muslim Turks, whether they lived in the occupied territories or in the Ottoman Empire, that is, in the "distant Orient."¹⁸ The Orient "close to home" provided an opportunity for "actual or quasi-colonial

14 Stijn Vervaet, "Cultural Politics, Nation Building and Literary Imagery: Towards a Post-Colonial Reading of the Literature(s) of Bosnia-Herzegovina 1878–1918," *Kakanien Revisited* (2009): 10–11, accessed December 20, 2017, <http://www.kakanien-revisited.at/beitrfallstudie/SVervaetz.pdf>. Also Austro-Hungarian sources show that Bosnia and Herzegovina were perceived as backward countries. Thus, education was considered "absolutely primitive" before the occupation and so were houses in Bosnia and other aspects of the local population's lives and activities, primitive even by the standards of "today," i.e. at the turn of the century. See *Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild*, vol. 22, *Bosnien und Hercegovina* (Vienna: Kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1901), esp. 330 and 345. I am grateful to Pieter Judson for bringing this source to my attention.

15 Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, vii.

16 Vesna Goldsworthy, Maria Todorova, Bakić-Hayden (and in a way also Larry Wolff writing on Eastern Europe) and others in the 1990s were already persuasively demonstrating that post-Enlightenment Eurocentrism and 19th-century imperial projects had a major impact on Europe itself. See Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania*; Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Milica Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995): 917–31; Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

17 Gingrich, "Frontier Myths of Orientalism," 110 and 107.

18 Johann Heiss and Johannes Feichtinger, "Distant Neighbors: Uses of Orientalism in the Late Nineteenth-Century Austro-Hungarian Empire," in Hodkinson et al., *Deploying Orientalism*, 148–65.

enterprises and made possible the notion of civilizing missions by the empire.”¹⁹

In the late 19th century, the Czech lands ranked among the economically most developed regions of the Habsburg Empire. Czech-speaking entrepreneurs and professionals took an active part in the Austro-Hungarian expansion. They founded factories and construction firms in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Czech capital helped to finance local businesses, and Czech financial institutions established branch offices in Sarajevo.²⁰ The Czechs, speakers of a Slavic language that the local population could understand, served as clerks in the Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia-Herzegovina provided many Czech teachers, doctors, architects, officers, and skilled and unskilled workers with work.²¹ State-employed physicians Anna Bayerová and her colleague Bohuslava Kecková, who worked in Mostar from 1893 to 1911, were part of a stream of Czechs who temporarily or permanently settled in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Despite Kállay’s encouragement, Bayerová had to face numerous obstacles in Tuzla, ranging from difficult dealings with her superiors and excessive administrative duties to problems with her salary and the hardships involved in traveling around the province in freezing weather day and night. As she was unable to find an apartment, she rented what she described as a noisy and dirty place above the worst Turkish café in town.²² She was eventually able to get a transfer to Sarajevo, where she was in close contact with Paulina Irby, the famous British author of travel books on Southeastern Europe and the founder of a school for Serbian girls in Sarajevo.²³ Even in Sarajevo, Bayerová complained, her administrative duties prevented her from taking care of her patients as she had to sit in an office full of men, and no Muslim woman would be allowed to enter such a room. Having drafted a critical report

19 Heiss and Feichtinger, “Distant Neighbors,” 150. Scholars dealing with Bosnia-Herzegovina focus especially on literary sources, however, and thus they do not answer the question as to whether Austria-Hungary’s activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina differed from their enterprises in other parts of the empire and can be rightly labelled “colonial.”

20 See Cibor Nečas, *Na prahu české kapitálové expanse: Rozpínávanost českého bankovního kapitálu ve střední, jihovýchodní a východní Evropě v období rakousko-uherského imperializmu* (Brno: Univerzita J.E. Purkyně, 1987), esp. 27–31 and 63–65.

21 Ladislav Hladký, “Podíl Čechů na kulturním a společenském povznesení Bosny a Hercegoviny v letech 1878–1918,” *Slavia*, no. 1–3 (2008): 265–75. Czechs made up about 13 percent of the Austro-Hungarians in Bosnia-Herzegovina; see Zdeněk Uherek et al., *Češi v Bosně a Hercegovině: Úvod do problematiky s výběrovou bibliografií* (Prague: Etnologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, 2000), 8–9.

22 Anna Honzáková, *Dr. Med. Anna Bayerová, 1853–1924: První česká lékařka ve Švýcarech* (Prague: Nákladem Ženské národní rady, 1937), 24–27; Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 30–38.

23 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 32 and 39; on Irby see Goldsworthy, “The Balkans,” 29–30.

on the situation, she resigned from her job, just one year after arriving in Bosnia. Nevertheless, her pioneering role as a female physician and the selfless assistance she gave to poor Muslim and other women in Bosnia have been acknowledged by Czech and international historians alike.²⁴

Bayerová's story is one small but significant piece in the larger picture and narrative of Czech involvement in the occupied provinces, a story of "Czech help" in the cultural and economic advancement of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a story that was constructed in the 19th century and is still accepted by historians today. In this narrative, the beginnings of the Czech presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina were far from auspicious. The Czechs participated in the seizure of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the suppression of opposition from the local, mainly Muslim, population. The inhabitants of the occupied provinces first thought of the Czechs as *Švábe* (Germans from the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and as *kuferaši* (from *kufer*, i.e. suitcase), people arriving in Bosnia-Herzegovina with a suitcase and a plan to get rich, much like the "carpet-baggers" after the American Civil War.²⁵ Gradually, however, the local people are claimed to have understood that the Czechs were either trying to build a professional career there or were motivated by a sincere (Pan-)Slavic sentiment. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, so the story continues, the Czechs contributed significantly to the development of the Bosnian economy, education, and culture and distinguished themselves as architects, musicians, and scholars, and as the founders of local museums. They also worked as successful engineers, lawyers, geodesists, pharmacists, and doctors, not to mention the many who were employed as skilled and unskilled workers and craftsmen.²⁶ The Czechs allegedly even helped to represent Bosnia to the world: Alfons Mucha was commissioned by the French organizer of the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900 to decorate the Bosnian pavilion.²⁷ In short, the Czechs believe themselves to have helped to create modern Bosnia.

24 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 49–50; Brigitte Fuchs, "Orientalizing Disease: Austro-Hungarian Policies of 'Race,' Gender, and Hygiene in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1874–1914," in *Health, Hygiene, and Eugenics in Southeastern Europe to 1945*, ed. Christian Promitzer, Sevasti Trubeta, and Marius Turda (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2011), 83; Brigitte Fuchs, "Austria-Hungary's Civilizing Mission in Bosnia and Its Positive Effects on Domestic Feminists' Demands 1890–1918" (paper presented at the conference "Gender and Empire: Exploring Comparative Perspectives and Intersectional Approaches," Global South Studies Center, Universität zu Köln, September, 2015).

25 Hladký, "Podíl Čechů," 267.

26 *Ibid.*, 268–70.

27 Milan Hlavačka, "L'Exposition Universelle – Světová výstava 1900 v Paříži: Fenomén světových výstav v druhé polovině 19. století," in *Alfons Mucha – Paříž 1900: Pavilon Bosny a Hercegoviny na světové výstavě*, ed. Milan Hlavačka, Jana Orlíková, and Petr Štembera

There is no doubt that many of these activities benefited the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and, in some cases, their main purpose might have been to help the Czechs' "Slavic brothers." However, the narrative of selfless help ignores an important aspect of Czech involvement in the region: for those who worked in or for Bosnia-Herzegovina, this was also an opportunity to get a job and earn money. The first female doctors, Bayerová and Kecková, were no exceptions.²⁸ It was difficult to get a job as a physician abroad and nearly impossible in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; after returning from Bosnia, Bayerová indeed struggled to find a job in Prague. Thus, "official service in the occupied territories was for them one of the few solutions."²⁹ Regardless of the difficulties and sacrifices connected with the task of being the first female physicians in Bosnia,³⁰ their work in Bosnia-Herzegovina should also be seen in this pragmatic light. As should the activities that other Czechs pursued there.

This chapter analyzes Czechs' attitudes toward the former Ottoman provinces Bosnia and Herzegovina and their Muslim population. The relationship Czechs had with this group was made more complex by the fact that the "near-by Muslims" of Bosnia-Herzegovina were Slavs like the Czechs themselves. Given the prevailingly secular character of Czech nationalism, the chapter asks how much it mattered that these Slavs were at the same time Muslims whom the Czechs called "Turks." While the previous chapter, examining journeys by Czechs into the Ottoman realm, addressed Oriental travels in a non-colonial setting, here the focus shifts to Czech colonial ambitions or "colonial complicity." According to some scholars, in societies outside Western centers "colonial complicity" characterized their participation in hegemonic discourses and practices of dominance as a way of approximating a model of relating to non-European societies introduced by Western powers.³¹ The Czech case was an example of "colonialism without colonies," a concept that refers to "the presence and perseverance of colonial structures and power relations in countries that, according to the hegemonic (self-) representation, have not been part of the colonial projects."³² The chapter first describes Czechs' views on Slavic

(Prague: Mucha Trust, 2002), 29–30. Mucha was, of course, commissioned by the imperial authorities and thus, regardless of his national or Pan-Slavic feeling, he was acting as an agent of the Habsburg Empire.

28 Kecková wrote that the salary she received from the government was 1600 *florin* (the currency in Austria-Hungary until 1892). Bohuslava Kecková, "Z lékařské činnosti MUDr. Bohuslavy Keckové," *Lada*, no. 2 (1895): 14.

29 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 124.

30 *Ibid.*, 32–47.

31 See Lüthi, Falk, and Purtschert, "Colonialism without Colonies," 4.

32 *Ibid.*, 5.

Muslims, arguing that they were essentially ambivalent. It then presents Bosnia-Herzegovina as the “near Orient,” which was a destination for Czech tourists. The next parts of the chapter describe the Czechs’ attitudes toward the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and set them in the context of Czech colonial ambitions.

1 What’s in a Name?

The Czechs had no single term with which to refer to the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They often just called them “Turks,” though they occasionally distinguished “local Turks,” i.e. the Slavic converts to Islam, from the “true Turks” in Asia, sometimes called Ottomans or Ottoman Turks. Also quite common was the more pejorative *Turčini*, used to denote both Slavic Muslims and Ottoman Turks,³³ and the most unambiguously negative *Poturčenci* (i.e. the Turkified).³⁴ *Mohamedáni* (Mohammedans), a term that was originally also used in official documents of the Austro-Hungarian administration,³⁵ was more popular than “Muslims” (*moslímové*, *Moslemíni*³⁶), and appeared alongside “Mohammedan Slavs/Serbs” and, more rarely, “Bosnians.” The various terms were used inconsistently and often interchangeably within a single piece of writing or even on a single page, as illustrated by the words of the writer and teacher Antonín Zavadil: “Bosnian Mohammedans call themselves Turčins, they have not renounced their Slavic origin and have not forgotten their Mohammedan language, but they have always been fanatic in their opposition to their Slavic compatriots who were of a different religion, as the proverb says: a Turkified person is worse than a Turk.”³⁷ This terminological variation was, this chapter argues, indicative of Czechs’ ambivalent feelings about Slavic Muslims.

In postcolonial studies, ambivalence denotes “the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and

33 Krásnohorská, *K slovanskému jihu*, 16, 79, 135–37, and 195; Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 110; Knotek, *Balkán*, 44; Zavadil, *Obrázky z Bosny*, 28 and 32.

34 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 61; Josef J. Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina v minulosti a přítomnosti* (Prague: Spolek pro vydávání laciných knih českých, 1882), 93 and 124; Zavadil, *Obrázky z Bosny*, 28.

35 Hladký, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 50.

36 Mayerhofer, *Ilustrovaná kronika*, 110; Svátek, *V zemi pŭlměšice*, 41; Klaus, *Do říše pŭlměšice*, 224–25.

37 Zavadil, *Obrázky z Bosny*, 28.

colonized.”³⁸ The concept applies mostly to the colonized population’s relationship to the colonizers, oscillating between rejection of and complicity with colonialism or incorporating both. However, it also refers to colonial discourse and its patronizing attitude toward the colonized; it describes an approach that (cl)aims to elevate the “indigenous people” while simultaneously trying to capitalize on them. This understanding of ambivalence can also be applied to the asymmetry of power created by the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The occupation markedly increased the Czech interest in and need for information about Bosnia-Herzegovina. The two major Czech 19th-century encyclopedias illustrate how much this interest grew in the second half of the 19th century: in 1860, Rieger’s *Slovník naučný* (The Encyclopedia) devoted fewer than six pages to “Bosnia,”³⁹ while the entry on Bosnia (with Herzegovina) in *Ottův slovník naučný* (Otto’s Encyclopedia) in 1891, written by six authors, was 16 pages long.⁴⁰ Both encyclopedias stated that the local “Mohammedans” were descendants of the old Bosnian nobility, who converted to Islam in order to keep their estates, and some of them were urban craftsmen and traders; they called themselves Turks (*Turčíní*), but had not forgotten their origins and national language; in fact, both entries on Bosnia alleged, the *begs* had preserved the purest Serbian language, but soiled it by mixing in Turkish words. Both encyclopedias described them as fatalists and often religious fanatics, interested only in ruling others.⁴¹ According to *Ottův slovník naučný*, the Bosnian Mohammedans’ Slavic origin was evident in the fact that they had not embraced polygamy (unlike fatalism and fanaticism). Until the occupation, they had been the worst enemies of their Christian brothers, which was reflected in surviving local idioms: it is a sin to kill a dog or an ox, but to kill a Christian is to be commended; and a Turk can do what he likes with the Orthodox, as long as he washes his hands afterwards.⁴²

Czechs held the view that the Bosnian church had adopted the theology of the persecuted Bogomils, a dualistic religious sect founded in Bulgaria in the 10th century.⁴³ This theory helped explain how it was that some Slavs had

38 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2007), 10–11.

39 Rieger, *Slovník naučný* (Prague: Kober and Markgraf, 1860), 1:822–27.

40 *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1891), 4:428–44.

41 Rieger, *Slovník naučný*, 1:824; *Ottův slovník*, 4:432.

42 *Ottův slovník*, 4:432–33. These idioms, together with other information, were later repeated in travelogues. See, e.g., Zavadil, *Obrázky z Bosny*, 28.

43 See John V.A. Fine, “The Medieval and Ottoman Roots of Modern Bosnian Society,” in *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the*

become Muslims: the Slavic Muslims were considered descendants of Bosnia's former nobility, most of whom were Bogomils, who, in order to preserve their rights and property after the Ottoman conquest, had adopted the faith of their Muslim conquerors *en masse*. Local rulers' persecution of the Bogomils combined with European states' attitude toward them during the Ottoman conquest made this population more willing to convert to Islam under "Turkish" rule, after which the local Muslims became the ruling class, though they did not hesitate to fight with the Ottoman Turks for their privileges.⁴⁴

The uprisings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875, as we saw in the first chapter, strengthened Czech animosity toward the Turks, who seemed villainous in the eyes of some – Holeček, for instance, wrote in 1876 how Montenegrins grew cautious whenever they saw someone approaching who might, as he put it, be "a bad person or even a Turk."⁴⁵ This animosity extended also to "local Muslims" in Bosnia and was expressed in the pejorative label "Turkified" (*Poturčenci*). There is an old Czech saying that "a Turkified person is worse than a Turk"; it was also cited by Zavadil and is still used today to describe how new converts can be even more zealous than old believers. Christian apostates who had betrayed their faith and accepted the religion of the enemy were considered to be more violent and fanatic defenders of Islam than the Turks themselves. In 1882 the journalist Josef Jakub Toužimský wrote that Bosnia-Herzegovina had suffered more than any other country under Turkish rule; the Christians might have been able to endure the Turks, but they could not do so and simultaneously resist the local nobility who had accepted Islam. "The Bosnian and Herzegovinian Turkified have become not only zealous adherents of Islam but also the jealous defenders of their privileges, and opponents of anything new."⁴⁶

Reports from Czechs who had participated in the conquest of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the suppression of the subsequent local Muslim uprisings breathed new life into the stereotype of the "terrible Turk," and now it was applied also to Slavic Muslims. One such account, while it was far from supportive of the incursion into Bosnia-Herzegovina and criticized Austrian military officers, portrayed the local "Turks" as barbarians and beasts who tortured

Dissolution of Yugoslavia, ed. Mark Pinson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 8.

44 *Dvacet let práce kulturní: Cesta Bosnou a Hercegovinou, již vykonali J.U.Dr. Emanuel Dyk, Max Hájek, František König, říšští i zemští poslanci* (Plzeň: Knihotiskárna J. Císaře, 1899), 14–15; Ludvík Kuba, *Čtení o Bosně a Hercegovině: Cesty a studie z roků 1893–1896* (Prague: Družstevní práce, 1937), 47; Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 21 and 61–63; Jan M. Černý, *Hercegovina: Země a lid; Dle zápisků vlastenců a zkušeností cizinců* (Prague: J. Otto, 1876), 9–10.

45 Holeček, *Černá Hora*, 27.

46 Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 93–94.

their captives, forced them to kiss their feet, and cut the heads off dead enemies.⁴⁷ Another participant in the fighting repeatedly compared the Muslims to cannibals: "...we stood fully armed against the abominably cannibalistic enemy, and I am not exaggerating, the Zulus, Bagirmis, Nyam Nyams, Bechuans, Hottentots and similar South African tribes behaved with more chivalry toward European travelers than the Bosnian Turks did toward us."⁴⁸

Although a shift in Czechs' views of Muslims can be identified between the late 1870s and the 1900s, their views did not develop linearly, but were marked by both continuity and constant variation. Thus, not all the participants in the fights in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the late 1870s and early 1880s saw their adversaries as cannibals and beasts; some painted a complex picture of the Muslims they had fought. In his memoirs Ignát Hořica described the violence on the Austrian and "Turkish" sides as comparable. The Muslims did sometimes cut off an enemy's head, but he portrayed them as brave defenders of their country against invaders. One chapter in the memoir that recalls a "Turkish fanatic" executed for murder points out that the murder was a reaction to similar acts committed by the Austrian army.⁴⁹ Hořica believed the war to have been absurd: "How many men of the beautiful and healthy Slavic tribe were annihilated so quickly! It was also a war of brothers against brothers, and [look] how it was waged!"⁵⁰

The distinction between the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Ottoman Turks was often blurred. But the association was sometimes made on the basis of some kind of Ottoman or "Turkish" heritage. A renowned historian, Čeněk Zíbrt, argued in 1909 that the current problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina should be dealt with in the same way (by arms) that Czech treatises had proposed tackling the Turkish threat – but that was back in the early modern period!⁵¹ The two groups continued to be conflated after the annexation. The writer and journalist Josef Jan Svátek (whom we met in the previous chapter) explained that the annexation generated a need for a better understanding of Turkey, because "our wish is that after the annexation of Slavic Bosnia and Herzegovina not only will those countries in which the Turkish influence is still excessively felt take to us kindly, but also the rest of the Turkish Empire will live

47 *Povstání v Bosně: Pravdivé příhody rakouského vojáka v Bosně a Hercegovině* (Prague: A. Reinward, 1883), 74–80.

48 Edmund Chaura, *Obrázky z okupace bosenské* (Prague: Přítel domoviny, n.d., ca. 1893), 37–38.

49 Hořica, *Smutné i veselé z Bosny a Hercegoviny*, 47.

50 *Ibid.*, 43.

51 Čeněk Zíbrt, "Balkánská otázka a Bosna i Hercegovina ve světle staročeských knih o Turcku," pt. 4, *Zlatá Praha*, December 11, 1909, 140.

in peace and friendship with us.”⁵² Repeating the saying about Bosnian Muslims looking more favorably on dogs than on Christians, Antonín Zavadil argued in 1911 that this explained the number of dogs that could be seen “in Constantinople.”⁵³ And there are more examples revealing how much the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Ottoman Turks were closely connected, or even interchangeable, in the minds of Czechs.

Most Czech writers at the same time paradoxically emphasized that the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite their religion, were Slavs and were thus their (Slavic) brothers. It is interesting to ask, however, whose brothers the Czechs thought the Muslims were. Edin Hajdarpasic has suggested the concept of (br)other to describe the attitude of Christian Serbs and Croats to their Muslim compatriots in Bosnia: “The co-national, in this understanding, is the national (br)other: signifying at the same time the potential of being both ‘brother’ and ‘Other,’ containing the fantasy of both complete assimilation and ominous, insurmountable difference – and thus making visible a range of passages between seeming opposites.”⁵⁴ Hajdarpasic has highlighted the efforts that were made to “nationalize Bosnian Muslims” and the local Muslim population’s varying responses to the nationalist rhetoric, which complicated the nationalists’ plans and the neat categorization that was imposed by the Austro-Hungarian administration – and also employed by Czech observers.

According to the Czechs, the Muslims shared with the Christians of Bosnia-Herzegovina the same habits and customs, interests, and legal consciousness, which revealed their common Slavic roots.⁵⁵ Czechs argued that the Muslims of Bosnia might have called themselves Turks, but many did not speak Turkish, and they pointed out that some “true Turks” who had settled in Bosnia and Herzegovina had in fact adopted the local language. They observed that the Muslims were speaking Serbo-Croatian like everyone else in their home country and felt a real patriotic love for the language.⁵⁶ Czech writers were astonished by the Muslims’ deep, even “fanatic” devotion to Islam, but claimed that many of these Muslims knew little about Muhammad’s teachings.⁵⁷ What most obviously and significantly showed the Muslims to be Slavs in the eyes of Czech observers was their family habits: Muslims shared with their Christian

52 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 1, 24–25, and 54–55.

53 Zavadil, *Obrázky z Bosny*, 28.

54 Edin Hajdarpasic, *Whose Bosnia? Nationalism and Political Imagination in the Balkans, 1840–1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 16.

55 *Dvacet let práce kulturní*, 17.

56 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 21–22; Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 119; *Dvacet let práce kulturní*, 14–15; Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 92; Kuba, *Čtení o Bosně*, 60.

57 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 21–22.

compatriots a patriarchal mentality, they were monogamous and did not exercise the right of the Hanefite rite to four wives, they rarely divorced and their family life was orderly, with an admirable companionship and mutual respect shown among family members.⁵⁸ The family life of the Muslims was considered exemplary. Holeček wrote that society would not be lost as long as the strong basis of the pure Mohammedan family life remained unshaken.⁵⁹ He went so far as to claim that, “[i]n truth, one does not find among the Western Christians either as much conjugal love or as much family love as among the Mohammedans.”⁶⁰

Czechs for the most part did not explicitly call Slavic Muslims the “Czechs’ brothers,” they were considered rather the brothers of the Serbs and Croats, with whom it was felt they should eventually unite. That the Serbs and Croats were the Czechs’ brothers implied that the Slavic Muslims were too, but this was not a kinship emphasized by most Czechs, who focused instead on how desirable it would be for unity and brotherhood to form among the religiously divided Slavs of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The article celebrating Bayerová’s appointment quoted at the beginning of this chapter was exceptional in that it spoke about “her Slavic sisters, the Mohammedan Serbs in Bosnia.”⁶¹ Czech women did not generally call Muslim women their “sisters” any more than they called Muslim men their brothers. For example, describing her travels through Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, Máša Absolonová wrote about “our Slavic brothers,” the Serbs and Montenegrins, but she associated the Muslims (*moslemíni*) with danger, noting that a military presence was necessary in the Muslim-inhabited area.⁶²

Compared to their Christian compatriots, the Muslims were considered less refined and civilized. In an article about her impressions from Bosnia, published in 1893, Bayerová praised the Bosnian Muslims’ ability to choose the most beautiful locations for their homes, but claimed that the people lacked order, an interest in useful gardening, and good taste. She had seen many tasteless reproductions of art works or pictures of Mekka, including a terrible fresco of the bridge in Mostar, and she found portraits only in the homes of the most “advanced” Mohammedans. She commented ironically on the Muslims’ love for onion and garlic, which made them recognizable as soon as they entered a

58 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 22; Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 123–24.

59 Josef Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina za okupace* (Prague: Josef Holeček, 1901), 63.

60 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 46.

61 “První státní lékařka v Evropě,” 35.

62 Absolonová, “Přes hranice Černé Hory,” 305. Marie Absolonová (1888–?), née Marvánková, accompanied her husband, the famous archeologist and paleontologist Karel Absolon, on his travels to the Balkans in 1908 and 1912–1913 and took pictures documenting the trips.

room, and on other habits that she felt showed their lack of civilized manners.⁶³ Her words suggest that she viewed Islam not as causing Slavic Muslims' animosity or fanaticism, but rather as a cultural issue, and as responsible for their "backwardness."⁶⁴

Nonetheless, both Bayerová and her colleague Kecková clearly cared about their local patients, including the Muslim women. In a letter to a friend in 1892 Bayerová wrote how pleased she was with "her Mohammedan women"; it was only because of them that she had not given up her job.⁶⁵ Kecková noted that 360 of her 710 patients in 1893 were Muslim women and she attributed her achievements to the support provided by the government, the Mostar newspapers, and the Catholic, Orthodox, and Muslim religious representatives who recommended her to local women. She added that even the doctors in Mostar accepted her without jealousy. Perhaps owing to the undeniable success of her mission, she showed more sympathy than contempt for the Muslims. She claimed she was happy in her job and "loved her uneducated but open and sincere patients," whom she was glad to advise and help also in matters of the household.⁶⁶ She stood by her words: she remained in Mostar as a doctor almost until her death in 1911.

As the examples mentioned so far make clear, there was much that was paradoxical about the ways the Czechs viewed the Muslims. The Muslims could be both portrayed as the defenders of Christians and called "Turkified" fanatics.⁶⁷ The "Turkified" were seen to have preserved many habits from the Christian past: they demonstrated sincere hospitality and faithfulness in friendship and they practiced *pobratimství*, the brotherhood of choice, which could be established even between a Christian and a Muslim, and which was considered more sacred than kinship. At the same time, the Muslims were described as belligerent, as fiercely vengeful, and as hating outsiders, though so, too, sometimes were the Christians of Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁶⁸ Even "fanaticism" could be interpreted positively: "The Mohammedans are famous for their pure

63 Anna Bajerová, "Črty z Bosny: Feuilleton; Domy Mohamedánů," pt. 1, *Pšován*, April 9, 1893, [1–2]. In the article, Bayerová's name is spelled Bajerová.

64 Bayerová's article is preceded, in an earlier issue of the journal, by a brief report about Bayerová's lecture for the local audience, in which she described the social and family life of Bosnian Muslim women, their mores, upbringing, and superstitiousness. "Různé zprávy," *Pšován*, March 12, 1893.

65 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 35.

66 Kecková, "Z lékařské činnosti," 14.

67 Třeštík described how during the uprising some Muslim Bosnians defended the representatives of the Austro-Hungarian administration against attacks from their Turkish coreligionists. See Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 63.

68 Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 123.

and honest character,” Daneš wrote in 1909, “their religious fanaticism gives them moral support against the corruption coming from cultured Europe...”⁶⁹ The associating of Slavic Muslims with religious fanaticism, which was stereotypically attributed to Ottoman Turks, was both widespread and persistent, and even appeared in contexts that were otherwise not entirely negative.⁷⁰ Holeček clearly distinguished “our local Mohammedans” from the Turks.⁷¹ His views of the Slavic Muslims were embodied by a figure named Omer – one of “our Mohammedans” and an example of an “honest Turk.” He wrote that at first sight Omer looked fierce and indocile, but it was not difficult to discover that his coarse appearance hid a “good and healthy core”;⁷² yet when Omer got angry, he was the image of a “true Turkish fanatic.”⁷³

The ambivalence in the Czechs’ views is reflected in a novel titled *Péri*, about the 1875 insurgence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, written by Bohumil Havlasa (1852–1877), a prolific writer of adventure novels and a journalist who reported on the Balkan uprisings and even took part in the fighting. The book presents a strange mixture of Orientalist stereotypes about belligerent, lazy, and nosy Turks,⁷⁴ garbled Turkish words, which Havlasa calls Arabic, and confused ethnic designations: he refers to the Slavic Muslims alternately as *Turčúns* or Turks and as Muslims or Mohammedans, while elsewhere he distinguishes the “pure-blooded Turks” or Ottomans from the “Mohammedan Southern Slavs.”⁷⁵ The novel portrays local Christians and Muslims as equally violent: a Muslim village is destroyed by the Christian insurgents while a Christian village is annihilated by the “Turks.”⁷⁶ The narrator, a Czech supporter of the insurgents, is captured by the “Turks” and kept prisoner in the house of a local notable named Ibrahim, whose nephew Ahmed, depicted as beautiful and proud, clearly holds the author’s attention and affection.⁷⁷ Ahmed tries to prove that even a Muslim “can behave in European ways,” but, betrayed by the narrator, he

69 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 92.

70 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 21–22; *Dvacet let práce kulturní*, 15.

71 In the mid-1870s he viewed the Ottoman Turks as evil, but later he acknowledged that they also had some positive qualities (especially when compared to the Austrians). See Holeček, *Černá Hora*, 27, and Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 43.

72 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 16.

73 *Ibid.*, 44.

74 Bohumil Havlasa, *Péri* (Prague: F. Šimáček, 1901), 18 and 22. A strongly anti-Turkish novel on the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was published in the late 1870s. See, *Krvavá Bosna aneb: Ukrutnosti mohamedánů, páchané na křesťanech, s ilustrovanou přílohou; Rakouská okupace Bosny a Hercegoviny*, 3 vols. (Prague: A. Hynek, n.d.).

75 Havlasa, *Péri*, 22.

76 *Ibid.*, 96 and 90.

77 *Ibid.*, 31.

swears he will only seek revenge.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, when the insurgents help the narrator and his friends fight the Muslims and kill or capture most of them, the narrator saves Ahmed's life. This act marks the culmination of the complicated relationship between a Christian Czech and a Muslim Bosnian, a relationship that expresses how the Czechs viewed Slavic Muslims – as furious Orientals and their Slavic (br)others at the same time.

2 The Orient at One's Doorstep (Safe Even for Ladies)

For too long the Czechs had remained at home, the politician Václav Klofáč complained in the early 20th century. Arguing that traveling broadens the mind, leads to new experiences, and turns theorists into practitioners, he felt that the young generation in particular should “go cheerfully and bravely out into the world, around the entire world, but around the Slavic world first.”⁷⁹ The only thing that the Czechs had known about the Balkan Slavs fifty years earlier, the historian and archivist Jan Bedřich Novák added at roughly the same time, was that they made a living stealing sheep and goats and had big noses, which they enjoyed cutting off each other's faces. With the expansion of tourism and economic ties in the late 19th century, interest in and understanding for other Slavs had increased, which in his view was grounds for optimism.⁸⁰

The “Slavic South” and, after the occupation, Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular did indeed become popular destinations for Czech travelers and tourists. One famous visitor to the region was the painter Alfons Mucha, who went on a study trip to Bosnia in 1899 after being commissioned to decorate the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Pavilion at the Paris World Exhibition of 1900.⁸¹ This journey gave rise to a major Pan-Slavic work of art, “with allegorical frescos depicting Ottoman oppression, Sarajevo and the wealth of Bosnia, as well as embroidery and sculpture.”⁸² Many travelers added trips to the former Ottoman provinces to their journeys through other South Slavic regions. Czech travels to the

78 Ibid., 145.

79 Václav Klofáč, “Ven – do slovanských zemí,” in *Slovanský jih: Články posl. V. Klofáče, L. Brunčka, Dra J.B. Nováka a J. Jasyho* (Prague: Hejda a Tuček, 1911), 1.

80 J.B. Novák, “Mezi Adrií a Drávou (několik fragmentů),” in *Slovanský jih*, 12–13.

81 Hlavačka, “L'Exposition Universelle,” 29–31.

82 Jeremy Howard, *Art Nouveau: International and National Styles in Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 19.

territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina can thus be viewed as “emotional visits”⁸³ made by Slavic brothers that were motivated by and reinforced the Pan-Slavic aspect of national identity. This understanding of the Czechs’ relationship to Bosnia-Herzegovina appears to be in direct contrast to what Mary Louise Pratt has called a “contact zone”: “the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict.”⁸⁴ This raises the question of the subtext of the trips Czechs made to Bosnia-Herzegovina: Did they feel they were traveling to a remote part of the Slavic world, in which they felt at home, or to a part of the imperial domain; did they travel like East Europeans, as though they were essentially visiting other members of their own family,⁸⁵ or did they travel like West Europeans, venturing out to inspect their colonies? And how did their trips to Bosnia-Herzegovina compare to their journeys to the Ottoman Empire?

One striking difference between Czech travel to the Ottoman Empire and to Bosnia-Herzegovina is that the latter was a destination of organized group tourism. The Czech Tourists’ Club (KČT), founded in 1888, arranged its first trip to Dalmatia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1897. The trip lasted 18 days and its 71 participants, including 17 women, came from Prague and from about 20 other towns and cities in Bohemia and Moravia (only one participant was from Vienna). Their occupations – real estate holders, factory owners, and wholesale traders – suggest that they belonged to the upper and upper-middle classes, though they were joined by a few teachers and a “peasant” family. Accordingly, they traveled in the first class of the train and, reportedly, in luxurious cabins on the boat. The trip was considered so important that three participants published travelogues about it.⁸⁶ One of these travelogues was written by Jan Buchar,⁸⁷ a KČT member from Prague. It emphasized Slavic

83 On emotional visits see Noah W. Sobe, “Slavic Emotion and Vernacular Cosmopolitanism: Yugoslav Travels to Czechoslovakia in the 1920s and 1930s,” in *Turizm: The Russian and East European Tourist under Capitalism and Socialism*, ed. Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane P. Koenker (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 82–96.

84 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 5. Pratt (*Imperial Eyes*, 7) writes that her concept “treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and ‘travelees,’ not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power.”

85 Bracewell, “The Limits of Europe,” 61–120.

86 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*; Ferdinand Velc, “Sarajevo,” *Časopis turistů*, April 1, 1897, 93–103; Jan Buchar, *První výlet Klubu českých turistů do Dalmacie, Černé Hory, Hercegoviny, Bosny a Záhřebu ve dnech od 13. do 30. dubna 1897* (Prague: J. Buchar, 1898).

87 Buchar, *První výlet*, [1–2]. The book also lists the names and professions of the participants (*První výlet*, 94–96).

solidarity and focused on the respect and love the local population showed Czech travelers rather than on places of touristic interest, and it treated Bosnia-Herzegovina in the same way as Montenegro or Dalmatia, while perhaps just devoting a little more attention to the Czechs who lived in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Among the Czechs in Bosnia-Herzegovina Buchar mentioned Ferdinand Velc, a member of the KČT from Sarajevo, and Professor Jan Třeštík, both of whom wrote travelogues describing the tour.⁸⁸ Třeštík, in a speech he gave to his fellow travelers, which Buchar quoted, praised the progress achieved in the twenty years of Austro-Hungarian rule: he claimed Czechs were among the pioneering figures working on the cultural and economic advancement of Bosnia-Herzegovina and held important jobs in the political, judicial, financial, and technical administration of the country; their role was outstanding also in education; they distinguished themselves as teachers, physicians, and officials and together with tradesmen helped to spread the good name of the Czechs.⁸⁹ In his own travelogue, which focused on the part of the trip from Sarajevo to Dubrovnik, Třeštík stressed how much the trip was a boost to “Slavic solidarity”⁹⁰ and appraised Czech enterprises in the region, noting in particular a trades school in Sarajevo, whose director and entire teaching staff, apart from the local catechist, were Czechs.⁹¹

In 1911 a similar tour of the South Slavic countries, lasting 26 days and including Bosnia-Herzegovina, was organized for a very different social group by the Czech Teachers' Union. One of its participants, Adolf Vojtěch Obst, described it in writing.⁹² This time, half of the 47 participants were women and, as well as teachers, a few (male) school directors and their family members took part in the trip. The travelogue resembled the previous accounts: it pointed out how the teachers were greeted with love and hospitality everywhere they went and was accompanied by photos of the towns and villages visited, taken by one of the participants. The travel book also contained a section devoted to local education and schools in each country, including curricula and specific educational features that reflected the religious differences of the pupils. Obst claimed that the government supported education in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which brought hope for the future and for the country's Muslims, alternately called *Turčíns*, Turks, and Mohammedans.⁹³ The more “learned”

88 Ibid., 63–64.

89 Ibid., 64.

90 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 3–4.

91 Ibid., 8.

92 A.V. Obst, *II. studijní výprava českého učitelstva v roce 1911: Přímoří–Dalmacie–Černá Hora–Bosna a Hercegovina* (Prague: Nákladem Fondů výprav učitelských, 1912).

93 All three terms can sometimes be found on the same page: Obst, *II. studijní výprava*, 61.

character of this trip was reflected in the fact that the teachers had bought 46 publications about the countries they were going to travel through and used them to prepare for the journey. Especially welcome were the guidebooks written in Czech and published by the “Máj” Association and the KČT, which, Obst noted with satisfaction, could be used instead of foreign publications. But for more detailed information it was still necessary to read the more abundant German guidebooks.⁹⁴

People who visited Bosnia-Herzegovina at the turn of the century were luckier than the prevailing individual travelers to the Middle East, who could not use Czech-language guidebooks.⁹⁵ Velc’s guide, published in 1907 by the KČT, claimed to be the first travel guide to Bosnia-Herzegovina published in Czech. It included a brief history of the country, a more detailed outline of possible travel routes to Bosnia, and descriptions of suggested excursions within the country, and it mentioned the many Czech stores, businesses, and pubs that could be found in different towns. It was accompanied by a map of Bosnia-Herzegovina and photos, most of them views of cities, architecture, and nature, but also of local people in their “Oriental” costumes. The author, a Czech living in Sarajevo,⁹⁶ appreciated how the Austro-Hungarian occupation had improved the conditions for and the safety of traveling, which had led to a rising tide of tourists to the south – a still little known area of “our empire,” attractive for its nature and the inhabitants’ costumes and poetic way of life.⁹⁷ The conditions are so good, he argued, that it was safe “even for ladies” to travel there.⁹⁸

94 Obst, *II. studijní výprava*, 11. In 1912, a popular Czech magazine called *Máj* reported on a lecture about traveling in Bosnia-Herzegovina that was given in Prague by the director of the Ilidža Spa near Sarajevo, Julius Pojman, author of a German-language guide to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The report noted the growing interest in this region among Czechs at the time and mentioned that the lecture was well-received by the audience, who were hardly able to fit in Žofín Hall; such an interest was an encouragement for the organizers who were just preparing a new guide to Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to the report, the event showed that there was fertile soil in Czech society for widening touristic activities in Bosnia-Herzegovina and that the official circles in Bosnia-Herzegovina understood the importance of similar efforts. “O cestování v Bosně a Hercegovině,” *Máj*, February 9, 1912, 250–51.

95 Ferdinand Velc, *Průvodce Bosnou a Hercegovinou* (Prague: Klub českých turistů, 1907); Vincenc Šindelář, *Průvodce Bosnou a Hercegovinou* (Prague: Jos. Uher, 1912); *Dalmacie s Terstem, Istrií, s pobřežím chorvatským a výletem do Cetyně a Bosna s Hercegovinou* (Prague: Čeněk Šulc, n.d., ca. 1913).

96 Velc was mentioned in Buchar’s travel account from 1898 (Buchar, *První výlet*, 63) and he himself wrote a brief account of the trip, which was published in the journal of Czech tourists in 1897 (Velc, “Sarajevo”).

97 Velc, *Průvodce*, 111. The author recommended that travelers visit local people, who were hospitable, in order to benefit from their knowledge and to avoid paying more than necessary, and that they should always knock before entering a “Turkish house” so the women could hide. Velc, *Průvodce*, 1–2.

98 Velc, *Průvodce*, 1–5.



FIGURE 3 “Sarajevo: Z turecké čtvrti” (Sarajevo: From the Turkish Neighborhood), photograph from *Průvodce Bosnou a Hercegovinou* (A Guide to Bosnia and Herzegovina) by Ferdinand Velc, 1907

A guidebook that explored both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Dalmatia, published in 1913, professed specifically to be aimed at enhancing “Slavic solidarity.”⁹⁹ Like Velc’s book, it emphasized that traveling had become safe and comfortable, even though Bosnia-Herzegovina had been almost closed to visitors until the occupation. After presenting a brief history of the region, the guide gave travelers detailed advice on where to go on their trip, including current prices for trains or cabs, what to see, and how to shop. It commented very little on the population and its religion(s), but noted that Bosnia-Herzegovina was attractive for its nature and particularly for its “Oriental character.”¹⁰⁰ This was underscored by the accompanying illustrations: photos of men and women in local costumes, namely Oriental clothes, in front of picturesque “Oriental” houses; one picture of a veiled Muslim woman looks like a coat without a body and is reminiscent of some of the current depictions of women in burqas.¹⁰¹

99 *Dalmacie s Terstem*, [3].

100 *Ibid.*, 111.

101 *Ibid.*, 144.



FIGURE 4 “Mohamedánka” (A Muslim Woman), photograph from *Dalmacie s Terstem, Istrií, s pobřežím chorvatským a výletem do Cetyně a Bosna s Hercegovinou* (Dalmatia and Terst, Istria, the Croatian Coastline and a Trip to Cetinje and Bosnia and Herzegovina), ca. 1913

While the travelogues and travel guidebooks all stressed Slavic solidarity, both as the aim of the publications and as a fact experienced by the travelers, they were not equally interested in Islam. Buchar, for instance, did not pay much attention to the Islamic sites of Bosnia-Herzegovina, though he mentioned a story (repeated later by Obst) about the grave of a Muslim holy man, whose caretaker prepared a jar of water and a towel every night and claimed that the jar was half empty and the towel wet every morning because the holy man used them for religious ablution. This, Buchar concluded with irony, had to be clear proof that the story was true.¹⁰² Mostly, the authors connected Islam with the Ottoman past of the provinces, and contrasted it with the present. According to Třeštík, in the 15th century, “the fanatical cry ‘Allah!’” could be heard throughout the country, and the Austrian occupation in 1878 led to a quickly suppressed uprising of the Mohammedan mob, but now the country was in a cheerful state of revival. Even the dirtiness typical of the Orient had disappeared.¹⁰³ Velc’s guidebook highlighted the Oriental character of the towns in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the history of suffering under devastating Turkish rule. Velc mentioned somewhat condescendingly that it was perhaps as a result of this history that Bosnia had not distinguished itself by fighting for any big ideas. The occupation, according to him, marked the start of “the era of European culture”; order and peace were established, and Bosnia-Herzegovina had awoken from a long, heavy slumber.¹⁰⁴

The Oriental past – once it was safely left behind – could be viewed with some nostalgia, as was the case in the Ottoman Empire. Travelers applauded the modernizing reforms and the growth of modern cities and simultaneously hoped that the “Orientalness” of the region would not disappear. Třeštík both praised the progress achieved under Habsburg rule and admired the exotic Oriental quality of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which he even called the most interesting feature of Sarajevo.¹⁰⁵ Obst also highlighted the country’s Oriental characteristics, which were visible in its architecture from the Ottoman period, its Oriental markets or the jug of a water vendor, decorated with scenes from *The Thousand and One Nights*.¹⁰⁶ Compared to travel accounts on the Ottoman Empire, Orientalist stereotypes were certainly less widespread in travel books about Slavic Bosnia-Herzegovina. But they were not entirely absent,

102 Buchar, *První výlet*, 58.

103 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 17.

104 Velc, *Průvodce*, 2–7.

105 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 13.

106 Obst, *II. studijní výprava*, 57.

and they appeared, for instance, in remarks on Muslims' fatalism or sexual aberrations.¹⁰⁷

Of particular interest in the Czechs' perception of Bosnia-Herzegovina as Oriental is the way they viewed women, who attracted so much attention among visitors to Istanbul. Gingrich argues that one of the differences between "frontier" and "classic," colonial, Orientalism is that both in its folk and elite versions frontier Orientalism almost exclusively understands the Oriental as a male person, in most cases a single, heterosexual soldier. In contrast to erotic fantasies about Muslim women in classic Orientalism, in its frontier variation women are, according to Gingrich, almost completely ignored, and the only ones who do appear are the female members of the "home" society, threatened by "bad Muslims."¹⁰⁸ Czechs occasionally depicted Bosnian-Herzegovinian women as victims of the Ottoman Turks' lust, sometimes as fighters, but usually as wives and mothers. Muslim women figured in travel literature less as a distinct group and tended to be simply encompassed within the category of "local women" generally; when they were specifically mentioned it was mainly in the context of family. The travelers noted that Muslim families were patriarchal, but that, although women's place was limited to the family and household, conjugal relations were distinguished by mutual respect.¹⁰⁹ According to *Ottův slovník naučný*, Muslim women in Bosnia-Herzegovina had more freedom than Ottoman Turkish women: in Bosnia, even elite women wore only light veils allowing their features to be seen, and in Herzegovina, they did not wear veils at all.¹¹⁰

Sometimes, however, Czech travelers to Bosnia-Herzegovina employed the same imagery with which others described Ottoman Turkish women. The participants of the trip organized by the KČT in 1897 showed a strong interest in the local harems. Buchar mentioned that Doctor Kecková, one of the first Czech physicians in Bosnia-Herzegovina, helped some of the ladies to satisfy their curiosity about harems by arranging visits for them to prominent Turkish

107 Daneš (*Bosna a Hercegovina*, 92) said that the Muslims were declining economically, particularly members of the nobility, who "often indulge in pleasures forbidden by the Koran and fall into moral as well as financial decay." Kuba (*Čtení o Bosně a Hercegovině*, 232) wrote about the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina with sympathy but described Sarajevo's mysterious smile as "the fruit perhaps of Oriental fatalism."

108 Gingrich, "Frontier Myths of Orientalism," 120.

109 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 49–50; Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 22.

110 *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague, J. Otto, 1888), 1:433. For a different image of Muslim women in British travel literature see Neval Berber, *Unveiling Bosnia-Herzegovina in British Travel Literature (1844–1912)* (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2010), 77.

households in Mostar.¹¹¹ But most notable was how Velc described the Muslim women of Bosnia-Herzegovina: as lazy and vain, leading an idle life in segregation, their interests limited to the richness of their trousseau, and so dumb that it was impossible to have a conversation with them – in other words, in the same way that some travelers depicted the women of Istanbul.¹¹² A different, but no less “Oriental” image of a Slavic Muslim woman appeared in Havlasa’s novel *Péri*, named after its Muslim heroine Zékiye, nicknamed Péri (*peri* means “fairy” in Turkish). In a plot reminiscent of a medieval romance, the author-narrator runs away with Péri – “the enemy’s treasure.”¹¹³ Wondering about the reason for his attraction to Péri, he explicitly associates Slavic-Muslim with Ottoman-Turkish women: “Before me stood the extraordinary maiden whose strange behavior I mainly explained to myself thus: Ottomanism, a character from the world of the harem. Orient, Orient! Was I right? Was this explanation sufficient? I do not know.”¹¹⁴

While in travel books about the Ottoman Empire women figured mostly as objects, whether of the male gaze or in analyses of their living conditions, in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina Czech women were in the role of subjects, and they described their own work and travels in the former Ottoman provinces and the provinces’ female inhabitants. Bayerová depicted the way of life of local Muslim women with a mixture of caring interest and patronizing despair: “You have no idea how much time I have to make for the Mohammedan women,” she complained. She had to prepare every medicine and tea for them, and even had to cook for them if she wanted them to eat something “sensible,” instead of their regular dish consisting of a piece of meat boiled with onions in a pot. She felt sorry for the poor children with thin legs and terrible stomachs and felt that, in order to help them, she had to study “their culinary art and try to somewhat improve their things and physiologically to cultivate them...”¹¹⁵

Kecková mentioned also that she helped Muslim women with other issues, not just strictly medical ones. And she was proud to have gained the trust and friendship of the local Muslim women. She attributed her success largely to the fact that the beautiful and intelligent wife of the local mufti had been her patient and was cured by her. This helped to overcome any misgivings about

111 Kecková’s name is spelled Kheková in the travelogue: “Many individual tourists are grateful to Miss Kheková, MD, the local government physician, because thanks to her kind company they were able to see, apart from numerous places of interest in the city, the way prominent Turkish households are organized as well.” Buchar, *První výlet*, 57.

112 Velc, “Sarajevo,” 95.

113 Havlasa, *Péri*, 73.

114 *Ibid.*, 104.

115 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 35.

medical care among even the more conservative Muslim women and the fatalistic attitude they had toward their health; eventually, they started to follow her recommendations. She even managed to get permission to teach several young Muslim women to read, write, and count, which led her to the following conclusion: "I must confess that Muslim women are entirely our equals, with respect even to talent, diligence, and good will; they learn easily and quickly. Only the Koran (the Holy Word) and the immense opposition of Mohammedan men to even the smallest attempt at women's emancipation put insurmountable obstacles in the path of such efforts."¹¹⁶

Vesna Goldsworthy has pointed out that in the late 19th century some of the most interesting British accounts of travel in the Balkans, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, were written by women. She explained the disproportionate number of women among travelers to the Balkans as due not only to the proximity and safety of the region but especially to the fact that British women could attain the status of "honorary men" when traveling through these patriarchal lands.¹¹⁷ Although Czech women also traveled to the South-Slavic regions, their Balkan travels did not necessarily grant them this kind of status, especially if they were traveling in organized tours. Women were well-represented among the participants of the trips organized by the KČT and the Teachers' Union; like their male counterparts they seemed to be motivated by their Slavic sympathies, but the closeness and safety of Bosnia-Herzegovina undoubtedly added to the area's attraction. Some women traveled individually, though not necessarily alone, and the published accounts of their experiences contain evidence of the prestige they achieved as travelers. Máša Absolonová rode from Sarajevo to Montenegro in 1912 through an area inhabited mainly by Muslims (*Moslemíni*). On her way, she met crowds of "indigenous" people going to the market in Foča. Her reaction to this scene reveals how a Czech woman positioned herself in relation to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the distance separating the author from the local population, both Christian and Muslim, while discriminating between the Christians and the Muslims or "Turks": The Christian men all enjoyed the comfort of riding a horse, while the women, stumbling along on foot beside their husbands' horses, followed with envy as Absolonová rode her horse. Further on she saw "a whole cavalcade of Turks, headed by a veiled Turkish woman adorned with baubles and trinkets, gold and beads, seated proudly astride a Turkish saddle..."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Kecková, "Z lékařské činnosti," 14.

¹¹⁷ Goldsworthy, "The Balkans," 29–30.

¹¹⁸ Absolonová, "Přes hranice Černé Hory," 305.

Růžena Svobodová (1868–1920), a respected woman writer, traveled through the South-Slavic regions, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, in 1911.¹¹⁹ She was interested in Islam and paid close attention to the faith of the local inhabitants: “I feel respect for everything that I come across and I am concerned not to offend the feelings and sacred customs of the people in prayer,” she confessed when she first visited a mosque. “I feel terrible that I should look with my Christian eyes upon conversations with the God of Mohammed, omniscient and all-wise, and despite the efendi’s entreaties I retreat toward the door so as not to disturb those who believe in the mystery and try to do right with their prayer...”¹²⁰ Svobodová, on the one hand, showed humility toward Islam and Muslims’ feelings and an affection for the Muslim women she visited in Mostar, extolling their beauty and hospitality. On the other hand, however, she wrote in clichés about the harem, the women’s superstitiousness, and their preoccupation with jewelry and having a rich trousseau (which Velc called Muslim women’s only interest), and she used other stereotypical images: “Do you know *The Thousand and One Nights*, I ask. No, she does not, she has never heard of it. I tell her about the book and think to myself: ‘Why, you yourself are a Djamilé or Safir or Scheherezade.’”¹²¹

Reference to the stories of *The Thousand and One Nights*, which is so typical of European – including Czech – travelogues to the Middle East, is evidence that both male and female Czech travelers perceived Bosnia-Herzegovina in general and its Muslims in particular as Oriental. In this respect, the Czechs resembled British travelers and travel writers who “Orientalized” Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹²² This would seem to contradict the claims of Slavic solidarity that the travel accounts and guides emphasized so much. Yet, it was possible to hold both views at the same time, which made for the special attraction of Bosnia-Herzegovina for Czech tourists and distinguished the writings of these tourists from descriptions of trips to the Ottoman Empire: Bosnia-Herzegovina was both Oriental, and thus exotic, and Slavic, and therefore related to the Czechs. The Slavic Muslims differed from other Slavs among other things in

119 When she wrote about the Muslim inhabitants of Mostar and Sarajevo, she switched between references to Turks and Mohammedans; she mostly called women Mohammedans, but sometimes called them Serbian Mohammedans or Turkish, though “of a perfectly Serbian type.” Svobodová, *Barvy Jugoslavie*, 78–83.

120 Ibid., 75.

121 Ibid., 82.

122 See Omer Hadžiselimović, “The Travelers’ Tales: Bosnia and Herzegovina in British Eyes,” in *At the Gates of the East: British Travel Writers on Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Omer Hadžiselimović (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2001), XXVIII–XXIX.

that they were seen to be exotic. Their lifestyle and their Ottoman heritage were the source of Bosnia-Herzegovina's Oriental appeal, which Czech tourists could enjoy in the safety of their "home": traveling in their home country and, at the same time, feeling at home among the Slavs.

3 Occupation as Liberation

When Bosnia-Herzegovina was occupied in 1878, Czech political representatives and the general public accepted the legitimacy of the act, citing the mandate given to Austria-Hungary by the great powers at the Berlin Congress. Imperial policy was supported and the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina celebrated in particular by figures connected with the Austro-Hungarian regime, like the conservative Austro-Bohemian politician, legal scholar, and historian Joseph Alexander Helfert.¹²³ Judging Austria-Hungary's right to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina from the perspective of international law, Josef Trakal, a legal scholar and professor at Charles University, also unequivocally concluded that it had the right to replace the Ottoman Empire in these provinces.¹²⁴ Most Czechs agreed.

A group of Czech members of the imperial and the provincial parliaments made a "jubilee" trip to conduct an inspection of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1898. They intended the report on their journey to "be a modest, but hopefully not unwelcome contribution to a glorious chapter in Austrian history ... a festive gift to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Austrian occupation, and an incentive to those who would undertake deeper studies of these flourishing countries that Austria proudly counts as its permanent property."¹²⁵ The report presented Bosnia-Herzegovina under Ottoman rule as a poor, disorderly and unhappy Oriental country, which the influence of the Austro-Hungarian regime has only started to advance. Yet, the results of the twenty years of Austro-Hungarian occupation were deemed "admirable" and it was claimed Bosnia-Herzegovina could already be considered truly civilized and Sarajevo a

123 In his writings *Bosnisches* and *Die weltgeschichtliche Bedeutung des Wiener Sieges von 1683*, he discerned two kinds of inhabitants: the bad Turks and the good Southern Slavs (including Bosnian Muslims). See Heiss and Feichtinger, "Distant Neighbors," 151–52.

124 According to the author, there was no doubt that also the problems arising from the annexation in 1908 would be solved based on the (correct) Austrian view. Josef Trakal, *Bosna a Hercegovina po stránce práva mezinárodního* (Prague: Bursík a Kohout, 1909), 133 and 188.

125 *Dvacet let práce kulturní*, [6].

modern city.¹²⁶ The authors admitted that the Austro-Hungarian administration had some faults – it was not Slavic and was led by the Hungarian Kállay, with his absolutist tendencies, and it had emerged out of expansionist imperial ambitions. But they noted with satisfaction that, as a result of the occupation, the Slavs of Austria-Hungary had been joined by another 1.5 million of their “fellow-tribesmen.” On the whole, the visiting MPs claimed to “have found in Bosnia an administration that is resolute and strict but also performs its work properly and with understanding.”¹²⁷

Although the Czechs wished for the unification of the Slavs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, regardless of their religion, they were divided over which group they supported – the Orthodox Serbs or the Catholic Croats. The MPs clearly preferred Croatian domination in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Given the tensions between the Serbs and Croats, they considered the Bosnian Muslims, who had just started to show national awareness, an important political factor that would play a decisive role in Bosnia, able to influence the balance of power between groups within the region.¹²⁸ The MPs pushed for Muslims to align themselves with the Catholics, whom they considered to be more open and ready to accept Muslims than the Orthodox Church, which they found stiff and more hostile to Islam.¹²⁹ They argued that relations between Muslims and Christians had become quite open and often friendly, and that perhaps the time would come when it would be asked “whether it would not be right for the Mohammedands to return to the bosom of the Christian Church.”¹³⁰

Toužimský and Holeček evaluated the three groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina according to their level of national awareness and favored the Serbs. Toužimský claimed that the Orthodox Serbs had a stronger sense of national awareness than the Catholics and the Mohammedans, who still identified mainly with their religion.¹³¹ Holeček considered the Orthodox Serbs by nature to be physically more robust and have a stronger moral foundation; they had not grown tired under the Turkish yoke and had instead rested and gained fresh strength.¹³² He therefore recommended that the less-educated Muslims follow their Orthodox brothers, who were as conservative as the Muslims in their family life, but otherwise open to progress.¹³³

126 Ibid., [5 and 7].

127 Ibid., 27.

128 Ibid., 15 and 17–18.

129 Ibid., 17.

130 Ibid., 16.

131 Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 119.

132 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 13.

133 Ibid., 63.

Many who traveled to Bosnia-Herzegovina after the occupation, as we have seen, wrote rather favorably about the impact of Austro-Hungarian rule. The main reason for the approval of the occupation was the perception that the Ottoman Empire's presence in Europe was an aberration. Ottoman rule over the Slavs was considered to have led to stagnation or decay and was identified with backwardness. Toužimský summed up the prevailing opinion with the judgment that both the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina and their land were backward; centuries and world events had passed without any effect on them.¹³⁴ He contended that Bosnia-Herzegovina's strikingly sparse population was a "natural consequence of the Turkish state economy, which bases and has based all its wisdom on taking wherever there is something to take and wherever it can be taken most easily, regardless of the destruction to all forces of production."¹³⁵

The image of backwardness and fanaticism that prevailed under Ottoman rule was contrasted with the progress brought about under the Habsburg administration. Although in 1882 few positive effects of the new regime could yet be noticed, Toužimský pointed out that Bosnia-Herzegovina had only started to awaken from its long medieval stupor.¹³⁶ Jan Třeštík, in his account of the tour of Bosnia-Herzegovina organized by the KČT in 1897, noted that despite what seemed like inertia, Mostar had made striking economic and cultural progress. The population had increased and so had its trust in the new establishment, and this had provided a boost to the development of industry and trade.¹³⁷ Likewise, Sarajevo, "the pearl of Bosnia," he wrote, "finds itself under Austrian rule free from opposition in a pleasurable state of revival."¹³⁸ He concluded that thanks to the quiet political conditions, religious tolerance, and improved communications, trade, industry, and culture had developed to an unprecedented extent. A decade later, Daneš maintained that thirty years of Austro-Hungarian rule had brought about more change in Bosnia-Herzegovina than had occurred in the course of centuries in the past and had ushered a backward Oriental country into the reformed Austro-Hungarian present. Two elements, divided in their cultural development by centuries and alien to each other in their world views, had joined together, the effect of which was to shake up "the entire population's primitive Oriental way of life."¹³⁹

134 Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 125.

135 *Ibid.*, 115.

136 *Ibid.*, 125.

137 Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 74.

138 *Ibid.*, 20.

139 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, [3].



FIGURE 5 “Na Bendbaši v Sarajevě” (Bendbaši in Sarajevo), photograph from *Ku břehům Adrie* (Toward the Coasts of Adria) by Jan Třeštlík, 1897

Most authors acknowledged the modernizing impact that the Austro-Hungarian administration’s reforms had had on the land and its population, but many criticized them because they lacked a national dimension and did not correspond to the actual needs of the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Moreover, according to them Kállay’s autocratic style of rule led local people even to reject positive changes.¹⁴⁰ The historian Novák aptly summed up the diverse views: Some claim that a country that used to be a theater of endless bloodshed is today a focus of peaceful work, a center from which progress and civilization radiate. Former fighters against the occupation are now the strongest supporters of the government.¹⁴¹ At the same time, he continued, dissatisfaction with the regime had increased and thousands of immigrants were leaving the “center of progress and civilization” because they could not live there any more, spiritually or materially. According to Novák, both perspectives on the effects of the reforms had some validity to them. He admitted that Kállay, a great organizer but a despotic ruler, had taken over the country when it was in a state of chaos, resulting from Turkish rule, and he reorganized its

140 Ibid., [4].

141 Novák, “Mezi Adrií a Drávou,” 22–23.

administration from the top down. Novák believed that this absolutism allowed Kállay to introduce “with American speed” changes and progress that were admired by foreigners (and that was their only purpose) and benefitted foreign countries but improved the lot of only a few individuals in the domestic population. Although the administration tried to inculcate the people with “culture” and the benefits of civilization, occasionally doing so with good intentions, it always, according to Novák, used the wrong methods. He argued that the majority of the population, excluded from the benefits of the innovations but burdened by their disadvantages, looked at these changes with fear and hatred.¹⁴²

Consequently, as a number of visitors observed, the local population was opposed to the occupation: even the Czech MPs who looked favorably on Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia-Herzegovina pointed out that the people were dissatisfied with the political situation and were far from enthusiastic about “the Švábe” (which is what they called all foreigners) and Habsburg rule.¹⁴³ Others mentioned that the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina considered the Austro-Hungarian occupation to be even worse than Turkish rule.¹⁴⁴ Holeček quoted local Serbs, according to whom the occupation’s only positive impact was the possible unification of the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who had learned the difference between the Austrian (*Švába*) and the Turk (*Turčín*): the former, until they got to know him, for them epitomized education and high-mindedness, the latter embodied stupidity and brutality. But experience had taught them that even the *Turčín* has some good qualities and no falseness about him, even when he is the enemy. The *Švába*, in contrast, is false as a friend and as an enemy alike.¹⁴⁵ Holeček noted that people in some ways remembered Turkish rule in a positive light, because the Turks at least had not wanted them to remain scared and docile when they were asked to pay unfairly high duties, but had wanted them to defend themselves and had even provided them with weapons to do so.¹⁴⁶

142 Ibid., 22–24.

143 *Dvacet let práce kulturní*, 9. *Šváb* means “Swabian,” i.e. an inhabitant of a German land, but it also means “cockroach” in Czech. See also Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 114; Adin Ljuca, “Turci a Švábové, nebo slovanští bratři? Český pohled na bosenské muslimy v letech 1878–1918,” in *Pravda, láska a ti na „východě“: Obrazy střeoevropského a východoevropského prostoru z pohledu české společnosti*, ed. Mirjam Moravcová, David Svoboda, and František Šístek (Prague: UK FHS, 2006), 122–34.

144 Hořica, *Smutné i veselé z Bosny a Hercegoviny*, 11–12; Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, esp. 9 and 43.

145 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 43. Holeček (*Bosna a Hercegovina*, 49) also notes that even during the war, the Turks showed they could behave in a humane way.

146 Ibid., 65.

Some Czech politicians also denounced Habsburg rule in Bosnia-Herzegovina for being too authoritarian and failing to create conditions for the development of national awareness among the population.¹⁴⁷ Masaryk's views on Bosnia-Herzegovina reflected his criticism of Austro-Hungarian foreign policy and his pro-Slavic sympathies, which also influenced his opinion on the Ottoman Empire and the Turks, who, as we saw in the first chapter, he primarily viewed as the enemies of the Slavs. He therefore approved of Andrassy's justification of the occupation and believed it should last until the Turks could repay what they owed the Austro-Hungarian Empire and could guarantee that the situation in the provinces would not deteriorate if they came under Ottoman rule again. But he accused the Austro-Hungarian politicians in the pre-war period of collaborating with the Turks and hindering the development of the Slavs.¹⁴⁸ In his speeches in parliament he repeatedly advocated Bosnia-Herzegovina's autonomy,¹⁴⁹ and although he appreciated the technical achievements of Austro-Hungarian rule, he denounced the lack of social-political and legal progress. Bosnia-Herzegovina was, for instance, still governed by the old Turkish Islamic law.¹⁵⁰

It is worth underlining that the progress the Czechs advocated was national, rather than political, for which they deemed the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina to be insufficiently mature; therefore, they believed that instead of full political rights the people should get more freedom of association, especially with respect to activities benefiting national, or "Slavic," interests.¹⁵¹ Czech observers felt that Austro-Hungarian reforms had had a Germanifying effect; since Bosnia and Herzegovina were Slavic countries, whatever

147 See Hladký, "Podíl Čechů," 271–72; Ctibor Nečas, *Balkán a česká politika: Pronikání rakousko-uherského imperialismu na Balkán a česká buržoazní politika* (Brno: Univerzita J.E. Purkyně, 1972), 81–92.

148 Masaryk, *Rakouská zahraniční politika*, 8.

149 *Ibid.*, 7. Similarly, he noted that most of the criticism of the annexation of 1908 did not concern Austria-Hungary's right to Bosnia-Herzegovina, but the way it was annexed (Masaryk, *Rakouská zahraniční politika*, 6). Although the reason given for the annexation was the Young Turk constitution in 1908, this, according to Masaryk, did not justify the annexation as the Ottoman constitution of 1876 was never officially abolished, so Austria-Hungary could have introduced a constitutional regime in Bosnia-Herzegovina after 1878 had it wished to do so. He wrote that, moreover, the annexation was not permissible without the approval of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He argued that it is wrong to claim that the people are not mature enough to make such a decision – if they are mature enough to pay taxes and serve in the army, they should also be allowed to decide about their fate. (Masaryk, *Rakouská zahraniční politika*, 41–42).

150 *Ibid.*, 51.

151 *Dvacet let práce kulturní*, 27.

violated their Slavic character was detrimental to them and contrary to Czech preferences.¹⁵²

Although many Czechs criticized some aspects of the Austro-Hungarian presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina, only a few opposed the occupation as such. Most notable among them was Josef Holeček, who compared Bosnia-Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian rule to neighboring Montenegro and noted the ubiquitous military and police control.¹⁵³ According to him, the attempts at modernization had brought about the dissolution of the original culture and a physical degeneration of the local population. He cited as an example the Herzegovinian breed of horses, which, as a result of the occupation, has been mixed with other breeds and become enfeebled. Similarly, the population had grown weaker, shorter, and more pallid, with a “decrease of the original dark race all over the Balkans,” the result both of the indigenous population’s sexual contact with the newcomers and their moral contamination, leading to decay.¹⁵⁴

Others were less critical of the fact of the occupation, but condemned the colonizing efforts of “non-Slavic” elements, noting that Bosnia-Herzegovina was “becoming the trophy of political and trade adventurers who consider it a colony for their interests and enrichment.”¹⁵⁵ “Non-Slavic,” however, was the key word: most Czechs concerned with Bosnia-Herzegovina saw nothing wrong with the colonial enterprise, if the economic, trade, and financial activities were being carried out by Czechs.

4 Czech Colonial Ambitions

The idea of colonization was certainly not foreign to the Czechs. Emil Holub, one of the most famous Czech professional explorers, mentioned among the main goals of his arduous explorations in Africa an attempt “to find land on which the poor and hard-working families of my countrymen could settle in

152 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 4.

153 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 33–39. Kuba (*Čtení o Bosně a Hercegovině*, 66–67) also described the impact of the occupation on the decline of local crafts.

154 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 7–10. Holeček responded negatively to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, repeating many of his earlier arguments against Austro-Hungarian rule. See František Šístek, “Josef Holeček: Kronikář hercegovského povstání a kritik okupace Bosny a Hercegoviny,” in *Bosna 1878–2008: Sborník příspěvků z konference konané ve dnech 29.–30. května 2008 v Ústí nad Labem* (Ústí nad Labem: Ústav slovansko-germánských studií FF UJEP, 2009), 142.

155 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, esp. 159.

the African regions for their own profit and the benefit of the indigenous population.”¹⁵⁶ When Czech authors condemned imperial rule and exploitation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it was because these actions were not directed by Slavs – it was not criticism of colonialism itself. Even Holeček, who was opposed to the occupation, considered it quite natural that Central European, and particularly Czech, economic, political, and cultural positions in the Balkans should become stronger after the end of Ottoman rule. So far, he complained, opportunities had been taken advantage of mainly by the German, Austrian, and Hungarian elites, and not the Slavs.¹⁵⁷ Daneš argued that the conditions of Bosnia-Herzegovina were very good for Czech financial enterprises as the local population had been persuaded of the need for a good Slavic bank, which would fight together with local institutions against the power of foreign capital.¹⁵⁸

The view that “Czech” did not count as “foreign” was held by many Czechs. According to Toužimský, it was essential to introduce the reforms in Bosnia-Herzegovina through brotherly Czechs, not foreign Germans: “Well, the sole key to the heart of these people is brotherly love. Even if not all at once, it will fully open them up. Without love it is impossible to conquer the heart of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian people.”¹⁵⁹ Yet, as Daneš argued in the same vein, after the occupation foreign opportunists descended on the country, seeking it as a colony whose resources were theirs for the taking.¹⁶⁰

An important reason behind the Czechs’ criticism of the Austro-Hungarian reforms in Bosnia-Herzegovina was that they allegedly served the interests of German, Hungarian, and Jewish capital. Most authors had some negative remarks to make about the aggressive behavior and “achievements” of these foreigners: Holeček wrote that the pro-German stream, advocating the submission of local culture to the German culture, had strong support from Jews, whose commercial and speculative spirit quickly attracted them to the new territories, “accompanied lightheartedly by the light Magyar cavalry.”¹⁶¹ He claimed that large industry was in German-Jewish hands based in Vienna and Pest and mostly benefited a single group of capitalists who were acquiring a

156 Jindřich Dlouhý, ed., *Dr. Emil Holub: Africký cestovatel* (Prague: Kruh rodáků a přátel města Holic v Praze, 1947), 32.

157 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 77–78.

158 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 165.

159 Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, esp. 125.

160 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 159–60.

161 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 12. Likewise, in Hořica’s memoirs (*Smutné i veselé z Bosny a Hercegoviny*, esp. 13–16), the image of the Turks is more positive than the depiction of the Jews.

monopoly on business in Bosnia-Herzegovina and owned both industrial and commercial enterprises.¹⁶² Daneš concurred: the profit went to Vienna, Pest, or into the hands of the Germans and Jews, who had only contempt or pity for the local population.¹⁶³ Kállay, Novák asserted, regarded Bosnia and Herzegovina as mere colonies, and the local population as an unwelcome deadweight of natural treasures, which he handed over as loot to a group of Magyar-Jewish and Viennese capitalists, making the population subject to the administration's whims.¹⁶⁴ The exploited local population had no idea about modern financial economics and with childish carelessness let itself be preyed upon, Daneš argued; only Spanish Jews, the Serbian intelligentsia, a few local Catholics, and even fewer Mohammedans were, according to him, able to profit from the conditions at that time and withstand the influx of foreign capital.¹⁶⁵ Apart from confirming that Czechs were perhaps more anti-Jewish than they were anti-Turkish in sentiment, these views demonstrate that the Czechs saw Bosnia-Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian occupation as a land of economic, colonial opportunities, which the Czechs should use for their benefit.

Bosnia-Herzegovina was far from the only target of Czech entrepreneurial ambitions though. Czech architects, engineers, and urbanists were renowned for the various projects they put their hands to in the newly independent Bulgaria, which ranged from bridges and breweries to schools and libraries.¹⁶⁶ The role of Czechs in Bulgaria reached a peak when a Czech scholar, Konstantin Jireček, became the Bulgarian minister of education. It is no wonder that this period of Bulgarian history is referred to as the time of "Czech cultural

162 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, esp. 12, 72–73, and 77.

163 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 125–26.

164 Novák, "Mezi Adrií a Drávou," 22–24.

165 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 160.

166 See the enlightening TV series *Šumné stopy*: "Šumné stopy: Bulharsko – Adolf Václav Kolář," Česká televize video, 27:05, televised by Česká televize on March 27, 2013, accessed November 20, 2016, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10262550261-sumne-stopy/212522162350002-bulharsko-adolf-vaclav-kolar/>; "Šumné stopy: Bulharsko – Josef Václav Schnitter," Česká televize video, 26:46, televised by Česká televize on April 3, 2013, accessed November 20, 2016, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10262550261-sumne-stopy/212522162350003-bulharsko-josef-vaclav-schnitter/>; "Šumné stopy: Bulharsko – Rodina Prošků," Česká televize video, 26:55, televised by Česká televize on March 20, 2013, accessed November 20, 2016, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10262550261-sumne-stopy/212522162350001-bulharsko-rodina-prosku/>; "Šumné stopy: Bulharsko – Šipkou do Varny," Česká televize video, 26:58, televised by Česká televize on April 10, 2013, accessed November 20, 2016, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10262550261-sumne-stopy/212522162350004-bulharsko-sipkou-do-varny/>.

occupation” or “Czech invasion of Bulgaria.”¹⁶⁷ Similarly, Czechs traveling through Serbia at the turn of the century noted a number of important signs of Czech “assistance” to Serbian development: the beautiful building of the University of Belgrade was designed by the Czech architect Nevole, who, Klaus noted in 1910, “together with General Zach rendered many a service to the young Serbia.”¹⁶⁸ In 1903 Raušar described the achievements of the Czechs in Serbia, particularly the families of two entrepreneurs who had arrived in Serbia with no means, but through their diligence and hard work and because they had a mind for business secured themselves a prominent position and considerable renown throughout Serbia.¹⁶⁹ In the past, Raušar explained, there had been numerous foreign clerks in Serbia: Germans, French, Italians, and Czechs. Only the Czechs and other Slavs were often drawn there out of brotherly love and the desire to learn about the Serbs and their way of life; others wanted to get prestigious and well-paying jobs, and the majority only came to hunt and to fill their own pockets. In the meantime, however, the Serbs had developed their own forces or were at least trying to empower and emancipate themselves from foreigners, who Raušar concluded were decreasing in number.¹⁷⁰

Raušar’s views show that Czechs were aware of the economic or even exploitative nature of many of their countrymen’s involvement in the newly independent Slavic countries, although they tried to distinguish it from the activities of other nationals and present it as “brotherly assistance.” Hálek, writing about the Serbs in the mid-1860s, was even more forthright: “I completely approve of their self-regard [*samocit*] against foreigners, I approve of it even against the Czechs, who so far have indeed been moving to Serbia for the same reason as all foreigners – to get rich there.”¹⁷¹ Half a century later, Masaryk argued that the problem of the Balkans could only be resolved by cultural, not military expansion. While Spanish and Portuguese colonization, relying on military power, had failed, Britain, the United States, France, and newly also Germany and Italy were making successful commercial and cultural encroachments. Masaryk claimed that colonization required strong men, free and enterprising people who could take care of themselves abroad, but Austria encouraged inactivity and weakness; therefore, Germany had been taking over

167 Jan Rychlík et al., *Dějiny Bulharska* (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2000), 397. See also Čestmír Amort et al., *Dějiny československo-bulharských vztahů* (Prague: Academia, 1980), 136–42.

168 Klaus, *Do říše půlměsíce*, 74.

169 Raušar, *Na půdě sopečné*, 64–65.

170 *Ibid.*, 65–69.

171 Hálek, *Cestopisy*, 257.

Czech trade positions in the Balkans.¹⁷² He wrote that the Czechs should not just sit and passively watch how Austrian policy, favoring Young Turks, was hurting Czech industry in the Balkans.¹⁷³ It is obvious that in Masaryk's eyes the lack of colonial activity and ambitions was a Czech weakness.

With the increasing self-sufficiency of the newly independent Balkan countries, Bosnia-Herzegovina had become a more popular place for the Czechs to settle and work. A directory of Czechs living in Sarajevo around 1910, compiled and published by the local Czech expatriate organization Česká Beseda, listed around 2000 Czechs in Sarajevo, whose professions ranged from various state positions to craftsmen and entrepreneurs; among women, the most widespread profession was that of a cook. According to the editors, the directory was not only a valuable tool for Czech industrialists, merchants, bankers, and others who wanted to establish trade contacts in Sarajevo, it was also an important document from the national point of view, as it provided a glimpse at the life of the strong "Czech colony" in this city.¹⁷⁴ Another booklet published at the same time by a Czech newspaper in Zagreb contained the addresses of Czechs and "especially well-circumstanced compatriots" living in the South-Slav Balkan countries.¹⁷⁵ It paid special attention to Bosnia-Herzegovina: the introduction quoted the words of Stjepan Radić, a Croatian politician and correspondent for Czech and other newspapers, who claimed that those who would benefit from the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 most were the Czechs. No Czech could have summed up the Czechs' position as advanced brothers and entrepreneurs in a colonial setting more bluntly:

The Balkans are for the whole of our empire the promised land of economic influence and expansion that other European powers have sought with so much sacrifice and effort in their colonies. By annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina – a territory as large as the Bohemian Kingdom, but three times more sparsely populated – our empire has become a prominent Balkan state. However, because the Slavs make up a large majority in the Balkans, and also non-Slavs are justifiably mistrustful of or overtly resistant to German encroachment, our empire can quietly assert its economic influence in the Balkans only with the help of its Slavic nations, among whom only the Czechs are at present mature enough to be able to

172 Masaryk, *Rakouská zahraniční politika*, 29.

173 *Ibid.*, 66.

174 *Čechové v Sarajevě dle sčítání lidu v r. 1910*, rev. ed. (Sarajevo: SAMAS, 2012), II.

175 *Adresář Čechů v jihoslovanských zemích: Charvatsko, Slavonie, Dalmacie, Istrie, Bosna, Hercegovina, Již. Uhry a Srbsko*, vol. 2, *Adresář slovanských obchodníků* (Prague: Administrace "Českého listu" v Záhřebu, 1912), 5.

fulfill this great task. As soon as the renewed energy of the Czechs is freed up in the near future, once the Czech question is resolved, all of the Czech nation's economic efforts will turn to the Slavic South, toward Croatia and Bosnia in particular, as has long been indicated not only by farsighted individuals, but also by an increasingly strong stream of Czech emigrants and tourists.¹⁷⁶

5 Conclusion

In their views on Bosnia-Herzegovina and its Muslims, Czechs occupied the middle ground. They were somewhere between the Austro-Hungarian elites, who saw Bosnia-Herzegovina as a colony and its Muslim population as a potential ally against the emerging "Slavic threat" and the Slavs' national aspirations in the monarchy, and the Balkan Christian Slavs, for whom local Muslims of Slavic origin were (br)others, expected to strengthen the South-Slavic nation once they returned to their Slavic roots. As Slavs and supporters of their southern brothers, the latter view was closer to Czechs' hearts, but at the same time they almost unanimously approved of the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which they interpreted as liberation from the Ottoman yoke. While there was some criticism of the occupation (for example, by Holeček), it was quite rare. As a result of the heavy-handed administration of the newly occupied territories, its lack of respect for the Slavs' national rights, and the continuing opposition of the local population in Bosnia-Herzegovina to Austro-Hungarian rule, Czech views on the occupation started to diversify. Some Czechs, especially those who represented the empire or held official positions, persisted in their support for the official Austro-Hungarian policy in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Many criticized some aspects of Austro-Hungarian rule, most often its lack of concern for the national development of the Slavs of Bosnia-Herzegovina. And many, while rhetorically and perhaps even sincerely supporting the local population, were eager to take advantage of the opportunities offered in a "backward" Slavic realm that was now attached to the empire.

Czechs viewed the Slavic Muslims with ambivalence. As Slavs they were the Czechs' kin, but because they were associated with the Ottoman Turks, a traditional enemy, anti-Turkish sentiment was also directed at the Muslim Slavs and expressed in images of Muslims as fanatics and as foes of their Christian brothers. Most Czechs who wrote about the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina believed

¹⁷⁶ *Adresář Čechů*, 3.

they had been influenced by Ottoman-Turkish heritage and were consequently more “backward” than their Christian countrymen. For some Czech travelers to Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Ottoman-Turkish heritage was associated with the perceived fanaticism or fatalism of Muslims, but for most this heritage was a source of exotic appeal. Their accounts show that it was especially the “Oriental” character and Muslim population of Bosnia-Herzegovina that made it so attractive to travelers. In the mainstream Czech view, it was not only the Muslims but all of Bosnia-Herzegovina that was exotic and Oriental, and this could have both negative (backwardness) and positive (exoticism) connotations. It was a tame, local Orient that was safe for tourists – and “even for ladies.”

The somewhat paternalistic attitude of the Czechs was not confined to Muslims but was evident also to a greater or lesser extent in their opinions on all the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹⁷⁷ In this sense, the difference between the Muslims and Christians was a matter of degree rather than quality. Also, the “civilizing mission,” although directed primarily at Muslims, was not limited to them and was interpreted as responding to the “backwardness” of the former Ottoman provinces. The Czechs saw themselves as the vanguard and enlighteners of other Southern Slavs, not just those of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Czech travelers, in particular those who participated in the trips of tourist groups and teachers to various South-Slavic countries, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, boasted about the esteem in which they were held by the local population; occasionally they also voiced their disappointment at not being treated with sufficient warmth and respect by the Balkan Slavs.¹⁷⁸ In Absolonová’s rendering, the Southern Slavs in Bosnia-Herzegovina were uneducated, lived in primitive dwellings, and ate primitive food; they worked little, but also needed little for their life, and had no feel for business or other duties that would take them away from fighting for their country. Although she acknowledged that this was not the Southern Slavs’ fault and their simple life was meaningful, it is clear that she felt superior to the local people, who she believed looked up to the Czechs.¹⁷⁹

177 For instance, a report on Kecková’s achievements in Mostar praised the humanistic activity by which she helped to solve “the woman question among the neglected, forsaken daughters of Eastern Slavdom.” “Česká lékařka MDr. Bohuslava Kecková,” *Ženské listy*, November 1898, 217.

178 Němec (*Má cesta*, 47–48) complained that while he had envisioned a warm welcome from other Slavs, he saw little interest and even contempt from the Serbs, and the Bulgarians’ friendliness was no different from the cordiality they showed to other foreigners, such as Germans, Swedes, or Americans. Klaus (*Do říše půlměsíce*, 40–41) was disappointed by the Serbs’ lack of interest in Slavic solidarity.

179 Absolonová, “Přes hranice Černé Hory,” 305–7.

Czech travels to Bosnia-Herzegovina bore some resemblance to the travels of West Europeans to their colonies, but they differed both from traditional colonial journeys and from Czech trips to the Ottoman Empire because, as Slavs, the Czechs saw themselves as ethnically and racially closer to the local population. This is apparent in the depictions of Muslim women in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in which they were occasionally exoticized like their Ottoman Turkish counterparts, but in most cases were presented through their role in the family, and their families were much like the families of other Slavs. However, the fact that Czech women who wrote about Muslim women mostly viewed them in the same exotic light that men did suggests that arguably “non-colonial” Czech women also participated in the construction of Muslim stereotypes and in the imperial project, just like women representing colonial empires.

After the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Czechs did not hesitate to take advantage of the opportunities that the newly occupied territories had to offer for business, as a source of employment, and as a place of settlement. This attitude was shared even by the most ardent critics of the occupation, like Holeček, as long as the benefits of the imperial enterprise went to the Czechs, and not to the Germans, Hungarians, or Jews. In contrast to a typical colonial setting, however, the inhabitants were not seen as mere colonial objects. They were the Czechs’ Slavic brothers, and while they may have been regarded with some condescension, they were not considered markedly different from or inferior to the Czechs. Czechs clearly had a stronger sense of superiority over the Muslims, whom many continued to associate with the Turks, which prevented them from seeing Slavic Muslims as their true brothers. Yet, the Ottoman heritage was a shortcoming that could be overcome, and not an inborn characteristic, like race.

From this perspective, the Czechs’ involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina might just seem like another venture driven by the Czech entrepreneurial spirit and similar to their pursuits in other parts of Southeastern Europe, a venture that became more attractive as the opportunities for careers and making money in the independent Slavic states began to dwindle. What made the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina different from other Slavic areas of Southeastern Europe was the fact that the Czechs could and did go there with the support of the empire behind them. Not all the Czechs who settled in, worked with or traveled to Bosnia-Herzegovina were in the service of the state, but their presence in the provinces was made easier by the fact that Bosnia-Herzegovina was ruled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The perceived backwardness of the region then gave sufficient justification for various kinds of “civilizing missions.”

That one of the reasons Czechs went to Bosnia-Herzegovina was to improve the lives of the people who had been incorporated into the empire is not inconsistent with their participation in and contribution to the Austro-Hungarian colonial enterprise. The work of the female physicians employed in Bosnia could be viewed in this same way. In 1895 one women's magazine summed up a recently published text by Mrs Kállay, wife of the minister responsible for Bosnia-Herzegovina, as follows: "The first attempt to staff the positions of state doctors by female forces has succeeded wonderfully and it is only to be wished that things continue in this direction and that more female doctors be called up. Apart from purely philanthropic tasks, female doctors also have a deeply important cultural mission, for which they are wholly suited, and they work effectively in this field."¹⁸⁰ By helping women in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the article concluded, we are substantially advancing "civilization in the Orient."¹⁸¹ Bayerová, and undoubtedly many other Czechs, came to Bosnia-Herzegovina in order to help both themselves and the local people, seeking to improve the population's health and simultaneously to "civilize" them¹⁸² – just as some West Europeans went to the colonies both to further their own agenda and to uplift the indigeneous population.

180 Vilma de Kállay, "Ženské lékařky v Bosně," *Lada*, no. 10 (1895): 78.

181 Kállay, "Ženské lékařky," 78.

182 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 35.

“Our Mission in Oriental Studies”

Those [Orientalists] who never get to the Orient or who – upon returning – publish their observations in print must begin the task of systematically creating Czech Orientalist literature. We owe this to our nation, [and] to our students ... If it wants to profit the state must invest. Built this way Oriental studies will secure us lasting success in the Orient and will perhaps serve as a model for other Slavic states.

ALOIS MUSIL, 1920¹

In 1920, the year that according to some marks the end of the first phase in the development of Czech Oriental studies,² the anthropologist, geographer, and Middle Eastern scholar Alois Musil (1868–1944)³ wrote an article titled “Our Mission in Oriental Studies and in the Orient.”⁴ The field of scholarship devoted to the languages, cultures, and history of “the Orient” was still relatively young in Czech (and from 1918 Czechoslovak) academia, and only a handful of scholars dealt with the Turkish language and the Turks in their research and teaching. Each of these scholars (all of whom were men) was a personality in his own right, and not everything that Musil wrote in this text about the tasks

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- 1 Alois Musil, *Naše úkoly v orientalistice a v Orientě* (Prague: Edvard Leschinger, 1920), 19–20.
 - 2 Rudolf Růžička, “Prof. Dr. Rudolf Dvořák: Posmrtné vzpomínky o zemřelých členech Akademie,” in *Almanach České akademie věd a umění*, vol. 31–32 (Prague: Nákladem České akademie věd a umění, 1922), 82.
 - 3 Musil’s education, research interests, international fame, and adventurous life set him apart from his Czech colleagues. He discovered early Islamic portraits at a time when it was generally believed that Islam did not allow the depiction of human beings, he became a “blood brother” of a Bedouin chief and even a Sheikh himself, while at the same time he had close ties to the Habsburg family and was involved in high politics. On Musil see Erich Feigl, *Musil von Arabien: Vorkämpfer der islamischen Welt* (Vienna: Amalthea-Verlag, 1985); Ernest Gellner, “Lawrence of Moravia: Alois Musil, Monotheism and the Hapsburg Empire,” *The Times Literary Supplement*, August 19, 1994, 12–14. See also Karl Johannes Bauer, *Alois Musil: Wahrheitssucher in der Wüste* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1989); Udo Worschech, *Alois Musil: Ein Orientalist und Priester in geheimer Mission in Arabien 1914–1915* (Kamen: Verlag Hartmut Spenner, 2009). Among Czech works, see, e.g., Oldřich Klobas, *Alois Musil zvaný Músa ar Rueilí* (Brno: CERM, 2003); Jaroslav Franc, *Kněz a teolog Alois Musil: Příspěvek k dějinám mezináboženských vztahů a výbor z pozůstalosti* (Olomouc: Nakladatelství Centra Aletti Refugium Velehrad-Roma, 2015).
 - 4 Musil, *Naše úkoly*.

of Oriental studies can be taken to represent what his fellow academics would also have believed. Yet, Musil's article raises a more general question: how did the first generation of Czech scholars with a professional focus on the Middle East, and specifically the Turkish language, literature, and history, see the purpose of their work and their mission?

The emergence of the modern disciplines that make up Oriental studies coincided in the West with the height of the imperialist age and, as R. Stephen Humphreys notes, imperialism led to a sense of European material and intellectual superiority. Orientalists were also influenced by this feeling and consequently looked down on Orientals and regarded them as mere objects of study: "One could admire or sympathize with them, but in the end they were specimens under a microscope."⁵ Certainly not every example of the work of Orientalists supported the colonial enterprise. Scholars held different views on the people they were studying and used different theoretical frameworks to analyze them. Zachary Lockman warns against conflating examples of prejudice, stereotyping, and racism in scholarship on the Middle East with the theories and interpretative paradigms that academics used and points out that even those scholars who respected Islam and looked favorably on Muslims worked with what are today considered questionable interpretative frameworks.⁶ Yet, it is broadly accepted that in the 19th century, in Lockman's words, "the ways in which European scholars, writers and artists analyzed, imagined and depicted the Orient were often intertwined, in complex ways, with the reality of growing European power over those peoples and lands."⁷

The special relationship that exists between knowledge and power has been highlighted in analyses of the colonial powers' "Orientalism." For a long time, the model of European scholarship on the Orient was taken to be the work of the British and French scholars. Now, in the 21st century, 19th-century German Orientalism, which at that time was very influential throughout Europe and even more so in Central Europe, is attracting renewed attention and is being interpreted in various ways: it is described as a subspecies of the Anglo-French (and especially the French, via de Sacy) "colonialist" model; or it is considered to have had little to do with pragmatic political issues and imperialist objectives – in other words, it is deemed to have been preoccupied with the pursuit of "pure knowledge"; or it is even regarded as having formed its own breed of

5 Humphreys, "The Historiography of the Modern Middle East," 22.

6 Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3–4 and 74.

7 *Ibid.*, 73–74.

scholarship, a kind of “third way.”⁸ Suzanne Marchand, for instance, has argued that, at the turn of the century, German-language Orientalists systematically criticized Eurocentric interpretations of Eastern cultures and their history.⁹

Turks and the Turkish language often occupy a marginal position in analyses of the history of Oriental studies,¹⁰ except in Austria and Russia, where Oriental studies actually referred particularly to the study of the Turks and the Turkish language.¹¹ Russia is an interesting example of a country that was both “Orientalized” by the West and itself exercised imperial power over Oriental territories.¹² Russian scholarship on the East is associated with the German school; it was influenced by German academia, and also its diametric evaluations resemble those of German Orientalism. David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye claims that Russian scholars focusing on Islam and the Turkic lands occupied by Russia “were sympathetic and respectful of the nations they studied” and there was “no inherent link between knowledge and power as far as the Orient was concerned.”¹³ Kalpana Sahni extends Said’s critique of Western Orientalism to apply to the Russian colonization of the Caucasus and Central Asia,¹⁴ while Vera Tolz portrays Russian “Orientologists” as “empire-savers,” deeply convinced of the power of their knowledge to substantially transform

8 Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 2010), xxii. For an overview of various positions on German Orientalism see Ursula Wokoeck, *German Orientalism: The Study of the Middle East and Islam from 1800 to 1945* (London: Routledge, 2009), 9–18.

9 Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 496.

10 Compared to Arabic, Turkish was a minor topic; nevertheless, the extent to which it is overlooked is surprising. Marchand (*German Orientalism*, xxx) mentions among the subfields of Oriental studies covered in her comprehensive work Assyriology, Egyptology, biblical criticism, Indology, Persian studies, Arab linguistics, Islamic studies, Sinology, and Japanology, but not Turkish studies. Also Wokoeck (*German Orientalism*), Lockman (*Contending Visions*), and Irwin (*Dangerous Knowledge*) pay limited attention to Turkish specialists and topics.

11 See, e.g., Oliver Rathkolb, ed., *250 Jahre – von der Orientalischen zur Diplomatischen Akademie in Wien / 250 years – from the Oriental to the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna / 250 années – de l’Académie Orientale à l’Académie Diplomatique à Vienne* (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2004).

12 Not only imperial powers like Russia, but even societies that depended on imperial powers sometimes related to the Orient in contradictory ways, as a center to a periphery and as a part of the periphery themselves. See Joseph Lennon, “Irish Orientalism: An Overview,” in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, ed. Clare Carroll and Patricia King (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 130 and 156.

13 David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 8.

14 See Sahni, *Crucifying the Orient* (with the characteristic subtitle “Russian Orientalism and the Colonization of Caucasus and Central Asia”).

Oriental societies, but at the same time, as the forerunners to 20th-century postcolonial scholarship, critical of the East–West dichotomy.¹⁵

In Central European countries, the different schools of Oriental studies that emerged drew inspiration from various sources and did not fit neatly into any one model.¹⁶ Polish scholarship on the Orient was affected by the partition of Poland and its development was brought to a halt when the Russian authorities closed the University of Wilno.¹⁷ After that, Polish Orientalists often joined the Russian imperial service as experts on the Orient and sometimes acted as intermediaries between the Russian authorities and the Turks. As Kalinowska argues, they often found themselves in the dilemma of being “a colonized subject living out his life as one of the colonizers.”¹⁸

In practical terms, and often also intellectually, scholarship in other Central European countries was linked to Austrian professors and institutions of learning. Fichtner points out that the Habsburg regime, through its victories over the Turks, transformed the Ottoman Empire from a mortal threat into a state that ought to be objectively studied; in this sense, the Habsburgs contributed immensely to the advancement of Oriental scholarship.¹⁹ The rise of Oriental studies in Vienna was largely connected with the Habsburgs’ need for qualified translators and interpreters to communicate with the Sultan. As a result, Turkish was one of the main Oriental languages taught at the university, starting in the late 17th century, and at the Oriental Academy established in 1754.²⁰ The most important Austrian Orientalist was Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856), “whose impassioned commitment to the uniqueness of Islamic and Eastern cultures,” according to Fichtner, “influenced Oriental studies throughout central Europe most profoundly.”²¹

15 Vera Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient: The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 5–6 and 20.

16 See Gadoin and Vesel, *Figures pionnières de l'orientalisme*.

17 Kalinowska, *Between East and West*, 5.

18 *Ibid.*, 63.

19 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 160.

20 *Ibid.*, 117–61; Ernst Dieter Petritsch, “Die Anfänge der Orientalischen Akademie,” in Rathkolb, *250 Jahre*, 47–64.

21 Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 130. Fichtner (*Terror and Toleration*, 130–61, esp. 136–39) emphasizes Hammer’s deep knowledge of the subject of his research, his contribution to the advancement of scholarly methods in Oriental studies, and his open-mindedness toward the Turks and Eastern cultures, which is why his multi-volume *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches* is, according to her, a resource that readers and even scholars continued to use into the 20th century. Other historians are more critical. Irwin (*Dangerous Knowledge*, 150–51) writes that Hammer “was full of ideas and insights, many of which were not only wrong but also slightly mad” and denounces his “History” as not much more than an uncritical compilation of Turkish and Greek sources.

Although Hungarian historians generally followed the traditions of German and Austrian historiography, Gábor Ágoston argues that the anti-Habsburg and pro-Turkish atmosphere that dominated Hungary in the second half of the 19th century led to institutional support for Turkish studies and produced a more positive attitude toward Turkish history than was common in other countries that had experienced Ottoman rule; by 1870 a chair in Turkology had already been established at the university in Pest and for nearly four decades it was occupied by Ármin Vámbéry – one of the main proponents of the theory of the Turkic origins of the Hungarians.²²

In Czech scholarship, little attention has been devoted to the politics of knowledge in the period preceding state socialism. The prevailing opinion on Czech academic engagement with non-European countries in the 19th century is that scholars had a genuine interest in “exotic” cultures, and this suggests that there were no political influences behind their work.²³ This lack of criticism extends also to research on the history of Czech Oriental studies, whose major figures, whether active under Habsburg rule or in the new Czechoslovak state, are idealized, and their work is not subjected to any critical analysis.²⁴ Although some Orientalists, especially the fascinating figure of Alois Musil, have been the subject of many publications,²⁵ the history of Czech Oriental studies has yet to be written.

It is not the aim of this chapter to provide a brief history of Oriental studies. It is solely concerned with the pre-history of Czech Turkish studies. Like elsewhere in Europe, the study of all things Turkish was a part of the larger discipline that in the 19th century – and in the Czech case in the late 19th century – came to be called “Orientalism” (“Orientalistika” in Czech, “Orientalistik” in

22 Ágoston, “The Image of the Ottomans,” 15–18.

23 See, e.g., Binková and Polišínský, *Česká touha cestovatelská*; Borovička, *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české*.

24 Lemmen (*Tschechen auf Reisen*, esp. 61–72) describes the debates about the founding of the Oriental Institute in Prague as a sign of an increasing interest in the non-European world in interwar Czechoslovakia.

25 Franc, *Kněz a teolog Alois Musil*; Klobas, *Alois Musil; Alois Musil: Život a dílo vynikajícího českého vědce a cestovatele; Katalog výstavy k 25. výročí úmrtí pořádané ve dnech 18.-20. dubna 1969 ve výstavním sále Technického muzea v Brně* (Brno: Československá společnost zeměpisná při ČSAV, 1969); *Alois Musil 1868–1968: Katalog výstavy ke 100. výročí narození* (Brno: Československá zeměpisná společnost při ČSAV, 1968); Rudolf Veselý, ed., *Alois Musil – český vědec světového jména* (Prague: Globe, 1995); Edvard Reich, *Alois Musil: Selský synek světovým cestovatelem* (Prague: Českomoravské podniky tiskařské a vydavatelské, 1930); Stanislav Segert, “Alois Musil – Bible Scholar,” *Archiv Orientální* 63, no. 4 (1995): 399–400. Musil is the only Czech “Orientalist” who is known today among the wider public; his life story was even turned into a Czech comic book. See Kristýna Košutová, *Šejch Músá, aneb, Prof. Alois Musil* (Prague: Akademická společnost Aloise Musila, 2015).

German).²⁶ The chapter asks why some Czechs chose to take an interest in this subject at a time when Czech society's primary focus was on national issues and on the relationship of the Czech people to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It examines the ways in which Czech scholars in the late 19th and early 20th centuries framed their study of the Turkish language, literature, and history, and the factors that structured their research on the Turks, a subject that was initially connected with research on the wider Middle East. What kind of relationship exists between scholarship and politics in a nation that is fighting for its independence and, after 1918, starting to build its own nation-state? Given the role of the colonial context in the emergence of Oriental studies in the West, an obvious question is whether, at a time when the Czech lands were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, there were any imperialist undertones to the Orientalist work of Czech scholars. The politics of knowledge was not, however, confined to colonial interests. The national struggle provided its own opportunities for exploiting images of the Orient – for instance, to justify a nation's claim to sovereignty by juxtaposing its “European virtues” with the shortcomings of non-European societies.

The chapter seeks to make sense of Czech scholars' interest in Turkish issues at the turn of the century, and to present the views of experts to complement the non-scholarly literature on the Turks discussed in the previous chapters. It examines early Czech scholarship on the Turks, on the one hand, in relation to the dominant academic approaches used to study Turkish topics in other countries at that time and, on the other hand, in the light of Czech society's attitudes toward the Turks. It is a rather selective view of the scholarship and scholars who within the emerging field of Oriental studies specialized also in Turkish issues and focuses primarily on a few key figures – Rudolf Dvořák, Alois Musil, Jan Rypka, and marginally also the younger Felix Tauer – and their writings in Czech, which were aimed at a Czech-speaking audience.

The beginnings of Czech Oriental studies are examined here from several perspectives. The chapter first briefly introduces the institutional setting and the first generation of scholars connected with the emerging field. It then goes on to show what shaped the research interests and views of these scholars and what topics and approaches emerged as scholars developed their own areas of expertise. The chapter closes by looking at the connection between scholars and the society they lived in.

26 In Czech, a distinction exists between *orientalismus* (Orientalism), which has traditionally been used to refer to art inspired by various “Oriental” cultures and more recently has been connected with Said's concept, and *orientalistika* (Oriental studies). I use the term Oriental studies (rather than Orientalism or Orientology) for the emerging discipline, although it was not used this way in English at that time.

1 The Founding Fathers of Czech Oriental Studies

The origins of Czech scholarly interest in the Middle East and the early development of the discipline(s) focusing on this region are closely tied to the university in Prague, which in the 19th century was called “Charles-Ferdinand University.” It was a bilingual German-Czech institution and the site of heated debates over the language of instruction and more general national issues, which came to a head in the revolution of 1848. Like elsewhere in Europe, it was the university’s Faculty of Theology that first devoted attention to Islam, doing so within the scope of Biblical studies. Although the majority of the university’s courses were in German, the number of Czech students and professors and courses taught in Czech gradually increased in the second half of the century. In February 1882, after lengthy negotiations, Charles-Ferdinand University was divided into two universities – one German and one Czech.²⁷

Institutionally, Oriental studies followed a similar path of development in Prague as it had at German universities, where scholars who taught about the Middle East held positions defined as appointments in “Oriental languages” (*morgenländische/orientalische Sprachen*), a subject area that could then actually encompass all of Asia and Africa, but in practice mostly concerned the languages of a region that stretched from the Middle East to India.²⁸ Most early Czech Orientalists, like their German counterparts, studied classical philology, sometimes after or along with theology,²⁹ and their educational trajectories reveal how important an education in the German language was for the emergence of Czech Oriental studies. Josef Brandejs (1853–1876), an Orientalist *in spe*, who is considered to have been the first Czech student of Orientalistik, though he died before he could start his professional career, studied at Vienna

27 On the history of the University in Prague see František Kavka and Josef Petráň, eds., *A History of Charles University*, transl. Anna Bryson and Frederick Snider, 2 vols. (Prague: Karolinum, 2001). Each of the universities had three faculties, one of them a Philosophical Faculty, while the Faculty of Theology remained undivided until 1891. In the second half of the 19th century the study of the Middle East moved to the Philosophical Faculty, which by 1846–1847 was already starting to offer elective courses in Hebrew, taught by Wolfgang Wessely (1801–1870).

28 Wokoeck (*German Orientalism*, 2–18) has noted that by the first half of the 19th century, interest in the Middle East (Arabic, Persian, and Turkish) had at German universities ceased to be exclusive to theology, but Oriental studies was still a minor discipline. Over the course of the century, the steps required to build an academic career became more rigorous and ultimately came to include the writing of a dissertation, followed by Habilitation, and then the positions of lecturer, professor *extraordinarius* (without a chair), and, at the top, professor *ordinarius* (with a chair), which was the only position with a proper salary.

29 This was the case of Břetislav Košut, Jaroslav Sedláček, and Alois Musil.

University under Friedrich Müller (1834–1898), a professor of comparative philology and Sanskrit, and Joseph von Karabacek (1845–1918), a professor of the history of the Orient and its auxiliary sciences (and the director of the Hofbibliothek in Vienna). Brandejs also studied Turkish with A. Plechacsek³⁰ and was a true polyglot: he is said to have mastered Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Sanskrit, Pali, Coptic, Hebrew, Armenian, and Syriac; he also learned some Chinese and Japanese and was interested in central African languages and in Egyptian hieroglyphs. He was in touch with Orientalists abroad and while still a student he was already hired by the Viennese Court library as an expert on Slavistics and Oriental studies.³¹ Jaromír Břetislav Košut (1854–1880), another promising scholar who died young, started his university education at the Theological Faculty in Basel before moving to Leipzig to study Persian, Arabic, and Turkish with Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer (1801–1888), whom the Czechs considered the best contemporary expert in Oriental studies.³²

The idea to establish the first teaching position in “Czech” Oriental studies began to be considered in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Initially the post was supposed to be held by Košut, who habilitated in Oriental philology in 1879 at the still undivided Charles-Ferdinand University, where, up until his premature death in 1880, he lectured – in Czech – on the Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages. The position of “first Czech Orientalist” then went to Rudolf Dvořák (1860–1920), who habilitated in Oriental philology in 1884 at what was by then the separate Czech university; in 1890 he became extraordinary professor and in 1896 ordinary professor, and he focused on a broad range of “Oriental” subjects, including Turkish.³³ Dvořák started to specialize in Oriental philology in Prague, studying with Košut, Max Grünert (1849–1929), and Saul Isaak Kämpf

30 T.G. Masaryk, “Josef Brandejs,” *Světozor*, May 19, 1876, 305.

31 Brandejs translated Indian poetry and corresponded with the Egyptian poet Ali al-Laihi and the French Orientalist de Cheyannes. He was a schoolmate and friend of T.G. Masaryk, who wrote Brandejs’s obituary (“Brandejs”) in 1876. See also “Kdo byl kdo? Čeští a slovenští orientalisté, afrikanisté a iberoamerikanisté,” accessed May 5, 2018, <https://libri.cz/databaze/orient/search.php>.

32 Fleischer was a philologist and a former student of de Sacy (1758–1838) and his pupils included such important figures as Caspary, Dietrich, Goldziher, Hartmann, Sachau, Rosen, and others. For Czech views on Fleischer, see the encyclopedia entry on Fleischer written by Dvořák in *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1895), 9:295–96.

33 His students included the future Arabist Rudolf Růžička (1878–1957), historian of the Middle East Felix Tauer (1894–1981), translator and poet Jaromír Borecký (1869–1951), physician Josef M. Řehák (1871–1936), lawyer Karel Majzner (1875–1952), secondary school teachers Jindřich Entlicher (1878–1926) and Karel Šafář (1899–1970), as well as two women: Marie Tauerová (1896–1981) and Vlasta Kálalová (Kálalová-Di Lotti, 1896–1971). See Jiří Bečka, “Žáci Rudolfa Dvořáka: Z dějin české orientalistiky,” *Nový Orient* 50, no. 2 (1995): 73–77.

(1818–1892),³⁴ and then continued his education in Leipzig and Munich. In Leipzig, Dvořák studied with Fleischer and took courses in Biblical studies, Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Coptic, Assyriology, Sanskrit, and Chinese, among others. Dvořák's successor in the area of Turkish and Persian studies, Jan Rypka (1886–1968), came to Vienna University at a time when its professors of Semitic languages included David Heinrich Müller (1846–1912) and Rudolf Eugen Geyer (1861–1929), and Friedrich Johann Kraelitz-Greifenhorst (1876–1932) was its specialist in “Turko-Tatar” languages. Rypka also took courses in Chinese and Japanese, but he was most interested in Turkish and Persian literature and history. Von Karabacek helped him to find a job and would ultimately have a strong impact on Rypka's life.³⁵ Tauer, who was seven years younger than Rypka, completed his studies entirely in Prague, where he took courses with Dvořák, Grünert, and Rudolf Růžička (1878–1957)³⁶ focusing on Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and history.

In Prague, Turkish was initially studied in the Philology Department as part of a broader program in Oriental philology, like in Germany in the late 19th century, and later as part of a program in Semitic philology.³⁷ Turkish was just one of a number of subjects that scholars known as Orientalists studied, and it had to compete for attention with Arabic and Persian and other scholarly interests. A tendency toward academic specialization, however, became somewhat stronger after the First World War. In the years after the war Alois Musil began to teach modern Arab political and cultural history as well as the modern Arabic language. Studies in Turkish and Persian ceased for a short time after Dvořák's death in 1920, but were soon revived by Rypka, who habilitated in 1925, and was promoted in 1927 to extraordinary and in 1930 to ordinary professor of Turkish and modern Persian philology; he is therefore considered to have been the first Czech Turkologist and Persianist.³⁸

34 Kämpf lectured on the comparative grammar of Semitic languages – Chaldean, Syriac, and Arabic. Grünert, a pupil of Fleischer, moved to Prague in 1877 and after the division of the university taught Arabic, Turkish, and Persian philology at the German University, where he became ordinary professor in 1891. See Josef Petráň, “The Philosophical Faculty,” in Kavka and Petrání, *A History of Charles University*, 2:109–22, 147–61, and 223–32.

35 See *Poutník Orientem: Sborník k počtě šedesátin prof. Dr. Jana Rypky* (Prague: Nakladatelství ELK, 1946), 11.

36 Růžička studied philology at Charles University in Prague and later at the universities in Strasbourg and Berlin, before being habilitated in Semitic philology in 1909 and becoming an ordinary professor of Semitic languages in 1923. Alongside languages he specialized in the history of Arabic poetry. Tauer obtained his PhD in Prague in 1917 and later lectured on the early political and cultural history and literature of Islam.

37 Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*, 35–36. In Prague, Semitic philology continued to include the Turkish and Persian languages as late as the 1930s.

38 See Petrání, “Philosophical Faculty,” esp. 231.

Despite the institutionalization of Oriental studies, teaching positions – up to and including extraordinary professor – did not pay a salary that was sufficient to survive on. All the major figures in the emerging field of Oriental studies in the early stages of their careers had to supplement the income they received from academic work by doing other jobs. The first two Czech students of Orientalistik, according to their contemporaries, struggled with financial difficulties and worked so hard that in one case this contributed to the young Orientalist's early death.³⁹ Others survived by taking on various additional jobs and paid tasks: Dvořák edited the *Ottův slovník naučný* encyclopedia while Rypka, interrupting his studies, worked as a tutor in the family of Prince Bagration in the Caucasus, and later, on the recommendation of his former professor Karabacek, as a corrector of Oriental prints in the Viennese court and for the university printing press of Adolf Holzhausen in order to add to his meager income as a private *docent*.⁴⁰

When we consider how demanding the program in Oriental studies was and how poor and poorly paid the employment prospects of graduates of the program were, one might ask why any intellectually gifted young man⁴¹ would want to study Oriental languages. Sometimes it was a teacher who suggested a student study Oriental philology,⁴² and since Oriental languages were taught in the Philology Department, students who moved from classical to Oriental philology often made the transition gradually over the course of their university studies. Others appear to have been attracted by some notion they had of “the Orient,” or they were captivated by the “magic of the East,”⁴³ and often this

39 “Dr. Jaromír Břetislav Košut” [Obituary], *Humoristické listy*, December 11, 1880, 393–94; Masaryk, “Brandejs,” 305.

40 *Poutník Orientem*, 11–12.

41 The two women among Dvořák's students were quite exceptional and their post-war lives certainly deserve special attention. Marie Tauerová, sister of Felix Tauer, worked as a librarian and translated from Arabic and Persian. Vlasta Kálalová studied Arabic, Turkish, and Persian with Dvořák, Růžička, and Grünert, went on to study medicine, and later founded a Czech hospital in Baghdad. Her memoirs remain unpublished, but the brief published texts on the time she spent in Istanbul in the early 1920s contain valuable information. See Vlasta Kálalová, “Cařihradská lékařská fakulta,” *Časopis lékařův českých* 64, no. 2 (1925): 78–79; Kálalová-di Lottiová, *Cařihradské a bagdadské kapitoly*. See also Bečka, “Žáci Rudolfa Dvořáka,” 73–77.

42 That is how Košut came to abandon theology and turn his focus to Oriental languages instead. On Košut see Jiří Bečka, “Z počátků české orientalistiky: J.B. Košut,” *Nový Orient* 46, no. 4 (1991): 99–101. Košut in turn influenced Dvořák's decision to specialize in Oriental languages after he had already started studying classical philology. Růžička, “Prof. Dr. Rudolf Dvořák,” 73.

43 Rypka, according to Tauer, started to learn Oriental languages when he was still just a secondary school student. *Poutník Orientem*, 11. Tauer wrote in his memoirs that he, too, started to study Near Eastern languages while at secondary school (*gymnasium*) and then

occurred when they were still in secondary school. Musil’s motive was a desire to better understand the Bible by studying the circumstances under which it was written and the people to whom it was addressed.⁴⁴

Most of those who helped to develop Oriental studies as a discipline were university graduates who retained ties to Czech academe, but there were also a few autodidacts who contributed to promoting Turkish culture among the Czech public. Some learned Turkish while living in the Ottoman Empire and applied their knowledge either to the work of translation or to writing about the Ottoman Empire. These “non-academics” included priest, writer, and translator Alois Koudelka (1861–1942),⁴⁵ typographer, writer, and translator Richard Hrdlička (1868–1967),⁴⁶ and journalist Jaromír V. Šmejkal (1902–1941).⁴⁷ Although it probably mattered little to the Czech public whether a story was translated by a university professor or a journalist, there was a recognized distinction between academic Orientalists and the non-academics who knew Turkish, which is evident, for instance, in encyclopedia entries on these figures. “Orientalist” (*orientalista*) was the term used most often to describe early scholars interested in the Middle East – and other non-European languages and cultures. It was reserved for academics and there was an element of prestige attached to it.⁴⁸ Since these are the people who are discussed in this chapter, this is the term that is used here, without any evaluative connotations.

went on to focus on the history of the Muslim world at university. Felix Tauer, “V Istanbulu před půlstoletím: Z reminiscencí orientalisty,” in *Českoslovenští vědci v Orientu*, Adéla Jůnová Macková et al. (Prague: Scriptorium, 2012), 1:55.

44 Alois Musil, “Jak jsem poznával Orient,” *Česká revue*, May and June 1921, 215.

45 Koudelka, who was called “the Czech Mezzofanti” for having done translations from more than twenty languages, translated Ahmed Hikmet’s short story and wrote a series of essays on modern Turkish literature. See Alois Koudelka, “Něco z moderního tureckého písemnictví,” *Hlídky* 28, no. 5 (1911): 297–302; Alois Koudelka, “Z novější literatury,” *Hlídky* 31, no. 6 (1914): 421–25; Alois Koudelka, “Z novější turecké literatury,” *Hlídky* 31, no. 7 (1914): 524–29; Alois Koudelka, “Turecké písemnictví,” *Hlídky* 35, no. 1 (1918): 1–9.

46 Hrdlička published a translation of Nasreddin Hoca’s adventures with a short commentary on Turkish literature in 1913. Richard Hrdlička, *Žerty a příhody Nasreddina Chodži* (Tábor: printed by author, 1913), 4–6. Although he claimed that it was based on the Turkish edition of Mehmed Tevfik, it was probably at least partly translated via translations to other Slavic languages.

47 Šmejkal published articles on Turkey in the 1920s, but also a book of translations of writings by Yakub Kadri and Ahmed Hikmet, which he introduced with an essay on Ottoman-Turkish literature. Jaromír Václav Šmejkal, *Turecké povídky ze sbírek Jakuba Kadryho a Achmeda Hikmeta* (Prague: Nakladatel Alois Hynek, n.d.), 3–8. He also published the memoirs of Leyla Hanım (via a French translation): Lejla Hanum, *Vzpomínky na harém sultanů tureckých*, trans. Jaromír Václav Šmejkal (Prague: J. Otto, 1927).

48 See entries in *Ottův Slovník naučný* on Dvořák (Prague: J. Otto, 1894, 8:269–70) and Košut (Prague: J. Otto, 1899, 14:971) and the entry on Rypka in *Masarykův slovník naučný* (Prague: Československý kompas, 1932, 6:338), which all refer to them as Orientalists. In contrast,

2 Oriental Studies “as Translation”

The first Czech Orientalists, who had to study abroad to learn their field, were influenced by the ideas and scholarship they encountered there. The impact of German-language Orientalistik in particular had a formative effect on young Czech scholars through the personal ties they had with professors in Germany and Austria and with German scholars in Prague. The dependence of early Czech Oriental studies on foreign models can be interpreted in different ways. Ursula Wokoeck has observed that, since the Orient that forms the subject matter of Oriental studies is, according to Said, produced by prejudice and political ambitions, “there can be no Oriental studies, in the proper sense, in countries which have no colonies and/or colonial/imperialist interests in the Orient. If Oriental studies exist in such countries, they cannot be ‘authentic,’ to use a fashionable catchword. In other words, they have to be derivative.”⁴⁹ In this spirit, one could argue that Czech Oriental studies were derivative because Czechs lacked a colonial empire. The lack of a colonial apparatus, including the institutions that educated colonial administrators, may indeed have been one of the reasons why Czech Oriental studies emerged so late. And with no Czech tradition of formal study of non-European cultures, the Czech intellectuals who began studying “the Orient” looked for models elsewhere.

However, the beginnings of Czech Oriental studies and the derivative nature of the discipline can also be examined through the interpretative lens of what Vladimír Macura called “culture as translation.”⁵⁰ Macura developed this concept in order to describe the process by which Czech national literature in the 19th century emerged in a dialogue with German culture: in the early 19th century the Czechs were trying to prove their maturity as a nation but lacked important elements of a full-fledged national culture, and they therefore created their literature by borrowing, emulating, and translating from more advanced cultures, especially from German-language works. This process was not confined to literature; it also occurred in scholarly writings and it is in this light that this chapter deals with early Czech scholarship on the Turks.

Alois Koudelka is described as a priest and translator (*Ottův slovník naučný*, 14:997), and Jaromír Borecký, Dvořák’s student, who translated Persian poetry and worked as the director of the University Library, is described as a writer and an expert in musicology, but not in Oriental studies. See *Masarykův slovník naučný* (Prague: Československý kompas, 1925), 1:578.

49 Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*, 9.

50 Vladimír Macura, “Culture as Translation,” in *Translation, History, Culture*, ed. Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (London: Pinter, 1990), 64–70; see also Macura, *Znamení zrodu*.

The emulative character of early Czech Oriental studies becomes apparent when we look at the content of some scholars' early publications. A particularly interesting example is the work of Rudolf Dvořák, considered the father of Czech Oriental studies. The breadth of Dvořák's research interests and the views he held in his youth bear the stamp of having been influenced by his study abroad and by the scholarship of his time. Thus, for instance, his 1884 habilitation lecture, titled “On the Cultural Importance of Arabs for Europe,” was to a significant extent inspired by Ernest Renan's (1823–1892) famous Sorbonne lecture “L'islamisme et la science” from 1883.⁵¹ Dvořák painted a contradictory picture of the Arabs as a talented and admirable nation, suffering under the voluntarily donned “yoke of Islam.” The rise of Islam in the 7th century was, according to Dvořák, the result of an Arab renaissance that had started a century earlier.⁵²

“The son of the desert, brilliantly endowed with all of nature's gifts, embarks on his task with zeal so as in the shortest of time to make up for what he missed by remaining inactive so long, and in his simplicity he contents himself with being inspired by his mood; he creates a product of his imagination, poetry, and almost at once elevates it to a height which it will never again attain later.”⁵³

Despite Dvořák's more sympathetic depiction of the Arabs, he certainly drew some of his views from Renan. Like Renan, Dvořák presented Islam as an enemy of science and free thinking: “Islam has never proved itself to be a friend of the free-thinking spirit, and it is, according to what Renan said, a thousand miles away from everything that we have become used to calling rationalism or science.”⁵⁴ According to Dvořák, Hammer took the Koran too literally when he blamed Europeans' ignorance and prejudices for their portrayal of Islam as an enemy of education and science. Dvořák acknowledged that the Koran had a respect for learning, but a form of learning, he claimed, that is closely tied up with the Islamic faith.⁵⁵ He argued that whenever Islam did take an interest in science, it was inspired by influences that it drew from abroad – for example, from Spain. The Arabs were thus transferring knowledge, not producing it themselves.⁵⁶ Dvořák assigns the Arabs more credit for having raised Europe

51 Ernest Renan, *L'islamisme et la science* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1883).

52 Rudolf Dvořák, *O kulturním významu Arabů pro Evropu* (Prague: J. Otto, 1884), 5.

53 *Ibid.*, 4.

54 *Ibid.*, 6.

55 *Ibid.*, 7.

56 *Ibid.*, 11.

out of its barbarity than Renan does, calling their role immense, but this concerned the distant past. Since then, the Arabs had become closed to new ideas, and although this was partly because Christians had shown them intolerance and persecuted them, Dvořák, like Renan, claimed that the main reason was the spirit of Islam itself, which was at odds with progress.⁵⁷

Lockman has noted how Renan spoke of “the Mohammedan” in the singular (“because for him all Muslims everywhere were essentially the same”⁵⁸) and how race played a key explanatory role in his famous lecture on Islam and science. Although in his description of the Arabs Dvořák switched between the plural and singular forms, assigning all Arabs the same abilities and qualities, he did not view them primarily in racial categories but instead referred to them as “a nation.” Notable are his comments about the Turks. Where Renan writes only briefly about how Turkish rule would lead to the absence of any philosophical and scientific spirit in society, Dvořák is more critical. Inspired by Renan he states that when “the Turkish tribe” (*čeled*) came to rule the world of Islam, its intellectual activity reached a low point, and it is then that “Islam killed its science,” adding that there is truth to the proverb that says “wherever the Turkish rider sets his foot, the grass no longer grows.”⁵⁹

Given Renan’s fame and popularity, both in Europe and among the Czechs (many of his works were translated into Czech before Renan’s death), it is perhaps not surprising that some of Dvořák’s arguments are aligned with Renan’s. Although Dvořák’s views, especially at the beginning of his career, were nowhere near the alternative perspective on the Middle East that is embodied in the work of Ignác Goldziher,⁶⁰ he seems to represent the middle ground among Czech intellectuals at that time. At one end, there was Brandejs, the first Czech student of Orientalism, who expressed more open and positive views on the Arabs. In a letter from Vienna in the mid-1870s he wrote about his new acquaintance Yusuf Ziya al-Khalidi, the former mayor of Jerusalem, who was teaching him Arabic: “He is a Muslim, but a modernized Muslim, who, it seems to me, has fallen into disgrace in the East for his open-minded views on faith [and] for his extreme tolerance.”⁶¹ Brandejs praised al-Khalidi highly for his knowledge and for his willingness to help him, and noted with surprise that al-Khalidi believed European Orientalists were working for the benefit of the Arabs, who would then eventually be able to profit from the Europeans’ work.

57 Ibid., 27–28.

58 Lockman, *Contending Visions*, 79–80.

59 Dvořák, *O kulturním významu Arabů*, 8. Renan (*L’islamisme et la science*, 14) also wrote that Islam had killed science and philosophy.

60 Lockman, *Contending Visions*, 81.

61 Masaryk, “Brandejs,” 305.

Masaryk was at the opposite end of the spectrum. In the obituary he wrote about Brandejs, he quoted Brandejs's letter and showed his admiration for Brandejs's expertise, but it is clear that he did not share Brandejs's views on Muslims.⁶² In 1883, Masaryk published a summary of Renan's lecture, in which he reproduced the deprecatory tone that Renan adopts toward Islam. Masaryk argued that, given our limited knowledge of medieval literature and the modern aversion to medieval Christianity, and to the Catholic Church in particular, the role of Islam in the development of science and philosophy in the Middle Ages is generally exaggerated, and Renan's essay, which Masaryk believed revealed the real truth about Islam, was therefore an especially welcome point of view. He concluded by praising Renan's evaluation of Islam as opposed to science and as the worst fetter on humanity, an observation that Masaryk considered important not only theoretically, but also in politics and practice, as it could serve to counter the views of liberals who were defending Islam because they knew nothing about it.⁶³

Naturally, Renan was not the only source of inspiration for Dvořák and his colleagues. A short history of Ottoman literature that Dvořák wrote in 1906 for the entry on Turkey in *Ottův slovník naučný* was based on *A History of Ottoman Poetry* by E.J.W. Gibb.⁶⁴ It is worth noting that two decades after his habilitation lecture, in which he portrayed the Turks as the great enemies of learning, Dvořák wrote that the Turks, although unable to create a literature that would express the true genius of their race, certainly did not underestimate or despise learning and were able to appreciate and adopt the Persian literary system.⁶⁵ Dvořák highly valued Gibb's work, "written with exceptional understanding and love...,"⁶⁶ and was strongly influenced by it. He also duly acknowledged Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry* in his list of cited references as well as in the text. In fact, more than just appreciating Gibb's work, Dvořák himself, who emphasized how much the tone, spirit, and language of Turkish literature drew on Persian poetry, adopted Gibb's description of the

62 Ibid.

63 T.G. Masaryk, "Ernest Renan o vědě v islamismu," *Sborník historický* 1 (1883): 288–90. Compare with Renan, *L'islamisme et la science*, 17.

64 [Rudolf Dvořák,] "Turecko – Literatura," in *Ottův slovník naučný* (Prague: J. Otto, 1906), 25:904–19. Dvořák also wrote the entry on the Turkish language (901–4), while the author of the section on history (and the general information on the Ottoman Empire) was historian František Hýbl. Dvořák's main arguments come from the first volume of Gibb's work. See E.J.W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. 1 (London: Luzac, 1900).

65 Dvořák, "Turecko – Literatura," 905–6.

66 Ibid., 919.

development of Ottoman-Turkish literary production and even reproduced Gibb's figures of speech.⁶⁷

In conformity with Gibb,⁶⁸ Dvořák distinguished between the old Asian literary school and the new European school and the division of the former into four periods (“...it is possible like Gibb to divide 5½ centuries into four periods”⁶⁹). He highlighted the “uniformity” of Ottoman poetry over the centuries,⁷⁰ described the Turks as a race whose genius “lies in courage and action, not in speculation,”⁷¹ and noted their strong devotion to Islam.⁷² Also consistent with Gibb's work is the way Dvořák links literary history and its periodization to the political development and stability of the state, claiming that Turkish poetry emerged in the 14th century, found its purpose in the 15th century, and reached its peak in the 17th century, at which time it captivated “all the beauty-loving Orient.”⁷³ It then entered a long period of struggle and decline, from which it did not recover until the 19th century, when, as Dvořák put it, it started to “flourish again and revive with a life stronger, fresher, and more hopeful than ever before.”⁷⁴ Compare this with how Gibb, at an earlier date, worded his account of the revival of Turkish poetry, writing that after a decline it “burst forth once again in strong fresh life, more vigorous, more buoyant, more hopeful than ever it had been in the days of the Süleymans or the Ahmeds.”⁷⁵ Dvořák concluded his brief history in a positive tone, with praise for contemporary Turkish authors. He nonetheless attributed the revival of Ottoman-Turkish literature, which before that had been “on its last legs,” to “refreshing influences from Western culture,”⁷⁶ a view consistent with the prevailing framework of Western interpretations of Turkish literature.

In early 20th-century Czech works dealing with Ottoman literature, Gibb was clearly the most influential foreign scholar. The translator and writer Alois Koudelka cites Gibb in a series of essays he wrote on modern Ottoman-Turkish literature that were published in the Catholic intellectual journal *Hlídká* (The

67 Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, 1:14–25.

68 *Ibid.*, 4–7.

69 Dvořák, “Turecko – Literatura,” 905.

70 “In this long period it [Turkish poetry] underwent numerous modifications, but its unity is not broken.” Dvořák, “Turecko – Literatura,” 905.

71 *Ibid.*

72 *Ibid.*, 906.

73 *Ibid.*, 904.

74 *Ibid.*, 904.

75 Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, 1:3.

76 Dvořák, “Turecko – Literatura,” 917.

Watch) between 1911 and 1918.⁷⁷ Koudelka's essays reflect the Enlightenment belief that European literature is the measure of progress and quality.⁷⁸ They align with Dvořák's view of the development of Turkish literature and his praise of contemporary over old Ottoman writers, but they are less coherent and more eclectic: as well as Gibb, Koudelka cites the Russian Turkologist Vladimir Gordlevskii (1876–1956) and the German philologist specializing in Turkish and Persian Paul Horn (1863–1908).⁷⁹

Jan Rypka, Dvořák's successor in the field of Middle Eastern studies, regarded Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry* as the high point of current knowledge on this subject and as an excellent combination of scholarship and a style of writing accessible to the general public.⁸⁰ His habilitation lecture, titled “Main Streams of Ottoman-Turkish Poetry,” reveals that, like Dvořák, Rypka adopted Gibb's division of Ottoman-Turkish literature into an Asian and a European school and agreed with Gibb's appraisal of the 19th century.⁸¹ He claimed that Ottoman poetry was not strong enough to thrive on its own and depended on Western models, and he maintained that the Turks were unable to construct religious and philosophical systems of their own and could only reproduce the culture, religion, and philosophy of others. The main trait of Turkish poetry, he alleged, was not the depth of its thought, but the subtleness of its details; the nation showed great diligence, but no trace of genius.⁸² Rypka acknowledged

77 In his long but somewhat chaotic series of articles introducing dozens of Turkish authors, Koudelka wrote that until the 20th century Turkish literature was very dull because the political and social conditions were not auspicious for writing; only the recent political upheavals had led to its revival. Even this new Turkish literature, according to Koudelka, could not yet pride itself on its originality or particular wit: as soon as they shed the Arab-Persian yoke, Turkish authors became the slaves of the French. See Koudelka, “Něco z moderního tureckého písemnictví,” 297–302; Koudelka, “Z novější literatury,” 421–25; Koudelka, “Z novější turecké literatury,” 524–29; Koudelka, “Turecké písemnictví,” 1–9.

78 Koudelka expresses praise for many authors, such as Hüseyin Rahmî (whose works sparkle with “healthy humor” and give Western readers an insight into Turkish family life) or Ahmed Hikmet, who can be “rightly deemed an equal to West European story-tellers,” but his appraisals are often accompanied by a remark about which Western writer the Turkish author modelled himself on. Koudelka, “Něco z moderního tureckého písemnictví,” 299–301.

79 Koudelka, “Turecké písemnictví,” 1.

80 Jan Rypka, “Hlavní proudy literatury osmanské-turecké,” *Topičův sborník* 12, no. 8 (1925): 354.

81 Although he appreciated Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry*, Rypka disagreed with his identification of the 18th century as a separate stage in the history of literature and saw it as a continuation of the preceding period, but he admitted that Ottoman literature was in this transitional period less imitative of Persian works. See Rypka, “Hlavní proudy,” 358–59.

82 Rypka, “Hlavní proudy,” 356–58. Rypka (359) criticizes Bakı and praises Fuzuli. Despite the emulative nature of Ottoman poetry, Rypka (355) defended it against some Western

Hammer as a man who was trying to correct European misconceptions about the Turks, but he had a low opinion of Hammer's ability as a scholar and said his work on Ottoman literature was so riddled with mistakes and inaccuracies that it was largely useless.⁸³ In Rypka's opinion there were no masterpieces among the new Turkish national novels, which he found sentimental, naïve, and too long, but he liked that they dealt with real local subjects, such as the harem, and claimed that they were gradually improving, with works by authors like Halid Ziya, Ahmed Hikmet, and Hüseyin Rahmi aspiring to high literary standards. Rypka concluded that although Turkish literature had not produced any magnificent works, this was also true of many Western literatures, and it offered enough for it to be worthy of our interest.⁸⁴

Rypka opened his lecture by explaining that he felt obliged to give a brief overview of Ottoman literature because Europeans had long believed no such thing existed and only imagined the Turks as warriors.⁸⁵ Rypka wondered whether "our" methods of Western literary scholarship could even be applied to Eastern literatures. This sounds like a very modern-day question, but Rypka offers a standard essentialist response, claiming that the East and the West are antipodes and differ in fundamental ways: the East knows little of individuality and appreciates objective beauty over the subjective perspective and form over content, and consequently there is a certain inertia to Eastern literature (in the singular!). That is why Baki, and those like him, none of whom had any original thoughts, had been consistently enjoyed in the East for centuries.⁸⁶

The reliance on foreign scholarship that can be observed in the early and some of the later writings of Czech Orientalists does not mean that the Czech field of Oriental studies emerged as a pure replica of Orientalist schools abroad. The main focus of the Czech Oriental studies differed even from its German counterpart, which had been a major influence on Czech academics. Suzanne Marchand argues that in the 19th century, "*Orientalistik* was not a fully secular science, perhaps especially in the German-speaking world, but elsewhere, I would wager, as well,"⁸⁷ and *Orientalistik* was less concerned with modern

critics, such as Martin Hartmann; he argued that the Turkish nation had without question produced men as clever as the German scholar.

83 See Rypka, "Hlavní proudy," esp. 352–55.

84 *Ibid.*, esp. 361–63.

85 *Ibid.*, 352.

86 Rypka also claimed that while the East looked at Hafiz as a mystical interpreter of secrets, the collective Western view was that he should be interpreted in a realist sense; he conceded, however, that it was not clear whether the poet would agree with the Western or the Eastern interpretation. Rypka, "Hlavní proudy," 355.

87 Marchand, *German Orientalism*, xxviii.

problems of communicating with or exerting power over the locals than with “traditional, almost primeval *Christian* questions.”⁸⁸ The one Czech scholar whose studies and early career fit the mould of a German Orientalist as described by Marchand is Alois Musil, who studied theology and became a priest and a doctor of theology before continuing his education in Jerusalem and Beirut. He was drawn to the Middle East through his study of the Bible: his search for the sources of monotheism sparked his interest in the environment in which the Bible was written and his attempts to locate some of the places mentioned in the Bible.⁸⁹ However, Musil’s attention soon turned to the current inhabitants of the desert and to the contemporary Middle East more generally.⁹⁰ He lived for a time among the bedouins in the late Ottoman Empire and later wrote a book and a number of articles on contemporary Turkey that were published after World War I in newspapers and scholarly journals.⁹¹

Other Czech Orientalists who dealt with Turkish topics showed remarkably little interest in religious questions, the Bible, or philology as subjects of research. Dvořák, who had close ties to Christianity, nevertheless focused more on the philosophical and poetic than the religious aspects of the Bible⁹² and

88 Ibid., xxiv.

89 This interest was also behind his important discovery of the figurative murals in the 8th-century Umayyad desert castle Quseir Amra (Qusaʿr ‘Amra) in 1898. Alois Musil, *Kuseir ‘Amra und andere Schlösser östlich von Moab: Topographischer Reisebericht* (Vienna: Gerold in Kommission, 1902).

90 See, e.g., Alois Musil, *Arabia Petraea*, 4 vols. (Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1907–8); Alois Musil, *Zur Zeitgeschichte von Arabien* (Vienna: Manz, 1918); Alois Musil, *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins* (New York: The American Geographical Society, 1928). Musil was arguably one of the most fascinating European scholars dealing with the Middle East at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. He was a theologian and Bible scholar, an explorer and traveler, an ethnographer, journalist, and writer, and a specialist in the Arabic language (he is said to have mastered 35 Arabic dialects) and the history of the Middle East. He was a loyal subject of the Habsburg Empire, and as a professor at the University of Vienna he wrote and taught in German; he is considered to belong to both the Austrian and the Czech history of Middle Eastern Studies.

91 Important are his articles in *Zahraníční politika* (Foreign Policy), a journal intended particularly for Czech diplomats. For the bibliography of Musil’s works see *Alois Musil 1868–1968*. Musil’s articles cover a broad range of topics, including reflections on the role of the caliphate and Islam in the last period of the existence of the Ottoman Empire, the emergence of the Turkish Republic and its internal development, the short-lived experiment with the opposition party, Turkish nationalism, and Turkey’s international position. He also described his personal experiences in the Ottoman Empire, which he first visited in 1898, and his meetings with Turkish politicians, including the first two future Turkish presidents. See Alois Musil, *Most do Asie: Nové Turecko* (Prague: Melantrich, 1941), esp. 11.

92 He translated various parts of the Bible, including the Book of Ruth and the Song of Songs, and published a commented translation of the Psalms. See Růžička, “Rudolf Dvořák,”

did not inquire into the Turks' religious beliefs. At the very beginning of his scholarly career, he studied comparative Semitic linguistics, a choice that was allegedly inspired by his teachers in Leipzig, but he never wrote on philological topics connected with the Turkish language.⁹³ Philology was commonly considered the foundation of Oriental studies, and though Czech scholars edited and translated documents written in Oriental languages,⁹⁴ they generally approached languages more as a means of gaining access to knowledge about the past and the present of the Middle East than as an expression of the Orientals' character and mentality.

The main research interest for these scholars – except Musil – was literature. Košut's short career was itself emblematic of this. His most important published work on the Middle East was devoted to the Persian poet Hafiz, and he translated an excerpt from Hafiz's *Divan* from Persian into Czech in collaboration with the famous Czech poet Jaroslav Vrchlický (1853–1912). In the area of Turkish-Ottoman studies Dvořák was also solely focused on literature. Initially he mainly chose traditional topics: his major international contribution to Ottoman studies was his critical edition of Baki's *Divan*,⁹⁵ along with articles on Baki published in international journals. The first article, "Bâkî als Dichter" (Baki as a Poet), which includes also Baki's kaside on the death of Sultan Süleyman, was published in the German journal *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* in 1888.⁹⁶ Dvořák explains that he chose this topic because only one translation of Baki's poems into a European language existed, done by Hammer, and it was a very imperfect translation at that.⁹⁷ The choice seems somewhat paradoxical since Dvořák challenged the general consensus on Baki as a great poet and argued that, except for a few poems, Baki's work was not good enough for him to rank among the world's great poets – he was, Dvořák said, "a great one among minor ones," and the greatest among the Turkish poets.⁹⁸

79–80. Sedláček, Dvořák's student, became a professor of Bible studies and Semitic languages at the Faculty of Theology. He wrote textbooks of Arabic and Hebrew and studied religious literature, and he also knew Turkish. See Bečka, "Žáci Rudolfa Dvořáka," 73.

93 Růžička, "Rudolf Dvořák," 75.

94 There were some exceptions, e.g., Košut's dissertation, written under the impact of Fleischer, dealt with philological questions. See the entry on Košut written by Dvořák in *Ottův slovník naučný*, 14:971.

95 Rudolf Dvořák, *Bâkî's Dîwân: Ghazalijjât, Nach den Handschriften von Leiden, Leipzig, München und Wien herausgegeben*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1908–11).

96 Rudolf Dvořák, "Bâkî als Dichter," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 42 (1888): 560–86. A short note on the article appears in *The American Journal of Philology* 10, no. 2 (1889): 236.

97 Dvořák, "Bâkî als Dichter," 560.

98 *Ibid.*, 562.

Dvořák nevertheless continued to focus on Baki, the “greatest Turkish lyrical poet”: in a paper he presented at the 1889 international congress of Oriental studies in Stockholm, published in 1893, he claimed that the Turks were only able to create their own literature and their culture as a whole by imitating or adopting Arabic and Persian models, and that the same was also true of Baki.⁹⁹ He also argued that classical Ottoman poetry should be published with vocalization, as was common with Arabic texts,¹⁰⁰ this being an issue he had already written an article about in 1888.¹⁰¹ Dvořák again touched on the question of vocalization in the introduction to his critical edition of Baki’s *Divan* published in Leiden in 1908–1911, where he also hinted at his preference for modern Turkish literature over classical Ottoman poetry, mentioning that only modernism had managed to liberate Turkish literature from the affected persified style that had previously characterized it.¹⁰² This publication was met with mixed responses. Brockelmann considered the vocalization more or less successful but had some critical comments – for example, about the manuscripts on which Dvořák based his edition.¹⁰³ Rypka appreciated Dvořák’s contribution to the field, especially the way he took into account the poem’s meter, but he alleged that Dvořák did not understand the meaning or possible interpretations of the text and regarded his work on Baki as a step back from what Gibb had achieved.¹⁰⁴ Leaving aside scholarly writings aimed chiefly at an international audience, Dvořák presented Ottoman-Turkish literature to Czech readers in several articles and in translations; the latter included excerpts from Baki’s *Divan* (1901)¹⁰⁵ and a sample from the work of the poetess Fitnet (1881),¹⁰⁶ as well as writings by modern Turkish authors.

99 Rudolf Dvořák, “Über eine zu veranstaltende Ausgabe des grössten türkischen Lyrikers Bâkî: Mit einer Ausgabe von neun Kaşîden desselben,” in *Actes du huitième Congrès international des Orientalistes tenu en 1889 à Stockholm et à Christiania*: Sect. I; Sémitique (B) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1893), 473–527.

100 Ibid., 484.

101 Rudolf Dvořák, “Sind türkische Dichterausgaben zu vokalisieren?,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 42 (1888): 102–12.

102 Dvořák, *Bâkî’s Dîwân*, V.

103 Brockelmann, Review of *Bâkî’s Dîwân: Ghazalijât, nach den Hdss. von Leiden, Leipzig, München und Wien hg.*, by Rudolf Dvořák, *Literarisches Zentralblatt für Deutschland* 60, no. 21 (1909): 677.

104 Jan Rypka, *Bâqî als Ghazeldichter* (Prague: Nákladem Filosofické fakulty University Karlovy, 1926), esp. 3, 14, and 27–28.

105 Rudolf Dvořák, “Z Divánu Bâkîho,” *Zvon* 1, no. 45 (1901): 531–32.

106 Rudolf Dvořák, “Z nové poesie turecké: Z divánu básnířky Fitnety: 2 Gazely, Derviš Seid Reefet: Gazel (Při poslední revoluci), Sultan Selim III: Žalozpěv nad svržením s trůnu,” trans. R. Dvořák, adapt. into verse Jan Červenka, *Lumír*, April 1881, 154–55.

Rypka was praised especially for his detailed history of Persian literature, but he confessed his first love was Turkey,¹⁰⁷ and he wrote about and translated from both classical Ottoman poetry, most notably Baki and Sabit, and modern Turkish literature.¹⁰⁸ Tauer's masterpiece was his monumental annotated translation of *The Thousand and One Nights*. Thus, starting with Košut and up to the establishment of Czechoslovakia, literature was at the centre of Czech scholarship; even authors outside academia who wrote about Turkish issues wrote mostly about literature.¹⁰⁹ Musil's interest in anthropology and geography remained an exception, and it was only after the war that history received more attention. Rypka then introduced a new topic into the emerging field of Turkish studies, one that would later also occupy the attention of his successors in the 20th century: the history of the relations between the Czech lands – or more broadly Central and Eastern Europe – and the Ottoman Empire.¹¹⁰

The field of Czech Oriental studies did not take shape in isolation and establish itself along the lines of some specifically “Czech” vision. Orientalists working in the area of what would become Ottoman-Turkish studies selected their topics and drew on ideas that were common among scholars abroad. At the same time, however, they started to develop their own research interests and their own way of approaching them.

3 Finding a Voice of Their Own

According to Marchand, one thing common to both the (German) Orientalists who loved the East and the ones who despised it was that they tended to

107 *Poutník Orientem*, 12 and 14.

108 On Rypka's work see *Poutník Orientem*, esp. 10–24.

109 Koudelka translated a story by Ahmed Hikmet, Šmejkal translated Ahmed Hikmet's and Yakub Kadri's works and Hrdlička stories about Nasreddin Hoca.

110 He wrote, for example, on the history of Slovakia in the 16th and 17th centuries, when a portion of Slovak territory was under Ottoman rule, on Ottoman correspondence with public officials in Transylvania and Ukraine, and on relations between the Sublime Porte and Poland, Ukraine, and Crimea. See, e.g., Jan Rypka, “Z korespondence Vysoké Porty s Bohdanem Chmelnickým,” in *Z dějin východní Evropy a Slovanstva: Sborník věnovaný Jaroslavu Bidlovi, profesoru Karlovy university, k šedesátým narozeninám*, ed. Miloš Weingart, Josef Dobiáš, and Milada Paulová (Prague: A. Bečková, 1928), 346–50. This line of research was later developed by Rypka's pupils Josef Kabrda, Josef Blaskovics (Blaškovič), and Zdeňka Veselá. Tauer wrote studies on Persian manuscripts in Istanbul and on sources on the campaigns of Süleyman and Tamerlan and scholarly and popular works on the early history of Islam and the history of the Middle East. See, e.g., Felix Tauer, *Historie de la campagne du Sultan Suleyman I^{er} contre Belgrade en 1521* (Prague: Nakladatelství Řivnáč pro FF UK, 1924).

neglect the real-world existence of the Orient, especially in its contemporary form, because 19th-century German scholarship on the Orient still focused primarily on ancient and religious texts. The modern economic, military, and political situation of the Middle East was the concern of journalists, officials, and businessmen, who did not enjoy the same standing and prestige as academics. Thus, Marchand argues, German scholars, at least up until World War I, felt it beneath their level of expertise to devote any intellectual attention to the practices of (pre-)colonial exploitation.¹¹¹ Irwin identifies a similar inclination among scholars in other countries to leave current affairs to non-academics and to focus instead on “classical” periods, and this included the practice of teaching Middle-East languages as “dead” classical languages. Furthermore, according to Irwin, Orientalists have always had a tendency to be anti-imperialists.¹¹² The dependence of Czech scholars on what was occurring in Oriental studies abroad raises the question of what their relationship was to contemporary issues: Did they mirror their foreign colleagues’ attitudes on this matter as well? And how did they relate to the policy of the Habsburg and later the Czechoslovak state in that region?

While the early career paths and research interests described so far in this chapter seem to imply that Czech Oriental studies had no distinctive features, that is only part of the story. From its very beginnings the new discipline was characterized by an effort to make scholarly research accessible to the broader public and by an interest in the current situation in the Middle East. The desire to bring popular writings on the Middle East to the general public was a fundamental part of the enterprise of Czech Oriental studies. It was a reflection of the time in which the field was established and of the Czech “national revival” and its belief that it was the mission of intellectuals to educate and enlighten their compatriots. Moreover, there were probably too few people among the Czechs who were knowledgeable in the Middle East and its languages for the type of specialization Marchand outlines to be possible; academics therefore regularly contributed to newspapers and popular journals. The first Czech journal devoted to Oriental studies, *Archív Orientální* (Oriental Archive), was only founded in 1929, and until then Czech scholars often published the results of their research in Czech in cultural and literary journals and magazines.¹¹³

111 Marchand, *German Orientalism*, xxvi.

112 Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge*, 204. For examples of Orientalists’ focus on earlier periods, see also 141–214.

113 Dvořák, for instance, published a report on his participation in the international Orientalist congress in *Athenaeum*, a journal for “scholarly literature and critique.” Rudolf Dvořák, “VIII. mezinárodní sjezd orientalistů ve Stockholmě a Christianii,” pts. 1 and 2, *Athenaeum* 7, no. 6 (1889): 164–72; no. 7 (1889): 201–4.

This meant that they had a larger potential readership and that may have affected some of the topics they chose, including whether or not they dealt with contemporary issues, and possibly even the way they wrote about them.

The focus on the present became more marked during and after World War I, but Dvořák had already begun turning his attention to contemporary Oriental culture in the early 20th century. While his academic work directed at the international scholarly community concentrated on Baki, in the encyclopedia entry he wrote in 1906 on Ottoman-Turkish literature Dvořák stated that he considered modernism the most interesting period in Turkish culture,¹¹⁴ and he increasingly chose examples of modern literature for his translations into Czech.¹¹⁵ Rypka also devoted considerable attention to popularizing Turkish culture, whether through his translations of contemporary Turkish authors, the articles he wrote for magazines, or his public lectures.¹¹⁶ In 1922, he wrote a newspaper article about his visit to Istanbul University, in which he painted a strikingly positive image of Turkish educational institutions and their representatives.¹¹⁷ He called on Czech ethnologists, geographers, and botanists to build and further relations with Istanbul University and its scholars. He considered this both useful and feasible because Turkish academics were all perfectly able to communicate in one or two European languages, and Rypka's own presence in Istanbul would make this endeavor even easier as it was his task "to make friends and acquaint Istanbul with the Czech learned world."¹¹⁸ By way of example he pointed to the poet and philosopher Rıza Tevfik; he described him as a sophisticated critic of Ottoman literature who knew Prague and remembered it with admiration, and whose lectures in Istanbul attracted large numbers of students, especially women. "[T]he fairy tales about Turkish women are no longer true," Rypka remarked, "without a veil and with a pencil in their hands, even here they outshine their male colleagues with their assiduousness."¹¹⁹ Rypka observed that the only connection he saw to the old

114 Among the Turkish writers of the second half of the 19th century that he drew attention to, such as Şinasi and Namık Kemal, he particularly mentioned Nigâr Hanım, who distinguished herself as a great lyrical poet, and Fatma Aliye, whom he regarded as particularly gifted, "a perceptive observer and talented story-teller," and an ardent defender of women's rights. Dvořák, "Turecko – Literatura," 918–19.

115 From 1912 on he published only translations of modern Turkish authors.

116 He translated Muallim Naci while he was still a young man, and he continued these efforts throughout his life. See, e.g., Jan Rypka, *O knihách, knihovnách a knihomolech na Východě* (Prague: printed by author, 1941).

117 Jan Rypka, "Návštěva v turecké universitě," *Večerník Práva lidu* January 3, 1922, 2.

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid. In the comments to his translation of Muallim Naci's novel, Rypka described the position of Ottoman-Turkish women in a much more stereotypical way.

customs was that at the university young women were supervised by an elderly matron, but that did not prevent them from meeting male students.

The image Rypka sketched of Turkish women's lives in the last days of the Ottoman Empire is consistent with the way Musil described the conditions of Muslim women after World War I.¹²⁰ Musil also wrote an article about Turkish “nationality” (*národnost*), in which he summarized the emergence of nationalism in the late Ottoman Empire and its development up to 1922. In Musil's interpretation, the Turks started to embrace national identity under the influence of Europe, though “the farsighted Abdülhamid II” already knew that nationalism was a divisive force, and when the Young Turks separated religion and nationality, they lost the Arabs and alienated the Armenians and Greeks.¹²¹ They therefore started to seek support from their relatives, the Turanians,¹²² and after World War I Mustafa Kemal, whom Musil called “farsighted and persistent,”¹²³ gave the Turkish national movement a new foundation – which was to build a new national Turanian home in Anatolia, Azerbaijan, Central Asia, and Kazan. Musil took a positive view of this endeavor because one of its aims was to bring education to the Turanian people. In Musil's opinion, the best proof of the progress the Turks had made was the devotion with which the people defended their homeland from foreign invaders and the prudence with which they made treaties with other nations. As he saw it, “[t]he Turanian nationality is growing and it will be good for us to get to know it.”¹²⁴

Musil was not the first Czech scholar to highlight the importance of Turkish nationalism. Interest in emerging Turkish national awareness first appeared in connection with contemporary Turkish literature. Koudelka discussed Turkish nationalism in his 1911 overview of modern Turkish literature and he praised

120 Musil argued that Muslim women are generally equal to men and remain independent even in marriage; full equality between men and women was a recent European idea, but Musil asserted that the Orient would achieve it, too. Alois Musil, “Národnost místo náboženství,” in *Ze světa islámu*, ed. Pavel Žďárský (Prague: Akropolis, 2014), 295. He believed, however, that women's emancipation had to be gradual. Musil, “Změna vnitřní politiky,” 2.

121 Alois Musil, “Turci a národnost,” *Venkov*, April 23, 1922, 1–2.

122 According to Musil, they learned that the Turanians had given the world the best conquerors, but also supported culture and brought prosperity to vast regions. Musil, “Turci a národnost,” 1.

123 Musil, “Turci a národnost,” 2. Musil's views of Mustafa Kemal evolved and fluctuated, from the criticism he expressed in articles written during the early years of Mustafa Kemal's career, to the praise he voiced about Kemal's achievements after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, to a more mixed evaluation of the Kemalist reforms and authoritarian regime in the 1930s.

124 Ibid.

the Turkish writers connected with the journal *Servet-i fûnun* (Wealth of Knowledge) for advancing the ideas of Western enlightenment while at the same time fighting for their “national interests” and for better conditions in their homeland.¹²⁵ In the 1918 sequel to this essay, Koudelka focused on the New Turan movement that was organized around the journal *Türk Yurdu* (Turkish Homeland) and that he claimed was striving to free itself from Western influence, advocating instead for the revival of the Mongolo-Tatar-Seljuk tradition – the “New Turan culture.” He also noted the purification movement that was directed against Arabic and particularly Persian influences, which he believed had until recently made Turkish literature not only distasteful, but also completely incomprehensible to the common people.¹²⁶

While judging from his essays Koudelka did not regard Turkish nationalism as a positive development in itself, Turkish nationalism found an enthusiastic supporter in Dvořák, who in 1915 devoted an entire article to nationalism in literature.¹²⁷ Titled “New-Turkish Poetry,” it briefly summarized the history of Ottoman Turkish poetry, from the early days, when it modelled itself on Persian poetry, to the latest developments in national literature inspired by Turkish patriotism. The article was based on a recent issue of the Turkish journal *Türk yurdu* and Dvořák adopted the opinions of Turkish contributors to *Türk yurdu* both in his praise of the education and patriotism of Turkish women, and Halide Edib in particular, and in his assessment of new literary trends. Interestingly, this included even the anti-Bulgarian views that Halide Edib expressed during the Balkan Wars, which he quoted without adding any comments or criticism of his own. Writing in 1915, Dvořák connected the rise of patriotic poetry all over Europe with the contemporary war and described modern Turkish literature reflecting on war-time experiences as “patriotic, militant, to some extent outright bellicose.”¹²⁸ He concluded the article with a very positive appraisal – which in Czech academia was exceptional – of the Turkish mission to become the leaders of the Turkish tribes across the vast plains of Asia, who often lacked education and who, if united, could come to form the second-largest ethnic group in the world after the Germans:

125 Koudelka often mentioned Turkish patriotism without commenting on it – for instance, when he wrote about Tevfik Fikret, who, according to him, praised the brave deeds of Turkish soldiers during the Greek-Turkish war and was full of love for his Turkish brothers. See Koudelka, “Z novější turecké literatury,” esp. 527.

126 Koudelka, “Turecké písemnictví,” 1–2.

127 Rudolf Dvořák, “Poesie novoturecká,” *Topičův sborník literární a umělecký* 2, no. 8 (1914–15): 376–78.

128 *Ibid.*, 377.

To turn these nations toward culture, to elevate them to the level of the European nations, that is Turkey’s rewarding mission in the future. Nursed on centuries of the most high-minded Persian learning, familiar with the currents of modern European cultural life, [and] now nationally aware, Turkey would thereby again secure itself a place in the history of world civilization, this time in its most immediate sphere of influence. Modernization, islamization, turkification, the catchwords we encounter in modern Turkey, are not mutually exclusive, they complement each other. The catchword *türkleşmek* (*türklešmek*), to become a (conscious) Turk, perhaps holds the best hope for the future.¹²⁹

Although Dvořák’s article adopts arguments put forth by Turkish intellectuals, it seems to be consistent with his own views on contemporary Turkish literature. These views are also apparent in his choice of translation work, because, except for Baki,¹³⁰ Fitnet, and Sultan Selim III,¹³¹ he mainly translated contemporary authors in his later years, such as İsmail Hami, Celal Sahir, Hasan Sadi, and particularly Mehmed Emin.¹³² And he primarily chose poems with patriotic, nationalist, and sometimes militant themes, which are the characteristics of modern Turkish literature that Dvořák highlighted in his article “New-Turkish Poetry.” For instance, the poems by Mehmet Emin that Dvořák translated celebrate the glory of the name *Türk* (Turk, Turkish), extol patriotism as the courage of a people who defend their homeland and make sacrifices for the sake of the country’s freedom, and praise selfless mothers who educate and support their sons to become *šahids* (martyrs). The poems by Hasan Sadi and İsmail Hami presented in the same selection of modern Turkish poetry are less militant, but no less patriotic, and extol the virtues of working for the benefit of one’s country and for peace in the aftermath of war.¹³³

Most intriguing is Dvořák’s translation of Celal Sahir’s poem “To the Daughters of the Country” (*Vatanın Kızlarına*). Asking women who had not yet

129 Ibid., 378.

130 He translated excerpts of Baki’s works into Czech in 1901; see Dvořák, “Z Dívánu Bákího,” 531–32.

131 Dvořák, “Z nové poesie turecké,” 154–55.

132 See Dvořák’s translations of Mehmed Emin, Celal Sahir, Hasan Sadi, and İsmail Hami in *Topičův sborník literární a umělecký* 2, no. 8 (1914–15): 332 and 373, and *Topičův sborník literární a umělecký* 4, no. 10 (1917): 460–61.

133 Rudolf Dvořák, “Hasan Sádí: Mozolná ruka; Ismá’il Hámí: Červený pulměsic; Dželál Sáhír: Dcerám vlasti,” *Topičův sborník* 2, (1914–15): 332–33 and 371–73. Dvořák had translated patriotic poetry already in 1912: Rudolf Dvořák, “Z nejnovější turecké poesie: Ferjád (volání o pomoc) Abd-ul-Hakka Chairího,” *Máj*, May 31, 1912, 441.

embraced selfless patriotism to devote everything they had to their country, the poem compares a “woman with no country” to a woman whom the author presents as “truly Turkish.” Dvořák translated the word *Vatansız*, which literally means someone with no country (from *vatan*, i.e. country, and *-sız*, i.e. without) into Czech as “Not-Vlasta” (*Nevlasta*). *Vlasta* is a common Czech name, which comes from *vlast*, a Czech word for homeland or one’s own country, but it is also the name of the mythical Czech heroine *Vlasta*, who in the 19th-century Czech national movement served as a symbol of Czech women’s patriotism.¹³⁴ The “woman with no country” in the Turkish poem thus becomes the opposite of the patriotic figure of *Vlasta*: by using the name of this Czech heroine in his translation, Dvořák was drawing a direct link between the Turkish national struggle and the Czech “national revival.”

Dvořák’s favorable opinion of Turkish national literature and the works he selected to translate reflect his effort to faithfully convey the Turks’ own perspective, but they seem to express also Dvořák’s affinity for Turkish nationalism, which resonated with his own patriotic views as a member of a nation that was still struggling for independence.¹³⁵ Czech Orientalists were not, however, united in their opinions on Turkish nationalism. After the war, Rypka considered Turkish nationalism to be a negative feature of Turkish literature and something that the Turks had learned from the Germans.¹³⁶

The attention scholars devoted to the early 20th-century Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants focused chiefly on contemporary literature and did not necessarily translate into scholars’ support for the interests of the Habsburg Empire (or the Czechoslovak state) in the Middle East. Sometimes their part in the colonial enterprise was merely academic. Rypka, for instance, in his article on Istanbul University, admired, “not without some envy,” the large number of Turkish, Arabic, and Persian manuscripts, rare prints and unique documents that he saw there, and mentioned that many purchased or stolen manuscripts had found their way into European libraries. Although he criticized the policy of the Germans and then of the Entente powers on this, he complained that while Vienna had had Hammer-Purgstall, the Czechs had no patrons who were

134 On the use of *Vlasta* in the 19th century see Jitka Malečková, “Nationalizing Women and Engendering the Nation: The Czech National Movement,” in *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann, and Catherine Hall (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 293–310.

135 In an essay marking the 100th anniversary of Dvořák’s birth, a former student of his mentioned that in the spirit of the “national revival” Dvořák had taken an active part in Czech cultural life and in the establishment of “Czech” Oriental studies. Karel Šafář, “Vzpomínky na prof. dra Rudolfa Dvořáka,” *Dialog*, no. 1 (1961): 85–87.

136 Rypka, “Hlavní proudy,” 362.

ready to help Rypka buy books for Czech libraries. Wondering if only Austria could produce a Salo Kohn (who bought a whole collection of Hebrew prints) or a Rainer (the archduke who purchased a collection of Fayum papyruses), Rypka was implying that he would not mind if the Czechs were also able to cheaply acquire some of the rare manuscripts whose disappearance from Turkey’s libraries he was lamenting.¹³⁷

Musil’s involvement with the state was more direct. Among Czech Orientalists, Musil is probably the one who devoted the most attention to the current Middle East.¹³⁸ He worked tirelessly to support political and economic relations with the Orient, first within Austria-Hungary and later in Czechoslovakia. He talked to Austrian entrepreneurs about his plans for increasing cooperation with the Middle East and took an active part in the Balkan und Orientsektion der K.K. Österreichischen Orient-und Überseegeellschaft, established in 1916.¹³⁹ In 1917, Musil headed an Austrian mission to the Orient that was designed to strengthen the Austro-Hungarian position in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The mission included making visits to inspect the Austro-Hungarian military units in the Ottoman Empire and providing support to Austro-Hungarian subjects in the region.¹⁴⁰ He also helped some 130 young men from the Middle East to study at various schools and institutes in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹⁴¹ He continued these efforts when he became a professor at Charles University in 1920, a position he obtained despite the complications his close ties with the Habsburgs and the Austrian Empire caused him and largely thanks to the support he received from the new Czechoslovak president Masaryk. Musil collaborated with the Czechoslovak minister of foreign trade Rudolf Hotowetz to help forge the new state’s economic and

137 Rypka, “Návštěva v turecké universitě,” 2.

138 According to Rypka, Musil published over 1200 newspaper articles on this topic, most of which sought to show how the East “is pleasantly surprising a quarelling and declining Europe,” and he tried to influence the opinion of the public in Czechoslovakia, which did not yet sufficiently understand the importance of the Middle East. Jan Rypka, “Alois Musil, June 30th, 1868-June 30th, 1938,” *Archiv Orientální* 10, no. 1 (1938): 26. The articles appeared between 1920 and 1936. See also Ferdinand Menčík, *Prof. Dr. Alois Musil: O jeho cestách, spisech a jejich významu* (Olomouc: R. Promberger, 1908); and Reich, *Alois Musil*.

139 This society, led by Joseph Maria Baernreither (president) and Vienna’s mayor Richard Weiskirchner and Rudolf Freiherr von Slatin (vice presidents), was intended to support the interests of Austria-Hungary in the political, economic, scholarly, and cultural spheres. Its committee included, apart from Musil and two other professors, the director of Austrian Lloyd, the director of the Geography Society, and the director of the Škoda company. See Eduard Gombár, “Alois Musil a jeho role při budování hospodářsko-politických vztahů k arabskému světu,” in Veselý, *Alois Musil*, 25–28.

140 On this as well as Musil’s role in the so-called Sixtus affair see Bauer, *Alois Musil*.

141 Rypka, “Alois Musil,” 24.

trade relations with the Middle East and worked to establish a school of Oriental languages for the public and an Oriental society to promote economic and cultural relations between Czechoslovakia and “the Orient.” Musil’s influence on Masaryk, in addition to Masaryk’s own interest in Oriental studies, is considered to have been instrumental in getting the legislation passed that made possible the establishment of the Oriental Institute in Prague in 1922. Based on a plan Musil drew up, the institute was to be divided into a cultural and an economic section and would also teach Oriental languages.¹⁴²

Musil is sometimes likened to Thomas Edward Lawrence and referred to as “Lawrence of Moravia” or “Musil from Arabia.”¹⁴³ The comparison, however, only partially holds up. As Makdisi noted, Lawrence ranked among those Europeans who insisted the Orient must inevitably yield to Europe’s civilizing mission and who criticized Ottoman efforts to reform and modernize their empire themselves.¹⁴⁴ Makdisi described how for Lawrence and others like him, the desert of Arabia and “the timeless Orient constituted a refuge from the strictures and effeminacy of European civilization, a place where a superior race of British men could reacquaint themselves with their own primordial nature by surviving the harshness of the desert and the savagery of its inferior Arab inhabitants.”¹⁴⁵ The desert was important also for Musil; it was a life-shaping experience that he reworked into a kind of heroic narrative.¹⁴⁶ He believed his

142 The actual work of the Oriental Institute started only in the late 1920s. On Musil’s role in the establishment of the Oriental Institute see Jiří Bečka, “Alois Musil, duchovní otec Orientálního ústavu,” in Veselý, *Alois Musil*, 29–32. The Oriental Institute, when it was finally established in 1927, included among its 34 members both scholars and businessmen, such as Jan Antonín Baťa, Jindřich Waldes, the Trade Chamber’s director Zdenko Fafl, and the president of the board of the Union Bank, Václav Schuster, as well as the minister of foreign trade dr. Hotowetz. See Bečka, “Alois Musil,” 28; and Rypka, “Alois Musil,” 23–24.

143 These are the titles of Gellner’s article (“*Lawrence of Moravia*”) and Feigl’s book (*Musil von Arabien*). On different interpretations of Musil’s role in politics see Miroslav Slach, *Kavalíři pouště, aneb, Alois Musil, šejch Músa ar-Rwejli, beduin z Rychtářova, kontra agent britské Intelligence Service Thomas Edward Lawrence of Arabia: Dobrodružný příběh (Biografický román s převahou literatury faktu)* (Třebíč: Akcent, 2000), and the works already mentioned.

144 In Makdisi’s words, “[t]he nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire became the venue for a modernization politics in which a beleaguered group of Ottoman officials made the case for independent reformation of the Ottoman Empire in the face of a majority of European authors, travelers, politicians, and missionaries who insisted on its inevitable subordination to a European civilizing mission. In either case, the Ottoman Empire was configured as a premodern place in relation to Western modernity.” Makdisi, “Mapping the Orient,” 40–41.

145 *Ibid.*, 42.

146 Musil, “Jak jsem poznával Orient,” esp. 223–26. Musil emphasized that he was able, thanks to his knowledge of their language and habits, to go from him being a prisoner to

life among the bedouins helped him to understand the belief system of the inhabitants of the desert, who have no use for and reject priests, temples, sacrifices, special prayers, and religious prescriptions. The way he described his experience does not suggest that he considered the inhabitants of the desert inferior to Europeans and that he wanted them to remain timelessly unchanged (even if that was in the interest of the Austro-Hungarian and later the Czechoslovak economy and politics). His outlook resembled not so much Lawrence's as that of Goldziher, who in his endeavor to understand the sources of Islam likewise felt it was more important to learn from the people than from “paper,” and who studied the influence of the religious system on society by talking to the local population, both the educated elites and the common people.¹⁴⁷

In 1922, by which time Lawrence's romantic Orient had already been destroyed by the war and its aftermath, Musil wrote an essay titled “Why the Orient Hates the Occident.”¹⁴⁸ Musil claimed that hatred of the West and of Britain in particular had been rising because the Orient was scared of European imperialism. The Orient needed a revival, but the “help” that the West provided to the Turks and Egyptians in making their reforms reflected “neither love for one's neighbor nor enthusiasm for the flowering of culture” and arose rather from the Western pursuit of material gain, which is what had driven various powers to interfere in the affairs of the Orient.¹⁴⁹ Musil noted that the Europeans' hunger for colonies had never been as strong as it was in the last four decades: Africa was not enough for them, they wanted to control the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and the Arab lands as well, regardless of earlier promises and agreements. All that the Orient wanted was to be left alone, he concluded, and when its inhabitants see how the Western powers behave, they “fear for their survival as a nation, and that is why they hate us.”¹⁵⁰

The views of Musil and his fellow academics on the contemporary Middle East and on Czech (or Austro-Hungarian) interests in the region certainly deserve a more thorough analysis. It is evident, however, that Czech Orientalists were indeed interested in the Middle East of their time and its inhabitants, and their work did not simply copy that of Orientalist scholars in other countries.

becoming a friend of the Beni Sakhr and later of the Rwala tribes, and he even became the blood brother of the Rwala sheyh. He reproduced this narrative in several adventure books he wrote for the youth. See, e.g., Alois Musil, *Syn pouště* (Prague: Novina, 1933).

147 Céline Trautmann-Waller, “Ignác Goldziher ou la fondation de l'islamologie par un Juif Hongrois,” in Gadoin and Vesel, *Figures pionnières de l'orientalisme*, 258.

148 Alois Musil, “Proč Orient nenávidí Okcidentu,” *Venkov*, January 22, 1922, 2.

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid.

4 Scholars and Czech Society

Though they had studied abroad and had other international experiences, early Czech Orientalists were in many ways strongly tied to the Czech milieu. In their works, they often drew on ideas and imagery that were commonly found in Czech popular writings, novels, or journalism on the Turks, and they, in turn, were regarded as having an important role to play in the development of Czech national culture. There were, therefore, consequences to the diverse attitudes these scholars maintained toward the objects of their research. The way Dvořák portrayed the Turks underwent an interesting transformation between 1884, when he denounced them as responsible for killing science in Islam, and 1906, when the encyclopedia entry he wrote presented a less negative but hardly complimentary picture of the alleged absence of any artistic spirit among the Turks, and 1915, when the Turks' mission to civilize other Turkic peoples was depicted in the most positive terms yet. Rypka clearly liked the Turks, while in Tauer's writings it is possible to discern a certain dislike on his part, especially when compared to his views on the Arabs and Iranians, whom he clearly preferred. Musil also favored the Arabs over the Turks, but he was most critical of the Turks when he found them acting in a way that was at odds with what he felt to be the interests of the Arabs and Islam.¹⁵¹

Even when these scholars did like the Turks, when they wrote in Czech for the wider public they sometimes employed the same stereotypes that were common in popular writings read by the general public. In the foreword to his translation of Muallim Naci's *Ömer'in Çocukluğu* (Ömer's Childhood) Rypka claimed that the Orient was still cloaked in magical imagery and warned readers not to expect to see in his book the kind of fantastic images found in *The Thousand and One Nights*.¹⁵² A few years later, he noted that real life in Turkey was the very opposite of what "grotesque ideas about the Orient" seemed to suggest.¹⁵³ Nevertheless, exoticizing and stereotypical images occasionally found their way into his own writings. He mentioned, for instance, the "melancholy

151 It was in this sense that he wrote in 1920 about the role of the Ottoman caliph in the contemporary Middle East. See Alois Musil, "Chalífa a Turecko," *Venkov*, February 24, 1920, 1. In another text, he later claimed that Islam had never penetrated the very being of a Turk as much as it had that of the Arab. The Turks were, according to him, satisfied with external rituals; from the Koran, they took the duty to worship one God and the distinction between good and evil, and otherwise they abused Islam. See Alois Musil, "V Turecku," in Žďárský, *Ze světa islámu*, 309–16.

152 Mu'allim Nádži, *Omarovo dětství*, 8.

153 Rypka, "Návštěva v turecké universitě," 2.

and pessimism¹⁵⁴ that were inherent to the Turkish character and repeatedly referred to Turkish superstition and the “inevitable baksheesh.”¹⁵⁵

Tauer wrote in the introduction to his translation of a story from *The Thousand and One Nights* in 1921 that the political decline of the caliphate had reached its peak with the Seljuk and Mongolian invasions, which “spread terror and havoc throughout Muslim Asia, immediately followed by a cultural decline.”¹⁵⁶ He described the style of *The Thousand and One Nights* as “light” and characterized by the “expansiveness and verbosity” typical of the Orient, somewhat tedious clichés, the use of a serious tone even in descriptions of comic events, an exaggerated naturalism, and an overt delight in describing intimate scenes, something that was at odds with “our” taste. Tauer complained that “the Oriental” saw nothing wrong in such scenes, but they were embarrassing for European translators.¹⁵⁷ Rypka, too, emphasized the inherent East–West opposition: his habilitation lecture on the “Main Streams of Ottoman-Turkish Poetry,” as we have seen, was based on and perpetuated the notion that there is an essential difference between the West and the East even in literature, citing, among others, the example of Nesimi and his quest for a martyr’s death, which he pursued “with a zeal that is peculiar to the Eastern psyche alone.”¹⁵⁸

Dvořák was certainly not immune to the common prejudices of his time. He expressed them, for instance, in the deprecatory view he took of the Middle Eastern scholars who attended the Orientalist congress in Stockholm and Christiania in 1889.¹⁵⁹ But Dvořák and Musil seem to have been somewhat less gripped by the belief that the East was inherently opposed to the West. In an essay on the symbolism of Oriental poetry in 1892, Dvořák touched on a subject that Tauer was critical of, namely love scenes in Islamic literature, but Dvořák interpreted in a different way: he argued that it was no surprise that Turkish love poetry used daring imagery and parables since it would be hard to find an Oriental poet who did not write about either transcendental love for

154 Mu'allim Nádži, *Omarovo dětství*, 91, note 23.

155 Ibid., 105 (note 75), 90, 96, 99, and 105. In a 1941 talk “On books, libraries and bookworms in the East” broadcast by Czech radio, Rypka (*O knihách*, 97–101) mentioned that, unlike other spheres, where they had to learn from Europe, in the realm of literature and the arts the Muslim world could proudly dual with Europe. Yet, at the same time, he referred to “Oriental fatalism” or “bloody origins” of the wealth that enabled Muslims to collect books.

156 Felix Tauer, “Úvod,” in *Pohádka o Aláaddinovi a kouzelné lampě z Tisíce a jedné noci*, transl. Felix Tauer (Kladno: J. Šnajdr, 1921), 21.

157 Ibid., 27.

158 Rypka, “Hlavní proudy,” 358.

159 Dvořák, “VIII. mezinárodní sjezd orientalistů,” 168.

God or sensual love. “These original and suprising images,” according to Dvořák, were what gave Eastern love poetry its special charm.¹⁶⁰ Musil wrote in one of his later texts that the Muslim world, having grown out of Hellenistic culture and Roman heritage, was undeniably closer to Europe than to East Asia and complemented European society.¹⁶¹

The most controversial concept to appear in some pamphlets and other writings about the Turks in the 1870s, described in the first chapter, was the notion of race. Scholarly works that dealt with or touched on the Ottoman Empire and the Turks used the term race mostly in passing and without much elaboration. Dvořák occasionally referred to the Turks as a “race” (*plémě*), but later more often defined them as a nation.¹⁶² In his article on Turkish nationality from 1922 Musil explained that the science on race taught that race should not be confused with nationality, but he himself distinguished the “Turanian race” from Turkish nationality somewhat inconsistently.¹⁶³ In the introduction to his translation of “Ömer’s Childhood,” Rypka contrasted the lighthearted, jovial Arian-Iranian-Persian phantast with the always rather gloomy and pre-occupied Mongolian-Turk, more down-to-earth in his thinking and “clinging to the glebe,” and in a footnote he remarked on the Turks’ lack of national and racial awareness.¹⁶⁴ Although such references reveal how widespread the ideas of racial difference were in Czech society at that time, they are quite rare in scholarly writings on the Ottoman Empire and are not applied as an interpretative lens in scholarly work on the Turks.

160 Rudolf Dvořák, “Obrazná mluva milostné poesie východní,” in *Slavnostní list posvěcený památce Frant. Lad. Čelakovského* (Strakonice: Nákladem tělocv. Jednoty “Sokol Tyrš,” 1892), 17.

161 Musil, “Národnost místo náboženství,” 293–95.

162 He used the term race (or its equivalent), for example, in the entry on the Turks he wrote for *Ottův slovník naučný* in 1906 (Dvořák, “Turecko – Literatura,” 905–6), while in his 1915 essay on Turkish literature the Turks figure as a nation.

163 Musil, “Turci a národnost,” 1–2. In the mid-1930s, Musil used racial terminology in a booklet on the current Orient and international politics, where he warned that if the West does not help Russia, “Mongolian Asian hords will once again spill over to the West and who knows where in Europe they will stop.” He was mainly concerned about the Japanese and Chinese: the Japanese would, in his words, burst through China and “the yellow race will decide the history not only of the Orient, but also of the Occident.” In contrast, the Muslim nations of the Orient were, according to Musil, aware of the danger and therefore in the last couple of years they had been growing closer to Western powers, even to the colonial powers. Alois Musil, *Dnešní Orient v politice světové* (Prague: Nákladem Jednoty československých matematiků a fysiků, 1935), 18.

164 See Rypka’s note in his translation of Muallim Naci: Mu’allim Nádži, *Omarovo dětství*, 90, note 22.

One might assume that scholars' views on the Turks, whether positive or negative, mattered little to Czech readers. But even Western Orientalists sometimes had a wide public impact, for instance through their translations,¹⁶⁵ and in societies with only a small academic community professors in a minor academic discipline like Oriental studies were often very familiar public figures. In the late 19th century, Czech Orientalists were involved in a number of projects that sought to sum up contemporary knowledge and package it for use by the general lay public. Most notable among these projects was Otto's Encyclopedia (*Ottův slovník naučný*), which became an exceptionally influential work and won its contributors considerable acclaim.¹⁶⁶ Dvořák worked as an editor on the encyclopedia and he himself wrote a number of entries on the languages, histories, and cultures of various “Oriental” countries. The fact that some of the most famous Czech poets collaborated with early Orientalists on translations of Eastern poetry also increased the visibility of these scholars: Jaroslav Vrchlický, considered one of the greatest Czech lyrical poets of the turn of the century, worked with Košut on his translation of Hafiz from Persian and with Dvořák on his translation of Chinese poetry, while Rypka translated the work of the 12th-century poet Nizami from Persian with the help of such great poets as Vítězslav Nezval (1900–1958) and Jaroslav Seifert (1901–1986).¹⁶⁷

The prestigious status enjoyed by some Orientalists went beyond literature. When Alois Musil gave his inaugural lecture at the Czech University in Prague in 1920, by which time he was a famous scholar, even though he was shunned by some Czech nationalists for his close ties with the Habsburgs, the audience included scholars, journalists, and politicians, foremost among them the then minister of foreign affairs and future president Edvard Beneš.¹⁶⁸ And Masaryk's involvement in Musil's career has already been mentioned.¹⁶⁹ Orientalists served in leadership positions in academia during times of war, which is an indicator of their standing: Dvořák, who was dean of the Philosophical Faculty

165 The *folie* following Galland's “translation” of *The Thousand and One Nights* and the influence of Hammer's translation of Hafiz on Goethe are among the best-known examples of such sway. Antoine Galland was a French scholar who collected some stories, which had never formed a single whole, and translated them into French, thus creating the European image of the “Arabian Nights” or *The Thousand and One Nights*. Their publication in the early 18th century caused a sensation in France and later in other European countries.

166 Orientalists' works were read and referred to by the general public and travelers to the Middle East mentioned especially Alois Musil's writings. See Forejt-Alan, *Za karavanou mrtvých*, 14.

167 Rypka's other collaborators included Pavel Eisner and Svatopluk Kadlec. See Stanislav Segert, “Překlady z orientálních jazyků,” *Dialog*, no. 1 (1961): 3.

168 Pavel Žďárský, *Alois Musil* (Prague: Orientální ústav AV ČR, n.d.), 14.

169 Masaryk also helped Musil publish his work in English in the United States.

in 1900–1901, served as the university president during World War I, and Rypka was dean of the university's Philosophical Faculty during World War II. The fact that academia turned to Orientalists in these times is a reflection of the respect they enjoyed, and it also enhanced their status as public intellectuals.

The important standing of the first Orientalists in Czech society both before and after the independent state of Czechoslovakia was established can also be observed in various celebratory events that took place.¹⁷⁰ On the occasion of Musil's 70th birthday, for instance, Rypka wrote a long biographical essay that assigned Musil a place among the world's great scientists and the great sons of Czechoslovakia.¹⁷¹ He described the peripetiae of Musil's life as a heroic search for truth in the desert and the transformation of a Bible scholar and philologist into a geographer, topographer, folklorist, Bedouin politician, and observer of the modern Orient, and left aside the potentially controversial aspects of Musil's life.¹⁷² Although the essay was written six years before Musil's death, it reads like a long obituary. Obituaries also testify to the status of early Czech Orientalists as well-known and respected figures in Czech intellectual and cultural life of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Academic obituaries are an interesting source of information on how individual scholars were viewed by their peers and former students, reviewing their importance or contributions, and they thereby also had the effect of defining emerging academic disciplines.¹⁷³ For example, Růžička, in his obituary of Dvořák, identified Dvořák's death with the end of the first phase in the development of Czech Oriental studies, a phase that was entirely defined by Dvořák and his role as a scholar, a teacher, and a propagator of Eastern cultures among the Czech general public.¹⁷⁴

Obituaries published in ordinary periodicals tell us even more about the public standing of the early Orientalists. In the obituary of Brandejs that Masaryk wrote in 1876, he noted that the loss of this talented young man was so keenly felt by the Czech nation because "there are so few of us," and there was little chance that anybody else would show as much promise of becoming a renowned international scholar as Brandejs had.¹⁷⁵ Masaryk also praised

170 Rypka's prestige was highlighted in the event organized for his 60th birthday in 1946. The speakers included alongside other distinguished guests the minister of education Zdeněk Nejedlý. See *Poutník Orientem*, 7.

171 Rypka, "Alois Musil," 34.

172 *Ibid.*, 19.

173 On the role obituaries play in nation-building see Julian Hamman, "Let Us Salute One of Our Kind: How Academic Obituaries Consecrate Research Biographies," *Poetics* 56 (June 2016): 1–14.

174 Růžička, "Rudolf Dvořák," 82.

175 Masaryk, "Brandejs," 305.

Brandejs's involvement in Czech national culture, and he quoted from his last will, in which Brandejs, aged 22, had prayed not to die before he could use his modest knowledge “for the benefit of the Czech nation.”¹⁷⁶ The obituary that the well-known Czech poet Josef Václav Sládek (1845–1912) wrote for 27-year-old Jaromír Břetislav Košut, which was published in a popular magazine called *Lumír* in 1880, mourns the death of a “Czech Orientalist” who was familiar to the general public from his articles on Oriental literatures. Sládek described Košut as the one outstanding Czech expert in Oriental languages and literatures, a real scholar, and a true Czech. Košut's life was difficult, according to Sládek, because he was “one of us” – an inclusive phrase used to explain all sorts of things by tapping into the sense that all Czechs had to work very hard to get by. Sládek wrote that the Czechs were poorer for the loss of this young, faithful, and hardworking lad, but Košut had nevertheless built a permanent monument for himself in his translations of the poems of Hafiz.¹⁷⁷ Another obituary written about Košut emphasized the hopes that the Czechs had placed in him and praised him for having worked, even at such a young age, with those who were trying to realize “our most cherished vision,” a Czech university. An emotional poem accompanying the obituary that laments the passing of the only Czech Orientalist who was on par with his international peers noted that those fighting for the Czech cause were few in number, and that the death of Košut, the “wise man of the Orient,” was therefore an irreplaceable loss.¹⁷⁸

These obituaries demonstrate the importance society assigned to the first generation of Czech Orientalists, who also dealt with Turkish topics, and their perceived role in creating the culture of a small nation, meaning that they were engaged in an enlightening task of national significance. This was particularly true in the early period, from the late 1870s up to the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but the sense that Orientalists were engaged in the mission of building a Czech – or Czechoslovak – culture survived into the interwar period.

5 Conclusion

Rudolf Dvořák is generally considered to be the founding father of Czech Oriental studies and someone who substantially influenced both his successors

176 Ibid.

177 Josef Václav Sládek, “Dr. Jaromír Košut,” *Lumír*, December 10, 1880, 544.

178 Untitled obituary and poem (signed – nka) in the magazine *Humoristické listy*: “Dr. Jaromír Břetislav Košut” [Obituary], 394. See also “Dr. Jaromír Břetislav Košut,” *Národní listy*, December 5, 1880, 2.

and educated society in general.¹⁷⁹ He was neither the first nor the only promising young man to specialize in Oriental studies: he was a part of a small group of intellectuals who were ready to help their nation by establishing the field of “Czech” Oriental studies, the systematic study of the Orient in the Czech language, at a time when the struggle was under way to found a separate Czech university in Prague. For the first generation of Czech Orientalists, Turkish topics were only one object of research and teaching. Dvořák in particular was an Orientalist in the broadest sense, his interests ranging from China to ancient Egypt and the Middle East, including the Turks. Rypka divided his attention between Turkish and Persian themes, while Musil was, among his various professions, primarily an Arabist who only dealt with the Turks in popular texts and later in his life; for Tauer, too, Ottoman history was a rather marginal topic of interest.

The emerging discipline was modelled on established schools of Oriental studies in other countries. The notion of Czech “culture as translation” formulated by Vladimír Macura also applied to early Czech Oriental studies and more specifically the discipline’s Turkish branch. Czech intellectuals were working to create a complete society that had all the attributes and the kind of structure observed in other societies, and that included an academia that comprised all the standard fields of academic study and research – from science and literature to such specialized fields as Oriental studies. Since the study of non-European languages and histories was an academic pursuit in advanced nations, it was considered patriotic to take an interest in Oriental cultures and try to introduce them to the Czech public.¹⁸⁰ In this sense, Czech Oriental studies served national interests both inwardly – as part of the effort to educate the public and enrich national culture – and outwardly, in that by studying non-European languages and peoples, including the Turkish language and the Turks, Czech intellectuals sought to demonstrate to the world the vigor of Czech society and its culture. Czech Orientalists did not, however, use images of the Turks to emphasize the qualities of their own nation, perhaps at least partly because their first focus was on literature and not on the “Turkish wars,” the study of which often elicited praise of the nation’s bravery in fighting the Turks.¹⁸¹ They paid less attention to Turkish topics than did Hungarian scholars,

179 Růžička, “Rudolf Dvořák,” esp. 82.

180 See Masaryk, “Brandejš,” see also the entry on Košut in *Ottův slovník naučný*, 14:971.

181 This line of argument was emphasized by some historians in Central Europe, who did not specialize in Middle Eastern history, and it also appeared in Czech history books from even as late as the 20th century.

for whom Ottoman rule was a part of their national history, and some of whom were concerned with the possible Turkic origins of Hungarians. The conditions of Czech Orientalists differed also from the situation of their Polish counterparts who lived under Russian rule: Because the discipline emerged at a time when the Czech national movement was both widespread and quite successful, Czech Orientalists (except for Musil) did not usually seek employment in the service of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and instead supported the establishment of Oriental studies as "Czech."

Although Czech Oriental studies started out as largely emulative of its counterparts abroad, it developed its own specific Czech form out of a mix of emulation and nationalism. The circumstances of its belated emergence also affected the focus of the new discipline. Theological studies of Islam were not a relevant topic of Czech Orientalists' research, although Musil had an interest in Islam throughout his life and Tauer was drawn to its early history. But with the notable exception of Musil they were less motivated by Christian concerns than the German Orientalists were. None of the scholars whose focus was on the Turks carried out research on the Turkish language, even though most of them held a university position in the field of philology. Most remarkably, Czech Orientalists were from the outset also interested in contemporary issues.

In their analyses of the literature, history, and present of the Turks, early Czech Orientalists did not use just one single interpretative framework. Their thoughts on the Ottoman Turks were to varying degrees structured by their own sense as an emerging nation, which is perhaps why they devoted considerable attention to the emerging national awareness among the Turks. Their views on Turkish nationalism changed over time and ranged from Dvořák's enthusiastic depiction of the Turks' mission and Musil's ambivalence about Turkish nationalism, especially when directed at the Arabs, to Rypka's criticism of nationalism in Turkish literature. Although they sometimes referred to racial differences between Europeans and the Turks, race was not a relevant interpretative frame in scholarly works dealing with the Turks. Rather than by racial concepts, Czech scholars were affected by their belief in the inherent and essential difference between the West and the East and in European superiority. This belief was reflected in many ways in some of their works well into the 20th century, but so was criticism of European dominance over the Middle East, and an awareness that the East should not be judged by Western criteria. There were internal contradictions to the views of scholars: Rypka, on the one hand, denounced the rapacity of Western powers regarding Oriental manuscripts and, on the other hand, called on the Czechs to imitate this behavior,

and Musil both criticized colonialism and seemed to promote it, or at least advocated an economically and politically more pragmatic attitude toward the East.¹⁸²

The beginnings and early development of Czech Oriental studies were nevertheless not driven by colonial considerations. The existence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and imperial interests were not without influence, most importantly on the career of Musil, who had the closest ties to the empire and its dynasty. His opinions suggest that if Czech Oriental studies did not serve colonial aims it was because the Czechs did not have an opportunity to implement their own Middle Eastern colonial policy, not because every scholar would have objected to colonialism. Yet, Musil's views, as we have seen, were not altogether identical to those of an imperial scholar like T.E. Lawrence. Despite his ambivalent attitude toward the Turks, Musil was not convinced of the inferiority of the Muslims. Nor did he advocate that the Orient should remain frozen in time or subordinated to the interests of the Austro-Hungarian regime and later those of the Czechoslovak state.

Czech Oriental studies were established as part of a patriotic endeavor to develop Czech culture and to raise it to a level on par with that of more advanced European nations. First-generation scholars in Oriental studies considered it their mission to enlighten the Czech public on the Middle East. And as the words of Alois Musil that are quoted at the beginning of this chapter suggest, some of them may also have been trying to set an example for other Slavic countries. They introduced into Czech academia many ideas that they imported from abroad, but they were not deaf to the stereotypes about the Turks that existed in Czech society. And by reproducing these stereotypes in their position as experts, in the final analysis they confirmed them.

182 He claimed that the Orient is alive and research on it should benefit everybody – both at home and in the Orient. Musil, “Naše úkoly,” 6. Yet, in his inaugural lecture at the university in 1920, Musil maintained that “[t]he Orient can for us take the place of a colony, it can supply us with raw materials in exchange for numerous products, and it can provide many of our countrymen with Eastern stations in life. We need only to consistently stimulate a concern for the living Orient here at home and for our country in the Orient, and use a cultural foundation to make way for bustling economic relations.” Musil, “Jak jsem poznával Orient,” 226.

The New Republics

The Czechs do not have a “Turk” of their own, which is to say, they do not have an image that immediately comes to mind when they hear the word “Turk,” one fundamentally distinct from the imagery found in other countries. Even today many Czechs would perhaps think first of Hašek’s famous work. The contrast he painted between Švejk’s dislike of the Turks and Palivec’s more businesslike outlook is used to capture the discrepancy between the negative views that some Czechs have of the Turks and the more pragmatic attitude adopted by their politicians. Most recently, this was reflected, for instance, in comments in the media on the 2019 Turkish offensive in Syria.¹ The positions that Švejk and Palivec represent, however, do not cover the full spectrum of Czechs’ views on the Turks, whether back in the late 19th and early 20th centuries or even a hundred years later – and they certainly do little service to the variety of views found among those individuals who were fascinated by the Turks and their country.

Czech images of the Turks emerged in times of war with the Ottoman Empire and reflected a “real” encounter with the Turks. This experience, influential as it proved to be, posed no actual threat to the survival of the Czechs and, as time passed, their interest in the Turks waned. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Czech intellectual elites were instead focused on rediscovering the Czechness of the population in the Czech lands, studying their own language, history, and culture, spreading national awareness among wider social groups, and, in the second half of the 19th century, pursuing Czech political objectives. Because the Czech lands were not vitally affected by combat with the Ottoman army, the Turks did not become an important part of the 19th-century master narrative of Czech history and Czech self-identification. Nevertheless, Turkish subject matter never disappeared entirely from Czech culture, high or low. Memory of the “Turkish threat” was kept alive in folk songs and tales and in history books that told the story of Czech participation in the Turkish wars, and Turks occasionally appeared as props or minor figures in emerging modern Czech culture.

1 A recent article in a major literary magazine was titled “Do You Like the Turks? Do You Like Those Heathen Dogs?” See Jiří Weigl, “Máš rád Turky? Máš rád ty pohanský psy?,” *Literární noviny*, December 16, 2019, <https://www.literarky.cz/civilizace/629-mas-rad-turky-mas-rad-ty-pohansky-psy>.

This imagery formed the heritage from which 19th-century Czech writers were able to draw. While representations of the Turks as fighters and as the foes of Christendom remained prominent, by the 19th century they became less sharp. These images could still be resurrected at any time with their poignancy intact, confirming Franz Stanzel's contention about the deep roots that images of Others establish in historical consciousness. Stanzel has argued that images of Others, of foreign neighbors, are so engrained in historical consciousness that they are more difficult to erase from it than are conflicts or even wars with one's neighbors and the consequences of such wars. In times of political tension and war, these images of Others re-appear or are invoked from the depths of the unconscious.² However, there was no single image that the Czechs automatically associated with the Turks, even though the image of the Turks as fighters and as the foes of Christendom went some way in this direction. The "local" Czech way of depicting the Turks was accompanied by ideas received from abroad and images drawn from Western travelogues, novels, scholarly writings, and works on political systems. That these images did not always match the experiences, conditions, and aspirations of the Czechs mattered little given the absence of any uniform framing that views of the Turks had to fit into. Czechs had in the late 19th century no ambitions in the Ottoman Empire that needed to be justified, and turn-of-the-century Czechs were interested in the Turks for a variety of reasons, some of which changed over time, while others remained more constant. One of the most obvious motivations for the attention the Czechs paid to the Turks throughout the period that is the focus of this book, from the 1870s to the early 1920s, had to do with the Ottoman Turks' rule over the Southern Slavs. As the Czechs' sense of closeness to other Slavs grew stronger in the 19th century, this was accompanied by increasing concern for the Southern Slavs' struggle against Ottoman rule.

In the 1870s, the revolts in the Ottoman Balkans and the war that the Slavic states waged against the Ottoman Empire boosted the level of interest that Czechs showed in the Turks. Their views were at that time influenced primarily by Pan-Slavism and a sense of solidarity with the Slavs suffering under the "Turkish yoke." Earlier stereotypes did not disappear. Images of the Turks in the 1870s often continued to be informed by religious animosity, and the Turks were depicted as the archenemies of Christendom, despite the prevailingly secular nature of Czech national ideology and the fact that there were no new religious arguments to be added to the old imagery. The Turks were also still portrayed as cruel and violent in anti-Turkish pamphlets in the 1870s, much in

2 Franz K. Stanzel, *Europäer: Ein imagologischer Essay* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 1998), 11.

the way they had been during the Turkish wars. In comparison to the past, depictions of religious difference were now occasionally accompanied and corroborated by references to racial difference, in which the Turks, as representatives of the "Mongolian race," were contrasted with Indo-Europeans. Most such views were borrowed from foreign literature and reproduced by Czech authors writing about the Turks. Other stereotypes that were commonly employed in anti-Turkish rhetoric in Western countries, such as the opinion about the despotic nature of Ottoman rule, appeared only rarely in Czech discourse. Race was not a central issue in writings on the Turks either, whether in the 1870s or later, but it was present, and it was mostly used to provide more arguments in support of the already negative portraits of the Turks.

While most authors of anti-Turkish writings in the 1870s did not base their descriptions of the Ottoman Turks on any personal contact with them, in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries many Czechs visited the Ottoman Empire. Their impressions were shaped in advance by the ideas they developed about the Turks from folk songs, history textbooks, encyclopedias, and anti-Turkish publications. Their own travel accounts then served as a source of information for subsequent writing about the Turks: authors who had never been to the Ottoman Empire cited them, and entries on the Turks in encyclopedias drew stories and examples from this travel literature. Travel writing thus helped to add flesh to the historical representations of the Turks as fighters and enemies by providing concrete details about their habits, way of life, and character. Because the authors of these writings were speaking from first-hand experience, the descriptions they offered came across as true representations of the Turks' character and customs, even if the authors had actually taken their information from earlier travel books.

To prepare for their trip, travelers supplemented whatever ideas they had already formed about the Turks with information they found in a variety of works, ranging from earlier Czech travel books to contemporary Western travel literature and Orientalist novels. Their actual encounter with Ottoman reality did not substantially alter the travelers' views, but some were favorably impressed by the Turks they met, and others learned to distinguish between who they deemed "the old" and who "the new" Turks. They perceived the Ottoman Empire as both backward and exotic, and in this they were often at least partly influenced by foreign writings. But they were not uniform in how they evaluated the signs of this backwardness, nor were they all persuaded that modernization had to follow the Western path. They tended to stress the backward/modern dichotomy more when they were trying to contrast Ottoman and Slavic elements in the newly emancipated Slavic countries of South-eastern Europe.

Although they adopted many images of Turkish men and women from Western works, the way they wrote about some topics differed from Western travelogues. Travelers' views on Turkish and Muslim women are one of the more remarkable examples of these differences. Czech men who traveled to the Ottoman Empire were fascinated by the exotic beauty of women and fantasies associated with the veil and the harem, but they focused most on the position of women in society and did not portray Ottoman women as objects to be owned. Anecdotal evidence of the Czech perspective on Ottoman women is perhaps indicative of a more general characteristic of the Czechs' relationship to the Ottoman Turks, which is that it was not shaped by any colonial ambitions in the Ottoman Empire. Traveling, however, also gave Czechs an opportunity to express the sense of superiority they felt over the local population. They felt superior to the Turks – and other inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire whom they perceived to be “Oriental” – because they regarded themselves as European. But they did not (at least in their travel writings) exhibit a need to prove this, and the preeminence of Europe over the Ottoman Empire seemed self-evident to them.

The Czechs did not just view the Turks through an Orientalizing lens, but also saw the Slavs who used to live or were still living under Ottoman rule in this light, regarding them as exotic. The Czechs who visited or worked in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which from 1878 was occupied by Austria-Hungary, felt this to be especially true of the local Muslims there, who were of Slavic origin, but the Czechs nevertheless called them Turks. Their view of these Slavic Muslims was in fact shaped by two perspectives: one in which they were seen as Oriental and exotic and as marked by their “Turkish” (Ottoman) past, and another that claimed them as brothers and part of the larger family of Orthodox and Catholic Slavs, with whom they should be united. The Czechs took a patronizing view of the Muslim Slavs, but they viewed the Christian Slavs of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and perhaps of the former Ottoman Balkans as a whole, in the same patronizing light.³ Their relationship to the Slavs in Bosnia-Herzegovina was equally influenced by their sense of Slavic solidarity and Pan-Slavism, and this sense of closeness extended at least partly also to their Slavic Muslim brothers.

The Czechs may have referred to the Muslim Slavs as “Turks,” but they clearly distinguished them from the Ottoman Turks. This distinction is evident in the way Czech visitors described the women of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The

3 They still viewed the Balkan Slavs as influenced by their Ottoman past; Todorova's claim that “the Balkans are the Ottoman legacy” corresponds with what the Czechs' views were as well. See Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 12.

Muslim women of Bosnia-Herzegovina seemed stranger to the Czechs than their Christian counterparts. Yet, they were not portrayed as sexual objects; they were often presented as mothers and daughters, which is to say as part of a family, and their families were explicitly depicted as Slavic. Czechs saw both Muslim and Christian Slavic families in Bosnia-Herzegovina as patriarchal, but they highlighted that Muslim families there were monogamous and that Muslim women had more rights than was common among Ottoman-Turkish women. Czech observers nevertheless often represented them as somewhat exotic and occasionally even used imagery not unlike that employed in depictions of Ottoman women. These Orientalizing portraits were found in writings by women as well as men. Czech women also participated in the Habsburg Empire's civilizing mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was presented (and partly carried out) as a means by which the Czechs could help their Slavic brothers and sisters. Czech men and women generally supported the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and some identified with the Austro-Hungarian imperial policy in the former Ottoman provinces. Their views suggest that Czechs did not lack colonial ambitions and their "civilizing mission" rhetoric can be interpreted as a sort of colonial attitude, even if these views were not expressed in relation to the Ottoman Empire as a whole, but concerned Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In contrast, colonialism was not a significant framework of early Czech Oriental studies, although one of the field's major figures identified with the Habsburgs' imperial interests and after the emergence of Czechoslovakia expressed a kind of Czechoslovak version of colonial aspirations. The lack of an imperial tradition perhaps contributed to Czech Oriental studies' late emergence: the discipline was institutionalized in the 1880s as part of efforts to create a full structure for Czech culture, which included developing the sort of scholarship on the Orient that existed in advanced societies in Europe in the 19th century. Czech scholars initially reproduced some ideas that were current in German-language universities, where the early Czech Orientalists studied, and also common among famous European scholars of their time. The emerging discipline was not merely a copy of foreign models though. Christian interests and the focus on theological concerns that characterized 19th-century German Orientalistik were less prominent in Czech Oriental studies. As well as the more traditional research subjects popular among Orientalists in Europe, Czech scholars were also interested in the contemporary Middle East and they were often sympathetic toward Turkish nationalism. And although modeled on Oriental studies abroad, Czech scholarship espoused ideas that set it apart from these models. The way Czech Orientalists framed their research was only in some instances inspired by the ideas that were predominantly shared by

scholars in other countries, one such example being the belief that the West and the East were fundamentally different. Other concepts that Czech Orientalists drew on were formed out of a mixture of foreign influences and Czech nationalism; the latter in some way shaped the thinking of most early Czech Orientalists and helps explain their interest in Turkish nationalism, especially before the emergence of Czechoslovakia.

Czech Orientalists did not work in support of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with the notable exception of Alois Musil, who allied himself with some of the Habsburgs' policies in the Middle East. For the most part, Czech scholars were motivated by an effort to enhance and strengthen Czech culture by advancing the study of the Orient, including the Turks, both on the international scene and for a Czech audience, whose intellectual horizons they sought to expand. Czech specialists in the Middle East were, however, susceptible to the same stereotypes and exoticizing images of the Muslim world that circulated among the general public. Because they were experts and very often also prominent public intellectuals, their views could then in turn confirm the Czech public's perception of the Orient as essentially different from the West, even though on the whole scholars tended to have a close and admiring relationship to at least some of the objects of their research.

Czechs who wrote about the Turks around the turn of the century in most cases backed the Austro-Hungarian Empire's policy on Bosnia-Herzegovina. In other contexts, they wrote from the perspective of their own, Czech, interests and to some extent, especially in travels, from the perspective of a European. Negative views of the Turks were often accompanied by similarly or even more negative depictions of other ethnic groups, most notably the Greeks, the Armenians, and the Jews of the Ottoman Empire, who were perceived to be just as Oriental as the Turks. The primary interpretative framework through which the Czechs viewed the Turks in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, was nationalism and specifically the Czechs' sense of solidarity with the Slavs who were fighting against Ottoman rule.

Nationalism played a role also in the way images of the Turks figured in other Central European societies. The images expressed various feelings, but they primarily served as instruments in the construction of national identity and the boosting of national pride. The Turks were presented as the enemy in order to show the courage and sacrifices that were involved in the Central European peoples' fight against them. While in Czech writings this was often just a side narrative, both the Hungarians and the Poles identified themselves as Christian Europe's bulwark against the onslaught of Islam or the Turks much more vociferously and with a stronger emphasis on Christianity than the Czechs did in their national discourse, which was largely non-religious. Czechs were already being influenced to some extent in the 19th century by

the views that prevailed among the Slovaks, who had lived through a period of Ottoman rule, but this influence only became more widespread after the emergence of Czechoslovakia. The Turks also figured as a symbol of the enemy more generally – whether that meant the Habsburgs, the Russians, or the Germans (or even the Hungarians) – and because of the past experience of war with the Turks, this symbolic imagery was salient throughout the region.

At the same time, however, the Turks were not seen only as foes and depictions of them fulfilled other functions as well. While the Czechs did not use images of the Turks to set themselves apart from the Orient because they did not identify as an Oriental or Eastern country, for Poles and Hungarians the East–West dilemma was more complex, and their attitudes ranged from self-identifying as partly Oriental to distancing themselves from the Orient or the East and trying to prove their Western allegiance, even though they often viewed the West in a critical light. Leaving aside the Oriental influences that were embraced by early modern Polish culture and elites in particular, the Poles and Hungarians developed a warmer relationship with the Turks in the 19th century as the Ottoman Empire came to be perceived as a safe haven for Hungarian and Polish exiles, a perspective that Czechs and Slovaks did not share. For Hungarians, the Turks and the Orient played an additional role in their 19th-century search for national identity: while views on the Turks were varied and ambivalent, they were regarded by some intellectuals as the Hungarians' relatives.

Another important difference concerned the role of Slavic solidarity in attitudes toward the Turks. Generally speaking, Slavic nations in the 19th century were more concerned than non-Slavs were with the fate of the Slavs who remained under Ottoman rule. However, the Poles, because of their antagonistic feelings about Russia after the partition of Poland, were suspicious of Pan-Slavism if it involved a greater role for Russia, and in the Russo-Turkish war of 1878–1879 the Poles' sympathies did not lie with Russia. Hungarians also had little reason to support Russia, which had played an important part in suppressing the 1848 revolution, nor were they motivated to promote the emancipation of the Slavs in the Ottoman Empire, which might encourage similar efforts among the sizable Slavic population living under Hungarian rule. The Czechs thus differed from both the Poles and the Hungarians in terms of what role events in the Balkans in the 1870s and the emergence of Pan-Slavism played in resurrecting anti-Turkish feelings among them.

An important turning point identified by Kuran-Burçoğlu in images of the Turks Europe-wide was the emergence of the Turkish Republic in 1923.⁴ The collapse of Europe's multi-national empires after World War I also changed

4 Kuran-Burçoğlu, "Turkey," 254–55.

the foundations of Czech-Turkish relations. In their own new state, established on October 28, 1918, the Czechs observed with relative detachment the postwar fighting on Ottoman territories and the international negotiations that took place over the future of the Ottoman Empire. The creation of the Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923, however, made the establishment of diplomatic ties and a redefinition of economic relations between the two states a necessity. Another important aspect of mutual contacts was the position of Czechoslovak citizens in postwar Turkey.⁵ In October 1924 an agreement on friendship between Czechoslovakia and Turkey was signed, followed in 1927 by a trade agreement, and in April 1926 the Czech embassy moved from Istanbul to Ankara.⁶

In the postwar order the Czechs were positioned among those who had won the war while the Ottoman Turks belonged among those who had lost, and this had the effect of reinforcing the distance and amplifying the sense of difference between the Czechs and the Turks. Initially, Czechs tended to reject any comparisons between Czechoslovakia and Turkey. They were offended that Turkey had allegedly been treated the same way as Czechoslovakia on the international stage by the Western powers.⁷ Given that Turkey was of little consequence for Czechoslovakia's international position and for its commercial activities, there was no clear common line of Czechoslovak interests and policy in and toward Turkey in the interwar period. As a result, even official representatives of Czechoslovakia were not united in their stance on Turkey.⁸ Although the Czechs were not directly affected by the negotiations and developments in the Middle East, these events impacted their allies in the Little Entente, Romania and Yugoslavia, who were not on the best terms with Turkey.⁹ In September 1922, the minister of foreign affairs, Edvard Beneš, wrote that, with respect to the "Eastern Question," Czechoslovakia would back the position of Romania and Yugoslavia, adding – confidentially – that Czechoslovakia considered the Turks' "return to Europe" and their being granted possession of Constantinople

5 M. Hlavíčka, "Právní postavení čl. státních příslušníků v Turecku," *Zahraniční politika 2* (1923): 273–74.

6 On postwar relations between Czechoslovakia and Turkey see Petr Novák, "Počátky československo-tureckých vztahů 1918–1926," *Slovanský přehled* 91, no. 4 (2005): 425–41.

7 See "Mírová konference v Lausanne," *Zahraniční politika 2* (1923): 444. See also Josef Chmelař, "Problém ochrany menšin v Turecku na konferenci v Lausanne," *Zahraniční politika 2* (1923): 345.

8 This was reflected in the journal *Zahraniční politika* (Foreign Policy), which represented the official standpoints of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and published articles by diplomats and scholars.

9 Josef Chmelař, "Československá zahraniční politika v r. 1922," *Zahraniční politika 2* (1923): 30.

and the Straits, and even Thrakia, to be a mistake.¹⁰ The state's official position on the Turks was at first also influenced by the sympathy some Czech political elites felt for postwar Greece, but this sympathy was quite short-lived, and Czechoslovak diplomacy thereafter kept a clear distance from the Greek-Turkish conflict.¹¹

After the Turkish Republic was established, its new leadership settled in, and especially once the modernizing reforms of Mustafa Kemal became visible the approach of some Czech politicians and political commentators started to change. The way the Turkish Republic developed after the war made it possible to view it as a country that was leaving its "Oriental" past behind it.¹² After an initial period of hesitation and continuing suspicion, Czechoslovakia's political elites acknowledged that positive changes were occurring in Turkey. This shift was particularly discernible in foreign affairs, where some Czech politicians' latent distrust of the Western powers, which were perceived as important for the fate of both Czechoslovakia and Turkey, occasionally gave rise to a sense on the part of Czechs that they shared common interests with the Turks. In the early 1930s, diplomat and politician Kamil Krofta (later minister of foreign affairs) argued that, thanks to its deep "rebirth," Turkey had renounced revisionist claims and this had made possible a rapprochement between Turkey and the countries that were defending the status quo, among them "our republic."¹³

A certain shift can be traced also in the views of Alois Musil, who published numerous articles, aimed at both experts and a wider audience, in which he commented on current developments in Turkey. While before the war Musil's somewhat critical opinion of the Ottoman Turks was influenced by his strong sympathies for the Arabs, after the establishment of the Turkish Republic he showed more understanding for the Turks and mainly criticized the great powers' policy toward Turkey and the Middle East more generally.¹⁴ Despite some reservations, he painted an image of Turkey in which he primarily highlighted

10 Edvard Beneš, *Cirkulární telegramy 1920–1935*, ed. J. Dejmek (Prague: Společnost Edvarda Beneše, 2002), 58.

11 Petr Novák, "Československá diplomacie a řecko-turecká válka 1920–1922," *Moderní dějiny* 15 (2007): esp. 190 and 217.

12 See Jaroslav Cebe, *Anglie a Turecko: Otázka mossulská; Příspěvek ke studiu mandátních otázek a působnosti Rady Společnosti národů jako orgánu rozhodčího* (Prague: Orbis, 1928), 83.

13 Kamil Krofta, *Československo v mezinárodní politice* (Prague: Orbis, 1934), 23. He also published a book titled "We and the Hungarians in the Fights with the Turks." Kamil Krofta, *My a Maďaři v bojích s Turky* (Prague: Státní tiskárna, 1934).

14 Alois Musil, "Věci turecké," *Zahraniční politika* 1 (1922), 1373–77.

the progress achieved by the new Turkish government and the suffering of the Turkish population, which had been further exacerbated by the international economic crisis.¹⁵ The other early Orientalists, Rypka and Tauer (Dvořák died in 1920), did not respond to the establishment of the Turkish Republic and Mustafa Kemal's modernizing reforms with any marked change in their views and continued to publish academic work and devote substantial attention to the popularization of their research among the Czech public. In the postwar Czechoslovak Republic, Oriental studies underwent further diversification and developed more than other philological fields at Charles University's Philosophical Faculty.¹⁶ One of its representatives was Bedřich Hrozný, an Assyriologist who was the first to decipher the Hittite script and who carried out archeological digs in Anatolia in the 1920s. In a travel book he published about his journey, he praised the Turkish authorities for their support of his excavation work and demonstrated his clear fondness for Ankara, which he likened to Prague after the foundation of Czechoslovakia, while equating Istanbul with Vienna and its decline after the war.¹⁷

According to Hrozný, there were few European tourists in Anatolia, but in the interwar period a number of Czechs visited the new state. Compared to the prewar years, the travelers were more diverse. They comprised "ordinary" Czechs who traveled third class and had no advantages of status over the average Turks they observed in Turkish cities, as well as some women, such as Emílie Jahnová, a teacher who participated in a trip organized by the "Club of Friends of the Orient" in 1933 and described it in a book published the same year.¹⁸ Another travel book, titled "Across Kemal's Turkey," was published by a Czech convert to Islam.¹⁹

Despite the increasing supply and variety of travel literature and scholarly writings on Turkey that were available to Czechs in the interwar period, the public was still presented with textbooks and history books that did not offer a substantially different picture of Ottoman history than what had been asserted in the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. While the Turks may no longer have been called the archenemies of Christendom, they were still sometimes portrayed as cruel and vengeful, and Sultan Abdülhamid was depicted as

15 Alois Musil, "Nejistota v Turecku," *Venkov*, January 10, 1931, 1–2.

16 Petráň, "The Philosophical Faculty," 231.

17 Bedřich Hrozný, *Vříšči půlměsíce: Cesty a výkopy v Turecku* (Prague: Jos. R. Vilímek, 1927), 15.

18 Emílie Jahnová, *Do Orientu* (Prague, 1933), esp. 5, originally published as a supplement of the *Wiener Tagebuch* 1932–1933. This club was founded in Prague in 1930.

19 Mohamed Abdallah Brikcius, *Napříč Kemalovým Tureckem* (Prague: Československá grafická unie, 1935).

a sly despot trying to exploit Muslim fanaticism.²⁰ Like in the past, historical images of the Turks continued to serve various aims. For example, amidst the dramatic events of 1939 and the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, a major publication was released that glorified the Czechs' contribution to humankind, including their role in the Turkish wars, and it claimed that they had been denied recognition for their role by the Habsburgs and Germans, and sometimes also by the Hungarians, who wanted all the glory for themselves alone.²¹ The fact that the new Czechoslovak state included Slovaks, in whose historical consciousness and culture the Turks were a more prominent theme, necessarily also impacted the images of the Turks that existed in interwar society.

After the emergence of Czechoslovakia and Turkey as two independent states, a certain commonality of interests between the Czechs and the Turks was born and recognized by some Czechs. The perception that both Czechoslovakia and Turkey were "bridges" between the East and the West (albeit these two spheres were differently defined in each case) may have contributed to this feeling. However, this more pragmatic and positive attitude does not seem to have taken deep root among the general public. Across all historical changes and periods, including that of communism in Czechoslovakia, the Czechs have primarily associated the Turks with the Orient. As well as the "innocent Orientalism" of popular culture, other stereotypes of the Turks have survived, which remain latent but could be resurrected by political actors if they felt it convenient to do so or if a situation were to arise that – together with the media's coverage of it – brought back memories of "the terrible Turk." All that, however, is part of another story, which is waiting to be told.

20 Jaroslav Bidlo, Josef Šusta, and Josef Dobiáš, *Všeobecný dějepis pro vyšší třídy středních škol*, vol.3, *Dějiny nového věku od osvícenství*, 4th ed. (Prague: Historický klub, 1938), 59, 98, and 121. This description of the Ottoman period contrasted with the neutral and even positive depiction in the same textbook of the changes introduced in the Turkish Republic under Mustafa Kemal, who was "pushing Turkey with a firm hand in the direction of progress." Bidlo, Dobiáš, and Šusta, *Všeobecný dějepis*, 3:159.

21 Rudolf Urbánek, "Češi a války turecké," in *Co daly naše země Evropě a lidstvu: Od slovan-
ských věrozvěstů k národnímu obrození*, ed. Vilém Mathesius (Prague: Evropský literární klub, 1939), 117–23.

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