



# Central Europe and the Non-European World in the Long 19th Century

Markéta Křížová/Jitka Malečková (eds.)

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**F** Frank & Timme  
Verlag für wissenschaftliche Literatur

Cover illustration: Ethnographic map in the article “Menschenrassen” (human races) in the 4th edition of *Meyers Konversationslexikon* (Leipzig, 1885–1892).



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Structural and Investment Funds  
Operational Programme Research,  
Development and Education



This work was supported by the European Regional Development Fund project “Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success of Europe in an Interrelated World” (reg. no.: CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16\_019/0000734) implemented at Charles University, Faculty of Arts. The project is carried out under the ERDF Call “Excellent Research” and its output is aimed at employees of research organizations and Ph.D. students.

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ISBN 978-3-7329-0867-7

ISBN E-Book 978-3-7329-9076-4

DOI 10.26530/20.500.12657/57705

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Herstellung durch Frank & Timme GmbH,  
Wittelsbacherstraße 27a, 10707 Berlin.  
Printed in Germany.

Gedruckt auf säurefreiem, alterungsbeständigem Papier.

[www.frank-timme.de](http://www.frank-timme.de)

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## **Acknowledgments**

Work on this book was further supported by the research program of Charles University PROGRES Q09 “History – The key to understanding the globalized world.” We would also like to thank the reviewers for their useful suggestions and Martina Kutková for editorial assistance.



MARKÉTA KŘÍŽOVÁ AND JITKA MALEČKOVÁ

# **1 Central Europe and the “Non-European Others”: A Conceptual Framework**

The present volume is a contribution to the ongoing discussion about what types of relations existed between Europe and the rest of the world in the long 19th century. Scholarly analyses of the contacts between Europe and the outside world had for a long time focused on various forms of relations between colonial powers and their colonies and, when dealing with the “Orient,” on Western Orientalist discourses as the prevailing form of othering. Gradually, however, it has become clear that the relationship and character of the perceptions as well as both sides of the putative dichotomy, the West and the rest, had been and continue to be more diverse. More recent scholarship has disrupted the dichotomous understanding of Western (European) relations with Others and brought to attention the relevance of the concepts previously associated with colonial powers and their Orientalist attitudes also in other temporal, spatial and cultural contexts, namely countries and regions that were apparently outside both the imperial centers and their colonies.

This volume explores various ways in which the world outside Europe was perceived by inhabitants of Central Europe, a region that in spite of its toponym assumed the position either “in between” or on the margins of Europe as an imagined community that established itself in the course of the 19th century. We use the term Central Europe, despite its contested nature and changing connotations throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, because we believe it is useful in transcending the narrow focus on national histories and highlighting the entanglements of national actors in broader transnational processes without *a priori* assuming the region’s opposition to Western Europe (as for instance the term Eastern Europe does). Analyzing how Central Europeans, or rather various groups within the region, positioned themselves towards those Others against whom the very idea of Europe was constructed can help us better understand the mechanisms of their own self-fashioning<sup>1</sup> and shed light on the informal strategies of economic, cultural, and ideological dominance. Moreover, such an analysis transcends a merely local significance, involving not just the specific social and political processes that took place within the region, but also the more general political, social and intellectual developments that encompassed the entire European continent, as the second wave of overseas colonization led to the dramatic increase of global entanglements.

While Central European societies, with rare exceptions such as the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, mostly found themselves outside the actual realm of colonialism, they nevertheless engaged in colonial projects in a variety of ways and benefited from these inter-

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1 The term that Stephen Greenblatt used to analyze the self-presentations of individuals in the early modern era can be conveniently applied also to collective selves, exposed to the varied repertoire of Others. See Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago – London: U of Chicago P, 1980.

actions.<sup>2</sup> Paraphrasing the concept introduced by Christoph Kamissek and Jonas Kreienbaum that inspired Bálint Varga’s chapter in this book, they participated in the “colonial cloud,” sharing the imagery and knowledge that emerged from the colonial relations and benefitting from the economic advantages generated by the colonial economies. But beyond the circulation of knowledge and wealth, colonialism was, primarily, a relationship of power. Starting from this premise and focusing on Finland, another European country involved in the colonial entanglements without actually possessing colonies, Ulla Vuorela developed the notion of “colonial complicity” to describe the aspirations of non-colonizers to partake in the colonial hegemony over the non-European world.<sup>3</sup> This approach to non-European Others could assume many forms, from pictorial and literary representations to missionary activities, which will also be addressed in the following chapters of this volume.

The notion of complicity does not only imply an active approach, or intentionality, but it also highlights an unspoken moral assessment on the part of the historian with respect to colonial atrocities.<sup>4</sup> Other scholars have suggested alternative concepts for specific situations, such as “colonial fantasies” studied by Susanne Zantop in the German lands in the

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 2 Sauer, Walter. “Habsburg Colonial: Austria-Hungary’s Role in European Overseas Expansion Reconsidered.” *Austrian Studies* 20 (2012): 5–23.

3 Vuorela, Ulla. “Colonial Complicity: The ‘Postcolonial’ in a Nordic Context.” *Complying with Colonialism: Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Nordic Region*. Ed. Suvi Keskinen et al. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. 19–20.

4 Vuorela alluded to such an understanding by presenting the dictionary definition of complicity – “participation in a crime” (Vuorela, “Colonial Complicity,” 20). Filip Herza in his reassessment of current Czech and Slovak historiography with respect to the global history of colonialism and Central European involvement in it explicitly rejected this “inherently moralising concept.” See Herza, Filip. “Colonial Exceptionalism: Post-colonial Scholarship and Race in Czech and Slovak Historiography.” *Slovenský národopis* 68.2 (2020): 175–87.

period predating their expansion overseas,<sup>5</sup> “non-colonial colonialism,” employed by Sarah Lemmen for the Czech lands,<sup>6</sup> “colonialism on the margins” that Kristín Loftsdóttir introduced for Iceland,<sup>7</sup> or “colonialism without colonies” analyzed by Barbara Lüthi, Francisca Falk, and Patricia Purtschaert using the examples of Switzerland and the Nordic countries.<sup>8</sup> These concepts denote a conscious joining of the hegemonic colonial discourses and a derogatory perception, construction, and stereotyping of colonial subjects, which were not based on direct colonial interests or overseas possessions, but concurred with the ideological justification of colonialism and at the same time were motivated by efforts of the non-colonial nations to profess their allegiance to a hegemonic, colonizing Europe. As Zantop and others have noted, colonial fantasies developed in close relationship to the evolving nationalist sentiments, and in fact helped to fortify them by projecting the hegemonic aspirations of the emerging nations on a global scale. “There was no escaping hegemonic discourses,” Zantop concluded in her analysis.<sup>9</sup> That colonial

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5 Zantop, Susanne. *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870*. Durham: Duke UP, 1997.

6 Lemmen, Sarah. “Noncolonial Orientalism? Czech Travel Writing on Africa and Asia around 1918.” *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History: From Germany to Central and Eastern Europe*. Ed. James Hodkinson and John Walker. Rochester: Camden, 2013. 209–27.

7 Loftsdóttir, Kristín. “Colonialism at the Margins: Politics of Difference in Europe as Seen through Two Icelandic Crises.” *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 19.5 (2012): 597–615.

8 Lüthi, Barbara, Francisca Falk, and Patricia Purtschert. “Colonialism without Colonies: Examining Blank Spaces in Colonial Studies.” *National Identities* 18.1 (2016): 1–9.

9 Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 209. For the connection between colonial fantasies and the hegemonic concept of Europe see also Delantey, Gerard. *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*. New York: St. Martin’s, 1995. 56.

knowledge production did not require a colonial state of its own is also demonstrated in the chapter by Barbara Lüthi in this volume.

There is, however, a certain contradiction in the scholarly interpretations of non-colonial colonialism. While seeing the non-colonizing nations as partaking in the joint discourse of power, scholars still separate them from the body of the "colonizers proper." More inclusive is the concept of "coloniality," introduced by the Peruvian sociologist Anibal Quijano in the 1980s. According to Quijano, while the term colonialism should be used to refer to specific sociohistorical configurations (for example, the Spanish and British colonial empires in the Americas and Asia), "coloniality" denotes the complex ideological matrix of modern Europe as a global actor and encompasses even the historical actors that did not actively take part in colonial ventures.<sup>10</sup>

Central Europe occupies a specific position in the ideological matrix of "coloniality." On the one hand, it was to some extent an object of the (quasi-)colonialist attitudes of powerful neighbors and of "hegemonic exoticism,"<sup>11</sup> and on the other, Central Europeans showed similar attitudes towards areas outside (or on the margins of) Europe.<sup>12</sup> Within his tripartite world-systems model, Immanuel Wallerstein assigned to the

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10 Quijano, Anibal. "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America." *Nepantla: Views from the South* 1.3 (2000): 533–80; see also Mignolo, Walter D., and Madina Tlostanova. "The Logic of Coloniality and the Limits of Postcoloniality." *The Postcolonial and the Global*. Ed. Revathi Krishnaswamy and John C. Hawley. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2008. 109–10.

11 Welz, Gisela. "Transnational Cultures and Multiple Modernities: Anthropology's Encounter with Globalization." *ZAA* 52.4 (2004): 410.

12 Central Europe was clearly not unique in this respect. A similar situation was described for instance for Ireland. See Lennon, Joseph. "Irish Orientalism: An Overview." *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*. Ed. Clare Carroll and Patricia King. Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 2003. 130 and 156.



region the role of the periphery of the West, interpreting its marginal positioning through the economic and political developments of the period from the 16th to the 18th centuries.<sup>13</sup> Larry Wolff, inspired both by Wallerstein and by Edward Said, traced the origins of the dismissive gaze of the Western Europeans on Central and Eastern Europe to the period of Enlightenment.<sup>14</sup> While Wolff's arguments have been criticized for the author's choice of sources and their interpretation, for example for projecting Cold War divisions back to the 18th and 19th centuries,<sup>15</sup> various sources produced by Central Europeans suggest that they were aware of similar views and showed a certain defensiveness against a perceived disdain on the part of other, especially Western nations. As the texts in the present volume demonstrate, the persistent oscillation between the self-perception as those dominating and those being dominated constitutes one of the characteristics of Central European self-fashioning in the modern era.

Representations of non-European Others by (Western) Europeans have often been analyzed within the framework of Orientalism, even when dealing with Others that had little in common with the Muslim Middle East and could hardly be comprised in 19th-century notions of the

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13 Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The Modern World-System, Vol. I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic, 1974. Wallerstein's theory with respect to Central Europe is resumed by Kubik, Jan. "How to Think about 'Area' in Area Studies?" *The Rebirth of Area Studies: Challenges for History, Politics and International Relations in the 21st Century*. Ed. Zoran Milutinovic. London: I. B. Tauris, 2020. 67–69.

14 Wolff, Larry. *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1994.

15 Franzinetti, Guido. "The Idea and the Reality of Eastern Europe in the Eighteenth Century." *History of European Ideas* 34.4 (2008): 361–68.

“Orient,”<sup>16</sup> to the extent that Orientalism has become almost a catchword for the processes of othering in general. In contrast, a number of works have shown that even regarding the Middle East, Orientalism was not always hegemonic and unchallenged and that there was a heterogeneity and fluidity to Orientalist discourses.<sup>17</sup> Parallel to the debates bringing a more nuanced understanding of “coloniality” in various times and places, different types of attitudes to (not only “Oriental”) Others have given rise to various concepts drawing inspiration from Said, but pointing out the specificity of (Western) European attitudes to certain regions. For Southeastern Europe, these include “Balkanism”<sup>18</sup> and “nesting Orientalism,”<sup>19</sup> whereas the concept of “Ottoman Orientalism” shifts the focus from Western Europeans to Ottoman Turks who, according to Ussama Makdisi, perceived the inhabitants of the periphery of their empire (and especially the Arabs) as pre-modern and backward compared to the imperial center and its Ottoman-Turkish elites.<sup>20</sup> The elites used Ottoman Orientalism to prove that, unlike the inhabitants of the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, its center was already joining Western modernity. Andre Gingrich’s “frontier Orientalism”<sup>21</sup> describes

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16 See, e.g., Latin America as an object of Orientalism, as it was analyzed in Camayd-Freixas, Erik, ed. *Orientalism and Identity in Latin America: Fashioning Self and Other from the (Post)Colonial Margin*. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 2013.

17 Çelik, Zeyneb. “Colonialism, Orientalism and the Canon.” *Art Bulletin* 78.2 (1996): 202–5; Lewis, Reina. *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem*. London – New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004. 3.

18 Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

19 Bakić-Hayden, Milica. “Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia.” *Slavic Review* 54.4 (1995): 917–31.

20 Makdisi, Ussama. “Ottoman Orientalism.” *The American Historical Review* 107.3 (2002): 768–96.

21 Gingrich, Andre. “Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim World in Public and Popular Cultures of Central Europe.” *Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School*. Ed. Bojan Baskar and Borut Brumen. Vol. 2. Ljubljana: Inštitut za multikulturne raziskave,

the relationship of the Austrians and other (Central) Europeans not to overseas colonies, but to the Other who resided just behind the borders of their empire and who had for centuries endangered its territory. Frontier Orientalism, expressed in both folk and high culture, in Gingrich's words refers to a contested border where the eternal "we," the Austrians, are contrasted with the Oriental "Turk"; it furthermore differentiates the Turk as a traditional enemy from the image of the Muslims of Bosnia after Austro-Hungarian occupation. This concept, as Charles Sabatos's chapter in this volume shows, has also inspired studies of other cultures in Central Europe.<sup>22</sup>

One of the differences between classical and frontier Orientalism, according to Gingrich, was that while the former was connected with imperialist ideology, the latter was closely tied to nationalism. Nationalism permeated relations to non-European Others throughout Europe, but its role was not the same everywhere. In Central Europe, and in multinational empires more generally, nationalism emerged in a situation of non-existing national states, which undoubtedly affected relations with the world outside the empire. A particularly interesting example regarding the place of non-European Others in the construction of national identity are the Magyars. In their search for national origins in the 19th century, some intellectuals in Hungary turned towards the East

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1998. 99–128; Gingrich, Andre. "Blame It on the Turks: Language Regimes and the Culture of Frontier Orientalism in Eastern Austria." *Diskurs - Politik - Identität / Discourse - Politics - Identity*. Ed. R. De Cillia et al. Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2010. 71–81; Gingrich, Andre. "The Nearby Frontier: Structural Analyses of Myths of Orientalism." *Diogenes* 60.2 (2015): 60–66.

22 See, e. g., contributions to Sabatos, Charles D., and Róbert Gáfrik, eds. *Frontier Orientalism in Central and East European Literatures*. Spec. issue of *World Literature Studies* 10.1 (2018).

and argued that Magyars had common roots with the Turks as members of the Turanian family.<sup>23</sup>

The Magyars who believed to have Oriental roots can serve as an example of the diversity of attitudes towards non-European and specifically "Oriental" Others in 19th-century Europe. One criticism of Edward Said's analysis of the Western appropriation of the Orient was that his overgeneralization did not allow for positive views towards the Muslim Middle East in the West. Said in fact hinted at the possibility of more diverse views when he mentioned the tendency among some 18th-century thinkers to exceed their contemporaries' judgments of Eastern societies by "sympathetic identification" or "identification by sympathy."<sup>24</sup> While the instances of compassionate identification referred to by Said tend to be interpreted as merely confusing or concealing the real interests of the West,<sup>25</sup> Charles Sabatos's chapter in this volume takes "sympathetic identification" as a starting point for his interpretation of the representations of "the Turk" in examples of Slovak Romantic literature in which he identifies "hidden elements of kinship" between the Slovaks and the Turks.

It can be argued that both coloniality in Quijano's definition and Orientalism are but time-specific cases of the universal intellectual process of

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 23 Ágoston, Gábor. "The Image of the Ottomans in Hungarian Historiography." *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 61.1-2 (2008): 15-18. On the linguistic theories see Gal, Susan. "Linguistic Theories and National Images in 19th Century Hungary." *Pragmatics* 5.2 (1995): 155-66.

24 Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979. 118.

25 See, e.g., Piep, Karsten. "The Nature of Compassionate Orientalism in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford*." *The CEA Critic* 75.3 (2013): 246.

othering, the “societal constructs of separation and distinctiveness,”<sup>26</sup> a constant feature in the life of every individual and every human community. The Others could be identified within a society at a moment when its members perceived the need for stronger mutual ties. In such situations, some groups could be artificially separated from the body of the society by legal norms as well as by prejudices and their alleged inability to meet the standards of “normal” behavior. But Others were often identified outside one’s society and it is the latter that is the focus of this volume. The process of othering is constantly renegotiated as societies develop and influence each other; the Other is not a fixed category, but rather a flexible and complex form of relationship, which was invoked in various ways at different times and for different purposes.<sup>27</sup> Concurrently, the constitutive marks of otherness, as well as those traits that society identifies as signs of those who belong to it, can change over time.

An important mode of othering emerged in close relationship with the overseas discoveries and colonization of the modern era—one based on “races” as supposed innate biological differences among peoples, organized in hierarchical order. While the origins and implications of racial thought (not only) with regard to non-Europeans have been stud-

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26 Sonnis-Bell, Marissa. “Introduction: Arbitrary Constructions and Real Consequences of the Self and Other.” *Strangers, Aliens, Foreigners: The Politics of Othering from Migrants to Corporations*. Ed. Marissa Sonnis-Bell, David Elijah Bell, and Michelle Ryan. Leiden: Brill, 2019. 1.

27 The processes of othering (not only) in Central European contexts were explored in several edited volumes, see, e. g., Klusáková, Luďa, ed. “We” and “the Others”: *Modern European Societies in Search of Identity*. Prague: Karolinum, 2000; Klusáková, Luďa, and Karel Kubiš, eds. *Meeting the Other: Studies in Comparative History*. Prague: Karolinum, 2003. James Clifford, among others, also considered an active construction of the “Other” an inseparable part of the construction of both the individual and the collective Self. See Clifford, James. *Writing Culture*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1986. 23.

ied extensively for Western Europe or individual colonizing powers, for Central (and Eastern) Europe the problem has only recently started to be addressed by historians. Given their lack of direct contact with non-European "races," racial categories had not been considered relevant for the inhabitants of Central Europe, who, in constructing power hierarchies, allegedly did not use the argument of "whiteness" or deny humanity to other "races." Racial imagery has come forth mainly in the study of Central (and Eastern) Europe's contemporary history, especially with reference to the Holocaust and Nazi ideologies.

Several recent studies, however, challenge these notions. Brigitte Fuchs has analyzed racial thought in Austria both in the 19th and the 20th centuries, the imagining of "national bodies" and the use of racial nomenclatures for constructing inner hierarchies within the nation, in close relationship to the hierarchizations based on gender and class.<sup>28</sup> The volume edited by Marius Turda and Paul Weindling, devoted to eugenics and racial hygiene, presents a pioneering attempt to study the history of eugenics in Central and Southeastern Europe from a comparative perspective.<sup>29</sup> Filip Herza has in several of his texts explored the relationship between nation building in the Czech lands before and after World War I and the epistemologies of race. While mostly focusing on the biologization of "Czech specificities" within the imagined entity that would later be called the "Indo-European race," Herza also reflected upon the integration of the non-European "races" into the de-

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 28 Fuchs, Brigitte. "Rasse", "Volk", *Geschlecht: Anthropologische Diskurse In Österreich 1850–1960*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2003.

29 Turda, Marius, and Paul J. Weindling, eds. *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900–1940*. New York: Central European UP, 2006; see also Turda, Marius, ed. *The History of East-Central European Eugenics, 1900–1945: Sources and Commentaries*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.

bates.<sup>30</sup> Lenny Ureña Valerio has focused on the complicated efforts of Polish intellectuals, travelers and migrants of the Prussian–Polish provinces who in the situation of a non-existing national state had been considered culturally backward and biologically inferior and subjected to racialized hegemony by Germans, while they themselves had actively pursued such racialized hegemony in Africa and South America.<sup>31</sup> The described examples, however, cannot be generalized for the entirety of Central Europe.<sup>32</sup> Despite first steps in this direction, racial imagery in Central Europe still requires more thorough and comparative research, especially with regard to the late 19th century, and it is only touched upon in the present volume. Also, the transfer of racial concepts across borders within the region and throughout Europe only receives cursory remarks, for example in Jitka Malečková’s chapter which mentions the impact of racial categorizations common in Europe in Czech intellectuals’ writings on the Turks.

While the understanding of Europe was being constructed and undergoing changes over a long period, the idea of Central Europe is more recent. Leaving aside the late 19th and the 20th-century visions of *Mitteleuropa* on the one hand and attempts to set aside the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians and distinguish them from the rest of the Eastern bloc under communism on the other, we use the term descriptively, and not

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30 Herza, Filip. “Sombre Faces: Race and Nation-Building in the Institutionalization of Czech Physical Anthropology (1890s–1920s).” *History and Anthropology* 31.3 (2020): 371–92.

31 Ureña Valerio, Lenny. *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities: Race Science and the Making of Polishness on the Fringes of the German Empire, 1840–1920*. Athens: Ohio UP, 2019.

32 The already mentioned belief in the common Magyar and Turkish roots on the part of some intellectuals included a racial aspect: the Turks and Magyars were seen as belonging to the same “Turanian race.”

as an ideological concept. Historically, separating Central Europe as a specific entity fulfilled various aims: in the 20th century it was often directed against Soviet Russia and, as Todorova has noted, after the fall of Communism, the concept of Central Europe (as well as Southeastern and East-Central Europe that replaced the formerly used term Eastern Europe) has become an ideological device.<sup>33</sup> In contrast, our loosely delineated Central Europe combines geographical and cultural-historical characteristics and refers to the region located roughly in “the center” of the European continent that once belonged to the Habsburg Empire, although we are aware of the problematic nature of this (and for that matter any other) definition.

However defined, “Central Europe” was certainly not a homogeneous region and in the period we are dealing with its parts lacked any common sense of identity, perhaps apart from the various degree to which they felt a political belonging to the Austrian (and from 1867 Austro-Hungarian) Empire. From the perspective of power, for example, Austrians, followed by Hungarians, were on the one end of the spectrum, while Slovaks and various minorities in both Cisleithania and Transleithania were on its other end (with the Czechs, Slovenes, Croats and Poles who lived under Habsburg rule somewhere in between). This undoubtedly also had an impact on their colonial ambitions. Other differences were related to geography or rather geo-politics, specifically associating the Croats and Slovenians with the Balkans, or to history, for instance the consequences of Ottoman rule over parts of Central Europe. The areas discussed in the volume had faced an imminent threat of Turkish occupation and for centuries their population had participated in wars

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 33 Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 141. Todorova (140–60) provides a detailed discussion of the concept of Central Europe.



against the Turks. Large parts of Hungary, including both the Magyar- and Slovak-speaking populations (as well as the region's southeastern parts), were under direct Ottoman rule, the Austrians had to face Ottoman attacks on Vienna, whereas in the Czech lands, the Turkish threat affected Moravia more substantially than the rest of the country. Central Europe is also characterized by a strong ethnic/linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity. Even in the subsection of the region included in this volume, the Hungarians (or Magyars) differed from the German-speaking Austrians as well as from the Czechs and Slovaks who represented the numerous Slavic population of the empire. Due to the cultural and religious diversity, the variously defined Other was of great significance for its inhabitants: the most relevant Others were the neighbors, living next-door, and the conflicts with the neighbors were often projected on images of more distant Others.

This book does not aim at a comprehensive history of the relations of the Austrian (or Austro-Hungarian) Monarchy or its constitutive nations with regions outside Europe. Rather, it tries to display a variety of approaches and also of the parts of the world that Central Europeans imagined and represented. It shows this on a sample of cases that do not cover the entire Central European region, but focus in particular on the Czech lands (Bohemia and Moravia), Hungary, and Slovakia, while other areas, such as Austria and regions more to the east and southeast of Europe, are mentioned in a more cursory way, especially in Robert Born's chapter on Orientalist art. Furthermore, Switzerland appears as a comparative example in Barbara Lüthi's reflections. The selected areas are representative of the region in that their inhabitants were among the most active groups of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in asserting both their national identity in the 19th century and a "Central" rather than "Eastern" European identity in the late 20th century. The case studies include different sets of sources, analyzed using different methods.

Instead of trying to find a common methodology that would suit the whole volume or to enrich the already abounding repertoire of labels and concepts in order to grasp the region’s cultural and geopolitical “specificity,” the authors of the individual chapters make use of various existing approaches. This way, the volume shows that even a comparably small region consists of a variegated spectrum of cases that can be studied by multiple approaches, each of which may fit one situation, but does not necessarily describe Central Europe in its entirety. At the same time, the selection of the cases reflects the composition of the panel at the Sixth European Congress in World and Global History, organized by the European Network in Universal and Global History in Turku in June 2021, in which the contributors to this volume took part.

Central Europeans were involved in contacts with the non-European world, not to mention regions on the margins of Europe, in varied and complex ways. To some extent they adopted the perceptions and hierarchies that had been formulated by West European colonial powers, as they were attracted by the “appeal of the empire”<sup>34</sup> and felt the need to confirm their belonging to the “civilized” West. As elsewhere in Europe, and maybe even more than elsewhere, the idea of civilization (namely intellectual endeavor and technological progress) was promoted in Central Europe as an exclusive marker of Europe. Being part of the European modernity meant participating in the European project of knowledge production through exploration or at least through commenting on explorations of the far away regions.<sup>35</sup> But there were also specific strategies

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 34 Rupprecht, Tobias. *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin. Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015. 2.

35 Dzenovska, Dace. “Historical Agency and the Coloniality of Power in Postsocialist Europe.” *Anthropological Theory* 13.4 (2013): 394–416.

of representation that explicitly opposed Central European reality to Western European colonial empires. For example, as Markéta Křížová demonstrates in her chapter, Czech journalists and scholars explicitly sought similarities between Slavs oppressed by Germans and the inhabitants of Africa and North America, subjected to European colonization, thus breaking the clear-cut dichotomy of European colonizer and non-European colonized.

The term “non-European” in the title of our book is even more problematic than “Central Europe.” To define the object of (Central) Europeans’ interest as what *it is not* can be considered Eurocentric, implying an essential difference between Europe and the rest of the world and European superiority, and lumping together immense and immensely different areas that comprised the majority of the world under a unifying label. It is neither a descriptive term (there is no “non-Europe” as the opposite of Europe) nor an analytical concept, and can justly be criticized as fuzzy and clumsy.

We have nevertheless decided to use it for simplicity’s sake to describe the diverse areas that were the object of Central Europeans’ representations and ambitions and are touched upon in the volume. These included Asia (both the Middle and the Far East), Africa, and America, but also Southeastern Europe, a region situated not outside the European continent, but at its margins. Thus, the very borders of Europe were being problematized in the region of Central Europe, especially with respect to its east and south-east.<sup>36</sup> The perception of the Ottoman Empire and of Bosnia-Herzegovina as both in and outside Europe underlies the

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36 This problem for the whole of Austro-Hungarian Central Europe is reflected in Heiss, Johann, and Johannes Feichtinger. “Distant Neighbors: Uses of Orientalism in the Late Nineteenth-Century Austro-Hungarian Empire.” *Deploying Orientalism in Culture*

changing understanding of “Europe” and the contradictions embodied in the dichotomy European/non-European. The Ottoman Empire was for centuries an important *European* empire and figured among European states (though the debates often suggested that this was an aberration and the Ottomans should be expelled from Europe). At the same time, however, the Ottoman Empire was considered to be a non-European—Oriental, Asian, barbaric—state. This brings us to the second, and more important, reason why we use the term “non-European” with all its flaws: the areas touched upon in the volume were considered non-European by 19th-century Central Europeans. And it is this perception of regions outside or on the margins of Europe as non-European that is the topic of our volume.

Although the roots of the specific relations that individual Central European societies had with areas outside or on the margins of Europe go back to earlier periods and their effects could be felt well into the 20th century, the long 19th century was essential in this respect. In the period starting with the late 18th century, both national and transnational identities, including the problematic European identity, were constructed, and the relationship to non-European Others played an important role in these identities. During the 19th century, imperial ambitions of the classical colonial empires increased and colonial ambitions spread beyond the imperial centers. World War I did not mean the end of the colonial system, and even less so of colonial aspirations, but it did bring about the dissolution of three multi-national empires, the Habsburg Empire among them. Although Central Europeans had an opportunity to formulate their own colonial dreams in the interwar period, after the

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*and History: From Germany to Central and Eastern Europe*. Ed. James Hodkinson et al. Rochester: Camden, 2013. 148–65.

establishment of their new nation states, the new post-war international order changed the parameters of colonial politics and ambitions. In order to enable a more focused comparison based on common ground, the volume therefore focuses on the long 19th century.

The volume begins with the chapter by Robert Born, which deals with the visual representations of the Orient and Oriental Others, taking Said's concept of Orientalism as a point of departure. Both geographically and by using a different type of sources, it goes beyond the framework of the other chapters. Although it pays particular attention to the Hungarian part of the Habsburg Empire and the striking place the "Oriental origins" played in Magyar self-perceptions, the chapter covers Central Europe in the broad sense, including its eastern and southeastern parts. Born examines Orientalist paintings in the context of the respective historical developments and national traditions as well as the wider trends of Orientalist art in (Western) Europe, asking whether Central European Orientalist art shared some specific features that distinguished it from Western imperial Orientalism. The chapter thus transcends national borders, showing the transfer not only from Western Europe to its central and eastern parts, but also within the region of Central Europe.

Jitka Malečková explores the views that late 19th and early 20th-century Czechs expressed on the Ottoman Empire and Bosnia-Herzegovina, asking whether they reflected Czech colonial ambitions. The chapter concentrates on non-fiction works and identifies the inspiration they drew from foreign texts. The pamphlets, published under the impact of the 1870s uprisings of the Slavs in the Ottoman Empire and their suppression, reflected Czechs' solidarity with the Southern Slavs and, as a result, depicted the Turks as violent and fanatic enemies. In travel literature, in contrast, the Turks were exoticized, but not necessarily viewed in a negative light. Whereas the discourse on the Turks and the

Ottoman Empire according to Malečková took the form of Orientalist fantasies, she identifies colonial attitudes in Czech views of Bosnia-Herzegovina and its Slavic Muslims, whom the Czechs also labeled Turks. This colonial discourse was related to practice, but since Czechs could not model their relationship to Bosnia-Herzegovina on their own previous colonial experiences and took over Western colonial rhetoric, the author suggests that it can be classified as what Selim Deringil calls "borrowed colonialism."

A different image of the Turks emerges in the following chapter, which approaches the topic from the perspective of literary studies and demonstrates the impact of the early modern Ottoman invasions on the emerging 19th-century Slovak national culture. In the chapter, Charles Sabatos focuses on the two most famous "Romantic Turks" in Slovak literature. Omar, the first hero, allegedly dug "a well of love" in the 15th century in order to free his beloved held in captivity in Trenčín castle. The chapter follows the shifts in the depiction of Omar, starting with the German story published by a Hungarian author in the late 1820s and its British version a decade later, to its poetic adaptations in the works of Slovak Romantic writers. The second Turkish hero, "The Turk from Poniky" of Samo Chalupka's poem from 1863, turns out to be a converted Slovak. Sabatos analyzes the poems against the backdrop of the emerging Slovak national literature and identity under the Hungarian (and Austrian) political and Czech cultural impact, which, he maintains, has affected the Slovak version of frontier Orientalism. His analysis further suggests that compared to other Central Europeans, Slovaks were further from the "position of strength" in Said's Orientalist paradigm and the famous poems with Turkish heroes can be interpreted rather as examples of "sympathetic identification."

In her chapter on scientific activities tied to the exploration of overseas regions, Markéta Křížová examines how these symbolic acts of possession translated into local politics, especially the national competition within the Czech lands, where Czech and German speakers aspired to augment their political power, wealth and prestige. She focuses on the representation of “savages,” especially from America and Africa, within the academic community and among the general public through the newly established museum institutions and activities such as ethnographic shows. Through these practices, the Czech and German intellectuals from the Czech lands transformed their defensive nationalisms into offensive ones, positioning themselves and their fellow citizens alongside the imperial powers of Western Europe. But especially on the side of the Czechs there were also manifestations of sympathy with those who were, just like the Slavic nations of Central (and Eastern) Europe, subject to oppression and deprived of their lands and their culture.

Bálint Varga explores the activities of Hungarian Catholic missionaries who in the second half of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century worked in China and in Portuguese Southeast Africa (Mozambique). Despite their low numbers, the missionaries played a significant role in communicating ideas about the “heathen,” the exotic, and racial difference, interpreted as “stages of civilization,” to the Hungarian public. The Catholic press regularly reported on their endeavors, which helped the missionaries collect donations and seek popular support. Varga argues that the fact that they came from a formally non-colonizing country was not manifested in their writings and public activities. Instead, they acted like their counterparts from colonial countries and the images of the non-European Others they presented, be they the somewhat more “civilized” inhabitants of China, or the “barbaric” population of Mozambique, were similar to those created by missionaries hailing from colonizing nations.

In the concluding chapter of the volume, Barbara Lüthi reflects on some of the theoretical premises for studying “colonialism without colonies” in general and in Central Europe in particular. Set in the context of two decades of research in postcolonial studies, the chapter singles out concepts that could be of particular relevance in analyses of Central Europe. At the same time, it points out commonalities and differences between the cases studied in the volume and Switzerland, thus showing how more detailed analyses of specific types of colonial involvement can enrich our understanding of the general “European” trends. Lüthi underlines three interlinked aspects—knowledge production and circulation, colonial imaginaries and colonial networks—that she connects to the chapters presented in the volume. She argues that the example of Central Europe can help us “decenter colonial history,” showing the complicity of “colonial peripheries” and their participation not only in the hegemonic discourses—using them for their own aims to confirm their status as civilized countries—but also in transnational actor networks.

The volume shows that despite their explicit self-understanding as outsiders to the colonial project, unable to benefit from the advantages of colonial power, and a belief in their colonial “innocence” reflected in respective national historiographies, Central European societies were involved in colonial relations and other forms of imperial aspirations aimed at areas outside Europe. The extent and character of this involvement, however, differed between countries and even within individual countries. Just as the term “colonialism” itself does not exhaust the entire reality of colonial entanglements,<sup>37</sup> those who did not own colonies were attracted by colonial fantasies and participated in the colonial enter-

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 37 See the detailed examination of the term by Osterhammel, Jürgen. *Colonialism*. Trans. Shelley L. Frisch. Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2005. Esp. 15–22.



prises to a varying extent. Even where no colonial ambitions have been clearly detected, however, the chapters in the volume show the extensive transnational context of Orientalist imagery and the circulation of ideas on non-European Others (as well as bodies and material objects expressing these ideas) across national borders.

ROBERT BORN

## **2 Observations on the Pictorial Strategies of the Orientalizing Paintings from East-Central Europe**

### **Postcolonial Perspectives on and from East-Central Europe**

In analyzing literary and philological texts dating from the nineteenth- and twentieth-century, Edward Said's (1935–2003) seminal work "Orientalism" diagnosed the essentialization of the Orient as the counter-image of the West and therefore as an ideological construct in the service of asserting hegemonic ambitions.<sup>1</sup> This perspective was subsequently further deepened by the author.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the four decades that have passed since the publication of "Orientalism," Said's positions and arguments have been repeatedly criticized.<sup>3</sup> Critique notwithstanding, Said's

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1 Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon, 1978. The 1994 reprint includes a longer epilogue in which Said addresses his critics.

2 Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Knopf, 1993.

3 Lewis, Bernard. "The Question of Orientalism." *The New York Review of Books* 24 June 1982; Clifford, James. "On Orientalism." *History and Theory* 19.2 (1980): 204–22;

theoretical reflections exerted important impulses on the exploration of alterities and wielded a lasting influence on almost all fields of cultural studies and historical research. One of the early points of criticism of “Orientalism” addressed Said’s focus on British, French, and American aspects of the phenomenon. Since then, however, the concept has been complemented by additional studies on Orientalizing discourses in other European countries as well as for the Ottoman Empire itself.<sup>4</sup>

The historical region of East Central Europe appeared to be untainted by “orientalist” practices since it bordered, and had been at times part of the Ottoman Empire and only possessed colonies for very brief periods.<sup>5</sup>

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Halliday, Fred. “Orientalism’ and Its Critics.” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 20.2 (1993): 145–63; Osterhammel, Jürgen. “Edward W. Said und die ‘Orientalismus’-Debatte: Ein Rückblick.” *Asien-Afrika-Lateinamerika* 25 (1997): 597–607; Irwin, Robert. *For the Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and Their Enemies*. London: Allen Lane, 2006; Varisco, Daniel Martin. *Reading Orientalism. Said and the Unsaid*. Seattle: U of Washington P, 2007. 93–234.

- 4 See Lowe, Lisa. *Critical Terrains. French and British Orientalisms*. Ithaca – London: Cornell UP, 1991; Makdisi, Ussama. “Ottoman Orientalism.” *The American Historical Review* 107.3 (2002): 768–96; Türesay, Özgür. “L’Empire ottoman sous le prisme des études postcoloniales. À propos d’un tournant historiographique récent.” *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine* 60.2 (2013): 127–45. See also the contributions in Pouillion, François, and Jean-Claude Vatin, eds. *After Orientalism. Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-Appropriations*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- 5 On the analytic framework of East-Central Europe as a historical meso-region (Germ. Geschichtsregion): Troebst, Stefan. “Historical Meso-Region: A Concept in Cultural Studies and Historiography.” *European History Online (EGO)*. 6 March 2012. Leibniz Institute of European History. Web. 2 December 2021. The extra-European possessions of the states from East-Central Europe were rather ephemeral episodes. On the possessions of the Duchy of Courland and Semigall under Polish-Lithuanian suzerainty, in America (Tobago, 1654–1659 and 1660–1689) and on James Eiland, on the African coast (1649–1660) see Merritt, Harry C. “The Colony of the Colonized. The Duchy of Courland’s Tobago Colony and Contemporary Latvian National Identity.” *Nationalities Papers* 38.4 (2010): 491–508. On the Habsburg initiatives in Asia in the early eighteenth-century see Sauer, Walter. “Habsburg Colonial: Austria-Hungary’s

Initial studies addressing this region, informed by the methodological framework of postcolonialism, did not appear until after 1989.<sup>6</sup> Larry Wolff's 1994 study on the hegemonic narratives about "Eastern Europe" molded by Western intellectuals, travelers, and writers in the Age of Enlightenment is an important landmark in the debates about the mental maps of East-Central and Eastern Europe that followed the end of the Communist regimes. Drawing on Edward Said's "Orientalism," Wolff reconstructed the "invention of Eastern Europe" as the "other" that belongs to Europe and yet is different. On the basis of a development-oriented scale, Eastern Europe became situated in a middle position between Western civilization and an uncivilized and backward East. Wolff's model, in which the East of Europe was to be simultaneously described, categorized and colonially dominated by the West, displays a multitude of overlaps with Said's "Orientalism".<sup>7</sup>

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Role in European Overseas Expansion Reconsidered." *Austrian Studies* 20 (2012): 5–23; Wanner, Michal, and Karel Staněk. *Cisařský orel a vábení Orientu: Zámořská obchodní expanze habsburské monarchie (1715–1789) = The Imperial Eagle and Attraction to the Orient: The Habsburg Monarchy Trade Expansion to Overseas (1715–1789)*. Dolní Břežany: Scriptorium, 2021. On Poland's colonial plans in the interwar period see: Borkowska, Grażyna. "Polskie doświadczenie kolonialne." *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2007): 15–24; Kowalski, Marek Arpad. *Dyskurs kolonialny w drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*. Warszawa: DiG, 2010. 52–59.

6 Said's *Orientalism* was first translated in Poland in 1991. On the reception of Said in Poland and the ensuing debates: Uffelmann, Dirk. "'Here You Have All My Stuff!' Real Things from a Mythical Country: Ottoman 'Sarmatica' in Enlightened Poland." *Präsenz und Evidenz fremder Dinge im Europa des 18. Jahrhunderts / Presence and Evidence of Unfamiliar Things in 18th-Century Europe*. Ed. Birgit Neumann. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015. 323–24. In the other former Eastern Bloc countries, translations followed a decade later: Hungary (2000); Romania (2001); Russia (2008) and the Czech Republic (2008).

7 Wolff, Larry. *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1994.

Early in the debate initiated by Wolff, critical voices from Eastern and East-Central Europe already expressed their opinions, although these were hardly noticed outside the region, by pointing out that disparaging discourses about the region had existed even before the Enlightenment. Furthermore, studies have shown that the notions of economic and cultural backwardness (or barbarism) that Wolff identifies as a characteristic of Western perceptions of Eastern Europe can also be found in contemporary German accounts of rural regions in Western Europe.<sup>8</sup> Simultaneously, Russia appears in some German-language texts, including those of the naturalist and ethnologist Georg Forster (1754–1794), as a partner in the civilizing mission vis-à-vis Poland-Lithuania. The public debates on Enlightenment and civilization were clearly more complex and differentiated than the juxtaposition of West versus East might suggest.<sup>9</sup>

Considerably longer lasting impulses, especially regarding the regions of East-Central and South-Eastern Europe, emanated from the studies of Maria Todorova, Milica Bakić-Hayden and Vesna Goldsworthy, focusing on the Balkans, a part of Europe whose culture has been shaped by both Christianity and Islam.<sup>10</sup> In their wake came studies on the Orientalizing

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8 Dupcsik, Csaba. "Postcolonial Studies and the Inventing of Eastern Europe." *East Central Europe* 26 (1999): 1–14; Adamovsky, Ezequiel. "Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France, 1810–1880." *Journal of Modern History* 77.3 (2005): 592–95; Struck, Bernhard. *Nicht West – nicht Ost. Frankreich und Polen in der Wahrnehmung deutscher Reisender zwischen 1750 und 1850*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006. 92.

9 Pečar, Andreas. "Einführung zu Sektion II: Zonen der Barbarei in einem aufgeklärten Europa?" *"Mapping Europe" in der Aufklärungszeit. Konstruktionen Europas in der Frühen Neuzeit. Geographische und historische Imaginationen*. Ed. Susan Richter, Michael Roth and Sebastian Meurer. Heidelberg: Heidelberg UP, 2017. 93–97.

10 Todorova, Maria. "The Balkans: From Discovery to Invention." *Slavic Review* 53.2 (1994): 453–82; Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans*. New York: Oxford UP, 1997;

perception of this space from a Hungarian perspective.<sup>11</sup> Sorin Antohi diagnosed a comparable longevity or revival of certain Orientalizing topoi for Romania.<sup>12</sup> The buzzwords associated with these Orientalizing discourses, such as “Balkan mentality,” “Balkan primitivism,” “Balkanization” or “Byzantinism,” did not remain limited to historiography after 1989, but were repeatedly polemically put forward by opponents to the EU’s eastward expansion, especially in the public discussions surrounding both phases of this initiative.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, parts of South-Eastern Europe, with Bosnia and Herzegovina as the most prominent example, have played an important part in investigating Orientalism in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and discussing whether “colony” constitutes an appropriate category of analysis with regard to this polity.<sup>14</sup> In his analysis of the various initiatives to

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Bakić-Hayden, Milica, and Robert Hayden. “Orientalist Variations on the Theme Balkans: Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Cultural Politics.” *Slavic Review* 51.1 (1992): 1–15; Bakić-Hayden, Milica. “Nesting Orientalisms. The Case of Former Yugoslavia.” *Slavic Review* 54.4 (1995): 917–31; Goldsworthy, Vesna. *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1998.

- 11 Dupcsik, Csaba. *A Balkán képe Magyarországon a 19–20. században*. Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2005; Oláh, Dániel. “Erdély indiánjai. Románságkép a Vasárnapi Újságban.” *Pro Minoritate* 1.3 (2016): 167–83.
- 12 Antohi, Sorin. *Imaginaire culturel et realite politique dans la Roumanie moderne. Le stigmate et l’utopie*. Paris: L’Harmattan, 1999 (Translation of the Romanian first edition of 1994).
- 13 Fleming, Katherine Elizabeth. “Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography.” *The American Historical Review* 105.4 (2000): 1218–33; Born, Robert, and Sarah Lemmen. “Einleitende Überlegungen zu Orientalismen in Ostmitteleuropa. Wahrnehmung und Deutung des ‘Oriens’ vom 19. Jahrhundert bis in die Zwischenkriegszeit.” *Orientalismen in Ostmitteleuropa. Diskurse, Akteure und Disziplinen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Ed. Robert Born and Sarah Lemmen. Bielefeld: transcript, 2014. 9–28.
- 14 Komlosy, Andrea. “Innere Peripherien als Ersatz für Kolonien? Zentrenbildung und Peripherisierung in der Habsburgermonarchie.” *Zentren, Peripherien und kollektive*

incorporate Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Habsburg Monarchy, Andre Gingrich uncovered the phenomenon of what he labelled “frontier orientalism,” displaying on the one hand certain structural parallels to colonial forms of Orientalism, while being characterized by a specific “Central European” component on the other: namely by directly addressing the actual border to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>15</sup>

## The Visual Component of the Orientalizing Alterity Concepts

Although the cover of the early editions of “Orientalism” featured a reproduction of Jean-Léon Gérôme’s (1824–1904) canvas “The Snake Charmer” (c. 1879), one of the best-known works of Orientalist painting, which was particularly popular in Europe and the USA in the second half of the nineteenth-century, Said neglected any visual sources in his analysis. This seems surprising at first because it was precisely in those years that a series of exhibitions attempted to redefine this movement. Initially, the focus lay on the aesthetic qualities of these paintings.<sup>16</sup>

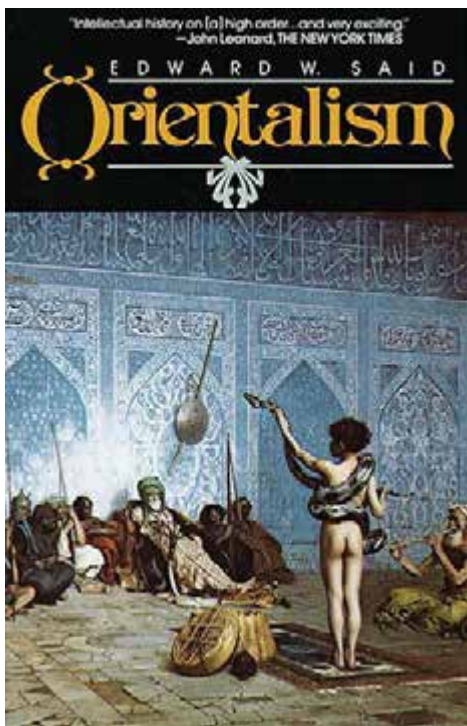
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*Identitäten in Österreich-Ungarn.* Ed. Endre Hárs et al. Tübingen: Francke, 2006. 55–78; Heiss, Johann, and Johannes Feichtinger. “Distant Neighbors. Uses of Orientalism in the Late Nineteenth-Century Austro-Hungarian Empire.” *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History: From Germany to Central and Eastern Europe.* Ed. James Hodkinson et al. Rochester: Camden, 2013. 148–65.

15 Gingrich, Andre. “Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim World in Public and Popular Cultures of Central Europe.” *MESS: Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School, Piran/Pirano Slovenia 1996.* Ed. Bojan Baskar and Borut Brumen. Vol. 2. Ljubljana: Institut za multikulturne raziskave, 1996. 99–127; Gingrich, Andre. “The Nearby Frontier: Structural Analyses of Myths of Orientalism.” *Diogenes* 60.2 (2015): 60–66.

16 Frübis, Hildegard. “Orientalismus re-visited – Zur Repräsentation des Orients in der Malerei des 19. Jahrhunderts.” *Verschleierter Orient – entschleierter Okzident? (Un-)*

In 1983, a turning point was reached with the seminal essay “The Imaginary Orient” by Linda Nochlin (1931–2017), who drew on the ideas of Said to illustrate the structures of power within which the Orientalist paintings were created.<sup>17</sup> Simultaneously, Nochlin, together with Lynne Thornton (\*1943), was a pioneer in the investigation of gender-specific aspects in Orientalist paintings.<sup>18</sup>



**2.1** Cover of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978).

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*Sichtbarkeit in Politik, Recht, Kunst und Kultur seit dem 19. Jahrhundert.* Ed. Bettina Dennerlein et al. München: Fink, 2012. 137–38.

17 Nochlin, Linda. “The Imaginary Orient.” *Art in America* 71.5 (1983): 119–31, 187–91.

18 Thornton, Lynne. *La femme dans la peinture orientaliste.* Paris: CR, 1985.



In the four decades that have passed since the publication of Said's and Nochlin's studies, these positions have been further developed and, in some cases, readjusted. However, in the analysis of the Orientalizing discourses with a view to East-Central and South-Eastern Europe, the visual evidence has only been sporadically included so far.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, there has been no analysis of discourse in the overviews on Orientalizing painting in the previously mentioned major regions.<sup>20</sup> Thus, a trans-regional comparative study of Orientalist artworks created in East-Central and Southeast Europe or of the Orientalist perspectives on these large historical regions still remains a research desideratum. In the following, I would like to present individual aspects of these prob-

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- 19 Mayr-Oehring, Erika, and Elke Doppler, eds. *Orientalische Reise: Malerei und Exotik im späten 19. Jahrhundert*. Vienna: Museen der Stadt Wien, 2003; Kovács, Éva. "Fekete testek, fehér testek – A 'cigány' képe az 1850-es évektől a XX. század első feléig." *Beszélő* 14.1 (2009): 74–90; Baleva, Martina. *Bulgarien im Bild. Die Erfindung von Nationen auf dem Balkan in der Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Cologne – Vienna – Weimar: Böhlau, 2012; Fabritius, Heinke. "Das Erinnern der Künstler. ‚Türkenbilder‘ bei Bertalan Székely, Gyula Benczúr und Ferenc Eisenhut." *Kritische Studien zur „Türkenbelagerung“*. 2. *Der erinnerte Feind*. Ed. Johannes Feichtinger and Johann Heiss. Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2013. 141–49; Makuljević, Nenad. "Habsburg Orientalism: The Image of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 'Kronprinzenwerk.'" *Zbornik Matice Srpske za likovne umetnosti*. Novi Sad 41 (2013): 71–87; Born, Robert, and Dirk Suckow. "Brigands and Virtuous Musicians: Representations of Roma ('Gypsies') as Oriental Other in the Eastern Part of the Habsburg Monarchy during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." *Constructing Race on the Borders of Europe: Ethnography, Anthropology, and Visual Culture, 1850–1930*. Ed. Marsha Morton and Barbara Larson. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021. 85–106.
- 20 Lem, Agata. "Wizja Bliskiego Wschodu i Afryki Północnej w malarstwie polskim 2 poł. XIX i 1 poł. XX wieku: wybrane wątki i zagadnienia." *Dziela i interpretacje* 4 (1996): 39–109, 218–39; Ninkov-Kovačev, Olga. *Životi i delo Franca Ajzenhuta (1857–1903): povodom 150. godišnjice rođenja umetnika – Kunst und Leben von Franz Eisenhut (1857–1903) 150 Jahre von dem Geburt*. Subotica: Gradski muzej, 2007; Kozak, Anna, and Tadeusz Majda, eds. *Orientalizm w malarstwie, rysunku i grafice w Polsce w XIX i 1 połowie XX wieku*. Warsaw: Muzeum Narodowe, 2008; Haja, Martina, and Günther Wimmer. *Les orientalistes des écoles allemande et autrichienne*. Courbevoie: ACR Édition Internationale, 2000.

lem areas and, in doing so, also pursue the question as to certain special features of Orientalism in East-Central and South-Eastern Europe. The latter aspects are of interest, above all, in contrast to the imperial Orientalism of Western Europe.

One of the first particularities to be pointed out from a *longue durée* perspective is the existence of a consciousness of an Oriental origin in Hungary. The earliest evidence dates back to the fourteenth-century. The miniatures of the *Chronicon Pictum* (“Illustrated Chronicle,” formerly known as the “Vienna Chronicle”) created between 1358 and c. 1370 by court artists of King Louis I the Great (of the House of Anjou, Hungarian: Nagy Lajos, r. 1342–1382) present the protagonists of the two waves of immigration into the Pannonian plain—the first under the Hun King Attila (r. 434–453), the second under King Árpád (r. c. 895–c. 907)—as figures with oriental arms and garments.<sup>21</sup> As Ernő Marosi (1940–2021) pointed out, the illustrations of the *Chronicon* convey different “Orientalizing layers.” The oriental weapons and military tactics, qualified as unchivalrous in contemporary sources, function as references to “national” traditions. These were emblematically reconciled in the frontispiece presenting King Louis I with a group of Western knights in heavy armor to the right of his throne and “oriental” light cavalrymen on the left.<sup>22</sup>

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 21 *Chronica de Gestis Hungarorum e Codice Picto Saec. xiv.: Chronicle of the Deeds of the Hungarians from the Fourteenth-Century Illuminated Codex*. Ed. János M. Bak and László Veszprémy. Budapest: Central European UP, 2018. 30 and 60. The “Illustrated Chronicle” is today in the National Széchényi Library in Budapest.

22 Marosi, Ernő. “Zur Frage des Quellenwertes mittelalterlicher Darstellungen: ‘Orientalismus’ in der Ungarischen Bilderchronik.” *Alltag und materielle Kultur im mittelalterlichen Ungarn*. Ed. András Kubinyi and József Laszlovsky. Krems: Medium Aevum Quotidianum, 1991. 86–88.

In the late Middle Ages and early modern period the historical region, the core of which was made up of the former kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia and the principalities of Moldavia and Walachia, as well as the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, played a key role not only as a theatre of military conflicts with the Ottoman Empire and its tributary, the Crimean Khanate, but also as an area of intense cultural contacts and entanglement.<sup>23</sup> The influx of oriental goods and commodities took place through various channels such as trade, as war trophies, and within the framework of diplomatic protocol. Concurrently, Eastern sartorial forms and weapons played a crucial role in what has been labelled the “ostentatious barbarism” cultivated by the Hungarian and Polish-Lithuanian elites.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the male population in these two parts of East Central Europe was frequently portrayed by early modern travelers to this region as warlike and with an Oriental appearance.<sup>25</sup>

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- 23 Cf. Atasoy, Nurhan, and Lale Uluç. *Impressions of Ottoman Culture in Europe: 1453–1699*. Istanbul: Armagan, 2012; Born, Robert, and Andreas Puth, eds. *Osmanischer Orient und Ostmitteleuropa: Perzeptionen und Interaktionen in den Grenzregionen zwischen dem 16. und 18. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 2014; Born, Robert. “The Ottoman Tributaries Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia. Reflections on the Mobility of Objects and Networks of Actors.” *Transottomanica: Eastern European-Ottoman-Persian Mobility Dynamics*. Spec. issue of *Diyâr* 2.1 (2021): 27–58. Ed. Stefan Rohdewald, Albrecht Fuess and Stephan Conermann.
- 24 Klaniczay, Gábor. “Everyday Life and the Elites in the Later Middle Ages: The Civilised and the Barbarian.” *The Medieval World*. Ed. Peter Linehan and Janet Nelson Laughland. London: Routledge, 2001. 782–83; Jasienski, Adam. “A Savage Magnificence: Ottomanizing Fashion and the Politics of Display in Early Modern East-Central Europe.” *Muqarnas* 31 (2014): 173–205; Uffelmann, “‘Here You Have All My Stuff!’”; Grusiecki, Tomasz. “Uprooting Origins: Polish-Lithuanian Art and the Challenge of Pluralism.” *Globalizing East European Art Histories: Past and Present*. Ed. Beáta Hock and Anu Allas. New York: Routledge, 2018. 25–38.
- 25 Petneki, Áron. “Oriens in Occidente: Ungarn und Polen als exotisches Thema in der Kunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts.” *La Pologne et la Hongrie aux XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*. Ed. Vera Zimányi. Budapest. Akadémiai Kiadó, 1981. 145–49.



**2.2** Hungarian and Polish Nobles, Illustration from Bryn, Abraham: *Omnium pene Europae, Asiae, atque Americae Gentium Habitus, Coloniae* (1577).

These hybrid cultural practices not only presented a challenge to the Western European travelers of the early modern period, but also to the categorizations that are used by us with regard to the phenomenon of Orientalism.

Illustrative examples are the works of Jean-Étienne Liotard (1702–1789), considered to be one of the most eminent masters of the *Turqueries*, a widespread trend around the middle of the eighteenth-century.<sup>26</sup> From 1742 to 1743, Liotard worked at the Moldavian court during the second

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<sup>26</sup> Avcioglu, Nebahat. *“Turquerie” and the Politics of Representation, 1728–1876*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2011; Williams, Haydn. *Turquerie: An Eighteenth-Century European Fantasy*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2014.

reign of prince Constantinos Mavrocordatos. In his famous self-portrait in Florence, Liotard describes himself as a “Turkish painter,” while in an analogous self-portrait he emphasizes that he appears with a Moldovan beard and hat.<sup>27</sup>



**2.3** Jean-Étienne Liotard, *Self Portrait as Peintre Turc* (1744). Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi.

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27 Koos, Marianne. *Haut, Farbe und Medialität: Oberfläche im Werk von Jean-Étienne Liotard (1702–1789)*. Paderborn: Fink, 2014. 36–45.

This is likely an homage to his patron, a Greek prince who ruled a principality subordinate to the Ottoman Empire, whose majority Christian population comprised Romanians, Greeks, Armenians and Poles.<sup>28</sup> Against this background, the painter's outer appearance can be interpreted as a sign of belonging to a trans-confessional elite of the principality, respectively the empire.<sup>29</sup> The self-description as *Peintre Turc* doubtlessly also reflects a considerable economic calculation. The strategic decision for the subject areas of the *Turqueries* or the Orientalist paintings were very often also motivated by monetary aspects.

In the first half of the nineteenth-century, a number of aristocrats from East-Central Europe undertook lengthier journeys to the Middle East and Greece. One of these was Count Edward Raczyński (1786–1845), who published a richly illustrated travelogue in 1821 with illustrations that clearly follow the tradition of the *voyage pittoresque*.<sup>30</sup> Just like many of his contemporaries, Raczyński did not put the impressions he had collected down on paper until after his return, supplemented by

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 28 Wasiucionek, Michał. "Conceptualizing Moldavian Ottomanness: Elite Culture and Ottomanization of the Seventeenth-Century Moldavian Boyars." *Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Central and Eastern Europe* 8 (2016): 39–78.

29 Sheriff, Mary D. "The Dislocation of Jean-Étienne Liotard, Called the Turkish Painter." *Cultural Contact and the Making of European Art since the Age of Exploration*. Ed. Mary D. Sheriff. Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 2010. 97–121; Miller, Sanda. "Mobility, Dress and Early Enlightenment Bodies: Hybrids of Ottoman East and West in the Romanian Principalities." *Mobility and Fantasy in Visual Culture*. Ed. Lewis Johnson. New York: Routledge, 2014. 56–64.

30 Raczyński, Edward. *Dziennik podróży do Turcyi odbyty w roku MDCCCXIV*. Wrocław: Grass & Barth, 1821 [German Edition: *Malerische Reise in einigen Provinzen des Osmanischen Reiches*, Breslau: Grass & Barth, 1825]. Regarding the genre of the *voyage pittoresque* publications cf. Jeanjean-Becke, Caroline. "Les récits illustrés de voyages pittoresques: une mode éditoriale." *Le livre d'architecture, XV<sup>e</sup>–XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Édition, représentations et bibliothèques*. Ed. Béatrice Bouvier and Jean-Michel Leniaud. Paris: Publications de l'École nationale des chartes, 2002. 23–51.

historical and geographical background information. According to his own statements, the volume, published in a representative folio edition, was intended to help spread knowledge about “the countries under the yoke of the Ottoman monarchs” among his Polish compatriots. Since comparable reports had previously appeared mainly in England and France, Raczyński understood this editorial project as a patriotic act. In his descriptions, the author deviates at points from the established topoi. In contrast to Western travelers who, when visiting the eastern regions of Poland, emphasized above all the poverty and misery of the population whose clothing gave them an oriental appearance, Raczyński also portrays the beauty of the landscape. He often uses the poverty of the present as a contrasting foil for the description of the glorious past of these regions.<sup>31</sup>

The more than 80 full-page engravings, maps and plans form an important argumentative component of the work. The illustrations and descriptions of life in the capital and the visited regions of the Ottoman Empire largely follow the established conventions of contemporary Western European publications. Alongside the evidence of antiquity and the world of the seraglio associated with mystery and eroticism, there are depictions of the everyday life of the population, often staged from a picturesque vantage point. Representative of these pictorial strategies is the visual presentation in the “Coffee House in Gallipolli”.

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31 See Jagodzinski, Sabine. “Eduard Raczyński's Perception des osmanischen Orients in Bild und Text seines Reisetagebuchs.” *Orientalismen in Ostmitteleuropa. Diskurse, Akteure und Disziplinen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Ed. Robert Born and Sarah Lemmen. Bielefeld: transcript, 2014. 187–220; Lewis, Simon. “East Is East? Polish Orientalisms in the Early Nineteenth Century.” *Central Europe* 19.2 (2021): 135–52.



**2.4** Ludwig Fuhrmann, *Coffee House in Gallipoli*. (Engraving), Plate 75 in *Dziennik podróży do Turcji odbyty w roku MDCCCXIV* (1821).

On closer inspection, the scene depicted by Fuhrmann appears less as an atmospheric account of the colorful hustle and bustle in the large room of an inn (Turk. Han) in Gallipoli (Turk. Gelibolu) than as a precisely composed image. In the center of the picture, the figure of a standing European dressed in white clearly distinguishes itself from the surroundings through its observing statics. The sitting and crouching characters around him are talking, playing cards and smoking tobacco or drinking coffee. The European in the center, probably Raczyński himself, appears as an observer who passes on supposedly value-free knowledge about what he has seen on his travels. In reality, it is a white man's privileged perspective on the exotic East. Such an interpretation is also supported by the framing figures, whose picturesque clothing is



strongly reminiscent of those in the costume albums, a type of publication that had become widespread since the sixteenth-century.<sup>32</sup>

Around the same time, the Hungarian Count István Széchenyi (1791–1860), accompanied by the painter Johann Nepomuk Ender (1793–1854), toured Greece and eastern Turkey. While the diary of the journey was published after a delay of almost 200 years, the drawings and watercolors made during the journey remained unpublished and are kept in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.<sup>33</sup> Count István Széchenyi not only ranks among the most important pioneers of the modernization of Hungary in the first half of the nineteenth-century; in his 1841 publication “Kelet népe” (People of the East) he also interwove the narrative of the Hungarians’ Eastern origins with the Enlightenment ideas of progress and political freedom and the ideas of Herder.<sup>34</sup> The emphasis on the connection to the original homeland of the Hungarians was identified by Géza Staud (1906–1988) as one of the most important directions of the Orientalism of Hungarian Romanticism.<sup>35</sup>

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32 Jagodzinski, “Eduard Raczyński's Perception des osmanischen Orients,” 210–12; Lewis, “East Is East?” 9–11.

33 Gonda, Zsuzsa. “Die Wiener Dioskuren. Die künstlerische Laufbahn von Johann Nepomuk und Thomas Ender.” *Johann Nepomuk Ender (1793–1854), Thomas Ender (1793–1875) emlékkiállítás: Gedenkausstellung Johann Nepomuk Ender (1793–1854), Thomas Ender (1793–1875)*. Ed. Gábor György Papp and László Beke. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 2001. 90–91.

34 See Trencsényi, Balázs. *The Politics of “National Character”; A Study in Interwar East European Thought*. London: Routledge, 2012.

35 Staud, Géza. *Az Orientalizmus a magyar Romantikában*. Budapest: Sárkányi, 1931.

## The Exoticism of the Populations on the Middle and Lower Course of the Danube

The next stage in the development of Orientalist painting in East-Central Europe was fostered by two military conflicts. The hostilities in Hungary and Transylvania during the Revolution, or from the Hungarian perspective “the War of Independence” 1848–9 as well as the Crimean War of 1853–6 were accompanied by intense pictorial campaigns.<sup>36</sup> The artists taking part in these enterprises—among them the French Théodore Valerio (1819–1879) and the Austrians Alois Schönn (1826–1897) and August von Pettenkofen (1822–1889)—were deeply impressed by the barren scenery of the Great Hungarian Plain. Accordingly, they visualized this part of the Habsburg Monarchy as a kind of inner-European Orient. Théophile Gautier (1811–1872), the chronicler of Parisian art life, who supposedly also introduced the term “exotic” into contemporary art criticism, likened the Hungarian Great Plain to the African and Asian deserts.<sup>37</sup>

During the Crimean War Valerio was based in the Danubian Principalities where he documented the Asian and African units of the Ottoman army.<sup>38</sup> His compatriot Jean-Léon Gérôme, the future archetypal Orientalist, was also a contemporaneous chronicler of the war on the Low-

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36 Keller, Ulrich. *The Ultimate Spectacle: A Visual History of the Crimean War*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 2001; Nagel, Florian. “Anfänge der Bildreportage: Zeichner und Fotografen im Krimkrieg.” *Was macht die Kunst? Aus der Werkstatt der Kunstgeschichte*. Ed. Urte Krass. München: Utz, 2009. 85–119.

37 Gautier, Théophile. “Album ethnographique de la monarchie autrichienne par m. Théodore Valerio.” *Les beaux-arts en Europe 2* (1855): 287–89.

38 Valerio, Théodore. *Les populations des provinces Danubiennes, en 1854*. Paris: Pierron et Delatre, 1854. See also: Gautier, Théophile. “Aquarelles ethnographiques.” *Les beaux-arts en Europe 2* (1855): 303–15.

er Danube.<sup>39</sup> This conflict, which heralded a new era in war reporting through intensive photographic documentation and news transmitted by telegraph, seems to have been an important source of inspiration for Orientalist subjects as well as a platform for exchange. Thus, this war was also the starting point of the career of Theodor Aman (1831–1891), who was to become one of the most important representatives of Orientalist painting in Romania.<sup>40</sup>

Valerio and Jean-Léon Gérôme can both justifiably be characterized as “*peintres ethnographes*.” Their activities were decisively shaped by the triumphant advance of lithography. This new medium facilitated the combination of text and image and thus precipitated the intentionally strategic access to the subject-matter in question. Valerio’s artistic method of precisely designing the contours of figures invested his representations with a sense of quasi-scientific detachment which was highly appreciated by German viewers such as Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869) and Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859).<sup>41</sup> The latter prompted Valerio to visit the Great Hungarian Plain to document the native population in its original state before the advance of civilizing modernism. Commissioned by the French Ministry of Public Affairs, Valerio then trav-

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39 Peltre, Christine. “Les ‘géographies’ de l’art: physionomies, races et mythes dans la peinture ‘ethnographique.’” *Romantisme* 130 (2005/4): 69–70; Miller, Peter Benson. “Gérôme and Ethnographic Realism at the Salon of 1857.” *Reconsidering Gérôme*. Ed. Allan Scott and Mary Morton. Los Angeles, CA: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2010. 106–18.

40 Simon, Corina. “Imagini orientale în grafica lui Theodor Aman.” *Sub zodia Vătășianu: studii de istoria artei*. Ed. Marius Porumb. Cluj-Napoca: Nereamia Napocae, 2002. 283–88; Ionescu, Adrian-Silvan. “Orientali(ști) și parizieni.” *Artiștii români în străinătate (1830–1940): călătoria, între formația academică și studiul liber*. Ed. Gabriel Badea-Păun et al. București: Institutul Cultural Român, 2017. 127–59.

41 See the report on Valerio’s publication in: *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* 12 (1854): 222.

elled along the Danube regions of the Austrian Monarchy and finally presented the results of his artistic and ethnographic studies at the 1855 *Exposition Universelle*. His watercolors depicting the Roma were praised emphatically by Théophile Gautier who drew comparisons between the nomadic life of Bedouins and Roma.<sup>42</sup>

In its status as the leading European center of art during the second half of the nineteenth-century, Paris decisively shaped the Orientalizing view of the Great Hungarian Plain in general and the group of the Roma in particular. The role of pivotal agent of transmission was assumed by the Austrian painter August von Pettenkofen who, in 1851, travelled to Szolnok for the first time, a town praised by Gautier as gateway into the wild and picturesque parts of Hungary.<sup>43</sup>

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42 Meyer, Sébastien. "Entre écriture savante et lecture poétique. La marginalisation des Bohémiens d'Europe au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle." *Bohémiens und Marginalität / Bohémiens et marginalité: Künstlerische und literarische Darstellungen vom 19. bis 21. Jahrhundert; Les représentations littéraires et artistiques du XIX<sup>ème</sup> au XXI<sup>ème</sup> siècles*. Ed. Sidonia Bauer and Pascale Auraix-Jonchière. Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2019. 384. A selection of watercolours can be consulted under: <https://www.cnap.fr/orient-de-theodore-valerio>.

43 Kovács, "Fekete testek, fehér testek," 81; Sinkó, Katalin. "Az Alföld és az alföldi pásztor mint orientális téma a hazai és külföldi festészetben." *Ethnographia* 100.1–4 (1989): 141–44.



**2.5** Théodore Valério, *Roma from Arad-County* (1851). Watercolour, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Paris.

Pettenkofen worked in Szolnok for decades, and his Hungarian sojourns were posthumously expounded as inner-European equivalents to the first-hand experiences of leading Orientalists such as Eugène Fromentin's (1820–1876) in Algeria or Gérôme's in Egypt.<sup>44</sup> The postulation of such analogies was certainly encouraged by a series of comparable pictorial strategies which are especially conspicuous in the case of the depictions of the Roma's everyday life.

The basis for these associations is exemplified by the painting of a smoking young “Gypsy” woman, shown by Pettenkofen as a three-quarter figure. The woman wears a long skirt, the rear part of which is draped over her head and shoulders in a mixture of cloak and veil. The clothing and the whitish-yellow muddy house wall in the background, and not least the activity of smoking, a cipher for idleness in many Orientalizing paintings, evoke an exotic atmosphere. Pettenkofen's paintings of Szolnok were highly esteemed in Munich and Vienna and in 1873 were even displayed at the Vienna World's Fair.<sup>45</sup>

Pettenkofen in turn served as a model for painters like Tina Blau (1845–1916), Johann Gualbert Raffalt (1836–1865), and in particular Leopold Carl Müller (1834–1892) who was to become known as *Ägypten-Müller*.<sup>46</sup> He was rumored to have staged a series of Egyptian motifs at the bank of the Tisza River near Szolnok toward the end of his career.

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44 Rózsaffy, Dezső. “Pettenkofen Szolnokon.” *Művészet* 4 (1905): 393.

45 Meyer, Bruno, and A. Woltmann. “Plastik und Malerei.” *Kunst und Kunstgewerbe auf der Wiener Weltausstellung 1873*. Ed. Carl von Lützow. Leipzig: Seemann, 1875. 366.

46 Morton, Marsha. “Leopold Carl Müller's Scenes from Egyptian Life: Ethnography, Race, and Orientalism in Habsburg Vienna.” *Constructing Race on the Borders of Europe: Ethnography, Anthropology, and Visual Culture, 1850–1930*. Ed. Marsha Morton and Barbara Larson. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021. 107–47.

From 1875, Hungarian painters joined the Szolnok circle—notably Pál Böhm (1839–1905), Gyula Aggházy (1850–1919) and Lajos Deák Ebner (1850–1934)—and in 1903 a publicly subsidized artists’ colony was established there. Szolnok’s mystique as an enclave of the Orient in East-Central Europe even survived World War I.



**2.6** August von Pettenkofen, *Smoking Roma Woman* (1862), Vienna, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere.

The development of Szolnok was only a part of the unfolding Orientalist painting. Other factors that promoted this new direction were the establishment of regular maritime connections between Trieste and Constantinople, respectively Alexandria. The accelerated and officially promoted turn of the Dual Monarchy towards the East, including North Africa and the Far East, is illustrated by the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873 and the ‘Oriental Museum’ library and journal founded at the same time by Austrian entrepreneurs.<sup>47</sup>

Leopold Carl Müller, in whose paintings soberly realistic depictions of the everyday life of the Egyptian Muslim working class (fellahs [peasants], Bedouins and Nubians/Sudanese) are frequently encountered, also appeared as a teacher. Among his pupils was Pavle (Paja) Jovanović (1859–1957), a Serbian born in the Hungarian part of the Dual Monarchy, who later lived and worked in Vienna and Munich.

## Munich as a Center for the Orientalizing Painting in East-Central Europe

In addition to Paris and Vienna, the Bavarian capital was the third important center where artists from East-Central Europe, above all Hungarians and Poles, studied.<sup>48</sup> In his overview of the arts in Munich in the nineteenth-century, published in 1888, the influential critic Friedrich

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47 Cf. Wieninger, Johannes. “Das Orientalische Museum in Wien, 1874–1906.” *Vienne, porta Orientis*. Ed. Dieter Hornig, Johanna Borek and Johannes Feichtinger. Mont-Saint-Aignan: PURH, 2013. 143–58.

48 Kárai, Petra, and Nóra Veszprémi, eds. *München magyarul: magyar művészek Münchenben 1850–1914*. Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 2009; Baumgartner, Anna. “Die Münchener Polenschule.” *Deutsche und Polen. Geschichte einer Nachbarschaft*. Ed. Dieter Bingen et al. Darmstadt: Theiss, 2016. 112–16.



Pecht (1814–1903) subsumed these painters under the category of “Slavs, Magyars and Orientals.”<sup>49</sup> Presumably, the latter category means the thematic emphasis in the works of these artists. Among the most successful figures of this group was Ferenc Eisenhut (1857–1903), who came from the same part of what was then Hungary as Jovanovic. With the mediation of his Russian colleague Franz Roubaud (Franc Alekseevič Rubo, 1856–1928), Eisenhut undertook a trip to the Caucasus in 1884. Between 1886 and 1888 Eisenhut stayed in North Africa (Tunis, Algiers, Cairo). This was followed in the 1890s by another trip to the Caucasus, following in the footsteps of Jenő Zichy’s (1837–1906) expeditions in search of the ancient homeland of the Hungarians. Among the paintings, most of which were made in the Munich studio based on sketches made on site, everyday scenes and above all depictions of the festivities of the largely Christian population against the imposing backdrop of the Caucasian mountain villages dominate.<sup>50</sup>

Comparable street subjects can also be found in the paintings inspired by his travels in North Africa. It is striking, however, that Eisenhut locates almost all the scenes in which he shows nude female figures either in images of supposed slave markets in North Africa or in historicizing depictions of Ottoman or Arab rulers’ courts. In his depiction of slave market scenes, Eisenhut clearly oriented himself along the lines of already established compositions.

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49 Pecht, Friedrich. *Geschichte der Münchener Kunst im 19. Jahrhundert*. München: Anst. f. Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1888. 420–24.

50 Ninkov-Kovačev, *Životi i delo Franca Ajzenhuta (1857–1903)*, 106–12.



**2.7** Ferenc Eisenhut, *Arabian Slave Market* (1888), Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Galéria.

Conceived as a mixture between genre painting and historical representation, these depictions uniformly presented white women, exposed, staged for sale as sexual objects. Among the best-known representatives of this genre is William James Müller's (1812–1845) painting "Slave Market in Cairo", first exhibited in 1841, of which six copies were already known by 1875. Jean-Léon Gérôme's "Slave Market" had a particularly strong succession, and after its presentation at the Paris Salon in 1867, it subsequently became widely known via numerous replicas and print reproductions.



**2.8** Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Slave Market* (1866), Williamstown, Mass., Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute.

This success was certainly also a consequence of the sophisticated pictorial strategies. Nochlin diagnosed a chilling pseudo-scientific naturalism as their essential characteristics, which were situated in a rationally understandable pictorial space. This supposedly sober objectivity made it possible to stage the otherness of the pictorial figures as an incontestable fact. In this way, two messages could be subtly intertwined: the domination of men over women and the superiority of white men over their Arab counterparts, who were primarily defined in terms of their salacious behavior.<sup>51</sup> Complementing this, Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff (1944–2013) interpreted the high number of representations of slave markets as a repression or denial of the memory of the European-transatlantic slave trade.<sup>52</sup>

In contrast, Robert Irwin showed that both the French Orientalists and the Russian Orientalists worked for an international audience, including a large part in the United States. The accurate execution of the paintings conformed to the specifications of the patrons, who, against the backdrop of the emergence of photography, demanded representations of comparable precision.<sup>53</sup>

These observations can also be applied to the works of Eisenhut, who worked in Munich in a studio equipped with oriental accessories and

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51 Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient."

52 Schmidt-Linsenhoff, Viktoria. "Sklavenmarkt in Kairo. Zur Verkörperung verleugneter Erinnerung in der Malerei des Orientalismus." *KörperKonzepte / Concepts du corps. Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Geschlechterforschung / Contributions aux études genre interdisciplinaires*. Ed. Beatrice Zigeler et al. Münster – New York – Munich: Waxmann, 2003. 101–19.

53 Irwin, Robert. "The Real Discourses of Orientalism." *After Orientalism. Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-Appropriations*. Ed. François Pouillon and Jean-Claude Vatin. Leiden: Brill, 2015. 18–39.

staffage, like his fellow painters, the Polish-born Józef Brandt (1841–1915) or the aforementioned Russia-born Franz Roubaud. Eisenhut's particular success was not only due to the solid quality of the painterly execution and the sound compositions, but also to his ability to assemble the motifs he had collected on his travels into new historical paintings. A prime example is his depiction of the death of the dervish Gül Baba in Buda. This was one of the first historical paintings to portray the Ottoman period of Hungarian history in a thoroughly positive light.<sup>54</sup>

## **Orientalizing Pictorial Strategies and National Political Agendas at the End of the Nineteenth-Century**

Eisenhut's combinatorial method of portraying the past could also be applied to the depiction of current events. This is illustrated by the works of the Czech painter Jaroslav Čermák (1830–1878). The latter had initially distinguished himself as a history painter, above all by portraying the Hussite period. Like many other Polish, Russian and Czech painter colleagues, he subsequently addressed the uprisings of the Christian Slav populations in Bulgaria, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina against Ottoman overlordship.<sup>55</sup> Following a tradition of Orientalist painting that was initiated with Eugène Delacroix's (1798–1863) paintings of the Greek struggle for independence, Čermák combined motifs in which the beauty and innocence of Christian women were combined or juxta-

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54 Fabritius, "Das Erinnern der Künstler," 154–57.

55 Baleva, Martina. "Martyrium für die Nation. Der slawische Balkan in der ostmitteleuropäischen Malerei des 19. Jahrhunderts." *Gemeinsam einsam. Die Slawische Idee nach dem Panslawismus*. Ed. Stefan Troebst et al. Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts, 2009. 41–52.

posed with Orientalizing erotic motifs such as the harem or the excessive brutality of the Ottoman overlords.<sup>56</sup>



**2.9** Jaroslav Čermák, *The Abduction of a Herzegovinian Woman* (1861), Dahesh Museum of Art, New York. 2000.19.

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56 Makuljević, Nenad. "Brutality and Banditry: Towards the Orientalist Imagery of the Balkans during the 19th Century." *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju* 27.2 (2020): 13.

Paja Jovanović, who has already been mentioned, took a different path. In his paintings, he combined exoticism and eroticism with the depiction of brutal rituals such as blood vendettas to present the patriarchal world of the Balkan Mountain populations, above all the Albanian Hajduks, as a wild counter representation to a civilized Europe.

Jovanović then transferred individual clichés of this seemingly archaic world to the description of the mountain world in the volume on Bosnia of the ambitious editorial project “Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild / Az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia írásban és képben” initiated by the Crown Prince Rudolf (1858–1889). The 24 German and 21 Hungarian volumes of “The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Words and Images,” also known as “Kronprinzenwerk” (KPW), were published over the course of 17 years (1886–1902) and feature 4500 illustrations by 264 artists. The large-scale project was intended to consolidate the unity between population, dynasty and army by using older concepts of state patriotism.<sup>57</sup>

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57 Petschar, Hans. “Über die Konstruktion von Identitäten. Vergangenheit und Zukunft im Kronprinzenwerk.” *Migration und Innovation um 1900: Perspektiven auf das Wien der Jahrhundertwende*. Ed. Elisabeth Rörlich and Agnes Meisinger. Cologne – Vienna – Weimar: Böhlau, 2016. 316; with an overview of the current research on this editorial project.



**2.10** Paja Jovanović, *Cockfight*, Belgrade, Narodni Muzei.

In many of the paintings produced in large numbers after Bosnia's incorporation into the Dual Monarchy, violence plays no role, and neither does the idleness of the population, castigated in the caricatures in the press as backward. Bosnia had replaced Szolnok as the Orient on the threshold of the country. Comparable constellations are also encountered in Romania regarding the territory of Southern Dobruja, newly incorporated in 1913, a late and hitherto little-noticed offshoot of the Orientalism phenomenon in Europe. There, the Turkish and especially the Tatar population became popular exoticizing motifs in the works of several artists in the interwar period.<sup>58</sup>

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58 Prügel, Roland. "‘Unser kleiner Orient’ Balchik und die südliche Dobrudscha aus der Perspektive Rumäniens (1913–1940)." *Orientalismen in Ostmitteleuropa. Diskurse, Akteure und Disziplinen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Ed. Robert Born and Sarah Lemmen. Bielefeld: transcript, 2014. 313–34.





**2.11** Josif Iser, *Tatar Family* (c. 1921). Bucharest, Muzeul Național de Artă al României.

The present study could only shed light on the variety of Orientalizing discourses with regard to, or from, East-Central Europe. Their specific manifestations were conditioned by the diversity of ethnic constellations in the region. Their arguments developed partly in parallel, but in some cases also came to contradictory results.

At the same time, it also became apparent that Orientalist painting in East-Central Europe was strongly influenced from the centers of academic painting in Paris, Munich, and Vienna. However, the utilization in East-Central Europe of the pictorial forms shaped in these centers shows striking disparities when compared to Western Europe, the roots of which lie in the respective national traditions or were determined by prevailing political agendas.

JITKA MALEČKOVÁ

### **3** **Fantasies and Acts: Czechs on the Ottoman Empire and Bosnia-Herzegovina**

*But let Sheherezade tell you about it herself. After all, some places in the land of the crescent moon seem like a fairy-tale even today—and as she narrated these tales, the alluring Sheherezade was irresistible... Even in the Arabian Nights there could not have been a more beautiful and fascinating fairy-tale than the entrance to Constantinople from the Sea of Marmara soon after sunrise. This is the Orient, this is the east in the truest sense of the word, these are the marvelous colors, the unification of sea and land, the division of light and shade, the variety of buildings and bizarreness of their shapes and especially the fascinating scenery of the shores of both continents that nearly touch each other here.*

—Svátek, 1909<sup>1</sup>

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1 Svátek, Josef Jan. *V zemi pŭlměšice: Cestovní causerie*. Prague: Fr. Řivnáč, 1909. 1, 17.

*Our countrymen have taken up many professions in Sarajevo and one can say with pleasure that Czechs have been taking a substantial part in the cultural and economic uplift of Bosnia and Herzegovina for many years. In nearly all branches of the land administration, in the field of technical prowess, in education, as physicians, as clerks in post offices and in the local government, as well as in other spheres of public activity, the Czechs in Sarajevo occupy positions of importance.*

—Třeštík, 1897<sup>2</sup>

Josef Jan Svátek, lawyer, writer and journalist, belonged to the increasing number of Czech-speakers<sup>3</sup> who in the late 19th and early 20th centuries benefited from the improving conditions for traveling beyond the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He traveled in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as overseas. The book he wrote about his journey to the Ottoman Empire presents an exotic Orient of the Arabian Nights, where Sheherezade is the traveler's guide and inspiration, picturesque scenery abounds, and beautiful women hide behind lattices of harems. Svátek explains that he dwells so much on the position of women in the Ottoman Empire because "our empire," as Turkey's neighbor, "should know its conditions thoroughly and not underestimate the forces that are concealed in the Sultan's realm, although he is already spoken of as a Sick Man. And the knowledge of these conditions is the more urgent for us the more sincerely we wish that after the annexation of Slavic Bosnia and Herzegovina, not only these lands, in which the influence of Turkish conditions is still excessively felt, will

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2 Třeštík, Jan. *Ku břehům Adrie: Od Sarajeva do Dubrovníku*. Prague: J. Otto, 1897. 27–28.

3 The chapter focuses on those "Czechs" who wrote in Czech; "Czech-speakers" would thus be a more precise term than "Czechs," but for simplicity's sake the latter is often employed and the terms Czech and Czech-speaker are used interchangeably.

accept us, but also the rest of the Turkish Empire will live in peace and friendship with us. It is necessary to know one's friend and foe equally well and not to underestimate them."<sup>4</sup>

Svátek does not explain who the friends and foes are whom it is important to know, nor does he pay more attention to Bosnia-Herzegovina in the book describing his travel to Istanbul. But the connection he makes between Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1909 still affected by Ottoman heritage (or influenced by "Turkish conditions"), and the Ottoman Empire is symptomatic of Czech views of the former Ottoman provinces, which the Austro-Hungarian Empire occupied in 1878 and annexed in 1908.

Andre Gingrich has described how after the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Austrians gradually started to view its Slavic population of Muslim faith as "good Muslims" who helped the Austro-Hungarian Empire in its struggle with the Slavs, while Ottoman Turks with whom the Austrians had fought for centuries epitomized the "bad Muslims."<sup>5</sup> As a part of the Habsburg Empire, the population of the Czech lands had participated in the early-modern "Turkish wars" and could benefit from the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which became, in Pieter Judson's words, Austria-Hungary's "lone colony."<sup>6</sup> Yet, the Czech lands had been less impacted by the early modern struggles with the Turks than the neighboring Austrian, Hungarian, and Slovak territories. And

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4 Svátek, *V zemi pŕlrměšice*, 54–55.

5 Gingrich, Andre. "Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim World in Public and Popular Cultures of Central Europe." *Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School*. Ed. Bojan Baskar and Borut Brumen. Vol. 2. Ljubljana: Inštitut za multikulturne raziskave, 1998. 106–11.

6 Judson, Pieter M. *The Habsburg Empire: A New History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2016. 378.

the Czechs could hardly appreciate the Slavic Muslims' support of Austria against the Serbs (who were both Christians and Slavs) in World War I, as Gingrich argues the Austrians did. In other words, while affected by similar circumstances, the population of the Habsburg Empire had a far from uniform attitude towards Ottoman Turks<sup>7</sup> and the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The growing understanding of the heterogeneity of Western societies' relations to the variously defined "Orient" led to amendments to and elaborations upon Said's Orientalism, such as Gingrich's "frontier Orientalism,"<sup>8</sup> Milica Bakić-Hayden's "nesting Orientalism,"<sup>9</sup> and Maria Todorova's "Balkanism,"<sup>10</sup> to name just a few examples. The perception of colonialism and its impact has broadened as well; it is not viewed only as a matter of colonizers and colonized any more. In the late 19th century, "[c]olonialism came to be seen as a modern way of being,"<sup>11</sup> which also concerned countries that did not own colonies and peoples who could not realistically aspire to acquire any. Countries with no colonial realm partook in colonialism by sharing its premises and replicating the racist and colonialist discourse; their "colonial complicity" in colonial discourses and practices of dominance was, according to Barbara Lüthi, Francesca Falk, and Patricia Purtschert, a way of imitating the kind of

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7 On the images of the Turks in Czech, Slovak, and Hungarian literatures see Sabatos, Charles D. *Frontier Orientalism and the Turkish Image in Central European Literature*. Lanham: Lexington, 2020.

8 Gingrich, "Frontier Myths of Orientalism," 99–128.

9 Bakić-Hayden, Milica. "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia." *Slavic Review* 54.4 (1995): 917–31.

10 Todorova, Maria. *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

11 Deringil, Selim. "'They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery': The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45.2 (2003): 313.

relationship Western powers had to non-European societies.<sup>12</sup> For the Ottoman Empire, Selim Deringil coined the term “borrowed colonialism” to describe the Ottomans’ colonial stance towards the peoples on the periphery of their empire at the end of the 19th century. Deringil views “borrowed colonialism” of the Ottomans as a survival tactic, which the Ottomans adopted in order to not become a colony of the West; instead, they aspired to become one of the colonial powers.<sup>13</sup>

Central Europe was not threatened by imperial powers’ colonial ambitions in the way the Ottoman Empire was, but at the turn of the century, the inhabitants of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, including the Czechs, shared the belief that a country must own colonies in order to be considered advanced. Colonialism was viewed as something they should aspire to and attain following the example of Western imperial powers. The famous Czech explorer Emil Holub explained in 1879 that he had embarked on his explorations in Africa, among other motivations, because he noticed that “the Czechs first and foremost and Austria in general do not possess prominent men who devote their care and strength to exploring unknown African lands, as the English, French and Germans have already attempted with admirable results,” and because he wanted to find a land on which “the impoverished and hard-working families of my countrymen could settle in the African regions, to their own advantage and for the benefit of the native population.”<sup>14</sup> Four decades later, already in the new Czechoslovak state, another famous explorer, geographer and

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12 Lüthi, Barbara, Francesca Falk, and Patricia Purtschert. “Colonialism without Colonies: Examining Blank Spaces in Colonial Studies.” *National Identities* 18.1 (2016): 2–3.

13 Deringil, “They Live in a State of Nomadism,” 313.

14 Dlouhý, Jindřich, ed. *Dr. Emil Holub: Africký cestovatel*. Prague: Kruh rodáků a přátel města Holic v Praze, 1947. 31–32.

Arabist Alois Musil, argued 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.”<sup>15</sup> Although most Czechs did not express an explicit wish to turn the Czech lands into a colonial power, assent to the colonial project and respect for colonial empires arguably affected the Czechs’ attitudes to the regions outside Europe and their inhabitants.

Rather than to prove or deny that Czech-speakers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire had colonial ambitions, this chapter aims to explore how and in what contexts they expressed such ambitions and whether they acted upon them. In other words, the question is not whether Czechs aspired to own colonies, but how they expressed such aspirations discursively and practically. Without playing down the power of colonial/Orientalist discourse, a distinction is made between the material benefits of colonial possessions or a relationship modeled on colonial dominion on the one hand, and fantasies about exotic lands on the other. More specifically, the chapter addresses questions about the relationship between images of the Other and actual colonial practices, the domestic and foreign sources of Orientalist imagery, and the possibility of non-dominant nations of multinational empires to take part in the colonial enterprise of their empires.

The chapter asks these questions by analyzing Czech perceptions of two distinct but related Others: the Ottoman Turks and the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina whom Czechs commonly also called “Turks.” The perceived affinity between the two groups and, at the same time,

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15 Musil, Alois. “Jak jsem poznával Orient (Nástupní přednáška universitní).” *Česká revue* 14.5–6 (1921): 226.

the different status of Bosnia-Herzegovina compared to the Ottoman Empire offer a good starting point for a reflection on what made a land the target of colonial aspirations and a people the object of civilizing mission.

## The Turks and the Ottoman Empire

For centuries, the Turks occupied a central place in the Czechs' perceptions of non-European<sup>16</sup> Others. Czech interest in Ottoman Turks, which can be traced back to the 14th and 15th centuries, intensified with the increasing danger of Ottoman conquest in the 16th century.<sup>17</sup> In the early modern period, according to Laura Lisy-Wagner, Czechs crafted their identity through contact with both the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire and used the Turkish theme in their search for a place in Europe.<sup>18</sup> The Turks were to a large extent viewed through the religious prism, as archenemies of Christendom, and this idea and the corresponding images of the Turks as religious fanatics and cruel warriors survived until the 19th century, despite a general trend towards secularization in the discourse on the Turks.

By the early 19th century, when the attention of the Czechs was drawn to the needs of the national movement, "the Turkish threat" and interest

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16 Although the Ottoman Empire was in fact a European state as well, and sometimes was seen as such, as already mentioned in the Introduction, it was commonly counted among "non-European" countries.

17 On the Czech perceptions of the Turks in the early modern period see Rataj, Tomáš. *České země ve stínu pŮlměsíce: Obraz Turka v raně novověké literatuře z českých zemí*. Prague: Scriptorium, 2002.

18 Lisy-Wagner, Laura. *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453–1683*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. 16 and 171.



in things Turkish receded to the background, although the Turkish wars never completely disappeared from cultural memory. Czech national awareness influenced the way the Turks were perceived in the 19th century, especially inasmuch as it was related to the idea of Slavic solidarity and, for some, various forms of pan-Slavism. The fate of the Slavs who were suffering under or fighting Ottoman rule was a primary concern for the Czechs. Therefore, the 1870s uprisings of the Slavs living under Ottoman rule and their suppression by the Ottoman forces caused passionate reactions among the Czechs.

Between the 1870s and the foundation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, the Turks had been the topic of numerous and diverse writings in Czech. Leaving aside literary works, two types of texts are particularly interesting as a reflection of Czech views of the Ottoman Empire and the Turks: the first, which for simplicity I call pamphlets, responded to the uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans and the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–1878. It drew on the tradition of anti-Turkish literature from the period of early modern wars with the Ottoman Empire and presented a negative image of the Turks as cruel warriors and suppressors of the Slavs. The second type of sources analyzed here are travel writings, which reflected the increasing travels beyond the borders of the Habsburg Empire, enabled by the economic and technological developments. As a result, the social composition of Czech travelers and the spectrum of their destinations gradually broadened; Southeastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire were particularly popular due to their proximity. The travel accounts, whose authors included famous writers such as Vítězslav Hálek, Jan Neruda, and Svatopluk Čech, lawyers, teachers, explorers as well as tourists, were more diverse than the pamphlets, even though they were quite eclectic and often copied from each other. Their attitudes towards the Turks ranged from negative to positive and sometimes oscillated between the two poles.

In Western Europe, 19th-century perceptions of Ottoman Turks were connected with colonial discourses and the Ottoman Empire was not only an increasingly popular destination of organized tourism, but also the target of colonial aspirations. Ussama Makdisi has described how the West, aiming to modernize the Ottoman Empire according to its own concepts, challenged any local attempts at modernization, and how British travelers' criticism of such attempts and defense of the original, pristine Ottoman Orient from the misled local reform efforts were often supported by asserting the cultural and racial superiority of Europe.<sup>19</sup> Although the Ottoman Empire managed to avoid becoming a colony of Western powers and Europeans' fear of racial mixing with respect to the Ottoman Empire was less pronounced than in colonial settings, the Turks nonetheless also became the object of racialization.<sup>20</sup>

In the late 19th century, the concept of race and the division of peoples into races found its way into Czech ethnographic and general educational discourse and appeared in descriptions of the Turks as well. The Turks were considered to belong to Johann Friedrich Blumenbach's "Mongolian race," which allegedly inhabited Asia and Arctic America and had brown-yellow skin, black hair, a wide, almost quadrangular face, small, slanting eyes, and protuberant cheek-bones.<sup>21</sup> Rieger's *Encyclopedia (Slovník naučný)* stated in the entry on the Turks in 1872 that the Turks were one of the most important tribes of the Altaic family (*čeled*) of the

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19 Makdisi, Ussama. "Mapping the Orient: Non-Western Modernization, Imperialism, and the End of Romanticism." *Nineteenth-Century Geographies: The Transformation of Space from the Victorian Age to the American Century*. Ed. Helena Michie and Ronald R. Thomas. Rutgers: Rutgers UP, 2003. 41–42.

20 Heffernan, Teresa. "Traveling East: Veiling, Race, and Nations." *The Poetics and Politics of Place: Ottoman Istanbul and British Orientalism*. Ed. Zeynep İnankur, Reina Lewis and Mary Roberts. Istanbul: Pera Museum, 2011. 158–60.

21 Rieger, František Ladislav, ed. *Slovník naučný*. Vol. 2. Prague: I. L. Kober, 1862. 545.

Mongolian race (*plemeno*), and though some older ethnographers had believed they belonged to the Caucasian race because of some tribes' strong resemblance to Caucasian nations, recent science had securely proven this not to be true.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, some four decades later, Otto's Encyclopedia (*Ottův slovník naučný*) mentioned that the Turks in a broader sense referred to one of the three groups of the Ural-Altai family of the Mongolian race, whose members now lived in heterogeneous political and cultural conditions in a vast area between the Mediterranean and Siberia, while in a narrow sense, or more commonly, the term Turks meant "the Ottoman subjects of the Turkish empire."<sup>23</sup>

The number of Czech-speakers who could report on Ottoman Turks from personal encounters increased in the last decades of the 19th century as tourists from the Czech lands started to visit the Ottoman Empire. Some described their experiences in travelogues, which often emphasized the difficulties of dealing with Ottoman bureaucracy and the constant requests for "baksheesh," the picturesque, dirty, and shabby neighborhoods ("typical of the Orient"), the laziness and phlegmatic character of their inhabitants, and the general backwardness of the Ottoman Empire, alongside other impressions, such as the beauty of Istanbul, or the piety, honesty, and hospitality of the Turks.<sup>24</sup> The travel literature borrowed views and information from earlier Czech travelogues, including those from the early modern period, and exoticizing imagery and Orientalist concepts from Western literature. Western literature on Oriental themes was popular throughout Europe and it was also being

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22 Rieger, František Ladislav, ed. *Slovník naučný*. Vol. 9. Prague: I. L. Kober, 1872. 639.

23 *Ottův slovník naučný: ilustrovaná encyklopaedie obecných vědomostí*. Vol. 25. Prague: J. Otto, 1906. 881.

24 For more details on the Czech travel literature on the Ottoman Empire see Malečková, Jitka. *"The Turk" in the Czech Imagination (1870s–1923)*. Leiden: Brill, 2021. 70–117.

translated to Czech. Pierre Loti's novels, for example, were quoted by several Czech travelers to the Ottoman Empire and his *Les désenchantées* (The Disenchanted) was translated to Czech by one of these travelers, Jiří Stanislav Guth.<sup>25</sup>

The racial discourse on the Turks was also influenced by foreign sources. Leaving aside the older works of taxonomers like Blumenbach or Georges Cuvier,<sup>26</sup> works on the Turks were drawing especially on the views of Friedrich Anton Heller von Hellwald, Austrian Darwinist and popular writer on history, geography, and ethnography. Czechs were familiar with Hellwald's works and some of them were translated to Czech by well-known Czech intellectuals in the late 19th century.<sup>27</sup> Yet, despite the inspiration from abroad, there were clearly local, "Czech" interests behind the use of the imagery coming from abroad.

In the general educational literature, attributing a racial category to the Turks was not a way of denigrating them and the use of racial labels was certainly not specific to the Turks. In contrast, some of the 1870s (and later) anti-Turkish pamphlets used racial arguments to support their anti-Turkish agenda by creating even more negative images of the Turks. It should be emphasized that the pamphlets, which appeared especially after the suppression of the uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans in the

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 25 Loti, Pierre. *Harémy kouzla zbavené*. Trans. Jiří Guth. Prague: Jos. R. Vilímek, n.d. (1906). See also Guth, Jiří. *Letem přes řecký kraj: Feuilletony z cest*. Prague: Dr. Frant. Bačkovský, 1896.

26 See the entry "Člověk" (Human Being) in *Ottův slovník naučný: ilustrovaná encyklopaedie obecných vědomostí*. Vol. 6. Prague: J. Otto, 1893. 792–93.

27 The translators included the historian and expert on the ancient East Justin Václav Prášek, the journalist, translator, and popular writer on history and literature Jakub Malý, the historian, journalist, and writer Jan Herben, and the literary historian and university professor Jaroslav Vlček.

1870s and the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–1878, mostly portrayed the Turks from the ethnic/national and religious perspectives as oppressors of the Slavs and Christians. Some, though, added the racial dimension.<sup>28</sup> They placed the Turks as representatives of the “Mongolian race” in juxtaposition to the Slavs as “Caucasians,” or representatives of the Indo-European race, and accused them of being able only to destroy—just like other members of the Mongolian race had been before them—and unable to participate in intellectual life and civilization. Based on Hellwald, Czech authors also claimed that the number of “real” Turks of the Ural-Altai race in Europe was decreasing, and they used this “fact” to argue that Turkish rule in Europe, and over their Slavic subjects, should finally end.<sup>29</sup>

Unlike the authors of the anti-Turkish pamphlets of the 1870s and 1880s, Czech travelers to the Ottoman Empire did not have a common agenda for using Orientalist imagery and stereotypes. It is worth noting that the travel writings generally did not dwell on the racial categorization of the Turks and did not include race as an argument in support of the authors’ views on the Turks. They referred to Orientalist stereotypes common throughout Europe as a way of making their travelogues more attractive to the readers. This concerned the depiction of places, especially the panorama of Istanbul, its breathtaking beauty and intriguing

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28 See Procházka, Josef. “Zápas Evropy s plemenem mongolským hledíc obzvláště k válkám Rusův s Turky.” *Osvěta* 7.1 (1877): 4–21; *Osvěta* 7.2 (1877): 81–103; *Osvěta* 7.3 (1877): 161–70; *Osvěta* 7.4 (1877): 257–77; *Osvěta* 7.7 (1877): 479–93; *Osvěta* 7.8 (1877): 567–78; *Osvěta* 7.9 (1877): 646–54; *Osvěta* 7.10 (1877): 717–28; *Osvěta* 7.12 (1877): 877–91; Adámek, Karel. “Jihoslované a Turci: Kulturní obzor.” *Podřipan* 9.7 (1878): 2; and *Podřipan* 9.8 (1878): 1–2; and Rüffer, Eduard. *Válka rusko-turecká*. Prague: Alois Hynek, n.d. (1878).

29 Adámek, “Jihoslované a Turci,” 9.7, 2; and 9.8, 2.

views,<sup>30</sup> and even its street dogs,<sup>31</sup> as well as its people. Needless to say that women, who belonged among the obligatory topics of both Czech and more generally European travelogues, were common objects of exoticizing fantasies.

While the anti-Turkish pamphlets focused on men, in travelogues, Muslim women figured prominently. Most travelogues mentioned the beauty of Turkish women, and wrote at length on such themes as harems and veiling. Some authors saw their conditions as miserable, whereas others claimed they were in fact not unhappier than their European counterparts. A typical travel account described a Turkish *kadun* (or *kadın*, i. e. lady) in a beautiful carriage, her face covered only by a light veil, which allowed the travelers to see her face, accompanied by a eunuch, or peaking from lattice windows.<sup>32</sup> Others commented on Turkish women's lack of education and subordination to their husbands, their idle life, which they allegedly spent smoking, eating sweets, and visiting the hamam or friends.<sup>33</sup> All these images can be found in the travel book written by Svátek, who took advantage of every opportunity to include comments about women, their appearance, character, and position, marriage customs and the harem, creating a rather inconsistent image of Turkish women's lives. On the one hand, he mentioned for instance how he and his companions frightened "the poor creatures" whose bodies and souls

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 30 Compare, e. g., Svátek's words introducing this chapter with British travelogues analyzed in Schiffer, Reinhold. *Oriental Panorama: British Travellers in 19th Century Turkey*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999.

31 For various examples see Malečková, "The Turk" in the Czech Imagination, 70–117, esp. 103–4.

32 Raušar, Jos. Zd. *Na půdě sopečné: Z potulek po Srbsku, Makedonii a Turecku*. Prague: Dr. Eduard Grégr a syn, 1903. 130.

33 Klement, František. "O Turkyních." *Národní listy* 29 November 1895: 1–2.

seemed to him as if imprisoned for life.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand he wrote that some Turkish women were able to give their “baggy attire” so much grace and make sure that “all the charms of their beautiful bodies can be perceived,” their veils were so thin that one could see the whole face, even more seductive under the light muslin, and in short, “[a] modern, elegant Turkish woman, who is an equally devoted customer of Parisian boutiques as any elegant Czech lady, has already found the means to assert her grace and charms.”<sup>35</sup>

Although Czech travelers used similar metaphors and occasionally similar words to describe some places (such as Muslim cemeteries and the bridges of Istanbul), people or habits, the interpretation of individual writers differed and the resulting image therefore could be negative, positive or contradictory. For example “baksheesh” was omnipresent, but it could be viewed as annoying, as a source of generalizations about “the Oriental” character or as something that was common everywhere, but was simply more open in the Ottoman Empire than in the Czech lands, where the same phenomenon was hidden behind various lofty labels.<sup>36</sup> Ottoman Muslims were described as similar to their fanatic ancestors and elsewhere as pious; some travelers mocked their religious rituals, while others followed them with respect. Yet, there was always some amount of exoticism in travelogues, from the use of Turkish words to references to the Arabian Nights and emphasis on the “Orientalness” of the visited places.

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34 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 7.

35 Svátek, *V zemi půlměsíce*, 167.

36 For the latter, see Kaminský, Bohdan. *Návštěvou u chorého muže: Causerie z cesty*. Prague: Jos. R. Vilímek, n.d. (1909). 177.

It is possible to argue that the exoticization and fantasies were a Czech way of getting hold of the Orient metaphorically, as a parallel to the way imperial powers were getting hold of it literally, as Roman Prahľ has argued about Czech architecture that used exotic elements.<sup>37</sup> However, my reading of the sources does not find the same motivation in travel writing. Czech travelers often contrasted the Oriental features (backwardness) of the Ottoman Empire with (the progress of) Europe, with which they identified. They even talked about the local population as “rabble,”<sup>38</sup> but the feeling of superiority was expressed more in the contrast between the generalized Orient, sometimes meaning the entirety of Asia, and Europe than the juxtaposition of the Turks and the Czechs. The Turks were interesting objects of observation, but never appeared as subjects for which the Czechs should be responsible and whom they should uplift. Travelers did not narrate dreams about dominating the Turks and, interestingly, this was also true about women: they considered Turkish women beautiful and fantasized about them, but with just a very few exceptions (and even these did not necessarily concern Turkish women<sup>39</sup>), travelers did not describe or invent stories about conquering Ottoman women.

In the pamphlets, the Turks were often portrayed as ferocious, even cruel, and in some respects, ranging from a lack of compassion to a lack of civilization, inferior to Europeans. But as warriors and oppressors of the

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 37 Prahľ, Roman. “Osvojování ‘exotismů’ v příležitostné architektuře dlouhého 19. století.” *Cizí, jiné, exotické v české kultuře 19. století: Sborník příspěvků z 27. ročníku symposia k problematice 19. století; Plzeň, 22.–24. února 2007*. Ed. Kateřina Piorecká and Václav Petrbok. Prague: Academia, 2008. 432.

38 Svátek, *V zemi pŕlmsíce*, 6.

39 On women in Cairo see Jiřík, V. *K pyramidám: Zápisky z cest*. Prague: Fr. Švejšda, 1913. 48–64; on Greek women in Istanbul see Moravec, Václav. *Cesta do Orientu*. Prague: printed by author, 1925. 118–20.



Slavs they were concurrently depicted as dangerous, and thus the Turks' alleged inferiority was only partial. Racial inferiority appeared in just some writings and race was not a common weapon even in anti-Turkish pamphlets. The authors of the pamphlets sometimes argued that the Turks should be expelled from Europe.<sup>40</sup> However, if any thoughts about the future of the lands occupied by the Ottomans appeared at all in this context, the possible successor of the Ottoman Empire in Southeastern Europe was Russia, not the Habsburg Empire, let alone the Czechs.

The authors of the numerous travelogues, novels, and stories that depicted an exotic Ottoman Orient in a way that largely resembled Western Orientalist works did not necessarily share the attitudes towards the Turks expressed in Czech anti-Turkish publications, for instance in the context of the Russo-Turkish war in 1877: "Although it is not possible to ignore the power of the declining empire of Osman, straining its last ounce of strength and ferociously thrusting itself into a mortal combat, all the Ottoman fury is breaking apart and God willing, will be broken by the enthusiastic and rock-solid Russian troops."<sup>41</sup> But the travelers were well aware of these views. And perhaps the perception of Ottoman Turks as violent, as fighters, rulers, and oppressors of the Czechs' Slavic brothers was one of the reasons why the authors of travel books did not write their works inspired by Western literature and expressing Orientalist stereotypes from the position of the colonizing Self looking upon the colonized (or colonizable) Other. Neither the hostility towards the Turks (including their perception in racial terms) nor the inspiration by West European Orientalist imagery thus led Czech authors to express colonial ambitions towards the Ottoman Empire.

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40 Procházka, "Zápas Evropy s plemenem mongolským"; Adámek, "Jihoslované a Turci," 9.8, 2.

41 Toužimský, Josef J. *O říši osmanské*. Prague: Dr. Edv. Grégr, 1877. 31.

## The Slavic Muslims and Bosnia-Herzegovina

It is not entirely surprising that Czechs did not express colonial ambitions vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire, given that they lacked the ability to achieve such ambitions. Neither did their writings manifest any need to justify Czech policy towards the Ottoman Empire because—as Czechs—they had none. That the Czechs did not view the Turks through colonial lenses, though, does not mean that they lacked colonial aspirations altogether. They just directed them to other areas, such as the already-mentioned dreams about Czech settlement in Africa, hinted at by Holub. Somewhat paradoxically, Czechs expressed similar ambitions towards a country inhabited by Slavs, whom they liked to call their brothers.<sup>42</sup>

The Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 substantially increased the number of Czech-speakers who for various reasons visited these former Ottoman provinces. They went there as soldiers, clerks, entrepreneurs, skilled and unskilled workers, and soon also as tourists. In the writings in which the visitors described their impressions from Bosnia-Herzegovina, they often designated the local Muslim population of Slavic origin “Turks” or “Turkified” (*Poturčenci*), alongside other names such as Mohammedans or Muslim Serbs, and dissociated them from their Christian compatriots.

Czechs saw the Slavic Muslims as marked by the Ottoman past when they had belonged to the ruling elites of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>43</sup> They were described as what could perhaps be characterized as “half-Turks.” They were most strongly connected with Ottoman Turks by their alleged

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42 See Malečková, “*The Turk*” in *the Czech Imagination*, 129–30.

43 Daneš, J. V. *Bosna a Hercegovina*. Prague: Český čtenář, 1909. 92.

violence and fanaticism, which, as we could see, Czechs tended to associate with the Turks. Emphasis on violence and fanaticism was particularly common in the writings by those Czechs who had taken part in the Austro-Hungarian occupation of the provinces and the suppression of the local uprisings against the occupation.<sup>44</sup> But also Otto's Encyclopedia in 1891 described the "Mohammedans" of Bosnia as affected by various Eastern superstitions and fatalism and claimed that their religious fanaticism was manifested in the persecution of their Christian compatriots in Ottoman times and reflected in the surviving anti-Christian proverbs.<sup>45</sup>

Concurrently, most Czech observers emphasized that Slavic Muslims were not entirely like Ottoman Turks: although they were brave, sometimes violent, and often hot-tempered, when dealing with each other they were honest, true friends, and real patriots. They differed from Ottoman Turks above all in their family habits. According to Czech visitors, the families of Slavic Muslims were patriarchal, but monogamous and full of conjugal love,<sup>46</sup> which distinguished them from what the Czechs considered a typical Ottoman polygamous family. Also, the way they depicted the Muslim women of Bosnia-Herzegovina diverged from the images of women drawn by travelers to the Ottoman Empire. The Muslim women of Bosnia-Herzegovina often appeared in Czech writings as mothers and wives in the midst of their families and were considered

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44 Chaura, Edmund. *Obrázky z okupace bosenské*. Prague: Přítel domoviny, n.d. (1893). 4, 53; *Povstání v Bosně: Pravdivé příhody rakouského vojáka v Bosně a Hercegovině*. Prague: A. Reinward, 1883. 70–81. See also Holeček, Josef. *Bosna a Hercegovina za okupace*. Prague: Josef Holeček, 1901. 44.

45 *Ottův slovník naučný*. Vol. 4. Prague: J. Otto, 1891. 432–33.

46 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina za okupace*, 46, 63; Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 22; Toužimský, Josef J. *Bosna a Hercegovina v minulosti a přítomnosti*. Prague: Spolek pro vydávání laciných knih českých, 1882. 123–24.

to enjoy more freedom than women in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>47</sup> In certain contexts, nevertheless, they shared the exotic features attributed to Ottoman Turkish women; a well-known writer, Růžena Svobodová, for instance, likened a Muslim woman of Sarajevo to Sheherezade and in the description of their meeting repeatedly cited images from the Arabian Nights.<sup>48</sup> Another traveler even found in Slavic Muslim women the traits that some visitors of the Ottoman Empire viewed as weaknesses of Ottoman women: he accused them of being lazy, vain, and ignorant.<sup>49</sup> Yet, such a view was quite exceptional.

Writings on Bosnia-Herzegovina were less dependent on foreign ideas and imagery than those on the Ottoman Empire, much as entries on Bosnia in encyclopedias and other educational works after the occupation also cited foreign scholarship.<sup>50</sup> Mostly though the writings reflected impressions of the Czechs who had visited the newly occupied territory, and when referring to the views of experts on Bosnia-Herzegovina, they primarily quoted earlier works by Czech travelers and journalists or Czech encyclopedias. The general tone and message of these works, even when they incorporated some foreign ideas, were in line with mainstream Czech views on Bosnia-Herzegovina as a somewhat backward, but quickly developing and beautiful land inhabited by a friendly population related to the Czechs. Due to its Ottoman past, it was considered

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47 *Ottův slovník naučný*, vol. 4, 433.

48 Svobodová, Růžena. *Barvy Jugoslavie: Obrázky z cest 1911*. Prague: Unie, n.d. 82.

49 Velc, Ferdinand. "Sarajevo." *Časopis turistů* 9.4 (1897): 95.

50 For example, the entry on Bosnia (with Herzegovina) in *Ottův slovník naučný* (vol. 4, 414) listed a number of Austrian and German sources, works by Southeastern European authors, and a few works on the history and geography of Bosnia and Herzegovina in French and English. See also Daneš (*Bosna a Hercegovina*) whose book includes an extensive bibliography of prevalingly foreign works.

an Oriental country, strongly affected by religious differences: “It is well known that in all Oriental countries—and Bosnia, during its 400 years of separation from the rest of Europe, when it bowed under the heavy yoke of the Turkish power, has indeed become an Oriental country—religious denomination has a much greater importance in public life than it does in Western Europe.”<sup>51</sup> Czech commentators somewhat differed in the evaluations of the Austro-Hungarian régime after the occupation and in their preference for either the Catholic, or the Orthodox population, but they principally agreed in their perception of the Slavic Muslims and of the specific “Czech interests” in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As one of the Czech authors argued, Czechs were to give priority to “the purely Czech and Slavic standpoint” and consider everything that infringes on the Slavic character of Bosnia-Herzegovina not only detrimental to that country and its people, but also to “our,” i. e. Czech, pretensions.<sup>52</sup>

The Czechs who visited Bosnia-Herzegovina did not have the same attitude to its inhabitants as travelers to the Ottoman Empire expressed in their works on the Turks. They felt close to the Slavic inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina, namely the Christians, and sympathized with their problems, pointing out first and foremost the obstacles that hindered their national development. At the same time, however, Czech visitors were well aware of the opportunities for commercial enterprise, financial penetration, and numerous jobs that the occupied provinces offered. And they unanimously claimed that Czechs should take advantage of these opportunities before the Germans, Magyars, and the Jews use this

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51 *Dvacet let práce kulturní: Cesta Bosnou a Hercegovinou, již vykonali JUDr. Emanuel Dyk, Max Hájek, František König, říšští i zemští poslanci.* Plzeň: Knihtiskárna J. Císaře, 1899. 14.

52 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, [4].

chance.<sup>53</sup> Because, as one of the authors argued, “the Czechs are the only nationality of Austria that has proven to be a competent educator of the occupied population and is a more noble-minded element in Bosnia and Herzegovina [than others], representing an idealist stream.”<sup>54</sup>

Czech authors writing on Bosnia-Herzegovina supported their views by pointing out the backwardness of the provinces, implicitly or explicitly comparing them with their own, more advanced society. The Oriental character and “Turkish heritage” of Bosnia-Herzegovina seemed to justify a certain feeling of superiority that the Czechs showed towards Bosnia-Herzegovina. They figured among the main reasons for the approval of the Austro-Hungarian policy in the former Ottoman provinces on the part of some Czechs, while others criticized this policy partly or entirely. Representatives of both views emphasized that it was the Czechs who should civilize Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>55</sup> Whether endorsing or criticizing the Austro-Hungarian régime in Bosnia-Herzegovina, they sometimes used a vocabulary reminiscent of the civilizing mission rhetoric characteristic of Western attitudes towards their colonial subjects. This was particularly apparent when they accentuated the Czechs’ or their own personal role as enlighteners of the population that was according to them “on a low level of education.”<sup>56</sup>

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53 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina za okupace*, 12; Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 125–26; Novák, J. B. “Mezi Adrií a Drávou (několik fragmentů).” *Slovanský jih: Články posl. V. Klofáče, L. Brunčka, Dra J. B. Nováka a J. Jasyho*. Prague: Hejda a Tuček, 1911. 22–24.

54 Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina za okupace*, 28.

55 Toužimský, *O říši osmanské*, 125; Třeštík, *Ku břehům Adrie*, 20, 74; for the diverse views see also Novák, “Mezi Adrií a Drávou,” 22–24.

56 *Ottův slovník naučný*, vol. 4, 433; Holeček, *Bosna a Hercegovina za okupace*, 28. It is worth noting that Czechs wanted to “civilize” not only the local Muslims, but also Christians, though this was implied rather than explicitly stated in their works, while

In this line of argument, the local “Turks” who, although of Slavic origin were of Muslim faith, embodied in Czech eyes the Ottoman heritage of Bosnia-Herzegovina. There was nevertheless a clear difference between the Czechs’ attitude towards Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the attitude of the British towards Indians, or the French towards Algerians, most notably in the perceived ethnic—and racial<sup>57</sup>—closeness between the Czechs and the Slavic Muslims. Despite their idiosyncrasy, even the Slavic Muslims could be considered Czechs’ brothers, or rather “(br)others”—a concept introduced by Edin Hajdarasic to describe the Serbs’ and Croats’ relationship to their Muslim compatriots, whom they saw as both brothers and Others.<sup>58</sup>

In their analysis of colonialism in non-colonial settings, Lüthi, Falk, and Purtschert show how representatives of the countries without colonies participated in colonialism by reproducing the racialized discourse of colonial powers.<sup>59</sup> Yet, colonial complicity could take various forms and included both attitudes and actions. In the Ottoman Empire, Czechs’ Orientalist views remained limited to the sphere of fantasies that did not inspire acts. Some Czechs did find work in the Ottoman Empire: there were Czech musicians, dancers and prostitutes, teachers as well

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they explicitly mentioned the need to civilize the Muslims or Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole.

57 It should be noted that race was not a theme elaborated upon in the writings on Bosnia-Herzegovina.

58 Hajdarasic, Edin. *Whose Bosnia? Nationalism and Political Imagination in the Balkans, 1840–1914*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2015. 16.

59 Lüthi, Falk, and Purtschert. “Colonialism without Colonies,” 1–3. See also Lemmen, Sarah. *Tschechen auf Reisen: Repräsentationen der außereuropäischen Welt und nationale Identität in Ostmitteleuropa 1890–1938*. Cologne: Böhlau, 2018. 295–96.

as pub owners and hoteliers, especially in Istanbul.<sup>60</sup> Yet, their numbers were limited and their jobs generally did not give them power over the local population.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, in contrast, Czechs could take advantage of the Austro-Hungarian occupation. Although whether Bosnia-Herzegovina can be considered an Austro-Hungarian colony remains a matter of scholarly debate,<sup>61</sup> there is little doubt that the position of the former Ottoman provinces under Austro-Hungarian occupation had a lot in common with more established colonies.<sup>62</sup> According to Ctibor Nečas, the economic interests of the Czech financial and industrial sectors corresponded to the Austro-Hungarian effort for expansion abroad and contributed to the articulation of the Habsburg Empire's aggressive policy in the Balkans.<sup>63</sup>

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60 At the turn of the century, Czech travelers wrote most often about Hôtel Kohout located in Asmalimescit Street in Pera and about its Czech owner. Already in the late 1860s, however, Vítězslav Hálek mentioned a Czech restaurant in Istanbul where he enjoyed Czech food (see Hálek, Vítězslav. *Cestopisy: Články z let 1861–1874*. Prague: Fr. Borový, 1925. 157–58).

61 Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*, 378; Gingrich, "Frontier Myths of Orientalism," 101, 106; Detrez, Raymond. "Colonialism in the Balkans: Historic Realities and Contemporary Perceptions." *Kakanien Revisited* (2002): 3. Web. 20 December 2017; Vervaet, Stijn. "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. Web. 20 December 2017.

62 Jürgen Osterhammel does not include examples from Europe in his typology of colonies, but the way he characterizes the "exploitation colony," namely the way it emerged, the purposes of the colonial relationship, character of colonial presence and autocratic government by the mother country (sometimes with paternalistic solicitude for the native population), more or less describes the position of Bosnia-Herzegovina under occupation. Osterhammel, Jürgen. *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. Trans. Shelley L. Frisch. Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2010. 10–11.

63 Nečas, Ctibor. *Balkán a česká politika: Pronikání rakousko-uherského imperialismu na Balkán a česká buržoazní politika*. Brno: Universita J. E. Purkyně, 1972. 7.



The number of Czechs who worked or participated in enterprises in Bosnia-Herzegovina was quite significant. Along with the entrepreneurs, Czechs were employed as skilled and unskilled workers, but they also held more prestigious jobs in administration and the professions. Czech women were most often hired as cooks, yet two of them were among the first female doctors in Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>64</sup> Work in the occupied provinces was understood and legitimized by the Czechs as help to their Southern brothers (or sisters): One of the female doctors, for example, emphasized that she did not give up her difficult job only because she cared about her Muslim patients,<sup>65</sup> while other Czechs argued that Bosnia-Herzegovina needed to be assisted by brotherly Czechs, not by foreigners.<sup>66</sup> A wish to help may have indeed entirely or partly motivated Czechs to seek employment in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But it was not the only motivation and it is clear that Czechs used Bosnia-Herzegovina for material gain as well. This was exemplified by branches of banks and other financial institutions that were established in Sarajevo and other cities in the region.

Czech banks did not try to penetrate only Bosnia-Herzegovina; in the late 19th and especially in the early 20th century, the growing Czech bank sector sought to expand beyond the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, primarily to the neighboring and Slavic areas. As Nečas has shown, some banks resorted to a pan-Slavic rhetoric in order to justify

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64 See *Adresář Čechů v jihoslovanských zemích: Charvatsko, Slavonie, Dalmacie, Istrie, Bosna, Hercegovina, Již. Uhry a Srbsko*. Vol. 2. Prague: Administrace "Českého listu" v Záhřebu, 1912. On the first female doctors see Nečas, Ctibor. *Mezi muslimkami: Působení úředních lékařek v Bosně a Hercegovině v letech 1892–1918*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1992.

65 Nečas, *Mezi muslimkami*, 35.

66 See, e. g., Toužimský, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, 125.

their enterprise: they claimed that their aim was not simply financial gain, but first and foremost advancing the Slavic banking industry.<sup>67</sup> Other banks were more open about their principally financial goals and Nečas argues that the acts of even those banks promoting Slavism show that Slavic solidarity was mere rhetoric. Nečas's analysis also suggests that the penetration of Czech financial institutions was easier and more successful in Bosnia-Herzegovina than in other Slavic areas.<sup>68</sup>

The question of colonialism of non-dominant nations in a multinational empire like Austria-Hungary is rather complex and deserves further research. Before 1918, these nations could not have a colonial apparatus of their own, but, on the other hand, their representatives undoubtedly shared the views widespread in colonial empires and, as individuals, they participated in the colonial or quasi-colonial enterprise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is possible to ask whether the Czech-speakers in Bosnia-Herzegovina took part in the Habsburg Empire's activities "as Czechs," working explicitly for the interest of Czech commerce, Czech industry, and the Czech position more generally, or whether they simply used the opportunity that offered itself in Bosnia-Herzegovina. To what extent did Czechs see themselves as contributing to the Habsburg Empire's colonial project, which they so often criticized? Western colonial outlook doubtlessly affected Czechs' ambitions to possess their own colonies and can be also discerned in Czech colonial discourse. But at the same time, because the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina, including the Slavic Muslims, were seen as related to Czechs, it was difficult for Czech-speakers to express colonial aspirations regarding Bosnia-Her-

67 Nečas, Ctibor. *Podnikání českých bank v cizině, 1898–1918: Rozpínavost českého bankovního kapitálu ve střední, jihovýchodní a východní Evropě v období rakousko-uherského imperialismu*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 1993. 28, 67.

68 Nečas, *Podnikání českých bank v cizině*, 25–57.

zegovina as “Czech aspirations,” even when in fact their activities might have reflected colonial interests.

Czechs writing on Bosnia-Herzegovina distinguished the German, Magyar, and Jewish attempts to “use” Bosnia-Herzegovina from their own activities, which, as we have seen, they presented as “brotherly help.” Some of them commented upon the colonial nature of the Austro-Hungarian involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Thus Jiří V. Daneš, professor of geography, wrote that “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.”<sup>69</sup> Czechs may have been aware of the paradox of participating in the project they criticized (not because it was colonial, but because it was carried out by the Austro-Hungarian state and because they saw it as detrimental to the Slavs), however, the idea of Slavic brotherhood prevented them from admitting it—and perhaps even from seeing it clearly.

## Conclusion

Although Czechs lacked not only colonies, but also a state of their own, in the period of “high colonialism” at the turn of the century they, too, participated in the colonial discourse that was common in Western imperial societies. Looking at imperial powers as models, Czechs perceived colonialism as desirable. They took over many of the views circulating in Europe at that time, including images of the Turks. The latter was re-

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69 Daneš, *Bosna a Hercegovina*, [3].

flected in some Czech anti-Turkish pamphlets (namely in the references to race) and even more centrally in Czech travel literature, which was often inspired by Western Orientalist works and stereotypes, even in the case of those Czechs who themselves visited the Ottoman Empire and articulated idiosyncratic opinions on the Turks that were at odds with these stereotypes.

Czechs expressed colonial ambitions in various contexts. The analysis of their views of Ottoman Turks and the “Turks,” or Slavic Muslims, of Bosnia-Herzegovina shows that colonial aspirations were not necessarily or primarily directed to “classical” colonial areas in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, but concerned areas in Europe as well, specifically its southeastern part. This was certainly not a Czech specificity; Vesna Goldsworthy has drawn attention to the British “narrative colonization” of the Balkan peninsula.<sup>70</sup> Unlike the British, however, the Czechs could not model their relationship to Bosnia-Herzegovina on their own previous colonial experiences. The Czechs’ attitude can thus be classified as “borrowed colonialism” in the sense that in order to be one of the advanced European societies, the Czechs felt they needed to be colonial, like the French and British models, and they assumed the powers’ colonial rhetoric. It was not a survival tactic like that of Ottoman Turks, though, as the Czechs were not under a threat of becoming a colony of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

If ideas about the desirability of colonialism as well as various Orientalist stereotypes came from abroad, their impact reflected specific Czech conditions and interests. Czechs for instance shared with their Austrian

.....  
 70 Goldsworthy, Vesna. *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1998.

counterparts the juxtaposition of the Turks of the Ottoman Empire and the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Yet, due to their different historical experience as well as the Czechs' kinship to the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Czech views of both groups somewhat differed from those of the Austrians characterized by Gingrich as "frontier Orientalism." Paradoxically, it was the Slavs who became the target of Czech colonial rhetoric and of their civilizing mission. Whereas the discourse on the Turks and the Ottoman Empire took the form of exoticizing Orientalist fantasies, in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina colonial discourse was more related to practice.

Even if they did not possess colonies of their own, Czechs thus not only expressed colonial attitudes, but also acted upon their ambitions using the occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina as an opportunity for investment and for gainful employment and as a place they could help "civilize." It was the Ottoman heritage, embodied especially (though not exclusively) by the Muslims, that enabled to view Bosnia-Herzegovina in (quasi-)colonial terms: the Orientalizing features of Ottoman Turks were transferred onto Slavic Muslims—and then further generalized to encompass Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole. The Czechs were aware of the colonial character of Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but did not view themselves in the position of colonizers. To benefit from the colonial or quasi-colonial status of Bosnia-Herzegovina seemed justifiable and in fact commendable, almost a national duty. They argued that by helping themselves they also helped the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina, thus exempting themselves from any guilt.

In contrast to Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Ottoman Empire remained for the Czechs either an enemy or a country of exotic fairy-tales about which they could fantasize, but which they did not dream of dominating. Despite the occasional use of racial terminology and arguments in a certain

strand of anti-Turkish literature and a more widespread perception of the Ottoman Empire and the Turks as backward compared to Europe, the outlook of potential colonizers was generally missing in the Czechs' writings on the Ottoman Empire and the Turks. In part, this could reflect the perception of the Turks as feared yet respected enemies that had survived in cultural memory from the period of early modern "Turkish wars" and in the late 19th century was drawn upon by the anti-Turkish pamphlets. Travelers held much more diverse views of the Turks, but even when they took over some of the imagery from British and French travel accounts, they did not position themselves as representatives of a colonial power and this also affected the way they portrayed the Ottoman Empire and its people(s).

The comparison of Czech views of the Ottoman Empire and Bosnia-Herzegovina and their "Turks" suggests that Czechs expressed colonial attitudes where it seemed possible to act upon them (Bosnia-Herzegovina), and not where it might have seemed ideologically justifiable (the Ottoman Empire). In other words, it was not a feeling of superiority that led to colonial ambitions and activities, but rather the feeling of inadequacy vis-à-vis the more successful, colonial powers, and the existing opportunities, namely the Austro-Hungarian occupation and resulting status of Bosnia-Herzegovina, that inspired such attitudes and activities. The possibility to act as representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina was then explained and justified by the civilizing mission that the Czechs felt particularly suited to fulfill.



CHARLES SABATOS

## 4 The Romantic Turk in Nineteenth-Century Slovak Literature

Edward Said's *Orientalism* is largely based on the most intensive period of British and French colonial expansion: "Romantic writers like Byron and Scott consequently had a political vision of the Near Orient and a very combative awareness of how relations between the Orient and Europe would have to be conducted." He notes only in passing that "we must not forget Russia's movements into the Orient [...] nor Germany's and Austria-Hungary's."<sup>1</sup> One of his few examples from Central Europe is Johann Gottfried von Herder's *Ideas toward a Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784–91), which he calls a "panoramic display of various cultures, each permeated by an inimical creative spirit," suggesting that "an eighteenth-century mind could breach the doctrinal walls erected between the West and Islam and see hidden elements of kinship between himself and the Orient." One of the figures who illustrates this "kinship," which he calls "sympathetic identification," is Mozart, whose

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1 Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979. 191–92.



operas portray a “particularly magnanimous form of humanity in the Orient,” although Said cautions that it is “very difficult nonetheless to separate such intuitions of the Orient as Mozart’s from the entire range of pre-Romantic and Romantic representations of the Orient as exotic locale.”<sup>2</sup> The term “sympathetic identification” does not reappear in *Orientalism* (and Austria-Hungary, unlike Russia and Germany, is not even included in its index), but it resembles what Ivan Kalmar calls “soft Orientalism,” an “admiration for the Orient as a continuing source of spiritual inspiration” which “stresses the East-West difference only to suggest overcoming it at some ‘higher’ level.”<sup>3</sup>

In the Austrian national consciousness, the cultural memory of the Ottomans remains distinct from Western imperial “combative awareness.” By using the term “frontier Orientalism” for the “relatively coherent set of metaphors and myths that reside in [Austrian] folk and public culture,” Andre Gingrich suggests that these representations focus on the self as much as the other: “The Muslim Oriental on both sides of this shifting frontier... allows ‘us’ to construct a fictitious community of selfhood and nationhood in the region.” He notes that the Turk is seen both as “violent aggressor and invader,” and “defeated and humiliated opponent.”<sup>4</sup> Róbert Gáfrík notes that the smaller nationalities under Habsburg rule shared these images, but in a distinct form: “Central and East European countries have never had any significant power interests

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2 Said, *Orientalism*, 118.

3 Kalmar, Ivan. *Early Orientalism: Imagined Islam and the Notion of Sublime Power*. London: Routledge, 2012. 5–6.

4 Gingrich, Andre. “Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim World in Public and Popular Cultures of Central Europe.” *Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School*. Ed. Bojan Baskar and Borut Brumen. Vol. 2. Piran: Institut za multikulturne raziskave, 1998. 108–11.

in the Middle East, Asia or Africa; on the contrary, they were often dominated by others.” He concludes that this “puts the Central European region in a peculiar, if not paradoxical, position: it is a victim as well as a producer (or a reproducer) of Orientalization.”<sup>5</sup> Ildikó Bellér-Hann has similarly pointed out that Hungarians viewed themselves “as victims of foreign imperialism” who were never able “to look eastward with the eyes of colonialists” even though they asserted control over their own national minorities: “Nineteenth-century Hungarian Orientalism should therefore be approached primarily as a combination of a romantic quest for the lost homeland and an effort to escape from the realities of oppressive dictatorship [as well as] a need to forge the Magyar national identity.”<sup>6</sup> These contrasting images of the “aggressive” and “defeated” Turk appear in Central European literary works, sometimes within the same text.

Jitka Malečková’s monograph on nineteenth-century Czech writing on the Turks (as well as her chapter in the present volume) also challenges Orientalism’s binary approach, stating that the Czechs “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.”<sup>7</sup> The version of frontier Orientalism found in Slovak literature has a similar ambivalence, but with an additional layer of

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5 Gáfrík, Róbert. “Imagining the Orient in Central Europe: An Intercultural Studies Project.” *Rebuilding the Profession: Comparative Literature, Intercultural Studies and the Humanities in the Age of Globalization*. Ed. Dorothy Figueira. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2020. 178.

6 Bellér-Hann, Ildikó. “The Image of the Turks in Nineteenth-Century Hungarian Literature.” *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 5.2 (1995): 226.

7 Malečková, Jitka. *The Turk in the Czech Imagination (1870s–1923)*. Leiden: Brill, 2021. 11.

intersecting influences: under the political control of the Hungarians, themselves dominated by Austria, and culturally overshadowed by the Czechs, the Slovaks were the furthest removed from the European position of power in Said's Orientalist paradigm.

One of the most enduring love stories in Slovak culture is "The Well of Love" ("Studňa lásky"), which features the Turkish characters Omar and Fatima. First published in German by a Hungarian baron in 1829, the tale then appeared in a British travelogue, and was adapted into verse form in the 1840s in both Czech and Slovak. An even more widely-known literary classic is Samo Chalupka's poem "The Turk from Poniky" ("Turčín Poničan," 1863), in which the eponymous invader discovers that he is a convert (*devşirme* in Turkish) who had been kidnapped from his Slovak homeland. This chapter will analyze the evolution of the Turkish image in relation to the emerging Slovak national identity; it includes the first full English translation of "The Well of Love" in its original German version, which is relatively unknown even to Slovak readers. In the Romantic period, while no longer a direct military menace, "the Turk" was still a powerful metaphor for oppression, but the older model of sympathetic identification helped to create an intermediate image between "violent invader" and "defeated opponent."

## **Ruins and Legends across National and Linguistic Boundaries**

Miroslav Hroch examines the "shared roots" of Romanticism and nineteenth-century national movements, particularly under Austro-Hungarian rule:

The fundamental road that was meant to lead the Romantics to a new sense of security was the road of individualization and subjectivization: one could find this sense of security in a deep, intense personal relationship [...] That search for new individualized values and relationships concerned the inner self and therefore ran opposite to the search for the great new community, the “nation.” No less complicated, but socially more relevant, was the search for a stability of relationships by turning to the past [...] the individual sought continuity, a connection with previous generations, at the levels of both the individual and the community that he or she identified with.<sup>8</sup>

For Romantic nationalists, as Joep Leerssen explains, “ancient texts were points of ancestral reconnection, living manifestations of that trans-generational contract which, in the historicist view, constitutes the nation’s enduring identity.” The frame narrative of the “found manuscript” became common in Gothic fiction, as Leerssen points out, “when in fact a lot of manuscripts were being found in attics and in secularized monastic libraries all over Europe ... Bringing the past back to life: that was not merely a private reading sensation, but the very definition of what romantic historicists were aiming to do.” As Leerssen highlights, when this folklore served the purpose of nation-building, “in many cases such ‘instrumentalized editions’ tread a thin line between authenticity and forgery.”<sup>9</sup>

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8 Hroch, Miroslav. “National Romanticism.” *National Romanticism: The Formation of National Movements*. Ed. Balázs Trencsényi and Michal Kopeček. Budapest: Central European UP, 2007. 5–6.

9 Leerssen, Joep. “Notes Towards a Definition of Romantic Nationalism.” *Romantik 2* (2013): 23–34.

One scholar who explores the importance of mystification in the Czech National Revival is Vladimír Macura: “Czech mystification always bore culturally and nationally creative aspects within it that were supposed to provide evidence of ... its ancient heritage, as testimony to glorious deeds of the past and the high level of its cultural development.”<sup>10</sup> Inspired by James Macpherson’s “translation” of the Gaelic epic *Ossian* (1761), the most influential literary forgeries in Czech culture were the “Queen’s Court” and “Green Mountain” manuscripts, which the Czech archivist Václav Hanka claimed to have discovered (but actually fabricated) in 1817.<sup>11</sup>

Some of the most tangible settings for this mythical heritage were the numerous castles dotting the Central European landscape, which became symbols of national greatness, even though the majority of the noble families living in them would not have identified with the nations that now claim them. Although ruins were of course a favorite theme for Romantic and Gothic writers, they held additional meaning in Central Europe, as Emil Neiderhauser notes:

It was of no interest to historians, nor to poets and writers, that the national past, as contrasted with the bleak present, had not been national at all, in the form they imagined. They turned boldly toward the past and took what they wanted... for the East European poets the ruins of fortresses unquestionably bore witness to the national past. Yet since ruins are tied to a specific locality, and the populations which settled around them changed and intermin-

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10 Macura, Vladimír. *The Mystifications of a Nation: The “Potato Bug” and Other Essays on Czech Culture*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 2010. 10–11.

11 The authenticity of these manuscripts was not disproved until the 1880s.

gled, the same ruin may be used to prove the former greatness of not one, but two or more nations.<sup>12</sup>

Reviving a semi-mythical past was thus tied not only to oral and written narratives, but also to physical locations whose age could attest to the endurance of national identities.

“The Well of Love” first appeared in German under the title “The Well of the Lovers” (“Der Brunnen der Liebenden”) in the collection *Tales, Myths, and Legends from Hungary’s Past (Erzählungen, Sagen, und Legenden aus Ungarns Vorzeit*, 1829) by the Hungarian baron Alois Freiherrn von Mednyánszky.<sup>13</sup> The tale features the Palatine Count Stephen Zápolya, who captures a Turkish woman named Fatme in a battle with the Ottomans.<sup>14</sup> When her beloved Omar comes to ransom her, the count gives him the seemingly impossible task of digging a well through solid rock, but after three years he succeeds. The story’s only connections to historical reality are Zápolya, who ruled Trenčín in the 1490s, and his wife, the Polish princess Hedwig of Cieszyn; Veronika Kucharská’s bi-

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12 Neiderhauser, Emil. *The Rise of Nationality in Eastern Europe*. Budapest: Corvina, 1981. 59–60.

13 Mednyánszky, Alois Freiherrn von. “Der Brunnen der Liebenden.” *Erzählungen, Sagen, und Legenden aus Ungarns Vorzeit*. Pest: Konrád Adolph Hartleben, 1829. 90–104. The same publisher issued a Hungarian translation three years later: Mednyánszky, Alajos. “A Szerelmesek kútja.” *Elbeszélések, regék’s legendák a magyar előkrből*. Trans. Alajos Nyitske and Pál Szebényi. Pest: Konrád Adolf Hartleben, 1832. 75–88.

14 Zápolya (1434–1499) is known in Slovak as Štefan Zápol’ský and in Hungarian as Szapolyai István. Coincidentally, the Romantic poet Samuel Coleridge used the title *Zapolya* for his last play (1815), set in “Illyria” and vaguely based on Austrian and Hungarian history, but it refers to a fictional queen, not a historical figure.

ography of Hedwig confirms that the family's mythical connection with the "well of love" has little factual basis.<sup>15</sup>

Mednyánszky begins with a highly Gothic description of the ruins of Trenčín Castle, which Stephen Zápolya had fortified with powerful walls, but was unable to resolve its greatest drawback: the lack of water. Returning from battle, Zápolya brings home a group of Turkish captives, including "the daughter of a noble Turk, a tall slender figure in the first bloom of youth," described as the "pearl" of his victory: "The gentle fire in her starlike eyes, which were shaded by an abundance of dark curls, seemed to be firmly attached to the ground as if to warm a precious tomb, as if to refresh it with a few heavy teardrops from long eyelashes."<sup>16</sup>

In Trenčín, Fatme becomes the servant of the "proud, strict" Hedwig. Months later Omar (posing as a merchant) comes to ransom the captives, and Zápolya senses something noble in the Turk's character: "a fire which elevates ambition to virtue, and a gentleness which he did not understand."<sup>17</sup> The two Turkish lovers are thus linked by the somewhat contradictory image of "gentle fire." Zápolya agrees to the ransom, with the exception of Fatme (named here for the first time), whom his wife refuses to give up, although she is brought down with the other captives.

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15 Kucharská, Veronika. *Ducissa: Život kňažnej Hedvivy v časoch Jagelovcov*. Bratislava: Post Scriptum, 2014. 11, 53.

16 "Unter den Gefangenen war dieses Siegeszuges Perle die Tochter eines vornehmen Türken, eine hohe schlanke Gestalt in erster Jugendblüte... Das milde Feuer der Augensterne, von einer Fülle dunkler Locken beschattet, schien an die Erde fest geheftet, um ein teures Grab zu erwärmen, um es mit wenigen, schweren Tränentropfen aus den langen Wimpern zu erfrischen." Mednyánszky, *Erzählungen*, 95. Translations from German are by Nina Cemiloğlu.

17 "Zápolya [...] erkannte in dem angeblichen Kaufmann auf den ersten Blick die Haltung des Befehls, ein Feuer, das den Ehrgeiz zur Tugend adelt, und eine Milde, die er nicht begriff." Mednyánszky, *Erzählungen*, 96–97.

Having not previously paid much attention to her, Zápolya suddenly sees her and is caught off guard by her beauty: “He hurried down and smiling, then surprised and halting, finally burning glances fell down upon the beautiful infidel.”<sup>18</sup>

Omar pleads on his knees for mercy, but Zápolya tells him that trying to coax tears of sympathy from him is like extracting water from stone. This leads to the turning point of the story, which is actually a misunderstanding: having given up hope of finding a water source, Zápolya mocks the desperate Turk: “Try [to reach water], turn these rocks into wax, and I will release Fatme together with all the other captives, without demanding ransom!” Omar takes this taunt as an actual offer: “If I create a well from these rocks, will you turn your harsh mockery into sincere earnestness?” Startled by his literal interpretation, the count agrees: “He had never broken his word to either friend or foe.”<sup>19</sup> Omar digs with the other captives for three years, but seems to be on the verge of death from exhaustion and despair, when he hears a joyful shout echoing the Muslim call to prayer: “The Lord is great! Water, water, master! Praised be Allah!”<sup>20</sup>

Mednyánszky alludes to a previously existing legendary background for his Turkish characters, as when the hero first arrives (“legend has it that his name was Omar”) and when Zápolya displays his captive:

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18 “Er eilte hinab, und lächelnde, dann überrascht stockende, zuletzt brennende Blicke fielen auf die schöne Ungläubige.” Mednyánszky, *Erzählungen*, 97.

19 “Versuch es, mache Wachs aus diesen Steinen, und ich gebe Fatmen, mit allen übrigen Gefangenen, ohne Lösegeld frei! ‘Wenn ich dir eine Quelle aus diesem Felsen schaffe, verwandelst du den harten Spott in biederer Ernst?’ [...] ‘[Dass] er nie dem Freunde und auch dem Feinde nie gebrochen habe.’” Mednyánszky, *Erzählungen*, 100.

20 “Der Herr ist gross! Wasser, Wasser, Herr! Allah sei gelobt!” Mednyánszky, *Erzählungen*, 103.



“According to the oral tradition, her name was Fatme.”<sup>21</sup> Yet there is no recorded version prior to Mednyánszky’s, and since he did not document his sources, there is little if any proof of this “legend” or “tradition.” Ondrej Sliacky notes that the author “was *doubtless* inspired by stories that he discovered in aristocratic archives and chronicles, to whom he had access as a well-known researcher and aristocrat of his time, or which he knew personally thanks to the oral storytelling tradition of aristocratic families” (emphasis added).<sup>22</sup> Not only are Omar and Fatima entirely fictional, but historians have determined that the actual well was dug by Austrian soldiers in the mid-sixteenth century, several decades after Zápolya’s rule. The historian Milan Šišmiš has examined archival attempts to date the well, but is not skeptical of the story’s folk origins: “It is not known exactly when the folktale originated. The fact is that the general public still considers it a true event. It did not appear in literary works until the nineteenth century, and in oral tradition it *certainly existed* before this period” (emphasis added).<sup>23</sup> Mednyánszky even links Omar’s endeavor to Turkish battle tactics: “Every page in the history books about their attacks or resistance at fortifications shows what a miracle the Ottomans could achieve at that time in tunnel warfare.”<sup>24</sup> Just as martial skills (such as digging tunnels under castles for

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21 “[Die] Sage legt ihm den Namen Omar bei... Fatme heist sie der mündlichen Überlieferung.” Mednyánszky, *Erzählungen*, 96, 97.

22 Sliacky, Ondrej. “Alois Freiherrn von Mednyánszky.” *Bibiana* 11.3–4 (2004): 8. Sliacky adds rather apologetically that although Mednyánszky supported a strong Hungarian state, he was against the forced “Magyarization” (assimilation) of minorities.

23 Šišmiš, Milan. “Trenčianska hradná studňa v svetle historických faktov.” *Vlastivedný časopis* 24.4 (1975): 182–83. All translations from Slovak and Czech sources (unless otherwise noted) are by the present author.

24 “Welch Wunder die Osmanen damals im Minenkriege getan, zeigt jedes Blatt der Geschichte ihres Angriffs oder Widerstandes in festen Plätzen.” Mednyánszky, *Erzählungen*, 100.

surprise attacks) can be turned to positive ends through the humanizing force of true love, imperial conflict can glorify the national past through sympathetic identification with an erstwhile rival.

Mednyánszky also co-founded the series of *Handbooks for the History of the Fatherland* (*Taschenbuch für die vaterländische Geschichte*, 1811–1848) with the Austrian Baron Josef von Hormayr, who believed in creating a shared history through folklore for the Habsburg-ruled nations. As Nóra Veszprémi has shown:

Mednyánszky's essays on the castles of Northern Hungary combined historical facts gleaned from "real" documents with stories from local lore. [...] Hormayr's project itself was an experiment in cross-cultural communication. Albeit driven by a political agenda, it populated the ruined castles with Hungarian, Austrian, and Slavic historical figures, fictitious characters, legends, stories, and superstitions [and] created an intricate web of connections between the different nations and their histories instead, leaving many loose ends, as well as room for alternative readings.<sup>25</sup>

Regardless of the historical, legendary, or fictional basis of his tale, Mednyánszky's role in popularizing one of Slovakia's most famous folktales is ironic for a Hungarian aristocrat writing in German, although this linguistic choice also made his work accessible to Western readers.

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25 Veszprémi, Nóra. "Ruined Castles and the Layers of History: An Emotional Approach." *Hungarian Art History Blog*. 5 August 2012. Wordpress. Web. 15 May 2021. <<http://hungarianartist.wordpress.com/2012/08/05/ruined-castles-and-the-layers-of-history-an-emotional-approach>>

In the 1830s, the British writer John Paget traveled across what was then the Kingdom of Hungary, including “Trentsin” (Trenčín). In his extensive travelogue *Hungary and Transylvania* (1839) he recounts the story of the well of love (then not yet widely known in Slovakia) and credits Mednyánszky as his source, while retaining a healthy skepticism toward his reliability: “I must again acknowledge how much I am indebted to Mednyánsky for the history, *authentic as well as legendary*, of the valley of the Waag [Váh]” (emphasis added).<sup>26</sup>

Paget, who eventually married a Hungarian baroness and settled on her estate in Transylvania, reflects the process of sympathetic identification which Katarina Gephardt explores in her study of nineteenth-century travel writing on Eastern Europe: “As the travel writers engage in a dialogue with their informers and sympathize with particular ethnic groups, the tensions within the Austro-Hungarian Empire resemble the relations among the ethnic groups that inhabit the British Isles.”<sup>27</sup> His book includes one of the first detailed descriptions of Slovakia in English, but his sympathies clearly lie with the Hungarian elite rather than with the Slovak peasants, whom he describes in primarily negative terms such as “humble” and “slavish.”<sup>28</sup> Since most educated Slovaks of the period were fluent in both Hungarian and German, Slovak writers could have been familiar with either the German original or Hungarian translation

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26 Paget, John. *Hungary and Transylvania, with Remarks on their Condition, Social, Political, and Economical*. London: John Murray, 1850. 67.

27 Gephardt, Katarina. *The Idea of Europe in British Travel Narratives, 1789–1914*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2014. 153.

28 Ironically, while Paget’s travelogue includes one of the earliest appearances of the term “Slovak” in English, he expresses an outright dislike for the Slovaks, although he admits, “I really can scarcely say why” (Paget, *Hungary and Transylvania*. 87).

of Mednyánszky's book, and they may have read the German translation of Paget's travelogue, which appeared in 1842.<sup>29</sup>

Paget paraphrases the legend in considerable detail, although more concisely than in the German version: "the most interesting part of the old ruins was the lovers' well, sunk through the solid rock, four hundred and fifty-six feet,—and that too by the force of true love. But I must tell the tale as Mednyánszky has recorded it." Like the Hungarian chronicler, he begins with the castle's "strength and magnificence," as well as Zápolya's "deep disappointment" for being unable to find a sufficient water source. Despite his avowed intention to follow the previous version, his retelling has some differences; for example, he uses the spelling "Fatime" rather than "Fatme," and she does not appear until after Omar's arrival.

When Fatime is brought out to see Omar, they have a fervent embrace not described in the original: "The girl was sent for, 'Omar!' 'Fatime!' burst at the same moment from their lips as they rushed into each other's arms. Fatime, it appeared, was the daughter of a Pascha, and the affianced bride of Omar [...] and her lover, disguised as a merchant, had undertaken this journey in search of her." The heightened emotion in this encounter subtly changes the characters, perhaps to conform with the English reader's expectations of a story of thwarted love. In response to Omar's pleas, Zápolya makes his seemingly impossible demand for water in anger at the Turk's persistence:

"Try!" said he in scorn, "and when the rock yields water to your prayers, I give up Fatime, but not till then." "On your honour!"

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 29 Paget, John. *Ungarn und Siebenbürgen: Politisch, statistisch, öconomisch*. Trans. E. A. Moriarty. Leipzig: Weber, 1842.

exclaimed Omar, springing to his feet, “you give up Fatime, if I obtain water from this rock!” “If you do,” said the knight, astonished that the Turk should have understood him literally, “I pledge my knightly word to release your mistress and all my prisoners ransom free.”

While the original suggests that Zápolya’s challenge to “coax water” from the rock of the castle was meant in jest, Paget makes his “astonishment” at Omar’s acceptance more explicit. The tedious years of digging are also summarized more quickly: “Three wearisome years were passed, and they saw themselves apparently as far from success as at the commencement, when, almost exhausted with fatigue and despair, the joyful cry of ‘Water! water!’ burst on their ears. The spring was found—Fatime was free!”<sup>30</sup> Like the Hungarian count, the British traveler sees the legend in terms of a chivalrous bargain between two gentlemen, whose noble origins overcome the cultural divisions between the Christian and Ottoman worlds.

## The Well of Love as a Source for an Emerging Literary Tradition

Alexander Maxwell refers to the nineteenth-century Slovak nationalist writers Ján Kollár and his rival Ludovít Štúr as “Hungaro-Slavs: they sought to combine political loyalty to Hungary with cultural loyalty to a Slavic culture, variously imagined.”<sup>31</sup> As Robert Pynsent notes, Kollár

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30 Paget, *Hungary and Transylvania*, 91–92. Paget omits the Islamic-sounding phrase “God is great” as well as “Allah” in the original version.

31 Maxwell, Alexander. *Choosing Slovakia: Slavic Hungary, the Czechoslovak Language and Accidental Nationalism*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2009. 66–67.

certainly read Paget's work (most likely in German) and justifiably considered Paget's sympathetic identification with the Hungarians to be hostile to his dreams of pan-Slavic liberation:

Some of the worst enemies of the Slavs are for Kollár the English, whom he sometimes lumps together with the Germans. He comes utterly to detest the English—as a major threat to Slav survival ... He writes also about an Englishman called Paget (i. e. John Paget) who had married a Magyar (i. e. Polixena Wesselényi) and this brings him to his concern at the way these two oppressor nations were coming together.<sup>32</sup>

Kollár's desire for a unified "Czechoslovak" language was ultimately rejected by the followers of Ľudovít Štúr, whose codification of the Central Slovak dialect became the basis of the national literary language in the early 1840s. Štúr did not write about the "well of love," but the first literary versions of the legend that properly belong to Slovak literature were written by Štúr's older brother Karol and their associate Mikuláš Dohnány.<sup>33</sup> Both poems differ from Mednyánszky's story in certain details, suggesting that the poets may have also been influenced by Paget.

During this period, Ľudovít Štúr visited Trenčín (his mother's birth-place), and in his short travelogue "A Journey Through the Region of the Váh" ("Cesta po Považí," 1840), reminiscent of the introduction to

.....  
32 Pynsent, Robert. *Questions of Identity: Czech and Slovak Ideas of Nationality and Personality*. Budapest: Central European UP, 1994. 93. The reference to Paget occurs in Kollár's *Cestopis obsahující cestu do Horní Italie a odtud přes Tyrolsko a Bavorsko, se zvláštním ohledem na slavjanské živly roku 1841*. Prague: I. L. Kober, 1862. 299.

33 Befitting Romantic poets, both of the Štúr brothers and Dohnány all died tragically young.

Mednyánsky's "Well of the Lovers," he describes "the great, legendary, and presently desolate castle, one ancient wing of which revealed itself to me from afar ... That castle is of archly important significance to history, especially the history of the Slovaks, although few they are who are aware of this fact."<sup>34</sup> Štúr later wrote about its "historical significance" in the narrative poem *Matúš of Trenčín* (1853), in which he celebrated an earlier ruler of the castle, the thirteenth-century Palatine Matúš Čák, as a Slavic hero.

In 1844, Karol Štúr published the poem "A Monument to Love" ("Pomník lásky") in his collection *Echo of the Tatras (Ozvena Tatry)*, written in the "Slovakized" version of Czech commonly used by Slovak writers at that time. In 1846, Mikuláš Dohnány published "The Well of Trenčín" ("Trenčianska studňa"), which follows the basic outline of Štúr's version, but in this case using the newly codified Slovak literary language. Thus, while these poems were published only two years apart within the same intellectual circle, they appeared in two different languages. Both use the authentically Turkish form "Fatma" rather than Mednyánszky's "Fatme" (or the now-common "Fatima") but Karol Štúr's poem does not mention Stephen Zápolya or Hedwig by name, referring to them only as "the count" and "the lady of the castle." Unlike the short lines of Štúr's poem, which evoke the simple style of folksongs, Mikuláš Dohnány's longer metrical structure develops the melancholy atmosphere more fully. Rudolf Chmel has described Dohnány's poem as "descriptive and verbose,"

.....  
34 Štúr, Ludovít. "A Journey Through the Region of the Váh." *Slavdom: A Selection of Writings, in Prose and Verse*. Ed. and trans. Charles S. Kraszewski. London: Glagoslav, 2021. 61.

but it “served the national-educational needs of the second half of the nineteenth century,” and established the well as a Slovak literary motif.<sup>35</sup>

Both Štúr and Dohnány, as members of the small and oppressed Slovak national movement, most likely felt less admiration for Stephen Zápolya than had either Mednyánszky or Paget, since they emphasize the count’s anger and his unjust behavior toward the long-suffering Turkish lovers. From the beginning of Štúr’s “Monument to Love,” Zápolya’s true enemy is the unyielding rock that defies his wishes to make the castle invincible: “But his power was / Cursed by the rock, / Whose gutters did not give / Water to drink: / The Count was enraged, the Count cursed, / The rock laughed defiantly at him.”<sup>36</sup> At the same moment, Fatma is longing for her homeland: “Silence throughout the castle, / Fatma sits alone, / When the moonlight shines/ She looks into the distance, / What shines there in her world, / Cities, castles, minarets.”<sup>37</sup> The first description of the “romantic figure” of Fatma in Dohnány’s “Well of Trenčín” creates a sense of mystery: “she in a veil—her head downcast; / all eyes are turned to her, / everyone watches her with wonder.” Like Štúr, Dohnány portrays Fatma’s situation from her inner perspective, including her longing for her Ottoman homeland and her beloved: “her father’s house, the land by the sea, / and there she loved the warrior’s son, / for whom she still burns with fervent love ...”<sup>38</sup> When Omar arrives in Štúr’s version, he

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35 Chmel, Rudolf. “Mikuláš Dohnány – život a dielo.” *Slovenská literatúra* 14.3 (1967): 250.

36 Štúr, Karol. “Pomník lásky.” *Ozvena Tatry*. Pressburg: Antonijn Šmjđ, 1844. 84–85.

37 Štúr, “Pomník lásky,” 86.

38 Dohnány, Mikuláš. “Trenčianska studňa.” *Dumy*. Ed. Rudolf Chmel. Bratislava: Tatran, 1968. 52. Originally published as “Tale of the Well of Trenčín” (“Povešť o trenčianskej studni”) in *Život* 5 (1846). Unlike Mednyánszky’s account (which describes Fatma’s tearful eyes and black hair during the journey, yet states that Zápolya



and Fatma openly display their passion: “They both fly / Into each other’s arms: / Hearts burn in the heaven of love, / Burning without pretense.”<sup>39</sup> A similarly “fervent” reaction can also be seen in Dohnány: “He forgets everything and leaps toward Fatma, / who casts her black eyes to the ground. / There is a long moment of silence / and the two lovers fervently embrace.”<sup>40</sup>

In Štúr’s poem, the initial agreement to dig the well appears more as a calculated challenge than an impulsive taunt. When the Count refuses Omar’s offer of gold: “Take Fatma and take freedom / When you bring forth water from this rock,” the Turk responds with a gentlemanly handshake: “If you have my promise, / Where is your right hand?”<sup>41</sup> Dohnány’s poem retains a sense of Zápolya’s mocking refusal: “Gazing around boldly and proudly, Zápolya haughtily tells the Turk: / ‘Until you bring forth water from this rock, / until then you won’t lead Fatma from here!’”<sup>42</sup> At the climactic moment of both poems, the discovery of water, the characters are thinking of home. In Štúr’s version, the lovers hear the cry, “Allah, water water,” and immediately think of their homeland: “Their homeland shimmers before their eyes, / The breeze of love blows through it.”<sup>43</sup> Dohnány’s Omar is “turning his sorrowful gaze toward his homeland” (implying possible acceptance of his defeat) when “all at once the joyful cry ‘water!’ of many people / awakens him from his

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had never looked at her before Omar’s arrival) Fatma’s beauty is first revealed when Zápolya brings her to his wife and removes her veil.

39 Štúr, “Pomnjk lásky,” 86.

40 Dohnány, “Trenčianska studňa,” 53.

41 Štúr, “Pomnjk lásky,” 87–88.

42 Dohnány, “Trenčianska studňa,” 53–54.

43 Štúr, “Pomnjk lásky,” 90.

sad rumination.”<sup>44</sup> Unlike Mednyánszky and Štúr’s character (but like Paget’s), Dohnány’s Omar does not give thanks to Allah, deemphasizing the cultural difference of the poem’s hero. The final lines of Štúr’s poem portray Omar and Fatma traveling home, leaving the well behind as an eternal monument to loving self-sacrifice, while Dohnány’s remains closer to Mednyánszky’s original, in which Zápolya keeps his promise and rewards Omar with his beloved’s freedom and a “wonderful treasure.” What is most notable in comparing these two versions is the fact that “The Well of Love” and its Romantic Turkish hero were brought into the Slovak literary tradition through a process of translation, in which the previous German and Hungarian versions were transformed into Czech and Slovak, along with the more unexpected influence of an English travelogue.

It is also worth considering that in this period of literary mystification, it is not impossible that Mednyánszky entirely fabricated the legend of the well of love in order to give Trenčín Castle a more glorious role in the struggle on the Habsburg-Ottoman frontier.<sup>45</sup> The motivation for such an invention might be found in the real-life history of the Zápolský family. Stephen and Hedwig’s son John Zápolya (c. 1490–1540) was a controversial figure who was criticized in the nineteenth century by both Slovak and Hungarian writers. After assuming the Hungarian throne following the defeat at the Battle of Mohács in 1526, John Zápolya found himself in a power struggle with Archduke Ferdinand of Austria during the peak period of Turkish conquest in Central Europe. Driven out by

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44 Dohnány, “Trenčianska studňa,” 55.

45 The story resembles the Persian legend of Farhad and Shirin, also well-known in Turkey, in which the king Khosrow II orders Farhad, who is in love with his wife Shirin, to carve a water passage through the mountains. Unlike “The Well of Love,” it ends tragically.

the Habsburg army, Zápolya asked for the support of Sultan Suleiman in 1528 (leading to the Ottoman conquest of Buda and the first siege of Vienna) which left him with a dubious reputation for collaboration with the enemy.

Sir Thomas More makes a veiled allusion to this conflict in his last work, *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* (1534), which he wrote when imprisoned in the Tower of London. The narrative is presented as a conversation between two Hungarians, who discuss the struggle within the Empire: “And now strive there twain for us [John Zápolya and Ferdinand]. Our Lord send the grace that the third dog [Suleiman] carry not away the bone from them both.”<sup>46</sup> Since More alludes only obliquely to the unnamed “twain,” this conflict seems to have been sufficiently well-known that his reference would be clear to the English reader of his time. It thus seems conceivable that Mednyánszky created the Romantic Turk Omar (who willingly enslaves himself for love) in order to give Stephen Zápolya a symbolic victory over the Ottomans, almost exactly three centuries after his son John’s real-life capitulation to them.

The first prose work published in Štúr’s literary Slovak was the historical novella *Janko Podhorský* (1844) by his follower Ján Francisci-Rimavský. It begins in the Tatra Mountains, where the protagonist Janko is preparing to head off to battle. Janko and his friends discuss John Zápolya’s struggle with Ferdinand: “[Zápolya] feels his weakness and calls upon the Turks for help, those who loot the entire region. . . they have him as a tool for their ferocity, which he, in his blindness, cannot see.” They openly criticize Zápolya, “who [says he] wants good for us. . .like a loving

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46 More, Thomas. *A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation*. Ed. Leland Miles. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1965. 9.

father. Fine goodness, a fine father!” The following scene shows Zápolya meeting with Suleiman in Buda Castle, and when the sultan shouts, “Glory to you, Allah! Buda is mine!”, the obsequious Hungarian replies: “Who can resist your victorious force, victorious emperor?”<sup>47</sup> Despite its historical setting, Francisci-Rimavský’s criticism of John Zápolya is aimed at the Hungarian leaders of his own time who suppressed their national minorities for the sake of greater autonomy from the Austrians.

Following the revolts across Europe in 1848, Hungary’s minority nationalities faced severe repression. In this period of disillusionment, Ján Kalinčiak published the historical novel *The Prince of Liptov* (*Knieža liptovské*, 1852) that features Stephen Zápolya’s struggle for power with Matthias Corvinus’s son John, although the majority of the events are historically inaccurate.<sup>48</sup> It features a subplot with Zápolya’s daughter Marienka and Corvinus’s brother Ján Červeň (both fictional characters) which Veronika Kucharská describes as “the classic Shakespearean motif of the tragic love of two people from enemy clans.”<sup>49</sup> Zápolya condemns Červeň to death for treason, forces Marienka to watch, and causes her death from sorrow; the Palatine is himself stabbed to death by one of Červeň’s friends.

Two years earlier, Kalinčiak had published his historical novella “The Pilgrimage of Love” (“Púť lásky,” 1850), which features a love triangle between the Slovak Žofia, her suitor Janko Černok, and the Turkish Aga Osman. As the story opens, the narrator describes Aga Osman as “youthful, high-spirited, [and] courageous,” adding that “there was not a

47 Francisci, Ján. *Iskry zo zaviatej pahreby*. Bratislava: Tatran, 1977. 77–78.

48 Kalinčiak, Ján. “Knieža liptovský.” *Kalinčiak*. Ed. Július Noge. Vol. 1. Bratislava: Tatran, 1975.

49 Kucharská, *Ducissa*, 45.

more handsome youth in the whole area.”<sup>50</sup> On Černok and Žofia’s wedding day, Osman kidnaps his rival and takes him to Belgrade, but Žofia follows them, disguised as a male troubadour pleading for Černok’s freedom with Elmira, the daughter of the vizier. This echo of the scenario in “The Well of Love” (with the nationalities and genders reversed) takes an unexpected twist when Elmira falls in love with the supposedly male visitor, then discovers her true identity and angrily sends her as a slave to Aga Osman, who has been drowning his unrequited love in forbidden wine. As the narrator observes: “He may be a Turk, not having in the depths of his heart that idea of a woman that is celebrated in the songs of the West, but a Turk’s soul can still dream of love, just as we do.”<sup>51</sup> Osman nobly releases both captives, but on Černok’s return, he is mistaken for a Turk due to his clothing and killed by his own countrymen, and Žofia dies from grief. The final sentence confirms the narrator’s sympathetic identification with his Ottoman protagonist: “You will feel sorry for the perished, passionate lovers; I feel sorry for Osman.”<sup>52</sup> It is unclear whether Aga Osman was inspired by the self-sacrificing Omar from “The Well of Love,” but Peter Petro has noted that “Štúr’s circle considered Kalinčiak’s heroes too dependent on their passions; for these characters, love was a virtual dictator, to the exclusion of all else.”<sup>53</sup> In the context of Romantic nationalism, Kalinčiak’s writing was too romantic to effectively serve the nationalist movement, regardless of its relationship to historical reality.

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50 Kalinčiak, Ján. “Pút lásky.” *Kalinčiak*. Ed. Július Noge. Vol. 1. Bratislava: Tatran, 1975. 176.

51 Kalinčiak, “Pút lásky,” 167–68.

52 Kalinčiak, “Pút lásky,” 177.

53 Petro, Peter. *A History of Slovak Literature*. Montreal: McGill-Queens UP, 1995. 83.

Just as Slovak Romanticism was giving way to the prevailing trends of literary realism, the most influential representation of the Ottomans in Slovak literature appeared in Samo Chalupka's poem "The Turk from Poniky" ("Turčín Poničan," 1863). The ballad begins with a fearful Turkish attack, in which the Janissary leader or "Turčín" finds an old woman and takes her into captivity, treating her cruelly on the journey. Upon their return to Istanbul, the old woman becomes the nurse of the "Turčín's" child, whom she calls "my dear grandson." When her captor is outraged at this, she responds that she has recognized him as her long-lost son, taken in a previous raid: "with a star-shaped mark on his side."<sup>54</sup> Kneeling before the old woman (like Omar before Zápolya), the "Turčín" and his wife beg her forgiveness and promise that they will now treat her with honor. The mother forgives them but declares her wish to return to her homeland, suggesting that her love for it surpasses even that for her newly reunited family.

Unlike Mednyánszky's legend, Chalupka's poem has clear origins in the oral tradition. According to Lubomír Kováčik, Chalupka "always carefully elaborated the material for a future poem, as attested by his notes. There we find side by side notes from archives, annals, historical works and records of oral performances of songs and legends."<sup>55</sup> Chalupka credits his source as the Evangelical pastor Matej Kosec, who recorded an original folksong inspired by an actual Ottoman raid on the village

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54 Chalupka, Samo. *Básnické dielo*. Bratislava: Tatran, 1973. 54–55. In a presumably pan-Slavic gesture, Chalupka uses the South Slavic demonym "Turčín" rather than the standard Slovak "Turek"; the former word has now become synonymous in Slovak with "poturčenec," meaning a Turkish convert with Christian origins. Thus, a more accurate translation of the title might be "The Devshirme (or Renegade) of Poniky" rather than "Turk."

55 Kováčik, Lubomír. "Samo Chalupka." *Slovník slovenských spisovateľů*. Ed. Valér Mikula. Prague: Libri, 1998. 187–88.

of Poniky in 1678. This adaptation of a folk source as an artistic text underwent what Peter Petro has described as “the interesting process of popular reappropriation of his work, which was spread via recitation by people who considered it folk poetry. Thus something that had emerged from folk literature returned to it.”<sup>56</sup>

As in Mednyánszky’s story, Chalupka’s poem takes the background of the Turkish invasions and turns it into a mythical affirmation of love, in this case for the Slovak homeland. With its simple metrical and rhyme structure, “The Turk from Poniky” quickly became established as a classic in the Slovak literary canon, and even to some extent within the nascent “Czechoslovak” canon that attempted to unify the Czech and Slovak traditions. In one anthology of Czech literature for high schools from the late nineteenth century, Chalupka was the only writer using Štúr’s literary Slovak to be included (albeit in a Czech translation.)<sup>57</sup> It is ironic that of the two best-known Romantic Turks in Slovak literature, Mednyánszky’s noble Omar is a native-born Turk, while Chalupka’s barbaric “Turčín” is a converted Slovak, reflecting the traditional saying “poturčenec horší Turka” (a convert is worse than a Turk.)

The well of love remains a popular tourist attraction in Trenčín, with some international visitors having heard of the tale, which is otherwise little-known outside Slovakia. According to an interview on Slovak Ra-

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56 Petro, *History of Slovak Literature*, 79.

57 Truhlář, Antonín. *Výbor z literatury české. Doba nová*. Prague: Bursík & Kohout, 1893. 179–80. As Marek Nekula has pointed out, this is the literature textbook that Franz Kafka used to study Czech, which provided him “with a sound basic knowledge of the 19th century Czech National Revival and the cultural and political forces it unleashed.” Kafka’s later reflections on “the literatures of small peoples” continue to inform current debates on world literature. See Nekula, Marek. *Franz Kafka and His Prague Contexts*. Prague: Karolinum, 2016. 149–50.

dio with the castle's long-term director, Augustin Vavrus, they may have begun to believe in its authenticity: "Some Turks asked how it had happened with Omar and Fatima, and whether Omar really dug that well or not."<sup>58</sup> In 2017, an original musical based on the story was performed in the castle courtyard by students from a local school, reenacting the fictional event in its "real" location.<sup>59</sup> Thus at the local level, the "popular reappropriation" (in Petro's terms) of Omar and Fatima's mythical love continues to evolve.

## Conclusion

As the Slovaks moved from the ethnic conflicts of the late Habsburg Empire through the struggles of interwar independence in the Czechoslovak state, the wartime Nazi puppet republic, and Communist rule, "The Well of Love" became fully naturalized as a national legend. Two adaptations of the tale by Vladimír Plicka and Ľudovít Janota, both in collections of stories about Slovak castles, were published almost simultaneously in 1934 and 1935, respectively. Plicka has a long chapter about Trenčín that flows almost seamlessly from historical fact to myth. He ends the factual section with a reference to John Zápolya's struggle for power with Ferdinand, then retells "The Well of Love" ("Studňa lásky"), which is perhaps the first time that the best-known form of the title was used in print. Plicka's concise summary of this "folk tale," as he calls it,

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 58 Anonymous. "Bol raz jeden hrad." 9 March 2021. *Radio Slovakia International*. Web. 15 May 2021. <<https://skrsi.rtv.s.sk/clanky/sutaz/250265/sutaz-2-kolo-bol-raz-jeden-hrad>>

59 Anonymous. "Deň detí oslávia premiérou muzikálu." 27 May 2017. *SME/My Trenčín*. Web. 15 May 2021. <<https://mytrencin.sme.sk/c/20543489/den-deti-oslavia-premierou-muzikalu.html>>



closely follows the version by Mednyánszky (whom he credits at the end.)<sup>60</sup> Janota, who grew up in Trenčín and whose collection was first inspired by its castle, keeps the main elements of the story, Fatme/Fatima's beautiful sorrow, Omar's self-sacrifice, and Zápolya's hard-hearted stubbornness. In Janota's retelling the Hungarian characters are otherwise less selfish when compared to other adaptations: Zápolya is mostly sorrowful rather than proud, and his wife shows genuine affection for Fatima. However, in this version when Omar finishes digging the well, Zápolya "celebrates like a little child" and wants to embrace him, but the Turk pushes him away with the bitter words: "You have your water, but your heart is harder than rock!"<sup>61</sup> This now proverbial conclusion makes the comparison of Zápolya's heart with the stone of his citadel more explicit than the earlier versions. This change subtly shifts the reader's sympathetic identification away from the defender of the homeland and toward the nominal invaders, the Romantic Turk Omar and his beloved Fatima.

In the same year as Janota's collection, Jozef Nižňanský published his full-length historical novel *The Well of Love* (*Studňa lásky*, 1935), in which the characters are given deeper psychological development and in which the eponymous love crosses national borders for the first time. His recounting of the love story of Omar and Fatima (here called Fatma) is set specifically in 1490, when Zápolya actually ruled Trenčín, and adds additional characters, both fictional (like the young captain Ambróz Opatovský) and historical (such as Cem Sultan, the younger son of Sultan Mohamed II, who fled to the West in a power struggle and was taken captive.) One of the most significant changes is the expanded role

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60 Plicka, Vladimír. *Slovenské hrady*. Žilina: O. Trávnicek, 1934. 29–31.

61 Janota, Eudovít. *Slovenské hrady*. Bratislava: Tatran, 1975. 446–49.

played by Zápolya's wife Hedwig (here called Hedviga.) Nižňanský turns the simple romance of the original legend into a double love triangle: Hedviga is infatuated with Ambróz, who is in love with Fatma, while the Turkish beauty is caught between her intended husband, the exiled Cem, and Omar, her true love. Zápolya's repressed attraction toward Fatma, as an underlying motivation of his refusal to release her (only hinted at in Mednyánszky's original), turns into a long and almost farcical psychological game between the lord and lady of Trenčín. After Zápolský asks Fatma to sing for them, he praises her to his wife: "I never would have believed that I would someday find a Turk so likeable [...] I'm even ready to find beauties in the Turkish language, which I always found so odious."<sup>62</sup> This provokes Hedviga's jealousy, especially when Zápolský teasingly refuses to admit whom he considers the most beautiful woman in the castle, but in turn he controls his anger when his suspicions of her infatuation with Ambróz are confirmed. Ultimately this situation is resolved by maternal love: Hedviga grows to appreciate Fatma's attention to her children, and realizing that Ambróz's love for Fatma is stronger (and equally hopeless) she learns to share her husband's sympathetic identification with the captive.

Only a decade later, another adaptation by the historical novelist Jozef Branecký served the national mythology of the wartime clerico-fascist Slovak State. Branecký was a priest and school principal in Trenčín, and the title character of his *Fráter Johannes* (1929), set during the Ottoman invasions in 1663, is a Janissary who rediscovers his repressed Slovak origins (like Chalupka's "Turčín"). In an anonymous interview soon after Nižňanský's novel appeared, Branecký avoids mentioning it directly

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 62 Nižňanský, Jozef. *Studňa lásky*. Bratislava: Slovenské nakladateľstvo krásnej literatúry, 1964. 79.

but hints that he finds the book has lost the original tale's authenticity: "Our people [*ľud*] dramatically capture the whole story, which I have not read about in any adaptation of this tale." When the interviewer requests that he "reproduce the dramatic section" unique to oral versions, Branecký gives a brief summary that includes the reply seen in Janota's version: when Zápolya challenges Omar to bring water from his "stern, merciless" eyes or from the rock itself, the Turk answers, "Harder is your heart, harder is your eye, than this rock, so it will give me a drop of water!"<sup>63</sup> The comparison of Zápolya's heart with stone, rather than a metaphor for the lord's capricious cruelty, is here presented as a literal choice.<sup>64</sup> Branecký's adaptation of "The Well of Love" was published in the fascist newspaper *Gardista* in 1943. Branecký's account follows the usual outline of the story, although with an epilogue called "The Veil" (*Závoj*) in which Fatima's wedding veil is caught on rosebushes as she and Omar ride away from Trenčín, which is now often included in retellings of the tale.<sup>65</sup> It was reprinted the same year in Branecký's anthology of "tales and historical articles" that was intended for use as a high school textbook, the romanticized Ottoman lovers making an odd addition to an otherwise heavily nationalistic and ideological retelling of the heroic Slovak past.

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63 Anonymous. "Jozef Branecký hovorí..." *Slovenský týždenník* 31.37 (1934): 1–2. Perhaps not coincidentally, Branecký's use of the word "people" echoes the name of the far-right Slovak People's Party (*Slovenská ľudová strana*), which dominated Slovak politics before World War II and took power during the war.

64 The fact that both Branecký and Janota (as well as Nižňanský) include some version of this phrase in their nearly contemporaneous retellings suggests that it might have already become common in the oral tradition.

65 Branecký, Jozef. *Z tisícročia. Povedí a historické články*. Bratislava: Tlač. Andreja, 1943. 95–97. It is not clear whether Branecký took this epilogue from folk retellings he had heard, or added it himself.

During the socialist period, at least two other prose adaptations appeared, by Jozef Horák and Ján Domasta, both of which added an unexpected twist to the story: one gives it a tragic ending, while the other makes Fatma responsible for her own captivity.<sup>66</sup> In Horák's melancholy version (probably written in the 1940s, and published in 1959) the "mildness" of Omar's character, which goes back to Mednyánszky's version, is transformed into tearful passivity.<sup>67</sup> After three years of laboring on the well, Omar's discovery of water brings a moment of joy to the gloomy story, but he learns the terrible truth Zápolya has been hiding from him: Fatima has died. The reader's sympathetic identification with his heroic struggle is thus replaced by pity. Domasta's "Well of Love" (probably written in the late 1960s) pays more attention to the Turkish background of the characters than to the events in Trenčín, focusing on the complicated relationship between its Turkish characters: Fatma, her father Pasha Selim, and her two suitors, the beylerbey Ali and the younger bey Omar.<sup>68</sup> While Fatma is liberated enough to have her own (ill-fated) adventures traveling alone, the addition of a love triangle (as in Nižňanský's novel) overshadows the purity of Omar's sacrifice. What is notable is that nearly all of these versions were written before Mednyánszky's story was translated into Slovak in the 1970s.<sup>69</sup> Since German was no longer

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 66 For more on these modern versions, see Sabatos, Charles D. "Studne lásky a srdce kamenné: dve storočia trenčianskej legendy v slovenskej literatúre." *Slovenská literatúra* 67.4 (2020): 306–30; and Sabatos, Charles D. *Frontier Orientalism and the Turkish Image in Central European Literature*. Lanham: Lexington, 2020. 86–92. A portion of this article previously appeared in Chapter 3 of the latter monograph, 80–86.

67 Horák, Jozef. *Povesti spod Sitna*. Bratislava: Mladé letá, 1979. 60–63.

68 Domasta, Ján. *Povesti o hradoch*. Bratislava: Osveta, 1991. 269–72.

69 The nationality in the title of the translated edition was changed from "Hungarian" to "Slovak": Mednyánszky, Alojz Freiherrn von. "Studňa lásky" *Dávne povesti o slovenských hradoch* [Long-ago Folktales of Slovak Castles]. Trans. Hana Ferková. Bratislava: Tatran, 1974. 57–65.

as widely spoken among educated Slovaks after 1945 as it had been in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and Mednyánszky's book was long out of print, these later adaptations were presumably inspired by the oral tradition that had "returned to the folk" more than by the primary textual source.

Saree Makdisi has suggested that British Romantic Orientalism should be seen in relation to "other developments—in India, Africa, the Arab world, and elsewhere [...] precisely because modernization has always been, and continues to be, a worldly and a global process, in which the so-called margins and peripheries have always played a global role."<sup>70</sup> However, as Ukrainian studies scholar Vitaly Chernetsky points out, Edward Said "only narrowly escapes [the] misjudgment of largely ignoring the complicated nature of the Russian/Soviet empire," and the addition "of eastern and southeastern Europe to [his] overall scheme challenges the otherwise dangerously looming binarization in a profound way."<sup>71</sup> The lasting appeal of "The Well of Love" across nearly two centuries derives not only from the undying devotion of Omar and Fatima, but also from the way that it presents (in Said's terms) the "hidden elements of kinship" between Omar and Zápolya. Both forms of the Turkish image described by Andre Gingrich, "violent aggressor and invader," as well as "defeated and humiliated opponent," functioned as enduring metaphors for Central European identity—whether a Hungarian identity, as it is for Mednyánszky and Paget (although neither wrote in Hungarian), or a Slovak one, as it is for Štúr and Dohnány (only the latter of whom wrote in Slovak.) In the case of Omar, the "defeated" Turk becomes a Romantic

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70 Makdisi, Saree. *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. xii.

71 Chernetsky, Vitaly. "Postcolonialism, Russia and Ukraine." *Ulbardus Review* 7 (2003): 32.

hero, at the same time strengthening his enemy's military power. Even as they integrate a fictionalized (or forged) version of history into national culture, Mednyánszky and other writers of the late Habsburg era diverge from the "combative awareness" that characterizes Romantic Orientalism in West European literatures and follow the earlier approach of sympathetic identification.

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## The Well of the Lovers

(from *Tales, Myths, and Legends from Hungary's Past*)

by Alois Freiherrn von Mednyánsky

Translated by Nina Cemiloğlu

When the thoughtful wanderer rushes through the picturesque valley of the Váh and all of a sudden, where the mountains are reluctant to allow the impatient river a narrow passage, under the roaring waters of the Váh and under the mysterious rustling of the wind-shaken trees, sees in the white light of the full moon the huge ruins of Trenčín Castle soaring up into the immeasurable vault of the sky, he will stand still, moved and lost in powerful memories. He will brood seriously and gently over what the old forest with its rustling, and the Váh sometimes hurling louder against its banks, and the thousand-year-old castle, like old schoolmates and playmates of youth, never tire of telling each other: what times and men they saw, men who (but only momentarily) imprinted the stamp of their great personality onto them and who performed deeds which still live and will live beyond the narrow limits of space and time! How new and different everything has become from the great Moravian king Svatopluk to Thököly, and from Thököly's time to the present! Only the Váh, the Carpathian Mountains, and their snow have remained the same.

Trenčín was the key to northwestern Hungary. It was of the utmost importance for the military campaigns of King Mathias against Moravia and Silesia, during which he, like in the wars of personal bitterness against the Emperor Frederick, cast to the wind the most wonderful fame which he had inherited from his great father: to be the savior of the more and more fearful Christendom and to fight against its arch-enemy. Mathias believed that Trenčín would be in the best of hands when he gave it to Stephan Zápolya. Stephan immediately chose Trenčín as

his headquarters. But the way he found Trenčín when he first laid eyes on it, appeared to him inappropriate and inferior to this purpose. The falcon's eyes of the skilled warrior noticed grave deficiencies with regard to the solidity of the castle; besides, the pride of the upstart lusted after a much more ostentatious outward splendor. If those rough times had been as overly refined and spiritually destitute as our times, moveable wealth would have been preferred to immoveable wealth and people would have prostrated themselves before the idol of gold, in which case neither Trenčín nor St. Petersburg would have been built.

Thanks to the huge workforce, the construction work proceeded incredibly fast. Skilled master craftsmen and artists were appointed and here, too, the eagle-like verve of the builders did not remain without visible results. Mathias founded a university and a library as national institutes, donating many books from his treasure to them. Besides, he hired more than 300 scribes who were to copy the newly rediscovered works of classical antiquity. Moreover, he invited scholars, painters, sculptors, printers, as well as architects, artisans and peasants from Italy, Germany, Provence and the Court of Burgundy. Thick walls, through their depth and width and through ramparts hewn from the rocks of the castle protected its entrance on the east, the only side which was accessible. Sturdy towers defied every attack. Immense vaults held supplies. Numerous threefold gates with drawbridges and portcullis secured the entrances. But what was the use of all these achievements as long as the most important necessity was missing: Water. Human beings and animals, so numerous in the vast castle, could not endure a long siege only supplied with two cisterns which were unreliable and even likely to cause infectious diseases. The impetuous Zápolya and his master builders futilely exhausted their ingenuity trying to thrust a tunnel into the rock as deep and far as the river Váh, which was believed to be one hundred fathoms distant from it. One could only hope to find a source



parallel to the river. Nature, which had bountifully lavished her gifts on Trenčín, seemed to mock human ingenuity and daring as conceited folly in that she seemed to refuse with relentless stubbornness just that which would give to everything else lasting value and true perfection.

While the renovations were still in ardent progress, Count Stephan was summoned by his king to join the military campaign against the Turks. With one hundred men Stephan joined the king's troops which were accustomed to victory, roved as far as the river Moldova and was rewarded with the most exquisite part of the spoils: The most distinguished captives, the ones which would bring him the highest ransom. On his journey homeward, he sent couriers ahead of him to his wife Hedwig, a born Duchess of Teschen, a woman of a proud, rigorous and disagreeable beauty and character, to announce to her his wish and command: that he intended to lead the numerous captives clad in alien garments with Moors and camels, the abundant spoils, the wreathed banners, the victory shouting and cheering brothers in arms, who were only rivaled in martial skill and bravery by the king's "Black Army", and the wild and exultant horses in a festive procession into Trenčín, the newly-founded seat of his might and the immortality of his name which resembled the forest stream; that he intended to be welcomed with flying banners and bright cheering, with thundering guns, with loud trumpets and drums as dull and dark as sinful pride!! Half of Hungary billowed like a cornfield around Trenčín on the occasion of the rare sight.

Among the captives was the pearl of this victorious exploit, the daughter of a noble Turk, a tall slender figure in the first bloom of youth, only the more enchanting in her stony sorrow. The gentle fire in her starlike eyes, which were shaded by an abundance of dark curls, seemed to be firmly attached to the ground as if to warm a precious tomb, as if to refresh it with a few heavy teardrops from long eyelashes. The rosebud of

the delicately closed mouth only seldom opened to exhale a deep sigh. She anxiously inquired after the mistress of this proud castle among her fellow prisoners who treated her with great awe. Her request was uttered with shy vehemence: to be locked up with her female slaves like in her home country was almost the only sound which escaped the lovely lips during the entire journey. Her request was granted without any hindrance. The Baroness even bestowed her eccentric favor on the beautiful captive. People without a peculiar inner spark of love cause more sorrow through their favor than through their hatred. The tenderness of the monkey which takes the beloved child out of the cradle and carries it around with all the loving gestures of a nurse will hardly please the mother.

Several months passed. Zápolya was inspecting the almost finished buildings and as always so also on that day lamenting the only thing still lacking—water—with sullen displeasure, when he was informed of the arrival of Turkish merchants with a sizeable retinue and the peace flag. Their leader vehemently desired to be allowed to talk to him. He summoned them. The leader of the group (legend has it that his name was Omar) turned with noble dignity to the Count and said that he was “sent by mighty dynasties and already passed the camp of the king and several castles in order to free their captive relatives from their chains of slavery, in exchange for a high ransom and to lead them back home into the laps of their grieving families.” Zápolya, who was himself a feared warrior and therefore at least not a stranger to martial virtues, recognized at first glance the demeanor of command in the supposed merchant—a fire which elevates ambition to virtue, and a gentleness which he did not understand. Count Stephan reacted less harshly than usual to Omar’s request. If they were to agree on the ransom, the Mussulman would be allowed to bring the captives as free men back to their home country with the exception of those whom the Count had already given to his

vassals and courtiers and who were thus no longer in his power and at his disposal. This situation was applicable to a single female slave whom the Baroness had chosen in place of anything else from the ample booty and from whom she was inseparable. Count Stephan allowed Omar to see and talk to all of his captive compatriots without exception. Omar was overwhelmed by an inner tremor. He hardly dared to ask the names of the captives. According to the oral tradition, her name was Fatme. The name fell heavily onto Omar's heart which was torn by the inner pain of separation. The son of one of the most distinguished Pashas, himself decorated with splendid wreaths of fame, he had lost Fatme in that attack in which the brave Magyars in the confusing darkness of the night had entered the heart of the city, had made countless prisoners of war and had drowned the city in fire, but were again driven out by him whose fists and breast were possessed by a hundred demons. No longer in control of himself, he forgot all prudence and hastily made a stunningly high offer for this slave girl. "Infidel, you are not wise", Zápolya replied, "Do you think you are talking to a shopkeeper? Fatme is in the possession of the Baroness, who on no account is willing to give her up." He turned his back on Omar and sent the prisoners to him. Men came who had fought with Omar many hours, men for whom he had bled and who had bled for him, burdened by chains, bowed down by homesickness and consumed by woe. He did not see anything, he did not hear anything, his eyes remained steadfastly turned toward the upper gate—and she came—it was she—whom he had possessed and lost—who had possessed and lost him, in fact, she had considered him dead! Who can add to this?

The heart-rending tidings of this unspoken and unspeakable reunion had also reached Zápolya's ears. He became attentive. Until then he had hardly noticed Fatme, who was always veiled according to the custom of her home country, and he had paid less attention to her than to his wife's colorful parrots and white palfrey. He hurried down, and smiling,

then surprised and halting, finally burning glances fell down upon the beautiful infidel. Completely drowned in insatiable ambition, throughout his life his heart had been threefold iron-clad against love. But he considered his will to be the law of gravity and his desire to be the only law which was to move his world. He was genuinely glad that he was never overwhelmed by the desire to attach a star to his fur cap, which he would not have been able to reach, and this rupture in his will would have probably driven him mad. Omar observed all of Zápolya's looks and movements as he used to observe the enemy throwing himself here and there into the wild waters while riding on a horse as fast as an arrow.

His secrets hastily revealed by his pain and joy, the favor and disfavor of chance, at the mercy of the most tormenting restlessness, Omar did what he should do least of all. He pressed Zápolya more and more vigorously and made him several very high offers. At last the Count impatiently stamped his foot on the ground and said: "She is priceless to me and the Baroness, and no god is powerful enough to restore her to you!" Completely beside himself, Omar fell down at Zápolya's feet. Zápolya commanded Fatme in a hoarse voice to return to the women's chambers. "Call forth water from this rock. Until then you will not be able to coax out of these eyes the foolish tears of compassion", he thundered at the Mussulman. "Try it, turn these rocks into wax, and I will release Fatme together with all the other captives, without demanding ransom!" A roar of laughter from the sneering warped lips concluded the harsh speech. Omar rapidly stepped up to the Count, who was hurrying away, and demanded his right hand: "If I create a well from these rocks, will you turn your harsh mockery into sincere earnestness?" Full of unbelieving amazement and pride, the Count thrust his hand at him as a symbol of his agreement and trustworthiness: "He had never broken his word to either friend or foe."

Every page in the history books about their attacks or resistance of fortifications shows what a miracle the Ottomans could achieve in tunnel warfare at that time.

With his hands solemnly raised toward his breast, Omar vowed to never leave this place unless he had redeemed Fatme or otherwise to die there. Omar's retinue and the captives crowded around the castle in order to attain the highest of all goods, their freedom and fatherland,—with Omar, their pride and hope, with him to whose bearing they all bowed, to whom they all gave their hands and hearts, who was steadfast in joy and sorrow alike as if he had been assured by fate and knew in advance the secret sources of the easiest and most difficult problems which he had to solve in life, council and battles. During countless weeks and months Omar sustained his companions' brave eagerness with his word and example, promise and reward. The rock always remained equally resistant and his most cherished and only hope remained, in proportion to the effort, still without any advance worth mentioning.

Three eternally long years had passed under these efforts. All the pleas, commands and threats of the father and the Sultan to call him back were futile. The undaunted had already reached an incredible depth, but there was still no water. His companions' determination, endurance and strength began to dwindle day by day. It was Omar who was the strong, firm tie which held together the loose bundle of birch rods. Besieged by heroic wounds, by hope and anguish, and herculean travail, the body seemed to gradually forsake any service to him, too. His proud beauty was consumed by sorrow, his eyes' lightning quenched. Life, disgusted by itself, prowled sluggishly and sullenly, certain that the parting was near, through his veins. The brave young man was left with only the cold ashes of a happiness which had died a long time ago.

The blows of a hostile fate almost always have their healing herb in faith,—yes, even death has its antidote in posthumous glory for this world and the hereafter. But wounds which the heart has wrought upon itself, a heart which is bound up with another heart, each beating for the other, are incurable and the afflicted disdains replacement and consolation and salvation. Thus Omar had poured an ocean of love into a treacherous sieve of hope. Now it seemed to him that there was nothing left to him but this invincible love and an unbearable suffering.

Finally prostrated onto the sickbed by exhaustion and pain, he summoned his companions and admonished them, invoking the God of their forefathers and, reminding them of Mahomet's promises, to be steadfast beyond his death. Fatme's tender care, in no way hindered by Zápolya, kept alive the small, flickering flame of this dear life.

“Who does not choose the thousandfold desires of selfishness, or the base evasions of fear or the thousandfold excuses of sloth, but only one thing, his greatest, his most necessary, will succeed!” Omar kept whispering the golden words of his prophet to himself, barely audibly breathing, with closed eyes, when, all of a sudden, he was startled by a vehement noise of jubilation. “The Lord is great! The Lord is great! Water, water, master! Praised be Allah!” The miraculous tidings spread through the castle at the speed of wildfire. The impossible had happened. Water found at a depth of more than 76 fathoms, Zápolya's ardent wish granted, and his Trenčín now unassailable!

From this and from all his castles Zápolya had all the Turkish captives summoned by couriers and gathered together with wagons. He entertained them royally and led Fatme himself into Omar's arms, outfitted with a splendor worthy of his imperiousness and love of magnificence.



MARKÉTA KŘÍŽOVÁ

## **5 Noble and Ignoble Savages and Their Scientific “Colonization” in the Making of the Nation**

The colonial expansion of the 19th and early 20th centuries was closely intertwined with the development of a vast repertoire of scientific disciplines. The territorial conquests overseas made it possible for scholars to investigate new botanical and zoological species, to improve the methods of cartography, to experiment with cures for hitherto unknown diseases, and to observe the various human groups, their customs, religions and languages. Not only was this research in the service of colonization, but the very acts of colonial expansion were often legitimized precisely because they opened new avenues for the development of scientific inquiry. The scientific expeditions to various parts of the globe paved the way for appropriation of the “discovered” regions and their inhabitants. The museums of natural history and of ethnology that were established in European cities in this period represented not only monuments to intellectual advancement, but also to the political and economic ambitions of the European states and their elites outside the continent. At the same time, interpreting the non-European landscapes, natural rarities, culture and history, and sharing this knowledge with other Europeans,



generated additional symbolic capital to the colonizing nations, as transnational connections were established and strengthened through new media, such as journals or international congresses.

These aspects have already been discussed and documented in monographs dedicated to the history of (colonial) sciences as well as to the history of European colonial expansion and the study of nationalism.<sup>1</sup> But it is important to note that the pursuit of scientific activities overseas, precisely because of their connection to colonization, entailed a special relevance for members of those European nations that were not directly involved in the processes of exploration and subjugation of non-European regions. They could still take part in the mapping and naming of unknown landscapes and in the extraction of what Stephen Greenblatt refers to as “marvelous possessions” (although his analysis deals with the earliest encounter between Europe and non-European regions).<sup>2</sup> The natural-historical and ethnographical specimens deposited in museums and other scientific institutions at home served as proof of the fact that a representative of the national community had visited faraway regions and studied them thoroughly. In turn, these important, albeit symbolic acts of possession nurtured the “colonial fantasies.” The term coined by Susanne Zantop for pre-colonial German ambitions with respect to

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1 Among these can be mentioned Pyenson, Lewis, and Susan Sheets-Pyenson. *Servants of Nature: A History of Scientific Institutions, Enterprises and Sensibilities*. New York: HarperCollins, 1999; Adas, Michael. *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance*. New York: Cornell UP, 1989; Stocking, George, ed. *Colonial Situations: Essays on the Contextualization of Ethnographic Knowledge*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1991.

2 Greenblatt, Stephen. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992.

overseas colonies<sup>3</sup> offers itself as a starting point for an analysis of the ambitions and attitudes of non-colonizing national communities within the European continent.

The present chapter will deal with one relatively restricted case study: that of the Czech Lands (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia) in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The analysis will focus on scientific expeditions, public lectures, museum exhibits, ethnographic shows, travelogues and other forms of symbolic exploitation of non-European cultures as they took place within the Czech Lands, in the broader context of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Through this case, I want to demonstrate the specificities of Czech scientific (non)colonialism within and outside Central Europe. Also, I aim to explore the ways through which the intellectual appropriation of faraway lands and peoples was used to pursue local political goals and promote the defensive nationalisms towards the other ethnic groups within the multi-national setting of Austria-Hungary.

In the first place, the Habsburg state exhibited official acts of (intellectual) possession of the overseas regions. In parallel with these efforts by the state authorities, and sometimes in opposition to them were the struggles of local intellectuals in various regions of the Austria-Hungary to increase the visibility of their respective nations in the wider European context, to prove their "greatness" and level of civilization. Thus a relatively restricted research case of one of those national contexts opens up some more general questions, not only on the mechanisms of construction of imagined communities, via the scientific or quasi-scientific

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3 Zantop, Susanne. *Colonial Fantasies. Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870*. Durham: Duke UP, 1997.

exploration of the other, but also the intellectual exchanges and competitions within the heterogeneous milieu of Austria-Hungary as well as the role of center and “peripheries” in the production of knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

## Colonial Dreams and Nationalist Struggles

As in other parts of Central Europe, the territory of the Czech Lands was inhabited by several linguistic and ethnic groups. While Czech-speakers were the dominant one, the second largest was composed of Germans. These “German-Bohemians” (*Deutsch-Böhme*; the ethnonym *Sudeten-Deutsche* only emerged in the later decades of the 20th century) developed their own specific identity, considering themselves a group apart from other Germans.<sup>5</sup> After hundreds of years of relatively peaceful coexistence of Czech- and German-speakers, the birth of nationalist sentiments in the second half of the 19th century caused the political, economic, social, and cultural separation of the two groups, resulting in what the historian Jan Křen has described as “everyday-life xenophobia.”<sup>6</sup> But the Czechs stood not only in opposition to the real or imagined oppression from Germans, but also voiced their dissatisfaction with the state of political subjection to the Habsburg dynasty, an aspect of which was the use of German as the official language and the alleged mar-

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4 See the similar case study in a further field of the history of science: Prendergast, Thomas R. “The Social Democrats of Scholarship: Austrian Imperial Peripheries and the Making of a Progressive Science of Nationality, 1885–1903.” *Religions* 6.4 (2015): 1232–48.

5 For the history of this group, see Houžvička, Václav. *Czechs and Germans 1848–2004: The Sudeten Question and the Transformation of Central Europe*. Prague: Karolinum, 2016.

6 Křen, Jan. *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft: Tschechen und Deutsche, 1780–1918*. Trans. Peter Heumos. München: Oldenbourg, 1996. 20.

ginalization of Czech in communication within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. At the same time, the Czechs confronted real or imagined stereotypes that were supposedly considering them and the other inhabitants of Central and Eastern Europe as less developed, or even “barbaric” in comparison to the “true Europeans” of the West.

In their effort to prove that they could qualify as a fully-fledged and civilized nation, and especially that they could compete with the Germans and other Europeans in all fields of intellectual and cultural activity, the Czechs throughout the 19th century pursued research, established scientific terminology, and published or translated specialized treatises. In other words, in the Czech Lands—as elsewhere in Central Europe and outside this region—the motivation for scholarly activity in this period certainly did not lie solely in the thirst for knowledge. Many other social factors were implicated in the production of scientific facts and their presentation to the public. In the situation of nationalist competition, even the choice of language in which the specific problem was presented was essential and meaningful. A scholarly text written in Czech also conveyed, beyond its specialized content, a message about the existence of a Czech-speaking scholarly public. In other words, it indicated the existence of a cultivated social strata which was receptive to such elevated genres. When choosing a branch of study, factors such as it being a field not yet covered by the existing Czech scholarship could play an important role.<sup>7</sup>

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7 This aspect of scientific production throughout the region was dealt with in the text by Ash, Michell G., and Jan Surman. “The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Central Europe: An Introduction.” *The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge in the Hapsburg Empire, 1848–1918*. Ed. Michell G. Ash and Jan Surman. New York: Palgrave, 2012. 1–29. For the specificities of the Czech case see also Macura, Vladimír. “Problems and Paradoxes of the National Revival.” *Bohemia in History*. Ed. Mikuláš Teich. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 182–97.

Interestingly enough, similar ambitions were held by German-Bohemian scientists. Germans-Bohemians had from the 1880s begun to lose the upper hand in politics and economics in the Czech Lands, a fact resented and widely commented on by their representatives. Throughout the late 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, the Germans throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire struggled to prove their high intellectual status, even though they vacillated between several communities of identification: Austria-Hungary, with its explicit allegiance to German language and culture, but also its imperial history and ruling dynasty; pan-Germanism promoted by the recently created, expansive and aggressively nationalist German Empire; or the local German-speaking community of the Czech Lands, considered as culturally superior to the Czechs. But in all cases, they manifested their allegiance to their community by the exclusive use of German in official as well as private communication—in contrast to the Czechs, who needed at least partial fluency in German to succeed in trade, administration and of course science.

The intellectual competition between the Czechs and German-Bohemians culminated in 1882 with the division of Charles University, the most important academic institution in the Czech Lands. A slightly absurd situation ensued, as both institutions continued to share the name, the university seal, even the grand hall for ceremonies and the library, even though, where possible, they separated the rest of the infrastructure.<sup>8</sup> The interaction of the two university communities from then on was

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8 For the history of the two universities, see Pešek, Jiří. “Die Prager Universitäten im ersten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts: Versuch eines Vergleichs.” *Universitäten in nationaler Konkurrenz: Zur Geschichte der Prager Universitäten im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Ed. Hans Lemberg. München: De Gruyter, 2003. 145–66; Havránek, Jan. “The University Professors and Students in Nineteenth-Century Bohemia.” *Bohemia in History*. Ed. Mikuláš Teich. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 215–28.

practically nil. Also, from the mid-19th century, the Royal Bohemian Society of Sciences was gradually turned into an exclusively Czech institution, with German-Bohemians cancelling their membership. Instead, the Society for the Furthering of German Science, Arts and Literature in Bohemia (*Gesellschaft zur Förderung deutscher Wissenschaft*) was founded, which, although indeed pursuing scientific goals, primarily emphasized the political dimension of intellectual development.<sup>9</sup>

The competition in the academic community was eagerly followed by the general public. Within the frame of the nationalist competition, "popular education" through books, picture journals, public lectures or museum expositions figured prominently. The Czechs as well as German Bohemians shared the notion of useful knowledge, which was at the same time politically implicated. Thus, the dissemination of knowledge in Czech or German was considered a patriotic duty, contributing to the development and well-being of the national communities. The scientists felt the need to not only present their research in specialized media, but also to give public lectures and write texts for popular magazines. Of course, neither the Czechs nor German-Bohemians actively defending and cultivating the national spirit truly encompassed the entire population, which contained a great number who felt nationally indifferent. Additionally, national and ethnic identities were not static, inherent categories. But it can be stated that by the end of the century, following what were known as the Badeni ordinances (1897) that aimed to put the Czech and German languages on an equal level as official languages of Bohemia, provoking considerable protests by the German-Bohemians

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 9 Mandlerová, Jana. "K změně charakteru *Gesellschaft zur Förderung deutscher Wissenschaft, Kunst und Literatur* v letech 1900–1910." *Sborník historický* 33 (1986): 89–134.

and equally heated responses from the Czechs, the majority of the population was drawn into the clashes of popular nationalism.<sup>10</sup>

It is against this background of nationalist intellectual competition that we have to read the beginnings of scientific interest in non-European regions and peoples in the Czech Lands. What is equally important is the way in which these activities are integrated into present-day historiography. After 1918, the German-Bohemians abruptly lost their dominant position in the newly founded Czechoslovak Republic. Methodological nationalism has been dominant in the historiography of science ever since. While early Czech contributions to the history of non-European anthropology or archaeology are studied as part of the national story, the activities of their German counterparts in the same field are left aside.

## Expeditions From the Center of Europe

Within the frame of the national competition in science, local topics were preferred in the study of nature and history as well as anthropology. In 1883, Antonín Frič, a prominent Czech naturalist, wrote an article in a popular journal on the tasks of the already existing, but still rather rudimentary national museum (at that time under the name Czech Museum). The text explicitly envisioned a parochial institution, purposefully ignoring exhibits from abroad: “The museum should serve as a national university for the natural sciences and the history of arts; it should be first and foremost the image of our homeland, of its natural products,

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10 The details of the struggle provoked by Badeni ordinances explained in Glassheim, Eagle. “Between Empire and Nation: The Bohemian Nobility, 1880–1918.” *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*. Ed. Pieter Judson and Marsha Rozenblit. New York – Oxford: Berghahn, 2005. 74–75.

historical artefacts and artistic produce."<sup>11</sup> But at the same time there were some members of the two national communities who precisely within the frame of this parochial and nationalist competition advocated the need to also study the distant regions and to leave Czech (or German-Bohemian) imprints there and in the history of their research.

The migrants from the Czech Lands to the USA, Latin America, the Middle East and, to a lesser extent, Africa and even Australia reported from their new places of residence. Often, their letters to family members were reprinted in journals and thereby contributed to a diversification of the imaginaries of these regions and also their native inhabitants that were circulating in the Czech Lands. There were also private collectors of exotic arts and curiosities—for example Albert Sachse, a German-Bohemian glass beads and bijou exporter from the city of Jablonec nad Nisou/Gablonz in North Bohemia. His company had branches in various non-European regions, including present-day Nigeria and Ghana, then British colonies. Sachse collected not only local jewelry and costumes adorned with beads (that served as inspiration for local designers and glassmakers), but various other ethnographic objects, wood carvings, masks, etc.<sup>12</sup> There were adventurers who visited various parts of the globe, and while these were certainly not numerous, they addressed wide audiences via travelogues and travel fictions, popular among all social strata in both ethnic groups.<sup>13</sup> This popularity of texts dealing

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11 Frič, Antonín. "České muzeum a jeho úloha." *Osvěta* 13.2 (1883): 98.

12 Jiroušková, Jana. *Albert Sachse's Collection in the National Museum*. Prague: National Museum, 2011.

13 Among these adventurers it is worth mentioning Čeněk Paclt, allegedly the first Czech to visit all five inhabited continents. Paclt lacked formal education, but the articles he occasionally sent to Czech popular journals were appreciated by the readers because of the vivid descriptions of exotic settings. They were later published in a volume: *Čeňka Paclta cesty po světě: příhody a zkušenosti jeho na cestách po Americe, Australii,*



with exotic lands was of course not necessarily an outright manifestation of colonial fantasies, as there was a general interest of especially the middle and upper classes in all kinds of diversions and departures from the everydayness.

Also, we need to perceive all these colonial dreams within the framework of the entire Austro-Hungarian Empire. While the monarchy lacked proper colonial possession overseas, the Austrian scientists and scholars did participate in the widespread expansion of the “empire of science” in the 19th century, and thus in the attempts at symbolic capital acquisition that these entailed.<sup>14</sup> There were numerous expeditions organized by the Austrian Geographical Society, to the Arctic, Central Africa, the Far East, to the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire, and North Africa.<sup>15</sup> There were the “exploratory” and leisure voyages of the members of the imperial family, such as the Archduke Maximilian or the crown prince Rudolph, to various parts of the globe and the collections they brought back and put on display.<sup>16</sup> There were even half-hearted efforts at “proper” colonization, such as the possession of Franz Josef Land by the Austro-Hungarian North Pole Expedition of 1872–74 or the expedition to the Nicobar Islands in 1886. The participants of these voyages

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*Novém Zealandě a jižní Africe.* Ed. Jaroslav Svoboda. Mladá Boleslav: Karel Vačlena, 1888.

14 Ash and Surman, “The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge,” 11. See also Sauer, Walter. “Habsburg Colonial: Austria-Hungary’s Role in European Overseas Expansion Reconsidered.” *Austrian Studies* 20 (2012): 5–23.

15 Mattes, Johannes. “Imperial Science, Unified Forces and Boundary Work: Geographical and Geological Societies in Vienna (1850–1925).” *Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Geographischen Gesellschaft* 162 (2020): 166.

16 Donko, Wilhelm. *An Austrian View of the Philippines. The Austrian Scientist Karl von Scherzer on his visit in Manila aboard the frigate “Novara” in June 1858.* Berlin: epubli, 2012.

also brought back numerous objects that were stored and eventually displayed both by scholarly institutions in Vienna and in the local capitals throughout the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, including Prague.<sup>17</sup>

All of these efforts by the central authorities were mimicked in local national communities within the monarchy. The Czech Geographical Society (Česká společnost zeměvědná), which was founded in Prague in 1894, had no German-Bohemian counterpart, and thus those German-speakers interested in far-away countries had to resort to the Imperial Geographical Society in Vienna.<sup>18</sup> However, even though successful travelers were celebrated, they received a rather weak institutional support. All Czech as well as German-Bohemian travelers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries had to rely on their personal resources, since none could get along with only the institutional support. Still, not only were realized expeditions, but within the scope of these scientific activities some overt formulations of colonial projects appeared, even though all of these remained on paper.

Between 1872–1879, the Czech physician Emil Holub travelled through the southern part of Africa, mapping the landscape and collecting ethnographic and natural historical specimen. In an effort to raise money

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17 For the North Pole expedition, see Payer, Julius. "The Austro-Hungarian Polar Expedition of 1872–4." *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 45 (1875): 1–19; Schimanski, Johan, and Ulrike Spring. *Passagiere des Eises. Polarhelden und arktische Diskurse 1874*. Vienna: Böhlau, 2015. The Nicobar Islands "colonization" is less studied, but the connection to Czech Lands (the participation of Czech sailors and their collecting activities) is explored in Heroldová, Helena. *Jitřenka pluje na východ: Deník českého námořníka Václava Stejskala z cesty korvety S.M.S. AURORA do Malajsie, Indonésie, Číny a Japonska z let 1886–1888*. Prague: Mare Czech/National Museum, 2007.

18 Mattes, "Imperial Science," 170.

for his next journey, Holub organized a series of lectures and an exhibition in Vienna and then in Prague, which arranged stuffed animals and mannequins in native costumes into scenes of “real life”. What is relevant here is that during his lectures, he voiced the conviction that Czechs should aspire to have their own colonial settlements in Africa, “for their benefit and that of the natives”. He announced that he had “decided to pursue a partial colonization of the Bechuanaland, and I aim for this purpose to realize the first preparations during my coming journey. [...] After concluding treaties with respective headmen on purchase or rental of territory and so acquiring fertile and healthy estates, I would turn to these states the migration of industrious and diligent (but only such) peasants, heading now to America.”<sup>19</sup> After returning from the first journey in 1879, Holub became a local celebrity in the Czech Lands and received a triumphant welcome in Prague, complete with cheering crowds, addresses by deputies of cultural and political organizations, banquets and congratulatory telegrams, all extolling the fact that a Czech had set foot upon the previously unexplored interior of Africa.

But the case of Holub is also a good example of how imperial and local scientific colonialism in the Habsburg empire nurtured each other. Already during his first stay in South Africa, Holub not only sent popular, patriotically tinted articles to Czech newspapers, but also openly promoted Austrian commerce and propagated industrial products imported from the monarchy. His second expedition (1883–1887) took place under the official auspices of the Austrian Geographical Society, whose

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19 Holub, Emil. *Kolonisace Afriky. Angličané v Jižní Africe*. Prague: E. Holub, 1882. 10–11. For Holub see Šámal, Martin. *Emil Holub: Cestovatel – etnograf – sběratel*. Prague: Vyšehrad, 2013. For the Czech colonial fantasies in general, see Lemmen, Sarah. “Noncolonial Orientalism? Czech Travel Writing on Africa and Asia around 1918.” *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History: From Germany to Central and Eastern Europe*. Ed. James Hodgkinson and John Walker. Rochester: Camden, 2013. 209–27.

"Proclamation" on this regard, presenting the aims of the expedition, was translated into Czech and published in the journal of the Czech National Museum. The wording of the proclamation is an explicit manifesto of scientific colonialism, but at the same time alluding to the general ideal of science: "We live in the age of exploration, and the representatives of all learned nations, competing with each other in the most noble way, give all their strength, yes sometimes even their lives, to rip off the mysterious veils that cover the until today unexplored regions of the earth!"<sup>20</sup> The proclamation thus hints at scientific competition, and also alludes to the general legitimization of the expeditions—for the greater good of the expansion of knowledge. This particular case, of course, was of even more importance for Austria-Hungary due to interest in Africa growing stronger among all European powers in the early 1880s.

To accentuate the imperial nature of the second expedition, its membership was purposefully composed of representatives of various crown lands of the Habsburg empire. There was, besides Holub, only one Czech, then a Hungarian, Austrian etc. The financial and material support was rendered not only by the Emperor Franz Joseph II, the Austrian Ministry of War and Ministry of Culture and Education, the Austro-Hungarian Export Association, but also the municipal council of Prague, the Czech National Museum and various private benefactors.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, Holub continued to be explicitly appropriated by the Czech community, being praised as the "Czech Livingstone", even though his contribution to the mapping of African interior was in fact rather meagre.<sup>22</sup> This was in spite of regrets being voiced that he was lacking in the most important

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20 *Časopis Musea království českého* 54.3 (1880): 601.

21 Šámal, *Emil Holub*, 261.

22 The epithet for example in *Národní listy* 25 October 1879: 3.

of symbolic signs of belonging, the Czech language. As noted in one of the newspaper reports, “due to the long residence in faraway countries, [he] had somewhat forgotten his mother tongue and acquired a strange, non-Czech accent.”<sup>23</sup> It is symptomatic that during his lecture tour in Vienna in 1880 Holub was allegedly criticized by local press for the “Slavic accent” of his German.<sup>24</sup>

Two decades after Holub, a German-Bohemian high school teacher and amateur archaeologist from Prague, Julius Nestler, spent several years in Bolivia, pursuing archaeological and linguistic research. His stay was supported both by the Austrian Ministry of Education (with a special stipend for teachers eager to expand their horizons through traveling) and the Vienna Academy of Sciences, as well as by numerous organizations and private individuals with “Great German” inclinations. When commenting on his excavations in Bolivia, Nestler also evaluated the economic potential of the region, the possible benefits from the construction of a railroad, and the transcontinental connection of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans through the Amazon River, from the exploitation of “mines rich in ore”, rubber forests and fields of sugarcane, cacao and tobacco, making use of the cheap workforce of local Indians. Then, he explained how archaeology was connected to such economic potential. “While [North] America and England are vigorously supporting their researchers, it will not be a bad policy to encourage German research, [...] to add another link to the growing chain of German enterprises in the world.”<sup>25</sup> In this case, Nestler identified not with Vienna, but rather with Berlin and the colonial ambitions of imperial Germany. Still, he lec-

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23 *Národní listy* 26 October 1879: 1.

24 Bauše, Bohumil. *Život a cesty Dra Emila Holuba*. Prague: J. Otto, 1907. 112.

25 Mandel, Karl. “Die Atlantis – ein neues Kolumbusei.” *Der Forscher: Illustriertes Zentralblatt für Deutsche Forschung* 1.2 (1910): 27.

tured on his endeavors in the local context of Prague, rendering prestige to the German-Bohemian organizations in their effort to prove more global outreach than could be demonstrated by the Czechs.<sup>26</sup>

## Museums as Carriers of National Ethos and Colonialist Rhetoric

The museum displays of non-European cultures were mostly related not to the discipline of anthropology—which did not become established either in the German or the Czech university until the very end of the 19th century—but rather to museums of industry and applied arts as demonstrations of “primitive technologies.” For the Czechs the Náprstek Museum (Náprstkovo museum) became the most important institution. Founded in 1874 by the Czech patriot Vojta Náprstek, who was enthusiastic about progress in both technical and social areas, it was originally devised as an industrial museum, similar to that in Kensington (today the Science Museum in London). Through documenting world scientific and technological progress, its aim was to assist Czech industrialists, at this period still marginalized by their German competitors, to develop their skills. However, from the beginning, the industrial collections were supplemented by exotic souvenirs from all over the world, such as those brought by Náprstek from his stay in North America in 1848–58. Further exhibits were supplemented by other Czech travelers and tourists. They were partly integrated into the collections as demonstrations of early developmental stages of various arts and crafts and as documentation

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26 For Nestler see Křížová, Markéta. “Julius Nestler and the ‘Nestler Collection’ in the Náprstek Museum: Nationalism, Occultism and Entrepreneurship in the Making of Americanist Archaeology in Central Europe.” *Annals of the Náprstek Museum* 37.2 (2016): 17–32.

of the progress which supposedly liberated Europeans, and especially women, from the bondage of exhaustive physical labor and freed their minds for intellectual pursuits.



**5.1** Interior of the Náprstek Museum – Chinese, Japanese and Indian collections. Engraving published in *Světozor*, August 14, 1885, clipping preserved in the Archive of the Náprstek Museum: fond Schrapbooks, No 133, Náprstkovo české průmyslové muzeum II, f. 52–54 (National Museum – Náprstek Museum, Prague, Czech Republic).

The pamphlet entitled “Outline of the Collections of the Industrial Museum” stated the purpose of the institution as the following: “The museum should serve as a [...] source of practical education to our nation, demonstrating graphically and systematically all human activities.” With respect to the content of the displays, it advised potential donors that “whoever intends to contribute to something to this institution of general utility, should take into account that the donations are to typify cer-

tain arts and crafts. Curia have no value whatsoever for this museum."<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, the number of curia increased. In fact, there was a logic behind this stemming from the basic evolutionist principle that stood at the very founding of Náprstek's Industrial Museum. Náprstek himself, as well as most members of the Czech intellectual circles, relied heavily on the idea of linear progress. The displays of non-European exhibits identified them explicitly as "examples of primitive technologies" to be contrasted to the newest, modern inventions. But the inclusion of great numbers of such displays soon disrupted the original conception of an industrial museum. It was transformed into a rather hybrid institution, the more so because "primitive" displays from Bohemia and Moravia were also included, such as embroideries and laces, under the denomination "Works of our Mothers."<sup>28</sup>

In anthropological museums of 19th century Europe, and the Náprstek Museum was no exception, the objects on display were often seen as "scientific booty". In fact, the word "booty" literally appeared in the newspaper coverage when travelers returned from America with new collections. For example in 1905 the daily *Lidové noviny* (Popular Newspaper) announced that "Vojtěch Frič Jr., the youngest Czech traveler, will return soon to Prague from his second South American journey with a rich scientific booty."<sup>29</sup> This specific article is even more interesting, as its continuation revealed much about the motivations of Czech scientific

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 27 *Rozvrh sbírek průmyslového muzea českého*. Prague: n.p., 1878. 12.

28 Today, transferred to Ethnographic Museum (Národopisné museum), they constitute part of the National Museum. See Filipová, Marta. "Peasants on Display: The Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition of 1895." *Journal of Design History* 24.1 (2011): 15–36.

29 *Lidové noviny* 20 July 1905: 5. Similarly, in April 1880 the newspaper *České noviny* wished to František Czurda, medical doctor employed Dutch East Indies Army in present-day Indonesia, who intensely collected and sent home ethnographic articles, "safe return with much booty." See *České noviny* 10 April 1880: 1. Quoted in Po-



travelers. The anonymous author stated that “Frič is only 22 years old. Already five years previously he applied as a member to the expedition of natural historical society of Vienna which under the direction of Prof. Wettstein planned to study Brazilian flora. He was refused to become a member of the expedition, prevented from taking part even as a lowly gardener, because—he is Czech. Thus, Frič started alone to America.”<sup>30</sup>

The quote thus connects the two principal themes of the scientific competition within the Czech Lands. On the one hand, there is the accentuated Czech nationalism and the image of an excellent Czech scholar being unjustly slighted by Austrian authorities only because of his nationality. On the other, there is the possessiveness connected to this competition. Frič himself later prided himself on being able to amass “collections richer than those in Berlin.”<sup>31</sup> Thus competitiveness became the principal motivation in scientific activity. Also, ventures to the furthest possible places were favored by learned societies and private sponsors to secure for the Czech nation—or for German-Bohemians—a “primacy” in their exploration.

Even the natives could assume the role of “scientific booty”. Emil Holub returned from his first journey accompanied by a girl, allegedly a “ran-

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přišilová, Dagmar. “The Náprstek Museum’s Indonesian Collections and their Collectors.” *Indonesia and the Malay World* 108.37 (2009): 125–46.

30 *Lidové noviny* 20 July 1905: 5. Vojtěch Frič (who later, after returning from his first South American journey, started to combine his first name with this Hispanic variant in public as well as private communication, so the version Alberto Vojtěch Frič often appears in bibliographic references) was a nephew of the naturalist Antonín Frič. Family networks in patriotic and scientific activities would be another topic worthy of exploration with regard to the Czech Lands and Central European region in general.

31 Letter by Frič to Josefa Náprstková, in document annex in Frič, Alberto Vojtěch. *Indiáni Jižní Ameriky*. Prague: Orbis, 1977. 242–43.

somed slave". This deed was announced in the local press in a way that effectively reduced the native girl to the level of museum exhibit or zoo animal. "Mr. Holub brought to do Prague an eight-year-old girl from the African tribe of the Bechuans, whom he named Bella, two live African hawks, two owls, live monkey and a big African dog".<sup>32</sup> Besides the possibly unconscious dehumanization of the African girl, the reference to the act of naming in fact mimics the act of naming and of possession by Robinson Crusoe towards his "Man Friday". Similarly to Holub, Vojtěch Frič also brought a member of the Chamacoco tribe from Argentina to Prague in 1908. This "genuine Indian", nicknamed Červíček (Little Worm) by the members of Prague intellectual circles, played the role of a living trophy, a Columbus-like proof of the existence of faraway lands and the fact the scientist had been there.<sup>33</sup>

The Náprstek Museum, being privately owned and notoriously underfunded, lacked the grandiosity of national museums founded as "cathedrals of science", with impressive facades and interior designs.<sup>34</sup> The exhibits were put on display in several rooms in the family house of the Náprsteks, and the cramped space significantly limited the development of the museum. It was only in 1886 that a three-story building, still within the premises of the house and brewery, was completed.<sup>35</sup> In any case, it

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32 *Národní listy* 18 October 1879: 2.

33 This episode was explored in detail in Křížová, Markéta. "Wild Chamacoco' and the Czechs: The Double-Edged Ethnographic Show of Vojtěch Frič, 1908–9." *Staged Otherness, c. 1850–1939: East-Central European Responses and Contexts*. Ed. Dagoslav Demski et al. Vienna: CEU, 2021. 109–44.

34 The phrase "cathedral of science" was often used for museums throughout the 19th century. See Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. London: Routledge, 1995.

35 Secká, Milena. *Vojta Náprstek: Vlastenec, sběratel, mecenáš*. Prague: Vyšehrad, 2011. 210.

could not be compared as a scientific institution to the anthropological museums that were coming into existence in the same period in Germany, France or elsewhere in Europe. It was rather a social club, where members of patriotic bourgeois circles met in an exotic setting. It offered members of the public the chance to view exhibits from non-European regions once a week, on Sunday afternoons. There was no professional staff employed; the curators and guides were all volunteers, often well-to-do ladies. There was no effort to organize collecting expeditions, the exhibits were augmented almost solely on the basis of gifts, and were therefore haphazard and fragmentary. But the very existence of the museum was a source of pride to the patriotic circles, a proof of their belonging within the civilized nations of Europe.

Emil Holub had great plans for either the presentation of his collections within the Czech Museum, or the establishment and furnishing a specialized African Museum, “the only one of its kind in the whole world”.<sup>36</sup> The truth is that in spite of the growing interest in Africa among Western European powers, scientific research of the continent was minimal and there certainly was no specialized museum anywhere in Europe. But Holub’s vision of the museum was rather vague; additionally, his ideas are documented mainly in fragments throughout his preserved correspondence and personal notes. In the end, none of his efforts succeeded. The Czech Museum struggled with a lack of space and funding, but it was restricted above all by the abovementioned spirit of parochialism and the directors were not willing to invest the limited resources into African displays. Similarly, the idea of a self-contained African Museum did not provoke a positive response from the local authorities (or the circles around the Náprstek Museum, which would

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36 Šámal, *Emil Holub*, 360.

lose its uniqueness in the context of the Czech Lands) and Holub lacked adequate personal funds. Characteristically, he later turned to the two capitals of the Habsburg Empire, Vienna and Budapest, negotiating for its establishment there; but again, the African Museum seemed too exotic and detached from the realities of Central Europe.

As for the German-Bohemians, they shared the motivations that led Náprstek to establish an industrial museum that would use the exotic objects to accentuate the developmental line and the high level of advancement of Czech arts and crafts. Like Náprstek, they sought inspiration abroad, in the Kensington Museum and similar installations elsewhere in Europe. At the initiative of a group of local industrialists and merchants, the Industrial Museum of North Bohemia (Nordböhmische Gewerbemuseum) was founded in 1873 in Liberec/Reichenberg, an industrial center with considerable economic importance, also known as "the stronghold of Germandom in North Bohemia".<sup>37</sup>

In contrast to Náprstek's institution, the Industrial Museum enjoyed the official support of local authorities from its foundation as well as those in Vienna (including financial contributions from Emperor Franz Joseph I and official patronage on the part of his younger brother, Archduke Karl Ludwig) that made the more purposeful acquisition of exhibits possible. It also manifested its loyalty to the Empire more pointedly—its very opening in 1783 was allegedly timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary

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37 *Deutsche Volkszeitung* January 1886. Quoted in Melanová, Miloslava. "Hlavní město Německých Čech? Liberec 1848–1918". *Hledání centra. Vědecké a vzdělávací instituce Němců v Čechách v 19. a první polovině 20. století*. Ed. Kristina Kaiserová and Miroslav Kunštát. Ústí nad Labem: Albis International, 2011. 294.

sary of ascension of Franz Joseph I to the throne.<sup>38</sup> But it was still mostly privately financed and the collections were made up of gifts from local German-Bohemian entrepreneurs and collectors. Its circumstances were also rather modest, as the collections were put on display in the attic of one of the Liberec schools; only decades later was a proper museum building erected. In the meantime, in 1883, the museum became subject not to the local trade guild, but to the newly created museum society. Similarly to the Náchod Museum, the local government was not involved and the museum maintained its independence.

Also, as in the case of the Náchod Museum, the most important role of the Industrial Museum of Northern Bohemia was social. It became one of the sources of pride for the local community, and a meeting place for like-minded local patriots. But what was characteristic is the fact that although the principal aim of the museum was to document and celebrate the advancements of local German-Bohemian culture and industry, the early acquisitions and donations also contained exotic artifacts, from the Near as well as Far East and other parts of the globe, apparently both to counterbalance the Náchod Museum and also to complement the evolutionary line of the exposition. As in the Náchod Museum, there was no effort made to study or comment on the exotic exhibits. Their non-European origin was a value in itself, in concordance with the totalizing, competitive conception of the museum.

Fascination with non-European, exotic cultures among the German-Bohemians in North Bohemia also manifested itself during the “German-Bohemian Exhibition” in 1906, an event that represented a

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38 Pazaurek, Gustav Edmund. *Das Nordböhmisches Gewerbe-Museum: 1873–98: Denkschrift zur Eröffnung des neuen Museums-Gebäudes*. Reichenberg: Selbstverlag des Nordböhmischen Gewerbe-Museums, 1898. 17.

German-Bohemian reaction to the extremely successful, but eminently political, Jubilee Exhibition in Prague in 1891 and the Czech-Slavic Ethnographic Exhibition two years later.<sup>39</sup> Both exhibitions, organized in imitation of great industrial and cultural gatherings that had been taking place in Europe throughout the second half of the 19th century, excluded the German-Bohemians and turned into a celebration of the Czech nation and its advancements. For this occasion the representatives of Czech emigrants in the USA brought White Wolf, a "full-blooded Indian from the Kickapoo tribe" of Kansas. Making and selling trinkets while clad in a "festive dress of his tribe" in front of a model of a log cabin, White Wolf served as a reminder of the hardships Czech pioneers had faced in North America.<sup>40</sup> The 1906 industrial exhibition in Liberec was the mirror image of the Czech-Slavic one, celebrating the German-Bohemians. Thus it also offered such amusements as the "Sudanese caravan", a stage show run by the German entrepreneur Carl Marquardt.<sup>41</sup>

## Noble and ignoble savages on the developmental scale

The widespread interest of Czechs as well as German-Bohemians in the numerous "ethnographic shows" that passed through the country proved their fascination with the cultural as well as physical specifics of the non-Europeans. As early as the 1870s, Prague in particular was

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39 Hlavačka, Milan. *Jubilejní výstava 1891*. Prague: TECHKOM, 1991; Filipová, "Peasants on Display."

40 Kovář, Emanuel. *Národopisná výstava československá v Praze*. Prague: J. Otto, 1895. 303.

41 Melanová, Miloslava, and Tomáš Okurka. "Historie výstavy/Geschichte der Ausstellung." *Německočeská výstava Liberec 1906/Deutschböhmisches Ausstellung Reichenberg 1906*. Ed. Anna Habánová. Liberec: Oblastní galerie Liberec, 2016. 23.

visited by the “Nubian caravans” or “northern shows” which were enthusiastically commented upon by the popular newspapers in both languages.<sup>42</sup> The scientific communities eagerly took part in the possibility of examining the “savages”. When one of the members of the touring “Samoyed Group” died in Prague in 1882, his body was examined and dissected at the Anatomical Institute of the then still-unified Charles University in Prague. It was afterwards buried at the city cemetery, but ten years later the Czech anthropologist Jindřich Matiegka disinterred it, again measured and analyzed the bones and the skull and then kept it within his osteological collection. In an article published in the journal of the anthropological association of Vienna, Matiegka used the skull to discuss comparative differences between races.<sup>43</sup> This case not only shows the importance of exotic specimens for the nascent anthropological science in the Czech Lands, but also the matter-of-fact, probably unconscious sense of superiority of Czech intellectuals over the men and women they studied, and their conviction that their pursuit of scientific progress legitimized practices that were at odds with the moral or legal regulations of the times.

There were some non-European groups that were viewed positively and with sympathy. Within the frame of the abovementioned sense of mar-

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42 The story of the Labrador group is narrated in detail in Křížová, Markéta. “Alone in the Country of the Catholics: Labrador Inuit in Prague, 1880.” *Ethnologia Actualis* 20.1 (2021): 20–45. See also analyses of other ethnographic shows that were taking place in Prague, from the point of view of Czech identity making and “othering” processes, in Herza, Filip. “Black Don Juan and the Ashanti from Asch: Representations of ‘Africans’ in Prague and Vienna, 1892–1899.” *Visualizing the Orient: Central Europe and the Near East in the 19th and 20th centuries*. Ed. Adéla Jůnová Macková, Lucie Storchová and Libor Jůn. Prague: Academy of Performing Arts, 2016. 95–105.

43 Matiegka, Jindřich. “Der Schadel des Samojedens Wasko.” *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 23 (1893): 62–63.

ginalization in Austria-Hungary, self-images of being "oppressed" or "colonized" by the Habsburgs were present in Czech public discourse and increased with the growth of the national movement.<sup>44</sup> The parallel between the oppression of Czechs and the colonized people was a chance to identify with the colonized rather than the colonialists, to see the situation from the point of view of the colonized. The medical doctor Pavel Durdík spent several years in Sumatra in the service of the Dutch army and was one of the important contributors to the Náprstek Museum. In spite of the fact that in his travelogues he exoticized the "man-eaters" of Sumatra, he simultaneously did not conceal his distaste for colonialism as "nothing else than robbery with respect to the local people, born in their homeland and her lawful heirs."<sup>45</sup> Even though he was in the service of the colonizing forces, Durdík expressed his sympathy for the oppressed and colonized, who defended their lands in spite of the weakness of their primitive weapons. While no outright comparisons were made, there was an implicit entreaty for the representatives of the Czech nation.

But it was especially the North American natives who were perceived positively by the Czechs. They were admired and constructed as virtuous heroes, as noble savages—their fate compared to that of the Slavs, wiped out by the German colonizers through the Middle Ages, or that of the Czechs oppressed by the Habsburgs, deprived of their political and

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44 Lemmen, "Noncolonial Orientalism?" 210; see also Mrázek, Jan. "Czech Tropics." *Archipel* 86 (2013): 155–90.

45 Durdík, Pavel. *Pět let na Sumatře: vypravování vojenského lékaře*. Prague: Frant. Bačkovský, 1893. 33; English translation Mrázek, "Czech Tropics," 184, who also explores in more detail Durdík's vacillation among belonging to the colonizers and sympathizing with the colonized. For biography of Durdík and also of other Czech travelers and collectors of objects from South-Eastern Asia see Pospíšilová, "The Náprstek Museum's Indonesian Collections."



cultural independence—or even that of the Czech migrants in America, desperately trying to preserve their native language. In his 1874 poem “On Indian graves”, the renowned Czech poet Josef Václav Sládek, who traveled to the USA in 1868–70, described the beauty and freedom of native Americans only to show the injustice and destruction caused by the encroaching white settlers.<sup>46</sup> The motive of “graves” was recurring in Czech poetry of the national awakening: the dusty graves of Czech kings served as a symbol of past glory and present humiliation. There was also the extreme popularity of the books by the German author Karl May, set in the Great Plains of North America, whose main heroes were the fictitious Apache chief Winnetou and the German adventurer nicknamed Old Shatterhand. It is interesting that May’s books are heavily marked by nationalist sentiments. The author explicitly contrasted the humane and virtuous attitude of the German traveler toward the natives to that of the “barbarous” Americans and representatives of other nationalities. In this particular case, however, the explicit pro-German discourse did not diminish the popularity of the books in the Czech milieu.<sup>47</sup>

But there was also the possibility of identifying with the colonizers. Both ethnic groups in the Czech Lands aspired to become equal with the most dominant European nations. Hand in hand with the sparse colonizing ventures and the more frequent colonial fantasies and practices, such as scientific colonization, went the generally contemptuous attitude towards the native inhabitants of the other continents. The Czech case

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46 Sládek, Josef Václav. *Na hrobech indiánských*. Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1951. 11.

47 The first book in the series, *Winnetou* (orig. ed. 1893), was published in Czech already in 1901. For the popularity of Karl May among the Czech readers see Moravec, Jaroslav. *Pražský případ Dr. Maye: Banální kapitola z nakladatelských dějin*. Prague: Toužimský a Moravec, 2006.

would thus fit the model developed by Ulla Vuorela (for the case of Finland) of "colonial complicity", with its joining of hegemonic discourses, coupled with derogatory perception, construction and stereotyping of "otherness" in the global context of modernization, nationalism, and the restructuring of power relations within Europe.<sup>48</sup> The scientific examination of "savages", the exhibition of their products and, within the ethnographic shows, their humiliating exploitation as showpieces helped the Czechs and the German-Bohemians to manifest their (supposed) superior position on the developmental scale and their pertinence to the concert of European powers.

This approach to non-European natives is clearly patent in the writings of the previously quoted Emil Holub, who perceived black Africans as immature, uncivilized and "ugly". The latter characteristics stood in stark contrast to the unique beauties of the African landscape, fauna and flora, which were praised and admired by Holub.<sup>49</sup> Similar attitudes are manifested in the popular travelogues and geographical treatises of Josef Kořenský, a high school teacher, ardent traveler and propagator of geography, who also unequivocally categorized human groups and put the Europeans (implicitly the Czechs) at the top of the developmental scale.<sup>50</sup> Ottokar Feistmantel, who in the final decades of the 19th century served in the British East India Company, denounced the barbarian usages of India (the obligatory *sati*, drowning of unwanted children,

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48 Vuorela, Ulla. "Colonial Complicity: The 'Postcolonial' in a Nordic Context." *Complying with Colonialism: Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Nordic Region*. Ed. Suvu Keskinen et al. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. 19–20.

49 Winter, Tomáš. "‘Tu šklebily se ohyzdné figury lidské...’ K charakteristice mimoevropských kultur v českých cestopisech 19. století." *Cizí, jiné, exotické v české kultuře 19. století*. Ed. Kateřina Bláhová and Václav Petrbok. Prague: Academia, 2008. 54–66.

50 Among other texts Kořenský, Josef. *K protinožcům: Cesta do Austrálie, Tasmanie, na Nový Zéland*. 2 vols. Prague: Otto, [1903].

absurd religious ceremonies) and praised the civilizing efforts of the British government, the improvement of sanitary conditions, opening the interior through the building of telegraph and railroad lines, the rational exploitation of natural resources, and scientific exploration.<sup>51</sup>

## Conclusions

It is apparent from the explanations above that the display of the exotic was inextricably coupled with the construction of national communities in the Czech Lands. The defensive nationalism, characteristic of this and other regions of Central Europe, needed the stereotypic images of “us” and of the others. Besides the internal others, such as rival ethnic groups or the Jews, or others in the immediate vicinity, the most prominent being the Turks, there were also the exotic others from non-European regions that could be used in identity construction. At the same time, as science became one of the important battlefields for the competition for national prestige and superiority in various branches of science translated as confirmation of the superiority of the national character, the role of the “savages” transcended that of positive models to follow or negative examples to be despised. The aspiring ethnic groups and nations, while deprived of the actual colonial involvement overseas, were nevertheless informed about colonial projects and benefitted from the interactions with the overseas regions subdued by the European powers.

Thus, the defensive nationalism turned at least symbolically to the offensive, creating the image of a nation actively involved in the civilizational and entrepreneurial deeds of Europe overseas. The Czechs and the Ger-

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51 Feistmantel, Ottokar. *Osm let ve východní Indii*. Prague: O. Feistmantel, 1884. 111–12.

man-Bohemians—that is, the publicly active intellectuals and authors that contributed to the public discourse in the Czech Lands in the period under study—actively sought recognition within the imagined community of “modern Europe”. Or rather, they wanted to become part of what they considered to be the modern Europe, to distinguish themselves culturally and intellectually from the rest of the world and to consider themselves, together with other “Europeans”, entitled to global domination. At the same time, the specific case study of the Czech Lands reveals clearly that in spite of the existence of colonial dreams and fantasies, the actual—albeit symbolic—involvement in the scientific examination and economic exploitation of the non-Europeans was rather modest. It remained limited to several enthusiastic individuals and private institutions. In contrast to the colonizing nations, they were aspiring to mimic, the Czechs and the German-Bohemians remained at the periphery of colonizing Europe.



BÁLINT VARGA

## **6 Hungarian Missionaries and the Making of Civilizational Difference in Africa and China**

Scholars have long identified missionaries as the key agents in the transnational transmission of norms and in creating and shaping the image of the “exotic” for and by Europeans and North Americans. As transnational professionals engaging in the communication of particular values and patterns of behavior to peoples in different cultural settings, missionaries retained their pivotal role even in the 19th century. Around 1900, the number of Christian missionaries in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific amounted to tens of thousands, making them the largest group of professionals in charge of spreading a particular set of European and North American values and communicating their encounters back to the European and North American metropolises.<sup>1</sup>

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1 This research has been supported by the Premium Postdoctoral Fellowship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. I am thankful to Péter Vámos for his help in clarifying some Chinese names.

The vast majority of Catholic missionaries in the long 19th century were French while the Protestant missionary movement was dominated by British and Germans, later Americans, i. e. citizens of the leading colonizer nations.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, most missionaries worked either in colonies or formally sovereign but in practice heavily dependent countries like China. Therefore, spreading the Gospel to the heathen intermingled with notions of culture, civilization, progress, and the very structures of empire and colonialism.

Yet, the missionary movement also spread to those parts of Europe that did not directly engage in overseas colonialism, instead participated in the making of the colonial order in several indirect ways. Basel emerged as an early center of the Protestant missionary movement with missionary societies appearing in the Nordic countries from the mid-19th century. Catholic communities in Italy maintained their engagement in overseas missionizing well before Italy began the process of colonization. In the Habsburg Empire, the missionary movement also gained traction, although its size hardly matched the Habsburg self-image as the only Great Power devoted to Catholicism in modern Europe. Concentrated in the Alps, especially in Tyrol and present-day Slovenia, the Catholic missionary movement in the Habsburg Empire spread unevenly across its territory.

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2 For France, see Daughton, J. P. *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880–1914*. Oxford – New York: Oxford UP, 2006; for Britain, see Cox, Jeffrey. *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700*. New York – London: Routledge, 2008.; Porter, Andrew. *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700–1914*. Manchester – New York: Manchester UP, 2004; for Germany, see Best, Jeremy. *Heavenly Fatherland: German Missionary Culture and Globalization in the Age of Empire*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2021; for the United States, see Fischer-Tiné, Harald, Stefan Huebner, and Ian R. Tyrrell, eds. *Spreading Protestant Modernity: Global Perspectives on the Social Work of the YMCA and YWCA, 1889–1970*. Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 2020.

In this chapter, I will present the small Hungarian Catholic missionary movement during the second half of the long 19th century to investigate how missionaries who had lesser stakes in colonial affairs worked and how they presented their labor to their home audiences. I will argue that the fact that they came from a formally non-colonizing country hardly had an impact on the writings of Hungarian missionaries, who acted rather similarly to their colleagues from colonizing nations. I will explain the commonalities with the help of the “missionary cloud”, which I define based on the concept of the imperial cloud as suggested by Christoph Kamissek and Jonas Kreienbaum. According to them, the imperial cloud was “a shared reservoir of knowledge, which was not bound to a single empire, but had a multi-local existence and was accessible to agents of different empires, both from the peripheries and the metropolises.”<sup>3</sup> Individual actors who had access to this cloud “downloaded” and eventually “uploaded” knowledge; nonetheless, their access varied greatly and depended on the particular position of the actors. I suggest that the cloud metaphor may be easily applied to the missionaries whose work was deeply embedded in colonialism and empire. I also argue that the missionary writing analyzed in this chapter formed one of the myriad ways in which an Austro-Hungarian colonial culture emerged without the Habsburg Empire establishing formal overseas colonies.

## The Habsburg Framework

The Jesuit period of the missionary movement in the 17th and 18th centuries rose to highest prominence in the Czech provinces of the East-Cen-

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 3 Kamissek, Christoph, and Jonas Kreienbaum. “An Imperial Cloud? Conceptualising Interimperial Connections and Transimperial Knowledge.” *Journal of Modern European History* 14.2 (2016): 166.



tral European lands of the House of Habsburg, from which some 200 missionaries left, mostly to Spanish America.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, ca. two dozen Hungarian subjects embarked on missionary travels, mostly also to Spanish America and to a smaller extent, to Brazil.<sup>5</sup> They became the first group of Hungarian professionals to travel overseas and to communicate their encounters with the non-European peoples in writing and person.<sup>6</sup> The suppression of the Jesuit Order between 1759 and 1773 put a global end to the first phase of the Catholic missionary movement and therefore also, unsurprisingly, in the Habsburg Monarchy.

The modern phase of the Catholic missionary movement in Austria started in the 1830s in the context of the Habsburg Monarchy's slow global opening. Named after the recently deceased Archduchess and Empress of Brazil, Maria Leopoldina, a fund was established to support the then impoverished Catholic Church in the United States in 1829. The Leopoldina Fund concentrated on financing the "export" of Austrian clerics, most of them native to the Alps, to the emerging German-speaking Catholic communities of the United States—evidence of Austria's wish to be *primus inter pares* in the German Confederation.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, a few Austrians engaged in spreading the Gospel among

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4 Křížová, Markéta. "Meeting the Other in the New World: Jesuit Missionaries from the Bohemian Province in America." *Historie – Otázky – Problémy* 8.2 (2016): 35–46.

5 There is no current, critical literature on the Hungarian Jesuits in Spanish America. On the four Hungarian Jesuits in Brazil, see Babarcsi, Dóra. *Magyar jezsuiták Brazíliában 1753–1760*. Szeged: SZTE Bölcsészettudományi Kar, 2013.

6 Sz. Kristóf, Ildikó. "Missionaries, Monsters, and the Demon Show: Diabolized Representations of American Indians in the Jesuit Libraries of Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Upper Hungary." *Exploring the Cultural History of Continental European Freak Shows and "Enfreakment."* Ed. Anna Kerchy and Andrea Zittlau. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012. 38–73.

7 Kummer, Gertrude. *Die Leopoldinen-Stiftung (1829–1914): Der älteste österreichische Missionsverein*. Wien: Dom, 1966.

the natives on the frontier in present-day Michigan. The most famous was the ethnic Slovene Frederik Baraga, who regularly wrote to his native Carniola in German and Slovene, allowing the members of the emerging Slovene public sphere to “encounter” the “savages”.<sup>8</sup>

The second missionary wave unfolded in the 1850s in the Sudan as a side-project of the cautious imperial foreign policy in the Levant. Patronized by the House of Habsburg, clerics native mostly to Tyrol and the Slovene-speaking Alps established mission stations in Khartoum and further south along the Nile. A new missionary association, the Tyrol-based Mary Society to Promote the Catholic Mission in Central Africa (Marienverein zur Beförderung der Katholischen Mission in Centralafrika), was responsible for collecting donations for the Sudan mission. In Sudan, too, an ethnic Slovene, Ignacij Knoblehar rose to prominence, heading the Khartoum mission station from 1849 until his death in 1858. Reports in German and Slovene about Africa were a side-product of this—largely failed—mission.<sup>9</sup>

The Habsburg–Vatican concordat of 1854 returned to the Catholic Church a great deal of liberty in conducting its foreign affairs. Together with the failure of neo-absolutism and the installation of a liberal and

8 MacDonal, Graham, ed. *Frederic Baraga's Short History of the North American Indians*. Calgary: U of Calgary P, 2004.

9 Frelj, Marko. *Sudanska Misija 1848–1858: Ignacij Knoblehar, Misijonar, Raziskovalec Belega Nila in Zbiralec Afris'kih Predmetov / Sudan Mission 1848–1858: Ignacij Knoblehar, Missionary, Explorer of the White Nile and Collector of African Objects*. Ljubljana: Slovenski etnografski muzej, 2009; Sauer, Walter. “Ein Jesuitenstaat in Afrika? Habsburgische Kolonialpolitik in Ägypten, dem Sudan und Äthiopien in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts.” *Österreich in Geschichte und Literatur* 55.1 (2011): 6–27; Wendt, Helge. “Central European Missionaries in Sudan: Geopolitics and Alternative Colonialism in Mid-Nineteenth Century Africa.” *European Review* 26.3 (2018): 481–91.

more secular regime in the mid-1860s, it brought about the eclipse of the hitherto substantial governmental interference in the missionary movement. From the 1860s, the largely autonomous and international monastic orders replaced the Austrian and government-controlled missionary associations as the main agents in the Habsburg missionary movement that became concentrated in the southern parts of Africa and Asia.

Banned briefly in 1848 for the second time, the Jesuits returned to the Habsburg lands in the 1850s and consolidated their presence by the late 19th century. The Jesuits became particularly active in the southern part of Africa. From the 1880s, many of them worked in Portuguese Southeast Africa (Mozambique). After the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Portuguese colonies in 1911, a few Austro-Hungarian and German Jesuits, predominantly ethnic Poles, moved along the Zambezi to British South Africa Company-administered Northern Rhodesia and in 1912 the Galician province was entrusted with evangelizing a part of this protectorate.<sup>10</sup> In Mozambique, the Society of the Divine Word (Latin: *Societas Verbi Divini*, short *Verbites* or *Steyl Missionaries*), a German-founded order with a strong presence in Austria, took over the Jesuit mission stations until they were expelled due to Portugal's entrance into the First World War on the side of the Entente.<sup>11</sup> In 1882, a Trappist monastery was established in Mariannhill, South Africa, under the Vorarlberg-born abbot Franz Pfanner with some Austrian clergy joining

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10 Bialek, Czeslaw. *Polish Jesuits in the Zambezi Mission*. Ed. Edward P. Murphy. Lusaka: Jesuit Archives, 2016. 62–63; Murphy, Edward P., ed. *A History of Jesuits in Zambia: A Mission Becomes a Province*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2003. 162–64; Mkennda, Festo. “Mission Context and the Jesuit Visitor: Charles Bert and the Visitation of Polish Jesuits in the Zambesi Mission, 1924.” *With Eyes and Ears Open: The Role of Visitors in the Society of Jesus*. Ed. Thomas M. McCoog. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2019. 214–35.

11 Schebesta, Paul. *Portugals Konquistamission in Südost-Afrika: Missionsgeschichte Sambiens und des Monomotapareiches (1560–1920)*. St. Augustin: Steyler, 1966. 354–411.

the dynamically expanding venture. Last but not least, the Tyrol province of the Servite Order started evangelizing in Swaziland in 1913.<sup>12</sup>

Having set foot on Habsburg soil in the 1850s, the Society of Mission (also known as Vincentians or Lazarists), a France-based order heavily engaged in overseas missionizing, became the first institution to send missionaries from the Habsburg Monarchy to Asia. The Vincentians had taken over the positions of the suppressed Jesuits in China in the 18th century and, following the order's reorganization in 1843, further expanded their operation in the Celestial Empire.<sup>13</sup> The Austrian Vincentian province provided the Chinese mission with several clerics but the proposal to establish an Austrian missionary territory in China met the resistance of the Paris headquarter.<sup>14</sup> Another area of Austrian engagement in Asia was the Northern Indian town Bettiah, whose Catholic community had been established in the 18th century by an Italian Capuchin friar.<sup>15</sup> In 1886, the North Tyrol province of the Capuchin Order dispatched a few monks to Bettiah and in 1892, the Propaganda Fide assigned the town and its vicinity, including Nepal, to the Tyrolese Capuchins, sending a few dozen friars to the mission.<sup>16</sup>

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12 Mayr, Franz. "Adieu ihr lieben Schwarzen": *Gesammelte Schriften des Tiroler Afrika-Missionars Franz Mayr (1865–1914)*. Ed. Clemens Gütl. Wien: Böhlau, 2004; De Vittorio, Luigi M. *Missione Africa: La prima esperienza missionaria dei Servi di Maria in Swaziland*. Vol. 1. Roma: Marianum, 2004. 37–46.

13 Rybolt, John E. *The Vincentians: A General History of the Congregation of the Mission*. Vol. 4. New York: New City, 2014. 647–99; and Rybolt, John E. *The Vincentians: A General History of the Congregation of the Mission*. Vol. 5. New York: New City, 2014. 641–80.

14 Gattringer, Franz. "Das einst geplante österreichische Vikariat in China." *Vinzenzstimmen: Zeitschrift für Heiden- und Heimatmission* 2.2 (1927): 42–44.

15 Kalapura, Jose. "Philanthropic Organizations and Community Development: The Case of the Bettiah Christians in India." *Asian Journal of Social Science* 43.4 (2015): 402–4.

16 Gelmi, Josef. *Geschichte der Kirche in Tirol: Nord-, Ost- und Südtirol*. Innsbruck – Wien – Bozen: Tyrolia – Athesia, 2001. 353–54.

## From Hungary to China and Mozambique

The emerging European missionary movement and the missionaries native to other Habsburg lands were relatively well-known in Hungary. The Hungarian Catholic press regularly reported on their endeavors,<sup>17</sup> reviewed and translated missionary publications, among others, Kno-blehar's works.<sup>18</sup> High-ranked clerics urged the believers to support the global missionizing project financially<sup>19</sup> and the Hungarian flock indeed made some modest donations.<sup>20</sup> In 1861, the St Ladislaus Association was created with a threefold agenda: to support (1) the Hungarian-speaking Catholics of the predominantly Orthodox Moldavia, (2) the Pope whose reign in the Papal State was challenged and, in a few years, terminated by the Risorgimento, and (3) Christian communities worldwide. The association became a relatively large organization but increasingly focused on the Hungarian-speaking Catholics and became involved in the government's diaspora program from the 1900s; the genuine global engagement slowly faded away.<sup>21</sup> From 1881, István Nogely, a canon in Nagyvárad (today Oradea, Romania), published a relatively well-read Hungarian missionary journal, the *Katholikus Hitterjesztés Lapjai* (Journal of the Spreading of Catholic Faith). The paper was dominated by

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17 "A kath. missiók jelen állapotja." *Religio és nevelés* 11 February 1844: 93–95; "Hirfűzér." *Religio és nevelés* 7 January 1847: 16.

18 "A közép-afrikai missio ügyében." *Katholikus néplap* 24 April 1851: 129–31; "Középafrikai missio." *Családi lapok* 1 (1852): 98–103.

19 *Egyházi beszéd, mely Nagy B. Asszony ünnepén a Leopoldina Intézetének hathatósabb ajánlása végett számos keresztyén katolikus hívek jelenlétében tartatott.* Nagyvárad: Tichy János, 1829.

20 See, for instance, a survey of donations from 1853: "Magyarország." *Religio* 2 March 1854: 213.

21 Szemes, József. *A Szent László Társulat története 1861–1941.* Veszprém: Egyházmegyei Könyvnyomda, 1942.

translations of missionary papers from French and German with occasional original contributions. In 1885, Nogely also established a Misszió Társulat (Mission Society), a spinoff of the Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi (Society of the Propagation of Faith), the most important missionary mass organization of France; however it never attained significant membership.<sup>22</sup>

Inspired by the Catholic media's regular reports on the missionary movement, a growing number of clerics developed an interest in embarking on a missionary career. The first was Ignác Erdélyi (1828–1885). Coming from a poor peasant family in Zsigárd (today Žihárec in Slovakia), Erdélyi became first secular priest, then entered the Vincentians in Graz in 1858. Following training in Paris, he was posted to Zhengding in Hebei province in 1861 in the last years of the Taiping Rebellion and remained there until his death.<sup>23</sup> Erdélyi maintained some scarce correspondence with fellow clergy that was partly published in the Catholic press. His missionary career was certainly known in his native village and inspired another local peasant son, Ignác Ūrge (1840–1898) to follow in his footsteps. A secular priest trained at Hungarian seminaries and in Vienna, Ūrge entered the Vincentians in 1869 and left for China's Zhejiang province in 1880.<sup>24</sup>

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22 "A magyarországi kath. 'Misszió-Társulat' ügyében." *Religio* 44.31 (1885): 241–44.

23 So far, scholarship has not addressed the Hungarian Vincentians' activities in China, thus only hagiographic biographies are available. On Erdélyi, see Gattringer, Franz. "Hochwürdiger Herr Erdely Ignaz." *Vinzenz-Stimmen: Zeitschrift für Heiden- und Heimatmission im Geiste des Heligen Vinzenz von Paul* 3 (1928): 10–14, 41–47, 76–79; Kereszty, "Erdélyi Ignác magyar misszionáriusnak emlékezete." *Uj Magyar Sion* 17 (1886): 687–98.

24 Gattringer, Franz. "Die österreichische Lazaretenprovinz und die Heidenmission: Hochw. Herr Ignaz Ūrge." *Vinzenz-Stimmen: Zeitschrift für Heiden- und Heimatmission im Geiste des Heligen Vinzenz von Paul* 3 (1928): 41–47.



**6.1** Ignác Üрге and Petolo (Peter) Wu Xinyan in Budapest. Reprinted from *Vasárnapi Újság*, March 3, 1889. Courtesy of the National Széchényi Library.

In 1888–1890, Ürge toured Hungary and Austria to secure support for the Chinese mission. Visiting the Vincentian house in Graz, his audience included a Hungarian novice, József Wilfinger (1874–1906) hailing from a family of artisans and petty traders in Großpetersdorf (Hungarian Nagynémetszentmihály), a German-speaking town near the Austrian border. The encounter proved motivating enough for Wilfinger to join the missionary movement. In 1898, he arrived in Ningbo to receive training in the local Vincentian seminar and soon started evangelizing in Zhejiang province. Severely injured in an attack by bandits during the Boxer Uprising in 1900, Wilfinger died of the consequences of his deteriorated health a few years later.<sup>25</sup>

The other monastic order present in Hungary engaging in overseas missions was the Society of Jesus. Until the First World War, five Hungarian Jesuits are known to have embarked on overseas evangelizing missions but only two of them, István Czimmermann (1849–1894) and László Menyhárth (1849–1897), both active in Portuguese Southeast Africa (Mozambique), informed their homeland about their activities. Born into a family of lower-middle-class in Schmöllnitzhütte (Slovak Smolnícka Huta, Hungarian Szomolnokhuta) in Northern Hungary, Czimmermann studied theology in Rome, entered the Jesuit Order, and spent two years at the Sankt Andrä monastery in Carinthia. Hailing from Szarvas in Central Hungary, Menyhárth embarked on divinity studies at the Jesuit-run theology faculty at Innsbruck University and, preparing for overseas

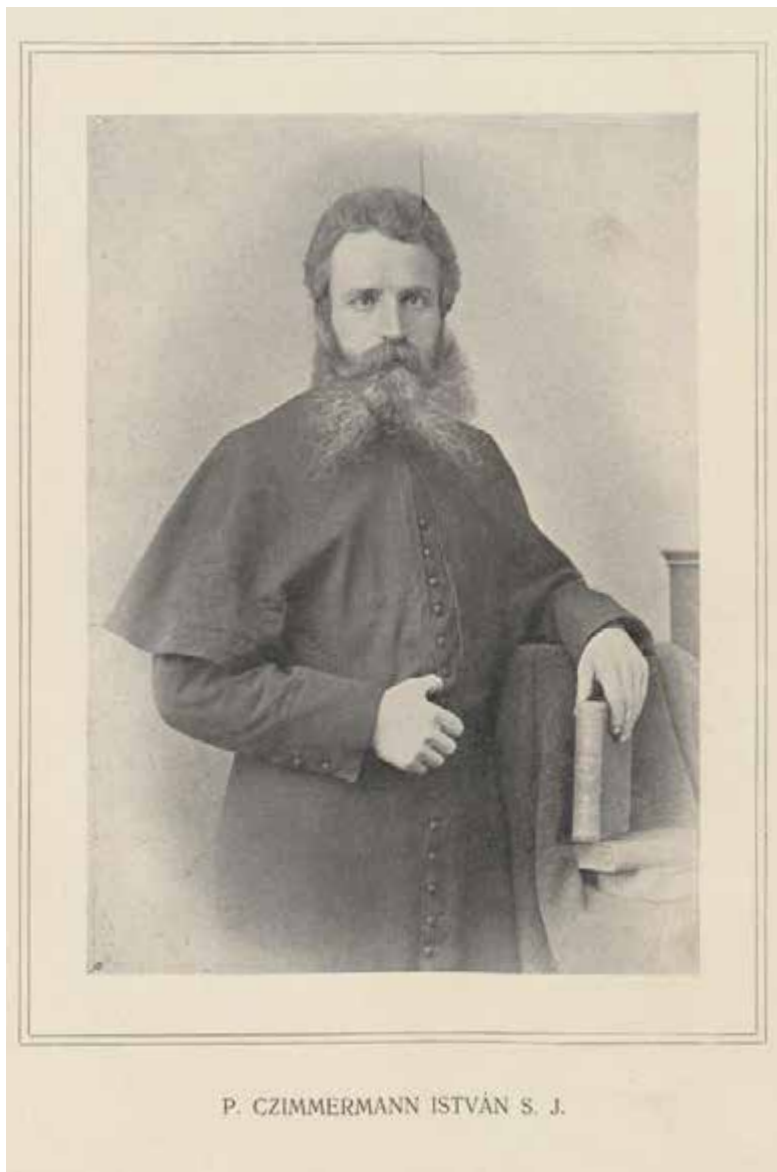
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 25 Illés, György. *A katolikus turáni eszme hőse és vértanúja: Wilfinger József magyar apostoli hit hirdető élete és működése Kínában*. Szombathely: Szombathelyi Papnövendékek Szent Ágoston Egylete, 1936. A fourth Hungarian Vincentian missionary, Ernő (Ernst) Tóth was also active in China but he does not appear in the Hungarian Catholic press: Gattringer, Franz. “Ernst Toth apostolischer Lazaristenmissionär in China, 1906–1909.” *Vinzenz-Stimmen: Zeitschrift für Heiden- und Heimatmission im Geiste des Heiligen Vinzenz von Paul* 4 (1929): 40–43.



missions, at the Jesuit school of St Beuno in Wales; for a while, he also lived in Sankt Andrä. Their recruitment, similar to the Vincentians, followed a chain pattern. A Silesian-born Jesuit missionary in Mozambique, Emanuel Gabriel, visited Kalocsa, a stronghold of Hungarian Jesuits in 1885. By that time, the Mozambique mission was already well-known in the Kalocsa house, whose library subscribed to several German missionary journals and also held publications of the Mozambique Jesuits.<sup>26</sup> Gabriel first recruited Czimmermann who left for Africa in 1885. Visiting Hungary briefly in 1889, Czimmermann recruited his former superior Menyhárth. Czimmermann first worked in the mission station in Boroma at the center of the Portuguese colony. Once Menyhárth arrived in 1889, he took over the Boroma station and Czimmermann moved along the Zambezi River and established the mission station in Riciko near the town Zumbo on the border to British territory (the border was demarcated in 1890).<sup>27</sup>

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26 Kicsindi, Edina. “‘Szegény kis feketém...’ Czimmermann István és Menyhért László missziós tevékenységének hatása a magyar Afrika-kép alakulása szempontjából” *Világtörténet* 25 (2003): 82.

27 On Czimmermann and Menyhárt there is substantial contemporary hagiographic literature, for instance: Cziráky, Gyula. *A mi apostolaink: Czimmermann István és Menyhárt László magyar hithirdetők élete és működése*. Budapest: Szent-István Társulat, 1897. For a critical, though noncomprehensive interpretation, see Kicsindi, “‘Szegény kis feketém...’”



**6.2** István Czimmermann. Reprinted from Velics, László. *Magyar jezsuiták a XIX-ik században*. Kalksburg: Kollegium, 1902. Courtesy of the National Széchényi Library.

The Hungarian Catholic missionary movement declined after the death of the above-mentioned missionaries; the next wave unfolded only in the interwar period. By the 1930s, not only did the Hungarian missionary movement multiply but it also developed a unique aspect in terms of its justification. The 19th-century missionaries justified their labor by the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19) only and did not strive to choose their field of action. In contrast, interwar missionaries absorbed a specific Hungarian approach to Asia that emerged in the early 20th century as a result of a convoluted Orientalism based on the supposed Oriental origins of the Magyars'. Throughout the 19th century, various forms of sympathies with the Orient emerged, culminating around the turn of the century in the so-called Turanism that supposed the cultural affinity of Magyars, Finno-Ugric, Turkic, Mongolic peoples, and eventually Chinese as well.<sup>28</sup> A Turanist justification of the Protestant missionary movement can be dated back to 1900,<sup>29</sup> whereas it appeared in Catholic circles during World War I.<sup>30</sup> During the 1920s and 1930s, a large number of Hungarian Jesuits and Franciscans evangelized in China and justified their choice exactly through the idea of the Magyars' Oriental origin that "forced" Catholic Magyars to engage in the Asian mission.<sup>31</sup>

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 28 Ablonczy, Balázs. *Go East! A History of Hungarian Turanism*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2022.

29 See the first call to evangelize among Turks, a fellow Asian people: Vai, Mór. "Magyar külmiszió." *Ébresztő* 1 (1900): 92–94; further examples at Vámos, Péter. "Hungarian Missionaries in China." *China and Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future*. Ed. Stephen Uhalley and Xiaoxin Wu. Armonk: ME Sharpe, 2000. 219–20.

30 Csernoch, János. "Főmagassága és főméltósága Csernoch János dr. esztergomi érsek, Magyarország biboros hercegprimása elnöki megnyitó beszéde a Szent-István-Társulat LXII-ik közgyűlésén, 1916. március 23-án." *Katholikus Szemle* 30.4 (1916): 338.

31 Vámos, Péter. *Magyar jezsuita miszió Kínában*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2003. 68; Kálmán, Peregrin. "A magyar ferencesek kínai misziójának kezdete." *A paokingi Apostoli Prefektúra rövid története*. Ed. Peregrin Kálmán and Péter Vámos. Budapest: Kapisztrán Szent Jánosról nevezett Ferences Rendtartomány, 2005. 15.



**6.3** József Wilfinger with Chinese acolytes. Reprinted from Illés, *A katolikus turáni eszme*, 33. Courtesy of the National Széchényi Library.

Similarly, the priest Gyögy Illés entitled his 1937 hagiographic biography of Wilfinger *The Hero of the Catholic Turanian Idea* and explained Wilfinger's zeal by his Turanian identity, though Illés had to admit that his protagonist, in fact, had never used this term.<sup>32</sup> Illés's anachronism thus aptly demonstrates the change in the position of Catholic clergy: while the Magyars' Oriental origin was already well-known during the 19th century, none of the missionaries investigated in this chapter connected this with their labor; in contrast, in the interwar period Catholic stakeholders in the missionary movement felt the need to justify their zeal with nationalist reasoning.

The activities of the 19th-century Hungarian missionaries in China and Mozambique differed greatly. In China, Catholic missionaries were allowed to re-enter after China's defeat in the First Opium War; their number rapidly grew to about 900 at the turn of the century.<sup>33</sup> Converts to the Catholic church came to a large extent from socially inferior groups and they enculturated (and later acculturated) Christian dogmas and social practices selectively.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, a growing number of Chinese Catholics entered the priesthood; nonetheless, the leadership of the Catholic Church remained exclusively in European hands until 1926 when six Chinese priests were consecrated as bishops.<sup>35</sup> The Catholic enterprise in China was to a large extent French: this not only meant

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32 Illés, *A katolikus turáni eszme hőse*, 3.

33 Wu, Albert Monshan. *From Christ to Confucius: German Missionaries, Chinese Christians, and the Globalization of Christianity, 1860–1950*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2016. 47.

34 Lindenfeld, David F. "Indigenous Encounters with Christian Missionaries in China and West Africa, 1800–1920: A Comparative Study." *Journal of World History* 16.3 (2005): 337–49.

35 Mungello, D. E. *The Catholic Invasion of China: Remaking Chinese Christianity*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. 15–45.

French predominance in the personnel—given the pre-eminence of the French in the Catholic missionary movement, their robust presence in China could surprise no one—but also the establishment of France’s protectorate over any Catholic missionary working in the Celestial Empire.<sup>36</sup> French and other European diplomacies did not shy away from manipulating missionaries to their secular ends. France made the murder of a French missionary who had illegally evangelized in the interior of China a *casus belli* to join Great Britain in the Second Opium War (1856); similarly, the German Empire used the murder of two Steyl missionaries as a pretext to colonize Jiaozhou (1898).<sup>37</sup>

While enjoying the French protectorate, the Hungarian Vincentian fathers rarely reflected on their role in imperial politics and colonialism. Üрге apparently approached the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to replace French consular protection with Austro-Hungarian, but to no avail.<sup>38</sup> Only Wilfinger speculated about politics in depth; yet, even he carefully avoided assigning a significant role to the missionaries in any secular endeavor. Otherwise, the three Hungarian Vincentian missionaries were rather preoccupied with more quotidian questions. Working in rural areas, Erdélyi and Üрге were most concerned with the pastoral care of the Catholic communities.<sup>39</sup> Wilfinger’s tasks oscillated

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36 Young, Ernest P. *Ecclesiastical Colony: China’s Catholic Church and the French Religious Protectorate*. New York: Oxford UP, 2013.

37 On France, see Young, *Ecclesiastical Colony*, 27–28; on Germany, see Tiedemann, R. G. “‘Christian Civilization’ or ‘Cultural Expansion?’ The German Missionary Enterprise in China, 1882–1919.” *Sino-German Relations since 1800: Multidisciplinary Explorations*. Ed. Ricardo K. S. Mak and Danny S. L. Paa. Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2000. 109–34; Wu, *From Christ to Confucius*.

38 Gattringer, “Das einst geplante österreichische Vikariat.”

39 About the Catholic missionary methods in the neighboring Jiangxi province, see Sweeten, Alan Richard. *Christianity in Rural China: Conflict and Accommodation in*

between the Catholic community and the Vincentian seminary in Ningbo where he taught novices. All three faced severe obstacles building the necessary infrastructure of communal life. They urged Hungarian donors to finance the construction of a church and in 1908, a church, named after the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of Hungary and financed partly by Hungarian almsgivers, was inaugurated. (The location of the church is uncertain, most likely it was one of the Catholic churches in Taizhou.)<sup>40</sup> Üрге also collected alms for an orphanage. Unlike their Jesuit predecessors in the early modern era, the Vincentians did not engage in scholarship; neither did they develop economic activities.<sup>41</sup> Restricting themselves to work in orphanages, schools, and the pastoral care of the few Catholic believers, the Vincentian fathers thus by no means played a central role in the life of the Chinese countryside. They rather tried to accommodate: Üрге wore Chinese garments and had his hair cut in Chinese fashion; Wilfinger insisted on his European dress but he also wore a Chinese-style mustache and haircut (see Figures 6. 1 and 6. 3).<sup>42</sup>

Far more embedded in colonialism was the mission in Mozambique. Portugal had once been (in)famous for its staunch anti-clericalism: the first nation to expel the Jesuit Order and to nationalize its property in

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*Jiangxi Province, 1860–1900.* Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, U of Michigan, 2001. 186–195.

40 “Magyar templom Chinában.” *Uj Magyar Sion* 16 (1885): 237–40; Illés, *A katolikus turáni eszme hőse*, 129–38.

41 As we shall see later, Üрге delivered a lecture at the Society of Geography in Budapest but that was rooted more in his own experience than in science. He also published on the Chinese language but his amateur attempt did not receive any feedback: Üрге, Ignác. “Van-e rokonság a magyar és a kínai nyelv között?” *Katolikus hittedzés lapjai* 16.5 (1897): 82–87; *Katolikus hittedzés lapjai* 16.6 (1897): 101–6; *Katolikus hittedzés lapjai* 16.7 (1897): 121–25.

42 Illés, *A katolikus turáni eszme hőse*, 33, 37.

1759, it prohibited all monastic orders in 1834. In the metropole, this led to the decline of religious life while in the African colonies, the Catholic church practically ceased to exist by the early 19th century. In 1857 and 1886, two concordats normalized the Portuguese–Vatican relations and monastic orders slowly returned to Portugal. In this period, the African colonies were increasingly seen as potential sources of the improvement of the vegetating Portuguese economy but the mounting British presence in the southern part of Africa challenged the Portuguese positions in the region. The Portuguese government thus started to strengthen its rule in the coastal areas of its colonies and to expand the actual colonial possession into the interior of the continent that so far had belonged to Portugal only nominally. In 1880, Jesuits were invited back to Mozambique to relaunch the Catholic church that was now regarded as an ally of the colonial administration. In the absence of manpower, the Portuguese Jesuit province started a recruitment campaign mostly in French and German-speaking Europe—as France, Belgium, Germany, and Austria-Hungary were not present in Southeast Africa yet, their citizens seemed more suited for the Portuguese goals than British missionaries.<sup>43</sup>

The Jesuit missionaries in Mozambique understood pastoral care in a far more comprehensive way than their Vincentian colleagues in the Celestial Empire. Converts came from all social strata but they had to contend with being mere believers; the European clergy did not yet deem Africans fit for priesthood. As a sign of the intended European make-up of the church and the inferior position of the natives, Black acolytes were provided with worn-out garments from European Jesuit houses, such as Kalocsa in Hungary and Kalksburg in Austria. For the Mozambique missionaries,

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 43 Morier-Genoud, Éric. *The Vatican vs Lisbon: The Relaunching of the Catholic Church in Mozambique, ca. 1875–1940*. Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2002. 1–10; Newitt, Malyn. *A History of Mozambique*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995. 317–85.



unlike their colleagues in China, going native in their dress or appearance was out of the question.<sup>44</sup> Building a European church came in a compact package: the Jesuit missionaries introduced European farming practices, educated locals in European-style trades, and advocated for labor values common in Western societies. They also promoted the nuclear family model and condemned slavery; though by buying enslaved children, they created additional demand for slaves.<sup>45</sup> The missionaries created writing standards of local vernaculars; Czimmermann, for instance, was among the first to write a catechism in Nyungwe, a Bantu vernacular spoken chiefly in Tete province.<sup>46</sup> Overall, the Jesuit fathers aimed at a complete remodeling of society and culture by engaging in practically all spheres of community life.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, the missionaries were active in the scientific mapping of the interior of the colony. A trained naturalist, Menyhárh studied the flora and the climate of the colony and contributed to its cartography.<sup>48</sup> Transforming the local communities in European style and mapping the interior of the Portuguese territory, the

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 44 This does not mean that church practice was not altered by local conditions: similar to Protestant missions in South Africa, the Jesuits in Mozambique also held a procession for rain to challenge the local rain-makers: Menyhárh, László. "Levél Afrikából." *Jézus Szentséges Szívének Hírnöke* 25.9 (1892): 249–54; cf. Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. *Of Revelation and Revolution*. Vol. 1. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991. 206–13.

45 Schebesta, *Portugals Konquistamission in Südost-Afrika*, 311–27.

46 Schebesta, *Portugals Konquistamission in Südost-Afrika*, 448.

47 The Jesuits' zeal largely resembled the nonconformist missionaries in neighboring South Africa: Comaroff and Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*.

48 Schinz, Hans. "Plantae Menyharthianae: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntniss der Flora des unteren Sambesi." *Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften Mathematisch-naturwissenschaftliche Klasse* 78 (1906): 367–445; Hauer, Ferenc. "P. Menyhárh László megfigyelései Afrika belsejében. 1890. május 22.–1897. november 16." *A Jézus-Társasági Kalocsai Érseki Katolikus Főgimnázium Értesítője az 1912–1913. iskolai évről* (1913): 3–88.

Jesuit missionaries were thus instrumental in pushing the frontier of the Portuguese colonial empire into the interior of Africa. By publishing a map in Portugal, Menyhárth believed to “do something honorable for the kingdom and useful for science”<sup>49</sup> and he certainly did not exaggerate his role in consolidating Portugal’s rule along the Zambezi.

## Writing and Talking about China and Africa

Despite their insignificance in numbers in contrast to both the global missionary movement and the population of their homeland, Hungarian missionaries played a pivotal role in communicating knowledge on and visions of Africa and China, respectively, to a Hungarian audience. This is explained by the fact that having no overseas colonial empire, only a few Hungarians traveled to Africa and Asia, and even fewer reported back to the metropole about their experiences. In contrast to that, the missionary culture was per se an epistolary one; missionaries thus routinely informed the Catholic media about their labor, and these reports were often reviewed in the secular press, too—a written testimony of faraway lands told by a compatriot was still something relatively rare around 1900 in Hungary.

Having spent several years in the mission, Üрге, Czimmermann, and Menyhárth embarked on brief travels to their home country to secure financial support and eventually recruit further missionaries. They all

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49 Cited in Rodríguez, Miguel. “Regreso de los jesuitas a los extremos imperiales: Mindanao y Zambesia en la segunda mitad del siglo (1808–1930).” *Gobernar colonias, administrar almas: Poder colonial y órdenes religiosas en los imperios ibéricos*. Ed. Xavier Huetz de Lemps, Gonzalo Álvarez Chillida and María-Dolores Elizalde. E-book ed., Casa de Velázquez, 2018. OpenEdition Books.

gave lectures to various audiences, both religious and secular and Üрге even presented a paper at the Society of Geography. The press emphasized the fully-packed venues, both in churches and in lecture halls and theaters in Budapest and provincial cities alike. The entrance fees were to support the missionary enterprise. Newspapers estimated that the missionaries' talks especially touched the female audience and women donated the bulk of the alms.<sup>50</sup> Üрге was particularly successful at attaining the interest of the secular public. He traveled with his assistant, a Chinese boy whom the sources in a patronizing way called only by his first name Petolo or Peter; this young man impressed people with some knowledge of Hungarian.<sup>51</sup> As a witty marketing gimmick, Ürged deliberately appropriated Chinese culture: he toured Hungary in his Chinese garment and haircut, though a few years earlier, he had admitted that the only Chinese product he found more comfortable than European, were shoes.<sup>52</sup> Üрге's strategy worked: at the Society of Geography, the self-exoticized "father Üрге and the Chinese boy appeared in genuine Chinese costumes .... a bizarre opposite to the black suits of the audience," as the popular liberal daily *Pesti Hirlap* reported about the event that was attended by a large crowd, among them the intellectual elite of the Hungarian capital.<sup>53</sup> Üрге and Petolo were even received by Emperor-King Francis Joseph who promised them support for their cause.<sup>54</sup>

Writing and talking about their "flock-to-be" in China and Africa, the missionaries offered a comprehensive picture of the native societies

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50 "Üрге Ignác." *Pesti Hirlap* 14 September 1889: 5.

51 *Budapesti Hirlap* gives his surname as Wuszínüien that most likely reads as Wu Xinyan: "Kínai hittérítő Budapesten." *Budapesti Hirlap* 12 February 1889: 6.

52 Üрге, Ignátz. "Chinai közlemények II." *Uj Magyar Sion* 15.2 (1884): 124.

53 "Üрге Ignác fölolvasása a földrajzi társaságban." *Pesti Hirlap* 15 March 1889: 4.

54 "A magyar hittérítő a királynál." *Budapesti Hirlap* 24 February 1889: 5.

to their audiences in Hungary. Discussing the perceived physical and mental qualities and (lack of) culture of the heathen societies, the missionaries not only explored the potential of the Catholic church to spread to heathen territories but also offered Hungarian Catholics participation in God's project through prayers and alms. Helping to turn the heathen Christian, went the standard argument of the missionaries, also boosted Catholic morale and culture in the metropole. Erdélyi especially claimed the Catholics' duty to donate to the missions; failing in participating in the Catholic Church's global enterprise, Erdélyi argued, meant that the Western Europeans kept on regarding Hungary as a barbarian land.<sup>55</sup>

## Body, Culture, and Soul in China and Africa

The Hungarian missionaries showed only a limited interest in the body of the missionized folk. Upon arriving in China, Üрге found the Chinese people repulsive and their dress and haircut ridiculous but in a few years, he became accustomed to the Chinese outlook.<sup>56</sup> In particular, Üрге criticized foot-binding as barbaric and irrational and even associated it with the devil.<sup>57</sup> Czimmermann found a correlation between the African body and soul by asserting that the "complete blackness" of the African body "[was] not by accident and without a higher and mystical meaning,"<sup>58</sup> obviously associating the black body with evil. Writing only

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55 Erdélyi, Ignátz. "Erdélyi Ignác hitküldér hazánkfiának levele Chinából." *Uj Magyar Sion* 9 (1878): 511; Erdélyi, Ignátz. "Erdélyi Ignác chinai hitküldér levele." *Uj Magyar Sion* 10 (1879): 39; "Magyar templom Chinában." *Uj Magyar Sion* 16 (1885): 237–40.

56 Üрге, "Chinai közlemények II."

57 Üрге, Ignátz. "Chinai közlemények [III]." *Uj Magyar Sion* 16.1 (1885): 19–27.

58 Czimmermann, István. "Afrikai levél." *Jézus Szentséges Szívének Hirnöke* 6 (1886): 267.

a few years after Henry Morton Stanley's *Through the Dark Continent*, Czimmermann too related Africans to all possible meanings of darkness. Erdélyi, Wilfinger, and Menyhárth mentioned the physical qualities of their "flock-to-be" only in passing.

Far more consideration was given to the mental capacities, culture, and society of the to-be-converts. From China, Üрге delivered the most detailed reports. He credited the Chinese with advanced mental capacities and self-critically admitted that before entering China, he mistakenly believed that the Chinese were "morally and culturally as imperfect as the American Indians and the Africans". Upon spending a few years in China, he learned to appreciate Chinese society and culture and compared them to ancient Greece and Rome; nonetheless, the comparison also meant that China was stuck in the past, lagging centuries behind modern Europe. "The Chinese are not savage but cultured and civilized people. Their culture is heathen, thus it naturally differs from ours and shows contrasts in several respects; however, seeing from the vantage point of the natural order, one may say that there is not much room for improvement [in Chinese culture]."<sup>59</sup> Üрге particularly praised the Chinese administration, the low level of taxation, the sophisticated industry, the intensive agriculture, the rich literary and scientific traditions, and the imperial examinations based on them.<sup>60</sup> All these achievements were rooted in the "strong power of conception" of the Chinese. Culture in China was strong enough to make the modern missionary in China "not need to teach people first of agriculture, industry, domesticity, and to develop their mind."<sup>61</sup>

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59 Üрге, Ignác. "Chinai közlemények [I]." *Uj Magyar Sion* 15.1 (1884): 32.

60 Üрге, "Chinai közlemények [I]," 32; Üрге, Ignác. "Khina földrajzi, népisme, vallási tekintetben." *Földrajzi Közlemények* 17.4 (1889): 178.

61 Üрге, "Chinai közlemények [I]," 38.

Ürge, however, found the Chinese cultural advancement incomprehensive and stagnating since Confucius, who “had rather been a compiler than a genuine exploring and creative mind.” The sciences were ignored by most Chinese except for a few office-holders; yet, even members of the “cultured classes had primitive, often childlike ideas and our experience tells that a European having only average education was intellectually definitely superior to any Chinese.”<sup>62</sup> Yet, cultural and social stagnation also brought about advantages. The archconservative and ultramontane Ürge was hypercritical towards the emerging female emancipation in Europe: “How may one agree with women being the lead in the company of respectable, meritorious gentlemen?” If one needed to choose between the Chinese patriarchy and the European “idolatry of women” (Ürge’s words for female emancipation), Ürge preferred the former.<sup>63</sup>

Wilfinger showed a far deeper skepticism about Chinese culture. In his assessment, Chinese cultural traditions were worthless because they were rooted in non-Christian traditions; in particular, he charged Buddhism with yielding in widespread superstitions rather than reason. As the Chinese showed no sincere interest in sciences and education, argued Wilfinger in a somewhat paradoxical way, the rational explanation of the Christian dogmas hardly could open the minds and souls of the Chinese to Catholicism.<sup>64</sup>

Czimmermann’s and Menyháth’s assessment of culture and society also antagonized heathen Africa and Christian Europe. To start with, Czimmermann several times mentioned African humans and animals in the

62 Ürge, “Chinai közlemények [I],” 44.

63 Ürge, “Chinai közlemények [III],” 25–27.

64 Wilfinger, József. “Wilfinger József kínai hithirdető levele.” *Magyar Állam* 7 July 1901: appendix; Wilfinger, József. “Levél Kínából.” *Magyar Állam* 14 November 1901.

same context, thus tacitly suggesting that Africans stood somewhere between nature and humankind: in the “wild jungles of Africa lives the heathen Negro, alongside with the lion and the elephant”;<sup>65</sup> on another occasion, he tasted a certain fruit but he “barely bit into it, and threw it away because it resembled a fig only in shape; it tasted very bad and supposedly only a Negro stomach or voracious monkeys” may have liked it.<sup>66</sup> For Czimmermann, Africans, living on the frontier of nature and humankind, unsurprisingly “had no idea of civilized and ordered conditions,”<sup>67</sup> meaning the standards of contemporary European industrial society. Rendering even their rich oral traditions worthless, he claimed Africans lacked social memory: “In Africa, there are no ruins and traditions hardly exist. ... The Negro’s poor mental capacities do not save the traditions of the past.”<sup>68</sup>

Menyhárth’s assessment did not start that deeply: he was positively surprised to see huts built similarly to Hungarian peasant houses and arranged in streets in a village in Angola en route to Mozambique.<sup>69</sup> In general, however, Menyhárth shared Czimmermann’s opinion about the worthlessness of the African lifestyle, culture, and society. They especially blamed the despotic leaders who misgoverned the people and practically kept them in slavery, depriving Africans of human dignity.<sup>70</sup>

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65 Czimmermann, “Afrikai levél,” 268.

66 Czimmermann, István. “Kelet-Afrika.” *A Katholikus Hitterjesztés Lapjai* 8.5 (1889): 99–100.

67 “Mission am Unter-Sambesi.” *Die katholischen Missionen* 21.6 (1893): 130–31.

68 Czimmermann, István. “Kelet-afrikai néptörzsek.” *Katholikus Hitterjesztés Lapjai* 7.3 (1888): 42.

69 Menyhárth, László. “Napló.” *Jézus szent szívének Hirnöke* 24 (1891): 16 [in the appendix].

70 Czimmermann, István. “Zumbo (Afrika), 1892. május hó 16-án.” *Máriakert* 8.10 (1892): 273–77.

These practices needed to be completely eradicated and replaced: “Our main task is,” informed Menyhárth the readership of a German missionary journal, “to civilize this poor Negro folk that we achieve through its conversion to Christianity.”<sup>71</sup>

Africans still had the potential for an improved life, claimed the missionaries. Even Czimmermann admitted that “one cannot entirely deny that [Africans] had reason and mental capacities” and they showed talent in handicrafts.<sup>72</sup> Czimmermann found that African children did not perform badly in the missionary school, though it is telling that he considered the local children to be most successful in singing, i. e. a non-rational, emotional subject.<sup>73</sup> Menyhárth saw more potential for Africans in education. He was assisted by two “genuinely Saracen” pupils who would have performed well in any European school,<sup>74</sup> and the missionaries’ instructions to Black workers were enough to build a large house without a single European bricklayer and carpenter.<sup>75</sup>

Cultural differences, the missionaries claimed, also influenced morals and the patterns of sins committed by the Chinese and the Africans. Erdélyi portrayed rural China as the land of poverty where crop failure

71 Menyhárth, László. “Mission am portugiesischen Unter-Sambesi.” *Die katholischen Missionen* 21.11 (1893): 241–43.

72 Czimmermann, “Afrikai levél,” 269.

73 Czimmermann, István. “Mission am portugiesischen Unter-Sambesi.” *Die katholischen Missionen* 21.8 (1893): 178.

74 Menyhárth, László. “Levél Afrikából.” *Jézus Szentséges Szívének Hírnöke* 26.1 (1893): 7–10.

75 Menyhárth, László. “Levél Zambézi tájáról.” *Jézus Szentséges Szívének Hírnöke* 28 (1895): 294–96.



made people commit the most horrible sins, such as cannibalism.<sup>76</sup> Üрге and Wilfinger observed the opposite: they agreed that the relatively developed Chinese economy made the Chinese materialistic and led them to seek financial benefits everywhere. Writing for the Christian Social and anti-Semitic paper *Magyar Állam*, Wilfinger likened the Chinese love of profit to that of the Jews.<sup>77</sup> The second trope employed by both Üрге and Wilfinger was a standard image in contemporary Orientalism: sensationalism and hedonism, in particular, among men whose chief interest laid in opium dens and brothels. The Orientalizing connection is the more obvious as Wilfinger equaled the Chinese voluptuousness with that of the Turks: “the family life of the Chinese is as dishonorable as that of the Turk.”<sup>78</sup> The third trope shared by all three was the cunningness of the Chinese: the sophisticated manners of the Chinese society, went the argument, made Chinese hide their true nature, therefore slyness became their national characteristic.<sup>79</sup> Gender roles in Chinese society further added to their vice, both Erdélyi and Üрге claimed. Chinese men repressed and exploited women, culminating in female infanticide and the exclusion of girls and women from education and social life, making Chinese women resemble slaves or cattle rather than free people.<sup>80</sup>

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76 Erdélyi, Ignác. “Erdélyi Ignác chinai hitküldér levele.” *Uj Magyar Sion* 10 (1879): 33–40.

77 Wilfinger, József. “Levél Kínából Illés Ferencz vasvár-szombathelyi kanonokhoz.” *Magyar Állam* 28 March 1901.

78 Wilfinger, József. “Levél Kínából.” *Magyar Állam* 14 November 1901.

79 See Ignác Erdélyi’s letter to János Zalka from 19 February 1866, “Egyházi tudósítások.” *Religio* 1.41 (1866): 324–26; Üрге, “Chinai közlemények [I],” 38, 44; Wilfinger, József. “P. Wilfinger levele Kínából Illés Ferenc szombathelyi kanonokhoz.” *Magyar Állam* 30 October 1900.

80 Erdélyi, Ignác. “Erdélyi Ignác magyar hitküldér levele Kínából.” *Uj Magyar Sion* 7 (1876): 776–77; Üрге, “Chinai közlemények [III],” 26–27.

Due to the “lack of civilization” and proximity to nature, Africans sinned in different ways. Since nature provided them with enough food, Africans were idle, torpid, and did not strive for an improved life. The “evidence” Czimmermann provided for this argument was the poor clothing of the Africans: a rag satisfied their needs and even that was often lacking.<sup>81</sup> Czimmermann and Menyhárth, unsurprisingly, also charged Africans with a lack of rational thinking, superstitions, and childishness.<sup>82</sup> Czimmermann added to this list the worst possible crime, cannibalism, allegedly practiced in the secluded interior of the continent, though he “evidenced” this charge merely by citing Duarte Lopez, a 16th-century Portuguese trader in the Congo.<sup>83</sup>

Yet, in the end, neither cultural differences nor the very way of committing sins mattered. Both the Chinese, akin to the ancient pagan civilizations, and the “uncivilized” Africans were condemned to the same destiny: eternal damnation and suffering after death. According to Christian theology, each human being, regardless of their wickedness, is capable of good, i. e. to accept the Gospel and to lead a Christian life. Accordingly, all the missionaries agreed that the heathen had their chance. “Humans even in the state of heathenness are able to learn the morally good to a certain extent,” Üрге claimed, concluding that “one finds a pinch of goodness in the acts and morals” of the Chinese.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, Czimmermann stated that the soul of the African heathen was “immortal and valuable” and similar to that of any other human being.<sup>85</sup>

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81 Czimmermann, “Afrikai levél,” 269.

82 Menyhárth, “Levél Afrikából [1892],” 249–54.

83 Czimmermann, “Kelet-afrikai néptörzsek,” 44.

84 Üрге, “Chinai közlemények [I],” 38–39.

85 Czimmermann, “Afrikai levél,” 268.

Africans, whom both Czimmermann and Menyhárt regarded as children-like creatures, were unable to help themselves but neither could Chinese because their relatively sophisticated culture and society were irrelevant for salvation. Help could thus come only from outside, best from Europe. Unfortunately, though, Africans and Chinese had already met the wrong Europeans.

In China, foreign influence came mostly from Britain. Üрге associated the British impact on China chiefly with opium that the British forced on Chinese society. The drug became the greatest evil in China, escalating the “typical” Chinese vices of slyness, voluptuousness, and profit-seeking; thus, the immorality and degeneration of the Chinese were to a large extent due to the British.<sup>86</sup> Wilfinger highlighted another British vice: the British (and also the Americans) misled the Chinese by spreading “heresy”, i. e. Protestant Christianity. Wilfinger mocked Protestant missionaries for being incompetent, but their sheer number that greatly outnumbered Catholic missionaries did pose a threat to Catholicism.<sup>87</sup>

The White Man harmed Africans even more. In the interior of the continent where only a few or no Whites lived, natives sinned because they were child-like, naïve, and lived in and from nature. In contrast to that, on the coast Africans encountered the European industrial society. “The evil example of the Whites” made Blacks work hard, so they earned

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86 Üрге, “Khina földrajzi, népismej, vallási tekintetben,” 180.

87 Wilfinger, József. “Wilfinger József kínai hithirdető levelei.” *Magyar Állam* 10 October 1901. Wilfinger was right to observe that Protestant missionaries outnumbered Catholics (ca. 2000 vs. 900); nonetheless, Catholics succeeded in converting Chinese far more efficiently than Protestants, the difference being sevenfold in 1899 and still more than threefold two decades later. Wu, *From Christ to Confucius*, 47; Sun, Yan-fei. “Reversal of Fortune: Growth Trajectories of Catholicism and Protestantism in Modern China.” *Theory and Society* 48.2 (2019): 268.

decent salaries; but their industry lasted for a few days only and they rather drank until they ran out of money, observed Menyhárth.<sup>88</sup> The allegation of alcoholism among the working class was a common trope among Catholic clergy living among the proletariat of the industrial neighborhoods of European cities, Menyhárth thus suggested that the co-existence of Europeans and Africans Europeanized the wickedness of the Blacks. European-style sins, however, did not diminish the gap between Black and White—after all, the “upward mobility” of the Blacks meant only becoming the proletariat of the coastal cities. Once observing an educated Mozambique White calling the local vernacular the language of dogs, Menyhárth was disgusted by the Whites’ everyday racism and denial of human dignity for the Africans.<sup>89</sup>

Yet the ultimate evil from Europe came not from the hands of Whites living in Africa but from the metropole. While pragmatically cooperating with and loyal to the Portuguese colonial authorities, neither Czimmermann nor Menyhárth hid their opinion about the anticlericalism of Portugal before the re-invitation of the Church to the African colonies. They both charged the antireligious Portuguese government with dismantling the church, morale, and the seeds of Christian civilization in Portuguese Africa, as summarized by Czimmermann: “The secret and destructive power that in 1773 and 1834 abolished the monastic orders in Portugal ... ruined the erstwhile flourishing communities, agriculture, industry, and civilization [also in Africa]... Today one sees desert and forest in lieu of the former civilization and one finds heathen, wild Blacks instead of the Christian, civilized Negros.”<sup>90</sup> Menyhárth agreed

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88 Menyhárth, “Napló,” 30.

89 Menyhárth, “Napló,” 34.

90 Czimmermann, István. “Czimmermann I. leveléből.” *Jézus Szentséges Szívének Hírnöke* 23 (1890): 299–301.

that Portugal “stabbed herself in the heart because her soldiers could neither civilize nor keep the giant colonies.”<sup>91</sup>

The key for the improvement of China and Africa was thus *proper* help and the missionaries left no room for doubt as to what “proper” meant. Technical knowledge and rationality without faith did not advance human society, indeed, as the example of liberal Portugal showed, it was more destructive than heathenness. Instead, Czimmermann and Menyhárth in Africa, and also Wilfinger in China shared the belief that converting to Catholicism not only saved heathen souls but also opened their way to proper civilization. Disembarking in Africa for the first time, Menyhárth immediately celebrated a mass “for the conversion of the wretched Negros and their veritable civilization”; Czimmermann persuaded natives to attend the church *and* to embrace civilization; and Wilfinger also related faith and progress.<sup>92</sup> Even Üрге, who appreciated the cultural achievements of his “flock-to-be” the most, believed that all the progress China had made in the past centuries was due to the Jesuit missionaries.<sup>93</sup>

Disregarding some minor differences in tone, Czimmermann and Menyhárth shared the conviction of the complete worthlessness of the African lifestyle and the dire need of its replacement with Christian morals and European culture. Erdélyi’s and Wilfinger’s assessments of China were rooted in their initial experience during the chaos of the Taiping and the Boxer Rebellions, respectively; they hardly identified

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91 Menyhárth, “Napló,” 17.

92 Menyhárth, “Napló,” 16; also Menyhárth, “Mission am portugiesischen Unter-Sambesi,” 241–43; Czimmermann, “Mission am Unter-Sambesi.” *Die katholischen Missionen* 21.6 (1893): 130–31; Wilfinger, “Wilfinger József kínai hithirdető levele,” appendix.

93 Üрге, “Chinai közlemények [I],” 44.

anything positive either in the country or in its people. Üрге, whose activity in China coincided with a relatively peaceful period, learned to respect several aspects of Chinese society but these were indifferent to Chinese morals that Üрге regarded as wicked as his fellow missionaries.

## Conclusion

These very condensed thoughts of five selected missionaries remarkably coincided with contemporary Catholic missionary reports and, significantly, also Protestant missionary accounts and lay descriptions about Africa and China written for Western audiences.<sup>94</sup> Darkness, in all possible (negative) meanings of the word, loomed over Africa,<sup>95</sup> while in China “the list of virtues [was] short, of vices long.”<sup>96</sup>

The commonalities between the images produced by the 19th-century Hungarian missionaries and their European contemporaries are striking enough to question the relevance of the attribute “Central” as it stands in the title of this book. If we suppose that missionary activity was embedded in the structures of empire and colonialism—though the agenda of missionaries and secular colonialists could vary greatly, to say the least—it is indeed intriguing to ask why missionaries hailing

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94 The only Hungarian Protestant missionary in sub-Saharan Africa during the 19th century, Samuel Böhm, also drew the gravest picture of Africa and endorsed the idea of civilization-cum-Christianity: Böhm, Samuel. “Briefe eines ungarischen Missionars in Afrika.” *Evangelisches Wochenblatt* 3.20 (1859): 314.

95 Nederveen Pieterse, Jan. *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1992. 69–74.

96 Mackerras, Colin. *Western Images of China*. Hong Kong – Oxford – New York: Oxford UP, 1989. 49.

from a formally non-colonizing nation produced narratives akin to their colleagues from colonizing empires.

I suggest that the answer lies in two phenomena: on the one hand, the age-old structure of knowledge transfer within the church that I call “missionary cloud” and, on the other, the phenomenon that recent research calls colonialism without colonies.<sup>97</sup>

The five missionaries’ access to the missionary cloud was influenced by their social background, their intellectual trajectory within the church, and the church framework itself. All five were born in a rural environment into families living from agriculture, handicrafts, or petty commerce. During their youth, they all experienced the transformation of the countryside as the industrial revolution unfolded in Hungary; yet, their channels of upward mobility were still rather limited. The church—as it had been doing for centuries—still offered a stable and convenient career for talented young men; indeed, transnational mobility was still easiest to attain in the framework of the church. All five future missionaries studied under the patronage of and within the church in various countries, and their intellectual horizon was first and foremost molded by the transnational intellectual milieu of the church. It is significant that they were not sent by national missionary associations as was customary in the Protestant churches, but by international monastic orders; indeed, both the Vincentians and the Jesuits operated at the Austro-Hungarian level, which explains the pivotal position of the Sankt Andrä monastery and the Graz house for Jesuits and Vincentians, respectively.<sup>98</sup> It may be safely argued that the Catholic Church provided relatively even access to

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97 See Barbara Lüthi’s chapter in this volume.

98 A Hungarian Jesuit province was separated in 1909, a Vincentian in 1926, both decades after the five missionaries embarked on their journeys.

its “cloud” for the clergy, in particular in contrast to the actors associated with competing imperial powers in their access to the secular “imperial cloud.” Thus, when the Hungarian missionaries “downloaded” knowledge from the “missionary cloud” about the heathens in Africa and China, and the patterns of behavior that were expected from them, they simply appropriated positions that had already existed. Czimmermann and Menyhárt also uploaded knowledge to the cloud: the former drafted religious books in the Bantu vernacular spoken by his flock, while the latter made meteorological and botanical observations that were published in German.

Since the clergy did not live cut off from the secular society, the “missionary cloud” was certainly not the sole source of knowledge about the lands and peoples that were to be evangelized. Reporting about Africa, the Hungarian secular press uncritically reproduced the narrative of vast civilizational differences between the European core and sub-Saharan Africa until the late 1880s (Hungary, of course, was claimed to belong to the former). It also appropriated the colonizers’ agenda of civilizing missions. From the late 19th century, some Hungarian press outlets cautiously became more critical towards Western colonialism in Africa.<sup>99</sup> The Hungarian secular press and the few Hungarians visiting China published reports mixing visions of past prosperity and current stagnation, often referencing up-to-date Western, mostly British accounts.<sup>100</sup> Via the mediation of the press, the future missionaries could thus “download” knowledge also from the secular imperial cloud.

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 99 Kicsindi, Edina. “Az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia és az afrikai gyarmatosítás: Gyarmatosítás és nagyhatalmi politika a magyar nyelvű sajtóban a 19. második felében.” *Az Eiffel-torony árnyékában: Majoros István 70 éves*. Ed. Gábor Búr. Budapest: ELTE BTK Új- és Jelenkori Egyetemes Történeti Tanszék, 2019. 388–408.

100 Andrásy, Manó. *Utazás Kelet-Indiákon: Ceylon, Java, Khina, Bengal*. Pest: n.p., 1853; Kreitner, Gusztáv. *Gróf Széchenyi Béla keleti utazása India, Japán, China, Tibet és Birma országokban*. Budapest: Révai Testvérek, 1882.



The 19th-century Hungarian missionary movement coincided with the zenith of the European confidence in the colonial cause. Embedded into the transnational community of the Catholic church, this small sample of a particular group of globally mobile professionals produced sharp images of the extra-European world that resonated well with both religious and secular audiences. While they were mostly concerned with the division between Christian and heathen, they also contributed to the making of the difference between Europe and non-Europe, White and Colored, Civilized, Uncivilized, and Barbaric. The views and reports of missionaries as molded between the 1860s and early 1900s, were dominated by the shared reservoir of knowledge and one can barely describe these understandings as a “non-colonial” perspective. The secular representations of Africa and China in the second half of the 19th century in Hungary illustrate well the emergence of a Hungarian colonial culture without having actual Austro-Hungary overseas colonies. As missionaries analyzed in this chapter uncritically borrowed the frames of reference of their West European contemporaries and disseminated them to the Hungarian public, they unintentionally became agents in making a non-colonizer colonial culture. Only with the advance of the nationalist ideology of Turanism and its embracement in the Catholic church in the interwar period did Hungarian missionaries develop an original perspective that embraced a sympathetic identification with “Asians”. This suggests that the semi-peripheral Central Europe, more particularly Hungary, shared notions of civilizational and racial difference and uneven relations between Europe and the extra-European world with the European core during the second half of the 19th century. At the same time, the small number of missionaries suggests that the density of these “encounters” was far smaller, making the difference between the West European core and the East-Central European semi-periphery one of quantity but not of quality.

BARBARA LÜTHI

# 7 Colonialism without Colonies in Europe: Defining Lines

European history has long vacillated between two extremes: On the one hand, a history of enlightenment and revolutions which culminated in individual freedom, progress, liberal democracy, modernization, and scientification.<sup>1</sup> On the other, European history can be read as a history of violence and extremes, particularly with regard to the 20th century.<sup>2</sup> During the past two decades a further narrative has developed that scrutinizes European colonial history and its long-lasting impact. Especially the tendency to understand European history and historiography in their global and post-colonial context and to acknowledge the diversification and global horizons of Europe, has brought postcolonial studies to

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1 Kaelble, Hartmut. *Europäer über Europa: Die Entstehung des europäischen Selbstverständnisses im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2001.

2 For example, to Hobsbawm, Eric. *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991*. London: Michael Joseph, 1994; Mazower, Mark. *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*. London: Penguin, 1999.

the fore of newer historical intellectual endeavors. Colonial studies has experienced renewed attention in many European countries.<sup>3</sup>

One question at the heart of the debates has been whether European and non-European forms of empire can be studied in the same analytical frame. In this context, especially scholars from Europe have looked closely at the different structures of dominance for European and non-European imperial polities: the different “degrees of tolerance, of difference, of domination, and of rights” for European and non-European imperial polities.<sup>4</sup> A further call for a more nuanced understanding of colonial history has been referred to as *colonialism without colonies*, thereby adding another dimension to thinking about imperialism and colonialism.<sup>5</sup>

Postcolonial Studies have played a formative role in these debates. As a loosely defined interdisciplinary field of perspectives, theories and methods emerging from Cultural Studies, it deals foremost with the analysis of the non-material dimensions of colonial rule and, at the same time, the deconstruction of colonial discourses and thought patterns that have been effective up to the present day. Postcolonial Studies are significant for European history, because their representatives define colonialism

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3 At the beginning of the millennium, the historian Charles Maier put forward the thesis that in the context of the globalized world, the legacy of colonialism and Western dominance will sooner or later become the subject of groundbreaking intellectual and political debates. Maier, Charles. “Consigning the Twentieth Century to History.” *The American Historical Review* 105.3 (2000): 807–31.

4 Stoler, Ann Laura, Carole McGranahan, and Peter C. Perdue, eds. *Imperial Formations*. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research, 2007.

5 Lüthi, Barbara, Francesca Falk, and Patricia Purtschert. “Colonialism without Colonies Examining Blank Spaces in Colonial Studies.” *National Identities* 18.1 (2016): 1–9.

as a web of reciprocal relationships that shaped not only the colonized regions, but also a colonizing Europe. This research also speaks to the lingering presence of colonial elements in Europe's contemporary everyday life, politics and scholarship. It sheds light on the paradox that, while postcolonial notions pervade European society (even if to varying degrees), they are barely reflected upon.<sup>6</sup>

The aim of this article is, on the one hand, to outline some of the helpful theoretical premises which have been developed under the heading of "colonialism without colonies" during the past two decades, and on the other hand to look at possible similarities and differences between the examples of Central European countries and Switzerland labeled under such headings. It is important to coax out the subtle differences the different countries and regions' colonial involvement, practice and theorization.

## Complicity in the Realm of Colonialism

The concept "colonialism without colonies" points to the specific postcolonial constellation of countries that were highly involved in and affected by colonialism without having developed a respective self-conceptualization. Studies on such cases have received abundant attention during the past decades. Besides "smaller" and belated colonial powers, such as

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 6 Majumdar, Rochon. *Writing Postcolonial History*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010; Steinmetz, George. "The Implications of Colonial and Postcolonial Studies for the Study of Europe." *European Studies Newsletter (Council for European Studies)* 32.3-4 (2003): 1-3.

Germany or Italy<sup>7</sup>, the Nordic countries, including Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, or countries such as Switzerland have often exhibited an explicit self-understanding as being outside the realm of colonialism.<sup>8</sup> These countries nevertheless engaged in the colonial project in a variety of ways and shared its profits. Some of the main impulses of these debates were studies in economic history, which, for example, dealt with the multifaceted involvement of actors in the transatlantic slave and colonial trade, as well as studies on colonial knowledge production or the formation of race.<sup>9</sup>

In this context, studies have suggested a plethora of definitions in an attempt to describe different formations of colonialism and degrees of colonial involvement. For example, in launching the idea of “borrowed colonialism,” Selim Deringil refers to the Ottoman’s colonial stance towards the peoples of the periphery of their empire. Colonialism was a

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- 7 Lombardi-Diop, Cristina, and Caterina Romeo. *Postcolonial Italy: Challenging National Homogeneity*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012; Conrad, Sebastian. *German Colonialism: A Short History*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012.
- 8 Suvi, Keskinen, et al., eds. *Complying with Colonialism: Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Nordic Region*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009; Purtschert, Patricia, and Harald Fischer-Tiné, eds. *Colonial Switzerland: Rethinking Colonialism from the Margins*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015; Purtschert, Patricia, Francesca Falk, and Barbara Lüthi. “Switzerland and ‘Colonialism without Colonies:’ Reflections on the Status of Colonial Outsiders.” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 18.2 (2016): 286–302.
- 9 For example, David, Thomas, Bouda Etemad, and Janick Marina Schaufelbuehl. *Schwarze Geschäfte: Die Beteiligung von Schweizern an Sklaverei und Sklavenhandel im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*. Zürich: Limmat, 2005; Schär, Bernhard C. *Tropenliebe: Schweizer Naturforscher und niederländischer Imperialismus in Südostasien um 1900*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2015; Zangger, Andreas. *Koloniale Schweiz: Ein Stück Globalgeschichte zwischen Europa und Südostasien (1860–1930)*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2011; Loftsdóttir, Kristín, and Lars Jensen. *Whiteness and Postcolonialism in the Nordic Region: Exceptionalism, Migrant Others and National Identities*. London: Routledge, 2012.

“survival tactic” to avoid becoming a colonized power and to reject the “subaltern role” that the West seemed to have in mind for them.<sup>10</sup> Other terms, such as “covert colonialism” or “part time colonialism,” used in the case of Switzerland, point to the nations’ involvement in the slave trade and other international capitalist ventures while underlining the invisibility and restricted engagement of their involvement in colonialism.<sup>11</sup>

A more precise and overarching term, which may be a helpful gateway to understanding “colonialism without colonies”, is the concept of “colonial complicity.” In her article *Colonial Complicity: The “Postcolonial” in a Nordic Context*, the social anthropologist Ulla Vuorela uses the notion of “colonial complicity” to theorize a situation in which countries, like Finland, have “neither been historically situated as one of the colonial centers in Europe nor has it been an ‘innocent victim’ or mere outsider of the colonial projects.”<sup>12</sup> By referring to Michel Foucault she describes the “ambiguous” position of many countries without colonies in Europe which, while striving for positions of power, have simultaneously been subjected to power. The notion that “[s]eduction by the hegemonic is the very appeal that leads to our complicities” lies at the heart of “colonial complicity”: If one wants to be heard in the hegemonic Western discourses, one is exposed to a danger of being “seduced” by universal

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 10 Deringil, Selim. “‘They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery:’ The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45.2 (2003): 333–35.

11 For example, Fässler, Hans. *Reise in Schwarz-Weiss: Schweizer Ortstermine in Sachen Sklaverei*. Zürich: Rotpunktverlag, 2005.

12 Vuorela, Ulla. “Colonial Complicity: The ‘Postcolonial’ in a Nordic Context.” *Complicity with Colonialism: Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Nordic Region*. Ed. Suvi Keskinen et al. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. 19.

thinking and practices of domination and it is precisely this “seduction” that can lead to “colonial complicity.”

Her manifold examples of Finnish complicity make it abundantly clear that even if Finland was not a proper colonial subject, there were ways to “colonize” the Finish minds into an acceptance of colonial practices and universally accepted regimes of truth.<sup>13</sup> Besides pointing to the “inner colonization” of the Sámi people, the racialization of the Roma people or the formation of anthropological theory to sustain evolutionary theories of culture and hierarchies, she gives examples of children’s books like *A Little Princess* and *Pippi Longstocking* which speak to the “seductive” elements of the stories and their hailing children “into taking the colonial order of things as natural.”<sup>14</sup> The process of not only striving for positions of power but also being subjected to it, is the quintessence of her concept when Vuorela argues that *“hegemonic relations of ruling also give rise to hegemonic understandings of the ways in which ‘things are’ i. e. what is considered as universal truth at any point in time. [...] Even for the most abstract and apolitical scholar, getting access to the dominant fields of knowledge is a temptation and a seduction. [...] Yet, getting access to power is not only about being hailed to power-holding subject positions, but also about becoming subjected to it.”*<sup>15</sup>

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13 Vuorela, “Colonial Complicity,” 21.

14 Vuorela, “Colonial Complicity,” 24.

15 Vuorela, “Colonial Complicity,” 31.

## Knowledge Production and the “Colonial Imaginary”

Being drawn into the orbit of power has been one of the main features of many European countries that had an explicit self-understanding as an outsider within the European-colonial power constellation. In this context, three closely linked aspects seem relevant when looking at countries without colonies, also in respect to Central Europe: The role of *knowledge production and circulation*, *colonial imaginaries* and *colonial networks*.

In research on questions of nationalism and identity formation, there is a consensus that all forms of community and collective identities take place against the background of “othering procedures.” In this process, a diverse structure of ethnic, social or cultural differences is produced, which distinguish “European” from “non-European” characteristics. For example, Bálint Varga argues in his article on Hungarian missionaries in Africa (Mozambique) and China that there were commonalities between the images produced by the 19th-century Hungarian missionaries and their European contemporaries. Using the concept of the “imperial cloud” as “a shared reservoir of knowledge, which was not bound to a single empire, but had a multi-local existence and was accessible to agents of different empires, both from the peripheries and the metropolises,”<sup>16</sup> individual missionaries had access to this knowledge in different degrees, depending on their particular social position, their intellectual trajectory within the framework of the church, and the church framework itself.

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 16 Kamissek, Christoph, and Jonas Kreienbaum. “An Imperial Cloud? Conceptualising Interimperial Connections and Transimperial Knowledge.” *Journal of Modern European History* 14.2 (2016): 166.



In many countries, missionaries from different monastic orders were involved in the scientific mapping and anthropological knowledge production. But most of all, they were active in communicating knowledge on and visions of the colonized regions to their respective national audiences. Therefore repercussions of missionary work in Africa on countries such as Hungary as well as Switzerland were manifold.

As historian Patrick Harries showed in his book “Butterflies and Barbarians” by example of a group of missionaries from French-speaking Switzerland in southeastern Africa around 1900, a whole range of images of “Africa” reached and influenced everyday life in the metropolis.<sup>17</sup> The collected work and missionary propaganda brought Africa directly into the most intimate hiding places of Swiss homes and everyday life: lectures by returning missionaries, sermons, Sunday schools, museum collections, botanical gardens as well as a collection of photographs and memorial albums contributed to the dissemination of this knowledge about Africa. In the 1920s and 1930s, the work of the missions was also disseminated through theater plays or pamphlets on individual topics such as the “race question” in Africa or the future of the education of the natives. Transnational Mission Societies reveal the kind of global experience that Christopher Bayly called “lateral history.” Above all, however, the mission played an important role in the way in which Switzerland saw itself as a homogeneous community—precisely because of its diversity of languages, religions and classes: Africa served as a useful foil for assessing its own level of civilization. Similarly, the Hungarian missionaries as an epistolary culture, routinely informed the Catholic media about their labor, and these reports were taken up in the secular press—

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17 Harries, Patrick. *Butterflies & Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries & Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa*. Oxford: James Currey, 2007.

therefore filling in information and images for a broader audience in Hungary which rarely traveled to African and Asian oversea territories. But the reciprocal gain also played out on a different level: The aim to turn the heathens into Christians “boosted Catholic morale and culture in the metropole,” as Varga argues. Hereby the entanglements between metropolises and colonies and the repercussions of colonial culture on the metropolises becomes especially perceptible.<sup>18</sup>

Yet, knowledge production and circulation were not limited to clerical groups. Besides the formal colonies, an extensive literature developed during the past decade which has pointed to spaces of knowledge production around the turn of the century which must be understood as gradually independent of colonial interests, since there was no simple congruence. From this follows that colonial knowledge production did not require a colonial state of its own. Colonial history, which analyzes both the politico-military expansion and the sciences in the colonial age, should not only look for its relevant actors within the respective colonial empires and their metropolises, but also take into account central milieus and networks outside, such as that of the urban bourgeoisie in cities or missionary networks throughout Europe. As scholars have elaborated, such an approach leading away from “empire-centered approaches” allow us to understand colonial empires as “transit zones,” “meeting areas” and imperial networks. In these zones, communication took place between not only scientists, missionaries and other actors from the respective European colonial metropolises, but also representatives from societies that did not maintain any colonies themselves.

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18 Cooper, Frederick, and Ann Laura Stoler. “Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda.” *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*. Ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler. Berkeley: U of California P, 2009. 1–58.

Markéta Křížová's contribution thinks along these lines. As she shows, the pursuit of scientific activities overseas with their connections to colonization had a special relevance for countries without own colonies. As a marker of "colonial complicity," the Czech lands including Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia were—even if on a small scale—involved in scientific expeditions, museum exhibitions and the more which were often closely tied to colonial powers and their infrastructure. Yet, she demonstrates that the "intellectual appropriation" of far-away lands served another purpose, namely for aspiring political goals and "promoting the defensive nationalism" towards other ethnic groups within the Habsburg Empire. Both, the Czech speakers and the "German Bohemians" followed a "defensive nationalism" which used stereotypic images of various others for the own identity construction—including the internal others (e. g. the Jews) or social groups at the immediate vicinity (such as the Turks), but also the "exotic others" from non-European regions. At the end of the day, the example shows the limitations of Czech and German-Bohemian colonial dreams and fantasies, since scientific knowledge production as well as economic exploitation never truly expanded and only single individuals and private institutions were involved. As Křížová concludes, they "remained at the periphery of the colonizing Europe." This leads to the interesting assumption that colonial knowledge production was not in need of an own colonial state and, despite its limitations, explicitly served national goals.

Fantasies and social imaginaries at times may be understood as a substitute for the concrete material aspirations or colonial dominion in demonstrating colonial ambitions, as Jitka Malečková shows in her article on colonial fantasies of the Czech people towards two related "Others," namely the Ottoman Turks and the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Imaginaries, understood as "culturally shared and socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with the personal

imagination and are used as meaning-making devices, mediating how people act, cognize and value the world,”<sup>19</sup> maybe most clearly show the “colonial complicity” of the Czech inhabitants of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But this case also shows the important differentiations we need to apply not only to regional and national settings within the Habsburg Empire, but at times even to the interpretation of individual writers leading to different perceptions and images of the “Other”; an important detail in trying to empirically undergird the concept of “colonialism without colonies”. For example, while pamphlets often described the Turks as ferocious or ranging from a lack of compassion to a lack of civilization, and as inherently dangerous warriors, the authors of the numerous travelogues, novels and stories that depicted an “exotic Ottoman Orient” did not always share these attitudes towards the Turks. Importantly though, while much of the thoughts on Ottoman Turks that resonated in these writings were influenced by foreign sources (such as Johann Friederich Blumenbach, Georges Cuvier, or Friedrich Anton Heller von Hellwald, an Austrian Darwinist and popular writer on history, geography, and ethnography), some were nonetheless adapted and “localized.”

This was quite unlike the imaginaries and fantasies of the Slavic Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, numerous Czech-speakers visited these former Ottoman provinces as soldiers, clerks, entrepreneurs, skilled and unskilled workers, and tourists. Different than the Ottoman case showing Orientalist fantasies, the Slavs were the target of colonial rhetoric and their civilizing mission on the background of the occupa-

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 19 Salazar, Noel. “On Imagination and Imaginaries, Mobility and Immobility: Seeing the Forest for the Trees.” *Culture & Psychology* 26.4 (2020): 768–77.

tion of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It became, as Malečková underlines, “an opportunity for investment and for gainful employment” and a place they could help “civilize.” The different “colonial” status of Bosnia-Herzegovina compared to the Ottoman Empire within Czech writings therefore was of great significance.

While the volume addresses different case from Central Europe, many of these countries have so far not been addressed from a postcolonial perspective. This may also imply that not all European countries had similar colonial ambitions or imaginaries, of which some—such as Croatia and Slovakia—have not found adequate attention yet. Or, as Charles Sabatos argues in his article, Slovaks were rather far removed from the “position of strength” in Said’s Orientalist paradigm and not all images of Others necessarily had a colonial subtext, if one follows his reasoning on the version of frontier Orientalism found in Slovak literature. In a similar vein, Robert Born argues that Orientalist painting in East Central Europe was to a certain degree influenced by the centers of academic painting such as Paris, Munich and Vienna while at the same time the applications of the pictorial forms coined in these artistic centers show noticeable differences in comparison to Western Europe. This can be traced back to the respective national traditions or were dictated by current political agendas.

## **Decentering colonial history**

In the debates about different colonial formations and the postcolonial impacts in and on Europe, it is essential to understand the different degrees of domination and social imaginaries, the manifold actors, and the scales of involvement. Not to forget the “ambiguous” position of many countries without formal colonies seeking positions of power,

while at the same time having been subjected to power. In the context of these often subtle and important differences, the example of Central Europe allows us to decenter colonial history in pointing to “colonial peripheries” which were in one way or another “complicit”—not just mere outsiders of the colonial projects and at times seduced by hegemonic discourses, civilizing fantasies and by confirming one’s own level of civilization through the encounter with the Other. The example of Central Europe also shows that “colonialism without colonies” should not merely be understood as a purely discursive colonialism, but points to the—even if limited—participation of individual actors and transnational actor networks. The repercussion of such entanglements on Central Europe manifested itself possibly less in economic connections than in the adaptation of ideas from other parts of the world, of collections and racialized discourses.

But further close readings of individual writings as well as local, national, and regional conditions will prove important for future research, in order not only to understand European and non-European imperial polities but also to differentiate the concept of “colonialism without colonies.”



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