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The Image of Balkan Muslims in Czech and French Journals around 1900

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ABSTRACT

This chapter offers a comparative analysis of the image of Balkan Muslims in French and Czech public discourse in the period 1875-1914, by using the evidence from Czech and French periodicals. Balkan Muslims constitute only a part of the overall discourse of the region, but this was nonetheless a very important and frequent theme, and constituted a common public image. The background for this chapter is a wider study of the complex occidental reflection on the peninsula¹, which takes Czech and French discourses as a representative sample.

Článek je věnován komparativní analýze obrazu balkánských muslimů ve francouzské a české publicistice v letech 1875-1914. Balkánští muslimové tvoří sice jen část komplexního obrazu, ale objevují se jako velmi časté a důležité téma veřejného diskursu. Příspěvek je založen na zevrubném výzkumu komplexní "západní" reflexe Balkánu pro nějž české a francouzské časopisy slouží jako jeho reprezentativní vzorky. V úvodu autorka představuje korpus časopiseckých textů, který se stal základem pro rozbor a komparaci zkoumaných obrazů. Analytickou část autorka rozčlenila na tři oddíly podle typů obrazů: muslimský válečník, reflexe vztahu muslimů k modernizaci a pohled na ženu z muslimského prostředí. Stať sice předložila pouze tři typy obrazu, přesto předvedla, že studovaný obraz je rozmanitý. Komparace dokazuje, že na jedné straně oba diskursy, český a francouzský, tvoří součást „západního“ diskursu o Balkánu, na druhé straně poukazují i na národně specifikované pohledy a potvrzují, že neexistoval unifikovaný západní přístup. Studie poukazuje i na celou řadu pohledů vlastních oběma společnostem současně, které by si zasloužily pozornost badatelů.

INTRODUCTION

Before embarking on an analysis of the image of Muslims itself, we should first present some basic information on the historical background to the subject and also comment briefly on the nature of the sources used in the research. The chronological framework is the period 1875 - 1914. The year 1875 was a turning point in that it saw the outbreak of anti-Turkish rebellions in the Balkans which proved to be the first in a chain of conflicts in the last third of the 19th century – conflicts which fundamentally changed

the political and cultural situation in the Balkan region. The year 1914 serves an apt terminal date, not just because of its seminal nature in global terms, but also because the context in which information about the Balkans was gathered and communicated changed very substantially with the outbreak of the First World War.

In southeast Europe, the turn of the 20th century was a very complex period, marked by major political and social changes. This process of transformation, often referred to as the 'Eastern Crisis' or the 'Eastern Question' in historiography, started at the end of the 18th century when the Ottoman Empire began to lose its status as a great power, and culminated after the First World War with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The main features of this complex period are generally considered to be the deterioration of the position of the Ottoman Empire as a political great power, the growing tensions within the empire, manifested above all in increasingly powerful movements for national emancipation that ultimately resulted in the creation of independent nation states, and the interventions of the great powers on the side of the various actors in the struggle, against the background of shifting international political concerns and rivalries².

The aim of this research has been to explore in comparative perspective how authors from Czech and French cultural conditions perceived the area today known as the Balkan Peninsula, and to find out what kind of information on the Balkans these sources offered the public. Czech and French society here represent two types of European society that were in different socio-political situations at the end of the 19th century: Czech society was an example of a small nation striving for national and cultural emancipation within the context of a multi-ethnic (Habsburg) monarchy, while French society was an example of a major nation, and a great cultural and colonial power. For source material I chose magazines, often accompanied by illustrations, since these are more extensive and analytical than newspaper articles which were a direct reaction to political events and often unconcerned with identifying the broader cultural and historical context. In any case, the readers of these magazines were also informed about current political events in the special magazine sections, for the most part designed specially to give a brief summary of the latest developments. I have, however, also used newspaper material particularly when they described fundamental and significant events. The comparative perspective made it necessary to select magazines that were similar in terms of genre. The following titles were chosen: the Czech magazines *Zlatá Praha* [Golden Prague], *Osvěta* [Enlightenment], *Vlast* [Fatherland], and the French magazines *L'illustration*, *La Revue des Deux Mondes* and *Le Correspondant*.

Zlatá Praha was a Czech literary and cultural fortnightly magazine, designed to be both entertaining and informative, with a readership drawn from the middle strata of Czech society. It contained articles on a diverse range of subjects, with pictorial accompaniment being a very important element in each case. The second Czech magazine analysed, *Osvěta*, was a popular scientific revue that also appeared fortnightly throughout the period surveyed. It contained articles of a more academic type than those published in *Zlatá Praha*, especially historical and ethnographic studies that were often printed in

instalments and sometimes came out later in book form. The third Czech magazine was the fortnightly *Vlast*, a magazine for Czech Catholics and conservatives. This revue, subtitled *A Magazine for Entertainment and Instruction*, was the organ of a society of the same name founded to spread Catholic faith and culture.

The French magazine *L' Illustration* was the most successful illustrated French periodical at the turn of the 20th century. It offered a view of the week's events with commentaries, as well as information from Paris, metropolitan France, the colonies and the rest of the world. As time went by its cultural section, containing information on theatre and the arts, extracts from literary works and numerous feuilletons, acquired greater importance. The French *La Revue des Deux Mondes* was a monthly periodical devoted to French cultural life, especially literature, history and art. It was a non-illustrated, more academic revue aiming to offer general information, especially on the novel, travel literature, politics, economics and art. The third French magazine analysed was the fortnightly journal of moderate Catholics, *Le Correspondant*. Like the *Revue des Deux Mondes* it carried relatively academic articles that were often several dozen pages in length and not infrequently later published in book length. It featured a regular political section entitled *La revue de quinzaine*, devoted to political events at home and abroad.

Overall, several dozen authors contributed to the magazines studied. Roughly sixty French or French-speaking authors were published in the French magazines over the period, most of them professional experts (diplomats and academics), but also journalists, travellers and writers. They were very varied in terms of education: many had a legal education, but they were also technicians, journalists and philologists. Generally they were active in political and cultural life, though they were not necessarily directly interested in the Balkan region. The number of Czech authors was roughly a third less than the number of French or Francophone writers. The Czech authors had mainly received their education at modern secondary schools or classic secondary schools (gymnasiums). Those authors with university education for the most part had degrees in the humanities (predominantly in history, Slavonic studies, philology with a stress on Slavic languages, and, occasionally, geography). The best known and the most important of the Czech authors in terms of social standing was Konstanin Jireček (1854-1918). Jireček was a Czech intellectual and university teacher who, for several years from the 1880s, occupied a high position in the Bulgarian government. Another author cited was Jaroslav Bidlo (1868-1937), a Czech historian and university lecturer, whose academic interests were mainly in the history of the Slavs and their cultures. The journalist, writer and translator Josef Holeček (1842-1907) had a reputation mainly as an enthusiastic Slavophile and the author of travel literature and fiction. Josef Wünsch (1842-1907) was a well-known cartographer and traveller, while Jiří Václav Daneš (1880-1928) made his name primarily as a traveller and journalist but was also a university teacher and diplomat. I have only managed to obtain information about two of the four Francophone authors cited. Jean Erdic was the pseudonym of the French economist Eumén Quiellé, who like Jireček was invited to assist the Bulgarian government in the 1880s, in his case as auditor of state finances. Emil de Laveley (1822-1892),

likewise an economist, was born in Belgium but lived and worked in France as well. In his specialist works he focused on the causes of economic decline and land ownership. No details have been established regarding the other two French authors cited, Yves Reynaud and Léon Lamouche.

The core of my research concerns ideas surrounding and responses to the religious, ethnic and cultural plurality of the peninsula. Specifically in relation to religious communities it is very interesting to see how the Czech and French pictures of Muslims and Islam were formed, how they differed and in what they agreed.

In these popular scientific journals of Czech and French provenance, the Balkans appear in three basic types of material: in short articles of an informative nature reporting on political events of the day, in longer articles considering history and culture, and in travelogue sketches. With few exceptions the authors whose articles were published in the journals concerned all had a university education or at least more than a basic education. Most had been in the Balkans on some short study or professional trip, or in some cases they had lived in the Balkans for some time, and so their articles reflected their personal experiences. Their texts, or rather the journals in which they published, were addressed to a broad readership.

In 19th-century European culture the perception of the ‘Muslim’ and the evolving contours of the image of Muslims were generally very strongly influenced by cultural stereotypes that were partly the effect of the cultural tradition of Orientalism³, but also reflected the historical experience of Europeans. Although in Czech and French encyclopaedias of the time ‘Muslim’ was dryly and succinctly defined as “person avowing the Islamic Faith”⁴, in general cultural consciousness the image of the Muslim widespread in Europe in the 19th century was quite negative; that is, a Muslim was an oriental whose main salient features were fanaticism and violence, conservatism and a lack of civilization, laziness and debauchery⁵. In analysing material on the Balkans, I therefore had to ask myself the fundamental question of how Czech and French authors described Muslims in a region that in the European mind lay on the borders between Europe and the Orient⁶.

ANALYSIS – THE IMAGE OF MUSLIMS

Comments on Muslims appear in these sources in various different contexts and in all three types of article, but mostly in the context of describing the Balkan population. When encountering the nationally, ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous population of the Balkan Peninsula, authors tried to distinguish between groups on the basis of different features – most often language, religion or region. Constructs of different groups, most often based on the construct of ‘nations’ or ‘peoples’, or in some cases minority or religious groups therefore emerge from their writings. The perception of the Balkan population in the periodicals reflects the situation at the turn of the century when the term ‘nation’ or ‘people’ (Czech *národ*) was starting to be used in a markedly modern sense and was employed in various contexts, often very loosely, and generally as a term for ethnic groups rather than peoples necessarily having nation states.

In this chapter there is no space for consideration of all the details of the image of Muslims, and so we shall focus just on three basic sub-images that appeared repeatedly. First, the image of the Muslim as a fanatical warrior, which emerges from commentaries on war in the Balkans⁷. Second, the image of the Muslim and the process of modernization, which emerges on the one hand from analysis of material devoted to the internal development of the Ottoman Empire, and on the other from articles considering the historical development of the Balkan provinces, as well as general comments on Islam. Finally, there is the image of the Muslim woman, which can be traced particularly in the travelogue pieces but also in the political news.

The image of the Muslim as warrior

In the Czech and French publications analysed, Balkan themes appear most frequently at the times of most dramatic political disturbance in the Balkans. In the Czech press there was a particularly strong response to the various forms of struggle by Balkan peoples against Ottoman rule, and especially the struggles of Slavic peoples. The Czech authors consistently sympathised with these opponents of the Ottoman regime, and especially the Slavs. The enemy in the armed conflicts, the Ottoman Empire, was always described in very negative terms, and Ottoman soldiers – Muslims (of whatever ethnicity) were seen as personifying the enemy. On the Czech side there was therefore a one-sided, black-and-white picture, with the Balkan nations – Christians – lined up against the Muslim Ottoman army. In the texts the Turkish soldiers were often described by such expressive phrases as “fanatical killers, Muslim dogs, beasts in human shape” and so forth⁸. In the Czech historical consciousness (or subconsciousness) this negative vision of the Muslim was linked to the figure of the Turk as the eternal arch-enemy of Christians, and was in some ways simply a revival of an old image from the early modern period⁹.

In the French press of the same period we do not, however, find so strongly polarised a picture. Although there was criticism of violence committed by Ottoman soldiers against Christians, especially civilians, and some authors openly supported the Christian Slavs in their efforts at emancipation, essentially the criticism was of war and the Ottoman supremacy in general. In the French texts the issue was more one of politics – what to do about “the sick man on the Bosphorus”, and less a question of precise contours in the image of Muslims.

Criticism of Muslims and a negative image of Muslims appeared most strikingly in reports of Albanian conditions. The Albanian Muslims were described as the mercenaries of the Turks, who murdered helpless Christians for money, and whose lack of principle and venality were emphasised. Another example of negative perception of Muslims as warriors related to Bosnia. Both Czechs and French saw the Bosnian Muslims as generally Serbs as far as ethnicity was concerned, or in some cases in a wider sense as South Slavs, but they nonetheless sometimes wrote about them as Turks and attributed to them the same characteristics as were attributed to Ottoman soldiers - Turks and Albanians, i.e. fanaticism in religion and in the fight against Christians.

Czech authors saw Balkan rebellions as a just cause and described rebels as “brave undaunted fighting heroes”. One typical subject of such Czech idealisation were the Montenegrins, a particular object of interest for the Czech author Josef Holeček. In his articles he compared the two warrior nations – Montenegrins and Albanians – and tried to explain the origins of their national characters. Both these peoples, he claimed, were “brought up to the sound of gunfire” but while the Montenegrins had become a “chivalric nation”, the Albanians had turned into “base brigands” and mercenary soldiers¹⁰.

In the writings of some Czech authors we find words of defence for Slavic Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina as people who are good at heart because they have a “good Slav foundation”. This vision was entirely consistent with the widespread Czech pan-Slavist sympathies of the end of the 19th century¹¹. For example, Josef Holeček considered the core element of Bosnian Muslims to be the Bosnian nobility, who in his words were “nationally conscious and powerful and also outstanding for their Slav goodness and greatness of mind.” In his view, therefore, Islam was merely “silt on the good Slav foundation”. Holeček expressed the hope that in the course of time the good Slavic nature would triumph over the negative characteristics that were the result of Islamicization; the Slavs would become civilized and return to European customs¹².

The image of the Muslim in the process of modernisation: is it possible to civilize the Muslim?

In both Czech and French sources the theme of the relationship of Muslims to civilization appears consistently and in various contexts, with civilization generally understood by writers to mean technical modernization and the European lifestyle of the 19th century. Generally the authors concur in the view that the obstacle to modernization and progress among Muslims is the conservatism and fatalism inherent in their religion, which prevented them from progressing. This stereotypical view appears very frequently and was applied to Muslims in general, with more than one author concluding that Islam was incompatible with modernization. Nonetheless, in individual cases we find a range of opinions and ideas that were not so categorically negative and conceded the possibility that progress might be consistent with Islam. This kind of view appeared primarily in relation to accounts of the Turks and Bosnian Muslims. Authors saw hope for the salvation of the Turks and of their whole empire in “enlightenment, education, reforms and emancipation from the Koran”. In some cases, however, we encounter the counter-argument that an educated Turk would actually lose his identity, because education and Islam were not, apparently, compatible. The Czech author Josef Wünsch claimed, for example, that as a result of modernization the Turk was ceasing to be a Turk and becoming a “Frenchman, because an educated Turk does not exist”¹³. Here the term Frenchmen should be understood in wider cultural context, as a European¹⁴. In Wünsch’s view any Turk who continued to lead his life according to the principles of the Koran was bound for certain destruction. He could only save himself from extinction by education, but as a consequence of enlightenment he would automatically lose his Turkish identity and become a different person – a European, and so one way or

another the Turkish nation would still cease to exist. For Wünsch, then, not just the fall of the empire, but also the end of the Turkish nation was inevitable.

It is interesting that the notion that the Turks were incapable of civilisation can be found among French authors as well. Alfrède Gilléron made much the same point as Wünsch when he stated that all progress is alien to the Turks; and as soon as they leave the atmosphere of patriarchal and primitive Islamic civilisation they degenerate and succumb to moral corruption. They therefore have only two alternatives: either to become civilized, and cease to be Ottoman, or to entrench themselves in their oriental character and sink even deeper into a struggle against civilisation¹⁵.

In the French magazine *L'Illustration*, however, an image of educated figures in Turkish political life was promoted with a series of profiles of leaders of the Ottoman Empire. In these kinds of article we can see an image of modern and progressive politicians (the Young Turks) taking shape, and being presented by journalists as a promise of the modernization and Europeanization of Ottoman society¹⁶. Reflections on modernization also appeared in comments on everyday life, which drew attention to the apparent Europeanization of local society, manifest, for instance, in the way people dressed. European responses to these changes in Turkish society were mixed. On one hand they were regarded as welcome signs, while there was also ridicule and criticism directed at Turks who had become Europeanized.

French authors also commented on the social hierarchy in Ottoman society. Emil Laveley, for example, made a distinction between the higher and lower ranks of society. The higher social ranks he called Ottomans, characterizing them as bureaucrats and criticising them for their luxurious life in palaces and for oppressing the population – not just Christian but also Muslim – with taxes. The lower levels of society – and the Christian population, which the author calls Turks, in his view represented the healthy core of the nation. What emerges from Laveley's account is therefore the image of the powerful Muslim official “described as a lazy Turk, jealous and sensuous, a conservative Muslim who cannot bear enlightenment, innovation and progress”. By contrast he presents us with the “rural Turk”, described as a good man, and the hope for a better future, even though attention is drawn to aspects of his “oriental character”, and in this context particularly his “fatalism”.

The debate on Turkish attributes and the prospects for modernisation and Europeanization also involved comments on the ethnogenesis of Turkish culture. The overall consensus tended to be that Turks were a non-European element and did not belong to Europe. The Frenchman Jean Erdic, however, pointed out in this context that if the ethnogenesis of the various European nations was investigated, the conclusion would be that nobody is actually at home in Europe because all the existing peoples of Europe originally arrived from outside the continent¹⁷. Another French writer, Léon Lamouche, went so far as to claim that the Turks were not an entirely heterogeneous element in Europe. He pointed out that the Turks had taken over many features of Byzantine culture and so were, in their way, the heirs of Byzantine culture¹⁸. Lamouche be-

lieved that a Byzantine influence could be observed particularly in court ceremonial at the sultan's court, in the system of government, and also in architecture and aspects of material culture¹⁹. In Lamouche we find an attempt to see Muslims, specifically Turks, as an integral part of the mosaic of European history.

In a similar way the Czech author Josef Bidlo, in an article on the decline of Turkish power, argued that the Turks had been civilized by contact with the Greeks and that this cultural influence was apparent, for example, in the way the peninsula had been conquered not just by brute force, but through the use of considerable intelligence and diplomacy²⁰. Bidlo propounded the notion that in their way Turks were the allies of the Greeks. He claimed that because the Greeks had failed to control the Balkan Slavs by themselves they had found allies in the Turks, who had then won a certain share in power in the framework of Byzantine government. Thus he alleged that the Ottoman Empire was a continuation of Byzantium – a new Roman Empire of the Turkish nation²¹.

In Czech articles we may encounter opinions on the possibility of modernizing and civilizing Muslims primarily in the context of the efforts of the Austrian government to improve Bosnia and Herzegovina. Josef Holeček expressed the view that the Bosnian Muslims were the most educated stratum of the population in Bosnia. Indeed, it is in Holeček's writings that we can see for the first time the emergence of the image of the "nationally conscious, educated Muslim" in contrast to the images of the "fanatical warrior" or "dull, ignorant layabout" that prevailed up to this time. Another Czech author, Josef Daneš, however, called the Bosnian Muslims "an obstacle to the progress of the country"²².

The Muslim woman – The gender aspect of the problem

At the end of the 19th century the view of the oriental woman was not monolithic in European culture, but the idea of the 'unfree woman' imprisoned in the harem and forced to cover her face in public was prevalent. More broadly, the persistent image was of the Muslim woman as passionate, sometimes sinful, oppressed but also mysterious and exotic²³.

The subordination of women in Islam, allegedly based on the principles of the Koran, was one of the traditional stereotypes to be found in European culture of the 19th century. Yet, as specialists on Islam and its culture have demonstrated, the position of women was not based only on the Koran, and was modified by different traditional structures and social environments. These specialists have drawn attention to the fact that nowhere in the Koran are there direct prohibitions and commands relating to the role and position of women, but only exhortations on what women should or should not do. The practise has therefore always depended on the interpretation of individual citations from the Koran in a particular society. The prohibition on women leaving the house was derived for example from the interpretation of the following verses: "Oh ye wives of the Prophet! Ye are not like any other women [...] And stay in your houses. Bedizen not yourselves with the bedizement of the Time of Ignorance [...]" (*Koran* 33: 23-33). The command to veil the face was an interpretation of the verses: "O Proph-

et! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them. That will be better, that so they may be recognised and not annoyed [...]" (*Koran* 33:59). Women were deliberately disadvantaged by interpretations of the Koran that legitimised the rule of men over women²⁴.

However, the powers of women also depended on their social and regional origins. For example women from the highest strata of Ottoman society were in charge of the running of the harem and household²⁵. In this sense they were the heads of families, to whom the whole household – sons, daughters, daughters-in-law and servants – were subordinate. A woman's status increased if she gave birth to a male child. The woman also had full responsibility for the upbringing of children. In the sources studied we find comments on or accounts of women in Muslim society in Bulgaria, Bosnia, Macedonia, Albania and European Turkey. Generally the authors had either travelled in areas inhabited by the poorer strata of the population or stayed in Istanbul, which naturally had a very specific character as the political and cultural centre. In their articles we therefore find reactions to two opposite poles in society: the poor village population in Bosnia or Albania or, by contrast, the women of the urban society of rich and busy Istanbul. Among French authors it was the theme of Muslim women from the capital that predominated, while Czechs tended to write about the position of women in the Muslim societies of the Balkan provinces.

In the texts analysed most of the comments on the position of women in society are critical. With a mixture of humour, bitterness, anger and regret, the authors describe women as helpless creatures imprisoned in harems and dependent on their men. It is nonetheless evident that authors also noticed differences between the regional Muslim communities. For example, both Czech and French authors drew attention to the fact that Bosnian Muslim men did not practise polygamy. We can find remarks of this kind in articles by Josef Holeček, Konstantin Jireček and Emil Lavaley.

At the beginning of the 20th century comments appear that reflect wider debate on the theme of the position of women in society and the importance of women in the process of modernization. Some authors saw the inferior status of women in Muslim society as a hindrance to progress, and argued that unless the position of women and their level of education were improved, Islamic society would never advance to modernity. When describing relationships in Bosnia, Lavaley, for example claimed that:

[...] even if a Muslim has only one wife, she is a subject being, a personal slave isolated from all culture. And because the task of woman is to bring up children, in this respect I see only miserable consequences...[It is] in the situation of women that we can identify the main obstacle to the modernisation of this territory...we are talking of very primitive human creatures who know absolutely nothing. In this context do we not reflect on the kind of position women have in Christian families? On the important role that women play here? We may ask ourselves if this is precisely not the reason why Muslims cannot assimilate to western culture [...]²⁶.

We find the same kinds of ideas expressed by another French author, Yves Reynaud, in his article *La femme dans l' Islam* of 1911. He criticised Muslim society as a whole and argued that the betterment of the position of women was the precondition for any social progress²⁷.

On the other hand, the sources also contain comments to the effect that life in the harem was relatively comfortable for women, who had complete material security and did not need to work. Some authors went so far as to ask whether women were not actually content in these conditions. They described the position of female Muslims in positive terms, describing how songs, laughter and music came from the harem, how Muslim women led carefree lives while the men had to take care of all the practicalities²⁸. Even Reynaud wrote that “some Oriental women have adapted ... many of them are satisfied and would not exchange their life for that of European women, who have numerous duties and responsibilities”²⁹. This is a point of view developed in relation to the lives of Christian women by an anonymous Czech author, who in 1907 compared their existence with that of Muslim women. He suggested that the position of “civilised women” was actually worse than the position of Muslim women, as Muslim women were “materially fully taken care of”, a state he viewed as more advantageous than the lot of their “civilized” sisters in Europe. He asked “How many civilized women, whose life passes in the shadow of modern laws in hunger and cold, would not happily exchange their work at the sewing machine or in a school for residence in a harem?”³⁰. Here we have an interesting elaboration of the theme of the negative impact of civilization, modernization and female emancipation. In general, however, we can say that the Christian woman appears as mirror opposite to the Muslim woman – as hardworking and unveiled. The author himself ultimately presents a positive image of the Christian woman, considering her to be superior in morals and character to the Muslim woman³¹.

CONCLUSION

Although we have looked at only three types of image that can be analysed in these periodicals, it is clear that the image of Muslims was very colourful, and we can in fact go further and state that when comparing images from sources of a different provenance we find a shared single image of Muslims in some cases, but elsewhere divergent or qualified and localized images of Muslims. A clearly negative image of Muslims emerges from the Czech sources in the period of armed conflicts in the Balkans, and is mirrored by the correspondingly positive image of Balkan Slav-Christians. The issue here is one of confrontation between Muslims – represented by Turks and Albanians – and Balkan Christians on the other. In the French sources, however, we do not find such a sharp polarization of the image of Muslims and Christians in this context.

Yet another image of Muslims appeared in remarks surrounding the question of modernisation. Here the situation was essentially one of contrast and confrontation between Islamic culture and the ‘modern European civilization’ from which the writers themselves came. Two images of Muslims took shape in this context – on the one hand

a negative stereotype, and, on the other, a new, unconventional and often positive image that deviated from the stereotype. Both these images were common to both the groups of writers, Czech and French. The stereotypical image presented the Muslim as uneducated and uneducable, and badly behaved towards women. In the framework of this negative image the Muslim woman was perceived as a helpless subject of male tyranny, and Muslim society was the precise opposite of the 'European' society from which the writers came, and into which they refused to admit Muslims, specifically Turks. The positive image of Muslims deviated entirely from the stereotypical view. Turks were in this perspective considered a part of European history; the existence of an educated social elite (among Turks, the Bosnian Muslims) was accepted; and Muslim women were considered happily liberated from the need to work, unlike European women.

My research indicates that a comparison of the Czech (Central European and Slav) view with the image created in the French (West European) environment shows many similarities of perspective: they were both part of a broadly conceived 'Occidental' discourse about Balkans. This research also suggests that there is no one common Occidental approach and that there are interesting themes for further research. As might be expected, agreement between French and Czech writers exists particularly in relation to the "established negative stereotypes" concerning the perception of Islam and Muslims that form the dominant part of the image. What is particularly fruitful about the study, however, is the discovery that authors also showed an interest in exploring issues of the relationship between modernization, civilization and religion. In this context the stress that some authors, like Reynaud and Laveley, placed on the role of women in the process of the modernization of society and the need to improve their position is surprising. Another important aspect revealed by this research has been the perception of social differentiation within Muslim society. There remains a great deal of room for further scholarship in questions surrounding the relationship of religion to modernization, social structures and gender roles.

NOTES

- ¹ See the author's *Obraz balkánské ženy v české publicistice*, in J. Polišenský (ed.), *Češi a svět. Sborník k pětasedmdesátinám Prof. Dr. Ivana Pjaffa*, Praha 2000; *The Bulgarian Intelligentsia and "inteligencija" (a contribution to the history of the study of the Bulgarian intelligentsia in the 19th century and the testimony of Konstantin Jireček)*, in L. Klusáková (ed.), *"We" and "the Others": European societies in search of identity. Studies in comparative history*, Studia historica LIII, AUC Philosophica et Historica 1/2000, Prague 2004, pp. 153-165; and also *Raum und Zivilisation. Zur Stellung des Balkan im kulturellen Horizont der tschechischen Gesellschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts*, in A. Bauerkämper, H.E. Bödeker, *Die Welt erfahren. Reisen als kulturelle Begegnung von 1780 bis heute*, Frankfurt - New York 2004, pp. 95-114.
- ² See for example, B. Jelavich, *History of the Balkans, I, 18th and 19th Century*, Cambridge 1985, and Id., *History of the Balkans, II, Twentieth Century*, Cambridge 1993.
- ³ Ch. Peltre, *Orientalisme*, Paris 2005; E. Said, *L'orientalisme: L'Orient crée par l'Occident*, Paris 2005.
- ⁴ *Ottův slovník naučný: ilustrovaná encyklopedie obecných znalostí* [Otto's Educational Dictionary: An illustrated encyclopaedia of General Knowledge]. Prague 1888-1909, 28 vols. Also accessible at <http://coto.je; Larousse du XIXème siècle, VIII, p. 326>.

- ⁵ Peltre, *Orientalisme* cit., Said, *L'orientalisme* cit.
- ⁶ On the image of the Balkans in European culture of the 19th and early 20th century see M. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford 1997.
- ⁷ In the period studied there were a number of geopolitical changes that substantially changed the borders in the Balkans and also had an impact on the socio-economic conditions of Balkan societies. Milestones included the year 1875, which saw the outbreak of a rebellion, the Russo-Turkish War in 1877-78, the annexation of Bosnia by Austria-Hungary and Young Turk Revolution in 1908, and the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. For a detailed account see B. Jelavich, Ch. Jelavich, *The Balkans in Transition*, Berkeley - Los Angeles 1963, and Jelavich, *History of the Balkans, II*, cit.
- ⁸ These expressions appeared frequently in *Národní Listy* [Czech daily news], especially during the Balkan Wars 1912-13.
- ⁹ For more on the image of Turks in Czech culture in the early modern period see T. Rataj, *České země ve stínu půlměsíce: Obraz Turka v rané novověké literatuře z českých zemí* [The Bohemian Lands in the Shadow of the Crescent: The image of Turks in Early Modern literature in the Bohemian Lands], Prague 2002.
- ¹⁰ Josef Holeček, *Černohorci ve zbrani* [Montenegrians in Arms], in "Osvěta", 1880, pp. 278 ff.
- ¹¹ On Czech Pan-Slavism see V. Štátný, *Slovanství v národním životě Čechů a Slováků* [Slavdom in the National Life of Czechs and Slovaks], Prague 1968.
- ¹² Holeček, *Černohorci* cit., pp. 278 ff.
- ¹³ "[...] already some Turks – but so far they are only rare exceptions - are learning modern sciences, educating themselves and ceasing to be Turks, becoming French in speech and manners. An educated Turk is an impossibility. Here there is just the cruel choice: to be an educated man or a Turk [...]" J. Wunsch, *Čařihrad*, in "Osvěta", 1876, p. 515.
- ¹⁴ The fashion and customs coming from Western Europe were called *alafrianga*.
- ¹⁵ A. Gilléron, *Grèce et Turquie. Notes de voyages*, in "Revue des Deux Mondes", 1877, p. 283.
- ¹⁶ For more on the history of the Young Turk movement see F. Ahmad, *The Young Turks, The Committee for Union and Progress 1908-1914*, Oxford 1969.
- ¹⁷ J. Erdic, *Autour de la Bulgarie*, Paris 1884, pp. 5, 40-41, 132.
- ¹⁸ L. Lamouche, *La péninsule balkanique*, Paris 1899, pp. 118-120.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 118.
- ²⁰ J. Bidlo, *Úpadek moci turecké a osvobození balkánských Slovanů* [The Fall of Turkish Power and the Liberation of the Balkan Slavs], in "Slovanský Přehled", 1912, pp. 149-151.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- ²² J. V. Daneš, *Před jubileem okupace*, Prague 1908, p. 11.
- ²³ A. Grosrichard, *La structure du sérail: La fiction du despotisme asiatique dans l'Occident classique*, Paris 1999.
- ²⁴ I. Kouřilová, *Žena a sexualita – fatální téma islámu* [Woman and Sexuality – the Fatal Theme of Islam], in *Cesta k prameni*, Prague 2003, pp. 35-44, p. 58
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- ²⁶ E. de Laveley, *La péninsule des Balkans*, 1885, vol. I, p. 235.
- ²⁷ Y. Reynaud, *La femme dans l'islame*, in "Correspondant", 10 October 1911, p. 59.
- ²⁸ Holeček, *Bosna*, in "Osvěta", 1876, p. 808.
- ²⁹ Reynaud, *La femme* cit., p. 76.
- ³⁰ *Svatební obřady* [Wedding Ceremonies], in "Zlatá Praha", 1907, p. 628.
- ³¹ *Komentář k obrazu Kratochvíle* [Commentary on Picture Entitled Leisure], in "Zlatá Praha", 1888, p. 815.

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