

# Crossroads of East and West: European Travelers to Istanbul & Anatolia in the Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century



10 December 2019:

Workshop at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII)

March - May 2020:

A Series of Lectures at Big Hall, Cezayir Building



<http://www.srii.org/>  
<http://www.oiist.org/>

# The Traveler's Voice: Approaches and Reflections on Travel Literature

10 December 2019, 15:00-18:30h

Workshop at  
The Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII)  
İstiklal Cad. 247, Tünel - Beyoğlu  
34421 İstanbul

---

15:00: Maria Georgopoulou

16:00: Helena Bodin

17:00: Erol Köroğlu

18:00: Discussion and concluding remarks by the organizers

# The Wonders that Illumined Greece. European Travelers' Books in Greek Collections.

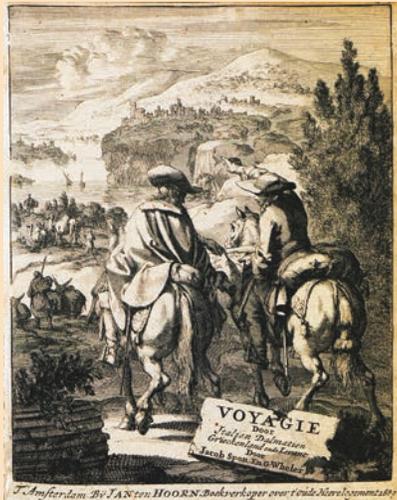
by Maria Georgopoulou

My presentation discusses the major collections of European travelers books in Greece, namely the Gennadius Library, the Finopoulos collection at the Benaki Museum, the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation, and the Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation.

Many of the European travelers who visited the Ottoman Empire, particularly in the Middle Ages, were pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land. These accounts are supplemented by the accounts of merchants, sailors, ambassadors and, beginning largely in the sixteenth century, by a growing number of scholars, artists and tourists who came to the area in search of classical antiquity. It is this turn to Antiquarianism that signals the importance of Greece in the imagination of the Europeans.

This body of material is relatively well-known. The travelogues have been extensively studied primarily for the important historical information they include or as a

special literary genre. Various indexing and imaging projects have been going on since the 1990s. Innovative Digital Humanities projects have recently sought to create new digital platforms that open up this unique historical knowledge to the world at large, and tie in the important historical maps of the same period. We look forward to see what that future will bring, especially Big Data projects such as the new European Project “Time Machine.”



**Maria Georgopoulou** is currently Director of the Gennadius Library at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, a member of the Board of Directors of the National Library of Greece and serves at the Board of Directors of the Consortium for European Research Libraries. Her scholarly work explores the artistic and cultural interactions of Mediterranean peoples in the Middle Ages and the early modern period. Her monograph *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies: Architecture and Urbanism* (Cambridge UP, 2001) examines the architecture of Venetian Crete. She has curated diverse exhibitions such as *Ottoman Athens* and *Flora Graeca*. She is currently working on portable objects within their economic and social Mediterranean context, and on Byzantine painting in its vernacular post-Byzantine transformations.

# Constantinople around 1900 as a Literary World in Travel Writing

by Helena Bodin

With a focus on Western travelogues from Constantinople in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire, this lecture sets out to discuss issues of literary world-making as a matter of travel writing and world literature. Around 1900, Constantinople was still a multilingual, multi-ethnic and multireligious metropolis, not to say a cosmopolis, bordering between the Western and Eastern worlds. Travelers from – for example – Italy, France, Croatia, England, the U.S., and Scandinavia described their impressions of Constantinople in travelogues, private journals, letters, and reportages. My intention is to explore the crafting of Constantinople as a particular literary world by examining the significance of the moments of arrivals and departures, of multilingualism, of gendered experiences, and of readings of earlier travelogues set in



Constantinople in a selection of texts. They were written between 1877 and 1922 by – among others – Edmondo De Amicis, Pierre Loti, Alka Nesteroff, Virginia Woolf, Ernest Hemingway, Elisabeth Jerichau-Baumann, and Stéphanie Beyel. It is demonstrated that travelogues portraying Constantinople around 1900 exemplify a linguistically complex part of world literature which as a literary world, is accessible to readers still a century after the birth of the Turkish republic.

**Helena Bodin** is Professor of Literary History in the Department of Culture and Aesthetics at Stockholm University and Senior Lecturer at The Newman Institute in Uppsala, Sweden. Her research concerns the functions of literature at boundaries, such as between languages, nations, arts and media. She is a member of the Research Collegium of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. Recent publications include “Heterographics as a Literary Device. Auditory, Visual, and Cultural Features”, *Journal of World Literature* 3(2018): 2, and “Seclusion versus Accessibility: The harems of Constantinople as Aesthetic Worlds in Stories by Elsa Lindberg-Dovlette”, in *World Literatures: Exploring the Cosmopolitan-Vernacular Exchange*, eds. Stefan Helgesson et al. (Stockholm University Press, 2018).

# A Novel Travel on the Sea: Narratorial Preferences and Ideology in Ahmet Mithat's *Sayyadâne Bir Cevlân*

by Erol Köröglü

Ahmet Mithat (1844-1912) was the most important literary figure in the Western-based modernization of the Ottoman-Turkish literature in the nineteenth century. He was an impressive polygraph with his more than 200 books in fiction and non-fiction genres and numerous amounts of writings in periodicals. This paper focuses on his short travelogue, *Sayyadâne Bir Cevlân* (A Hunterly Excursion), in which he narrates a sea voyage from



Bosphorus to İzmit Bay. He serialized it in his newspaper like his other books. Therefore the narrative voice in the travelogue is the voice of the roman feuilletonist, the novelist, and the journalist. Can we use Ahmet Mithat's very distinctive narrative voice as a connection point between this travelogue and other



novels that contain excursions or travels? This paper will focus on this question and try to problematize the interactions of Ahmet Mithat's travel writing in fictional and non-fictional works before and after *Sayyadâne Bir Cevlân*.

**Assist. Prof. Dr. Erol Köröglü** teaches history of modern Turkish literature since the 19<sup>th</sup> century at Boğaziçi University, Department of Turkish Language and Literature. Publications (selected): *Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity: Turkish Literature during World War I*, London 2007; "Novel as an Alternative Collective Remembrance Text: Poiesis, Storytelling, and Social Thinking in Yaşar Kemal's *An Island Story Quartet*," in Catharina Dufft, ed. *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory: "Multiculturalism" as a Literary Theme after 1980*, Wiesbaden 2009; "Propaganda or Culture War: Jihad, Islam, and Nationalism in Turkish Literature during World War I," Erik-Jan Zürcher, yay. haz., *Jihad and Islam in World War I: Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje's "Holy War Made in Germany"*. Leiden 2016.

# European Travelers to Istanbul & Anatolia in the Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century

---

## A SERIES OF LECTURES

Big Hall, Cezayir Building  
Hayriye Cad. 12 Galatasaray-Beyoğlu  
34425 İstanbul

**March - May 2020, Wednesdays**

at 19:00h

11 March

Gábor Fodor: **Hungarian Memoirs from the Ottoman Empire, 1848-1918**

1 April

Jitka Malečková: **Traveling Outside the Colonial Framework. Czech Travelers to Istanbul, 1860s-1923**

22 April

Ulla-Karin Warberg: **Fredrik Robert Martin: A Journey to Konya**

13 May

Christina Angelidi: **Exploring Cappadocia: Observing, Describing and Studying the Land of the Fairy Chimneys**

# Hungarian Memoirs from the Ottoman Empire, 1848-1918

by **Gábor Fodor**

11 March 19:00h

After the failure of the Hungarian revolution and freedom fight of 1848–1849 against the Habsburg Monarchy, thousands of soldiers found asylum in the Ottoman Empire. Even though most of them left the empire within a year, hundreds preferred to stay, live, and work in a society about which they knew virtually nothing.

Improvements in Hungarian-Turkish political relations, particularly after the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish war, led to an increase of Hungarian journalists, politicians, orientalist, tourists, soldiers and even representatives of the Catholic Church who spent longer or shorter period of time both in Istanbul, in Asia Minor and in the Middle East. The increasing number of visitors also boosted by the foundation of the Hungarian Geography Society, led to the first golden age of publication of Hungarian travelers' accounts, booklets and memoirs. Young



Turkologists like Ignác Kúnos, Gyula Mészáros, and Gyula Németh pursued their research along the Aegean shores. During the Balkan Wars, Hungarian journalists appeared in the field to cover the manoeuvres of the Turkish army, while the outbreak of the war in 1914 caused an intensification of mutual visits. In this presentation the speaker intends to shed light on the published and unpublished Hungarian-language sources within the time frame of 1848-1918 by highlighting the changes in trends, way of travelling, and storytelling throughout this 70-year period.

**Gábor Fodor** studied at the Departments of Turkish Philology and History of the University of Eötvös Loránd under the eminent Ottomanist Prof. Géza Dávid and Academy member Prof. István Vásáry. In 2018 he defended his PhD. thesis under the title of “The Armenian Question in the Light of Hungarian Sources, 1849 –1939”. He started his career in the research group of doyen Prof. György Hazai in 2009 as assistant and worked there until 2014 in the framework of three different research centers of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. From 2014-15 he spent one year as an assistant researcher at the Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies under the leadership of Prof. Miklós Maróth. In 2015 he was appointed as the first director of the Hungarian Cultural Center in Istanbul, founded in the previous year by the Hungarian Government, where he is still working.

# Traveling Outside the Colonial Framework: Czech Travelers to Istanbul, 1860s-1923

by Jitka Malečková

1 April 19:00h

Although by the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Czech lands had no direct contact with the Ottoman Empire Czechs were not so remote from the Ottoman Empire as to pay no attention to it at all. The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a rise in Czech travels to various parts of the world, and from the 1860s an increasing number of Czechs were describing their travels to the Ottoman Empire and particularly to Istanbul. Their travelogues were eclectic and were influenced by earlier Czech and foreign travelers, French exotic novels, and even the tales from *One Thousand and One Nights*. What distinguished the Czech travel accounts from their British counterparts was the absence of an “imperial” background - the lack of more pragmatic direct interests in the Ottoman Empire (leaving aside the Balkans). The talk will show what interested the Czechs who

visited late Ottoman Istanbul. While in most cases they did not stay in the Ottoman territories long enough to gain insight into important issues in the turn-of-the-century Ottoman Empire, their travelogues focus on things and people that were expected to amuse Czech readers and contain intriguing information.



**Jitka Malečková** teaches Middle Eastern history at the Charles University's Faculty of Arts in Prague. Her research focuses on the 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>- Century Ottoman Empire and Central and Eastern Europe, gender and nationalism. With Petr Kučera, she authored a book on Ottoman travelers to Europe and to the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire, titled “From Istanbul to the End of the World: Ottoman Travel Writings from the Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries” (*Z Istanbulu až na konec světa: Osmanské cestopisy z přelomu 19. a 20. století*, 2019). She has written numerous articles on political violence, gender and national identity and on relations between Europe and the Middle East.

# Fredrik Robert Martin: A Journey to Konya

by Ulla-Karin Warberg

22 April 19:00h



In 1905 the Swedish prince Wilhelm was a guest at the the Swedish legation in Istanbul. As his host he had the Swedish orientalist and art dealer Fredrik Robert Martin (1868-1933), who served as a dragoman at the legation. Together with the princely entourage they travelled to Konya to meet with the German consul Julius Löytved-Hardegg. During their visit to Konya they went to the Alaeddin mosque where a most spectacular discovery of unique Seldjuk carpets

took place. The carpets are to be seen today at the Türk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi (TİEM) in Istanbul. The discovery initiated an academic battle between two of the most distinguished orientalists of their time: Fredrik Robert Martin and Friedrich Sarre. It is also the story of the desire for and the business with Islamic cultural heritage in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the formation of the Islamic museums and private collections in Western Europe at the time.

**Ulla-Karin Warberg** is a curator at the Nordic Museum and lecturer at the University of Uppsala, Campus Gotland (since 2004) and Linköping University (since 2008). She is a board member at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul's Friends Association and at the Stockholm Oriental Carpet Society Pazyryk. She did a lot of travelling as a guide with Art historian groups to Istanbul, Anatolia, Rome, Madrid, Vienna, Bruges and to the TEFAF Art fair in Maastricht, Holland. Publications: *Textile Treasures at Nordiska museet in Stockholm*; *The tulip's way from the Ottoman court to the Scandinavian double cushions*, HALI Magazine, London, 2019 (December issue).

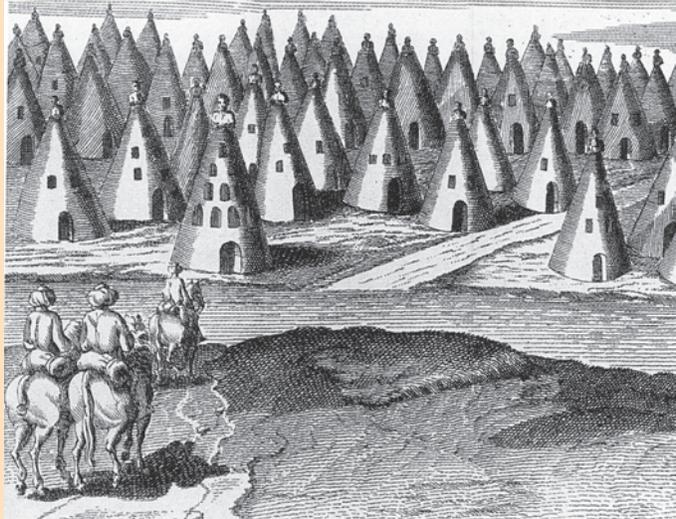
# Exploring Cappadocia: Observing, Describing and Studying the Land of the Fairy Chimneys

by Christine Angelidi

13 May 19:00h

With the exception of Roman and Byzantine official records and seals, Cappadocia is poorly documented in late antique and Byzantine literary sources, which focus on it as the native place of saints, tough warriors, horse breeders, wealthy landowners and families of military aristocracy aspiring to the throne. Indeed, the landscape particularity is only indirectly attested in tenth-century historiography, which designates the inhabitants as “troglodytes”. The Cappadocian scenery emerges from the travel literature in the early eighteenth century and up to the mid-nineteenth century the narratives provide interesting yet incidental insights into

the natural and anthropological aspects of the region, gathered during the quest for remains of pre-historical and classical heritage. Gradually, Cappadocia became a research subject of its own, and this paper intends to propose a comprehensive survey of this process provisionally contextualizing its successive stages.



**Christine Angelidi** Emeritus Director of Research in the National Hellenic Research Foundation – Institute of Historical Research. She taught Byzantine History and Literature at the Universities of Crete and the Aegean and lectured at French, British and American universities. I wrote on Byzantine hagiography, history, literature, and art. I collaborated on the two volumes of A. Kazhdan’s “A History of Byzantine Literature”, and edited several volumes in international conference acts. I organized and participated to international Congresses and Symposia, I am member of international committees of project evaluation, serve on editorial boards of scientific journals and regularly peer-review articles on history, literature and Byzantine art.

For a long time, travelogues and other autobiographical materials have almost exclusively enjoyed the interest of students of literature. Over the past two or three decades, however, the accounts of travelers to Asia Minor and Anatolia, in particular, have become a more popular and increasingly important source for historians in their study of the past of this geographical region.

This tendency finds its reflection in the increased number of recent publications and conference contributions based on travel literature. This shift has first become more widespread through the consideration of travelogues written in French, English, and other Western European languages.

The focus of a one-day workshop in December 2019 and a number of lectures in the spring of 2020 within our thematic series will center on the accounts of travelers from countries to the East, North and South-East of the more “classic” countries of descent of the more widely-known travelers from Western Europe. The fascinating and rich personal accounts of Czech, Hungarian, Swedish, and Greek travelers will for the first time be presented in Turkey and will thus introduce the audience to accounts in less-widely used or accessible languages.

The sequence of academic events is jointly organized by the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII), the Orient-Institut Istanbul and with the participation of the National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens.

Richard Wittmann  
Associate Director (Orient-Institut Istanbul)

#### *Academic Coordinators*

Ingela Nilsson, Director (Swedish Research Institute, Istanbul)  
Evangelia Balta, Research Director (National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens)  
Richard Wittmann, Associate Director (Orient-Institut Istanbul)  
Olof Heilo, Deputy Director (Swedish Research Institute, Istanbul)