Istanbul - Kushta - Constantinople

Narratives of Identity in the Ottoman Capital, 1830-1930

Edited by Christoph Herzog and Richard Wittmann

Life Narratives of the Ottoman Realm: Individual and Empire in the Near East

Istanbul – Kushta – Constantinople

Istanbul – Kushta – Constantinople presents 12 studies that draw on contemporary life narratives that shed light on little explored aspects of nineteenth-century Ottoman Istanbul. As a broad category of personal writing that goes beyond the traditional confines of the autobiography, life narratives range from memoirs, letters, reports, travelogues and descriptions of daily life in the city and its different neighborhoods. By focusing on individual experiences and perspectives, life narratives allow the historian to transcend rigid political narratives and to recover lost voices, especially of those underrepresented groups, including women and members of non-Muslim communities.

The studies of this volume focus on a variety of narratives produced by Muslim and Christian women, by non-Muslims and Muslims, as well as by natives and outsiders alike. They dispel European Orientalist stereotypes and cross class divides and ethnic identities. Travel accounts of outsiders provide us with valuable observations of daily life in the city that residents often overlooked. Accounts from Ottoman subjects, however, reveal the social tensions experienced within particular communities amongst themselves as well as in interaction with greater Ottoman society. Members of the Jewish, Bulgarian and Armenian communities of the city developed different strategies in navigating the social and political change arising from the modernizing reforms of the nineteenth century. By focusing on life narratives, this volume weaves together a tapestry of diverse experiences in the Ottoman capital, viewed from various angles, gender perspectives and social and ethnic backgrounds.

Christoph Herzog is Professor of Turcology at the University of Bamberg, Germany. He studied Middle Eastern and modern European history at Freiburg, Germany and in Istanbul. His research interests focus on late Ottoman history, especially on the history of the Arab provinces, intellectual history and biographical studies.

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Life Narratives of the Ottoman Realm Individual and Empire in the Near East

As a consequence of the political developments following World War I, the Ottoman Empire has been treated by a great number of historians above all as an intrinsic part of Turkish national history. Although the academic community has recognized that the Ottoman Empire was, in fact, multiethnic and multicultural, this recognition has too rarely translated into scholarly practice. This is due in large part to the fragmentation of Ottoman studies into various academic disciplines that only infrequently communicate with one another: as examples, Turkish-language literature predominantly produced by Muslims is treated by Turkish Literature experts and Turkologists in the West; Ottoman Ladino literature falls within the purview of Romance studies; the empire's Greeks are studied within the field of Byzantine and Hellenic studies; and so on.

This publication series aims to bring all of these perspectives together in a historically specific and responsible way by providing a key publication platform for scholars aiming to study the narrative sources of a vast geographic region, stretching, at times, from Bosnia to the Yemen, in its full complexity as a multilingual and multiethnic *Empire*.

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Introduction

Christoph Herzog and Richard Wittmann

Istanbul – Kushta – Constantinople. These three names, used by Muslims, Jews,[1] and Christians, respectively, are emblematic of the city's diversity, a historical fact commented on by both residents and visitors over the centuries. Indeed, the various names given this metropolis can hardly be squeezed into a single book title. In addition to *Tsarigrad*, *Islambol*, *Dersaadet* and *Āsitāne*, popular designations reflecting different ideological currents and political relationships to the city, there are dozens of other names. In fact, one may count around 135 different appellations given the city at one time or another.[2] This diversity of names, paralleled by the historical heterogeneity of its inhabitants, may have become most pervasive during the long nineteenth century as the result of an unprecedented influx of new immigrants from different countries and regions. However, the creation of nation-states out of the Ottoman Empire appears to have preserved little of this diversity. Only traces remain of the collective memories, scattered throughout the personal narratives of the time. This loss is perhaps felt even more acutely with the realization of the difficulty of its recovery, an enterprise arising from a new awareness of Istanbul's former multicultural makeup. Nostalgia for this presumably more colorful bygone era has been on the rise in recent years, not only among residents and visitors of the city, but also academics. Paralleling the explosion of novels and popular films dedicated to the "cosmopolitan" pre-World War I Ottoman way of life, enjoyed by a domestic and international public alike, is a growing literature of academic publications on late Ottoman Istanbul, taking into account the multicultural identities of its residents.[3]

Grand Eurocentric and nationalist narratives, which claim exclusivity in explaining different segments of the history of the Ottoman Empire's vast regions, as well as of that of the British, Habsburg or Romanov empires, have collapsed and no longer serve as viable heuristic frameworks. The reconstruction of the diverse imperial realities requires a diligent reassembly of what sometimes resembles different parts of a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. Even though the remaining pieces may not be sufficient in reconstructing in its entirety the city's multiple pasts, nor fit perfectly together with one another, they may collectively help to understand better the defining role that ethnic diversity played in the shaping of the city.

The present volume aims to add some more pieces to the puzzle. It has its origins in the conference *Istanbul – Kushta – Constantinople: Diversity of Identities*

and Personal Narratives in the Ottoman Capital (1830–1900) held in 2010 at the Orient-Institut Istanbul with the support of the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung. The volume brings together extended versions of select contributions to the conference, as well as several articles by authors who did not participate in the conference. By drawing on the voices of its permanent residents and foreign visitors, the book introduces the reader to the wealth of narrative sources on late Ottoman Istanbul's diverse population with a focus on non-Muslim authors of life narratives. It juxtaposes a selection of unpublished and/or neglected life narratives with the prevailing national historiographies in order to create a tapestry of diverse perceptions of life in the Ottoman capital from various angles, gender perspectives and social backgrounds.

Drawing on the methodological approaches of the biographical turn which, rather than writing biography in the usual sense, involves the use of "life histories" of individuals and groups as a way to open up new avenues of historical inquiry,[4] this volume represents an innovative approach in Ottoman biographical studies. While publications of personal narratives and biographical writings in Ottoman studies have tended to have a mono-lingual focus and context, usually presenting sources in Ottoman Turkish, the language of the state, the present volume goes a step further by including primary narrative sources originally composed in almost a dozen different languages. It presents for the first time in English a set of multilingual narrative sources that would otherwise be difficult to access for most readers. Making available to a wider audience the personal writings of diverse men and women – Jewish, Christian and Muslim – provides a valuable contribution to the reconstruction of late Ottoman realities in the multi-ethnic capital of Istanbul. In order to include as many voices and observations as possible, we broaden the boundaries of biographical writing or "life narratives" to include a wide range of personal writings, such as memoirs, letters, autobiographies, reports, travelogues and descriptions of Istanbul neighborhoods and their inhabitants.

The first section of the volume consists of three pieces dealing specifically with women in the empire, both European and Ottoman. It begins with "The memories of German-speaking women of Constantinople," in which Gudrun Wedel offers an overview of published travelogues to Constantinople by 14 German-speaking women who were all born in the nineteenth century. She provides a biographical and social contextualization for a literary genre that has tended to be overgeneralized as a mere representation of the Orientalist gaze of European women at the cost of the individuality of the authors and their texts. For example, as Wedel points out, while some of the women traveling to the East were accompanying their husbands, others were pleasure-travelers on their own account and even some were professionally employed women. In line with their social backgrounds and experiences in Constantinople, their accounts offer strikingly different and even contradictory notions of "the Orient."

Malte Fuhrmann's "Wanderlust, follies and self-inflicted misfortunes: the memoirs of Anna Forneris and her thirty years in Constantinople and the Levant" is based on the virtually unknown autobiography of a Habsburg female who lived in Istanbul for several years – and for some time, also in Iran. The life narrative

offers a critical account of the living conditions in the mid-nineteenth-century Middle East. Essentially a testimony to a biographical failure, Anna Forneris wrote her memoirs after her return to her hometown in Austria. Unable to readjust to the narrowness of life back home, she made plans for setting out to the "Orient" once more. Fuhrmann's contribution illustrates that a critical assessment of gender perspectives and the adherence to literary genres allow for the productive use of narrative accounts as sources for the historian.

Drawing on five early twentieth-century life narratives, Börte Sagaster informs the reader in her chapter "The Imperial Harem network in Istanbul, 1850s–1922" of the cultural and social realities of life in the Imperial Harem and its self-perception. These accounts were produced after the dissolution of the harem in 1922 and provide a retrospective assessment, which entails a methodological challenge as they were written after profound changes affected society under the conditions of the Republic. With due caution, Sagaster stresses, a reconstruction of pre-Republican life is still possible. The custom of assigning new names to the harem residents, which bears a striking similarity to the Ottoman bureaucracy (*mahlas*), turns the Imperial Harem into a "total institution" in the sense proposed by Erving Goffman.[5]

In the second section, three chapters present us with the richness of travel accounts by outside observers of Istanbul, ranging from American Protestant, Levantine Arab and Spanish Iberian perspectives. In his "Amalgamated observations: assessing American impressions of nineteenth-century Constantinople and its peoples," Kent F. Schull draws on the personal accounts of American Protestant missionaries who lived in Istanbul in the nineteenth century. He demonstrates the shortcomings of Foucauldian discourse analysis and the one-dimensionality of Edward Said's notion of Orientalism, pleading for the inclusion of agency in discourse analysis. Literary stereotypes, we are reminded, are better understood as the result of general essentialisms rather than solely as a consequence of Orientalism. Schull illustrates this by drawing on parallels in the narrative description of North America and the Ottoman Empire. Some of the authors were quite Turcophile and argued against set stereotypes such as the "bloodthirsty Turk" – even though not without, at times, replacing some of them with other stereotypes and essentialisms. In a scale of ethnic sympathies that could be distilled from these accounts, Greeks would often be found at the lower end, with Armenians and Jews holding a middle position, and (Muslim) Turks ranging at the top.

Malek Sharif's piece on "Istanbul and the formation of an Arab teenager's identity: recollections of a cadet in the Ottoman army in 1914 and 1916–1917" introduces the reader to the unpublished autobiography of the Arab Ottoman officer (and later Lebanese bureaucrat) ʿAbd Allāh Dabbūs. A descendant of the well-known Beirut al-Dabbāra family of scholars on his mother's side, Dabbūs received part of his training as an officer in Istanbul during World War I. His autobiographic notes, which he penned from 1940 until his death in 1962, provide a detailed portrayal of life in wartime Istanbul. It is noteworthy that Dabbūs's account is remarkably pro-Ottoman, which stands in stark contrast to the predominant Arab nationalist and anti-Ottoman historiography, even though he mentions

the discrimination to which he was exposed as an Arab officer in the Ottoman army. His emotional attachment survived the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and he continued to visit the Republic of Turkey repeatedly until his death.

While sixteenth-century Iberia plays a central role in Ottoman historiography due to the influx of Jews fleeing the *Reconquista*, the country's importance during the age of Imperialism and of the Oriental Question during the nineteenth century is generally neglected. Pablo Martín Asuero shows in his contribution "Hispanic observers in Istanbul" that an impressive number of Spanish as well as Latin American travelers made their way to Istanbul and described their experiences in travelogues and memoirs. The analysis of their accounts affords an important corrective and addition to the predominantly one-sided focus on the European great powers in the history of Ottoman contacts with the outside world.

The third section of the volume focuses on the Jewish communities of Istanbul, with studies drawing on Ladino (Judezmo or Judeo-Español), French and German narratives. David M. Bunis explores the dilemma of language as an identity marker, and the controversy of Ladino as a literary language among the Istanbul Jewish community during the second half of the nineteenth century in his chapter "The autobiographical writings of the Constantinople Judezmo journalist David Fresco as a clue to his attitudes toward language." Bunis's study demonstrates how Fresco's autobiographical writings may be used to trace the Jewish intellectual's controversial, and in fact ironically unintended, role in developing the literary version of the language he purported to despise. On becoming Ottoman citizens with equal rights as a result of the Tanzimat reforms, members of the Istanbul Jewish community began to debate their new role within Ottoman society at large. A heated question was which language should serve the Jewish community as their literary language: would it be Hebrew, Ottoman Turkish or Ladino – the Iberian Romance vernacular spoken by the greater part of the Sephardic Jews of the Ottoman Empire? In his thoroughly researched article drawing on contemporary arguments of the period, Bunis demonstrates that David Fresco, a renowned Ottoman Jewish journalist and publisher of Judezmo (i.e. Ladino or Judeo-Español) periodicals, was paradoxically adamantly opposed to the use of Judezmo as a written language for the Ottoman Jewish community. Yet, at the same time, Fresco likewise regarded Modern Hebrew inappropriate as a written language for Ottoman Jews since he regarded it as symbolic of the Zionist movement, for which he had no sympathies. Rather, Fresco, as a great supporter of the inclusive ideology of pan-Ottomanism by political conviction, considered Ottoman Turkish, the language of the majority, the best choice for a Jewish literary language. Although writing in the idiom of Judezmo throughout his journalistic career in Istanbul, Fresco made great pains to point out its inadequacies as a literary language to be used for articulating complex ideas, citing its undeveloped terminology and non-standardized vocabulary and grammar as proof. Influenced by the ideas of early and mid-nineteenth century *maskilim*, or representatives of the Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment, Fresco criticized the use of Judezmo or Ladino by Ottoman Jews along terms paralleling those waged against Yiddish, derogatively labeled an ungrammatical and jibberish-like

"jargon"; indeed, Yiddish for the *maskilim*, came to represent one of the main reasons of the oppression of European Jews. Fresco in turn assimilated these critiques against Yiddish in his attitude towards Judezmo. However, toward the end of his life, Fresco had a major change of attitude toward Judezmo when, in the early Turkish Republic of the 1920s, his dream of Jewish inclusion into Turkish society was shattered. In the end, he embraced Judezmo, the language of his literary output.

Yaron Ben-Naeh, in his contribution "Istanbul's Jewish community through the eyes of a European Jew: Ludwig A. Frankl in his *Nach Jerusalem*," offers a revealing analysis of the Jewish Bohemian Austrian writer Ludwig August (Ritter von) Frankl(-Hochwart)'s report on his journey through the Near East in 1856, which took him to Jerusalem via Istanbul. The source provides important and little-known information on key dates in the history of the Jewish community of nineteenth-century Istanbul, such as its relations to the Janissary corps and its violent destruction in 1826.

The volume closes with four studies on Armenian and Bulgarian communities of Istanbul in the nineteenth century, as they were being confronted with social change threatening traditional hierarchies during the Ottoman period of reform ushered in by the Tanzimat. Rachel Goshgarian's "A stroll through the quarters of Constantinople: sketches of the city as seen through the eyes of the great satirist Hagop Baronian" deals with a specific kind of life narrative – one focusing on life in the neighborhood with the personal observations of a prominent Armenian Istanbulite, Hagop Baronian, who made a name for himself as author and journalist, writing in both Ottoman Turkish and Armenian. His witty and satirical descriptions of Armenian Istanbul, however, are hardly known beyond the realm of Armenian literature. Through his Armenian socio-critical account, he brings to life the diverse and multifaceted expressions of Armenian culture in the Ottoman capital. While some of the descriptions of the city's neighborhoods are based on nineteenth-century stereotypes, others follow European literary patterns and offer unmatched historiographical insights into the everyday life of Armenians in Istanbul.

In her chapter, "From short stories to social topography: Misak Koçunyan's life landscapes," Aylin Koçunyan draws on autobiographical short stories written in Armenian by a renowned Istanbul educator, author and publisher, Misak Koçunyan. The work portrays the Armenian community of late nineteenth-century Istanbul as it struggles to come to terms with changes introduced into the traditional Armenian class structure as a result of the Tanzimat reform introducing theoretically equal Ottoman citizenship for all, and thus encouraging the greater inclusion of Armenians into Ottoman society at large. Misak Koçunyan ponders the different responses to rapidly increasing Westernization in Ottoman society, especially in terms of lifestyle and popular forms of dress and the disruptions they cause in traditional understandings of Armenian identity and community-focused philanthropy. The amalgamation of diversities in the Ottoman capital in turn posed new challenges for Armenians in regard to their sense of self and identity, as Aylin Koçunyan suggests.

Darin Stephanov's contribution, "'*Bulgar Milleti Nedir*?': syncretic forms of belonging in mid-nineteenth century Istanbul," attempts to reconstruct the awareness of a distinct identity among the circa 50,000 Bulgarians living in mid-nineteenth century Istanbul. The analysis is based on an extensive selection of the key self-referential texts of the city's Bulgarian community. Aside from the high esteem of the Greek language enjoyed by the Bulgarians who often preferred the language to their native Bulgarian, the semantic variations in the terms used for the Bulgarian ethnic component of the city's population reflect the complex web of identities of Bulgarian Istanbulites.

In "Twenty years in the Ottoman capital: The memoirs of Dr. Hristo Tanev Stambolski of Kazanlik (1843–1932) from an Ottoman point of view," Johann Strauss offers a new reading of the Bulgarian medical expert Hristo Stambolski's extensive autobiography from the perspective of Ottoman historiography. In his autobiography written in Bulgarian, Stambolski stresses the activities and achievements on behalf of the "national cause" of the Bulgarians, for whom Istanbul was the cultural point of reference. Stambolski spent almost two decades in the city where he studied and taught in the military and later at the civilian Imperial Schools of Medicine. Aside from being an indispensable source for the study of the imperial medical schools, his autobiography provides unique insights into the social and cultural history of the Ottoman capital and its inter-communal relations. The autobiography of Stambolski – the exemplary *Homo ottomanicus*, as Strauss notes – provides a wealth of prosopographic information on well-known Ottomans of the time, such as Ahmed Cevdet or Midhat Pasha.

We would like to express our gratitude to all authors who have contributed to this expanded volume.

Notes

1 For a discussion on the Modern Hebrew use of Kushta as a designation for Constantinople, see Chapter 7.
2 A study by Demetrius John Georgacas dating from 1947 lists some 60 names. Demetrius John Georgacas, "The Names of Constantinople," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 78 (1947), 347–67. A subsequent work, however, compiled no less than 135 different names. Necdet Sakaoğlu, "İstanbul'un adları," [The names of Istanbul], in İlhan Tekeli (ed.), *Dünden bugüne İstanbul ansiklopedisi*, vol. 4 (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı and Ankara: Türkiye Kültür Bakanlığı, 1993–95), 253–56.
3 Amy Mill's monograph *Streets of Memory: Landscape, Tolerance, and National Identity in Istanbul* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010) is one of the more prominent examples of this trend.
4 Judith M. Brown, "'Life Histories' and the History of Modern South Asia," *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 3 (2009), 587. For more on the biographical turn, see the other articles in the AHR Roundtable: Historians and Biography section of *The American Historical Review* published in 2009. Also see Tom Wengraf, Prue Chamberlayne, and Joanna Bornat, "A Biographical Turn in the Social Sciences? A British – European View," *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies* 2, no. 2 (2002), 245–69.
5 Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (New York: Anchor Books, 1961).

Part I

European and Ottoman women in the empire


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1 The memories of German-speaking women of Constantinople

Gudrun Wedel[*]

Many women from German-speaking countries traveled to other parts of Europe or countries that were even further afield. Some wrote about their travels in varying detail in their autobiographies, while others published travelogues, letters or diaries. To connect with the reading public, they turned to diverse media ranging from books to newspapers and magazine articles. This chapter focuses on those female autobiographers in the nineteenth century who stayed for shorter or longer periods in Constantinople and published their experiences.

These women's views of the city may be seen in the context of contemporary notions of the "Orient," which can be rather vague and contradictory. This particular term is contested in scholarship because of its lack of precision and ambiguity.[1] However, the Orient will be utilized throughout in the discussion that follows since it is found in the sources that are examined here, and it is also where the authors located Constantinople. The considerable extent to which these women understood the Orient in relation to Europe is shown by how permeable and varying the boundaries were, as recognized by these women authors.[2] Whereas Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt already felt something of the Orient shortly behind Marseille,[3] Mathilde Weber found the street life on Corfu to be "more Oriental." This did not keep her, though, from speaking of Constantinople as "the most wonderful city in Europe."[4] Anna Grosser-Rilke also recognized the Orient in Greece in 1909.[5] In contrast, in 1877 Clara Jurtz marveled at the "Oriental life on the quay" in Trieste,[6] while the governess N.L. freely assigned her Greek employer in Romania to the "Orientals."[7]

The following overview will first describe the source material and present the authors' biographies. Their memories of Constantinople will then be outlined, whereby the authors themselves will be placed into one of three groups: "travelers," "wives" and the "professionally employed." This will be followed by observations on writing practices and publication developments and, finally, some remarks on the spectrum of subjects.

The autobiographical source material

This overview centers on authors selected from the encyclopedia *Autobiographien von Frauen* [Autobiographies of Women][8] who have published autobiographical

writings of any kind in relation to a stay in Constantinople. They were born between 1800 and 1900 and belonged to the German-speaking world. Authors who did not publish an autobiographical text were accordingly not considered. The doctor Agnes Bluhm, for instance, does not figure into this overview, for although she was actually born in Constantinople in 1862, and was the daughter of the Prussian general Julius Bluhm, she also makes no mention of her place of birth in her autobiography.[9] The Viennese architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky was also excluded. Even though she was actively involved in the resistance against the Nazis in Constantinople from 1938 to 1940,[10] the late period of residence there is outside of the relevant time frame. The available corpus thus comprises 14 autobiographers. They each discussed their stays in Constantinople in various autobiographical writings, and sometimes more than once. Almost all of them were evaluated. Furthermore, it was possible to ascertain additional authors who however are no longer taken into account.

Over the course of the research, even more autobiographical entries were found in newspapers and magazines. The fact that they can only be identified with considerable effort probably explains why still very little is known about the authors and their modes of representation in this area of publishing. This research gap has been identified, however, especially in the work being conducted on travel literature.[11] Just the same, this has barely minimized the preference for monographs. In their study on *Frauenreisen in den Orient* [Women's Travels in the Orient], Annette Deeken and Monika Bösel accordingly discovered an "immense wealth of books and magazine articles" where this attractive travel destination had been reported on since the nineteenth century.[12] They detected a growing interest in the Orient since the *Gründerzeit*, especially among women, which had mainly been fueled by the frequent reporting on the Ottoman Empire in the contemporary press.[13] In her research on the topic of the harem in family magazines of the nineteenth century, Antje Harnisch has also identified the prominence of travel reportage on the Orient until the end of the 1870s.[14] None of the writers' names – male or female – are indicated in any of the contributions she examines. The question thus remains whether they even reflected personal experiences. Deeken and Bösel, conversely, see a publication wave in the 1890s, for at that time "the total number of the books and journal articles dedicated to Constantinople and Asia Minor had swelled to an unmanageable" degree.[15] For their own analysis, Deeken and Bösel focused on the predominantly monographic works by about 25 European authors. Three of these women – Ida Gräfin von Hahn-Hahn, Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt and Mathilde Weber[16] – are also included in the corpus under consideration here.

The range of texts that were examined includes life writings of different literary and publication types. The author's subjective perspective is often signaled by the title. The writings include diaries, letters and travelogues, but also sections on Constantinople within autobiographies (the chapter headings of which often vary in the amount of information provided, or even sometimes lack identification as such), articles in newspapers and magazines, autobiographical poems and autobiographical novels with more-or-less fictionalized passages, and, finally, autobiographical encyclopedia entries. There are also hybrid textual forms such as when

an autobiography referring to a stay in Constantinople is based – sometimes word for word – on excerpts from diaries and letters, or when a travelogue is presented in epistolary form. Travelogues within autobiographies are especially worth highlighting, because little is yet known about them. This is possibly because the book titles do not indicate their existence. The media presence of the indicated texts depends both on whether they are published as either a monograph or a journalistic contribution, and on their dissemination by means of subsequent reprints and translations.

Within this textual diversity, there are substantive differences between travelogues and autobiographies. A perspective based on an extended stay abroad differs fundamentally from one that is informed by travel to foreign countries in which the return home is anticipated in advance. Strangers arriving in a foreign country are thus confronted with different challenges. For longer-term stays abroad in a possibly completely foreign environment, it is important to make adjustments to the everyday routine and to settle into an acceptable and sustainable social situation. As indicated in a passing remark by Anna Grosser-Rilke, this distinction does not necessarily result in a change in one's perspective, but in an expansion of it. When describing her friendship with a well-known Persian carpet dealer in "Stambul," Istanbul's historic peninsula, she gives an account of her visits to his shop: "I spent many an afternoon there and was delightfully entertained when he and his son would serve the Oriental travelers, who were thoroughly cheated by them."[17] Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt, by contrast, and from her perspective as a traveler, distanced herself in an equally simplifying manner from the "*geputzte Perotinnen*" (the well-groomed women of the Pera district).[18] In addition, the monographic travelogues are usually about a single trip, whereas in the reminiscences of autobiographies, all trips are typically mentioned together in their biographical contexts. This can shed a light on the long-term effects of traveling and the related experiences of foreignness.

Biographical constellations

People's social circumstances influence their capacity and willingness to perceive others in equal and in higher or lower social positions. From this vantage point, three biographical time periods and their historical contexts were significant for the female autobiographers. Their respective family origins were crucial for their starting position in life, for they determined their provision of material resources, access to education and knowledge and their embeddedness within social networks. The women's current social position was relevant for their ability to experience a different culture, and also for the time in which the autobiography was written. As this could take place decades afterwards, their living conditions in old age played a key role. The following is therefore intended to give an impression of the authors' social upbringing that provided them with a basis for observing their foreign environment in Constantinople and for making judgments. This aspect should be emphasized because both positive and negative evaluations of strangeness not only occur because of a lack of familiarity, but also because of behavioral and perceptual patterns in response to social distinctions.

The social profiles of the authors are presented with a view to the following aspects. The birth years range from 1805, when Ida von Hahn-Hahn was born, until 1895, when Annotschka Berger was born. The majority of the authors, however, were born around the mid-nineteenth century.[19] In terms of their geographic origins, their birthplaces were predominantly in northern Germany. Anna Grosser-Rilke came from Melnik in Austria, and Lili Morani-Helbig[20] and Annotschka Berger[21] were born in Rome and Ukraine, respectively. As for their social standing, they were overwhelmingly upper and upper-middle class. Three authors were aristocratic – Ida von Hahn-Hahn, Marie von Hobe, Mathilde von Keller[22] – while Lili Morani-Helbig's mother also belonged to the Russian nobility. Her bourgeois father worked as secretary of the German Archaeological Institute in Rome. Other fathers from the bourgeoisie had professions like counsel, such as the father of Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt in Bremen, or book publisher, such as the father of Helene Böhlau[23] in Weimar. Hedda Eulenberg's[24] father William Maase was music director in Duisburg. Anna Grosser-Rilke's father was initially an estate manager and then became inspector of the newly founded Aussig-Teplitz railway. Her training as a pianist was encouraged by her cousin Jaroslaw Rilke in Prague, an uncle of the poet Rainer Maria Rilke. Daughters belonging to landowners included Mathilde Weber, whose father Gustav Walz later headed up the Agricultural Academy in Hohenheim.[25] Annotschka Berger came from a rich landowner family in Ukraine with origins from the Rhineland-Palatinate. N.L. was the daughter of a senior officer. The merchant's daughter Alma Kriesche was born into rather lower middle-class circumstances.[26] The authors from affluent families therefore had a good chance to get solid schooling and a sound general education. The fact that women in these circles were by no means expected to have a well-rounded education was something Mathilde Weber learned on her group excursion. She writes: "When one of the male travelers who was subsequently happy to speak with me discovered that I had read a translation of Homer, he condemned it as highly emancipated and unfeminine."[27]

Not only did the aristocratic authors find work opportunities outside the family and have the chance to travel later in life, but also those from the middle class. Where the women writers were able to work out of their own homes, this was not the case for the nurse Anny Meyer[28] or the deaconess Clara Jurtz. Governesses were traditionally "professionally mobile," as they would travel with the family of their pupils or between different appointments. The same was true for the lady-in-waiting, Mathilde von Keller. Due to her career as a pianist, Anna Grosser-Rilke took autonomous and extended work-related trips. As the head of a news agency later on, however, she was required to have local presence and cultivate a social network. For most of the autobiographers, therefore, the financing of relatively expensive trips abroad did not represent much of an obstacle, and some had even already enjoyed a variety of travel experiences by the time they had arrived in Constantinople. The women arrived in Constantinople between 1843 and 1919. They either traveled there with someone or were anticipated. They stayed in the city for different lengths of time, though none until her death.

Ida von Hahn-Hahn came the earliest, in 1843. Constantinople was the first stop on her journey to the "Orient," which would take her to Smyrna, Damascus, Beirut, Jerusalem, Cairo and Aswan, and then home again via Alexandria, Athens and Trieste. Alma Kriesche did not arrive until 20 years later to work as a governess from 1863 to 1865. The governess N.L. then came to Constantinople with her pupils' Greek family, with whom she spent the summers of 1871 and 1872.

The majority of the autobiographers arrived between 1881 and 1891. Many were between 30 and 40 years of age. Their reasons for making the trip differed and were often personal in nature. Deaconess Clara Jurtz, who worked as a teacher in Smyrna, spent her four-week holiday in Constantinople in 1881. Helene Böhlau came to the city in 1886 to marry and stay for the interim. Lili Morani-Helbig made a stop here while on her way to see Russian relatives. At age 22, she was the youngest of the arrivals. In 1891, Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt visited the city as a result of a private invitation, and a few weeks later, Mathilde Weber, came with a tour group. At age 61, she was the oldest of the women. The arrivals of the other authors were tied to Germany's increasing political interest in the Ottoman Empire. In 1883, Marie von Hobe accompanied her husband, who would enter into the service of the sultan as a Prussian officer. Anna Grosser-Rilke joined her husband in 1888, who worked as a correspondent for a newspaper. Mathilde von Keller accompanied Empress Auguste Viktoria as a lady-in-waiting during a visit of Wilhelm II in Constantinople in 1889.

The travelers and those passing through did not stay long, from one week in the case of Mathilde von Keller to six weeks in the case of Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt. Others decided to settle in Constantinople. Helene Böhlau stayed for well over a year and Marie von Hobe for 11 years. Anna Grosser-Rilke lived there for 30 years, and thus had the longest stay of all in Constantinople. She only finally left the city in 1918 because she was expelled by the Allies as a German.

Women autobiographers did not come again to Constantinople until after 1912. Their arrivals were connected to events that occurred before, during and after World War I. During the First Balkan War, Anny Meyer worked as a nurse in a military hospital from October 1912 to March 1913; Hedda Eulenberg worked as a journalist for the Red Cross, reporting about military hospitals in 1915; and Annotschka Berger fled to Germany via Constantinople and Venice in 1919 because of the revolutionary struggles in Russia and the persecution of German landowners.

At the beginning of her description of Constantinople, Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt emphasizes that she does not belong to the typical arrivals:

> Thanks to a series of all kinds of agreeable events, I was able to insinuate myself into the life there, both public and private, in a way that remains unfamiliar to most taking trips to the Orient. I belong neither to the happy slaves of a mass expedition with their tourist guides, nor did I go there as a governess for a more or less well-heeled dignitary to bring German erudition to a secluded harem and to learn its secrets and bring them back with me to

> Germany. I also do not live in any of the major international hôtels in the grand street of Pera or its side streets, and do not have to submit any letters of recommendation in the large community of my German compatriots. I do, however, have an amicable relationship with the German embassy.[29]

The reality, however, that her perception remained limited becomes apparent by the descriptions of her fellow autobiographers.

The travelers

The authors took different routes on their way to Constantinople. Some went over the sea by ship from Marseille or Trieste; others went over land by rail. Others still combined both rail and ship, often arriving via the Danube. Constantinople was occasionally the only destination (Schulze-Smidt, Jurtz, Meyer), yet the city could also be the starting point for a trip to the "Orient" (Hahn-Hahn) or the final stop on a Mediterranean cruise (Weber). Other women simply passed through as tourists (Morani-Helbig), or were even on the run (Berger).

When Ida Gräfin Hahn-Hahn went to the Orient in 1843,[30] she was already familiar with pertinent travelogues like those from Lady Mary Montagu, Therese von Bacheracht, Prince Hermann Pückler-Muskau and Knight Anton von Prokesch-Osten.[31] Few, though, undertook such a trip because it was dangerous and expensive. Hahn-Hahn traveled with her partner, Baron Adolf von Bystram, from Vienna to Constantinople, her first destination. They spent three weeks there. In letters to her mother, sister and a friend, she told of the sights she visited; to her brother, however, she reported on the slave trade and her visit to a harem.

Shortly after her return, she published these accounts as *Orientalische Briefe* [Oriental Letters] in three volumes. The many reviews of her work suggest that not only did the journey itself cause a stir, but so did the author's self-assured mode of depiction. Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, who himself reported on his experiences in the Orient in 1831, 1840–1842, and 1847,[32] criticized Ida von Hahn-Hahn's publication. As Ulrike Stamm discusses in some detail, he objected to, among other things, her participation in a discourse to which women were not entitled.[33] Fallmerayer's accounts were also part of Mathilde Weber's preparatory reading.[34]

Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt and Mathilde Weber resided in Constantinople almost simultaneously from April to the end of May 1891. Both were well-known as writers and recently widowed. They differed greatly, however, in their types of stay and in their perceptions of the city and its people. Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt went to Constantinople as a result of a private invitation from a Levantine family. This helped her to get settled in. It also facilitated her explorations of the city, as she was generally provided with a male escort, who was either the host himself, or one of his employees or service staff. In her personal relations, she preferred to have contact with people on the same social level and with a similar degree of education. She kept her distance from tourists and the European settlement. However, she joined other groups when sightseeing required it. Her knowledge of Turkish was sufficient for communicating with locals.

She only adhered somewhat to taking in the usual of run of attractions in her sightseeing program, and in her travelogue she did not repeat descriptions, which could already be found in travel guides. She instead tended to pursue her own preferences and interests, deliberately producing contrasts with the city's striking foreignness and splendor. She thus visited the monastery of lepers in Scutari (Üsküdar), which had been arranged by her host. When she learned that others had come there to visit as well, she commented with self-irony on her failed attempt to appear as a heroine. Her wordy descriptions of people in the streets and business life take up a lot of space. At the same time, she shows as little hesitation in making exceedingly defamatory statements as she does in offering exuberant praise for attractive women and men.

When Bernhardine Schulze-Smidt published an autobiographical magazine article in 1906 under the title "Vom Schreibtisch und aus dem Atelier" [From the Desk and the Atelier],[35] there appeared to be nothing left of the "warm-hearted enthusiasm" and the "poetic rapture" for Constantinople that one reviewer had highlighted earlier.[36] Her retrospective summary of her travels was sober: "Austria and France particularly inspired my creativity; Turkey and England hardly bore any fruit."[37] This statement is quite surprising given that Schulze-Smidt used her language skills for an extended period to freely adapt Turkish songs.[38]

Mathilde Weber had already had a variety of travel experiences by the time she left for Greece and Constantinople in 1891, again joining a group excursion organized by the travel company of Carl Stangen. She had previously undertaken an extensive trip to Italy with Stangen in 1877, and in 1878 she attended the Paris World Fair with her husband.[39] The couple had already planned the trip to the Orient years earlier, and it was not long after her husband's death that the 61-year-old started her journey from Tübingen. She was accompanied by a friend and professor's wife, whom she was able to convince rather quickly. As with her previous trips, she published a travelogue soon after her return.

Mathilde Weber had prepared herself for the trip through her own reading, and saw attractions with her tour group that had been chosen by Stangen. The diverse people on the new Galata Bridge had a special appeal to her, which caused her to devote an entire chapter to them.[40] Because of her long involvement in the women's movement, she was particularly interested in the living conditions of Turkish women.[41] While she did not withhold her criticism, she avoided making know-it-all comments and identified similarities: "And in many ways, some of us are not much better off than the veiled and imprisoned Turkish women. Are we not, if not physically, at least in many ways still mentally imprisoned and 'veiled'?"[42]

Lili Morani-Helbig was a leisured and discontented young woman when she was given the chance to accompany her Russian great-aunt and her daughter on their way back to Russia in 1890. Her grandmother, Princess Natalia Borisovna Schahowskoy, bore the financial burden. Leaving from Rome, the itinerary consisted of Brindisi, Corfu, Athens, Constantinople, Odessa and Kiev, and then onto her grandmother in Moscow.[43] In Constantinople, the education-starved aunts completed a comprehensive sightseeing program with guidebook in hand which Morani-Helbig occasionally evaded. This happened because she only initially

lived with her both relatives in a hotel in Pera. A friend of her parents, Russian Ambassador Nelidov, then invited her to his summer residence in Bujugdere (Büyükdere). She, in any case, did not have to pass on seeing those attractions that were not accessible to the broader public such as the so-called Alexander Sarcophagus, the sultan's treasury and Beylerbeyi Palace in Scutari.[44]

But not every trip was solely for education and enjoyment or removed from everyday cares and responsibilities. Other biographical situations come to the fore in autobiographies, which either paved the way for travel or made it mandatory. This also influenced the perceptions of particular travel destinations, and variants of such trips included those that were associated with employment. Clara Jurtz described a work-related holiday trip to Constantinople.[45] She had already been employed for several years as an elementary school teacher in Berlin, when, after a conversion experience in 1875, she found herself chosen by God "to move to the Orient and to educate the Oriental children for Him in a missionary school."[46] She therefore went to the Deaconess Motherhouse in Kaiserswerth, where she taught and received conversation lessons in French (as this was the language of instruction in the Orient).[47] The Motherhouse leadership already sent her the following year, in 1877, to be a teacher at the Institute of Deaconesses in Smyrna, which was run as a boarding school.[48] In 1881, she received permission to spend her summer holiday in Constantinople. She was encouraged, however, to get some experience in nursing with Kaiserswerther Sisters at the German Hospital. Her relaxation period, accordingly, was also supposed to entail a form of additional training.

In Constantinople, Clara Jurtz was housed in the German Hospital and integrated into the everyday lives of the nurses. This limited her opportunities to explore the city from the outset. Moreover, she was introduced to the practical aspects of nursing, which took a great deal of time. Her obligatory participation at the funeral of a German Hospital patient provided some variety, whereas a more joyous occasion was on the birthday party of senior Sister Lisette Jucht. (Several years later Jucht would receive a high honor from the sultan on her 25th anniversary for her services to Turkish hospital patients).[49] One of the birthday party guests was the German administrator of the sultan's gardens, Mr. Schlärf. He allowed Clara Jurtz and others to visit the park and the palace of Beylerbeyi during his next inspection in Scutari. From the abundance of "interesting experience[s]" in her diary, she only selected, however, a few details: she describes how she went with a nurse to Medjid [Mecidiye] Mosque to witness the procedure at the sultan's Friday prayers, and that Sister Lisette went with her to Hagia Sophia.[50] Just as Jurtz's experience of the "indelible impression" of a city illuminated at night for Ramadan was followed the next day by scraping carrots in the hospital kitchen,[51] in her autobiographical reflections she similarly relativizes her memories of worldly pleasures and the captivation of those days with pious reflections and feelings of missionary compassion towards Muslims.[52]

A further variant is reflected by forced trips for political reasons. In March 1919, the 24-year-old Annoschka Berger fled with an aunt from Nikolayev in Ukraine for Germany via the Black Sea and Constantinople. In Constantinople, under the

supervision of the Allies, they received German passports and were first housed in a barracks along with other refugees, and then in a hotel in Stambul, the historical part of the city. Since they were allowed to move freely, they toured the city from there. After eight days, the Allies mandated internment on the island of Prinkipo (Büyükada) in the Marmara Sea. They remained there for several weeks, until the order came just before Easter that they could continue their journey. They took a Turkish steamer to Brindisi and went next on to Venice. From there, they traveled by train to Munich.[53]

The wives

The wives did not go to Constantinople for pleasure; they also stayed the longest. They met their marital obligations by accompanying their husbands, who resided in the city for professional and political reasons. After Marie von Hobe returned to Germany in 1894 following an eleven-year stay in Constantinople with her husband, she immediately began to publish her experiences and impressions from this period. She first published "Harems-Geschichten" [Harem Stories] in the *Deutsche Monatshefte* and in *Nord und Süd*. They were later published as a book entitled *Haremsbilder* [Harem Images] in 1896 under the rather weak pseudonym Kerimée Hanoum,[54] which was followed up the next year with the volume *Vom Orient und vom Occident* [On the Orient and the Occident].[55] Hobe was thus able to keep the promise she had given to a female Turkish friend in Constantinople: that she would share her knowledge of the actual living conditions of Turkish women and above all confront the misconceptions about the harem. To this end, Hobe focused on presenting the life of the Turkish women to whom she had been granted unusually intimate access. It helped that she had learned to speak Turkish, as did the elevated professional and, hence, social standing of her husband, a Prussian horse master and adjutant general employed at the court of the sultan.[56] She consequently received preferential access to the sultan's court, was in demand as a guest at social events of the international upper class and became a sought-after facilitator for contacts. Little is revealed, however, about her own living conditions. Anna Grosser-Rilke, though, describes a grand reception at the home of the von Hobes to which she was invited shortly after her arrival. There, she was introduced into the society "as the famous pianist and student of Liszt."[57] Mathilde Weber also underscored that she had been invited to tea with the "*Frau Generalin*" [the general's wife].[58] Mathilde von Keller reported on Marie von Hobe's mediating assistance when the Empress Auguste Viktoria visited the harem of the sultan in 1889.[59] It was important to Marie von Hobe to truthfully depict life in the harem and to clarify the systematic deception of curious and affluent tourists who tried to visit harems.

Because of Marie von Hobe's exeedingly positive representation of Turkish family life, even in the harem,[60] her *Haremsbilder* had socio-political relevance in Germany in the 1890s. Her praise of Turkish women who completely surrendered themselves to their families strengthened the conservative position in contemporary debates about the legal discrimination against women. This attitude was

reflected into the new Civil Code and especially intensified by the legal establishment of the so-called *Hausfrauenehe* [housewife marriage].[61]

Anna Grosser-Rilke was well on her way to having a successful career as a pianist, when her husband, the journalist Julius Grosser, took a job at the *Kölnische Zeitung* as a permanent correspondent in Constantinople. She abandoned her vocation with a heavy heart and joined her husband a year later with their infant son.[62] She soon found access to the German community, gave several concerts in support of the burned down Teutonia building, and took every opportunity to make music in private circles. She gradually gained a good reputation among music fans. A major episode for her was receiving an invitation to play before Sultan Abdülhamid II.[63] When her husband became ill, she took on more and more responsibility at the news agency he had founded, *Agence de Constantinople*. How she continued to lead the agency after his death is discussed below.

Helene Böhlau stands out among the wives because she came to Constantinople to marry under Islamic law. She did not decide to do this for religious reasons, but because her marriage in Germany at the time faced unresolvable legal complications. She has addressed this turning point in her life in a variety of ways in her autobiographical writings.[64] Her autobiography *Isebies* reveals that her future husband Friedrich Arnd was still married. He could not obtain a divorce in Germany because he was considered a stateless person and had been married on the island of Helgoland. In Constantinople, he converted to Islam and subsequently called himself Omar al-Rashid Bey. Under Islamic law, he got a divorce from his wife and then married Helene Böhlau. He subsequently began to build his career in Constantinople as an employee of Münif Pasha[65] at the Ministry of Education and learned Turkish and Arabic. His serious illness, however, ended their stay in Constantinople, and the couple settled in Munich. It was while in Constantinople that Helene Böhlau began to depict the drama of her marriage in the autobiographical novel *In frischem Wasser* [In Fresh Water]. Also while in Constantinople, she wrote about the city for German magazines. By 1936, she put out more than 50 articles dealing with the Orient,[66] some of which even appeared in several different publications.

The professionally employed

Many of the autobiographers featured here were employed and came to Constantinople because of their professional activities or a specific assignment. The traditional professions included teacher and governess,[67] nurse, lady-in-waiting and writer. News agency head was atypical. Alma Kriesche, who had worked as a governess in Constantinople from 1863 to 1865, published the book of poems *Vom Lebenswege* [On the Road Through Life] in 1887,[68] which contained lengthy passages on Constantinople. In it, she describes the city – with historicizing details – from the perspective of the roaming fictional protagonist Rudolf. Still, she does not provide any obvious biographical references to her residence or former occupation.

N.L. worked as a governess for a Greek family in Romania beginning in around 1869. She spent two summers with the family at the Bosphorus. N.L. elaborated

on this time because she was able to take "a more penetrating look into the lives of the governesses there." In light of the widespread prejudices and misconceptions about employment in a harem, she aimed to present a realistic picture. To this end, she made inquiries among the "the most credible people." One advantage of her position included the fact that governesses could earn a relatively high income, making it possible to save money. But there were some drawbacks to consider. N.L. warned of taking employment in a harem especially on moral grounds: "A governess who has been in a harem falls into disrepute and such women are never hired by good families."[69] This negative view was mitigated at least slightly by increasing tourism and national political interests in the Ottoman Empire. Sophie Pataky, for instance, writes in her encyclopedia about women writers that Marie von Hobe helped many governesses to come to Constantinople.[70]

Mathilde von Keller was a lady-in-waiting for Empress Auguste Viktoria. At the beginning of her retirement in 1921, she found time to look through and organize her papers. With the assistance of her great-niece, Marianne von Rumohr, she compiled excerpts from her letters and diaries "for the children of my beloved mistress." This work was so popular that she released it as a book after a revision that contained abridgments and additions.[71] As one of two ladies of the court, she accompanied the empress on the journey to Constantinople in 1889. Mathilde von Keller describes in detail the reception of the imperial couple, the military parades, the illuminations, the sightseeing program and encounters with Sultan Abdülhamid II. She also included each of the two visits of the empress to the sultan's harem. The first visit was unsuccessful because the dancers were on strike and it therefore had to be repeated. There were also moments of friction because the empress did not want to accept the sultan's gifts and could only be persuaded with difficulty by Ambassador von Radowitz. As a result of her professional point of view, Mathilde von Keller devoted her description to the different forms of court etiquette on the German and Ottoman sides.

The daughter of the empress, Duchess Viktoria Luise, later used her copy of Mathilde von Keller's compiled excerpts to write the biography of her mother. In the portrayal of her parents' visit to Constantinople in 1889,[72] she partly reproduces the account of her mother's lady-in-waiting verbatim.[73] Viktoria Luise, though, does not always cite this as the source, but only generally refers to a "travelogue."[74]

As mentioned earlier, Anna Grosser-Rilke followed her husband to Constantinople and led his news agency after his death. She describes her work in the office, which mainly dealt with editing and sorting new incoming news items and then distributing them to the subscribers, especially institutions and the press. She discusses at greater length the personal contacts that were essential to this activity. To gain access to the latest news, her presence was necessary at official receptions and events as was her integration into the semi-private convivial atmosphere of Pera's international circles, the *große Klatschnest* [big gossip nest].[75] She was of course a card-caring member of the Teutonia,[76] the most influential association of the German community, and the private hospitality of her own household was considerable. Her reputation as a pianist again facilitated her contact with the

Ottoman elite: she played before the sultan and played music with his son. From her time as a music teacher at the American College, her female students included Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks, and Armenians. Nonetheless, she does not mention having had closer contact with Turkish locals – with one exception. This was Latife Hanim, the future wife of Kemal Atatürk, whom she taught the piano from 1915 to 1918.[77] The European-raised Latife spoke English and French, and developed a particular interest in German art and culture:

> She spoke flawless German and was an enthusiastic admirer of our great poets; the exceptionally gifted child was able to recite the first part of Faust by heart. I especially still remember how beautifully and precisely Latifé played Bach fugues.[78]

By working at her news agency, Anna Grosser-Rilke was kept in the loop concerning political events, which she discusses in several sections of her autobiography. But she also describes her daily life in Pera, such as her frequent changes of accommodations and her regular explorations of the city.

After her expulsion in 1918, Anna Grosser-Rilke saw no way to return to Constantinople, and her summary of her life afterwards was rather bleak. As a consolation for the days gone by, she commented that Berlin, where she lived in her later years, was "the rendezvous point for all her good and dear friends from that unforgettable 'Constantinople' period" in her life. "Gradually we all found each other again. A large circle therefore gathered around me, and, as the eldest, I try to keep the group together as much as I can."[79]

Because of the First Balkan War, Anny Meyer was sent by the Red Cross in Stuttgart with other medical personnel to Constantinople, where she worked as a nurse in a military hospital from 29 October 1912 to 15 March 1913.[80] She does not refer to this in her factual account of the time, but only mentions the war effects in relation to her subsequent medical treatment of wounded soldiers. She provides a full description of her work in a palace that was set up as a military hospital, depicting wounded soldiers who arrived in waves after the battles, their war injuries and the types of treatment. Women from the German community also volunteered at the hospital. Meyer describes the city's diverse street life and attractions, albeit sometimes quoting from the Baedeker travel guide.[81] In mid-March 1913, she returned to Stuttgart for health reasons. She concluded her report on 15 April 1913, dedicating it to "The high patroness of the National Association of the Red Cross, Her Majesty the Queen of Württemberg, in reverence and gratitude."[82]

In 1915, the translator Hedda Eulenberg traveled to Constantinople on behalf of the Red Cross, along with her husband, the writer Herbert Eulenberg. Both were supposed to communicate about their "experiences in foreign military hospitals to reassure the family members of those suffering over there in articles for various newspapers."[83] However, Eulenberg only briefly mentions this obligatory local research. By contrast, she gives a lengthy description of a visit to a charity concert "for the benefit of the Turkish women's Red Cross," which was arranged with