

ISTANBUL (Act II)

Thursday, May 27th, 2010

10.00-10.30

Opening Ceremony

Christian Brunmayr
Exc. Selim Yenel (inquired)
Cemal Öztaş
Michael Hüttler

11:00-13:00

Session I

Chair:

“The Sultan’s Saray”
Günsel Renda (Istanbul)

1. Gülgün Üçel-Aybet (Istanbul) Banquet at the Seraglio from the Description of European Diplomats in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

It was customary that official banquets were given during the reception of European ambassadors at the *Divan* (‘Grand Council’) in the imperial seraglio. Ambassadors were usually accompanied by diplomats from the embassies in İstanbul and also occasionally by their friends from their own countries who were taking part in the embassy. Detailed descriptions of the seraglio, including gardens, gates, the Divan, high ranked officials of the Divan, and janissaries in the Divan court were written by these diplomats and others.

The first part of the paper deals with the valuable sources of this study of the works of European observers of the seraglio in this period.

The second part of the paper deals with descriptions of the Divan and its banquets, as well as the European observers’ impressions and ideas about the seraglio, banquets, costumes and manners.

2. Fikret Karakaya (Istanbul) Ali Ufkî (1610-1675) and Music in Topkapı Saray

This paper deals with the music in Topkapı Palace in the mid-seventeenth century, based on detailed portraits of the palace by Wojciech Bobowski (also known as Albertus Bobovius, Ali Bey, Santurî Ali Ufkî).

Bobowski, who was born in Lvov, Poland, in about 1610 as the child of a noble family, was captured by Crimean Tatars and sent to İstanbul. He was about twenty-two years old when he was taken in at Topkapı Palace. He learned Arabic, Persian and Turkish at Enderun (the university of the palace). Converting into a Muslim, he took the name Ali Ufkî (Ufkî, meaning ‘belonging to the horizon’). He had already acquired a good music education at Lvov and had learned to note music on paper with the European notation system of the time. He learned subtleties of Turkish music and played *santur* (dulcimer) at the sultan’s special orchestra. His compilation called *Mecmua-i Saz ü Söz* (appr. ‘The Collection of Music and Lyrics’) involves notes of religious and irreligious pieces of music that he learned at Enderun. This compilation is an invaluable source about the court music of that time.

Presumably in 1665, Bobowski wrote his work in which the musician mentions Topkapı Palace and palace life. He wrote it in Italian and just before the fire that took place at the Palace. The work was translated by Nicolaus Brenner into German in 1667 and published in

Vienna by J.J. Kürner, titled *Serai Enderun; Das ist Inwendigebeschaffenheit der Türkischen Kayserl: Residentz zu Constantinopoli die neue Burgk genant sampt dero Ordnung und Gebräuchen so von Alberto Bobovio Leopolitano* ('Serai Enderun; That is the Inner Constituency of the Turkish Imperial Residence at Constantinople, Called the New Castle, with its Order and Customs, by Albert Bobovius from Lemberg'). Two years later, in 1669, the original Italian text was issued at Parma.

According to some sources, Bobowski could speak seventeen languages. This may be a little exaggerated. However, he was able to speak, write and read in Polish, French, English, German, Latin, Ancient Greek, Modern Greek, Italian, Turkish, Arabic and Persian, at least. He served as the translator of the Palace for many years.

Between 1662 and 1664, he translated the Bible into Turkish; the Turkish Bible of our time depends mostly on this translation by Ali Ufki.

During an unknown period between 1665 and 1673, Ufki translated the Old Testament's Psalms into Turkish, composed them in Turkish *maqams* ('modes'), and compiled these texts and compositions in a manuscript called *Mezmurlar* ('psalms').

3. Kısmet Deniz Polat (Istanbul) Femininity in Male Bodies: "Köçekler", Mediators of Two Separate Worlds (1720)

Cross dressing roles have been popular since the beginning of storytelling, from Odysseus to Lord Byron, from *Dede Korkut* stories to drag queens. But the *Köçek*, dancing boys and young men in women outfits whose erotic movements copied ancient fertility rites, play a different role in the entertainment world of Turkey today than they did back in the Ottoman times.

Levni, the great miniature artist of the Tulip era, depicted the festival of 1720, which lasted for twenty three days in honor of the circumcision ceremonies and weddings of the members of the royal family of Sultan Ahmed III (1673-1736, r.1703-1730). There were great meals served, fireworks displays, acrobatic shows of all kinds, and parades of the guilds; and in the colorful depiction of these scenes we see the dancing boys quite often, giving us evidence that they were a popular part of the entertainment world of the time. Hafız Mehmed Efendi, who wrote the *Surname*--the Book of Festivities, which Levni brought alive in all its details in the miniatures--calls them *raks oğlanları* ('dancing boys') or *çengi*: dancer rather than *Köçek*.

Evliya Çelebi (1611-1682) describes in detail the period of Sultan Murad Han (1612-1640, r. 1623-1640), and notes that there were twelve *kol*-troupes, each having a famous leader known as *kolbaşı*, usually a master of dancing, singing and acting, including acrobatic talents, also capable of managing two to three hundred performers. The most famous and talented of these were the Romans living in the Balat area (in the Fatih district on the western bank of the Golden Horn) of Istanbul. He mentions the *şehir oğlanları* ('city boys') and others described as Armenian and Jewish troupes, who usually competed with each other. Çelebi also adds that the performers had many admirers, for they were also experienced in a variety of relationships.

On the other hand, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762) describes the unseen, untold and therefore undepicted, but only fantasized world of women of the time. Her vivid and objective memories contained in her letters bring us a vision of the time when women indoors or at the baths lived a life of pleasure and had considerable power over their men, and their

duty was to reproduce. Writing about her visits to a harem, she describes the maids of each house playing instruments, singing and certainly dancing.

In this article I would like to point to the importance of the Köçek: by imitating women in their male bodies, becoming women by copying their movements and making them visible to the men's world, sharing emotions and women's reproductive powers, the Köçek created an intersection between the divided worlds of the sexes.

13:00-14:00

Lunchbreak

14:00-16:00

Session II

“Harem and Seraglio”

Chair:

Zeynep İnankur (Istanbul)

1. Nina Trauth (Trier)

Fantasies of the Harem in European Portraiture of the Baroque Period (Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century)

In the eighteenth century it became fashionable to have one's portrait painted wearing Oriental clothing. Jean-Marc Nattier (1685-1766) and Carle Vanloo (1705-1765) produced portraits of Louis XV's (1710-1774, r. 1715-1774) mistress, Madame de Pompadour (1721-1764), as well as of Mademoiselle de Clermont (1697-1741), as women from a harem. In this lecture, different interpretations of harems will be analyzed, using portraits of Western, aristocratic women in Oriental dress. The popularity of the harem theme in the visual arts, theatre and literature fired and fed the audience's imagination. Accounts of travels provided page upon page of descriptions of places beyond the access of Western men. Countless adaptations about abduction, murder and jealousy in harems were produced for stage. Roxelana and Zaire are the most famous heroines from the tragedies and comedies of that time, so the actresses had their portraits painted in these roles. With stories about harems, the cultural and gender differences of the Orient are presented to reinforce the ideas of gender relations in one's own culture. Due to the harem's timelessness and placelessness in the Western (Christian) world, it is an ideal example of Michel Foucault's (1926-1984) heterotopia. A woman's jealousy and “exotic”--i.e. spurned homoerotic--love in an isolated space are recurring topoi of travel reports, theatre and graphic prints. However, phallogocentric illusions do not exclusively dominate the discussion. This truism of the harem is characterized by its ambivalence and is not limited to the interpretation of the harem as a “prison of virtues” for women. There is also the female heterotopic harem, created by the English writer Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762) in the *Letters Of the Right Honourable Lady M--y W---y M---e* (London, 1763): to an English woman from the upper class of society, in which women possessed no property rights over their husband's houses, the life of the Ottoman princesses shielded from the male gaze was a privileged one. The freedom of action that Montague attributed to foreign veiled women, compared to her own restrictions, fascinated her and transforms the harem into a space of imagination. Therefore these portraits of Western noble women as sultanas or harem women are a tightrope walk between fact and fiction, as well as between cultural and gender differences.

2. Stefanie Steiner (Karlsruhe)

Enchantment/ Disenchantment: Conceptions of *Harem* and *Seraglio* in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Literature

In 1608, Salomon Schweigger (1551-1622) published his *neue Reyßbeschreibung auß Teutschland Nach Constantinopel und Jerusalem ... Mit hundert schönen neuen Figuren* ('New Description of the Journey from Germany to Constantinople and Jerusalem ... With A Hundred Fine New Figures'). Since then, an immense number of printed travelogues, novels and poems have dealt with Oriental matters on very different levels: Lady Mary Wortley Montague (1689-1762), for example, strove for an unprejudiced view of the foreign culture and manners in her travelogue from Turkey, published posthumously in 1763. Contrary to her friendly attitude towards the "Other", authors such as Sir James Porter (1720-1786) claimed explicitly to describe authentically an Oriental journey (1768), but delivered nothing more than fantastic and fictional repetitions of the well-established Oriental myths perpetuated in the fairytales of the *Arabian Nights* (*Les mille et une nuits, contes arabes traduits en français*, 1704-1717), including the stereotype of many beautiful, sensual, lascivious Oriental girls lingering in the sultan's harem.

"Harem" and "seraglio" as hidden, mysterious, allegedly depraved places still kindled the imaginations of Occidental men in the early nineteenth century: "Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle / Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime – / Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle / Now melt into softness, now madden to crime?" Lord Byron's question (taken from *The Bride of Abydos*), blatantly hinting at Goethe's Italy, "das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn" ('the land where lemons flower'), specifies and unites two main subjects of Oriental poetry: eroticism and cruelty, often presented in the dim, enchanting light of an opulent, exotic stage suspending the moral concepts of Western civilization. The enchantment, however, was short-lived: in 1852, Gerard de Nerval (1808-1855) had to confess, slightly disaffectedly, to the reader of his travelogue *Voyage en Orient*, "I would very much like to embroider the scenery a bit more, but to tell you the truth, there were neither trefoils nor small columns nor ostrich eggs. This sort of oriental decoration you can find in Paris only!" Reality proved to be much more prosaic than the dazzling imagination of the Orient nurtured by flourishing, luxurious poetry.

3. Bent Holm (Copenhagen)

Between Moralism and Exoticism: The Harem on the Late Eighteenth- and the Early Nineteenth-Centuries' Danish Stage

On the Danish stage of the late eighteenth century *turqueries* played significant and complex cultural, political and theatrical roles. As the power system was based on absolutism, on the stage the figure of the sultan, for example, immediately reflected the notion of the ruler, that is the idea of sovereignty as well as the actual ruler. The harem is a significant part of the environment of the spectacular ruler figure, and it is at the same time a location which reflects a number of displacements in the view of internal conditions and of an "Other" civilization as well. The pre-Romantic opera by Jens Immanuel Baggesen (1764-1826) and Friedrich Ludwig Æmilius Kunzen (1761-1817) *Holger Danske* (1789) was a *Türkenoper* which caused serious scandal because of, among other things, its allegedly non-patriotic "Oriental" sensualism. One of the most severe critics of the opera was Peter Andreas Heiberg (1758-1841), an outstanding representative of bourgeois Enlightenment. He wrote what was meant to be a virtuous bourgeois alternative to the opera, a "Turkish" *Singspiel* entitled *Selim og Mirza* ('Selim and Mirza'), performed on the occasion of King Christian VII's (1749-1808, r. 1766-1808) birthday February 2, 1790. In exotic scenery Heiberg's *Singspiel* deals

with urgent themes such as lust, justice and (royal) power. In that context the harem plays a central role as a location, where the sultan's attitude and behavior are realized in ways that seem to reflect and materialize local ideals rather than Oriental realities. At that time Denmark had been involved in a military conflict with Turkey and was at war with the Barbary States. These political and military circumstances were familiar to the audience. Nevertheless, the stage did *not* present an image of an enemy. The harem was a point of departure for the message of virtue, not a real, nor an exotic place. Later, in the nineteenth century, when absolutism had been abandoned and the strained relations with the Ottoman Empire were calmed, the thematic focuses changed and the harem was reduced to a setting of predominantly exoticized value. Only when the author and painter Elisabeth Jerichau Baumann (1819-1881) obtained permission to visit the harem of Constantinople were genuine descriptions from the actual place known.

16:15-17:45

Session III

“Seraglio in Musical Representations”

Chair:

Filiz Ali (Istanbul)

1. **Mary Hunter (Brunswick, Maine)** The Veiled Music of the Seraglio: Aspects of Haydn's *L'incontro improvviso* (Esterház 1775)

It was by no means unusual for the women in Ottoman harems to be well-trained and adept musicians. European visual representations of the harem sometimes show female musicians, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's (1689-1762) famous letters about harem life (first print 1763) also refer to music making. Harem musicians took lessons with the same masters as male musicians, and the music they made was essentially indistinguishable from other Turkish non-janissary art music.

However, explicit representations of “Turkish” music (the ‘*alla turca*’ topos) in the eighteenth century mostly refer to the janissary style, which differs significantly from the “chamber” style that would mostly have been used in the harem and that was at least somewhat known in the West. In a 1997 article I attributed this to the gendered representation of Turks in European entertainments, the stereotypical “Turk” being male and implicitly or explicitly threatening, thus suitable for the objectifying “lens” provided by *alla turca* music. I described Oriental women, on the other hand, as being characterized by purely “Western” musical devices in part because they were to be sympathized with or desired rather than objectified. I used a vocal trio in Joseph Haydn's (1732-1809) opera *L'incontro improvviso* (1775) to illustrate this point and to suggest the way music could suggest the “harem fantasy” of languorous and limitless sensuality.

In this paper I argue that the passive sensuality depicted in Haydn's vocal trio is exceptional in the eighteenth century, and I want to look at the broader context for that moment. In the broader repertory there are some musical hints that may evoke something of actual harem music making. In addition, the occasional uses of “masculine” *alla turca*-isms to characterize the cleverness, spite, or imperiousness of harem occupants (whether “Oriental” or “Western”) suggest a musical picture closer to *Don Juan*'s multifarious and vivid images than to the lassitude of, say, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres' (1780-1867) *Turkish Bath*.

2. Andreas Münzmay (Bayreuth)

Musical Representations of the Seraglio in Eugène Scribe's Vaudeville *L'Ours et le Pacha* (Paris 1820) and in its Adaptations in Nineteenth-Century European Theatre

Eugène Scribe (1791-1861) was most probably the most successful European author of musical theatre in the nineteenth century. But not only Eugène Scribe's (1791-1861) grand operas and operas-comiques--*La Dame Blanche* (for François-Adrien Boieldieu; Paris, 1825), *Le Maçon* (for Daniel François Esprit Auber; Paris 1825) *La Muette de Portici* (for Daniel François Esprit Auber; Paris 1828), *Les Huguenots*, (for Giacomo Meyerbeer; Paris 1836), etc.--were produced all over Europe; so were his ballets and vaudevilles. One of the earliest successes among a total of more than four hundred theatrical pieces signed by Scribe was the folie-vaudeville *L'Ours et le Pacha* ('The Bear and the Pasha') of 1820, music by François Bazin (1816-1878). This is a one-act piece representing the seraglio in a popular manner, thus continuing the popularization of the representation of the seraglio as a place of richness and splendor where absolute power is exercised by a feared and honored sole leader: the pasha Shahababaham, who has captured Roxelane, the wife of the bourgeois French trader Tristapatte, surely will be furious about the death of his favorite bear whom he loved so much because this bear could play the harp and dance the allemande; that is to say, the bear could perform courtly forms of expression of the French/European ancien régime. To cover up the death of the bear and to free Roxelane, Tristapatte tries to play the role of the bear and fails.

This parabolic situation, a brilliant satire on older and newer forms of political representation, succeeded not only in Parisian post-Napoleonic vaudeville theatre, but spread widely all over Europe in adaptations such as *Der Bär und der Bassa* (Königliche Schauspiele Berlin, 1822), *De Beer en de Pacha* (printed in Amsterdam, 1831), *Os Desafios (O Urso e o Pacha)* ('The Defiance'; printed in Lisbon, 1838), *El Oso Blanco y el Oso Negro* ('The White Bear and the Black Bear'; printed in Madrid, 1849), and *I Due Orsi* ('The Two Bears'; Teatro Santa Radegonda Milan, autumn 1867; Teatro Argentino Milan, carnival 1868).

On the basis of hitherto unexamined musical manuscripts and printed sources this paper focuses on the different musical representations of the seraglio interior: whereas the original French *L'Ours et le Pacha* incorporated traditional vaudeville timbres as, for example, "J'ai du bon tabac" ('I have fine tobacco') and more recent melodies such as borrowings from Nicolò Isouard's opera-comique *Joconde, ou les Coureurs d'Aventures* ('Joconde, or The Adventurers', Paris 1814), Blum's translation uses not only German words, but also "German" music out of Mozart's (1756-1791) *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* ('The Abduction from the Seraglio', Vienna 1782) and *Die Zauberflöte* ('The Magic Flute', Vienna 1791), as well as Karl Maria von Weber's (1786-1826) *Der Freischütz* ('The Marksman' or 'The Freeshooter', Berlin 1821).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a fundamental shift in the principles of the musical representation of the seraglio is to be observed: instead of using pre-existing music, the opéra-comique *L'Ours et le Pacha* staged in 1862 in Marseille (restaged and printed in 1870 in Paris) featured original music by François Bazin, just as Antonio Ghislanzoni's (1824-1893) aforementioned Italian version was to be newly composed by Costantino dall'Argine (1842-1877). At about the same time, the original and now somewhat anachronistic vaudeville was restaged in Paris, but this time it represented the seraglio in a musically more "realistic" way: the inhabitants of the seraglio, astonished by the bear's performance, would no longer sing "Quel talent ...", but "hollali mahomet ...", i. e. in a "Turkish" lingua franca modelled on Molière (1622-1673).

Evening Program

**Concert at the Austrian Cultural Forum
“Lord Byron’s Dream”**

Matthew Head (London) (Presentation), **Anna Pangalou (Athens)** (Mezzo-soprano), **Stefano Cavallerin (Perugia)** (Piano)

Friday, May 28th, 2010

09:30-11:00

Session IV

“Through the Eyes of the Other”

Chair:

Evren Kutlay Baydar (Istanbul)

1. Orlin Sabev (Sofia)

European ‘Seraglios’ and ‘Strange Arts’ as Seen and Described from Ottoman Encounters from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century

It is well known that a person’s initial contact with unknown civilizations causes cultural shock. Unfamiliarities--from shapes, aesthetic understandings, modes of behavior, ways of entertainment, to technological facilities, and so forth--not only draw strangers’ attention but spark their curiosity and normally arouse comparative comments and interpretations. It was true, for instance, for Western travelers and envoys to the Ottoman Empire who penned in their travelogues and letters about unknown and curious matters they had the opportunity to see and observe there. Equally, the Ottoman travelers and envoys abroad had the same cultural shock when visiting or observing countries and customs quite different from their own cultural milieu. However, in contrast to the Western observations of the Ottoman East, the Ottoman observations of the European West still remain *terra incognita* in scholarship.

This paper will attempt to reveal and focus on Ottoman encounters with European arts such as printing, painting, theatre, opera, and dance (including masked balls). The Ottomans usually defined these with the Arabic adjective *acaib* (or *acayip* in Turkish) meaning ‘strange things’, or ‘wonders’. Besides the basic connotation of being ‘unknown’ or ‘unfamiliar’, the definition apparently had other connotations as well, such as ‘curious’, ‘surprising’, or ‘eccentric’.

Besides military campaigns, the Ottomans actually started to travel to Europe as cultural encounters only in the seventeenth and more intensively in the eighteenth century. The earliest observations of European “strange arts” were penned by Ottomans who originated from Central European lands such as, for instance, Ibrahim Peçevi (Pécs in Hungary, 1574-1650), who in his *History* provides a short account of a “strange” European art like printing, still unused at the time by the Ottomans. For Katib Çelebi (Istanbul, 1609-1657) printing was also a “strange art”, although he referred not to European, but to Chinese printing activities. Evliya Çelebi (Istanbul, 1611-1682), who seems to have been the first Ottoman to describe his impressions of the European West when he was the personal assistant and scribe of Kara Mehmet Pasha (?-1684), who visited the Habsburg Imperial court as an Ottoman envoy in 1665. In his famous *Seyahatnâme* (‘travelogue’), Evliya Çelebi described his impressions of Vienna and its lively printing activities, technological achievements and fashion, as well as the activities and roles of Viennese women in public. As a matter of fact, all the Ottoman visitors to the West, whose cultural artefacts make a clear distinction between *selamlık*, the visible men’s world, and *haremlık*, the hidden and invisible women’s world, express amazement about the equal place that women and men share in Western public spaces. Temeşvarlı Osman Ağa (‘Osman Ağa of Temesvár’, the phrase ‘of Temesvár’ being part of his name), who spent seven years in captivity there, also describes what he observed there as *acaib-i garaib* (‘strange and curious’).

The eighteenth-century Ottoman envoys to European countries provide much more detailed accounts of the “strange arts” they had opportunity to observe there. Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi (?-1732) spent eleven months in Paris (1720-1721) as an Ottoman envoy to the French king and then related his observations in a *Sefaretnâme* (‘Book of Embassy’), including those from his attendance at the opera house. In his words, “there was a special

place in Paris, called opera, where *acaib sanatlar* [‘strange arts’] were performed”.

Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi’s first ever longtime Ottoman embassy set a precedent; subsequent Ottoman ambassadors penned embassy reports upon their return to their homeland. In particular, ambassadors such as Hatti Mustafa Efendi (Vienna, 1748), Derviş Mehmet Efendi (St. Petersburg, 1755), Şehdi Osman Efendi (St. Petersburg, 1757-1758), Ahmet Resmi Efendi (Vienna, 1757-1758; Berlin, 1763-1764), Silahdar Necati (St. Petersburg, 1771-1775), Abdülkerim Pasha (Moscow, 1775-1776), Ebu Bekir Ratıp Efendi (Vienna, 1791-1792), Abdürrezak Bahir Efendi (Paris, 1845), and others yet to be investigated, provide more or less detailed accounts of their attendances at performances at European theatres, opera houses, masked balls, classical concerts, etc.

The paper will not only describe these accounts but will also try to highlight the change in perception towards these “strange arts” throughout the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Throughout this period the Ottoman visitors to the West became gradually more accustomed to Western culture, but although perception became calmer, the general Ottoman attitude towards such arts remained more or less conservative and sometimes even condemnatory.

2. Nazende Öztürk-Yılmaz (Istanbul)

European Music Embraced in the Ottoman Seraglio during the Nineteenth Century

The nineteenth century was a period of change for Istanbul culture. Taking the West as a role model became more common in this period, which caused a number of traditional values gradually to fade away, and thus a new understanding of culture was established in the heart of Istanbul lifestyle. Because Istanbul was situated between East and West, the new taste could not completely evolve in its real form, but it took a new shape by adapting to the city’s cultural pattern. The diversity of Istanbul’s social structure was incomparable to any other European city and the support from the Court was significantly effective in shaping new directions in art.

The first change took place in military music which was the continuation of Mahmud II’s (1785-1839, r.1808-1839) military reforms. Polyphonic music was first developed in the Court, and then spread to other layers of society. Meanwhile, opera and other musical performances were held in the Pera region which was the face of Istanbul heading west. Western-style musical training was added and adapted to Turkish music style which had already existed in the Court. Countless musicians were trained from the dynastic family. Artists and their activities were always supported by the Court. Musical samples indicating a synthesis of traditional taste and Western style were produced. Accepting a completely different genre of music into the formal and daily life of a court without abandoning the traditional style was a progressive act for an established culture. There are several causes of the successful development of Western music at the capital city Istanbul. Substantially, the Court and the members of the Dynasty manipulated this innovation in art.

11:15-13:15

Session VI

Chair:

“On the Vienna Stage”

Michael Hüttler (Vienna)

1. Strother Purdy (Wisconsin, Milwaukee)

Irene, Doomed Queen of the Seraglio: A Wise Austrian Looks at Moslem-Christian Violence (Vienna 1781)

This paper is an expansion of one part of an unpublished survey I called “Western Literary Reflections of the Fall of Constantinople in 1453: with a tribute to Karoly Kisfaludy”, the last named being a Hungarian playwright whose 1821 drama *Irene*—about the beloved victim of Mehmet II (1432-1481, first reign 1444-1446, second reign 1451-1481), The Conqueror [of Constantinople], and Shadow of God on Earth—remains untranslated, my own partial translation as yet unachieved. In 2003, at the Mediterranean Studies Association congress in Budapest, I gave a slide lecture under the title of “Western Literary Reflections”, touching upon several points of my survey. Writers and works I included, besides Kisfaludy, were the historian Michael Critobulo (1410-1470), Giovanni Mario Filelfo’s (1426-1480) Latin poem *Amyris* (1471-76) on the deeds of Sultan Mehmet II (r.1444-1446, 1451-1481); Matteo Bandello (1480-1562); Kelemen Mikes’ (1690-1761) *Törökországi levelek* (‘Letters from Turkey’, written 1717-1758); Samuel Johnson’s (1709-1784) play *Irene* (1748); Edward Gibbon’s (1737-1794) *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-1789); the libretto of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, written 1781 by Christoph Friedrich Bretzner (1748-1807) for Johann André (1741-1799) and adapted in 1781-82 by Gottlieb Stephanie the Younger (1741-1800) for W. A. Mozart (1756-1791); and William Butler Yeats’ (1865-1939) ‘Byzantium poems’ (1926, 1930). My present interest, the proposition to you of a “Doomed Queen of the Seraglio”, concentrates on one part of my survey, a little known, and under-appreciated work, popular for four centuries, the Irene legend *Skizze eines Trauerspiels* (‘Sketch of a Tragedy’; 1781) of Cornelius Hermann von Ayrenhoff (1733-1819), a Viennese field marshal in the Austrian army and dramatist in, we might say, his slippered moments. He turns the story into the tragic stupidity of religious antagonism, with an uncannily predictive eye, yet with a psychological subtlety that in no way diminishes the erotic undercurrent in both love and murder.

2. John Sienicki (Grand Rapids, Michigan) But Not All Are Gentlemen: The Dark Side of the Harem Fantasy in the Works of Perinet, Spiess, and Hensler (1791/1794)

During the years of the French Revolution (1789-1794), German authors were allowed somewhat more freedom than usual to write realistically and critically. In some German states, there was a great flowering of the genre of the popular novel, both for entertainment and as an instrument for discussion of social issues. These novels had a major effect in the 1790s on the Viennese popular theater tradition, particularly at the Leopoldstadt Theater, where, under the leadership of Karl Friedrich Hensler (1759-1825), comedy was often a disguise for social commentary and moral instruction.

Two of the young writers who rose to fame under these conditions were the playwright Joachim Perinet (1763-1816; Austria) and the immensely popular novelist Christian Heinrich Spiess (1755-1799; Saxony and Bohemia). Both of these wrote major works in 1791 that use the “Turkish” capture-and-rescue plot. But instead of portraying the Middle East as just as civilized as Europe, as in Mozart’s *Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782), these works contain episodes that are built around the elements of the Turkish stereotype that were threatening to Europeans.

In Perinet’s *Kaspar der Fagottist* (‘Casper the Bassoonist’, music by Wenzel Müller; Vienna 1791), the captive women are shown working as slaves, spinning thread, exactly as if they were “immoral” women rounded up by the police and placed in one of Vienna’s recently introduced and controversial workhouses, in an elaborate musical number punctuated by the “fick, fick” of the overseer’s (orig. ‘Frauenwächter’) whip. In *Das Petermännchen* (‘Peter Puck’ or ‘The Peter Elfin’, dramatized by Hensler in 1794, music by Joseph Weigl; Vienna

1794), Spiess, strongly influenced by the beginnings of scientific folklore collection and the beginnings of modern psychology, uses the threat of castration by a sultan in Cairo forcibly recruiting harem guards, to focus his proto-Freudian allegorical tale of the conflict between the human sexual drive and Christian morality.

3. Lisa Feurzeig (Grand Rapids, Michigan) The Harem Transplanted? A Hopeful Picture of Bigamy in Schubert's Unfinished Opera *Der Graf von Gleichen* (1826-28)

The legend of the Graf von Gleichen has been retold many times. A Crusader, enslaved by Saracens, becomes romantically involved with the sultan's daughter. She escapes with him; they return to Europe, and the Graf receives papal permission to enter into a second marriage while his first wife is still living.

Eduard von Bauernfeld (1802-1890) began work on a libretto on this theme in 1826; his friend Franz Schubert (1797-1828) began composing the music in 1827, although it had already been rejected by the Viennese censors. When he died the following year, Schubert had completed detailed sketches for almost the whole opera. The choice to compose the work suggests a strong identification with the project, perhaps because of its positive view of multiple marriage. Bauernfeld's two-act structure, with Act I in Cairo and Act II in Germany, shows how an Eastern institution might be transplanted to Europe, while Schubert's music inspires empathy for the characters and their decisions.

Bauernfeld assigns the traditional exoticist view of Eastern ways to comic servant characters, who decry harem life with overtones of appreciative envy. The three elite characters, by contrast, enter earnestly into a harem life redesigned for their circumstances: it is Christianized and based on mutual consent of all parties, and the two wives will live as loving sisters.

Schubert reveals Suleika's sincere new faith by composing a chorale-like prayer for her. At the same time, he draws the Graf and Gräfin, both originally associated with flat keys, increasingly into Suleika's sharp-key harmonic world as the three-way partnership develops. He also employs harmonic progressions that have been linked in his music with themes of transcendence, as if to show that the three characters are moving into a higher form of love.

13:15-14:15
Lunchbreak

14:15-16:15

Session V

Chair:

“Byron's Harems”

Matthew Head (London)

1. Himmət Umunç (Ankara)

Byron's Reveries of the Ottoman Orient: The Byronic Representation of Oriental Exoticism

Following the fall of Istanbul in 1453, and especially upon the expansion into the Balkans and Central Europe of the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the traditional European perception of the Orient, which had previously been shaped by the

Crusades, Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and the accounts given by Marco Polo and other travellers and merchants, began to change; increasingly more and more focus was put on the Ottoman geography, society, culture, history, politics and institutions. Especially from the seventeenth century onwards, the term “Orient,” which was also referred to as “the Levant,” came mainly to signify the Ottoman Orient with all its social, political, cultural, and historical variety. This growing interest in the Ottoman Orient also played a significant part in the rise of Orientalism as a serious academic discipline in Europe, which was primarily concerned with a full study and critique of the Ottoman Empire in every respect, ranging from language, history, religion, culture and social life to diplomacy, domestic and foreign policies, military and naval organization, institutional characteristics, urban and rural settlements, and geographical features. Along European orientalists’ scholarly studies in Turcology and also their comprehensive linguistic and historiographical writings, there was also in Europe a growing number of travellers’ accounts of the Ottoman Orient based on personal impressions and observations and presenting a vivid description of life and society as well as political, institutional, architectural, archaeological and geographical details. However, in their accounts, *some* travellers blended fact and fiction and tended to bring to the fore their romanticized perceptions of the Ottoman Orient. Indeed, at the core of their romanticized perceptions was the recurrent notion of oriental exoticism, which they expressed not only through reveries about the Ottoman seraglio and harem life but also through fantastic fabulations about a pleasurable and carefree way of oriental life, embedded with sexual undertones.

In English literature, it is in Lord Byron’s writings and letters that one witnesses the representation of oriental exoticism as such most romantically and in terms of personal reveries. His readings in his early life about the Orient had so much influence on him that as a young man he set out in 1808 on a three-year journey, which began in Portugal and Spain, and took him to Ottoman Greece and Turkey. In his letters and romantic fabulations, he recurrently used an oriental setting, in which he situated himself and his characters. So this paper will be a close study of Byron’s fantasies and fabulations about the Ottoman Orient, informed by his idea of oriental exoticism.

2. Mi Zhou (London)

‘Here mingled in their many-hued array’: Ali Pasha’s Court as Harem in Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* and Hobhouse’s *A Journey Through Albania*

Before the success of *Don Juan*, it was the publication of Cantos I and II of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* in 1812 that first established Byron’s reputation. The notoriety of Byron’s depiction of the harem in *Don Juan* has overshadowed an earlier appearance of the Ottoman seraglio in his work. In late October 1809, Byron and his friend John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869) visited Ali Pasha’s (1741-1822) court in Tepellene, Albania. Both Byron and Hobhouse subsequently wrote about their encounter with the Pasha: Byron in Cantos II of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1812) and Hobhouse in *A Journey through Albania and Other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia, to Constantinople, During the Years 1809 and 1810* (1813).

The harem and the womenfolk of the seraglio feature in both Byron’s and Hobhouse’s sumptuous accounts of Ali Pasha’s court. For these British travellers new to the near East, the harem was a place of heterogeneous pleasures and political intrigues. But these ideas of the Oriental harem were not confined to the harem itself: they extended to Byron’s and Hobhouse’s perceptions of Ali Pasha’s court. This paper explores the representation of the

Albanian seraglio by Byron and Hobhouse, and argues that rather than the harem being a part of the seraglio, the seraglio was conceived as an extension of the harem: its power dynamics, intrigues and luxurious pleasures spilled over from the female domain into the male sphere of the court. The heterogeneity of the harem is paralleled in the diverse ethnic groups that strained against Ali Pasha's rule, foreshadowing conflict and violence for Albania and its neighbours.

3. Laura Tunbridge (Manchester)

“The soft hours of Sardanapalus”: Music and Effeminacy in Byron's Seraglios

Music plays a prominent role in Byron's descriptions of seraglios and harems. On the surface, it seems the poet subscribed to familiar Orientalist tropes conflating music, the exotic and the erotic. Yet music in these contexts is not only a symbol of feminine servitude; occasionally, Byron also shows it to be a source of strength and freedom. In *Don Juan* the sultan's women, “Their guards being gone, and as it were a truce / Establish'd between them and bondage, they / Began to sing, dance, chatter, smile, and play” (Canto VI, XXXIV). Meanwhile Sevilla, in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (Canto I, LIV), “Hangs on the willow her unstrung guitar, / And, all unsex'd ... / Sung the loud song, and dared the deed of war”.

Music, when used to delimit the feminized space of the seraglio, seems to be more of a problem for Byron's male heroes. In *Sardanapalus* (1821), music is heard prior to the entrance of the King of Nineveh: “Hark! The lute, / The lyre, the timbrel; the lascivious tinklings / Of lulling instruments, the softening voices of women, and of beings less than women, / Must chime in to the echo of his revel”. The “man-queen” Sardanapalus, when he finally enters, is said to be “effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with flowers, and his Robe negligently flowing”. He calls time spent with his harem “the soft hours of Sardanapalus” and they are marked throughout by music.

Byron did not intend *Sardanapalus* to be staged, but as with many of his poems this did not stop there being theatrical and musical adaptations of his work. This paper will focus on a series of versions that reveal some of the complexities of representing seraglios on the nineteenth-century British stage; attention will be paid in particular to connections between the seraglio and effeminacy. As discussed by Edward Ziter, Alfred Bunn's (1796-1860) adaptation for Covent Garden and Drury Lane (1834) depended on a highly theatrical notion of how to depict the “Royal Harem”. By contrast, Charles Kean's (1811-1868) *Sardanapalus* for the Princess's Theatre (1853) stressed the authenticity of its stage designs, claiming to have based them on archaeological evidence at the British Museum. At the same time--and with no real claims for authenticity--Kean's production made ample use of musical numbers and dancing girls.

Kean's emphasis on visual and musical spectacle was highlighted by a contemporary burlesque: *Sardanapalus: or, the “Fast” King of Assyria* (1853). The entrance of Sardanapalus is again heralded by music, but this time the satire is still cruder: “Why does that music fall upon my ear? / Some soft effeminate nonsense must be near; / The music of effeminacy savours; I hate such crotchets and such semiquavers”. As was typical of English burlesques, their musical numbers were drawn from popular Italian operas (notably Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* from 1833 and Verdi's *Rigoletto* from 1851). The linking of national musical styles and effeminacy is significant here as, perhaps, are allusions to Byron's personal life. Yet the broader point is the way the burlesque of *Sardanapalus* overturns standard gender politics of representations of the seraglio, presenting it less as a

place where women are subservient to men than where men are captured and weakened by women; or, as one character comments, “I hate this poor effeminate court–this king / Ruled by 500 wives--poor henpecked thing”.

16:30-18:30

Session VII

“Between Slavery and Freedom”

Chair:

Nina Ergin (Istanbul)

1. Alev Karaduman Baysal (Ankara)

The Rule of Women: A Study of Power and Femininity in the Ottoman Seraglio

Beginning from the reign of Mehmed the Conqueror (1432-1481, r. 1444-46, 1451-81), who was considered to be the initiator of the Harem in the Ottoman Empire, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Ottoman seraglio fascinated the Europeans and was often made the subject of European fantasies and prejudices. Essentially, this was due to the imaginary representations and misperceptions arising from the secrecy and censure that surrounded the life and concubines in the seraglio. However, contrary to the distorted and mistaken perception of seraglio as such, historically, it was an institution where the concubines were instructed in various forms of art, music, protocol and imperial etiquette, poetry and history. Those concubines who excelled in their skills and intellectual capacity were held in esteem and often rewarded. The favorites from among them were especially personally praised and respected by the sultan. Beginning with Hürrem Sultan (Roxelana) (1510-1558) in the sixteenth century, the chief concubine who gave birth to a son by the sultan began to exercise her power and influence not only over the other concubines but also over the sultan himself. In this regard, first Safiye Sultan (1510-1558), Kösem Sultan (1510-1558) and Turhan Sultan (1628?-1683) were the most famous figures who had much influence on the sultans and the politics of their time. The effects of the concubines on the sultans were written by concubines such as Leyla (Saz) Sultan (1845-1936) and Hanzade Sultan (1923-1998), the daughter of Sultan Vahdettin (r.1918-1922), the last Emperor of Ottoman Empire. These sultanas were exceptional as they wrote about their experiences of life at the palace, and in their memoirs they referred to many incidents they encountered in the harem of the sultans. So this paper is an account of how the chief concubines in the seraglio, from the sixteenth century onwards played a domineering role and displayed their powers over the sultan and the politics of their time, particularly taking Leyla Sultan’s and Hanzade Sultan’s memoirs into consideration.

2. Marian Gilbert Read (Hampshire)

“Schiava son io, Corsaro!?”: Does the Escape from the Harem Dramatise the Risorgimento Struggle in Giuseppe Verdi’s Adaptation of Byron’s *The Corsair* (Trieste 1848)?

In his dedication of *The Corsair* to the Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779-1852) in 1814, Byron discussed the possibility that an Oriental setting could be used by Moore to present “the wrongs of your own country” at a time when Irish nationalism was gathering strength to resist British rule. By 1816, Byron was associating in Milan with Italian liberals determined to resist the imposition of Austrian rule in the post-Napoleonic Restoration, and was enrolled

in the undercover patriotic movement, the *carbonari*. His works were widely translated and adapted in Italy, and *The Corsair* became a popular subject for artists and musicians.

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) and his librettist Francesco Maria Piave (1810-1876) began work on their adaptation of Byron's poem as their own involvement with *Risorgimento* politics grew in the 1840s; and by the time the work was premièred at Trieste (then belonging to Austria) in 1848, Piave himself had fought against the Austrians in Venice, and Verdi had written enthusiastically about the patriotic uprisings across Italy.

The paper will examine the way in which Verdi's opera *Il Corsaro* makes Gulnara the central character of the piece and her escape from the harem the key act of the drama. Her declarations of resistance and longing for freedom will be examined in the context of earlier works which have often been interpreted as *risorgimentale*, and the question of Verdi's actual political involvement in 1848 will be explored. In particular, the political debate about Giuseppe Mazzini's (1805-1872) *teoria del pugnale* ('theory of the dagger') will be discussed in considering the differing decisions of Corrado and Gulnara about using assassination as the means of securing their escape from captivity.

3. Gönül Bakay (Istanbul)

Can One Have Freedom in a Prison? : Emeline Lott's
*The English Governess in Egypt. Harem Life in
Egypt and Constantinople* (1867)

Women first were made for men
Not men for them. It follows then,
That men have right to every one
And they no freedom of their own.

Hudibras

Can one understand what the "harem" really stands for from the outside? When Emeline Lott (1897-1974) becomes governess to the children of Ismail, the Viceroy of Egypt (1830-1895, r.1863-1879), between the years 1863-1879, she finds the opportunity to observe harem life closely. Her account makes one feel that Lott hates the harem life but admires the luxury of the vice regal courts. Although the "harem" is generally understood to be the abode of "bliss" by the Moslems, Lott soon learns that it is at the same time a place of danger and corruption. In the book, after learning about the difficulties of her position from Mr. Xanos, she leaves for her post. She is warned: "I would have you, Madam, alive to the well established fact that the whole coteries which you will be introduced are the very hot bed of intrigue, jealousy and corruption. The chief eunuch is generally supposed to possess absolute powers within the Harem, even over the princess".

Although her contract requires her only to work in Egypt, the governess is forced to accept another job in the Turkish harem, and thus she has the opportunity to compare the two countries. Compared to the ladies of the harem of Egypt, the ladies of the Turkish harem enjoy carriage and *caique* ('boat') airing daily, and revel in a degree of freedom altogether unknown in Egypt. While Lott describes the richness of the clothes and jewelry of the women in the harem, she contrasts this with the vulgar eating habits of the ladies. When invited to eat with them on the floor, she declines because she cannot bear the idea of eating with her fingers.

As Reina Lewis (1959-) observes, harem literature emerged by the mid nineteenth century as a sub-genre of travel writing. With writers such as Grace Allison (1860-1935) and Lucy

Garnett (1849-1934), the public could have access to more objective and systematic accounts of harem life than they could through autobiographical narratives. My aim in this paper is to offer a reading of *The English Governess in Egypt: Harem Life in Egypt and Constantinople* as a representative example of this genre. In doing that, I seek to examine the socio-cultural dynamics that inform Lott's vision and that inflect her portrayal of the harem.

Dinner at Istanbul Vilayetler Evi

Saturday, May 29th, 2010

20:00

Evening Program

***Don Giovanni and His Servant Pulcinella* by Ankara State Theatre
Üsküdar Tekel Sahnesi – Üsküdar**