

The remote voyages were absolutely extraordinary events in the Middle Ages and Early modern period. But even people far away from home had to eat, sleep at night and take care of their appearance. I focused on the remarks in the area of daily life in the Writings of the Czechs, who travelled to the Near East in the 15th and 16th centuries. Václav Wratislav z Mitrowicz stayed in the Constantinople, Martin Křivoústý, Martin Kabátník, Jan Hasištejnský z Lobkowicz, Oldřich Prefát z Vlkanova and Kryštof Harant z Polžic a Bezdružic pilgrimised to the Holy Land. Kabátník and Harant then continued to the Egypt.

An alimentation of travellers consisted particularly of bread, fruits and meat. They drank in most cases water and wine. On the one hand they could taste exotic dishes; on the other hand their fare was relatively monotonous – especially on the ship, in the prison or during crossing the desert. It was necessary to keep the basic hygienic habits in order to avoid an illness. For example red pestilence or seasickness threatened. The ill pilgrims could take shelter in a hospital. The dirty travellers could visit an oriental spa that had distinction. Sleeping in the far-away countries was not too comfortable. The people slept in the hospices, in the monasteries or in the open air. They lay on the plaited matting or on the carpets. They had hardly a little privacy. They liked tours, walking through the foreign towns, visiting the monuments. They amused their leisure time with reading, singing or writing a diary. They collected various souvenirs.

Travelling to the Near East was quite dangerous. Somebody could die for example during the thunderstorm on the sea, meeting some pirates or brigandage. Often a conflict with Muslims threatened. Foreigners had to bear patiently with various injuries. Wandering was adventurous and expensive. Natives levied various charges and begged all the time. On the other side Czech globetrotters proved to appreciate positive qualities of natives.