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Summary

THE ISLAND OF CRETE AND ITS ANCIENT PAST IN CZECH HUMANIST TRAVELOGUES

Early Modern pilgrims, travelling by sea from Western and Central Europe to the Holy Land, had to cross a large part of the Mediterranean basin before they reached their destination. Their ships usually made stops at various islands, including the island of Crete, which was under Venetian rule for a wide timespan (1212–1669). Travellers from the Lands of the Bohemian Crown had taken part in the pilgrim-traffic since the Middle Ages, and often left reports for future generations. There are three well-known travelogues written in the Czech language that contain a detailed description of Crete, namely books by Jan Hasištejnský of Lobkowitz (journey in 1493, travelogue in 1505/1509, not printed), Oldřich Prefát of Vlkánov (1546, 1563), and Kryštof Harant of Polžice and Bezdružice (1598, 1608). Their depictions of the island reflect the basic characteristics of their travelogues. Hasištejnský is mainly concerned with contemporary Crete and its not-so-distant past, reporting almost exclusively information gained during his journey. In addition to describing the current state of the island, Prefát highlights its mythological connections, pointing loosely to further reading. Harant's account is the most complex one. He links his contemporary experience with the corpus of knowledge that was handed down by authorities, both ancient and modern. His citation method may not be perfect, but his list of referenced authors is vast. Cretan *memorabilia* mentioned by Prefát and Harant include sites associated with the island's mythological tradition and its remote ("Minoan") past which received legendary features in later Greek renditions.

Keywords: Old Bohemian Travelogue; Jan Hasištejnský of Lobkowitz; Oldřich Prefát of Vlkanov; Kryštof Harant of Polžice and Bezdružice; Crete; Labyrinth; Minos; the Minotaur; Mount Ida; Zeus

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