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Eva Tamara Asboth

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Transnational and Transatlantic Perspectives on the Balkans, 1850–1918

Historical Balkan narratives supported by Felix Philipp Kanitz, Mary Edith Durham, and Mihailo Pupin in the transnational public sphere

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To Motz, my love

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Eva Tamara Asboth is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for Comparative Media and Communication Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. She studied History and Communication Science. In the past ten years, she was working on different topics related to Southeast Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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CHAPTER 1

The "European Orient": Forerunner of the Balkans

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Abstract The "European Orient" as a regional designation for Southeast Europe has its origins in the eighteenth century, and became a geographical and political reality for Europeans in the nineteenth century. As the classification suggests, it was located on the European continent; the Orient was already imagined to be located east of Vienna, as noted by American historian Suzanne Marchand, i.e., actually in the middle of Habsburg territory. Today, the European Orient is no longer present in the collective memory of the Western world, even though an "Orientalization" of Eastern and Southeast Europe has taken place in recent media discourse, reviving the imagined division of East and West along with its associated dichotomous notions (backward-civilized). Therefore, studies and research on the Orient, on Orientalism, and on

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processes of Orientalization are as current as they are numerous, and are not exclusively located in the field of Oriental Studies. In the introductory chapter of this book, I present the literature on Orientalism and Balkanism as well as my categories of analysis, namely encounter, public sphere, and historical narratives. It ends with a brief overview of the following chapters and the structure of the book.

Keywords Orientalism • Balkanism • Encounter • Public sphere • Historical narratives

American literature professor Edward Said established a new field of study known as *postcolonial studies*. He defines "Orientalization" as those discursively created notions and narratives of the Orient in which the West establishes its hegemonic power over the East: "The Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience,"[1] he explains in the introduction to his book *Orientalism*, published in 1978. The division between the "backward" Orient and the "civilized" Occident is based on ontological and epistemological ideas contained in the form of Oriental images, as seen in the works of Western scientists and artists. Part of an ongoing Oriental discourse since the end of the eighteenth century, this produced a real power structure: "… in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."[2]

This same power structure is transferred to Southeast Europe by Milica Bakić-Hayden, professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh. Using the example of multi-ethnic Yugoslavia, the ethnologist from Serbia develops the concept of "nesting Orientalism,"[3] where one superior group Orientalizes another group. The further to the west a country positions itself, she notes, the more European and thus superior its inhabitants feel compared to territories further southeast. For Europe, the Balkans were

[1] Said refers to Foucault's discourse theory; see: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1978), 10–11.

[2] Said, *Orientalism*, 11.

[3] Milica Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms. The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995), 917–931.

imagined as an uncivilized and backward region that needed to be Europeanized. Croatia's membership in the European Union and its affiliation with the Catholic Church reinforce and underline the concept of "nesting Orientalism," while the political actors and general population see themselves as the vanguard of the non-EU member states, like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro. Members of the Serbian Orthodox community, in turn, feel more Western than European Muslims in the Balkans, and the latter group Orientalizes Muslims living in Asia. Bosnia and Herzegovina represents the phenomenon of "nesting Orientalism" in a very small area, where many ethnic groups separate themselves from the "others."[4] The actual geographical location of the countries in Southeast Europe plays a subordinate role; the mindset according to which the environment is organized determines their position on a *mental map*—nonetheless, this provides orientation just like a physical map.[5]

In *Imagining the Balkans*, Maria Todorova continues to explore Europe's relationship to the "Other," namely the Balkans. Europe invented the Balkans, she says. It needs them, because the space called the Balkans serves as a projection area for the uncivilized element that is inherent in Europe. She calls this discourse "Balkanism," which is not to be equated with Orientalism. As Europe's inner darkness, the Balkans are given a bridging function, an intermediate position between West and East. The Balkan images thus draw a semi-Oriental, semi-wild, or semi-civilized peninsula onto Europe's frontiers: the European Orient.[6]

Historical research on metaphorical images of the Orient and the Balkans within the framework of Orientalism and Balkanism has grown significantly.[7] Vesna Goldsworthy, a well-known scholar in this field,

[4] See also: Johannes Feichtinger, "Komplexer k.u.k. Orientalismus. Akteure, Institutionen, Diskurse im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert in Österreich," in: *Orientalismen in Ostmitteleuropa. Diskurse, Akteure und Disziplinen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Robert Born and Sarah Lemmen, eds. (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2014), 54–55.

[5] Alan K. Henrikson, "The geographical 'Mental Maps' of American foreign policy makers," *International Political Science Review* 1 (1980) 4: 498–499.

[6] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 194.

[7] Barbara Haider-Wilson and Maximilian Graf, eds., *Orient & Okzident. Begegnungen und Wahrnehmungen aus fünf Jahrhunderten* (Wien: Neue Welt Verlag, 2017); Nada Boškovska, "Die Entführung der Miss Stone. Der Balkan im Blickfeld der westlichen Welt," *Historische Anthropologie* 16, no. 3 (2013): 420–442; Feichtinger, *Komplexer k.u.k. Orientalismus*;

researches Balkan images and narratives in Great Britain through the entertainment industry. She deconstructs the predicate "Balkan" as meaning not conforming to Western standards, as otherness. It describes conditions that are either attractively repulsive or seductively abrasive to Western observers. Goldsworthy, based at English universities, argues that the main corpus of Balkan images during the nineteenth century came from British travelers. In the twentieth century, the Unites States disseminated many more of the ideas and stereotypes about the Balkans, based on images produced in Great Britain.[8] Historian Radmila Pejić emphasizes that correspondents at European newspapers in Vienna, in addition to travelogues, played a key role in the dissemination of reports and knowledge about Serbia, which is why many historical narratives can be colored by Austrian propaganda.[9] Austrian and British influences on images of the Balkans on the one hand, and American influences on the other, take up a great deal of space in this work, especially in the transnational and transatlantic transfer of historical narratives.

Wolfgang Geier, *Südosteuropa-Wahrnehmungen. Reiseberichte, Studien und biographische Skizzen vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006); Božidar Jezernik, *Das wilde Europa. Der Balkan in den Augen westlicher Reisender* (Wien: Böhlau, 2016); Florian Keisinger, "Uncivilised Wars in Civilised Europe? The Perception of the Balkan Wars 1912–1913 in English, German and Irish Newspapers and Journals," in *The Wars before the Great War. Conflict and International Politics before the Outbreak of the First World War*, Dominik Geppert, William Mulligan, and Andreas Rose, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 343–358; Andreas Pribersky, "Politische Mythen der k.u.k. Monarchie," in: *Kakanien Revisited. Das Eigene und das Fremde (in) der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie*, Wolfgang Müller-Funk, Peter Plener, and Clemens Ruthner, eds. (Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag, 2002), 322–330; Christian Promitzer, Siegfried Gruber, Harald Heppner, eds., *Southeast European Studies in a Globalizing World* (Wien: LIT Verlag, 2014); Andreas Rathberger, "Balkanbilder. Vorstellungen und Klischees über den Balkan in der Habsburgermonarchie im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert," Kakanien Revisited, April 6, 2009, accessed March 11, 2023, http://www.kakanien-revisited.at/beitr/fallstudie/ARathberger1.pdf.

[8] Vesna Goldsworthy, "Der Imperialismus der Imagination. Konstruktionen Europas und des Balkans," in *Europa und die Grenzen im Kopf*, Karl Kaser, Dagmar Gramshammer-Hohl, and Robert Pichler, eds. (Klagenfurt: Wieser Verlag, 2003), 272 and 257.

[9] Radmila Pejić, "Herbert Vivian. A British Traveller in Late Nineteenth-Century Serbia," *Balcanica* XLIV (2013): 264.

Douglas Little examines American Orientalism after 1945 and reconstructs Oriental stereotypes in relation to the Arab population in the Middle East throughout the second half of the twentieth century. While the Jewish population was first imagined as victims and then, after the Israeli military triumph of 1967, as winners, the Arab population continued to be described as "feckless, reckless, and weak" throughout the discourse.[10] The US historian argues that the stereotypical Oriental image of revenge-driven fanatics found its way into US mass and popular media, such as film and literature, and as a final consequence, into political decisions regarding the Orient.

The US image of the Orient stands in contrast to the Western image of the Balkans after 1945. Art historian and literary scholar Tanja Zimmermann shows how Tito's Yugoslavia succeeded in positioning itself as a country in the middle, thus shedding its Oriental associations. My own research also indicates that positive Balkan narratives dominated the media discourse in Austria between the end of the Second World War and Tito's death, thus establishing good political relations with the neighboring country.[11]

The influence of Balkan and Oriental images on politics was already clear in nineteenth-century Europe. However, Edward Said had proven his Orientalization thesis primarily with sources from French and British Encounters and then applied it to the colonies of the two major Western European powers. According to ethnology professor Roman Loimeier, there were no alternative findings for the United States and German-speaking Central Europe with regard to the image of the exotic and uncivilized imagined Orient. This raises the question of whether the Orient and the Oriental Balkans truly evoked a homogeneous image in the West. Since the publication of the work *Orientalism*, imagined superiority has always been the central strand in the discourse on Orient and Occident, regardless of the Western country and where the scholar's point of research begins.[12]

[10] Douglas Little, *American Orientalism. The United States and the Middle East Since 1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 32.

[11] Tanja Zimmermann, *Der Balkan zwischen Ost und West. Mediale Bilder und kulturpolitische Prägungen* (Köln: Böhlau, 2016), Chapter V; Eva Tamara Asboth and Silvia Nadjivan, "Gute Freunde—beste Feinde. Die (Um-)Deutung einstiger Selbst- und Fremdbilder in Wien und Belgrad nach 1945," *Der Donauraum* 53, no. 2 (2013): 267–286.

[12] Roman Loimeier, "Edward Said und der Deutschsprachige Orientalismus. Eine kritische Würdigung, Stichproben," *Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien* 2, no. 1 (2001) 1, 80–81.

This is not the only strand of discourse that has formed since the nineteenth century, counters US historian Suzanne Marchand. Within the field of German-speaking Oriental Studies, a circle formed that admired the authenticity and resilience of the Orient vis-à-vis the bourgeois Western world. In this field, knowledge about the Orient was improved by studying writings from Persia, India, and Assyria, leading to a better understanding of the new cultures, while the biblical Christian world was increasingly doubted. In this way, "German Orientalism" helped to weaken the notion of Western superiority, according to Marchand's finding, which is central to my work.[13]

In her research, Marchand takes up points of criticism from the debate surrounding Said's book: as already mentioned, he refrains from using German-language sources in *Orientalism* and bases his thesis on the study of the former colonial states of Great Britain and France. He argues that these countries developed Orientalism, and that the German-speaking world built on this.[14] Loimeier and Marchand take complementary approaches to Germany and Austria; both explain that despite the lack of colonies in each country, German-language Orientalism has made great achievements. In my view, Vienna in particular is of great importance as a cultural hub for the geographic territories that were perceived to be Oriental. In the nineteenth century, numerous academic institutions were founded in the capital of the Habsburg Empire that dealt with nearer as well as more distant neighboring areas.

Much stronger is the criticism of Said's *Orientalism*, according to which the Orient–Occident dichotomy leads to imperialist relations and creates a hopeless situation; there are no fluid processes, but rather a fixed relationship to which everything is subordinated. This prevents the observation of Transfers from one region to another.[15] Transfers are understood as experienced encounters (with a lower-case "e," an action or situation) that the Encounters (capital "E," a person), who come with their own

[13] Marchand, *German Orientalism and the Decline of the West*, 472–473.

[14] Said, *Orientalism*, 24–26.

[15] Kerstin S. Jobst, "Orientalism. E. W. Said und die Osteuropäische Geschichte," Saeculum 51, no. 2 (2000): 250–266; Thomas Schmidinger, "Orientalismus und Okzidentalismus. Zur Einführung in die Begrifflichkeiten und die Debatte," *University of Vienna*, March 27, 2009, accessed March 11, 2023, https://homepage.univie.ac.at/thomas.schmidinger/php/lehre/orientalismus_okzidentalismus.pdf.

expectations and worldviews, contributed to the Balkan discourse, thus circulating in a transnational public sphere, and influencing it. Therefore, I have focused on the perspectives of Encounters instead: travelers who encountered the Orient and who were influenced by their experiences and contacts with the local population.

The first Encounter perspective that is researched and presented is one from the Austro-Hungary monarchy. Felix Philipp Kanitz, who was famous at the time of his work, whose books on Serbia were sold out, and whose ethnographical research was heard at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, has now been forgotten. I say "forgotten," because his experiences as an Encounter have received little attention in scholarly analyses.[16] However, his work has gained more attention in recent scholarly discussions.[17] Kanitz's sources form the main corpus in this book, as he was already traveling continuously in Southeast Europe from the late 1850s until the 1890s, i.e., during a major phase of the discovery and transformation of the European Orient, which later became the Balkans (Chaps. 3, 4, 5, and 6).

His British colleague, Mary Edith Durham, is still a familiar name, appearing as a figure in literature and journalism in recent years. Durham managed to travel to regions of the Balkans that Kanitz was not able to visit. Among her favorite destinations were present-day Kosovo, Albania, and North Macedonia. Durham began her travels in the Balkans just as Kanitz was ending his, and she made it her goal to intensively influence European policy in the Balkans even after she was no longer able to travel for health reasons (Chap. 7). Both "Balkan discoverers" are presented and treated in this book as knowledge producers as well as intermediaries because of their important interface and transfer function.

At the chronological end of my analysis and the book, I concentrate on transatlantic transfers, specifically the Serbian migrant community in the United States, by looking at Mihajlo Pupin and one of his organizations,

[16] The Institute for Balkan Studies at the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Belgrade has devoted the most attention to Felix Philipp Kanitz in recent years; in 2014, a tribute to the Balkan scholar was published on their homepage, on the 100th anniversary of his death, accessed March 11, 2023; see: https://www.balkaninstitut.com/srp/vesti/4/510/homage-a-felix-kanitz.html.

[17] International Conference June 10–11, 2021, University of Zurich/online via Zoom: Knowledge Systems and Ottoman-European Encounters. Spatial and Social Dynamics.

the Serbian National Defense League of America. He used organizations like this one to orchestrate the transfer of historical narratives from the Balkans into the US public sphere. Pupin and the Serbian immigrants are also considered Encounters because they travel from their hometown into the United States, where they build a network of knowledge that transfers Oriental and Balkan images from one continent to another (Chap. 8). The Encounters, as intermediaries, made a significant contribution to shaping and negotiating images and historical narratives of the Orient and the Balkans.[18] But when, historically, did the notion of a "European Orient" emerge to begin with?

Historical Definitions of the Concepts of Orient and Occident

The imagined division of Europe into West and East goes hand in hand with numerous historical events that were ultimately absorbed into the narrative of a progressive Western and backward Eastern Europe, beginning in the eighteenth century. A major rupture was seen in the partition of the *Imperium Romanum* in 395, which divided the Roman Empire into a Western and an Eastern half with both a Western and an Eastern Roman Emperor. The administrative line between the two halves of the Empire ran through the middle of the Balkans (the meridian of Shkodra/Skutari).[19] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, a prominent contemporary historian, Leopold Ranke, from Prussia, located the Balkan Peninsula in the Orient: "Since the Slavs did not succeed in overpowering the Oriental Empire, they could not accomplish a rejuvenation of the old tribe in the same way as the Germanic tribes did. They could not live their lives fully, nor assert their nature in the state."[20] In other words, ever since

[18] Vesna Goldsworthy, "Der Imperialismus der Imagination"; Pejić, "Herbert Vivian"; Jezernik, *Das wilde Europa*; Andrew Hammond, "Memoirs of conflict. British women travelers in the Balkans," *Studies in Travel Writing* 14 (Feb. 2010): 57–75; Barbara Jelavich, "The British Traveller in the Balkans. The Abuses of Ottoman Administration in the Slavonic Provinces," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 33, no. 81 (1955): 396–413.

[19] Holm Sundhaussen, "Europa balcanica. Der Balkan als historischer Raum Europas," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 25, no. 4 (1999): 641.

[20] Leopold Ranke, *The Serbian Revolution. Aus serbischen Papieren und Mittheilungen* (Hamburg: Perthes, 1829), 2. Original: "Da es den Slawen nicht gelang, das orientalische Kaiserthum zu überwältigen, so konnten sie eine Verjüngung des alten Stammes nicht in der

the partition of the *Imperium Romanum*, the "Slavs" were considered part of the Orient. Ranke's monograph, published in Hamburg in 1829,[21] may be the first historiographical account of the recent history of Serbia. In any case, it was the first that was recognized in Western scientific circles, solidifying the notion that the Balkans have been located in the Orient since the rise of the Occident. Consequently, they were perceived as the "European Orient."

The next major change was the schism of 1054, which divided Christianity into the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches.[22] Medieval Serbia crystallized from Raška around 1170 under the Nemanjid dynasty, orienting itself toward the Byzantine Orthodox Church.[23] The ongoing development of differences between the Byzantine and the Western Roman Church became visible, including the Byzantine use of older languages, like Ancient Greek and Church Slavonic, as well as following the Julian calendar. The envisaged unification of the Western and Eastern Churches, which was pursued for centuries, never occurred (Oriental Schism). The Western Church, with Rome as its center, insisted on the Pope as the successor of Jesus Christ and head of both Christian churches, placed above the Emperor. In contrast, the Eastern Church saw itself represented by the leadership of the five Patriarchs, who sat in Constantinople under the Eastern Roman Emperor.[24]

Above all, the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire in 1453 posed an entirely new challenge for both the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, and is considered a significant departure in the history of Europe. Under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, large areas of Europe were conquered. Furthermore, with the advancement of Ottoman troops into Western Europe, the idea of a threatening East mutated into a comprehensive and centuries-long narrative that further consolidated the

Weise vollbringen, wie ihrerseits die Germanen. Sie konnten sich nicht völlig ausleben, noch ihre Natur im Staate geltend machen."

[21] It was not until 1843 that David Urquhart's English-language work *A fragment of the history of Servia* on "modern Servia" followed; see: Pejić, "Herbert Vivian," 257–258.

[22] Axel Bayer, *Spaltung der Christenheit. Das sogenannte Morgenländische Schisma von 1054* (Köln-Weimar-Wien: Böhlau, 2004), 203.

[23] Holm Sundhaussen, *Geschichte Serbiens. 19.-21. Jahrhundert* (Wien-Köln-Weimar: Böhlau, 2007), 28.

[24] Reinhard Pohanka, D*as Byzantinische Reich. Die Geschichte einer der größten Zivilisationen der Welt (324–1453)* (Wiesbaden: Marixverlag, 2013), 103–106.

division of Occident and Orient.[25] This not only created a spatial-geographical division between East and West, but also described the two halves as a pair of opposites with contrasting attributes and stereotypes. Due to Ottoman sovereignty in Southeast Europe, Leopold Ranke was not the only one who considered the Balkans to be part of the Orient, at least since the late Middle Ages.

The fall of the Byzantine imperial capital in 1453 was the climax of the upheaval in Europe, but the most devastating turning point in the history of Serbia happened in 1389. On June 28 (June 15 according to the Julian calendar), the battle on the *Kosovo polje* (Field of Blackbirds) was lost to the Ottoman army—this event is the foundation for the creation of the Serbian national myth at the beginning of the nineteenth century, which has been constantly updated to the present day. The Serbian Prince Lazar, who ruled over central Serbia and parts of Kosovo, was killed in this battle. He was canonized and declared a follower of Jesus Christ in texts written shortly after the battle. Later, the "Kosovo myth" developed further. It was said that Lazar had sacrificed himself, renouncing the earthly kingdom. The Serbian people saw themselves as a heavenly people, with Kosovo depicted as the promised land, finding its sacred place in the master narrative. The Kosovo myth preserved a kind of Western or non-Ottoman heritage with the aid of the Serbian-Christian culture and tradition. However, Holm Sundhaussen reconstructed the uncertain outcome of the 1389 battle. Besides June 28, 1389, he sees the dissolution of the medieval Serbian Empire under Stefan Uroš V in 1371 as another important date. The feudal lords, such as Lazar Hrebeljanović and Vuk Branković, divided the country among themselves. After the Kosovo battle, their lands became vassal principalities, and after the Second Battle on Kosovo polje in 1448 they were placed under Ottoman suzerainty. In 1459, the northern part of Serbia was annexed by the Ottoman Empire. The "White Fortress" in Belgrade (in Serbian, *Beograd; "beo"* means white and "*grad*" means city), which was under Hungarian rule at the time, was eventually conquered in 1521. Nevertheless, the 15th or 28th of June, respectively, was mythically transfigured as *Vidovdan*, and the legendary battle was preserved in Serbian cultural memory as the beginning of

[25] Marlene Kurz, "Istanbul," in *Europäische Erinnerungsorte 2. Das Haus Europa*, Pim den Boer, Heinz Duchhardt, Georg Kreis, and Wolfgang Schmale, eds. (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2012), 299–305.

Ottoman "foreign rule." In the nineteenth century, the founding narrative of the Ottoman army's victory over Christianity was revived by Serbian elites as an argument connecting Southeast Europe to the rest of Europe.[26]

As previously stated, the Kosovo myth circulated in the nineteenth century, not only in Southeast Europe, but also in Western historiography from 1829 onwards.[27] It served as an epoch-describing division according to the Western model of historiography and also explained the diverging historical courses of Southeast Europe and Western Europe.[28] There is no question that the beginning of Ottoman rule represented a turning point both in Serbian history and in Serbian–Western European relations. It should be noted that the historiographical, handed-down notion of a rigid demarcation between the Occident and the Orient triggered the memory of the Battle of Kosovo centuries later. Belgrade-born literary scholar Zoran Konstantinović, who influenced his discipline as a professor both in Austria and in his home country, wrote in 1960: "In the last quarter of the

[26] Sundhaussen, *Geschichte Serbiens*, 43–44; Spasić explains that the Second Kosovo Battle (1448) is not, or rarely, mentioned within Serbian scholarly discourse on the Kosovo myth, as the mythical narrative is built on the figures of the First Battle; see: Ivana Spasić, "The Trauma of Kosovo in Serbian National Narratives," in *Narrating Trauma. On the Impact of Collective Suffering*, Ron Eyerman et al., eds. (London: Routledge, 2011), 84. Spasić's bibliography lists almost exclusively English-language articles on the Kosovo myth, mostly published in the US space. Also, Milica Cimeša's Master's thesis primarily drew on Holm Sundhaussen's arguments on the Kosovo myth; see: Milica Cimeša, *Serbia's Long Memory. The Significance of the Middle Ages in the Collective Memory of the Serbian People* (Vienna: Unpublished Master's thesis, 2013). The second battle is mentioned by nineteenth-century travelers such as Felix Philipp Kanitz and Georg Hahn (*Reise von Belgrad nach Salonik*, 133), but the number of references declines over time. The historian Hans Georg Majer contradicted the narrative of the brutal incorporation of the Balkans into the Ottoman Empire. Religious freedom prevailed, he said, and the non-Muslim religious leaders had great influence on the shaping of the community, including its jurisdiction. Officially, for example, no new churches were allowed to be built, but it happened nevertheless; see: Hans Georg Majer, "Südosteuropa im Osmanischen Reich. Einige Grundgegebenheiten," in: Reinhard Lauer et al., *Osmanen und Islam in Südosteuropa* (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), 22.

[27] Ranke, *The Serbian Revolution*.

[28] In this book, I use the terms the "West" (including Northern America) and "Western Europe" to describe these entities as dominating the global hierarchy, but readers should be aware of their constructed character and the differences within them. I am also aware of the constructed nature of their commonality, and hence want to move away from this lumping together and present the differences within the West or Western Europe by focusing on contra-hegemonial narratives and divergent perspectives.

fourteenth century, the Balkans struggled terribly, forcing them out of the European family of nations and subjecting them to Turkish foreign rule."[29]

The metaphor of the "European family of nations," whose members come from different "peoples" but are all Christian, pushes the East-West narrative further: Europe as a whole was not shaken by the Ottoman conquest; from the seventeenth century onwards, the Enlightenment heralded the rise of the West as a world power, as US professor Charles Kupchan argues.[30] Only a part of Europe, which reappeared in the Western mental map as a largely unknown European Orient, was severed.

The idea of an Oriental, exotic, fascinating, but also dangerous and backward Eastern Europe or East is contrasted with European narratives of progress, civilization, and peaceful union. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Europe was imagined not only as a continent but also as a political power. After the Congress of Vienna in 1814/1815, the metaphor of the "European concert" dominated, which included the idea of European unity. After the Napoleonic Wars, the primary goal of the European Great Powers was to secure peace through a balance of power. The war with France contributed significantly to the development of a British nation and identity, which had been built up since the beginning of the eighteenth century.[31]

Following the European "saddle period" at the end of the eighteenth century, which encompassed a reinterpretation of political, cultural, and social life in the emerging nation-states in Europe, the idea of political, economic, social, and cultural European integration gained more and more momentum. Individual national character was of course dominant within the countries; however, the nation-states had no choice but to cooperate, and were forced to develop a system of European integration,

[29] Zoran Konstantinović, *Deutsche Reisebeschreibungen über Serbien und Montenegro* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1960), 15. Original: "Im letzten Viertel des 14. Jh.s beginnt auf dem Balkan jener fürchterliche Kampf, welcher dann das serbische Volk für Jahrhunderte aus der europäischen Völkerfamilie herausdrängen und unter türkische Fremdherrschaft bringen wird."

[30] Charles A. Kupchan, *No One's World. The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), Chapter 2: The Rise of the West.

[31] John Storey, "The 'Roots' and 'Routes' of British Identity," in: *Mapping Identity and Identification Processes. Approaches from Cultural Studies*, Eduardo de Gregorio-Godeo and Ángel Mateos-Aparicio Martin-Albo, eds. (Bern et al.: Peter Lang, 2013), 276.

as they were dependent on each other's foreign politics.[32] It must be emphasized that not all countries or monarchies in this system were seen as equal partners. Only a few Great Powers played an active part in European politics and economy and were allowed to participate during the Congress of Vienna.

The Great Powers—Britain, Prussia, Russia, France, and Austria—established a system of international law, which also included the concept of solidarity among the Great Powers.[33] Thus, European affairs were regulated through joint diplomacy. The Austrian foreign minister and later chancellor, Klemens Wenzel von Metternich, was considered the leading figure on the international stage of the Congress of Vienna as well as in the plans to conquer the Balkan countries at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In his role as ambassador and foreign minister, he aimed to integrate Serbia and Montenegro into the Habsburg monarchy by creating the notion of a "cultural region" along the Empire's southwest border. As a result of the uprisings in the Balkans against the Ottoman Empire, he deemed his mission a failure in 1810. Later on, he never tired of emphasizing that the rebellious (former cultural) regions would soon become a European problem.[34]

While Britain, France, and Russia actively sided with the rebels during the Balkan uprisings, Austria and Prussia—due to the balance of power created in 1815—considered an intervention to be dangerous for internal European stability. They tried to uphold a neutral position toward the Balkans in order to avoid weakening the Ottoman Empire. As long as the Ottoman Empire was in control of the Balkans, they believed, Russia had no claim, and the borders would be stable. However, this strategy turned out to be disadvantageous for the Habsburgs; it turned them into an unimportant political player on this issue in the long term. Combined

[32] Guido Thiemeyer, *Europäische Integration. Motive, Prozesse, Strukturen* (Köln-Weimar-Wien: Böhlau, 2010), 29.

[33] The Union had a dynamic character; Italy played a major role in the confederation after 1870, while the Habsburg monarchy had lost relevance by the second half of the nineteenth century; see: Thiemeyer, *Europäische Integration*, 30–38.

[34] Ulrike Tischler, Die habsburgische Politik gegenüber den Serben und Montenegrinern 1791–1822. Förderung oder Vereinnahmung? (München: Oldenbourg, 2000), 375–376.

with additional internal problems, the Habsburg monarchy lost their equal status with England and France, the dominant countries in Europe.[35]

There are two master narratives that shaped the notion of Europe during the nineteenth century[36]: first, during the Congress of Vienna, the European Great Powers endeavored to make the balance of Europe their highest negotiation goal, which established the metaphor of the "European concert," as has already been mentioned. Although, as French historian Thierry Lentz showed, each diplomat primarily and foremost wanted to assert the interests of their own country, the metaphor propagated the idea of the Union of Europe as a continental protector and peacekeeper.[37] The Ottoman Empire was excluded from the "concert," which led to a political discourse around the "inclusion in and exclusion from an exclusive [European] community of values that now operated with the word civilization," argues Haider-Wilson.[38] At the same time, this dividing line between Orient and Occident reinforced the image of Europe as a Christian-dominated "European family," no matter if it were Catholic, or Protestant, or Orthodox.[39] Both historical narratives are reflected in the first article of the "Holy Alliance," which was signed on September 26, 1815, by Russia, Austria, and Prussia as an expression of symbolic power. Based on "Christian values," the monarchs of the three Great Powers confirmed the continuation of their brotherhood. They were in any case related through the prevailing marriage politics. All three styled themselves as "fathers" of their Empires and the Armies.[40]

Both historical narratives are part of the European worldview of European integration, which is completed by the narrative of European progressive thinking and the associated sense of cultural superiority. The

[35] Haider-Wilson and Graf, "Begegnungen und Wahrnehmungen aus fünf Jahrhunderten," 28.

[36] Thiemeyer, *Europäische Integration*, 36.

[37] Thierry Lentz, *1815. Der Wiener Kongress und die Neugründung Europas* (Munich: Siedler, 2014 [Paris 2013]).

[38] Barbara Haider-Wilson, "Tanzimat Revisited. On the Influence of the Relationship between Orient and Occident on the International Legal Status of the Ottoman Empire in the Nineteenth century," in *Orient & Okzident. Begegnungen und Wahrnehmungen aus fünf Jahrhunderten*, Barbara Haider-Wilson and Maximilian Graf, eds. (Wien: Neue Welt Verlag, 2017), 410–411.

[39] See also the quote about the "europäische Völkerfamilie" by Konstantinović, *Deutsche Reisebeschreibungen über Serbien und Montenegro*, 29.

[40] Thiemeyer, *Europäische Integration*, 36.

fear of future North American dominance, which can be traced back to the economic influence from overseas since the 1870s, served as a driving force for a common economic and political European stance. The fear of a loss of European significance was counteracted by strengthening the awareness of Europe's uniqueness—a thought that found much resonance.[41] Both the idea of superiority at a cultural level, which the Great Powers alleged on the basis of their shared Christian history, and the idea of representing the most civilized and advanced region in the world, breathed life into the historical narrative of "Western Europe" and the Occidental myth.

Born into and raised in this environment, travel writer and illustrator Felix Philipp Kanitz observed the land and people of Serbia. Kanitz sometimes even made fun of habits in the European Orient that were different from his own. Once, he wrote in a letter to a journalist colleague, "When you visit someone in the Orient on the most burning matter, custom requires that you first talk about all conceivable things and only at the very end touch upon the object that is close to us.—But we do not live in the 'morning' land …."[42]

Encounters and "Publicity"

Felix Philipp Kanitz, who always claimed to research objectively, did not question the prevailing worldview. He always interpreted his research results in relation to the imagined Western Europe.[43] Nevertheless, it can

[41] Thiemeyer, Europäische Integration, 37; Wolfgang Schmale, *Geschichte Europas* (Wien: Böhlau, 2000), 91–92.

[42] Kanitz, Letter to Valdek-Wagner (Feb. 24, 1868), Autogr. 278/41–3 Han, correspondences, Briefnachlaß Rudolf Valdek-Wagner, Sammlung von Handschriften und alten Drucken, Austrian National Library. Original: "Wenn man im Orient jemanden in der brennendsten Angelegenheit besucht, verlangt es die Sitte, daß man zuerst von allen denkbaren Dingen spricht und ganz zuletzt erst rein zufällig das Objekt berührt, daß uns naheliegt.—Wir leben aber nicht im 'Morgen'-Lande … ."

[43] Dragana R. Mašović illustrates in her contribution that the travelers to Southeast Europe in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries confirmed the historical narratives of the exotic and semi-civilized Balkans, which led to everything Western becoming the standard. "The travelling 'I' or 'we' is an accomplished fact. It is constructed as a superior (home) culture and a norm … In a word, where the West is the norm, the East is a deviation from it"; see: Dragana R. Mašović, "Earliest Travel Writings about Southeast Serbia and Their Characteristics," in *The Balkans in Travel Writing*, ed., Marija Krivokapić (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 25.

be observed that Felix Philipp Kanitz as well as Mary Edith Durham created narratives and images of the Balkans that tell neither of backwardness nor of the Balkans' dependence on Europe or the West. As Encounters, both of the long-time travelers and researchers immerse themselves in a region that is undefined for them, and thus find themselves in an intermediate position and an intermediate sphere. The same is true for the Serbian immigrants in the United States. They all appropriate a space through experiences and exchange that they then convey—partly consciously and intentionally, partly unconsciously and unintentionally. They all use their position and perspective as an Encounter to deliver messages from one constructed region to another and vice versa.

By *encounter* I mean not only *people* ("Encounters") who explore unknown or foreign cultures, but also *situations* ("encounters") in which knowledge transfers take place. Therefore, besides the biography of the selected Encounters and institutional affiliations (people), their individual and collective experiences and transfer processes (situations) are also the subject of the investigation. In addition, Encounters can involve a group that has similar experiences in different cultures and that communicate these in the public space. Encounters therefore have not only a mediation function, but also a selection function regarding the content they transfer to the public. In this sense, they fulfill similar purposes to journalists, who as "gatekeepers" for their media platforms select the news from a flood of possibilities.[44] Encounters shape the perception of the foreign with which they come into contact, by placing their knowledge in the public sphere.

It was not easy for Encounters to deliver a comprehensive and compatible image of the European Orient or the Balkans to the public sphere, as historian Larry Wolff notes: "The Slavic languages, to say nothing of Albanian, … required very particular training and expertise for anyone born outside those particular language communities, and the voices of Eastern Europe, in order to make themselves heard, had to be comprehensible and therefore translatable."[45] Encounters also participated in Orientalization and Balkanization processes through their translation

[44] Rudolf Stöber, "Kommentar zur Miszelle von Holger Böning," *Jahrbuch für Kommunikationsgeschichte* 20 (2018): 180.

[45] Larry Wolff, "The Western Representation of Eastern Europe on the Eve of World War I. Mediated Encounters and Intellectual Expertise in Dalmatia, Albania, and Macedonia," *The Journal of Modern History* 86, no. 2 (2014): 407.