

# New Europe College Regional Program Yearbook 2001-2002



---

TAMARA CĂRĂUŞ  
KRASSIMIRA KRASTANOVA  
ANETA MIHAYLOVA  
DOBRINKA PARUSHEVA  
SRĐAN ŠLJUKIĆ  
SVETLANA STAMENOVA  
NIKOLAI VUKOV  
DENIZ EYLEM YÖRÜK

---

Editor: Irina Vainovski-Mihai

Copyright © 2003 – New Europe College

ISBN 973 –85697 – 4 – 5

NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Str. Plantelor 21

70309 Bucharest

Romania

Tel. (+40-21) 327.00.35, Fax (+40-21) 327.07.74

E-mail: nec@nec.ro



## **DOBRINKA PARUSHEVA**

Born in 1960, in Dimitrovgrad, Bulgaria

Ph.D., Institute of Balkan Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1990  
Dissertation: *Parliamentary Tactic of the Balkan Social Democracy until 1912*  
Research Fellow, Modern Balkan History, Institute of Balkan Studies, Sofia

DAAD Fellowship, Osteuropa-Institut of the Free University, Berlin, 1994  
Konstantin Irecek Fellowship, Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa-Institut,  
Vienna, 1994

Austrian Ministry of Science Fellowship at Österreichisches Ost- und  
Südosteuropa-Institut, Vienna, 1996

Andrew Mellon Fellowship, Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna, 1999

Andrew Mellon Fellowship, Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study,  
Wassenaar, 2000-2001

Participation in international workshops, conferences, symposia and  
congresses in Germany, France, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Romania and  
Bulgaria

Numerous papers and articles on comparative Balkan history, nineteenth and early twentieth century (social democracy, political elites and political culture, Jews in the Balkans, history of women)

# *ORIENT-EXPRES*, OR ABOUT EUROPEAN INFLUENCES ON EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY BALKANS

## **Some Preliminary Remarks**

*Orient-Express* was not the first agent of Europe in the Balkans.<sup>1</sup> I use it here only as a symbol of European penetration. The destination of this train – famous not only from Agatha Christie’s novel – depends, in fact, on one’s point of view. The train was called *Orient-Express* because its “godfathers” thought of it as a connection to the Orient, to the exotic, picturesque and multinational. From the Balkan point of view, however, it was, in a sense, an ‘Occident-Express’, for its orientation was North-West: the railway station Paris-East was the final point of the two-days trip, while at the same time the express was one of the direct providers of everything European to the Balkans.

If one looks for the very beginning of European influences in the Balkans (or vice versa), one has to go back to the times when people as well as ideas “traveled” on foot. I’m interested mainly in the nineteenth century, however, that is, the time when the newly established Balkan states as well as the lands still under Ottoman rule struggled with modernization. I used “struggled” to emphasize the difficulties all Balkan societies met on their path to modernity in economic, political, and social sphere, for the long absence of own state strengthened the validity of the unwritten laws of patriarchy. Fully aware of the possible contests the term ‘modernization’ could provoke, I use it not as a polite synonym of an undeveloped society but to denote the processes that took place during the transition from traditional to modern industrial society. Furthermore, I quite agree with Andrew Janos that, when addressing the problem of modernization, one has to deal not with a single process, but with both

the rise of a successful material civilization in the Occident and the gradual diffusion of the innovations from the core area to the peripheries and their responses to this ongoing process.<sup>2</sup> In other words, for non-Western European countries the modernization process meant the dissemination of the Western model. If in the West intellectual responses to the challenges of modernity were to be observed, in the East (and in the Balkans in our particular case) responses to the challenge of westernization have arisen.<sup>3</sup> It is in this framework of concepts of modernity and modernization (Westernization, Europeanization) that I would like to present my speculations on the European influences on the everyday life in the nineteenth century Balkans. No doubt, the following text is necessarily selective in the kinds of everyday life it examines.

### **Europe and the Balkans, or Perception and Self-Perception**

Europe has always been considered as a source of modernization. What people think of, however, when referring to "Europe"? History of Europe still concentrates only on the so-called West, while other parts are measured, at best, as something out of or rather beyond Europe.<sup>4</sup> No doubt, peoples at the periphery were concerned about their place in relation to the core.

Europe along the centuries had several cores. Until modern times it was the East and the South-East in particular (or the Balkans) that provided leadership. Around the year 1000, Byzantium boasted a civilization richer and more refined than Western Europe. In the fifteenth century, this traditional leadership began to be reversed, the principle axis of history shifting towards the West and then to the North-West. During the following centuries, the East was to a considerable degree isolated, even though the West, too, was divided and torn. After the religious wars of the seventeenth century, the rise of science and the Enlightenment brought a new secularism to Europe which made politico-religious structure of the Ottoman Empire seem old-fashioned. In the writings of travelers and philosophers, a new polarization emerges: between civilized West and barbarous East, between freedom-loving Europe and despotic Orient.

In the case of the Balkans, the isolation cannot be attributed exclusively to the Ottoman conquest, even though I cannot agree with the proposal by L. Stavrianos of anti-Westernism of the Balkan Orthodoxy as an explanation.<sup>5</sup> In fact, it is the term I do not agree on: it is irrelevant to

speak about “anti-Westernism” before the time when Western Europe started considering itself something different and the ‘others’ gradually adopted this notion. Nevertheless, the gap between the one and the other Europe (or one of the other Europes), i.e., the Western and the Balkan Europe, had its roots, indeed,

in the protracted conflict between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, in the barbarities of the Fourth Crusade, and in the merciless stranglehold of the Italian merchants on Byzantium’s economy.<sup>6</sup>

The Balkans occupied an intermediate zone between Europe and Asia – in Europe but not of it, as Mark Mazower has put it.<sup>7</sup>

What did Balkan people perceive as “Europe”? “Our Europe” was for prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, by the end of the seventeenth century, the Christian Europe,<sup>8</sup> while for the Romanian intellectuals of 1848 it was the Western part of the continent.<sup>9</sup> The same shift from the East to the West as a reference point was observed in all Balkan lands belonging to the Ottoman Empire. It should be noted that the West appeared to the Balkan peoples as something strange and foreign (they normally talked of “going to Europe”). In the eyes of most Balkan intellectuals, this foreign Europe was advanced, superior, and worthy of emulation, a civilizing force, which was stirring the passive Orient.

The separation from the East disturbed the mental schemes and contributed to the formation of countries’ national consciousness. Contacts with the Westerners and with the West in general (no matter where it happened) woke up the need for identity and helped disentangle Balkan societies from the post-Byzantine universalism (i.e., Orthodoxy and ancient Greek culture as anchors) and to come closer to a new paradigm: Western Europe. The re-orientation to the West had no alternative, for Balkan peoples were looking for their identity in a time when national diversity rather than “transnationalism” of religion mattered.<sup>10</sup> A small literate elite began to elaborate a new language of nations and ethnicities. The Greek historian Paschalis Kitromilides has described their goal as aiming to integrate “the forgotten nations of the European periphery into the common historical destiny of the Continent”.<sup>11</sup> Slowly the old assumption that Greek – like Latin in the West – was the route to learning was being challenged as ideas of romantic nationalism (emphasizing the cultural value of peasant languages) spread into the Balkans. In the early nineteenth century, Bulgarian, Serbian, and Romanian intellectuals, often

educated in Greek schools, now began to define themselves in terms of cultural communities for the first time, thus paving the way for modern nationalism and modern nation-states.<sup>12</sup> For all Balkan people there is a general consensus of opinion that it was the epoch of Enlightenment that sowed the seeds of a national revival, thanks also to the subsequent “ground work” done by such “an outstanding peasant as Napoleon Bonaparte”, so Francesco Guida.<sup>13</sup> There exist objections to this thesis but we are still left with the significant irony that an intrinsically cosmopolitan culture like that of the Enlightenment produced the seeds of national renaissance.

Of course, the perception of Europe derived from one people to another and from one person to another but the mid-nineteenth century generation in the Balkans showed incontestable interest in all spheres of life regarding all Western European countries. Once launched on the road of Westernization (Europeanization) the elite in the Danubian Principalities threw itself into the arms of France. At the end of the nineteenth century, Pompiliu Eliade even argued that Romania owed its whole modern civilization to France.<sup>14</sup> Although his opinion provides evidence of contemporary obsession with France, the French myth did play an important modeling role in the case of Romanians. It was only the German model, which managed to occupy a place close to that of the French one. Although the option of minority, it mattered because that was an influential minority – such as leaders of the *Junimea* society like Titu Maiorescu and P. P. Carp.<sup>15</sup>

As to the other Balkan countries, while France (and Belgium) represented the best known and most “active” model for them too, other important western European states such as Britain, Germany, Italy, etc., also had a function, or at least, an image to which more attention was paid, for different reasons. Thus, the tendency to restore the broken links between the Balkan people with the European West in order to rediscover themselves and their cultural and national identity was experienced in a differing manner in different societies. Sometimes it was a highly critical one because there existed some uneasiness as to how to root all those imported social phenomena or cultural attitudes into the each national reality. In other words, Western culture had to be used *cum grano salis*, Europe’s image must not turn out to be a deceptive dream but blend with Balkan realities.<sup>16</sup>

One of the main features of the European penetration in the Balkans as well as in other parts of the globe was its automatic self-perpetuation:

the more West intruded, the more it engendered new conditions and new social groups that demanded still further Westernization (Europeanization).<sup>17</sup> The nineteenth century witnessed the high point of the Europe's impact; this was the time when its dynamism and expansionism was omnipotent and unchallenged. Another feature of the European penetration to the Balkans during the same time was the direct way it came. There was no need of the previously used as channels for communication and interaction regions of Slovenia, Croatia and the Italian-held Greek islands as well as Constantinople and Russia anymore. It were the developments mainly in commerce that created slowly but irreversibly a new Balkan World that was responsive to direct Western European influences. The initiative came already from the rising 'class' of merchants, artisans, etc. in the Ottoman Empire – they needed not only more education but also a new type of education. That is why they bestowed books to their native towns, financed the education of young fellow countrymen in foreign universities and made possible the publication of books and newspapers in their native languages as well as translations of works of western European writers, philosophers, and scientists like Voltaire, Locke, Rousseau, Descartes, Leibnitz, etc.

The inter-penetration of Europe and Asia, West and East – because it's impossible to think about cultural influences as only one-way directed ones – was obvious for people who were visiting the Balkans during the nineteenth century. Travelers comment on signs of 'European' life such as houses with glass windows, cabarets, or hotels with billiard rooms, railways, etc. But under this modernizing façade, there was the same oriental (traditional) substance, deeply embedded into the Balkan societies.

Exactly this two-folded reality – Europeanization (modernization) vs. backwardness – is so interesting to be observed and analyzed. Accommodation of the European influences to the Balkan style of life and Balkan way of thinking is what challenged me to step into the present topic. Europeanization can be represented either as a social process (which can be measured) or as a (self)perception (which has to do with identity constructions and representations). I would like to take the second way, no matter how 'slippery' it may be.

## Everyday Life, Rich as It Is, and the Limitation of the Subject

The conception of 'everydayness' was formulated and lived within a discourse on modernity that developed as a commentary on the formation of a modern, capitalist society in Europe in the nineteenth century. A direct and explicit theorization of everyday life came after the Second World War, with Henri Lefebvre's formulation of critique, Michel DeCerteau's reworking of it as a space, and German labor historians (like Alf Luedtke) who represent the effort to dissolve the separation between bourgeois 'everydayness' and the domain of the laborer.<sup>18</sup> During the last decade, however, we've witnessed the renewed interest in the study of the everyday in history and social studies. It performs different functions in different cultural contexts; it can go against the grain of heroic national self-definitions; it can help to recover forgotten histories of modernity (such as histories of women's work, of private life) or contribute to the forgetting of the major catastrophes of the twentieth century (such as the Holocaust – as the *Alltagsgeschichte* of Nazi time have demonstrated).

I am fully aware of the "all-embracity" of the term *everyday life*. It embraces, in fact, almost everything: all what we do from morning until night, from Monday to Sunday (so called "twenty-four seven"), and from the beginning to the end of one's life. It's all about the ordinary and trivial, which is very difficult to map and to frame, whether by art, by theory, or by history.<sup>19</sup> The need to limit the subject imposes immediately. It is not quite easy to decide what to take into account and what to leave out. Nevertheless, there are some limitations that present themselves:

First of them concerns the narrow database as far as the private life is concerned. During the nineteenth century in Western Europe, one could observe imaginary concentric circles, which in reality overlapped, between public space on the one hand, and private, personal, intimate space on the other. The "place of our pleasures and drudgeries, of our conflicts and dreams" – as the authors of *Histoire de la vie privée* call private life – continued to be a rather closed space in the Balkans. This reticence makes it even harder for the historian, since the predominant majority of population (even the urban one) had been illiterate or not sufficiently literate in order to leave some written evidence of their everyday life behind the walls of their homes. We can find data about the changes that have occurred in the private space, too, but our

perception of this part of the everyday life in the Balkans remains very limited. Despite of the variety of the sources: memoirs, diaries, contemporary press, photographs, etc., in most cases they usually give us only small pieces of information and to fit them into the overall picture is not easy.

It becomes considerably easier to “decipher” the everyday life of the people when they enter the public space. The reason is that there are much more data available concerning the changes there because of the emergence (in the nineteenth century) of the newspapers and the daily newspapers in particular in the Balkans. Due to the existence of the press, in addition to the presence of published and unpublished diaries, memoirs, etc. one can read the town and its life as a text and find signs of Modernity. The periodicals were crucial agents in the definition of the cultural, social, and ethical ideas of the time. It is hardly surprising that public life in the South-East European corner was dominated by men. Nevertheless, during the nineteenth century the observer faced a big change: women entered the public arena and became visible. This presents an additional ‘hurdle’: the researcher has to consider everyday life as a gendered one as well.

A further problem ensues from the fact that everyday life can hardly be considered as a unitary thing even if we only think about its urban hypostases. There is a huge difference, for instance, between the life of the working class and the life of the bourgeoisie or intelligentsia, who were thought to be followers of modern (European) trends. The differences – as to social status, ethnicity, age, gender, etc. – are so numerous that one can question whether there is such a thing as everyday life. In my opinion, however, when thinking about all this in the light of the invasion of Modernity one can disregard this plurality of everyday lives. Because the penetration and dissemination of “European” in the Balkans was quite limited during the period under research. As Harry Harootunian states,

In modernity, during the epoch of industrialization and the establishment of mass society, the places of history are the cities, ... and it is in the cities that the everyday writes its own history.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, at the beginning the news coming from West affected above all the towns along the Danube and the Baron Hirsch’s railway as well as the capitals of the already present or future Balkan states. Once faced with the Modern in the Balkan capitals and bigger towns, it later penetrated

step by step in the other towns, too, while the countryside remained for a long time impervious to European influences. It is as though the emergence of the idea of modernity in the nineteenth-century Europe, with its sharp sense of time moving ahead fast, encouraged a view of the Balkans as a place where "time has stood still". As we know, Orthodox Christians regarded Catholic Europe's move to the Gregorian calendar at that time as an unacceptable innovation. That is why the Balkans were sleeping in the night of 17/18 December 1899 while the other Europe celebrated the coming of the year 1900, say, at "Maxim" in Paris.

As mentioned above, I would like to think of Europeanisation as a changing (self)perception. However difficult to follow developments from such a point of view, getting a picture (even if only an overall one) is possible. The category of everydayness might serve as a historical optic to widen our understanding of the process of modernity being experienced in the Balkans during the nineteenth century. To make it more bearable, I shall concentrate on the social spaces (or places), which allow closer communication and social interaction, presenting thus opportunities for the people to perform presentations of roles necessary for the functioning of the social system. For after having felt deprived of "being part of Europe" for centuries now, in the nineteenth century, Balkan people wanted not only to know more about Europe as well as feel closer to it but also to show their (mental or actual) belonging to the Western world. In other word, it all concerns the way contemporaries organized their lived experience at a certain historical moment and how they named it. I find it useful to present my discussion in two very much related (and from time to time overlapping) but still separate "files", namely stage and actors.

### **Stage: New Urban Developments and Appearance of Public Sphere<sup>21</sup>**

On 17 July 1856, *Journal de Constantinople* reported about the inauguration of Sultan Abdulmecid Han's new palace at Dolmabahce with a state dinner prepared and served in the French manner.<sup>22</sup> The transfer of the royal residence from Topkapi Sarayi across the Bosphorus to the European section of Istanbul and its manner of celebration in particular were symbolic. After the Anglo-Turkish commercial treaty of 1838 and the Tanzimat charter of 1839, which provided the necessary institutions

to foster the Western economic control made possible by the treaty, the European impact on the Ottoman Empire was increasing slowly but irreversibly. Until that point, the Europeanization was confined to the technological, scientific, and educational fields and was almost exclusively oriented toward the improvement of the military forces. Afterwards, the Western intellectual system was imported as well, for farsighted Turks came to realize the necessity for change if their empire was to survive. This resulted in more radical social changes. Foreign observers reported about a perceptive change in the life style of Constantinople, some of them complaining: they found the capital “too europeanized” and, hence, lost some of its exotic charm.<sup>23</sup>

The ‘Ottoman model’<sup>24</sup> and that of Constantinople in particular has dominated the urban life in the Empire for centuries. From the first half of the nineteenth century, however, this model endured some significant developments, for it had to confront another cultural model – the Occidental one. These new developments were not phenomena limited only to the Ottoman Empire; in all Europe, the second half of the nineteenth century was the age of the flourishing capitals. The modernization efforts recast the traditional urban policies based on Islamic law, replaced the urban institutions with new ones adopted (or rather “domesticated”) from European precedents, and introduced another set of building types, this time conforming to the requirements of a modern, Westernized lifestyle.

There had previously been some Western signs in the Ottoman everyday life. All Western European diplomats who brought their clothes, hats, and habits to the Orient influenced the circles close to the Porte. For instance, Ubcini reported that in June 1854, after a military ceremony, the ‘father’ of Tanzimat reforms Abdulmecid (mentioned above) had complimented Madame de Saint-Arnaud and other ladies in French.<sup>25</sup> Actually, it was the previous sultan who had already introduced some European habits into his own everyday routine. From 1829 on (the year of the ‘fez’ reform), Mahmud started wearing shoes and trousers; moreover, in his palace tables and chairs replaced (even though only partially) the divans and the pillows and, in addition, he put his portrait on the wall.<sup>26</sup> Some of the Ottoman high officials went further in acceptance of the Occidental model and their ‘network’ dreamed about Paris and its fashionable life. One can say that in the mid-nineteenth century in Constantinople there already existed social strata ready to adjust itself to Western habits and fashion, if not to Western cultural model yet.

During the nineteenth century, it was not difficult to spot the confrontation of the two models in the Balkan towns. Performances were rather diverse: violent or peaceful, introduced by a law, but all in all they were irresistible like technical progress and commerce were, for they simply embodied the inevitable development and expansion of the European capitalist economy. This confrontation followed different rhythms as well, depending on political climate, geographical position, and historical legacy of each case.

I have already noted that the Western penetration started from some towns along the Danube and railway roads as well as from capital cities. My intention now is to present some examples from Bucharest, Belgrade and Sofia. The development of Bucharest, the capital of Wallachia and later (from 1859 on) of Romania, took different ways due to the unique situation of the two Danubian Principalities within the Ottoman Empire. Belgrade had been for centuries an administrative (and military) centre of the Ottoman Empire and it represents a good example of transformation from a multi-ethnic "Empire" city into a national one in the course of two or three decades. Sofia shows some similarities with Athens: they both were very small places before having been chosen (for different reasons) as capital cities of Bulgaria and Greece.

Among the capital cities of the modern Balkan states, it was Bucharest that made the earliest start to becoming more European. It happened in the first half of the nineteenth century. Already in 1814, the question about gasification of the street lighting was raised; good intentions turned to reality, at least regarding the central part of the city, by 1856. Bucharest was the most important urban center in the South-East of Europe (after Constantinople) from the point of view of demography, too: in 1831, the population of the town was about 60000 people.<sup>27</sup> While in 1829 a foreign traveler noted skeptically: "This is by no means an European city.", 30 years later, in 1859 (a few days after the double election of Prince Cuza), a German witness, Heinrich Winterhalder, wrote: "When you see Mogoșoaia street in the area close to the theatre you feel as if you were in one of the famous European capitals."<sup>28</sup> Further development of Bucharest was observed during the third quarter of the nineteenth century, after becoming a capital of Romania. It is well known that during the nineteenth century they used to call Bucharest *le petit Paris*. Even a French aristocrat like Count Robert de Bourboulon was pleasantly surprised by Bucharest, which was "nice with its lively streets, almost like those in Paris" and by "its elegant, well dressed and well educated inhabitants who do not show any oriental features".<sup>29</sup>

*Le petit Paris*, however, was rather an enigma: everybody knew the expression but nobody said where it had come from, it seemed to be a part of some “imaginative luggage inherited in the family”, according to Ana Maria Zahariade.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, it seems that the appearance of this saying preceded the developments that could create a substantial base for its support. People who spent more time in Bucharest offered observations that support such an idea: Anna Stanchova Countess de Grenau, the wife of the Bulgarian ambassador in Bucharest, wrote at the beginning of the 1890s about the Modern which had been introduced only to the central streets; a Bulgarian diplomat, Petar Neykov, also pointed out, at the very beginning of the twentieth century, the “screaming luxury” of Calea Victoriei contrasting the misery at the edge of the city.<sup>31</sup> As one Swedish officer wrote in 1888,

Bucarest est une ville semi-orientale et semi-occidentale, que les Roumains se plaisent à qualifier de « petit Paris ». Pour petit, le mot est vrai, mais pour Paris c'est autre chose ...<sup>32</sup>

The same mixture between Oriental and Occidental features, with the former still definitely prevailing, observed travelers who passed Serbia at about 1825-1830. For instance, Otto Dubislav Pirch wrote in 1829, after having visited a house in a town:

In one of the rooms everything was European – mirrors, cabinet, furniture in general... In another room they follow the Turkish customs: no furniture, pillows next to the wall and carpets on the floor.<sup>33</sup>

During the second half of the nineteenth century European imprints made some more room for themselves in Serbia, too, but the towns, Belgrade inclusive, still were closer to the Ottoman rather than to the Western model. In 1870, Jan Neruda found in “the rose of the Danube” too many pure oriental particularities.<sup>34</sup> The influence of the European model, however, increased irreversibly and – characteristically enough – it was via the Habsburg Empire that it came. In addition, Constantinople itself still played a role of ‘Occidentalizing’ force, at least at the level of the everyday life. For instance, Serbian Prince Miloš wore a European suit only after his visit to the Sultan in the capital of the Ottoman Empire; moreover, it was exactly during the same trip when he discovered champagne unknown until then in Serbia.<sup>35</sup>

In fact, Belgrade started its transformation from an Ottoman Empire town into a European city in the 1870s, after the Turkish military unit based there left the town in 1867. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the whole city was being redesigned with wide boulevards and large public buildings. Harry De Windt, for example, remarked at the beginning of the twentieth century:

In 1876 dilapidated Turkish fortress frowned down upon a maze of buildings little better than mud huts and unpaved, filthy streets... To-day it seemed like a dream to be whirled away from the railway station in a neat fiacre, along spacious boulevards, with well-dressed crowds and electric cars, to a luxurious hotel.<sup>36</sup>

The transition from an Oriental to a Western world happened very quickly. But still there was a sort of clash of different cultures to be observed, a semi-Oriental atmosphere in the town.

When one turns one's attention to Sofia at the beginning of its capital being, in the 1880s, it becomes clear that the town was similar to a big village, to quote a young Bulgarian woman coming from Tulcea.<sup>37</sup> Konstantin Irecek shared the same observation when he first came to Sofia, in 1879:

... curved street with trees, opened Oriental small shops on both sides, terribly irregular pavement and dreadful mud. Big village.

Only three years later, he noted the great progress of Sofia and the appearance of lots of new buildings.<sup>38</sup> By the end of the 1880s, however, Bulgarian capital still is described as nothing else but "a Turkish town, which does not at all resemble a European one". As the future Bulgarian diplomat put it in 1893, his first visit to Sofia made him feel disappointed, moreover, humiliated because "... Sofia was a capital, indeed, but far from being major."<sup>39</sup>

What made observer wonder was the speed of the changes in course: only in less than two decades the town passed through a real building and enlargement "fever". Wide streets with pavements, beautiful houses, many office buildings, banks, shops, coffeehouses, etc. appeared. Still, electricity, for instance, was introduced only to the central streets and houses of the rich people because of the costs; on the other hand, tramway as well as bicycle as symbols of new way of city transport gradually

became part of the life of the population. All this did not occur without negative reactions and satirical statements. So, for instance, despite the fact that six tramway lines were ready, by the official opening they started using only two of them. The reason: “to give the population and functionaries some time to become used to the new heavy movement”.<sup>40</sup> “Heavy movement” meant, in fact, 15 km/h! Without losing its character as a peasant capital yet, Sofia was certainly moving on its way towards the Modern.

One of the main features of movement to the Modern in the Balkans as well as all over the Europe was the appearance of new modes of sociability that accompanied the rise of the public sphere. Jürgen Habermas defined it, in 1962, as a realm of communication marked by new arenas of debate, more open and accessible forms of urban public space and sociability, and an explosion of print culture in the forms of newspapers, political journalism, novels, and criticism. His public sphere is a historical product of two long-term developments: the rise of modern nation-states and that of capitalism.<sup>41</sup> Given that in the nineteenth century Balkans nation-states were in the process of creating – if only traces of – capitalism, the spectator should not be surprised by performances in that sphere, too.

Change from the old customs to the new Europeanized ones went on with quite fast speed. In spite of the traditional understandings and prejudices, new tastes for change and curiosity developed and new urban points of meeting as societies, bookshops, clubs, etc. were established. One of those new developments was the appearance of special places for walks in the late afternoons or evenings. In Sofia, Belgrade, Plovdiv<sup>42</sup> as well as in some other Balkan towns there were such walking places called ‘alleys’ or ‘gardens’. People enjoyed going there, moreover, since it belonged to the new *savoir vivre*, to be part of that society and to meet friends or just fellows citizens. An interesting target for walks became the railway station, in towns where there was such one. Citizens used to go there for a walk and to look at trains and locomotives; they considered the railway as a channel for the Western influences. In Bucharest there were several places that people frequented during the early evening and which they called ‘promenade’. But the walk along the *șosea* (*Șoseaua Kiseleff*) became part of the chic, or *bon ton*, for the high-life in summer evenings. There was one main difference regarding the Romanian experience: Bucharest high-life used the fiacre. Nonetheless, their main purpose was the same – to have a look at the others and to show

themselves to the others; in fact, this was only possible when the horses ceased galloping at the round point, in order to turn back, otherwise the fiacre moved so fast that there was no opportunity for observations and admiration (or envy), neither for flirting.<sup>43</sup>

Another new development was the establishment of places where people could spend some time together while drinking something, playing cards, reading newspapers, or simply chatting. Coffeehouses and popular periodicals were two institutions central to the organization of public life in the Balkans, as it was the case in Western Europe, too. They were, however, only men's area, and women were excluded from that public space. The main activities were reading and, more commonly in the Balkans, playing cards. Reading newspapers became part of defining oneself as a person sharing bourgeois cultural standards. It was during the second half of the nineteenth century when literate public grew (though still tiny), with enough education and interest to make reading a part of their daily lives. At the very beginning of the twentieth century, coffeehouses in Bulgaria were all at once places of culture, political clubs, and public reading rooms. And the more newspapers (not only Bulgarian but also some Western European) the coffeehouse offered, the more clients it attracted.<sup>44</sup> Playing cards as an usual activity was noted by almost all foreign visitors to the Romanian lands: gambling was among the weak points of Wallachian men in particular.<sup>45</sup>

Through the networks of institutions like press and coffeehouse, a new notion of the "public" arose and men conformed to the new codes of conduct. In contrast to other institutions of the new public sphere, the salon was women's way of taking part in the social life and to gradually become visible. Salon was part of the public at the edge of private space and by the end of the nineteenth century, it became very popular, especially with Romanians. Nonetheless, Bulgarian and Serbian "high society" women used to have so called *jours fixes*, too.<sup>46</sup> No doubt, the salons owed much to the men of letters who frequented them, and the desire to participate in a male-dominated world of letters was probably what led many women to host a salon. But no matter how famous the men in her salon, the hostess was its social center. In other respects, however, the salon embodied essential features of the Enlightenment public sphere: first, its development reflected the growing autonomy from the courtly world even though that had given birth to it; second, the salon, too, enjoyed a close relationship to the print culture; and finally, it provided occasion for individuals from different social and professional

backgrounds to mingle on relatively equal terms.<sup>47</sup> All these new public places provided the contemporary actors with opportunities to perform many different roles.

### **Actors: Costumes and Play**

Already at the end of the eighteenth century, foreign travelers commented that there were people speaking French and admiring French culture in some Balkan towns and in Romanian lands in particular. Nevertheless, it was the nineteenth century, which was so largely open for all European influences that imposed itself as a 'French' century par excellence.<sup>48</sup> The phenomenon was similar to that in other Balkan countries. People who were receptive to the new and people who were not able to accept new ideas and customs were likewise two sides of the Balkan attempts toward modernization.

It was the young generation of Romanians at the beginning of the nineteenth century who discovered the French civilization and culture and chose them as a model to follow. Young people wanted to "join" the European world through a mastery of style. One way to achieve it was to emulate the modes, social mores, and cultural ideas already established in that fashionable world. There were many French emigrants who had come to the Danubian Principalities and who gained their life being teachers at boyars' houses. A second channel for European influences – an indirect one – has to be noted, too: Pompiliu Eliade has pointed out the role of Russian officers as foreign agents of modernity.<sup>49</sup>

In Serbia, stimulus for turning to the West in looking for a model came a bit later but it was quite strong, too. Differently, in comparison to Romanian lands, Serbian people followed another Occidental pattern, the one they had seen next to them in the Habsburg Empire. Bulgarians started their "movement" to the West already during the mid-nineteenth century, before throwing off the Ottoman rule. At the beginning, they used Greek culture and schools as well as Russia as a mediator, exactly what had happened in the Romanian case. In this respect, the role of Bucharest and some of the other Romanian towns as an 'Occidentalizing' center for many Bulgarian emigrants during the late 1860s and 1870s should be mentioned, too. At about the same time and especially after the establishment of the Bulgarian national state the eyes of its subjects turned directly to the source of modernization, as it was the case of other

Balkan peoples, and the process of accommodating European values and style of life accelerated very much.

One of the main direct ways for penetrating European influences was, however, the attendance of some of the European universities. Sultana Craia has commented that the first who went from the Danubian Principalities to Europe to study there were the descendants of the boyars' families followed by those of the emerging bourgeoisie and finally some people of modest origin succeeded in joining European culture in this way, mainly using the fellowships provided by state.<sup>50</sup> However, this is a pattern only for Romania. Other Balkan countries simply lacked social strata that one can think of as an aristocracy. Their "sons" went to study in Europe supported by the new national states; of course, there were exceptions but we really have to reckon with a completely diverse situations while comparing Romania to other states of the region, and particularly in social terms.

As a consequence, almost all people who played an important role in the Romanian political and cultural life during the nineteenth century (the same for the first half of the twentieth century) had got their results from some European university, after having attended courses – usually – in more than one place (and state). The preference had been given to France and no other Balkan country enjoyed such a powerful Francophone elite. On the other hand, as Elena Siupiur has showed, Germany was not neglected. As for the Serbian and Bulgarian intelligentsia, a slight preference for Russian and Central-European universities was taking place.<sup>51</sup>

No matter where European culture was coming from and which ways of penetration it was using, it gradually found its place in Balkan lands. Meeting it, indeed, was a challenge for the people who wanted to be modern but did not know how to deal with coming modernity or how to "accommodate" it to the present background. Sometimes irrelevant performances were taking place. So, for instance, in the 1880s, Konstantin Irecek analyzed "the particular childishness" of the Bulgarian society of the time. "Everybody runs and buys European furniture, things unknown until now, ..." <sup>52</sup> At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries a lot of indications for the presence of the Western objects in the Balkan societies could be found. Newspapers reported about different news – most of them considered being a luxury. All these things, however, were too expensive at the time, so that only few families

could afford buying them. This, on its turn, is an indicator that new, well-to-do social strata had been appearing.

Furthermore, Irecek noticed that “some politicians think *dass man mit Repräsentation und dinners eine Gesellschaft gründen kann*”.<sup>53</sup> In fact, **this** was the problem: people were attracted by the appearance, by the form. The most noticeable changes, which imitated European handwriting, concerned people’s outward appearance. One witnessed invasion of European clothes, which were called differently – and regarding ‘German’ clothes and ‘French’ clothes, the saying *alafanga* in Bulgarian went down well. At the beginning they came from the shops of the big European firms in Vienna and Constantinople, later they already found their direct way from Paris and London. It was much easier to change one’s public behavior, to separate oneself from the community and create a different image than to re-direct the entire society towards the West.

At the beginning, merchants from Orient and Occident swarmed the streets of Bucharest and Jassy, for they found there people interested in what they offered and able to buy it. They brought with them articles of elegance of the two worlds that were melted here in a genuine fashion. In 1819, for instance, William MacMichael visited the court of Bucharest and observed that everything was Eastern in the appearance of the men while in the costume of the women, who were sitting cross-legged on sofas, there was an evident mixture of French and Oriental. Perhaps women were more open to the new influences because there was a stronger control of the suspicious government of Turkey over the men’s dresses: the use of the costume of civilized Europe would be considered as dangerous an innovation, as the adoption of the most enlightened views of modern policy.<sup>54</sup> In the late 1820s, the times had already changed, although several princes tried in vain to stop the new trends, and all men had to obey, willingly or not, the requirements of a new era and its fashion. By mid-nineteenth century, however, the fashion trends were still shaking between Istanbul and Paris<sup>55</sup> and only after that, the steady Western direction was pursued.

It was at about the same time when a real change became obvious regarding the clothes of the urban population in other Balkan countries. The first who wore Western type of clothes in the case of Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia were the richest merchants; they imported the new fashion dresses for their women and daughters, too, who were open to all the news coming from “Europe”.<sup>56</sup> The same openness of women for adopting

the new developments was to be observed in Belgrade in the mid-nineteenth century, so the Serbian historian M. Milevi (1870):

What has changed especially fast is the clothing of women – to the point that today it is very difficult to find a lady whose clothes and haircut are other than European ones.<sup>57</sup>

Another social group that “provided” some of The Europe in the Balkans was the intelligentsia who had studied abroad. At some point “French” clothes became a symbol of a higher social status and it took about two or three decades to turn the exception into a rule, which gradually imposed other criteria of social (and intellectual) diversity. Of course, the application and the perception of the news always depends very much on other general conditions, as social and educational background, for instance. For Robert de Bourboulon, French official to the Bulgarian court, officers’ wives in Sofia in the late 1880s, for instance, were dressed quite tastelessly and their haircuts reminded him hardly of Vienna’s fashion; in a letter to his mother he described them all as “provincial teachers”.<sup>58</sup>

Very often, it is difficult to separate the costumes from the play of the ‘actors’. As for instance in Petar Neykov’s statement from 1909 on the high-life of Bucharest:

Elegant society, dressed tastefully according the last Paris fashion. Flatteries of the best French style. Brave flirts, seldom fruitless. Superficial conversations, very often, however, ambiguous and witty. For this enraptured by the Western models milieu the Romanian language was improper, vulgar; they all spoke French and knew it perfectly.<sup>59</sup>

The nineteenth century and especially its second half was not only the time of appearance of a new understanding about the rhythm of the urban life among the population in the Balkan countries. New taste for how one should spend one’s spare time developed, too.

Along the already mentioned evening walks, visits to coffeehouses and attendance of salons, some other new ways of entertainment, also took place. People from both middle and higher social strata discovered how enjoyable one evening with visitors at home could be. It became part of the routine of Bulgarian intelligentsia to gather at one’s house and to discuss a variety of subjects, to sing songs or to dance. These social gatherings went alongside either the professional communities or friends’

circles. As to the high-life in Sofia, they became very quickly aware how important (for their reputation and status) it was to give receptions and to be invited to the “right” receptions of the others, too. Robert de Bourboulon is very useful source regarding this type of information, for he provides his experienced sight on the Bulgarian high society in development. So, he noted that the *société mondaine* and women in particular, instead of enjoying the dancing, tried to show their ignorance and boredom, as if they would have been ashamed of feeling good. At the same time he described the behavior of the men, too, pointing out the jealousy that they did not try to hide!<sup>60</sup>

Bucharest also had its balls as well as many more informal evening receptions. Evidences are so numerous that it is hardly possible to choose just few examples. Everyone, no matter whether Romanian or foreigner, reported about the social life of the high-life of the city. Houses of families Oteteleşanu, Suţu, Veisa, Grădişteanu, etc. were famous with the balls they were organizing. For instance, on 16 February 1862 there was a big ball with masques and costumes, accompanied by a piano playing, at the house of Gregoire de Soutzo, according to the announcement.<sup>61</sup>

Assiduous frequentation of dancing parties, balls, etc. was sign of “good manners” which were undoubtedly law-like psychosocial categories. The same concerned the membership with gentlemen’s clubs, committees and societies, and philanthropic organizations, not only for Romanians but for other Balkan peoples, too.

Some more news that came from Europe and gradually penetrated the Balkan societies deserve mentioning in this respect. Summer holidays of the family is another mark of modernity; it had not existed in the pre-industrial times. It is interesting to note that the places people were going to differed according to the social milieu; at least in the case of Plovdiv this is true. In 1900, a newspaper reported that the local *sui generis* aristocracy was going to Markovo, Kuklen was the place for the new bourgeoisie, while artisans and workers simply stayed in town and continued working.<sup>62</sup> For the high-life of the capital cities, it was Europe itself that was the goal of their journeys. Of course, there were some country’s resorts, too, that were quite preferable places for summer “retirement” as nearby the royal castle of Peleş in Romanian or Chamkoriya (also because there was a summer house of the prince there) in Bulgarian case. The rule was quite common, however, and it dictated necessarily to leave Sofia, Bucharest, or Belgrade in mid-June only to return in September.

All my points and the examples that I have presented concern mainly the presentation of what was going on in the nineteenth century Balkans. Going back to my point about the appearance having dominated the content, I consider this to be one of the main reasons for the amount of information available about the outside features of the people's life than about their private life, not to mention their spiritual one. Alterations in the way of thinking and in the behavior of the population, regardless of whether this concerned men or women, were much more difficult to grasp. In addition, they occurred much slower than all the 'outside', visible changes. The nineteenth century in the Balkans was still patriarchal at heart. But the old forms and modes were on the wane and new things were being born (or rather "adopted"). The tide was turning; the tone of life was about to change. The reason for this delay of the mentality compared to the visible changes, in my view, is the speed of the urbanization processes and impossibility to control them successfully. Changes in the urban life style at large occurred at a rapid rate, which helps to explain the precarious relationship between East and West in the Balkans and the anxiety aroused because of the proximity to their pre-modern past. Which takes me back to the *Orient-Express*. As a contemporary foreign witness noted in the Bulgarian case, the country was advancing "with the speed of this train".<sup>63</sup>

## Conclusion

Nineteenth century was the time of omnipotent penetration of European influences to the Balkans. The new established Balkan states used Western European experience as a model to follow on their way to Modernity, for Europe was in their understanding something superior and, thus, worth to imitate. However fascinated by Europe the people had been, the adaptation of European ways of life to the Balkan constellations turned out to be complicated. The contradiction between the speed of the processes and readiness of the population to "swallow" the new developments resulted in occurrences placed at various points of the spectrum from the ridiculous to the sad, sometimes with touches of absurdness.

I would like to present my opinion regarding the differences as well as similarities as to how the European influences have been accommodating to the everyday life in the Balkans:

Differences concern mainly i) timing and ii) situation at the start. The time when European influences made themselves visible diverges in different Balkan countries. First to begin with the accommodation of “Europe” in its South-East corner were Romanian lands, which started before becoming *de facto* independent from the Ottoman Empire politically in the 1830s. Then, it was Serbia’s turn to open its doors to Europe. The influences there met a strong opposition of the predominantly peasant population as well as of the Porte that had continued to exercise control for some more decades after the 1830s (that was the time when Serbia, too, received its *de facto* independency). Future Serbian capital Belgrade in particular took off three decades later. The real latecomer, however, was the Bulgarian state that began its modern national being only in the late 1870s. From the point of view of ‘who was where’ at the beginning of the nineteenth century: Wallachia and Moldavia had enjoyed a sort of “freedom” though being a part of the Ottoman Empire (even during the Phanariots’ rule) while Serbia and Bulgaria experienced much more of the Ottoman administrative power. On the other hand, having been on one hand distant from the Russian Empire, Danubian Principalities had to cope with the constant Russian interventions of a different kind. Weighing up these legacies and bearing in mind that already at the end of the eighteenth century Peter the Great had introduced pieces of Europe in his Empire one could argue that actually the first difference (concerning the time dimension) depends very much on the second one.

I’d like, however, to emphasize some similarities rather than differences: i) European influences reached mainly Balkan urban population; ii) they were not most welcome by a considerable part of society, which brings us to iii) time – but this time from the point of view of how much time it all needed. And now I want to turn our attention back to the view of the Balkans as a place where “time has stood still”. Balkan people do not like to be in a hurry, probably because of relativism and disposition to leave things in the hands of destiny. Balkan towns, too, had their own rhythm. No matter how strong they were influenced by the European world, they always remained strongly attached to one of the core readings of the Oriental, the one characterized by a powerful triptych of words: *yarın*, *rahat* and *kayı*.<sup>64</sup> That is why the penetration of European influences in the Balkans took a very long time and the transition from traditional to modern society has been perpetuating itself (in the case of mentality in particular) since the nineteenth century.

## NOTES

- 1 I use "Balkans" not as a geographical or political denomination but as a useful term for all lands that were part of the Ottoman Empire, no matter exactly how this was arranged juridically. For that reason I include the two Danubian principalities (from 1859 on, Romania) in my research.
- 2 JANOS, Andrew, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: The Case of Romania", in JOWITT, Kenneth, ed. *Social Change in Romania*, 72-116 (74) as well as JANOS, Andrew, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary, 1825-1945*, Princeton 1982, 313.
- 3 RIZESCU, Victor, "Romania as 'Periphery': Social Change and Intellectual Evolution", in MURGESCU, Bogdan, ed. *Romania and Europe: Modernisation as Temptation, Modernisation as Threat*, ALLFA, Edition Körber Stiftung, Bucureşti, 2000, 36.
- 4 See, for instance, WEIDENFELD, Werner, ed. *Die Identität Europas*, Bonn 1985, passim; MOMMSEN, Wolfgang, ed. *Der lange Weg nach Europa. Historische Betrachtungen aus gegenwärtiger Sicht*, Berlin 1992, passim.
- 5 See STAVRIANOS, L. S., "The Influence of the West on the Balkans", in JELAVICH, Charles and Barbara, eds. *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and Politics since the Eighteenth Century*, Archon Books, Hamden, 1974, 184-226 and 184-187 in particular.
- 6 STAVRIANOS, op. cit., 186. I leave Jenö Szücs' idea about three European regions (SZÜCS, Jenö, *Die drei historischen Regionen Europas*, Frankfurt, 1994, 2. Auflage) aside deliberately, for my purpose is not to discuss how many Europes there are but to try to make sense of the idea about Europe of the Balkan peoples and those of the nineteenth century in particular.
- 7 MAZOWER, Mark, *The Balkans*, Poenix Press, London, 2000, 9.
- 8 DUȚU, Alexandru, *Ideea de Europa și evoluția conștiinței europene*, ALL Edicational, Bucureşti, 1999, 22.
- 9 As Aleco Russo has put it, in some twenty years the eyes and the thoughts of his generation of Moldavians directed not to the East as it was the case of his parents but to the West. – Quoted by both Stela Mărieș and Dumitru Vitcu, see MĂRIEȘ, Stela, "Das westliche Europa aus der Sicht rumänischer Reisender (erste Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts)", in HEPPNER, Harald, ed. *Die Rumänen und Europa vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Böhlau Verlag, Wien-Köln-Weimar, 1997, 143-164 (143) and VITCU, Dumitru, „'Europa' aud der Sicht der rumänischen 1848er-Generation", ibidem, 165-184 (169).
- 10 "Separation from the East" is the way Lucian Boia, whose discussion I am following here, has referred to the process in question. Although his attention is directed to the Romanian case only, the observation on the Romanian responses to the changes is very much relevant to the cases of the other Balkan peoples, too. – See BOIA, Lucian, "Les Roumains et les autres. La quête des modèles dans la société roumaine des XIXème et XXème siècles", in DUȚU, Alexandru et Norbert DODILLE, eds. *L'état des lieux en sciences*

- sociales*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1993, 39-48 (39); IDEM, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, CEU Press, Budapest, 2001, 158-160.
- 11 KITROMILIDES, P., "The Enlightenment East and West: A Comparative Perspective on the Ideological Origins of the Balkan Political Traditions", in his book *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy*, I: 51-70.
- 12 In the Balkans, far from the nation winning itself an independent state, as romantic nationalists imagined, the leaders of new states had to create the Nation out of a peasant society that was imbued with the world-view of its Ottoman past. "Serbia", noted August Blanqui, "owes to Milos the first routes penetrating its forests, order re-established in its finances, the creation of Serbian nationality." – Quoted by MAZOWER, op. cit., 86. See in this respect also MISHKOVA, Diana, "The Nation as *Zadruga*: Remapping Nation-Building in Nineteenth Century Southeast Europe", in DOGO, Marco and Guido FRANZINETTI, eds. *Disrupting and Reshaping Early Stages of Nation-Building in the Balkans*, Longo editore, Ravenna, 2002, 103-115.
- 13 GUIDA, Francesco, "The Concept of Europe in Romania and Romania's Image in Western Europe", in BIANCHINI, Stefano e Marco DOGO, eds. *The Balkans: National Identities in a Historical Perspective*, Longo Editore, Ravenna, 1998, 75-90 (77).
- 14 See ELIADE, Pompiliu, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România: Originile* (Original edition: ELIADE, Pompiliu, *De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie*, Paris, 1898), Humanitas, București, 2000, passim.
- 15 About the importance and the competition between the two models, see BOIA, L., *History and Myth*, 160-165.
- 16 Regarding this point the attitude of the *Junimea* society (Titu Maiorescu) was emblematic: they all felt that Romanian society was giving way to "bottomless forms" and this explains why the influence of important foreign cultures was already seen as a negative influence producing disorder, etc. The debate remained open and others insisted that the "bottom" had to adapt to the "form" (Eugen Lovinescu). Interesting enough, in other Balkan societies there was no real public debate on the way of adopting, or rather accommodating, European models even though there existed single voices insisting on more careful attitude to "reading" Western model(s) and, respectively, while applying them. In other Balkan countries – Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia – , showing the unsuccessful examples in a satirical way prevailed.
- 17 See STAVRIANOS, L., op. cit., 189-190, who shared the view of an English jurist and historian of the 1860s about the spreading of the Western influence "like a contagion".
- 18 LEFEBVRE, Henri, *Critique de la vie quotidienne*, L'Arche, Paris, 1961 (vol. II), 1981 (vol. III); CERTEAU, Michel de, *L'Invention du quotidien*, Gallimard, Paris, 1998 (vol. I), 1999 (vol. II). For German examples, see LUEDTKE, Alf, *The History of Everyday Life*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1995,

- esp. pp. 3-40, 116-148, 169-197; also BERLINER GESCHICHTSWERKSTATT, ed., *Alltagskultur, Subjektivitaet und Geschichte*, Verlag Westfallisches Dampfboot, Münster, 1994.
- 19 Stanley Cavell speaks about the “uncanniness of the ordinary” that both resists and invites philosophical discussion. – See CAVELL, Stanley, *In Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1988.
- 20 HAROOTUNIAN, Harry, *History’s Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and the Question of Everyday Life*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2001, 19.
- 21 It is out of doubt that new urban developments are not only a stage where to look for and to observe the impact of the European influences. They are, in some sense, part of the Europeanization, too. The division of the material aims mostly clearer presentation rather than imposing predestined statements.
- 22 Quoted by ROSENTHAL, Steven, *The Politics of Dependency: Urban Reform in Istanbul*, Greenwood Press, Westport (Conn.)/London, 1908, 3.
- 23 See GEORGEON, Francois, “A la veille de la guerre, des voyageurs”, in YERASIMOS, Stephanos, ed. *Istanbul, 1914-1923 : Capitale d’un monde illusoire ou l’agonie des vieux empires*, Editions Autrement, Paris, 1992, 34. On changes in the capital city of the Ottoman Empire see ROSENTHAL, Steven, op. cit., as well as ÇELIK, Zeynep, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Protrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century*, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London, 1986.
- 24 While saying ‘Ottoman model’ I think of the concept of ‘Islamic city’. It has passed a lot of avatars by now but usually it is its external aspects mainly that defined it: city which usually grew around important nodal points in the imperial system, expressly concerned with maintaining Ottoman power against the local population and with the protection of trade routes, characterised by its small curved streets, the impasses, the houses with inner yards, etc., where the city life did not happen on the streets but in private. – For further clarifications on this see YERASIMOS, Stephanos, “A propos des reformes urbaines des Tanzimat”, in DUMONT, Paul et Francois GEORGEON, eds. *Villes Ottomanes a la fin de l’Empire*, Editions L’Harmattan, Paris, 1992, 17-32.
- 25 UBICINI, A., *La Turquie actuelle*, Hachette, Paris, 1855, 77-78.
- 26 LEWIS, B., *Emergence of Modern Turkey*, Oxford University Press, 1961, 102-103.
- 27 For comparison: at about the same time, in 1821, Athens’ population was around 10,000 – and it still was 13 years before its becoming a capital of Greece; in 1846, about 19,000 people were living in Belgrade. – HEPPNER, Harald, ed. *Hauptstädte in Südosteuropa: Geschichte, Funktion, Nationale Symbolkraft*, Böhlau, Wien-Köln-Weimar, 1994, data from different articles.
- 28 HEPPNER, H. ed. *Hauptstädte in Südosteuropa*, 49.

- 29 BOURBOULON, Robert de, *Bulgarski dnevnitsi (Bulgarian diaries)*, Kolibri, Sofia, 1995, 108.
- 30 I am grateful to her for sharing with me her findings and musings on this topic, which I enjoyed very much. I cannot but agree with her on two reference points she has presented as a possible explanation of persistence of the “enigme”: on the one hand, its mythical character and, on the other, its rhetorical importance as a mediator in the communication between the two actors, the Occidental and the Romanian one. – ZAHARIADE, Ana Maria, *L’enigme du « petit Paris »* (unpublished paper), 2002.
- 31 STANCHOVA, Anna, *Dvortsovi i diplomatskeski spomeni 1887-1915 (Court and Diplomatic Memoirs, 1887-1915)*, Bulgarski hudozhnik/Universitetsko izdatelstvo, Sofia, 1991, 81; NEYKOV, Petar, *Spomeni*, Izdatelstvo na Otechestveniya Front, Sofia, 1990, 138.
- 32 Quoted by ZAHARIADE, Ana Maria, op. cit., 5. About twenty years earlier Jan Neruda commented in a similar way: “... but ‘Paris on Dâmbovița’ is an Oriental Paris.” – See NERUDA, Jan, *De la Praga la Paris și Ierusalim: Tablouri din străinătate*, Editura Minerva, București, 2000, 251.
- 33 Quoted by VUCO, Nikola, “L’européanisation des villes en Serbie au XIXe siècle”, in *Istanbul à la jonction des cultures balkaniques, méditerranéennes, slaves et orientales aux XVIe-XIXe siècles*, UNESCO/AIESSE, Bucarest, 1973, 107-113 (108).
- 34 NERUDA, Jan, op. cit., 265.
- 35 See VUCO, Nikola, op. cit., 108.
- 36 Quoted by NORRIS, David, *In the Wake of the Balkan Myth: Questions of Identity and Modernity*, Macmillan Press, London and St. Martin’s Press, New York, 1999, 99.
- 37 PETROVA, Sultana, *Moite spomeni (My memoirs)*, Izdatelstvo na BAN, Sofia, 1991, 158.
- 38 IRECEK, Konstantin, *Balgarski dnevnik (Bulgarian diary)*, Akademichno izdatelstvo Marin Drinov, Sofia, 1996, vol. I, 21; compare to idem, vol. II, 524.
- 39 See respectively STANCHOVA, Anna, *Dvortsovi i diplomatskeski spomeni*, 26; NEYKOV, Petar, *Spomeni*, 70.
- 40 KAZASOV, Dimo, *Iskri ot burni godini (Sparks from Adventurous Years)*, Izdatelstvo na Otechestveniya Front, Sofia, 1987, 260.
- 41 HABERMAS, Jürgen, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zur einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Darmstadt und Neuwied, 1962, passim. In only a few years this book became one of the most widely discussed works of social and political theory on the West German (and not only) intellectual scene.
- 42 Plovdiv was the capital of the autonomous province Eastern Rumelia for seven years between 1878 and 1885, when the province joined to the Kingdom of Bulgaria.

- 43 See GAVRILOVA, Raina, *Koleloto na zhivota: Vsekidnevieto na bulgarskiya vuzrozhdenski grad (The Wheel of Life: Everyday Life in the Bulgarian Early Modern Town)*, Universitetsko izdatelstvo, Sofia, 1999, 48-53; *Plovdivski glas*, 1899, etc. On the ‘Corso’ of Bucharest see, for instance, LOVERDO, Jean, “Bucarest”, in *Le Monde Moderne*, 1897, 1-14 (9); MARSILLAC. Ulysse de, *Bucureștiul în veacului al XIX-lea*, Editura Meridiane, București, 1999, 147-158; NEYKOV, Petar, *Spomeni*, 144, where he points out that, at the turn of the nineteenth century, walking was considered a sign of poverty in Bucharest.
- 44 KAZASOV, Dimo, *Iskri of burni godini*, 273.
- 45 See MacMICHAEL, William, *A Journey From Moscow to Constantinople*, London, 1819, reprinted in BANNAN, Alfred and Achilles EDELENYI, eds. *Documentary History of Eastern Europe*, Twayne Publishers, New York, 1970, 121 – for the beginning and, for instance, LOVERDO, Jean, *Bucarest*, 2, for the end of the nineteenth century.
- 46 PETROVA, Sultana, *Moite spomeni*, passim; KUNISCH, Richard, *București și Stambul*, 84-89.
- 47 For more elaborate discussion on the (Enlightenment) salons in Paris, London, Vienna and Berlin, see MELTON, James Van Horn, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge UK, 2001, 197-225.
- 48 When saying “French” I use the term as a synonym for “European”, for it is hardly possible to differentiate where exactly influences came from – only the general direction, that is from the Western (more precisely, North-Western) part of the continent to its South-Eastern corner, is out of doubt.
- 49 ELIADE, Pompiliu, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România: Originile*, Humanitas, București, 2000, 155-160.
- 50 CRAIA, Sultana, *Francofonie și francofilie la români*, Editura Demiurg, București, 1995.
- 51 On issues concerning social and educational background of the political elite in South-East European countries see, for instance: SIUPIUR, Elena, “Les Intellectuels roumains du XIXe siècle et la réorganisation de la classe politique et du système institutionnel”, in *Revue roumaine d’histoire*, 1995 (XXXIV), 1-2; IDEM, “Die deutschen Universitäten und die Bildung der Intelligenz in Rumänien und den Ländern Südosteuropas im 19. Jahrhundert”, in *New Europe College Yearbook*, 1994-1995; PARUSHEVA, Dobrinka, “L’élite gouvernementale en Bulgarie et en Roumanie a la fin du XIXe et au début du XXe siècle et la France”, in *Etudes balkaniques*, 2000, 3-4; IDEM, “Political Elites in the Balkans, 19th and early 20th Century: Routes to Career”, in *Etudes balkaniques*, 2001, 4, etc.
- 52 IRECEK, Konstantin, *Bulgarski dnevnik*, vol. II, 374.
- 53 Ibidem; italic in original text.

- 54 MacMICHAEL, William, *A Journey From Moscow to Constantinople*, 120-122.
- 55 See IONESCU, Adrian-Silvan, *Moda românească 1790-1850: Între Stambul și Paris*, Editura MAIKO, București, 2001. The book is very rich regarding data the author has used.
- 56 See the reach discussion of GAVRILOVA, Raina, *Koleloto na zhivota*, 159-166.
- 57 Quoted by VUCO, Nikola, op. cit., 108.
- 58 BOURBOULON, Robert de, *Bulgarski dnevnitsi*, 59.
- 59 NEYKOV, Petar, *Spomeni*, 143.
- 60 BOURBOULON, Robert de, *Bulgarski dnevnitsi*, 81, 63
- 61 HAGI-MOSCO, Emanoil, *București: Amintirile unui oraș*, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, București, 1995, 94. For more details, see IONESCU, Adrian-Silvan, *Balurile din secolului al XIX-lea*, Fundația Culturală D'ale Bucureștilor, București, 1997.
- 62 *Plovdivski ek*, 1900
- 63 BOURBOULON, Robert de, *Bulgarski dnevnitsi*, 124-125.
- 64 *Yarin* (Turk.) means tomorrow; *rahat* (Arab.) – peace of mind, leisure, vacation, *laisser faire*; *kayf* (Arab.) – mood; it denominates the possibility to enjoy the life as much and as often as possible.