

Calic, Marie-Janine: *Südosteuropa. Weltgeschichte einer Region*. München: C.H. Beck Verlag 2016. ISBN: 978-3-406-69830-9.

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Marie Janine Calic's book is a pioneering example in German-speaking historiography of inserting Southeast Europe in a global narrative covering the time from antiquity up to the present.¹ The periodization proposed by Calic for structuring the chapters is innovative.² One of the most original features are intermezzos at the end of chapters or sections, in which Calic draws a portrait of everyday life in a Southeast European city in a precise year, to condense the analysis of broader social change through a thick and tangible prism.

Chapter one - *Lebenswelten und Zivilisationen vor 1500* - describes the expansion of the Roman, the Byzantine, and the (early) Ottoman Empires in the Balkans. These imperial systems, especially the Ottoman, are regarded as „foreign domination“ (*Fremdherrschaft*, indeed a problematic notion recurring in the text) on previously settled population. Calic is careful in avoiding essentialism in regards to ethnonyms and debates on autochthony. The unstable demography of the region and migration waves are scrutinized as transcultural encounters in the long term with different degrees of violence. For instance, many pagan beliefs and customs survived outside the realm of religion or were innovated within the dominant Christianity. The rivalry between Catholicism and Orthodoxy produced fractures in the region, which also led to ambiguous forms of confessional loyalties or efforts to preserve autonomy from Rome and Constantinople. An example is the Bosnian church, which influenced other „heretical“ movements in Western Europe before its dissolution. The author stresses that the region's population became „part of this Christian-western world“ (p. 68) and that a „clash of cultures“ on the basis of religious difference within Christianity was „not laid out“ (p. 44) during these early developments. At the end of the chapter, Calic takes the reader to Kruja (nowadays Albania) in 1450, du-

ring the Ottoman siege against Skanderbeg's cohort of local warlords. This episode of rebellion against Ottoman rule becomes a lens for discussing the trajectory of Southeast European feudal rulers who navigated through a complex network of loyalties and cultural contacts before eventually being obliged to accept Ottoman rule.

In Chapter 2 - *Weltreiche und Weltwirtschaften 1450 bis 1800* - Calic moves to the Modern Era between „archaic globalization“ (p. 126) and dynamics inherent to the Ottoman Empire. The author sees Islamization in Southeast Europe as part of a broader process of confessionalization. The Ottoman *millet* system, granting autonomy to confessional communities in educational and legal affairs, not only affirmed the dominance of Islam in the Empire, but also enhanced the authority of the Orthodox, the Armenian, and the Jewish religious structures. Thus, confessionalization and reformation of religious institutions are a decisive instrument of power in this period in the region as well as in the rest of Europe. A portrait of the diverse social fabric of Istanbul in 1683 – the watershed date of the last Ottoman siege of Vienna – discusses the coexistence of the apogee of the Sultan-Caliph's authority and the „Western-Eastern cosmopolitanism“ (p. 140) of an emerging mercantile class. The chapter later turns the perspective toward the growing influence of the Habsburg and the Romanov Empire in the Balkans. A densification of trans-imperial connections in the eighteenth century parallels the transformation of mercantile capitalism. The increasing power of Ottoman provincial notables (*Ayan*) thus coexisted with a higher permeability to ideas circulating in Europe especially among the Christian population, leading to an original variant of enlightenment developing in the region through contacts with the West. „Thinker[s] of the shift“ (p. 181) like Dubrovnik born Ruđer Bošković embodied a rapidly evolving approach which, however, did not break the boundaries

¹ For an earlier example in English see Andrew B. Wachtel, *The Balkans in World History*, Oxford 2008.

² Compare the standard work: Edgar Hösch, *Geschichte der Balkanländer, Von der Frühzeit bis zur Gegenwart*, 5th revised and extended edition, Munich 2008 (1st edition, 1968); and most recently: Ulf Brunnbauer / Klaus Buchenau, *Geschichte Südosteuropa*, Stuttgart 2018.

of the old *episteme*, since encyclopedic knowledge still prevailed compared to „modern“ scientific expertise. Moreover, a specificity of the region was the high influence of religious institutions in mediating the innovations of the enlightenment. A digression about everyday life in Dubrovnik in 1776 describes how the oligarchic Catholic Republic could come to terms and in fact benefit from Ottoman protection throughout the eighteenth century. Rapid economic and social change within „Proto-globalization“ (p. 190), though, would precipitate dramatic changes in terms of statehood, belonging, and legitimacy in the following century, inspired by the American and the French revolution.

The rise of nationalism in the region is analyzed in Chapter 3, *Das Jahrhundert der globalen Revolutionen 1776 bis 1878*. The Serbian (1804) and Greek (1821) uprising are analyzed as a new, drastic way to contest imperial governance. The violent repression of the Ottoman state is described through the view from Salonika in 1821, which allows Calic to discuss inter-communal relations in one of the most diverse Ottoman cities. The chapter convincingly illustrates how the Greek uprising had a resonance among Great Powers diplomacy, which invented the notion of „humanitarian intervention“ in favor of Christians as a way to justify increasing economic and political interference in the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the 19th century, though, the way these events were represented through media circulating internationally changed. Thus, the situation in Plovdiv and the surrounding villages in 1876, after Vasil Levski's failed uprising and just before the Ottoman-Russian war, was discussed in British parliament and newspapers to mobilize the public opinion against the Ottoman rule over Christians in the Balkans. The analysis of nationalism, although informative, is conceptually not quite innovative. Calic refers among others to Meinecke's duality between „Kulturation“ and „Staatsnation“ (p. 279) as well as Hroch's model of nation-building. Nationalism is considered mostly in its liberal and emancipatory character, while forms of non-Christian transnational belonging, such as Panislamism and early Zionism, are mentioned but not dealt with thoroughly. Also, what is missing is the

search for connections with synchronic diverse non-European anti-imperial rebellions such as those in Haiti (1791-1904), India (1857), Cuba (1868-1878) and, above all, the independence wars in Latin America.

Chapter 4 – *Weltkrisen und Weltkriege 1870 bis 1945* – deals with the disintegration of the imperial order. In the age of proper globalization, Southeast Europe was integrated into the world capitalist market economy, resulting in modernization but also dependence. A growing cleavage separating (few) winners and (many) losers of this process is exemplified in the intermezzo dedicated to Belgrade in 1913. When discussing politics, Calic sides with the compelling thesis of a „globalization of the national“ idea (p. 382). Nationalist liberal thinkers became attracted to internationalist politics, notably in the League of Nations, while others contributed to a radicalization of nationalism leading to WWI and its tense aftermath. This era also marks the emergence of socialism and anarchism, but a more successful synthesis of nationalism and collectivism in the region was agrarianism; peasants parties played an important role above all in Bulgaria and Croatia. Mass overseas emigration from some parts of Southeast Europe is touched upon but might have deserved a more detailed scrutiny.³ Dramatic war conflicts occupy an important place in this chapter. The decade of warfare from 1912 to 1923 represents the culmination of violent ethnic homogenization of the territory. New borders established after WWI exacerbated further irredentist claims as well as paranoias against minorities and internal enemies. The climate of cultural fervor, technical innovations, economic inequalities, and antisemitism is projected on everyday life in Bucharest in 1939, the most passionating city portrait of the book. Finally, WWII is discussed after a brilliant analysis of the economic exploitation of the region following Nazi Germany economic penetration in the 1930s.

The last chapter – *Globalisierung und Fragmentierung 1945 bis heute* – starts with the Cold War period, when supranational cultural and political boundaries ran across the re-

³See Ulf Brunnbauer, *Globalizing Southeast Europe, Emigrants, America, and the State since the Late Nineteenth Century*, Lanham 2016.

gion. Countries of the NATO neighbored Warsaw Pact members, while the leader of the non-aligned movement, Tito's Yugoslavia, acquired a previously unseen international recognition. Sarajevo hosted the Winter Olympics in 1984, and the city embodies both the global visibility and the decline of the Socialist Yugoslav statehood after Tito's death. Within the state socialist bloc, subalternity to the Soviet Union was negotiated differently in each country, and long distance political connections existed for example between Albania and China. The decolonization of the global south is integrated into the narrative, and the author proposes the engaging thesis that it resulted in a growing connectivity of Southeast Europe in world politics and transcultural encounters. New media and forms of socialization in the region also contributed to making critical moments such as 1968 and 1989 occasions of global communication and transnational political commitment. Especially the influence of NGOs increased during and after the wars of the 1990s, which shaped a new approach in international penal justice. Moreover, consumerism and pop culture are important prisms through which circulation of goods and people, as well as lifestyles, can be analyzed on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Finally, the book discusses the uncertainty of the most recent developments of European integration and the heritage of economic scarcity, also deriving from a deregulated privatization in the 1990s. In general, the region is now part of a multipolar world. Actors like Russia, the US, Turkey, and other states project on the region their being part of sometimes overlapping transnational institutions as well as private organizational networks, although (Western) Europe remains the main political and economic partner of the region (p. 585).

With this work, Calic has provided a valuable synthetic contribution to the historiography of the region, particularly useful for those – inside and outside academia – who wish to familiarize with its history. The book is vividly written and pleasant to read, and the narrative raises further curiosity. It is strikingly rich in information and masterly balanced between cultural, social and political history. Another strong point of the book is the multilayered analysis, which moves flu-

ently from transnational individual trajectories up to macro-processes in economy and international politics. At the same time, it will likely not fully match the expectations of those searching for an innovative conceptual and empirical approach on the global dimension of the history of Southeast Europe on the basis of previous knowledge. The – far from easy – goal of „rethinking development and change of Southeast Europe from the perspective of transcultural relations and global history“ (p. 9) is only partially achieved. The main problem, also stressed by Calic in the introduction, relates to space since it generally questionable whether Southeast Europe can be dealt with as a coherent historical object throughout three millennia. Moreover, one gets the impression that the main objective of the book is to reassert phases of globalization within the dynamic relationship between the region and Western Europe (and North America). In this sense, classical notions such as empire, nation, confession, community, industrialization, modernity, etc. are reiterated instead of being challenged through the crossing of global history and area studies. Although this work is an undoubtedly precious contribution to reading the history of the region beyond an outdated paradigm of methodological nationalism, the „world“ entering its narrative is still predominantly the „West“. Connections with other continents, a prerogative of the global history approach⁴, are present but only marginally explored. With the exception of individual transnational trajectories, Calic's narrative is more focused on an overarching look on the region's state and national configurations than on fully exploiting alternative categories and units of analysis. To sum up, the book can be welcomed as an important pioneer work. It will inspire future research questions and provides a starting reference for discussions about how the global history approach can further contribute to the knowledge of the history of Southeast Europe.

Andreas Guidi über Calic, Marie-Janine: *Südosteuropa. Weltgeschichte einer Region*. Mün-

⁴Sebastian Conrad / Andreas Eckert, Globalgeschichte, Globalisierung, multiple Modernen: Zur Geschichtsschreibung der modernen Welt, in: id. / Ulrike Freitag (eds.) *Globalgeschichte, Theorien, Ansätze, Themen*, Frankfurt am Main 2008, p. 24f.

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