



Images of the Balkans

The term 'Balkans'

Images of the 'Other' in National Literatures

Imagology, Stereotypes and National Images

First Lesson

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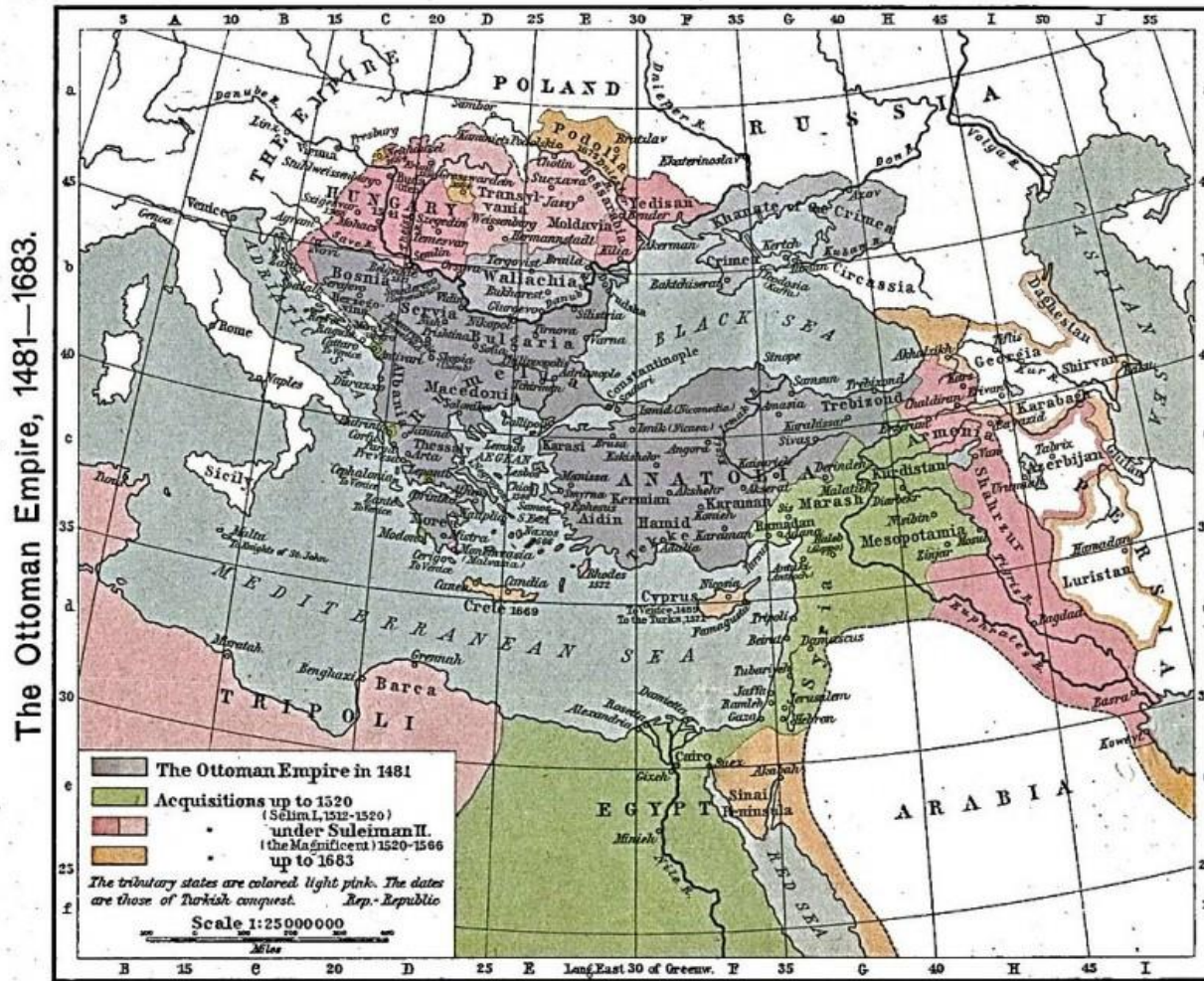
The subject of the course

- Representations of the Balkan Other and the Balkans
- Imagology- describing the Foreigner and the Unknown in literary texts
- The main connotations of the term 'Balkans'
- The main material: literary work, travel literature, memoirs, testimonies, political-historical texts, poetry
- How was the Balkans perceived in Modern Greek literature and why?
- Stereotypical constructions for the Balkan nations- The notions of anti-Westernism, backwardness, exoticism and inferiority
- The Greek self-perceptions as a European, Western country
- Balkan History: from the Balkan Wars to the post- communist Balkans

The term 'Balkans'

- Which countries constitute the Balkan Peninsula?
- Which other names were used to describe the area of the Balkans (?)
- Does Greece belong to the Balkans?
- Is Turkey a part of the Balkan heritage?
- **What are the criteria for a country's inclusion** to the term 'Balkan'?

The Balkans during the Ottoman Empire



Contemporary Balkan States



Naming of the Balkan Peninsula

- **Balkan Peninsula** (August Zeune)
- The term '**Balkans**' ('continuous mountain range) and its existence already from 16th century
- '**Greek**' and '**Roman** Peninsula (emphasizing the achievements of Greek or Roman civilization)
- The term '**European Turkey**' and the Ottoman imprint in the Balkans (18th and 19th century)
- The term '**Southeastern Europe**' (proposed by Otto Maull- trying to replace a term with negative connotations with a neutral term)
- Naming of the Peninsula and geopolitical aspects: a short Introduction
- 'Balkans' and 'Southeastern Europe': used as synonyms or subcategories

How did the Modern Balkan states occur?

- Overcoming the initial dependence on the Ottoman Empire and the Hamburg dynasty (19th century)
- Nationalism and Revolution (19th century)
- The creation of 'Eastern Europe'



Defining the Balkans- A complex case

**Which countries
constitute the
'Balkans'?**

**Do the Balkans
'change' from a time
period to another?**

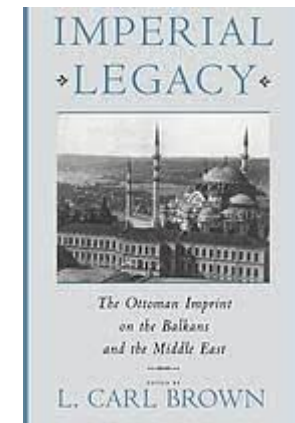
**Greece and the
Balkans: A relationship
under negotiation**

Defining the Balkans

- The difficulty of precisely defining the countries that constitute the Balkan Peninsula has its roots in ethnic, political, geographical and historical conflicts
- The creation of a complex object of study
- The example of encyclopedia 'Britannica Macropaedia': (1911- Albania, Greece, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Illyria, Macedonia, Montenegro, Novibazar, Serbia and Turkey # 1995 Romania, Slovenia and Moldova included, Greece excluded)
- Greece and Balkans: an 'integral part of the Balkan Peninsula' or a 'Western, European state'?
- Greece and the Balkans- a relationship as a question to be further explored

Turkey and the Balkans

- An ambiguous relationship
- The geographical parameter and 'European Turkey'
- **Turkey belongs to the Balkans:** 1. the role of the Ottoman Empire 2.the view of 'European Turkey' and the Balkans as similar places 3.the Ottoman legacy- shaping the Balkan Peninsula 4. the multileveled role of the Ottoman Empire in shaping contemporary Balkans
- **Turkey doesn't belong to the Balkans:** 1.Ottoman administration and the constant seek for Revolution 2. The images of the Turk as 'danger from the East'



Ethnicities, material and time-period under examination in the semester

- Which countries are we going to discuss?
- The role of Turkey- *Contrasting the Turk with the Balkan Other* (**potential allies or enemies**)
- Modern Greek and West sources
- **Literary Texts, Press and Cinema**
- **Travel literature**
- Greece and its relationship with the Balkans- **Identities and self-perceptions-**
- The role of **Europe** and **Communism**
- The Western factor- **Contemporary texts and the European Union**
- Depictions of the Balkan Other and the reasons that lie behind those
- *Exclusion of Slovenia and Hungary* (close relations # Central Europe)

Imagology and Comparative Literature

- **The portrayal of the Other-** a story from *antiquity* to the *Modern era* (different cultures and the intense interest **to depict the unknown**)
- The **stranger as a hidden aspect of the Self** (self identity and stereotypes)
- Depicting the stranger by *negative constructions*
- The '**Other**' and the **confusion with the enemy** (Julia Kristeva)
- The familiar space and the territory of the unknown. *Demons, ghosts, the dead and chaos* (Eliade)

Imagology and Comparative Literature

- **The national type of the Other:** From Aristophanes to the Middle Ages and the Enlightenment
- The Middle Ages and the **dictionaries that include adjectives based on nation characteristics**
- **Categorizing the people through ethnic characteristics** and the critical attitudes towards those tendencies
- **Science and typology** (19th century- classification of human types)
- **Ethnic characteristics, National Images and Literature**
- *Racial discourses and Imagology*
- Imagology as **a theoretical science that studies the ethnic characteristics** in literary texts

Stereotypes and Literary Images

- Images and stereotype as synonymous terms in the academic community
- (Cuddon) **Image** is a quasi-literary term used to describe a person in figurative language, but in a particular way
- (Cuddon) **Stereotype** and the term '**cliché**' (trivial phrase without value)
- (Abrams) **Stereotype** and **Stereotype characters** (human types that appear frequently in a particular literary genre and are therefore recognizable)

Stereotypes and Literary Images: relevance and distinctions between the two terms

- A *literary image* may **reproduce** a *stereotype*, but it is not necessarily identical with it
- **Stereotypical depictions** of the Other are distinguished by **stability**
- **Literary images of the Other can vary**, not only *between literary generations*, but also *between literary documents of the same period*
- The images of the Other are not necessarily stereotypical
- **Image, stereotype** and **prejudice** are used some times as synonymous, but they should be distinguished
- **Stereotype** and the idea of **generalization**
- **Self-stereotypes** and **stereotypes of the Other**
- **Stereotypes** and the capacity of **long-term survival**

Defining Stereotype

'Stereotypes are preconceived ideas that are not based on experience, have no concrete foundations, dominate the members of a group and have the ability to reproduce themselves unchanged'





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