

Resumés

of the scholarly works of Simeon Andonov Simeonov,

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Monographs

1. Francisco de Miranda in the Balkans. The birth of the idea of Latin American independence. Sofia: IBCT - BAS, 2022. 156 p.: with illus., col.; 24 cm. ISBN: 978-619-7179-31-6

The monograph explores one of the first contacts of Latin American travelers with the Balkan Peninsula - the "Balkan odyssey" of the famous Venezuelan revolutionary Francisco de Miranda in the summer of 1786. The monograph consists of an introduction, 6 chapters, a conclusion and an appended bibliography. The book contains 156 standard printed pages. It uses a wide range of sources – the diaries of Francisco de Miranda, periodicals, recollections of Miranda by his contemporaries, and new sources from Spanish and U.S. archives – to re-examine a forgotten episode of Balkan history as a key moment in the global Age of Revolutions.

The introduction analyzes the characteristics and problematics of the source material, emphasizing the importance of the source base for the historical reconstruction of one of the first visits of Latin Americans to Southeastern Europe. A critical analysis of the academic literature is provided, with particular emphasis on the history of international relations, "entangled" history, "new diplomatic" history, and global history. The study aims to integrate these methodological approaches by means of rethinking the relationship between "center" and "periphery", placing the interactions between two traditionally perceived as "peripheral" regions (South America and Southeastern Europe) at the center of historical analysis.

The monograph embeds Miranda's encounter into two distinct historiographical interventions on the nineteenth-century Balkans. First, it shows that the Latin American traveler had a profound interest in the system of international relations in Southeastern Europe, and demonstrates that the Creole not only inserted himself into that system, but also used certain aspects of it in the formulation of his revolutionary outlook and strategy. Second, the monograph demonstrates that the traveler perused a significant part of the most authoritative print materials on the Ottoman Empire and actively engaged with this large literary tradition. The book reconstructs his cultural pursuits through an in-depth analysis of his literary influences, reading his diaries as part of the rich travel writing tradition of Southeast Europe, extensively studied by scholars such as Nadia Danova, Raia Zaimova, Antoaneta Balcheva, Maria Todorova, Nikolay Aretov, Vanya Lozanova-Stantcheva, Julia Zlatkova, Elmira Vasileva, Vinicije Lupis, and a number of other researchers of the Balkans. These historiographical interventions – in the world of international relations and in

the culture of the Balkans – are understood as a compact historiographical contribution, but their relationship changes in the course of the exposition, which makes a brief presentation of their dynamic interaction expedient.

Chapter 1 traces Francisco de Miranda's political maturation from his birth to his departure from the newly founded United States of America following the end of the American Revolution (1776 – 1783). A special emphasis is placed on his Catholic education, and the role of religion is re-evaluated as an important element of the revolutionary's career – one of the contributions of the present study. His communication with French consular officials is also illuminated, thereby fulfilling the objective set in the introduction – to situate Miranda in a network of consular and diplomatic ties. Last but not least, the first chapter of the monograph refutes the widely established scholarly consensus on the participation of the Venezuelan in the American Revolution. Rather than seeing his involvement with the cause of the American revolutionaries as foundational to his revolutionary career, the monograph takes a reserved approach to the available historical sources, arguing for the gradual (rather than sudden) construction of his revolutionary worldview.

Chapter 2 analyzes Miranda's wanderings in Europe and his first contact with the Balkans – his visit to the independent Republic of Dubrovnik (Ragusa). Dubrovnik is understood as his "window to the Balkans" - a place where his notions of republican rule first fell into the long shadow of "oriental despotism", i.e. the set of oppressive practices that the Venezuelan identified as foundational to Ottoman rule in southeastern Europe. The Republic of Dubrovnik is the first Balkan location in which Miranda establishes a connection with European consular representatives, and we can highlight his mediating activity as motivated by primarily rational and material motives, rather than an ideological commitment to a particular political project in the world of international relations.

The traveler's first contacts with the Ottoman Empire are explored in detail in Chapter 3. In it, for the first time, the three threads that form the Latin American's overall idea of Southeastern Europe are intertwined - the Balkan way of life and culture, the ancient heritage of the region and the clash between competing notions of international relations. On the basis of detailed examples from the Creole's diaries, his observations on the Orthodox religion and traditional forms of entertainment in the Balkans are analyzed. The practice of Islamization is discussed extensively, with the monograph paying particular attention to its ethnic, religious and gender characteristics in Miranda's reflections. These cultural phenomena are set against the backdrop of the growing tensions between European officials and the Porte, which would culminate in the Russo-Turkish War (1787–1792) less than a year after Miranda's Balkan odyssey.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the crossing of the Aegean Sea and Miranda's stay in Smyrna (Izmir). The chapter analyzes Miranda's reflections on the active commercial and seafaring activities of the sailors from the island of Hydra, and their role in the nascent Greek national liberation movement is discussed in detail. A strong emphasis is also placed on the slave trade in the Mediterranean, which the traveler commented upon, and its comparative characteristics with slavery in the Western Hemisphere are highlighted. In Miranda's criticism of the slave trade, the chapter sees clear evidence of his increasingly Anglophile sentiments, which in the following decades would

develop into close cooperation with the Foreign Office and culminate in his attempts at an organized rebellion in Latin America.

Chapter 5 examines Miranda's contacts and interactions in Constantinople, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Being the longest in terms of duration, this period of his "Balkan odyssey" is also the most extensively researched within the monograph. Again, attention is paid to slavery and the slave trade, but unlike the previous chapter, Chapter 5 thoroughly analyzes the gender and age dynamics of these practices. Like the previous chapter, this one cites historical research on slavery in America that enriches and contextualizes Miranda's experiences and observations in Southeast Europe. Furthermore, the chapter explores in detail his archaeological activities, interweaving them with the motif of decadent despotism.

The chapter's main emphasis falls on the complex diplomatic network in the Ottoman capital and its adjacent areas of Üsküdar (Scutari) and Büyükdere. Miranda's diplomatic maneuvers in the capital are explored in two ways: on the one hand, the main diplomatic representatives and their strategic approaches to the famous traveler are presented, with the aim of drawing him more strongly into rival political camps; on the other hand, the Creole himself is understood as an informal diplomat who uses existing interpersonal and inter-imperial relations to achieve his own goals – avoiding confrontation with Spain and expanding his interactions with northern European powers such as Russia, Sweden and the Netherlands, his next destinations in Europe. This emphasis on informal diplomacy resonates with current academic contributions to this important topic by scholars such as Alexandre Kostov, Vanya Lozanova-Stantcheva, Liliana Simeonova, Penka Danova, Roumen Nikolov, Biser Petrov, and others. Overall, the chapter presents Miranda's activities in Constantinople as conducive to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the smooth running of international relations, with the exception of Spain, whose ambassador remained hostile to him until the end of his visit.

It is important to note that the work also pays attention to women in diplomatic missions, whose role is of key importance to the conduct of regular international relations. Understood as a social practice, in the spirit of "new diplomatic history," such a diplomatic framework provides an original perspective on the historical significance of Miranda's visit to the imperial capital. The Latin American background made the traveler not only a vivid interlocutor, but also a confidant of the several imperial powers and diplomatic families that dominated international discussions in the imperial capital. This favored the easy and flexible reconciliation of the diverse gender, national, and racial-ethnic registers that defined the norms in the highly hierarchical world of international relations in the nineteenth century.

The final chapter, Chapter 6, takes a retrospective look at the Balkans from Kherson and the Crimean Peninsula. Miranda visited these areas immediately after leaving Constantinople, but the author provides evidence for the expediency of an integrated approach to his experiences in view of the continuing and enduring connections between the Creole revolutionary and Southeastern Europe. The territories annexed by Russia in 1783 in the northern Black Sea naturally complemented the Venezuelan's criticism of "oriental despotism", and the author testified to this with examples of ethnic discrimination (the emigration of hundreds of thousands of Tatars, Greeks and Armenians) and restrictions on freedom of movement (heavy quarantine regulations and

prohibitions on the use of imperial roads). These practices interweave his experiences in the Ottoman Empire and on the periphery of the Russian Empire under the rule of Catherine II.

In the Conclusion, the author summarizes the results of the research and provides new perspectives on "entangling" the histories of Southeast Europe and Latin America in the context of globalization. The history of capitalism or the entangled history of consular and diplomatic relations are singled out as possibilities for such an approach.

The monograph provides a new and original reading of the Balkans as a region of particular importance in the global history of the modern world. It combines the detailed analysis of specific, hitherto unknown facts, interactions and events, with an extensive historiographical and analytical view, which allows this work to highlight the significance of the interactions between Miranda and a wide range of his contemporaries in the Balkans, beyond the prosaic of individual encounters and trivial social exchanges.

2. Builders of the Western World: How Consuls Created the Modern International Order. Sofia: IBCT – BAS, 2022. 312 p.: with illus.; 24 cm. ISBN: 978-619-7179-30-9

The monograph is a global institutional history of consular institutions in the "Golden Age" of diplomacy, the first half of the "long" XIX century. The study examines consulates as building blocks of the modern international system and important institutional units in the development of global capitalism. Drawing on new archival material from over a dozen archives, the work reexamines the scholarly consensus on consular institutions as "auxiliary" diplomatic agencies, conceiving of them as global regulatory bodies—connecting links in the system of global exchange of goods, people, ideas, and capital.

Understanding the institutional history of Western consulates is important, because these institutions are harbingers of Balkan modernity. From the establishment of the first Genoese and Venetian consulates in the Balkans in the Middle Ages to the establishment of the regime of capitulations in the Ottoman Empire, consular relations were integral to the Balkan transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age. The emergence and evolution of extraterritorial jurisdiction – the institutional core of consular institutions – is a major problem in the field of Balkan studies, which generates interest both among researchers of Ottoman diplomatic and economic history, and among scholars devoted to the analysis of the national liberation struggles of the Balkan peoples in the XIX and XX centuries. Their works are of essential importance for the understanding of the transformational processes that took place in the Balkans from the beginning of the XIX century.

Unfortunately, however, works devoted to consulship suffer from several deficiencies. First, they homogenize consulship—one of the central institutions of the capitulation regime in the Ottoman Empire—by viewing it primarily in the context of imperial geopolitics. In this way, the differences between the Western powers are minimized, they are seen as embroiled exclusively in clashes for economic supremacy, and their representatives in the Ottoman Empire are given an exaggerated importance - often reinforced by these agents themselves. It is not coincidental that the majority of such studies have strong prosopographic characteristics – the research emphasis falls on the

individual case, certain consuls with clear imperial ambitions are singled out, and the consular activity itself, as a social practice and as a structural element in the maintenance of international relations, remains insufficiently illuminated.

Using new methodological approaches and archival findings, this work reexamines Western consular institutions precisely with the ambition of contextualizing their historical construction, illuminating their evolution as an intertwined global process, and presenting a structural analysis of their institutional functions. The study draws creative impetus from various scholarly fields—international relations, the "new" (ie, de-ideologized, empirically oriented) history of capitalism, global studies, digital humanities, and Balkan studies—to present a more holistic and complex picture of consular relations as a structural element in the diplomatic history of the 19th century. In this way, it contributes to a more objective historical analysis of these fundamental institutions for the modern Balkans in a global context.

Articles and Studies

1. **„Служить нации, представлять империю: консулы России на Балканах (1774–1878 гг.)“.** В: Волокитина, Т.В., К.В. Мельчакова, М.М. Фролова (ред.), **Балканы знакомые и незнакомые: незнакомые события, личности, нарративы. XVIII–XXI вв., с. 73–81, Москва, 2022, doi:10.31168/7576-0477-0.2.1**

Influenced by the Anglo-Irish political scientist Benedict Anderson, many historians of the “long nineteenth century” continue to define nations as “imagined political communities” and consider nation and empire as two incompatible or even opposite phenomena. Unlike these traditional interpretations, the latest historiography raises the question of how the creation of new states in the Balkans influenced imperial geopolitics and to what extent imperial structures mediated the emergence of new nations. Focusing its attention on the widespread and well-studied consular establishments, this article claims that these institutions allowed local Balkan elites at the beginning of the nineteenth century to combine their national aspirations with imperial geopolitics. Due to the unique position of the Russian Empire after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) Russian consuls in the Balkans turned consulates into genuine imperial laboratories, as well as into incubators of national independence.

2. **“Consular Recognition, Partial Neutrality, and the Making of Atlantic Diplomacy, 1778–1825,” *Diplomatic History* 46:1 (2022): 144-172. ISSN: 0145-2096 (Print), 1467-7709 (Online)**

This study examines the creation of new nation-states in the early 19th century through the prism of consular institutions, which played an essential role in the construction of international diplomatic structures. The study uses archival materials from European and American archives to demonstrate the global nature of the diplomatic arguments, strategies and resources used by the

“founding fathers” of new nation-states in the process of global integration. In order for this integration to take place, the new nations engaged in the practice of "consular recognition", i.e. the empowerment of consular institutions with quasi-diplomatic functions and their institutionalization in the exclusive sphere of diplomacy and foreign policy. With its global focus, the study contributes to the understanding of the transformations in consular institutions in the Ottoman Empire, whose experience in this regard has been, and continues to be, the subject of increased research interest. European consular services in the Ottoman Empire were one of the main engines of the process of modernization and standardization that accompanied the establishment of new nation-states in both Southeast Europe and the Atlantic region from the early nineteenth century.

3. “Jacksonian Consular Reform and the Forging of America’s First Global Bureaucracy,” *Journal of Policy History* 33:4 (October 2021): 401-428

This study is dedicated to the history of globalization and traces the main moments in the evolution of the consular services of the United States of America – an important geopolitical actor on the Balkan diplomatic scene in the 19th century. Contrary to the current academic consensus on 19th-century Balkan diplomacy, the study claims that the United States played a key role in the creation of the international system – and especially in the sphere of consular relations. It is their relatively weak institutional framework and their distance from Europe that gave this rising economic power – with a particular interest in creating an efficient and predictable transatlantic infrastructure – a great weight in shaping the international geopolitical and economic framework. The research contributes both to a reassessment of American influence in the Balkans and to a rethinking of the role of the Balkans in transatlantic debates on the regulation of the international order. The Ottoman Balkans, along with the still-existing but rapidly disintegrating system of capitulations, were an irrevocable factor in the debates surrounding the institutionalization of American consular relations in a globalizing world.

4. “Miranda in the Balkans: Decadent Despotism, Consulship, and the Making of a South-Eastern Revolutionary in the Age of Revolution,” *Journal of Global History* 16:3 (2021): 375-394

The article examines Francisco de Miranda's trip to the Balkans (1786) through the prism of consulship and the ideology of "decadent despotism." The article reads this historical journey not just an exotic excursion in the biography of the famous revolutionary, but as a turning point in the global history of the “long” nineteenth century. In the course of his travels, Miranda developed his idea of "decadent despotism", which would later play a defining role in his revolutionary activity during the French (1789–1799) and Latin American (1811–1830) revolutions. Miranda formed his views on the Ottoman Empire and on the republican form of government under the strong influence of his companions, among whom the consuls in the Balkans played a special role. Extraterritorial jurisdiction gave these agents enormous privileges and prerogatives in dealing with the Ottoman

authorities, which they used in their contacts with Miranda, seeking to involve him in various imperial networks and ideological projects.

5. “Insurgent, self-styled Patriots’: Consuls, Privateers, Slavers, and Mariners in the Making of the Privateering Archipelago,” *Journal of Global Slavery* 5:3 (Fall 2020): 291-321

Piracy, privateering, and the slave trade are transnational phenomena that have long remained on the margins of historical accounts of globalization, the emergence of nation-states, and the creation of modern international relations. This study fills the scholarly gap by placing these historical phenomena at the center of a transnational story about the creation of regulatory regimes on a local, regional, and global scale in the early nineteenth century. On the basis of new documents from Iberian archives, the relationship of pirates, privateers and slave traders with the agents of the state – consuls, customs officials, judges and municipal executive bodies – is reevaluated. By focusing on these processes as global phenomena, the study enriches the historical understanding of the wave of naval expeditions against continental European empires as connected and mutually conditioned episodes of resistance to imperial authority, from the domains of the Ottoman Empire to the European colonial realms in the Americas. By uncovering new connections between Baltimorean shipyards and participants in the Greek Revolution (1821–1830), this article adds important evidentiary material for the study of the Balkan revolutions in the early 19th century, thereby contributing to an understanding of the Balkan liberation movements as global phenomena in the Age of Revolutions.

6. “With What Right Are They Sending a Consul’: Unauthorized Consulship, U.S. Expansion, and the Transformation of the Spanish American Empire, 1795-1808,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 40:1 (Spring 2020): 19-44

The clash between the Spanish, French and British empires in the early 19th century transformed the global diplomatic order. Oftentimes, this transformation has been narrated and understood within the framework of traditional diplomatic history – such as the account of the creation of the Concert of Europe in the era of the Napoleonic Wars. The article complements this consensual interpretation by analyzing the poorly known and unstudied processes in the sphere of consular relations. Rather than viewing consuls as subordinate diplomatic officials, the article presents a range of new evidentiary materials for widespread consular autonomy in the making of important geostrategic, geopolitical, and diplomatic decisions. The theoretical framework used in the study (the consulate as a "trans-institutional system") is applicable to the Balkan context, where vice-consulates are often left to determine their own agendas and political biases. The study also strives to rethink the opposition between European powers, complementing the emphasis of a number of Balkanist studies on the Napoleonic conflicts as a trans-regional, global clash to define a new international order, with an enhanced and deepened presence of consular representations.