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ENGAGING  vulnerability

**CAN A PERSON BE
ILLEGAL?**

Refugees, Migrants
and Citizenship in Europe

Olof Heilo & Ingela Nilsson
Back to Byzantium

Alexander Stagnell, Louise Schou
Therkildsen, Mats Rosengren [eds]

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— Back to Byzantium —
Rethinking the Borders of Europe

In early 2016, after reports had made the rounds in news media worldwide about sexual assaults committed by North African immigrants against women during New Year's celebrations in Cologne, a Polish news magazine ran a cover depicting "the Rape of Europe": it featured a white, blonde woman, clad only in the flag of the European Union, assaulted from all sides by grabbing and clutching hands, hairy and of darker complexion.¹

References to ancient Greek history and mythology are so common in discussions about the identity of Europe that few people are likely to give them any further thought.² But perhaps the fact that no one noted how the myth had been turned on its head shows how weak and even shallow that alleged continuity from antiquity really is. The mythical queen called Europa came from Tyrus, in modern-day Lebanon – from the historical region of Syria³ – and was abducted to Crete by Zeus, who had taken on the form of a white bull. Herodotus, who suggests that Greeks were the perpetrators of an actual abduction committed against people from the Near East,⁴ discusses Europa together with Io and Helen as representative of a type of myth derived from the widespread practice of abduction and rape in the ancient Mediterranean area.⁵

The text on the magazine cover, which refers to an "Islamic rape", makes it more tempting to suggest that what was supposed to resurface in the historical consciousness of its readers were not memories of an ancient Mediterranean world of which the latter have merely vague ideas, but of an Early Modern history of Muslim raiding and warfare in the Mediterranean and in Eastern Europe, where Poland takes special pride in having defeated the Ottomans in 1683.⁶ In other words: the "rape" does not define what Europe or Europa is, since a closer examination reveals the mythical queen to



offer little but a narrative trope without any deeper significance. It merely defines what Europe or Europa is not.

For the various nationalist parties that made such considerable gains in the 2015 elections to the European parliament, it is easy to say what Europe is not. They may not agree among themselves

about the nature of Europe, but in their common resistance to Islam – against immigration from the Middle East, against a possible Turkish EU-membership and against the planning and building of mosques on European soil – it might seem as if they have stumbled upon a European unity that they have otherwise denied or even derided. The following will show why it is not that simple, and why these nationalists, rather than the new narrators of a resurgent Europe, are likely to end up as the unwarranted ventriloquists of a very different narrative.

But we should briefly return to the ancient world. As a toponym, Europe first appears in a Mediterranean Sea void of fixed borders, laws, and order; of perpetual mobility of goods, people, and stories. Neither Hellenism, which spread from the Aegean, nor Christianity, which spread from the Levant, could be called European: they overlap in an Eastern Mediterranean world of fluid borders and constant interaction. Whereas Athens and Jerusalem are often depicted as opponents, cities like Alexandria and Antioch were main centres of Judaism, Christianity and Hellenism alike, a cultural interaction that extended both east and west to Carthage in North Africa and to the Persian Empire in Iraq. For the Roman Empire – mainly ruled from Constantinople from the fourth century AD – the Mediterranean was everything: its origin, its purpose, its political, economic, cultural, and ideological core.⁷ Even the collapse of its old borders against the Germans along the Rhine and the Danube did not alter the fact that its coastlines remained Roman, that the urban centres of the empire were directed towards the sea, and its various cultures and ethnicities were interconnected by the same oversea communications that St. Paul had once used to spread Christianity. From a Mediterranean perspective, Europe was simply the land mass to the north, just as Africa lay to the south and Asia to the east.

The birth of “Europe” as we know it is synonymous with the breakup of Mediterranean unity. When Henri Pirenne discussed this process in the 1930s he saw its reason in the rise of Islam, which had purportedly prevented the Arabs from following the examples of the German invaders and adopting the “superior civilization” it encountered in the Mediterranean.⁸ Muhammad had, so to say, put an end to Antiquity, and instead Europe had emerged as its rejuvenator, represented by the coronation of Charlemagne in 800. It is indeed noteworthy that the term “Europe” seems to be first used in a wider sense in the Mozarabic *Chronicle of 754* with reference to the major defeat that the Arabs suffered at Tours in 732, an event that played a crucial role in securing the legitimacy of the Carolingians and paving the way for a political alliance between the pope and the Franks.⁹ But there is another possibility: namely that the breakup of Mediterranean unity was the work of Charlemagne and the Franks themselves. When Pope Francis was elected in 2013, calendar enthusiasts were eager to note that this was the first non-European pope to be elected since the year 731, but few went to the roots of the fact and asked themselves what it was that had actually taken place in the mid-eighth century, when a line of Greek-speaking popes from Sicily, Syria, Anatolia, and North Africa was disrupted and the long line of subsequent popes from Latin Italy and Western Europe – areas that had until then been at the periphery of ancient civilization – assumed their place.¹⁰

The simple fact is that neither the rise of Islam nor the emergence of Europe took place in a historical vacuum: they both articulated themselves against a political, cultural, and ideological nexus that encompassed much of the ancient world and its traditions, an empire whose existence we have become so used to ignoring that we persist calling it “Byzantine” despite the fact that the purported

Byzantines never considered themselves as anything but Christian and possibly Greek-speaking Romans. It is not only that Charlemagne was self-consciously claiming a title to which the emperors in Constantinople had a hereditary right; contrary to what Pirenne assumed, the first century of Muslim or Arab rule in the Middle East was also marked by a strong cultural continuity with the Eastern Roman Empire in the Mediterranean that the caliphs tried to both emulate and defeat – even the first monuments of Islam are unmistakably Late Antique in style. In fact the first sign of a definitive Islamic shift away from the Mediterranean can be dated to the same time as the papal alliance with the Franks: when the Abbasids overthrew the Umayyads and moved the capital of the Caliphate from Damascus to Baghdad (which was founded in 762).¹¹

The perceived dualism between Islam and Europe disappears or at least transforms once we become aware of the blind spot in their midst. Against the shared backdrop of the Byzantine Empire as a Eurasian crossroad, many of the historical conflicts that current Islamists and European right-wing parties are trying to evoke lose their meaning. Indeed, instead of being constrained to their own self-constituting narratives, they might even find themselves sharing an epistemological horizon of which they had not previously been aware.¹² In the following we want to draw particular attention to Muslim and Christian narratives of conquest that both are subverted by the Byzantine *Other* and – at least to a certain degree – end up as narratives of defeat.

At first sight the holy wars of Medieval Christianity and Islam may seem to offer a strange mirror to our own time. Now as then we find young men and women leaving their homelands to join a self-proclaimed rule of God, only to end up killing their own co-religionists and laying waste to the historical heartlands of their

faith. Whereas the First Crusade (1095-99) followed a Byzantine call for mercenary troops to fight against the Seljuk Turks, its stated aims to help other Christians were quickly overshadowed by greed and a spirit of adventure, and within little more than a century the Crusaders had turned upon their hosts and destroyed the Byzantine Empire in the Fourth Crusade (1204), when Constantinople was sacked and looted. In the words of the Byzantine historiographer Niketas Choniates,

the Muslims did not behave like that; they even remained kind and friendly towards [Western] people when they entered Jerusalem: they did no harm to the Latin women; they did not throw themselves upon the monuments of the Christians; they did not send baptised people to death ... these enemies of Christ treated the Latins, whom they consider infidel, not with sword, not with fire, not with famine, not with persecution, not with stealth, not with ruin or pressure, but with great generosity; but these self-appointed “friends of Christ” and “brethren in faith” treated us in these ways which I have enumerated ...¹³

The fact is that Byzantium had evoked not only admiration among Westerners, but also envy, fear and contempt.¹⁴ Averil Cameron has discussed this development in terms of “orientalism”, arguing that an increasingly orientalist view of Byzantium partly replaced the initial feelings of respect.¹⁵ We may follow such changes in perception in documentary sources, like the eyewitness accounts of the crusaders,¹⁶ but also in the various romances that gained popularity in the West around this time. *Cligès* by Chrétien de Troie, written around 1176, is the first of a long series of romances written in the vernacular and with part of the plot set in a Byzantine

or Byzantine-like story world.¹⁷ A few years later we find an anonymous French romance, or romance-like text, known as *Partonopeu de Blois*, which has a significant part of the plot set in Byzantium.¹⁸ The hero Partonopeu is kidnapped while hunting in the Ardennes, and brought by ship to a mysterious castle where a woman comes to sleep with him every night. She turns out to be Melior, Empress of Constantinople. He is forbidden to see her: they must only meet in darkness. Obviously he cannot resist the temptation to look at her and, as a result, falls out of her favour: an inversion of the Cupid and Psyche myth probably drawn from the Latin tale by Apuleius. The romance includes numerous such inversions of myths and motifs, often with a gendered twist – the hero is seduced by the heroine; she is educated and has a higher social standing; he has to compete in a beauty contest (naked!) to win her favour again. This has to be understood against the Byzantine setting: a country that was not only luxurious, titillating, and alluring, but also dangerous, confusing, and subversive.¹⁹

Islamic tradition, too, preserved an image of a Byzantine Empire with seductive rather than martial powers. Both the objective of the early Caliphate to conquer Constantinople and its failure to do so left traces in the Islamic apocalyptic tradition, where a future fall of the Roman Empire appears as the last bastion of worldly rule before the coming of the Antichrist and the return of Jesus.²⁰ In the Abbasid era, when large-scale bellicose confrontations were abating, single warriors and mystics kept assembling along the Byzantine frontier in northern Syria in order to embark on campaigns into the subversive realms of the infidel, sometimes mixing martial arts with asceticism and mortifications.²¹ In the twelfth-century *Conference of the Birds*, a central literary work in the Sufi tradition, we learn about a pious Muslim sheikh who goes to Byzantium, falls in love with

a high-born Christian woman and makes himself her slave, even herding her pigs just to be close to her.²² The Byzantines themselves seem to have been aware about such cases: in the Medieval Greek epic *Digenis Akrites*, an Arab warrior from Raqqa falls so in love with a Byzantine girl he has captured that he is even prepared to renounce Islam, become a Christian and settle in Byzantium.²³

While the Crusader rape and pillage of Constantinople in 1204 dealt the main blow to the Byzantine Empire, Muslims ultimately reaped the prize: in 1453 the city was conquered by the Ottomans, and a historical circle seemed to close from the early days of Islam. Once again, Europe was under siege: calls were raised for new Crusades and stories of heroic feats found new markets. At this time, we find a Catalan romance, *Tirant lo Blanc* – begun by Joanot Martorell before 1460 and posthumously finished by Martí Joan de Galba in 1490 – telling a counterfactual story in which the Byzantine Empire is saved from the Turks by a sort of alliance between Europe and Africa.²⁴ Here too, the hero – the knight Tirant from Brittany – falls in love with a Byzantine woman, although the love story is less central and not instrumental for the plot. *Tirant* has often been described as the first ‘realistic’ romance, or even the first novel,²⁵ a description that depends on the historical details that allow us to recognize events and characters (even Mehmet II himself). The high status of its lively sarcasm and human feelings goes back to Cervantes who praised it as “the best book of its kind in the world”.²⁶

If *Partonopeu* subverts the European narrative, *Tirant* might seem to reconfirm it: not only have the traditional gender roles been restored, but a knight from the West is allowed to stand as the saviour of Byzantium from Islam. The trope is familiar from innumerable romances and no one has deconstructed it better than Cervantes himself in the ironic depiction of the fool who, drunk

on the chivalrous deeds of the romances, claims to offer protection from monsters and infidels that are actually sheep and windmills. It is not that Cervantes was indifferent to the real suffering of people who had to endure violence and abuse at foreign hands: he himself had suffered a fate shared by innumerable Mediterranean travellers in early modern Europe when he was abducted by North African corsairs and spent time in captivity in Algiers.²⁷ What he derided was not the noble motives of the knights but the inadequacy of their simplified world-view in a complex and contradictory world. Perhaps it is noteworthy that Cervantes was also an admirer of the *Ethiopian Tale* by Heliodoros, a Late Antique Greek novel, which in the Renaissance and Baroque eras was considered equal to the Homeric and Vergilian epics.²⁸ Set in North Africa and full of pirates, robbers, and shipwrecks, it contained elements that were, in fact, a lived experience to Cervantes. But most of all, it was an adventurous reality that predated both Christianity and Islam and to which the religious overtones of the Crusader romances had merely added an element that had with time become, at best, ceremonious and, at worst, hypocritical.

Here we are back in the ancient, lawless and borderless Mediterranean world of Queen Europa, a world that had in reality never ceased to exist, and whose reality the contemporaries of Cervantes could not deny even in face of the Ottoman conquests.²⁹ But now the Europeans had discovered new shores and other seas: for the next centuries, their restless energy would be directed elsewhere – first towards the new world that lay across unexplored oceans, and gradually back to the more arcane interiors of the old world from which they had emerged – and cause both a peaceful exchange and violent displacement of goods and people across the world. Soon it would become evident to the Europeans that in a global perspec-

tive “Europe” did not even match the definition of a continent as it had appeared from a Mediterranean horizon. So why was the term maintained?

In order to answer this question and finally return to the cover of the Polish magazine, we need to shift our attention to Eastern Europe, for it is there – and not in the Mediterranean – that we find the foundations of the current Fortress Europe. The right-wing thinkers who inspired Anders Behring Breivik³⁰ may imagine the lands east of Vienna as a Christian bulwark against Ottoman expansion, but most of all this was a region that was left disadvantaged in the global race unleashed by the Western European powers in the Early Modern era. In the areas of the “second serfdom”, three empires – Austria, Russia, and Prussia – would vie to legitimise their quasi-colonial ambitions after the disappearance of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth,³¹ and if Austria is responsible for promoting the largely erroneous idea that it had once repelled the Turks, Prussia played a no less significant part in the equally erroneous construction of a European history that goes back to ancient Greece – a thought that German romanticism had already heralded, but which would find its most influential vindication in the works of Hegel.³² For Russia, maintaining the notion of a European continent distinct from Asia while also conceiving their border in the Ural Mountains both ensured its own European status and justified its imperial ambitions over the Turkish and Muslim peoples of Central Asia and around the Black Sea.³³

Though the self-proclaimed religious-conservative “Holy Alliance” between Austria, Russia, and Prussia became an important foundation for the Europe that emerged out of the ruins of the Napoleonic wars and the 1814-15 Congress in Vienna, simply evoking a Medieval past could not save it from the challenges of a Modern

present.³⁴ Whereas the 1821 Greek uprising against the Ottomans became a main source of inspiration for liberals all over Europe, it also raised British concerns about Russian imperial ambitions in the Eastern Mediterranean and Central Asia, a tension that came to a head in the 1853-56 Crimean War;³⁵ and if the Ottoman Empire was sick or even dying, as Tsar Nicholas I insinuated, the ghost of its Byzantine predecessor was still vivid enough to send shudders down the spines of the Western European powers that opted to sacrifice tens of thousands of men in order to prevent Constantinople from being recovered for Orthodox Christianity.³⁶

Then as now, Russia had its defenders. Conservatives like the Prussian Herrman Goedsche – whose anti-Semitic writings would make up a core part of the later *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* that the secret police of the tsar collected – wrote pamphlets and popular novels in English in which he depicted Russia as a bulwark of traditional European values against the mutual threats of Capitalism, Socialism, Judaism, and Islam.³⁷ Bismarck encouraged the “civilizing mission” of Russia in Central Asia and added that the Ottoman lands were not worth the bones of a Pomeranian soldier.³⁸ Other voices were raised in the wake of the Crimean War: Mark Twain visited Russia and the Ottoman Empire and became an unabashed partisan of the former,³⁹ and when Ottoman atrocities in Bulgaria made headlines during the 1875-78 Eastern Crisis, it was the liberals of William Gladstone who became the driving force behind a British change of foreign policy.⁴⁰ In the end, the collapse of Ottoman authority and the subsequent exodus of hundreds of thousands of European Muslims from the Balkans left behind a power rivalry in Eastern Europe that made the 1914 catastrophe inevitable.

In his recent study into the Russian origins of the war, Sean McMeekin has likened the British liberals in 1914 to ventriloquists for

Russian imperial ambitions.⁴¹ The conservatives of our time may consider themselves a new kind of Crusaders, but they are likely to end up either like Don Quijote – fighting windmills when there are more urgent issues at hand – or even like Partonopeu: rather than rescuing the distressed damsel of their dreams, they could well become the prisoners of a very different Europe than the one they have imagined.⁴²

Sources

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Endnotes

- 1 For a reproduction of the image, cf. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/18/polish-magazines-islamic-of-europe-cover-sparks-outrage> (retrieved on Oct. 15, 2016).
- 2 H. Morales, *Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007), pp. 5–18.
- 3 For the connection with the Middle Eastern goddess known as Astarte or Ishtar, see Lucian, *De Dea Syria* (ed. and transl. Harmon, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1925) pp. 4.
- 4 Herodotos, *History* (ed. and transl. Godley, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1920) I:1–5, IV:45.
- 5 A. Koschorke, *Hegel und wir* (Berlin: Suhrkamp 2015), pp. 150–56.
- 6 A. Ziemlewska, "Jan III. Sobieski: Legende und Kult des Siegerkönigs", in: Heiss, Feichtinger (eds.) *Der Erinnernte Feind: Kritische Studien zur "Türkenbelagerung"* (Wien: Mandelbaum kritik&utopie 2013), pp. 26–42. A new, Polish-financed monument to Jan Sobieski is currently about to be erected on the Mount Kahlenberg in Vienna, where the 1683 battle took place.
- 7 M. McCormick, *Origins of European Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001), p. 83ff.
- 8 Pirenne, *Mahomet et Charlemagne* (Paris 1937) 130f. "La grande question qui se pose ici est de savoir pourquoi les Arabes, qui n'étaient certainement pas plus nombreux que les Germains, n'ont pas été absorbés comme eux par les populations de ces régions de civilisation supérieure dont ils se sont emparés?" A similar thought was already proposed by Theodor Mommsen in *Das römische Imperium der Cäsaren* (Berlin 1941, ch. XII) when he referred to Islam as "Henker des Hellenentums".
- 9 D. L. Lewis, *God's Crucible: Islam and the Making of Europe* (London and New York: W. W. Norton 2008) pp. 171–2.
- 10 J. Herrin, *The Formation of Christendom* 413–16 (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1987); A. J. Ekonomou, *Byzantine Rome and Greek Popes* (Lanham M D: Lexington Books 2007), pp. 244–72, 298–301;

L. Brubaker, J. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2011), pp. 168–73.

11 O. Heilo, *Eastern Rome and the Rise of Islam* (Abingdon: Routledge 2016), pp. 102–6.

12 Most efforts to geographically locate a Western or European historical tradition end up stranded along the Mediterranean coastlines: Rome, Athens, and Jerusalem (cf. J. Habermas, *Zeit der Übergänge. Kleine Politische Schriften IX* (Berlin: Suhrkamp 2001), p. 183ff), whereas even the most well-meaning attempts to put Islam on the common map seem to make a strange stretch for Mecca instead (cf. Brague, “Athens, Jerusalem, Mecca: Leo Strauss’s ‘Muslim’ Understanding of Greek Philosophy”, *Poetics Today* 19(2), pp. 235–59) despite the fact that the political, cultural, and religious geography of the Sunni Islamic and Arabic world has been centred on cities like Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, two of which are located in direct proximity to the Mediterranean, and all three of which have been ruled from the same capital at the Bosphorus as the late Roman Empire and the early Christian church.

13 Niketas Choniates, *History* 576 (ed. van Dieten, Berlin 1975). Transl. O. Heilo.

14 For an illustrative discussion of this process, see K. N. Ciggaar, ed., *Western Travellers to Constantinople. The West and Byzantium, 962–1204: Cultural and Political Relations* (Leiden, New York and Köln, 1996), esp. 45–77 and 322–254. See also A. Ducellier, ‘Une mythologie urbaine: Constantinople vue d’Occident au moyen âge’, *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome. Moyen-Âge, Temps modernes* 96/1 (1984), pp. 405–424.

15 A. Cameron, “Byzance dans le débat sur l’orientalisme”, in M.-F. Auzépy (ed.), *Byzance en Europe* (Saint-Denis, 2003), pp. 235–250; “Byzantium Between East and West”, in J.-M. Spieser (ed.), *Présence de Byzance* (Dijon 2007) pp. 113–33; *The Byzantines* (Oxford 2006), pp. 192–93.

16 In the words of Robert de Clari, who took part in the Fourth Crusade “... si l’on vous contait le centième de la richesse, de la beauté, de la magnificence qu’il y en avait dans les abbayes, les églises, les palais et la ville, on passerait pour menteur et vous ne le croiriez pas.” (*La conquête*

de Constantinople. Édition bilingue. Publication, traduction, présentation et notes par Jean Dufournet [Champion Classiques 14] (Paris, 2004), p. 183.)

17 Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligès*, édition et traduction par Charles Méla et Olivier Collet (Paris, 1994). For a recent discussion of this romance in relation to the Byzantine *Digenis Akrites*, see M. Moore, *Exchanges in exoticism: Cross-cultural marriage and the making of the Mediterranean in Old French romance* (Toronto, 2014), pp. 20–49.

18 *Le roman de Partonopeu de Blois*, édition, traduction et introduction par Olivier Collet et Pierre-Marie Joris (Paris, 2005). On the genre question, see P. Eley, *Partonopeus de Blois: Romance in the making* (Cambridge, 2011).

19 For a recent analysis on this romance’s relation to the Byzantine world, see E. Söderblom Saarela, “L’ἀνδρογεία féminine dans la courtoisie française: une influence byzantine?”, forthcoming in *Byzance et l’Occident III. Le roman au Moyen Âge: de Byzance à la France*, ed. E. Egedi-Kovács (Budapest, 2016).

20 D. Cook, *Studies in Islamic Apocalyptic* (Princeton: Darwin Press 2002), pp. 49–66. It is noteworthy that the monthly magazine of the current “Islamic State” and its digital counterpart are called, respectively, *Dabiq* and *Amaq*: these are the names of two Syrian villages where Islamic apocalyptic traditions expect the “Romans” (Byzantines) to unleash a *Reconquista*. (Muslim, *Sahīh*, V 747–8.)

21 M. Bonner, *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War: Studies in Jihad and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier* (New Haven: American Oriental Society 1996)

22 Farid ud-Din Attar, *Mantiq ut-Tayir* (ed. de Tassy, Stockholm 1929), pp. 1159–1564.

23 *Digenis Akrites: The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (ed. Jeffreys, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998) E:21–217.

24 J. Martorell and M. Joan de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, translated and with a foreword by David H. Rosenthal (New York, 1984).

25 For a discussion of such genre concerns, see e.g. C. J. Merrill, “Reading Tirant lo Blanc as Medieval Romance”, in *Tirant lo Blanc: Text and Context*, ed. J. M. Solà-Solé (New York, 1993), pp. 165–79.

26 Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, part

1, ch. 6. The full passage is cited and discussed in the foreword to the translation of *Tirant lo Blanc* by Rosenthal 1984, vii.

27 M. A. Garcés, *Cervantes in Algiers: a Captive Tale* (New York, 2002).

28 On the Greek novel in Iberian literature, see M. A. Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (New Brunswick 1996), 206–12, and M. Futre Pinheiro, "The Nachleben of the Ancient Novel in Iberian Literature in the Sixteenth Century", in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, ed. G. Schmeling (Leiden 1996), pp. 775–99.

29 Jardine, *Worldly Goods: a New History of the Renaissance* (New York: W. W. Norton 1996), pp. 37–90.

30 Breivik explicitly named an internet forum called "the Gates of Vienna" as his source of inspiration, which promoted the idea that the Umayyad period represented a "first wave" of Islamic conquests, that the Ottoman expansion that was halted at the gates of Vienna in 1527 and 1683 was a "second wave", and that the current immigration of people from the Middle East represent a third one.

31 Cf. esp. G. Thum, "Megalomania and Angst" in: O. Bartov, E. D. Weitz, *Shatterzones of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman Borderlands* (Indiana: Indiana University Press 2013), pp. 42–60.

32 Koschorke, *Hegel und wir*, pp. 47–81, 120–35. For Hölderlin, it was ancient Greece; for Novalis, it was Christianity.

33 J. Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens* 42ff.

34 E. Straub, *Der Wiener Kongress: Das große Fest und die Neuordnung Europas* (Klett-Cotta 2014), pp. 134–62. The German Romanticist painter Heinrich Olivier painted the Holy Alliance as the three emperors Alexander I, Francis I, and Friedrich Wilhelm IV clad like Medieval knights in a Gothic cathedral.

35 P. Hopkirk, *The Great Game* (John Murray 1990), pp. 57–76.

36 O. Figs, *Crimea: The Last Crusade* (Allen Lane 2010), pp. 4–60.

37 Mazumdar, "The Jew, the Turk, and the Indian", in Hodkinson, Walker (eds.), *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History* (New York 2013), pp. 99–116.

38 Hopkirk, *The Great Game* 301; S. McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge: Belknap 2011) 99, 101.

39 Mark Twain, *Innocents Abroad* (American Publishing Company 1869): "It is soothing to the heart to abuse England and France for interposing to save the Ottoman Empire from the destruction it has so richly deserved for a thousand years. (...) I never disliked a Chinaman as I do these degraded Turks and Arabs, and when Russia is ready to war with them again, I hope England and France will not find it good breeding or good judgment to interfere" (p. 173).

40 M. S. Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2008), pp. 116–35.

41 S. McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, pp. 234–43.

42 More on this by B. Schumatzky in *Der neue Untertan. Populismus, Postmoderne, Putin* (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag 2016).