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*From Time to Time: Time Routes and Temporal Fragments in Representations of the Eastern Adriatic*¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper problematizes, from an ethnographic perspective, the temporal aspects of Eastern Adriatic travelogues published in the first half of the 20th century. By employing the concept of ‘time routes,’ the author analyzes diverse temporal fragments emerging along the itineraries of travel writers such as Maude Holbach, Alice Lee Moqué, Frances Kinsley Hutchinson, and Rebecca West. Their descriptions of local cultures and specific locations in the Eastern Adriatic open a debate about the shifting boundaries between the West and the East and between the past, present, and future. Furthermore, the predominantly spatial aspect of travelogues is supplemented by an analysis of diverse non-linear temporal modalities and phenomena, such as anticipation, expectations, idleness, boredom, timelessness, and waiting. The paper explores the spatiotemporally fluid nature of ‘time routes’ in representations of the Eastern Adriatic and how they discursively constitute heterogeneous temporal regimes and practices. The emergence of diverse temporal modalities is examined within the broader, at times overlapping, context of the Mediterranean and Southeastern European regions, raising the question of how Western ideas of linear progress are entangled with processes of temporal othering.

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MAKING TIME FOR *TIME*: PROBLEMS OF TEMPORALITIES IN TRAVEL WRITING

In 2015, during ethnographic field research on lifestyle migration on the Dalmatian island of Hvar, I initiated a conversation with a Scotsman who had settled there a few years earlier. The decision to move to the Dalmatian island in pursuit of the Mediterranean sun and the alluring idea of a carefree lifestyle in the European South seemed strange and out of the ordinary, particularly to the islanders of Hvar, for whom this would only make sense if there were an ancestral story behind it. As their present-day narratives still echo traumatic memories of emigration to countries overseas, the story of a person settling on an island stigmatized by depopulation presented an unusual life choice at the time. However, over time, the islanders grew accustomed to his presence on the island, and he became a part of their everyday stories and a member of the local community in Stari Grad town. My conversation with this ‘unusual’ islander took an unexpected turn as he revealed his reasons, impressions, and motives for what he called a ‘return’ to the island despite never having been on the island before. While explaining his motives for settling on the island, my interlocutor explained what led him to make this decision. However, the reasons behind his move to the island of Hvar were full of temporal references, such as the rhythm of the island, the sense of life at a slower pace, a personal quest for tranquility, and his interest in a simpler way of life. Based on his experience of living on an island like Hvar, he highlighted the importance of time as he reflected on his past experiences before settling there—his busy career in the corporate sector back home in Scotland, which he contrasted with the island’s laid-back and take-it-easy attitude. Time held significance beyond chronological order for my interlocutor and it was much more than just a sequence of events or a mere abstract concept regulated by the ticking of a clock. The abundance of time on the island and the locals’ flexible attitude towards it became a question of freedom, life priorities, and what he had left behind back home but now rediscovered in his new island home. In many ways, his observation of island life reminded him of his childhood in Scotland thirty years ago but also of romanticized depictions of island paradise and the images of islands suspended in time. On the other side, for me as someone living in Croatia, these associations sounded familiar, especially considering the echo of catchy tourism slogans like “Croatia: The Mediterranean as It Once Was,”

which remarkably resembled my interlocutor's imaginations of the laid-back social atmosphere of the present moment that is, however, set back in time or 'as it once was.' Such comparisons that delve into metaphors of a happier life in another temporal dimension are not isolated examples of individuals who have decided to change their lifestyle radically, nor are they dramatic appeals for temporal escapism in the hectic rhythms of our everyday lives. In the context of the Adriatic region and its troublesome past, these comparisons are often intertextually woven together beyond the particularities of individual human experience. For instance, literary texts frequently resort to similar metaphors in which the spatial regime of the borderland is intertwined with the notion of elastic temporality. For example, in Vladan Desnica's novel *Winter Vacation*, Dalmatia is represented as "scarce, remote, and burdensome for supplies" but "aside from major events" (2005: 15) in temporal terms. Similarly, Claudio Magris, in his *Microcosm*, problematizes complex and multilayered identities in the Adriatic region and concludes that "in that *cul-de-sac* of the Adriatic", history is entangled (2001: 250). Are these comparisons only personal observations and literary inventions, or do they share similarities with historically rooted and ideologically sustained Western knowledge about the Eastern Adriatic as manifested in travelogues? How are diverse narrative strategies of representing time employed in travel writings to portray diverse temporalities?

Because travel writing produces and circulates knowledge about the rest of the world, the goal of this paper is to understand how our contemporary travel experiences overlap with the popular imaginings and cultural expectations. In this paper, I trace the historical, social, and ideological roots of diverse temporalities in Eastern Adriatic travel writings. Because travel creates overlapping and conflicting spaces and temporalities (Smethurst 2009: 7), I want to analyze several travel writing texts published in the first half of the 20th century to better understand the emergence of diverse temporal fragments in the Eastern Adriatic that highlight the coexistence of multiple, and at times opposing, temporalities. How do diverse temporal modalities, such as waiting, stagnancy, timelessness, daydreaming, or the future, relate to Orientalist or Balkanist discourses, and how do these non-linear temporal forms emerge along the borderland frictions of Southeastern Europe and the Mediterranean?

The concept of temporality is often perceived as abstract and vague while also indicating a sharp distinction of time being independent of space and human experience. However, since the 1980s, advancements in technology,

accompanied by rapid changes in society, culture, economy, and politics, have sparked a thought-provoking discussion about time as a social and cultural construct, which has led to the emergence of the multidisciplinary field of time studies (cf. Hassan 2010). One of the first authors to point out the interconnectedness of space, time, and the body was Henri Lefebvre, who initiated the discussion about the multiplicity of rhythms and the inextricable relations between space and time (cf. Lefebvre 1974: 89). At different times, this issue has been addressed in different ways. Most of the 19th century saw a generalized fascination with history (cf. Foucault 1986: 22), which Nietzsche critically defined as a period of “consumptive historical fever” (2005: 4), while a significant part of the 20th century emphasized a spatial approach, thus fostering an understanding of time as an enduring, unchanging, and universal phenomenon disconnected with space. However, this uneven intensity and analytical depth faded with the emergence of the temporal turn in the 1990s, which managed to reconcile these approaches and point to the inseparable and mutually interrelated nature of space and time. British anthropologist Tim Ingold argues that temporality is relational and that understanding it requires considering our engagements with the material world and daily interactions. According to Ingold, “temporality is neither an abstract concept nor the same as history or chronology” (1993: 153). Therefore, it becomes misleading to treat time as a separate realm; rather, it should be seen as a relational phenomenon that unfolds in myriad ways. At specific points, Ingold’s approach converges with that of Bruno Latour even though they come from different fields and have distinct theoretical perspectives. Latour says that time is mainly a relational phenomenon arising from the entanglements of human and nonhuman worlds. Our daily, embodied relations with the material world are not compartmentalized merely because we approach them in such manner analytically (2005:176). Rather, they are folded and unfolded in diverse ways, causing time and space to unfold differently along routes that traverse various cultural, historical, and social contexts.

In the case of travelogues from across the Eastern Adriatic published in the first half of the 20th century, the multiplicity of times emerging along the travel routes points not only to the different educational or class backgrounds of the authors, but also to the power imbalances that refigure the notion of linear time. The travelers’ points of view and, occasionally, the answers they receive from the people with whom they converse show that these power imbalanc-

es are articulated through ideologies of progress. According to Marry Louise Pratt, these imbalances occur in contact zones, which she defines as “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” (2003: 4). For Pratt, invoking “spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures” (ibid.: 6) intersects with temporal reframing and distancing. Travelogues depict these relations, and, at the same time, they portray the shifting boundaries that absorb and emanate different temporal regimes.

Therefore, temporal reframing and distancing in contact zones is not accidental. The travelers’ gaze and the ideologies it conveys were grounded in the initial sparks of what could be labeled globalization, or what Vanessa Ogle defines as “political, economic, social, and cultural interconnections, exchanges, and dependencies between world regions and states,” which is intertwined with the “new process of standardization of time” (2015: 3). Standardization of time in the European context, which started in last part of the 19th century, manifested differently in different European countries and was connected with the idea of progress and national ideologies. According to Ogle, “time reform reached its zenith roughly between 1908 and 1913” (ibid.: 209), and various suggestions regarding standardization in previous decades had warned about the tendency to nationalize and regionalize time (ibid.: 208). One such example was Robert Schram’s suggestion for a time zone named ‘Adriatic time’ (*Adria-Zeit*), which was to include Austria-Hungary, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Italy, Serbia, and Montenegro (Schram 1889: 14). Therefore, time was connected to movement and speed but also to ideas of national unification and therefore had ideological implications.

My understanding of *time routes* draws inspiration from James Clifford’s concept of ‘routes,’ which I want to expand upon, particularly in relation to its temporal dimensions. In Clifford’s understanding, routes are not merely physical movements; they compel us to contemplate travel and interactions spatially while unsettling our notions of localism and dwelling through “diverse practices of crossing, tactics of translation, and experience of double or multiple attachments” (1997: 6–7). As such, routes should redirect us to broaden our understanding of the near-infinite relations that constitute subjectivities and detach us from one-sided interpretations of the world. Therefore, *time routes* are more than just temporal reinventions of predominantly

spatial experiences. They are embodied practices constituted in the mosaic of intertextual relations and lived experiences of time according to which we navigate our lives. These practices compress and expand our understanding of time as well as the contexts that constitute their rhythmic pulse, resulting in a complex spectrum of spatiotemporal experiences. The notion of *time routes*, as explored in this paper, seeks to start discussions about the temporalization of space and the spatialization of time, but also of the ways in which “time and space loop around one another, fold in upon themselves, and twist and turn in complex, contingent ways that can best be compared to origami” (Warf 2008: 9). The concept of time routes attempts to revitalize our comprehension of the mutually inseparable interplay between time, space, and body while tracing the origins of a series of relations that unfold *en route*. Time routes involve establishing new pathways for understanding locations and spaces in which multiple temporalities collide and intertwine while embracing the detours, shortcuts, and intersections that make travel possible.

TIME AND TRAVEL: MULTIPLE TEMPORALITIES AND TRAVEL WRITING

The travel writing literature focused on the Eastern Adriatic region that I will address here covers the period of the first half of the 20th century. However, due to the overwhelming number of travelogues published during this period, it is only possible to reflect on some of the published material. Therefore, in this paper I will analyze only several travelogues focused on the Eastern Adriatic region and examine the multiple temporalities that emerge throughout the itineraries of travel writers and how they experience diverse yet sometimes conflicting temporalities. Most specifically, my analysis focuses on the region of Dalmatia and its shifting boundaries. Many travel writers thought of the Eastern Adriatic as part of Southeastern Europe more broadly and also as part of the Mediterranean, with no consensus on the boundaries between the regions. The shifting and transformative borders of the region, which got its name relatively late (Mazower 2003; Jezernik 2007; Luketić 2013), make the analysis especially intriguing when confronted with the theoretical reflections stemming from Balkan studies. As a result, the Eastern Adriatic frequently served as the entry point for regions whose changing boundaries were fre-

quently spatially defined by the implications of the East and the West and by the temporal reconfigurations that enabled the emergence of various, occasionally even conflicting temporalities. Even though most of the analysis of such travelogues has primarily been focused on issues of space, this paper will take theoretical perspectives inspired by time studies in order to untangle the mutually interwoven and inextricably entangled nature of time and space (May and Thrift 2003: 1–2). Therefore, the changing spatiotemporal borderlands, which were often dramatically described by writers traveling along the Eastern Adriatic, point to the gap between the political implications of borders, the material manifestations of borders, and the fluctuating and changing perceptions of how borders influence and redefine local cultures. As a result, the temporal aspects of the borderlands that were dramatically carved out by meandering routes along the symbolic lines of East and West, the Balkans, and the Mediterranean transcend the constraints of political territories and geographical limitations and emerge in zones of asymmetric power relations.

In order to understand the dynamics of the Eastern Adriatic borderland region situated between the Balkans and the Mediterranean, I will use the metaphor of the tidemark, as introduced by anthropologist Sarah Green, to move away from the strict spatial and political implications of borders. According to Green, there is a difference between lines, traces, and tidemarks. While lines suggest that the political, historical, and ideological implications of the border as self-evident and fixed in the landscape (2018: 67), traces refer to the material objects that mark the borders and “evoke the passage of time in a way that lines do not” (ibid.: 70). As such, traces call upon the entangled relations between the symbolic aspect, legal forms, and the material world (ibid.). The concept of the tidemark that Green proposes serves as a combination of lines and traces, but is used in a way “that helps us to think through the ongoing metaphorical, metonymical, and material elements of ‘border-ness’” (ibid.: 71). Just like the tidemark that leaves traces in the sand after the tide recedes, so do the fluid identities, everyday lives, and material traces appear as the borders morph, pointing to space and time as lively and contingent (ibid.: 81).

The idea of the tidemark is a small attempt to metaphorically combine the meshwork, the interweaving of everyday life, with that combination of space, time, materiality, and the ongoing transformation of things and places that this process generates. (Green 2018: 80–81)

Enlightenment ideology and the emergence of demi-Orientalist perspectives were the driving forces behind travel writers' increased interest in the Eastern Adriatic region at the beginning of the 20th century. As pointed out by historian Larry Wolff in his book *Inventing Eastern Europe*, this was a result of the process of mapping, referring to the mental mapping or intellectual operation of possessing, imagining, addressing, and peopling unknown parts of Eastern Europe. This process involved the comparison of Eastern Europe with the known lands of Western Europe through a set of associations and comparisons (cf. 1994). The mapping represented practices of cultural exoticization and geographic differentiation between different parts of Europe and, according to Wolff, this process "perfectly expressed the interest of Eastern Europe for the enlightened traveler" (ibid.: 173). In the case of the Eastern Adriatic, where the boundaries between Europe and what was to be called Eastern Europe were blurred, enlightened travelers set sail to a region already ideologically firmly positioned in the imperial gaze of Venetians. According to Wolff and his book *Venice and the Slavs*, the Venetian imperial gaze toward the Eastern Adriatic and Dalmatia was characterized by semi-colonial exoticism that lacked absolute otherness as, to the contrary, was the case for the Orient. It was formulated on the same principle of demi-Orientalism by which the Enlightenment 'discovered' Eastern Europe (2001: 9–17). This perspective emphasized spatial and temporal othering, further distancing Dalmatia from the rest of Europe. Over time, common knowledge about Dalmatia perpetuated such a gaze, constituting the paradox of Dalmatia being close but at the same time distant. Carlo Goldoni's 1758 drama *La Dalmatina* and Marco Foscarini's 1747 mapping of Dalmatia helped maintain such a belief and paved the way for travel writers in the centuries to come. Alberto Fortis's description of Morlacchi's noble and cruel nature, along with showing them to be living in the simplicity of Homeric times, inspired many travelogues (cf. Wolff 1997: 183).

Among the diverse issues emerging in the textual representations of the Eastern Adriatic and in travel writing, many resemble what Katherine Fleming recognizes as the paradoxes of the Balkans (2000: 1218–1233). According to Fleming, these paradoxes refer to how the West sees the Balkans as being both close and far away simultaneously (ibid.: 1220). However, this spatial remoteness cannot be separated from the temporal refiguration that often historicizes the present. "The time to a remote place is full of starts and stops, looping back on itself through a series of repetitions" (Gillis 2001). Because travel writers

produce and physically experience temporalities within the frictions of politics, ideology, gender, class, and nation, different temporalities show up in these places, causing different reactions and interpretations that go against the dominant chrononormativity set by the clock (cf. Ogle 2015; Dohrn-Van Rossum 1996). Temporal phenomena, such as delay, waiting, timelessness, idleness, and boredom became part of travel writers' vocabulary throughout their Eastern Adriatic itinerary. Some examples of travel writing literature dating back to the beginning of the 20th century show how, along the travel itineraries, new modes of temporal existence emerged, opposing each other and challenging the temporal normativity of the travel writer. From the perspective of ethnology and cultural anthropology, travel writers' rhetoric and their representations of the Eastern Adriatic share some similarities with what German anthropologist Johannes Fabian referred to as the "denial of coevalness" or the "schizogenic use of time" (cf. 1983: 1–35). According to Fabian, temporal othering in ethnographies served as the narrative backbone that enabled anthropologists to distance themselves from the objects of their study and tame them by setting them in a time different from their own.

Travel writing accounts of the Eastern Adriatic, such as those made by Maude Holbach, Alice Lee Moqué, Frances Kinsley Hutchinson, and Rebecca West, reveal that their rhetoric of spatial and cultural exoticism was frequently accompanied by temporal refiguration. Even though their writing does not qualify as unusual in terms of temporal refiguration—similar tactics appeared, e.g., in travelogues from southern Italy and Alfred Sohn Rethel's writings at the beginning of the 20th century (cf. Matošević 2021)—in the case of the Eastern Adriatic, they warn us about the importance of borders and their relation to temporality. The East-West orientation often emphasized by historians and classical scholars in the case of the Mediterranean (Bowersock 2005: 167–173) illustrates that the boundaries between East and West were frequently imbued with temporal fragments. These, to some extent, align with Said's notion of a timeless East and are deeply intertwined with gender perspectives. On the one hand, the emergence of female travelogue writers in the early 20th century is connected to the broader context of the declining power of empires, as well as to the fact that travel was largely prohibited for women throughout much of the 18th and 19th centuries. Indeed, "their presence beyond the domestic sphere was too anomalous to invalidate the general interpretative models" (Smethurst 2009: 8). As a result, they occupy ambivalent positions within the imperial

context, simultaneously “validating and invalidating the interpretative models of gender and empire where the two impinge on each other” (ibid.). On the other hand, Orientalism, as a form of institutionalized Western knowledge about the Orient developed over centuries, was rooted in the concept of imaginative geography and its dramatic boundaries (Said 1979: 73), which are spatially, culturally, and temporally elastic, shifting as they move further East (ibid.: 120). Orientalism emphasizes the distinction between Europe and its once unreachable temporal and cultural frontiers (ibid.), hence inscribing the East with a characteristic sense of timelessness.

An analysis of German travelogues in Kiril Petkov’s book *Infidels, Turks and Women: The South Slavs in the German Mind, ca. 1400–1600*, shows that, since the late Middle Ages, travel writing in the Balkans has been marked by a patriarchal view of male-female relations involving various forms of essentialization. These forms include the characterization of the Balkan peoples and a geopolitical reality in which Slavic nature is associated with the feminine principle and a subordinate role. In numerous reports, encyclopedic entries, travelogues, and general observations, Petkov notes a discursive feminization of the Balkans (1997: 122–123), which stands in stark contrast to the opinion of Maria Todorova (2006: 67), who characterizes Balkanist discourse with a masculine principle, in opposition to Said’s concept of the Orient as represented by feminine metaphors (Oroz 2016: 13). Within such discursive geographies, which shaped the region’s geopolitics, similarities and overlaps can be observed with southern Italy.

Unfolding under the Orientalist umbrella, space and time share resemblance with artists and travelers from the 19th century whose interest and obsession with the Mediterranean initiated diverse interpretations of Europe as divided between the North and the South (Bowersock 2005: 168). According to Moe Nelson, the Western gaze of travelers in southern Italy intertwined stereotypes of backwardness—along with their spatial and temporal implications—with gender perspectives (2002: 3; 198–199). Various temporal phenomena, such as slowness, laziness, and waiting, became defining characteristics of the Italian South in 19th century travel writing representations. The Italian South, as depicted in travel literature, becomes a liminal space, a kind of reservoir for feudal residues, a place where laziness and exoticism are localized, which is attributed in part to its proximity to Africa. Thus, travelling to the South is portrayed as a journey into the past (ibid.: 37). As has been pointed out by

Keya Ganguly, “the idea of time as giving particular shape to experiences and histories must be seen as at least in part produced by existing conceptions of temporality within the philosophical heritage of European thought” (2004: 163).

Different geographies enabled different temporalities, an idea deeply ingrained in the European imagination, as Paula Henrikson and Christina Kullberg point out in their book *Time and Temporalities in European Travel Writing*. According to them, “the Americas, for example, were considered to have another temporality than the East; within Europe, the North was associated with a different temporality than the South” (2021: 4). Such images acquired through the experience of travel became the medium of understanding both the location of travel as well as the travelers’ points of departure like some sort of cultural baggage impugned with stereotypes (Occhipinti 2011: 2). Just as in the case of (South) Eastern Europe, where the backwardness of the sleepy East served as an argument for implying a sense of timelessness, the Italian South served as the scenography for the dramatization of temporal and social relations for travelers. Consequentially, natural beauty and pristine landscapes were juxtaposed with sharp images of laziness, stubbornness, and backwardness among Southerners (cf. Moe 2002).

Consequently, in the case of the Eastern Adriatic borderland, fracturing became apparent on several levels, as the overlapping East-West and North-South orientations reshuffled fluid boundaries in their temporal mosaic. Therefore, I approach the travel writings analyzed here as points of temporal translation and mediation, or, as mentioned before, as *time routes*, which, when tracked, point to diverse temporalities emerging in an encounter with the Other. Because temporalities in travel writing coexist as a plurality, their emergence in many ways relates to embodied experience and spatial configurations. Temporalities can, therefore, be “influenced by external material conditions, physical dispositions as well as imaginaries and discourses. Temporalities can be distinguished as certain articulations of time; they refer to larger conceptions of pasts, presents, and futures” (Henrikson & Kullberg 2021: 3). The travel writers’ descriptions of the Eastern Adriatic use different types of narrative strategies to highlight different kinds of temporalities in their representations of the Eastern Adriatic. As such, the Eastern Adriatic figures as an ambivalent space where diverse modes of temporalities coexist, oppose each other, and are entangled, while the discursive geographies of the region are shaped by the

echoes of Orientalist and Balkanist discourses and their overlapping strategies of temporal othering.

BETWEEN TIMES: REPRESENTATIONS OF TIME IN EASTERN ADRIATIC TRAVELOGUES IN THE PRE-WAR PERIOD

Among the early 20th century travel writers who made their debuts on the Eastern Adriatic were Maude Holbach, Alice Lee Moqué, and Frances Kinsley Hutchinson, whose reflections on Dalmatia were only part of a broader interest in these, until then, relatively unknown parts of the world. Despite their shared interest in the Eastern Adriatic, their descriptions, interpretations, and representations of historical, social, and cultural phenomena along their Dalmatian routes differ. Whether it be their educational background, the conventions of the travel writing genre, or personal agenda, many writers' travelogues represent unique accounts of Dalmatia in the context of the Eastern Adriatic, thus confirming that travel writers pose as (un)conscious translators between cultures. As James Clifford points out, people travel, as do cultures (cf. 1997). However, travel writers could not differentiate their unconsciously self-adopted role of translators between cultures from aspects of temporality. As such, these travel writers often play a part in cultural tricks, or what Benedetto Croce calls *traduttore traditore*. The temporal effects of their translations are closely linked to discourses of essentialization and exoticization that are "blind towards the multiple times existing simultaneously in the world" (Henrikson & Kullberg 2021: 2). Among the metaphors that serve to emphasize different temporalities than their own, the notion of the shadow stands out quite often. The tidemarks between the 'now' and 'then,' between 'the past' and 'the present,' were often accompanied by the dramatization of the difference between the hinterland and the coast. The implication of these spatial markers in the imaginative geography of travel writers was not accidental, nor was it solely of spatial importance but it also had cultural significance, as pointed out by Svein Mønnesland in his monograph *Dalmatia through Foreign Eyes* (2011). Thus for travel writers, the shifting borders between the mountainous region and the coast became those that evoke a sense of the exotic backwardness of the mountainous hinterland, set back in the past, and the 'civilized' and temporally 'tamed' coastline.

One example of this borderland whirlwind of temporal fragments can be found in the writings of Alice Lee Moqué. Her travelogue *Delightful Dalmatia*, published in 1914, sets the tone for multiple temporalities unraveling throughout her journey across the Eastern Adriatic. The map of the Eastern Adriatic at the beginning of her travelogue accentuates the spatial dualism between the hinterland and the coastline. However, its form (lack of legend, title, scale, and source) and visual representation evoke a sense of historical periods before 1914. Moqué's travelogue shows similarities with other writings of the time. On the one hand, it vaguely situates the reader spatially via the itinerary at the beginning of the travelogue (from Rovinj in present-day Croatia to Kotor in present-day Montenegro). On the other hand, it establishes the frame of multiple temporalities that will be addressed in her work. These temporalities include the traveler's temporal point of reference in which presentism is the firm and unquestioned temporal coordinate of the traveler's experience. Simultaneously, it evokes an almost fantastic and elusive reference to different historical periods unfolding at every step of her journey. In terms of multiple and interchangeable temporalities, the traveler's narrative is formed through her comparative approach that addresses cultural norms, social etiquette, and the traveler's account of recognizing traces of the 'known' in the 'unknown foreign country.' The comparison employed in narrative strategies identifies the historical origin of places, buildings, and people. The Oriental aroma of her Near East experience, in temporal terms, is evoked by the presentiment of intangible oppression, often described as awful, and the description of a social atmosphere marked by her anticipation of coming troubles. Although constant reference and comparison with the U.S. or European countries, such as Switzerland and England, serve as reminders of civilization and comfort in times of peril, they are contrasted with the dramatic and constant fear of the nearness of the East, noticeable in the unpredictable present.

Time is often just a huge wet sponge that ruthlessly erases every vestige of good deeds. (Moqué 1914: 303)

For Alice Lee Moqué and her husband, the present seems unstable, while the past appears as a haven, providing them with temporal escapism from the dreadful present. A prime example is the description of Ragusa or Dubrovnik, which, for Moqué, has the feeling as if she were part of a past that is unfolding

at every step. However, interpretations of the locals' contrast with the ambience of the past through descriptions of strange customs, a "babble of tongues," (ibid.: 178) and people of unknown ethnic origin. Her observations regarding the atmosphere and the people fit well with representations of Eastern Europe, which, according to Wolff, was ethnographically unified and unknown, stretching from the Adriatic Sea to the Arctic Ocean (1994: 319). Nevertheless, by its visual appearance, representations of Ragusa seem to move away from Eastern Europe and are associated more with the Mediterranean. In terms of temporal frames, Moqué's 'to-do' list of places, included in her itinerary, was strictly scheduled by her fear of wasting time, especially when she was in the company of locals whose sense of time seemed liberating but simultaneously deceiving due to constant 'time sparing' and bad time management.

Frances Kinsley Hutchinson's travelogue, entitled *Motoring in the Balkans: Along the Highways of Dalmatia, Montenegro, the Herzegovina, and Bosnia*, also represents the Eastern Adriatic through a rhetoric of 'discovery' and 'exploration,' just like other travelogues at the time. According to Vanessa Ogle, the "temporalization of difference" and "different temporalities" played an essential role in globalization processes. "Time, or the absence thereof, thus became a measure for comparing different levels of evolution, historical development, and positionality on a global scale" (Ogle 2015: 7–8). The temporal references in this travelogue are rarely explicitly mentioned; however, considering that this travelogue depicts the travel writer's experience from the perspective of a car—relatively rare at the time—the distance is often described in terms of time flow entangled with spatial observations. Time and space are often intertwined in the description of locations and people. The locations described in Dalmatia are, as evident in the title of the travelogue, only part of a much broader itinerary that zigzags across countries and regions of the Balkans. Discourses of othering, which are pervasive in this blending of time and space, are noticeable in writer's constant descriptions of the present, which is haunted with history, with the discovery of the Oriental elements that add to the exoticism of the Eastern Adriatic. Among these elements, one can notice her constant description of life in coastal towns and their architecture, customs, and local customs that serve as reminders and evidence of the tumultuous past that still exists in everyday life. These fragments of history which are noticeable in everyday life reinforce her changing impression of the boundaries between the regions that recede like the tidemark. In the opening lines of the travelogue,

Kinsley Hutchinson refers to the combination of closeness mixed with distance which is often present in her descriptions, meaning that observations in which the traveler's perspective differs from the local point of view (or local voice) contribute to the rhetoric of discovery that entails "resetting historical chronometers at zero" (Zerubavel 2003: 91).

It is certainly not so far away nor so difficult to reach. But to me it seemed almost another planet. Dalmatia! What strange magic in the name! How remote and Asiatic it sounded! What visions of mountain fastnesses and landlocked harbors, of curious buildings and primitive peoples, danced before my excited fancy! (Kinsley Hutchinson 1910: 17)

Kinsley Hutchinson's descriptions align with the perspectives of her contemporaries, illustrating the coexistence of Eastern and Western civilizations in the borderland area of the Eastern Adriatic. This fusion is particularly noticeable in her depictions of Italian-style architecture, which absorbed Oriental influences and native art, thereby contributing to the "fusion of civilization" (1910: 102) that consistently surprises travelers in Dalmatia. The discourses of discovery, as constituted in her descriptions of infrastructure, such as roads or architecture, serve as the backdrop for the historicization of the present, noticeable in the description of the Morlacchi and their 14th century historical origin. According to Kinsley Hutchinson, their "barbaric costumes" (*ibid.*: 68) contribute to the "lively and vibrant atmosphere" that "creates a captivating scene in the heart of Dalmatia" (*ibid.*).

"You must excuse us," say the peasants, "we know we are behind the times. We want to see what is going on in the new world and be not angry strangers to the strange new carriages. Do not be angry with us, strange carriages. We will grow accustomed to the noise in time, and we wish to be too civilized for the smell of rant animals." (*ibid.*: 62)

Traveling by car in these relatively unknown and exotic parts of Europe presented a challenge due to poor road infrastructure. However, it sparked discussions with locals, whose amazement at motor vehicles is noteworthy in relation to their temporal orientation. The technological advancements and the appearance of automobiles on the roads supported this sense of temporal

self-othering. Despite this relatively new, at the time, mode of travel highlighting the difference between the traveler and the locals—who are astonished by the appearance of the car—Kinsley Hutchinson concludes that the suspended time of the present does not diminish the possibility that the western Balkan provinces will become the “happy hunting grounds of the avid traveler” (Kinsley Hutchinson 1910: 27) in the near future. Doubtless, as demand in the western Balkan provinces increased, the roads would be remedied for motorists.

The travelogue *Dalmatia: The Land Where East Meets West* by Maude Holbach problematizes the notion of the borderland by including and intertwining temporal and spatial aspects. Holbach’s perspective, symbolized by the metaphor of the Northern Eyes, highlights the contrast between the East and the West and situates Dalmatia along the line between them. This perspective emphasizes spatial implications and expands them into a complex system of classifications, creating a cascade of infinite distinctions that build upon each other and introduce new interpretations.

To-day Dalmatia dwells apart, in a borderland somewhat off the highway of the world’s traffic, like a shadow left by the receding tide between the sea and shore, belonging more to the East than to the West—more to the past than to the present. (Holbach 1910: 28)

In terms of its spatiotemporal aspects, Dalmatia was situated as the “meeting place between West and East” (ibid.: 14) or at the crossroads of different temporal regimes in which Oriental and Occidental temporal modalities collide, overlap, and mutually interact. According to Holbach, Dalmatia is represented as the “land of the past and the land of the future” (1910: 17), with spatial differences and material, primarily architectural, markers accentuating the temporal reconfiguration. Holbach situates the present in what she calls the Near East, which begins in Zadar. A similar reference can be found in Roy Trevor’s travelogue *My Balkan Tour*, published in 1911, where he includes Dalmatia as a region on the fringe of the Orient. For Holbach, as her itinerary takes her east of Zadar, the semi-Oriental atmosphere transforms into the Orient in its full capacity, with a mix of Oriental timelessness and history emerging along the routes. For instance, the field trip to Nin was perceived as a return to the past, with Nin becoming the “city of ghosts” that became “the ghost of the past.” (ibid.: 44). A similar phenomenon can be observed in the description of Salona

that, according to Holbach, appears as a site of historical importance but also as a sad ruin that superstitious natives feared, believing in ghost stories about Romans and barbarous Avars (cf. 1910: 95). Even though nearby Split rises from the ruins—much like Salona—it managed to escape a tragic fate due to its proximity to the shore. The Diocletian Palace functioned as the heart of the city, a sort of beehive full of life that flourished on the ruins of the ancient palace, adapting its antiquity to the needs of modern times (ibid.: 71).

According to Holbach, Dalmatia was divided between the West and the East but simultaneously between the past and the present. Within this linear temporal structure, temporal fragments clash, evoking different historical periods, whether medieval or early modern, ancient or modern. Her narrative strategies of temporal alternation were grounded in the material marks that evoked a sense of times gone by. This is visible in her attempt to localize time, turning a simple walk through the city of Zadar, a field trip to Nin, or a visit to Salona into a step from one time into another. This spatial movement, from time to time, is evident in numerous examples. While walking on the modern Zadar waterfront, she felt as if in modern times, but moving just a few steps closer to the city center felt like stepping into a whole other temporal dimension—that of ancient times. This borderland rhetoric of spatialized time periods reveals ambivalence, noticeable in the description of people who are often depicted as half-Oriental, living in a forgotten countryside where time has stood still since the Middle Ages (ibid.: 30). Evidence of the fringe of the Orient was abundant and, according to Holbach, could be found in medieval costumes and the faces of Morlacchi at the Zara (Zadar) market, in suspicious looks from locals, and in the way of sitting in an Eastern fashion that resembled North American Indians more than the European race.

INTERWAR PERIOD TRAVEL WRITING: RE-DISCOVERY OF TIME LOST

The coastal region of the Eastern Adriatic, with its historic cities as ‘islands of civilization’ and relics of the past, has a distinct rhythm that contrasts with the exotic, mountainous hinterland, where time seems to pass slowly, reflecting a sense of numbness influenced by its proximity to the Orient. This contrast is particularly evident in Rebecca West’s travelogue *Black Lamb, Grey Falcon*

from the 1930s, in which the author “continually crosses overlapping geopolitical borders—both historical and contemporaneous” (Robinson 2007: 101). In this travelogue, West sets the tone for a linear conception of time, which serves as the norm against which diverse temporal fragments appear, interrupt, and even invert the temporal progression between the past, present, and future. In her book *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s*, Janet Montefiore writes that West “weaves the micro-narrative of her journey through a combination of her memories and the historical narrative that permeates it, frequently shifting her focus to the past to explain the present” (2005: 177). When *Black Lamb, Grey Falcon* is juxtaposed with the works of other early 20th century travel writers, a notable transformation becomes apparent in the approach taken by Western scholars and travelers. Specifically, they begin to scrutinize the conventional Enlightenment notion of dividing Europe into its ostensibly ‘uncivilized’ Eastern and ‘civilized’ Western counterparts (Robinson 2007: 103).

In her attempt to explain different temporal frameworks, Rebecca West offers a plausible explanation by emphasizing the importance of social institutions. According to her, social institutions, like the rudimentary economy, which is “no older than the industrial revolution” (ibid.: 1105), contribute to the stagnancy and stillness of time and coexist parallelly with the concept of a linear structure of time. For example, the unknown future is perceived as insecure anticipation or an indefinite postponement of possible outcomes. West argues that social institutions like the Church support the idea of eternity, which coexists with this conception of the future. The intertwining of these temporal fragments gives the impression that the past and the future are still present in our daily lives despite non-linear temporal modalities interrupting them. Through discourses of victimization and naturalization, West shows that time is sedimented in the body, thus affecting temporal norms.

Temporal fragments that impact linearity are often associated with islands and are narratively evoked in descriptions of the atmosphere on islands which according to the Swedish anthropologist Owe Ronström serve as “focal points for fantasies of remoteness,” (2021: 271). Of her visit to the island of Rab, West describes the calmness of the town and the alluring stillness of the moment that characterizes the specific island atmosphere. The tone of the church bells, which all make the same melody, changes depending on the direction of the wind and comes from church bell towers that West describes as “stony promises of a fluid world” (ibid.: 132) serving as spatial and sonic markers that anchor

time. The stillness of the moment and the weight of the past are evident in her description of the church interior, particularly in the church statues. While describing the Pieta, a Madonna holding her dead son in her arms, she observes the same expressionless face of the Madonna mirrored in the sleepy and lax faces of local women in the town of Rab (ibid.: 131). According to John Gillis, “in the case of islands, remoteness and the sense of place they sustain are as much the result of travel through time as travel through space” (2001). This feeling of being far away is not limited to spatial dimensions; it also encompasses changes in time made possible by links to the past, present, and future, all of which are intricately linked with complex power dynamics (ibid.: 272).

According to West, the bells ringing the hour and shattering the silence abruptly disrupt their acceptance of tragedy and the moment’s stillness. During her visit to the countryside, she was cautioned to prepare herself for the Dalmatians’ notorious and historically ingrained laziness (ibid.: 136). In concluding her description of the island’s lethargy and sleepiness—attributes often associated with poverty—West explores the atmosphere to convey a sense of time and its rhythms. However, this laid-back island atmosphere that she describes is only a partial aspect of island life. In many ways, it is merely a fragment of the seasonal dynamics of island life that does not consider “seasonal tempos with summer prestos and winter adagios, as well as the cultural responses of the local community to cope with ‘difficult’ times” (Oroz 2022: 24).

Montefiore notes that Rebeca West’s observations “on Dalmatia, which frequently look back to the medieval Venetian Republic and beyond that to the breakup of the Roman Empire, have the most remote temporal scope” (2005: 183). This kind of temporal scope is especially evident in West’s description of Split. The intertwining of different historical periods is accompanied by a depiction of the specific social atmosphere emanating from the Diocletian Palace in the historic nucleus of Split. Discourses of ruination—both infrastructural and moral—along with descriptions of people of mixed race who have been “forced by history to run for centuries through the walls, cellars, and sewers of ruined palaces” (ibid.: 138) contribute to the overall lethargy dominating her discourse. A common occidental argument is that history shapes and models the present; however, this process is characterized as an “experience of flow rather than a series of static images” (Crang 2001: 206) and has no single rhythm or temporality. On the sunny promenade in front of Diocletian’s Palace, the dark tones of history that haunt everyday life seem to vanish. The only

thing distinguishing the people there from the rest of the world is their ability to communicate in the “arcana of languages and thoughts they learned to share while they scurried for generations, close-pressed through the darkness” (Holbach 1910: 138). According to West, the almost *noir scene* of everyday life in Split is similar to that of Italian Napoli. Like Napoli, Split is described as a “tragic and architecturally magnificent sausage machine” with a similar atmosphere as exuding from the Neapolitan air (ibid.).

CONCLUSION

The analysis of travelogues written by Maude Holbach, Alice Lee Moqué, Frances Kinsley Hutchinson, and Rebecca West in the first half of the 20th century has revealed that despite differences in their authorial expressions, these travelogues share characteristics that become particularly intriguing in the context of the temporal refiguration of space. The emergence of diverse temporal modalities, interpreted through the concept of time routes, shows that multiple temporalities cannot be considered separately from space. This relationship with space is influenced by broader global processes of temporal standardization and the epistemological tensions arising at the symbolic intersections between Western and non-Western forms of knowledge. Imperial perspectives on the Eastern Adriatic region and travel writers’ representations of time are deeply ingrained in the Western Enlightenment-inspired imperial gaze toward (South) Eastern Europe.

In such a dynamic spatiotemporal interplay, the boundaries between East and West change and transform, revealing that their symbolic constitution is as much temporal as it is spatial. Temporal modalities such as waiting, boredom, timelessness, expectation, and suspension are highly relational phenomena whose multiplicity and transformative nature are determined by global processes, local practices, and (mis)interpretations in encounters between diverse cultures. Whether related to space, bodies, architecture, weather conditions, or cultural practices, the multiple temporalities that emerge in the intricate entanglements of the local and global are situational, ephemeral, and dynamic cultural phenomena. They are grounded in Enlightenment ideology toward the Other and intersect with relatively new processes of time standardization and ideas of social progress, thereby producing paradoxes of temporal

and spatial closeness and distance simultaneously. Spaces and times alternately contract, unfold, and permeate, allowing for the fusion of diverse temporal fragments into a spatiotemporal re-charting of the Eastern Adriatic. However, multiple temporalities at the local level are also constituted within the web of Western exoticization and local cultural internalizations, interpreted through discourses of naturalization and romanticization.

Ethnographic readings of travel narratives, in an interpretive sense, draw inspiration from Clifford Geertz's definition of ethnography. Geertz sees the relationship between the local and global as "a continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way as to bring them into simultaneous view" (1983: 69). Such an approach, in the context of understanding the multiple temporalities of the Eastern Adriatic, shows that time routes, as forms of spatiotemporal alternations, are always entangled with the detours, shortcuts, and endeavors that are ideologically sustained and locally reappropriated.

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