

Sauveur Lusignan's Epistolary Accounts of His Travels as a Historical Source on the Balkans at the End of the Eighteenth Century

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The Greek merchant Sauveur/Saoveur/Saviour Lusignan published *A Series of Letters addressed to Sir William Fordyce* in 1788, the same year as the second part of *The Life and Adventures* of the Serbian enlightener Dositej Obradović appeared in print. The two authors were friends and shared a passion for travelling. In the Preface to his *Letters*, Lusignan explicitly states how the idea for his epistolary collection originated:

The following letters, which contain an account of part of my voyages and travels, were at first only written with the intention of amusing my friend Sir William Fordyce; but as he thought they would afford some information to the curious traveller, as well as amusement to the public in general, he has permitted me to present them to the world, by publishing them.²

“My voyages and travels”: already in the first sentence, Lusignan indicates these two terms that he will repeat frequently: *voyage*, according to *Oxford Concise Dictionary*,³ is “a long journey involving travel by sea or in space,” while *travel* indicates “the action of travelling. [...] journeys,

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² *A Series of Letters addressed to Sir William Fordyce, M. D. F. R. S. containing a Voyage and Journey from England to Smyrna, from thence to Constantinople, and from that place over land to England; likewise an Account and Description of counties, cities, towns and villages, through which the author passed; together with the Treaty of Commerce between the Court of Great Britain and the Sublime Porte, translated from the original into English by the author; to which is prefixed, a short answer to Volney's Contradictions on Ali-Bey's History and Revolt; and an appendix* (London: Printed for the author; and sold by Payne and Son; White; Sewell; Walter; Robson and Clarke; and Bateman and Son, 1788), i.

³ *Oxford Concise Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

especially abroad.” Lusignan, in the course of his narration, also makes frequent use of the word *journey*, i.e. the “act of travelling from one place to another.” And Lusignan travels uninterruptedly from one place to another; he is an exceptional traveller of whom little is known and who signs his epistolary report only with initials and as “Cosmopolitan.”⁴ His last name is that of the Lusignan family, as George Rapall Noyes says, “which came from Poitou, reigned in Cyprus from 1192 to 1475.”⁵ It is not excluded that he may be connected with James Lusignan⁶ (who was the private secretary of Frederick North, 5th Earl of Guilford (1766-1827), friend and protector of the Serbian philologist and poet Pavle Solarić (1779-1821). Solarić was a collaborator of Obradović who had the opportunity to meet Sauveur Lusignan in person. In the XI letter of his biography *The Life and Adventures*, Obradović describes how shortly after his arrival in London in December 1784, a mutual friend introduced him to Sauveur Lusignan, whom he describes as follows:

[...] I met a Greek, a native of Cyprus, of an ancient noble family named Lusignan, which once ruled over that island. This gentleman had lived in London for many years and acquaintance with him proved very useful for me.⁷

This meeting gave Obradović not only the opportunity to continue his stay, but also to meet the leading figures of Scottish culture and society of the late eighteenth-century.⁸ Moreover, when Obradović ran out of money, it was Lusignan himself who found a solution with a great impact on Obradović’s future:

⁴ In the Sowerby Catalogue Lusignan is described as an English writer. Karl Sabbagh, instead describes Lusignan as a “Portuguese traveller” (!) (K. Sabbagh, *Palestine: History of a Lost Nation* (London: Atlantic Books, 2008), 41).

⁵ G. Rapall Noyes, *The Life and Adventures of Dimitrije Obradović Who as a Monk was Given the Name Dositej Written and Published by Himself* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953), 291; see also S. Painter, “The Lords of Lusignan in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries.” *Speculum* 32:1 (1957): 27-47.

⁶ See A. V. Salamé, *A Narrative of the Expedition to Algiers in the Year 1816: Under the Command* (London: John Murray, 1819), cxl; A. Papadopulo Vreto, *Notizie biografiche storiche su Federico conte di Guilford* (Atene: Dalla Reale Stamperia, 1846), 40, 162.

⁷ G. Rapall Noyes, *The Life and Adventures of Dimitrije Obradović*, 291.

⁸ See P. Lazarević Di Giacomo, *U Dositejevom krugu. Dositej Obradović i škotsko prosvetiteljstvo* (Beograd: Zadužbina Dositej Obradović), 2015.

In the last week of the three months I made a farewell call on Mr. Lusignan and informed him that I planned returning to Calais; I explained that already I had partly acquired the pronunciation of the English language and that for what remained I could find a teacher in some other place.

“A good friend of mine,” replied Mr. Lusignan, “to whom I have spoken about you, has asked me to bring you around for dinner at his house tomorrow; he is anxious to meet you. He is a dealer in English porcelain, but is a learned man and a great lover of the ancient language and literature, both he and his wife. I trust that you will not refuse to come and dine with them tomorrow.”⁹

In the house of this merchant, named John Livie, Obradović would meet with representatives of the Scottish Enlightenment, including William Fordyce himself, the same William Fordyce with whom Lusignan would begin his epistolary correspondence just one year later. William Fordyce (1724-1792) was a Scottish physician and a native of Aberdeen. His mother was a sister of Thomas Blackwell, 1701-1757, the well-known professor of classical languages at Marischal College. Fordyce also studied at Marischal College and later became Lord Rector there. He was also a military doctor, and in 1787 King George III awarded him the title of knight. In the same year, he became a member of the Royal Society. Here is what Obradović says about Fordyce:

[...] Dr. William Fordyce, a physician and Knight of the Golden Fleece, to whom the king had awarded that distinction owing to his eminence in medical science. This most worthy gentleman was the intimate friend of my benefactor Mr. Livie; and when though him he met me, he became my special patron, charging his dear friend, so long as I remained in London, to furnish me with whatsoever money I needed for books or for clothes and other small expenses.¹⁰

Lusignan says that it was thanks to William Fordyce that he began writing these odeporic letters, but actually the person who

⁹ G. Rapall Noyes, *The Life and Adventures of Dimitrije Obradović*, 291-292.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, 297.

unintentionally forced him to adopt the perspective of the traveller *par excellence* was Constantin-François de Chassebœuf, Comte de Volney (1757-1820), a French philosopher, historian, orientalist, and politician. Volney embarked on a journey to the East in late 1782 and reached Ottoman Egypt, where he spent nearly seven months. Thereafter, he lived for nearly two years in Greater Syria in what is today Lebanon and Israel in order to learn Arabic. In 1785 he returned to France, where he spent the following two years compiling his notes and writing his *Travels in Syria and Egypt, During the Years 1783, 1784, & 1785*¹¹ which was published in 1787,¹² and *Considerations on the war with the Turks, written in the year of the breakout of a Russo-Turkish war in 1788*.¹³

In 1789, *The Analytical Review* observed¹⁴ that in the preface of his 1787 book, Lusignan had described in a condensed and concise way his twenty-five years of travel, from 1746 to 1775, when he arrived in England. And indeed, the intensity of his travels in those 25 years is impressive: Lusignan, talking about his trading skills, reports that in June 1746 he went to Egypt, to Damian, and then to Cairo, where he remained until 1749. That same year he reached Alexandria, and stayed there until the end of December, when he boarded a Turkish ship. He arrived in Halikarnas on January 6, 1750. He then went to Jussel-Isar, and remained there for fourteen months, then to Smyrna, and to Constantinople, where he spent six months. He again boarded the merchant ship and visited, among other things, the Holy Mountain, and in mid-October 1751 he arrived in Thessaloniki. Thereafter he sailed back to Constantinople at the end of May 1751 and remained there until September. He then rented a boat in Dubrovnik, took on passengers and goods, and proceeded to visit, among other places, Rhodes, Antalya, Damian, Jaffa, Syria, Tripoli. In each of those places he loaded a variety of goods, such as tobacco and silk, and when he had sold them all, he

¹¹ Volney, *Travels in Syria and Egypt, During the Years 1783, 1784, & 1785* ([...]. London: Printed for G.G.J. and J. Robinson), 1788.

¹² C-F. Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Egypte, Pendant les années 1783, 1784 et 1785* (Paris: Chez Volland & Desenne, 1787).

¹³ C-F. Volney, *Considérations sur la guerre des Turcs et de la Russie* (Londres [Paris]: [s.n.], 1788). Later Volney was accused by John Adams' administration in the United States of being a French spy, see: J. Einboden, *Jefferson's Muslim fugitives: The Lost Story of Enslaved Africans, their Arabic Letters, & an American President* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

¹⁴ *The Analytical Review, or History of Literature, Domestic and Foreign, on an Enlarged Plan*. Vol. III (London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1789), 55.

returned to Constantinople again, to procure new goods. In September 1753 he rented an even larger Ragusean ship and sailed to Damian and Jaffa, and other various places, where he boarded pilgrims and loaded goods, and then went on to sell those goods. In April 1756, he arrived in the Holy Land, then sailed to Smyrna, Mykonos, Arcadia, Cephalonia, Corfu, and Malvasia. He then sailed to Skopelos in the beginning October 1762, bought a cargo of wine there and headed for Constantinople, where after some trouble at sea, he arrived in mid-December, and sold all his cargo. In February, 1763, he loaded a new cargo of goods and headed for Jaffa, sailing again to the Holy Land. When he came back to Constantinople, he took a ship to Nafplio, then crossed Greece by horse, sailed again across the sea and reached Otranto. He hired a felucco boat there to reach Pescara. Along the way he visited Brindisi, Bari, and Barletta. He arrived in Pescara on July 1, 1764 and stayed there for two days, and then made his way to Ancona and Loreto. Lusignan then rented a Dalmatian boat and reached Trieste. He was in Piran in August and then returned to Venice, then on to Ferrara and Bologna, Florence and Pisa and then Messina. He went to Naples in December, where he remained until March, 1766. He then hired a trabaculum or a Slavonian vessel to take him to Barletta, and then sailed off for Rijeka. He visited Istria, Zadar, Hvar, Korčula, Dubrovnik, and returned to Xiant, and then in January 1767 he set out for England, where he arrived in April and stayed until June when he left for St. Petersburg. From Russia, Lusignan continued his journey – travelling to the Netherlands, England, France, Italy, Egypt, the Holy Land, and again Italy, Portugal, and finally returning to England on February 23, 1775.

Why then does Lusignan attack the notorious Volney? The above-mentioned book that Volney published in 1787, *Travels in Syria and Egypt*, was considered at the time the best possible description of Egypt from Ottoman Syria at the end of the eighteenth century. Volney's *Voyage* gives an account of a journey that lasted four years and it consists of erudite observations, owing everything to the quality of its author who was both a philosopher and an orientalist;¹⁵ the narrative is different from classic travel books since political considerations, comments and reflections are predominant, and the political vision is decisive, even when the author is describing the habits of the inhabitants, telling anecdotes, or

¹⁵ J. Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel 1550-1800* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 272-293.

summarizing the geographical and commercial situation. Moreover, all of Volney's descriptions served as the basis for the Egyptian expedition and many scientists and Bonaparte himself, who was Volney's student,¹⁶ carried a copy of the work with him.¹⁷ This book was responsible for Volney's fame throughout his lifetime and yet Lusignan attacked the work saying that Volney had included in his work an account of Ali-Bey's life and actions which Lusignan himself had published in a report in 1783 with the title *A history of the revolt of Ali Bey, against the Ottoman Porte*.¹⁸ In this *History* Lusignan tells of how he went to live in the East at the age of ten, and how in 1771 he was presented to Ali Bey in whose service he remained until the defeat of the latter, thereby confirming that he knew Ali Bey very well. Lusignan accused Volney of changing some details of events that he wasn't happy about. According to Lusignan, Volney allegedly made mistakes that he was able to detect since Lusignan had been in Ali Bey's personal service and knew him. In fact, Lusignan goes on the offensive by saying that Volney had never actually travelled outside of England and that "he only composes his laborious and voluminous works, and sends them to France for a better deception. This suffices for an answer to his conjectures and contradictions; and if he is not satisfied, the author will acquaint him that he is well known to him, & c."¹⁹ Lusignan practically attacks Volney for being an impostor even though other scholars such as the Prussian orientalist and biblical scholar Johann David Michaelis (1717-1791), trusted Volney's account.²⁰ With regards to Lusignan's accusations the 1788 *The Critical Review*²¹ says that "in the absence of other evidence, we must wait, therefore, for farther

¹⁶ M. Kete Asante, *Culture and Customs of Egypt*. Westport, Connecticut (London: Greenwood Press, 2002), 21.

¹⁷ E. W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1979), 81.

¹⁸ S. Lusignan, *A history of the revolt of Ali Bey, against the Ottoman Porte, including an account of the form of government of Egypt; together with a description of Grand Cairo, and of several places in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria: to which are added, a short account of the present state of the Christians who are subjects to the Turkish government, and the journal of a gentleman who travelled from Aleppo to Bassora* (London: [The Author], 1783).

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, 56-57.

²⁰ J. D. Michaelis, *Neue Orientalische und Exegetische Bibliothek* (Göttingen: im Verlag bey Bandenhoef und Ruprecht, 1787), 167; J. Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel 1550-1800* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 270.

²¹ *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*. Volume 66, by A Society of Gentlemen (London: Printend for A. Hamilton, 1788), 404.

elucidation from those who, on the spot, can decide with more certainty.”

Volney, then, according to Lusignan, had never travelled or travelled very little. Lusignan instead, had travelled extensively and to emphasize this fact at the end of the dense preface to his work he includes an account of his previous trips and then concludes:

The candid reader, I hope, will excuse this tedious prolixity in my preface, as I have partly been compelled, (unpleasant as it may be to relate the past transactions of my life) to give this short account of my former travels, by the unjust assertions of Mr. Volney, who, taking advantage of my absence from England, and imagining, I suppose, that I should never return, has undertaken to publish to the world his fictitious travels, and to contradict many of the circumstances in the history and revolt of Ali Bey, to which I myself was an eye witness. This account, then, of my former travels, tedious as it may appear, will serve to convince the public, that my relation of Ali Bey's revolt was not the work of Hearsay, but that as being present in the country, I was more likely to derive fuller information, and consequently gave account of circumstances as they really were.²²

After the “Preface” and a short “Answer to Volney's Contradictions on Ali-Bey's History and Revolt,” Lusignan starts his narrative in the form of letters addressed to William Fordyce beginning on the 30th of August, 1785, when he set off on his journey from Falmouth, on his leaving England to endeavour to regain some of the property he had left behind him in the East; and then a letter written on August 29, 1786, at Bruxells, from whence he returned to England. For the critic writing in *The Critical Review*,²³ Lusignan's route is not worth following “for we find the narrative equally dry and uninteresting. There are forests, corn-fields, towns with good or bad walls, bridges with a different number of arches, and cottages generally wretched. If there is what we have not heard of before, it is of the transitory kind, and usually of little importance.”

²² *A Series of Letters addressed to Sir William Fordyce*, xxiii-xxiv.

²³ *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, 405.

Perhaps to the magazine's reviewer, who had taken the part of the much better known Volney and not the almost unknown author of *Ali Bey's* story, Lusignan's account might have seemed dull and uninviting. However, for those who wish to know more about the Balkans (and not only), and from today's point of view, Lusignan's account is more than precious and more than just "a mere relation of facts and occurrences without any remarks upon men and manners"²⁴ because it is full of information about the places of the time, their demography, architecture, and culture. Lusignan's travels are actually very much in the style of Grand Tour travel writing although references to Italy are minimal. Just as Richard Lassels in his *Voyage to Italy* (1670) advocated: "Travelling brings a man a world of particular profits. [...] It makes a wiseman much the wiser by making him see the good and the bad in others. [...] It makes a man think himself at home everywhere, and smile at unjust exile [...]. In fine, it is an excellent *Commentary* upon historics [...]"²⁵ Well, Lusignan was a merchant, a merchant par excellence. And yet his descriptions of travels are today of an exceptional value and are much worthier than the reviewer at that time suggested. Particularly regarding those places that previously lacked descriptions and mentions in tourist guides. And it is precisely because of the feature for which he was reproached, that is his detailed accounts of 'uninteresting' details, that makes his narratives such precious sources for the study of the societies and cultures he encountered. This is the case, for example, of his description of Belgrade where he arrived on July 6, 1786. In the narration we find, among other things, an interesting fact, that Lusignan had the honour of dining at the house of the metropolitan. He describes him as "a native of Costantinople, sent here by the patriarch of that place. He is a man learned in several languages, and of an exemplary and pious life." Lusignan was describing Metropolitan Dionysius I (Papazoglu, also known as Papadopoulos or Popović, 1750-1828), a Greek by birth, born in Kozani, near Thessaloniki. He succeeded Metropolitan Jeremiah to the Chair of Belgrade in 1784 or 1785. He was one of the most promising bishops who had arrived at prominence after following along an interesting monastic path, becoming a metropolitan at 34 years of age.

²⁴ *The Analytical Review, or History of Literature, Domestic and Foreign, on an Enlarged Plan*. Vol. III (London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1789), 57.

²⁵ R. Lassels, *An Italian Voyage, Or, a Compleat Journey Through Italy. In Two Parts, [...]* [Volume 1] (London: Printed for Richard Wellington, 1697).

He learned to live well among the Serbs. Prior to the surrender of Belgrade to the Turks, Metropolitan Dionysius, as a supporter of Austria, fled with the Germans to Austria and the Austrian emperor gave him 6000 forints to endure until he received a diocese. Upon confirmation on January 3, 1791, he received a noble title from the Emperor. Metropolitan Stefan (Stratimirović) received the fugitive Dionysius into the clergy of the Metropolitanate of Karlovac, appointing him head of the Diocese of Budapest in 1791.

Lusignan's description of Belgrade as it follows:

Belgrade or Taurunum, July 6, 1786.

Dear Sir,

BELGRADE is situated on the banks of the rivers Sava and Danube, extending from west north west, to east south east, rather more than amile, and forms the shape of a pyramid. The western part of the town, which stands on an eminence, contains the castle, on the southern part of which are the Christian quarters. This castle is built on a rock, and is separated from the town by an out wall, and two ditches about fifteen yards distant from each other, which are always filled with water, and contain great quantities of fish; the space between them is formed into gardens, producing all kinds of vegetables, and planted with fruit trees of various sorts.

The walls of the castle, and the sides of the ditches over each of which is a wooden draw bridge, are of stone. On the outside of the wall is a large open place of about twenty-six yards broad, on all sides, except on the northern part, which is encompassed by the above-said rivers, which join on the north-west corner of the castle. In the citadel the Bashaw and his retinue reside; and on the outside of it, in the castle, are houses of several of the chiefmen in the town; in the enclosure of the outer wall, to the north west, is that of the Janilarigas (or general of the Janisaries) together with their barracks or quarters; and on the north is the magazine of arms and ammunition; on the outside of which is a large place, where are heaped up many hundreds of bomb shells of different sizes. On this side there is likewise a gate towards

the river, on the outside of which, along the wall, is a palisade. The ramparts and bastions of this wall, as well as of the citadel, are mounted with brass cannons, from six to twelve pounders each. The gates of the castle are four in number, one to the north, two to the east, and one to the west south west; the whole town, which has several gates, is surrounded by a palisade.

Belgrade contains seventeen Turkish parishes, some of an hundred, and others of an hundred and fifty houses each. The Turks are here divided into two parties, agitated with such jealousies to each other, that they sometimes come to blows. Very little attention is paid to the orders of the Porte, or to the Bashaw, or governor established here, as most of the inhabitants are Janisaries, and armed as I mentioned before, like them in Nisi.

The Christians have their metropolitan, a native of Constantinople, sent here by the patriarch of that place. He is a man learned in several languages, and of an exemplary and pious life; I had yesterday the honour of dining at his house. As his flock are mostly Bulgarians, he in a short time studied the Illyric, in which language he always preaches to them. The Christians, as well as the prelate himself, who is forced to be responsible for his flock, are heavily oppressed by the Turks. They have but one church, and about three or four hundred houses.

I must inform you, that this diocese, as well as that of Nisi, were formerly under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Ipekium, who was an independent Prelate, and called the Archbishop of the second Justinana; but was he was unable to support the dignity of the archbishoprick, on account of the heavy taxations imposed by the Porte and the Turks, it was lately, by a Topical Council, submitted to the See of Costantinople; and the patriarch of that place is now obliged to defray all those expences, and send a prelate from his own jurisdiction.

The streets in Belgrade are cleaner and better paved than any of the towns in Turkey. The shops and the markets are to the east of the town, as also the custom house, and the

inns for the merchants, which are built of stone, and were formerly, when the city was inhabited by Christians, the seats of noblemen. Trade is carried on here with spirit by the Greek merchants, and some few Turks, who send their merchandize to Hungary, and from thence to Austria, by the river Danube; and import the produce and different manufactures of those countries. The Emperor derives great advantages from this trade; and Semblin is much benefited of late, by the privileges granted by him to the Greeks, and by his taking off the quarantine.

The air of this country is very salubrious, though greatly infested with gnats, which are very troublesome to the inhabitants. Provisions are in great plenty, and very reasonable. Some of the Turkish merchants here are very civil to strangers, and wish to converse with them about politics. This afternoon I intend crossing the water for Semblin, from which place I shall continue my account of my journey. I am,

Dear Sir,
Your humble servant,
L. S.²⁶

In Letter XXI, dated July 7, 1786, Lusignan describes his journey to Zemun, a town on the border of the Austrian Empire. Back in the late eighteenth, and also in the early nineteenth centuries, Zemun Park was a quarantine area for people coming from the Ottoman Empire to the Habsburg Monarchy. And since those people had to spend up to seven weeks here for hygiene checks and were of different confessions, two different churches were built. And in fact, Lusignan says that there is a citadel and that the most beautiful houses are those of Greek merchants; that there are two very beautiful Orthodox churches, as well as two Catholic. In general, Zemun made a pleasant impression on Lusignan.²⁷

The next impressions appear in Letter XXII: having crossed the Danube, Lusignan reached Petrovaradin on 13 July, 1786. Petrovaradin Fortress, positioned on a high solid rock overlooking the city of Novi Sad and the Danube River, was originally the site of a Roman fortress to

²⁶ *A Series of Letters addressed to Sir William Fordyce*, 238-243.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, 244-247.

which various additions were made over the years and which was subsequently modified as the result of 18th-century military and civic planning efforts undertaken within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, as a result of which the fortress was enlarged by the Austrians, in order to prevent further Turkish expansion into central Europe. Very curious in this case is Lusignan's mention that in the middle of the town there is a large square and in the centre of it there is "a marble pyramid, curiously engraved on the top with the figures of the Holy Trinity, and the coronation of the Blessed Virgin":

Dear Sir,

I LEFT Semblin the 12th instant at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, after having hired a cart with three horses for myself and my baggage, for that is the usual method of travelling in these countries. The road on which our journey lay, had on the right hand the river Danube at about a quarter of a mile distant, and on the left, an extensive open country interspersed with some villages, the steeples of whose churches formed a very pleasing appearance. At one we passed through one of those villages called Badonitsa, containing about two hundred houses, with a church and a pretty large steeple, resorted to by those of the Greek persuasion. The roads through this village, which cross each other, are on each side planted with mulberry trees, by the Emperor's order, for the sake of breeding silk worms.

At half after two we passed through another village called B[...], containing about three hundred houses, mostly of one story high, inhabited by Bulgarians of the Greek church, and protestants, of which each nation has its respective church. The roads are broad, and planted with the same kinds of trees as in the former village. At five we passed through another village called Ingia, inhabited by Bulgarians, whose habitations are all huts, except the church, which is built of brick, and has a steeple. The produce of this place is chiefly cattle and hay. At seven we were opposite Pethica, a town of about three hundred houses. At nine we arrived at the town of Carlovitsa, which is situated on the declivity of a hill, on the banks of the river Danube, extending from east to west, about a mile: it contains one principal street, on the entrance

of which are barracks for the garrison, and in the middle of the town is the cathedral and Romish church. In this town is likewise the residence of the Primate of all Hungary, who is of the Greek church. I alighted at an inn in this place to pass the night, and the next morning at about five I departed, and at seven arrived at Peter-Waradin. We passed through, previous to our entering the town, the suburbs which are chiefly inhabited by protestants and Roman catholics.

The mines and fortifications of the castle extend from north to south, almost a mile. The castle itself is surrounded with a triple stone wall, and large ditches which are always full of water. Every stranger who enters thro outer gate, after being examined by the officer on duty, is accompanied by a soldier to the Comander's house, and having delivered his charge to the Chancellor, or one of his secretaries returns. The traveller is obliged to show his passport, and declare of what profession he is, and what business brought him there, or else he will not be permitted to proceed any farther. After I had been thus examined, the General, commander of the garrison, hearing that I was a British subject, desired to see me, and complying with his request, I was received by him with great affability and politeness. Having answered some questions which he proposed to me, I took my leave, and went towards the water side, where I found my baggage in the packet boat ready to cross the water, for the north and north west part of this castle are washed by the Danube, and there is no other way to cross the river, but through this fortified castle, which is partly situated on a rock, and partly on a declivity and the banks of the river. On going towards the river I passed through two gates, and over two draw bridges which were placed over two draw bridges which were placed over two ditches full of water, and containing great quantities of fish. Having crossed the river, and my baggage being examined by a custom-house officer, I proceeded to Peter-Waradin, which is about half a mile distant from the river.

Peter-Waradin contains about sixteen hundred houses, some of which are three stories high, and others two, all built

of the brick. Those of the Greek persuasion have here five churches, and a bishop suffragan to Calovitsa – the Roman catholics have only one church. In the middle of the town is a large square, in the centre of which is a marble pyramid, curiously engraved on the top with the figures of the Holy Trinity, and the coronation of the Blessed Virgin. This pile is about twelve or fourteen yards in height.

The streets in this town are all paved, though not very well; the shops are neat, and the people very industrious. The inn which affords the best accomodation to travellers is that at the end of the above-mentioned square on the right band. The situation of the town being low, is exposed to great quantities of dust, which is blown into it by the wind from the adjoining hills. As I purpose leaving this place tomorrow, I shall conclude, subscribing myself,

Dear Sir,
Your humble servant,
L.S.²⁸

Considering the above description, from today's point of view we could hardly agree with *The Critical Review* critic who found M. Lusignan's picture "uninteresting in general," although possibly "faithful." Continuing on in his negative judgement of Lusignan the critic observes that

a gloomy humour seems to have guided his pen. He saw little to praise, or was unwilling to commend for if he steps beyond facts, it is to blame what he saw, or to condemn the conduct of those whom he met with. We cannot recommend these volumes as generally pleasing or interesting. The author seems to have received some undeserved treatment: we wish him a better fate or more steady equanimity.²⁹

And yet this rather obscure friend of Obradović's, who was of exceptional help to our enlightener and consequently to Serbian culture, proves to be valuable in this case as well, and the basic facts and details he noted down are of considerable interest to us now and would seem to

²⁸ *Ibidem*, 248-253.

²⁹ *The Critical Review: Or, Annals of Literature*, 407.

require further and more in-depth research. As the French lawyer Boucher d'Argis Jaucourt said in the *Encyclopedie* (1751), modern travel throughout Europe no longer involves lengthy and arduous journeys and so, "is at the judgment of enlightened people, [...]. Travel extends the mind, raises it, enriches it with knowledge." And thanks to the writings of Lusignan a valuable record of how the Balkans appeared to such a traveller in the late eighteenth century is available to us today.

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