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Travelling the Old World.

Representations of Europe in the Fodor's travel guidebooks

Sofie Sonnenstatter

1 Introduction

What is the essence of Europe? A travel guidebook tries to answer this question by telling the reader what to see and do in Europe and what is essential to know about it. The travel guidebook is a representation, it creates an image of a destination which is selective and superficial. Covering the whole of Europe in one book requires a high degree of selectivity. There can be innumerable different representations of Europe, depending on which countries, sights and genuinely European experiences are selected out of an uncountable number, and how much of Europe's complex history is told. Europe can furthermore be understood as a geographical area, cultural space, or even as a political entity if we understand Europe as confined by the boundaries of the European Union. Moreover, the character of the guidebook is dependent on further factors such as the editor, contributors and the expected readership. Most notably, the guidebook representation is bound to time. A guidebook from the nineteenth century will most certainly show a different Europe from the one represented in a contemporary travel guide. Thus guidebooks are not only a mirror of a space but also of time.

For the non-European traveller Europe might seem like a unity, geographically as well as culturally. Then again, the discourse of Europe has always contained the poles of East and West, which were petrified in the second half of the twentieth century with the Iron Curtain. The latter constituted a deep cut through Europe, creating two politically and culturally defined, opposing halves, Western

and Eastern Europe, which even after the fall of the Iron Curtain has been deeply manifested in the discourse.

Subject of this paper are the *Fodor's* travel guidebooks to Europe from 1986 and 1992, thus from a short time before and after the end of the Cold War.¹ The aim is to analyse in how far Europe is represented as a unity and on the other hand as divided into West and East. The first part is going to examine to what extent the guidebooks create the image of Europe as a unity, a geographical and cultural space. As a next step the notions of West and East are analysed, focussing on the representation of Eastern Europe. As *Fodor's* Europe includes Turkey, the third part of the analysis is concerned with the relation between Turkey and Europe and its role as a bridge to Asia as depicted in the sources. Finally, the paper examines how the guidebooks mirror the fall of the Iron Curtain and the opening of Eastern Europe.

2 Theoretical framework

The topics of tourism and travel guidebooks can be approached from different disciplines such as history, sociology or economics. The theoretical approach of the paper at hand can be best described as post-modernist literature analysis, which understands literature as a result of cultural practice and has the aim to deconstruct discursively created notions. The paper analyses travel guidebooks as representations of a space, focussing on the created images of Europe as a travel destination. As Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan write, “representations are not a mirror copy of some external reality,”² instead they are simplified and mostly superficial images of that reality. In creating images of tourist destinations travel guidebooks in a way generate their own space, they produce their “own exhibitionary reality.”³ An otherwise vast and diverse space is confined and represented in a condensed, simplified way. In this way, the guidebook makes the destination accessible for the reader and “help[s] us to believe that we have entered a manageable space.”⁴

Guidebooks are due to their nature highly selective in what they represent. This implies an interpretation and a subjective statement about what the essence of the represented space, in this case Europe, is.⁵ Out of a vast and diverse repertoire

¹ *Fodor's Europe 1986. 33 Countries - from Portugal to Poland - from Iceland to Turkey* (New York: Fodor's Travel Guides, 1985) and *Fodor's 92 Europe. The Most Complete and Up-to-Date Guide to 31 Countries* (London and New York: Fodor's Travel Publications, Inc., 1991).

² Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan, *Writing worlds: discourse, text, and metaphor in the representation of landscape* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1992), 4.

³ Anne Bush, “Reviewing Rome: the guidebook as liminal space,” *Visual Communication* 1, no. 3 (1 October 2002): 370.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 372.

⁵ For the sake of convenience and because it is not relevant to the research question, this paper does not differentiate between tourist and traveller, however, it has to be noted that there is such a differentiation, cf. e.g. James Buzard, *The beaten track: European tourism, literature, and the ways to culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

they depict a selection of sights, customs, anecdotes and experiences that are crucial for the traveller to get a grasp of what Europe is. These decontextualized elements are connected with meaning, that is, they are embedded in the context of a simplified history, to present the reader an enclosed and coherent image of Europe.⁶

This paper mainly focuses on the representation of Eastern Europe. Whereas a large number of travel guidebooks mainly concentrate on Western Europe and leave out several countries in the east of the continent, the Fodor's guidebooks cover nearly all European countries that lie west of the former Soviet Union. This makes them especially interesting as a source for discourse analysis as they make Eastern Europe accessible, despite the prevailing public discourse of the Cold War, in which Eastern Europe was represented as an inaccessible space behind the impermeable, even non-transparent Iron Curtain.⁷

This paper is influenced by a number of post-modern approaches. It is based on the constructivist understanding of the history of the idea of Europe, as developed among others by Gerard Delanty. According to that, Europe's history as a continuation of ancient civilisations is invented, meaning it is simplistic, selective and distorted. Furthermore, post-modernist approaches to tourism studies constitute the basis of my theoretical framework. These have been applied for instance by John Urry, Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan, who treat the tourist destination as a discursive construction.⁸ In the analysis of the representation of Eastern Europe this paper is furthermore influenced by Edward Said's approach of deconstructing the representations of the East in Western literature, which claims that these representations imply Western superiority by romanticizing and patronizing the East.⁹

3 Historical background

The map of Europe has been subject to change throughout its history. As it is geographically a peninsular of the Eurasian continent, there are no natural borders justifying Europe being a continent. However, the lack of natural borders has been compensated by ideological ones, and especially the question of Europe's eastern border has been raised time and again and was answered differently in different ages. Along with that the question of whether Russia is considered to be part of Europe has been controversial, not only from Europe's perspective but also from

⁶ For the process of de- and recontextualisation in tourism representations cf. Can-Seng Ooi, *Cultural tourism and tourism cultures: the business of mediating experiences in Copenhagen and Singapore* (Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press DK, 2002).

⁷ Cf. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 1 ff.

⁸ Cf. John Urry, *The tourist gaze* (London et.al.: SAGE, 2002), and Chris Rojek and John Urry, *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory* (London: Routledge, 1997).

⁹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Vintage Books, 1979).

the view of Russia itself. The border between Europe and Asia has no real geographical basis, neither the Ural mountains and the Ural river, which have been generally agreed on as the border between Europe and Asia since the 18th century, nor the river Don, which had been thought to divide Europe from Asia before that, are such dramatic landmarks as to divide continents.¹⁰ The border has rather been an ideological one, created by Europe's self-definition as opposition to Asia but also influenced by Russia's changing aspirations to either belong to or to distinguish itself from Europe. Although this European-Asian border had been rather unstable – challenged by advancing cartography and Russia's changing self-definitions – it was important as a mental construct to develop and strengthen the idea of Europe as a distinct continent.¹¹

As Europe's eastern border has been an artificially invented one, similarly the notion of a sharp distinction between West and East has been reinvented time and again in the course of history according to the needs of time, especially due to political changes and threats from outside. The dividing line between West and East had been shifted remarkably and each epoch charged it with its ideology and filled it with meaning by political, religious, racial and civilisational notions. Whatever the Other to the east was, the distinction between West and East has always been part of the discourse of Europe.¹² It might be traced back to the split of the Roman Empire in the fourth century and was reinforced by historical events such as the Schism of 1054 and the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman armies in the 15th century.¹³ Notions of progress and civilisation as they arose in the eighteenth century reassured the West of its superiority over its ideologically constructed counterpart, the undeveloped East. This notion of the West-East dichotomy was illustrated and reinforced by representations in contemporary academic, fictional and travel literature as well as in cartography. Whereas it has been a notion ubiquitous in the public discourse the border demarcating the East from the West has always been somewhat blurry and could not be conclusively fixed on the map.¹⁴

The Cold War brought a new dimension to the West-East divide. With Germany's vast loss of territories to the east and Eastern Germany under Soviet occupation, Western Europe's eastern frontier moved to the river Elbe and thus was further west than ever before. Moreover, it became a "hard border"¹⁵ and was rigid like never before. The erection of the Berlin Wall and the notion of the Iron Curtain illustrate this border as fixed and impermeable. The division became a

¹⁰ Cf. Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Oxford: Pimlico, 1997), 8 ff.

¹¹ Cf. Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995).

¹² In the European identity formation, several Others were depicted to define Europe against, for more on that cf. e.g. Ibid.

¹³ Cf. R.J. Crampton, *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century - And After*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Taylor & Francis, 2007), 1.

¹⁴ Cf. Delanty, *Inventing Europe*.

¹⁵ Gerard Delanty and Chris Rumford, *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization* (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2005), 32.

geopolitical fact and the frontier fortified politically, ideologically and militarily from both of the opposing sides. Western and Eastern Europe became two confrontational power blocs, “the liberal democracies of the West and, on the other side, the communist states of Eastern Europe.”¹⁶

With the political revolutions in 1989 in many Eastern European countries and the collapse of communism, the Iron Curtain dissolved and the question of the West’s eastern border reappeared, challenging the idea of Europe built up in the previous four decades.¹⁷ Western Europe had defined itself against the East and the fixed eastern frontier had helped to create a European identity based on the notion of the West. The opening of the East forced a rethinking of the division of East and West and the once hard border became blurry again. It was especially questioned by the nations in the new borderlands between West and East. In the discourse about Central Europe arising in the 1980s, intellectuals especially from Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary claimed to be part of that Europe differentiating itself from Russia. They protested against being on the eastern side of the frontier which forcefully cut them off from the West. Even though the Iron Curtain has been dissolved and the dividing line between West and East is not a political border anymore, the Cold War division of Eastern and Western Europe is still not overcome; as Larry Wolff puts it, “the shadow persists, because the idea of Eastern Europe remains, even without the iron curtain.”¹⁸

The Iron Curtain was difficult to permeate for people, goods and ideas. Eastern Europe was sealed off from Western Europe. Although it was not impossible to cross the border, it was impeded by numerous restrictions regarding visa requirements, customs regulations and currency exchange. This strict border regime as well as undeveloped tourism infrastructure were obstacles for travellers; moreover, the image of the Eastern bloc produced in the West might have contributed to discouraging international tourism. The fall of the Iron Curtain facilitated travelling in Eastern Europe and a tourism infrastructure has been developed. However, preconceptions about these countries formerly east of the Iron Curtain persist until today, and despite a growing popularity as a tourist destination in recent times, it is still regarded as inferior to Western European countries, which is reflected in the fact that numerous contemporary travel guidebooks do not even mention many of these countries.

¹⁶ Delanty, *Inventing Europe*, 121.

¹⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, 115–129.

¹⁸ Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 3.

4 Representation of Europe in Fodor's Europe from 1986 and 1992

4.1. Eugene Fodor and the genre of the travel guidebook

With the advent of mass tourism in the nineteenth century the genre of the travel guidebook arose, the first example being John Murray's *A Handbook for Travellers on the Continent* from 1885.¹⁹ Unlike personal and impressionistic travelogues, which have existed before, these guidebooks try to be objective and authoritative with "matter-of-fact descriptions of what *ought to be seen* at each place."²⁰ In 1936 Eugene Fodor published *1936 – On the Continent*, a guidebook about 28 countries in Europe, containing transport and visa information, hotel and restaurant recommendations as well as suggestions of historical sights and insights into local culture. Eugene Fodor himself was a keen traveller and has a cosmopolitan background being "born in Hungary in 1905, raised in Czechoslovakia, and educated in England and France."²¹ Several chapters of the guidebook are written by his co-authors with special knowledge of the respective countries. This book became a great success and even appeared on the *New York Times* Best-Seller List in 1938. After the Second World War, in which he joined the U.S. army, Eugene Fodor published further guidebooks about European countries and the USA. Today *Fodor's Travel*, the publishing house founded by Eugene Fodor, is one of the largest guidebook publishers with books about several continents and single countries.

Whereas many guidebooks on Europe mainly concentrate on Western Europe, leaving out many countries in the east of the continent, *Fodor's* has a very positive outlook on Eastern Europe, encouraging Western travellers to discover the countries east of the Iron Curtain, in spite of the difficulties that exist due to the Soviet domination. Eugene Fodor's cosmopolitan background might explain this. However, the editions subject to this paper have a different editor, but according to the editor of the reissued edition of *1936 – On the Continent* from 2011, "Eugene's mission is alive and well"²² until today.

The *Fodor's* travel guidebooks appear to be primarily aimed at a British and North American readership, as transport and visa information is addressed to travellers from these countries. They do not provide any information about the contributors, their background and experience with the countries they write about. However, judging from their names, the majority of them is from Western (European) origin. The guidebooks are edited and published in New York and London.

¹⁹ Mass tourism meaning that travelling became affordable for people from across social classes, cf. e.g. Rudy Koshar, "What Ought to Be Seen?: Tourists' Guidebooks and National Identities in Modern Germany and Europe," *Journal of Contemporary History* 33, no. 3 (1 July 1998): 323-340.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 323.

²¹ "Eugene Fodor. The Spy Who Loved Travel," *Fodor's Travel Intelligence*, <http://www.fodors.com/about-us/eugene-fodor> (12 May 2011).

²² *Eugene Fodor's 1936... On The Continent* (New York: Fodor's Travel, 2011), 3.

4.2 One Europe: Europe as a (cultural) space

Ginette Verstraete's claim that "19th century Europe appeared to its visitors as a homogenized cultural, picturesque, view"²³ might be valid in the same way for the twentieth century. Travel guidebooks representing Europe as a whole have contributed to this image of Europe as one space. In James Buzard's words, they "effectively reinforce the reified unity of 'Europe' and put the key of that unity in the carrier's hands – or on American shelves and coffee-tables."²⁴

This chapter is concerned with the question of how Europe is depicted as a unity despite the division of West and East, which is what the next chapter deals with. Despite internal divisions, which are of cultural and political nature, there are connecting elements that unite Europe, both tangible and intangible. The former are illustrated in the guidebooks particularly by transport routes. A whole chapter is dedicated to Europe's train network, which is described to be extensive, with international cooperation facilitating travelling conveniently through all European countries. "International trains link most European capital cities, including those of Eastern Europe,"²⁵ even if there is apparently a decline of speed and comfort towards the east. In the same way as the rail network, international highways are considered, which connect the countries of Europe with each other. Europe's waterways are depicted as the natural connecting elements and *Fodor's* recommends cruising Europe by its rivers and seas. The Danube for instance, which finds mention at numerous points of the book, connects several Western and Eastern European countries. It is illustrated as "a main artery through Europe's history and geography"²⁶ and in vivid language the author follows its course through Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria. The Mediterranean, formally the centre piece of the Roman Empire, still provides a connecting element. Not only does it serve as a transport link to cruise to the adjoining countries. It also demarcates a region with shared elements such as climate and cuisine. Italy and Greece are described as Mediterranean countries, in the same way is Yugoslavia, and even Turkey reveals its connection to Europe with its cuisine "based on age-old recipes common to the Eastern Mediterranean."²⁷

Europe is not only represented as a geographical but also as a cultural space. This is expressed especially in the shared history. Europe is portrayed as "the Old World"²⁸, a place full of reminders of a glorious history. Some of these reminders are depicted by the travel guidebooks and embedded in the context of European

²³ Ginette Verstraete, "Heading for Europe," in *Mobilizing place, placing mobility: the politics of representation in a globalized world* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2002), 43.

²⁴ James Buzard, "A Continent of Pictures: Reflections on the 'Europe' of Nineteenth-Century Tourists," *PMLA* 108, no. 1 (1 January 1993): 36.

²⁵ *Fodor's 1992*, 40.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

²⁷ *Fodor's 1986*, 738.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, ix.

history with anecdotes and historical references. Although European history as a continuation of Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire is invented, it is maintained by historiography and serves as justification for Europe's claim of cultural superiority. As Western historians mainly reduced Europe's history to the one of selected Western European countries and neglected most of the Eastern European countries, the West claimed superiority and the legacy of ancient civilisations for itself.²⁹ *Fodor's* reminds us that the Greek as well as the Roman empires stretched further to the east than the boundary of Western Europe. The guidebooks show that Eastern Europe shares this legacy of the ancient world and point out numerous remains that bear witness of that. Many remnants can for instance be found in Bulgaria, such as the ancient city of Varna which used to be Odessos for the Greeks and later a Roman town for which a fortress wall and Roman Thermae give evidence.³⁰ Numerous Greek and Roman remains can be seen in Romania, not least the town of Constanza which in ancient Greek times was "Tomis, where Ovid spent his last years."³¹ The author does not only compare Prague to Rome because it was built on seven hills like the ancient capital, but also mentions that it "became briefly the seat of the Holy Roman Empire."³² Many parts of Yugoslavia bear traces of ancient times and the exhibited finds in Belgrade's national museum remind us that "some of Europe's earliest cultures [...] had their origins in these parts."³³

In the history of Europe the Carolingian Empire marks the next crucial period after the Greek and Roman Empires. Charlemagne, the self-appointed "father of Europe" united a territory in his empire that comprises much of what is nowadays referred to as Western and Central Europe.³⁴ Charlemagne's empire was tantamount to the idea of Europe which in turn "became subordinated to the notion of the West."³⁵ Even though Charlemagne's Europe was a small Europe, not comprising the Slavs, its border lies east of the Cold War division of Europe and *Fodor's* does not fail to put a mark of the former border of the Carolingian Empire on the map of Hungary, namely the town of Esztergom which "was once Charlemagne's eastern border fortress."³⁶

As a guidebook *Fodor's* points out the main sights of European countries and among the recommended sights is a number of museums; first and foremost the national museums of each of the countries are recommended. The national museum itself is a strong symbol, it constitutes a nation's legitimacy, displaying the col-

²⁹ Cf. Davies, *Europe*, 19–36.

³⁰ Cf. *Fodor's 1992*, 159.

³¹ *Fodor's 1986*, 621.

³² *Fodor's 1992*, 191.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1136.

³⁴ Delanty, *Inventing Europe*, 26 ff.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

³⁶ *Fodor's 1986*, 427.

lective memory and portraying it as the result of a long historical development.³⁷ National museums in Western as well as Eastern Europe display archaeological finds from ancient Greece and Rome, thereby claiming the legacy of these bygone civilisations. *Fodor's* lists the national museums of all countries represented in the books and points out the collections of ancient finds. This again makes clear that Eastern Europe shares this legacy with the West. Moreover, in the rhetoric of the guidebooks Europe itself is depicted as a "vast outdoor museum"³⁸ in which the traveller can wander around and get a grasp of what constitutes Europe. Europe, as a museum of the Old World, displays remains of ancient times, more or less well preserved. By pointing them out and interpreting them, that is, connecting them with a simplified version of history, the guidebooks act as a cultural mediator and fulfil the same function as the museum.³⁹ This created image of a museum illustrates the notion of Europe as a cultural space.

4.3 Europe divided: West and East

The *Fodor's* travel guidebooks show a surprising openness regarding Eastern Europe and encourage travels to these countries. They are advertised to offer stunning nature, a rich cultural life and plenty of worthwhile sights. Countries being understood in the guidebooks as belonging to Eastern Europe are all countries east of the line that became known as the Iron Curtain during the Cold War, with the exception of Greece which has been understood as Western despite its geographical situation.⁴⁰ Thus, the Eastern European countries are Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and in the 1986 edition Albania and the German Democratic Republic. Even in the guidebook of 1992, which was published after the Iron Curtain had officially been dissolved, these countries are referred to as Eastern Europe, whereas the GDR obviously ceased to exist after the unification of Germany and Albania was not part of *Fodor's Europe* anymore.

Despite numerous positive remarks and the effort to present Eastern European countries as rewarding travel destinations, the division between West and East is still apparent. Of course, the political reality implied obstacles for tourism in countries east of the Iron Curtain and these obviously have to be mentioned in a travel guidebook. However, the rhetoric used in the description of these countries is worth analysing. In many ways Eastern Europe is constructed as an antithesis to the West. This is apparent not only in negative connotations of underdevelopment,

³⁷ Cf. the dominant ideology thesis as developed by Jürgen Habermas and Abercrombie/Turner, which holds that heritage is instrumentalized to legitimize an existing regime, e.g. in Nicholas Abercrombie and Bryan S. Turner, "The Dominant Ideology Thesis," *The British Journal of Sociology* 29, no. 2 (1 June 1978): 149-170.

³⁸ *Fodor's 1992*, 1087.

³⁹ Cf. Ooi, *Cultural tourism and tourism cultures*, 1.

⁴⁰ It is to be noted that the countries are presented in alphabetical order, there is no formal division of Western and Eastern European countries.

which are plentiful, but also in romantic and patronizing depictions of the natural state of the recommended destinations.

To begin with negative connotations, the *Fodor's* guidebooks present Eastern Europe as a destination not as well developed in terms of tourism as Western Europe. Moreover, in describing the inferiority of the tourism facilities, they are continually compared to the ones in the West, mentioning that they “do not meet Western standards.”⁴¹ In that way the trains are not as fast, efficient and comfortable as in the West, the road conditions not as good, the standards of restaurants and accommodation are not to be measured by Western standards and many cities do not offer a “Western-style nightlife.”⁴² Even though the authors make an effort to reconcile the “discomforts”⁴³ – which is how it is phrased at numerous points – and emphasize the rewarding experience of travelling in the East, they stress the evident difference between East and West.

Furthermore the Western view from which the Eastern countries are depicted reinforces this sense of Western superiority. The guidebooks are presumably mainly written by authors from the West and addressed to travellers from the West. Facilitating the imagination of Western travellers, the guidebooks often use comparisons to the West, be it just regarding the size – like Romania having approximately the size of Oregon⁴⁴ – or in terms of other similarities: Prague for instance is built on seven hills just like Rome and its Wenceslas square is “the Times Square of Prague,”⁴⁵ in another example Budapest shines with “Western European-style”⁴⁶ bars.

Eastern Europe is portrayed as in general less modern than Western Europe. This lack of modernity is in many ways, despite the above quoted discomforts, described as positive whereas traces of modernity like the inevitable “urban scars”⁴⁷ are depicted as something disturbing the romantic image of the natural East. As many Eastern European cities have been partly destroyed by the war they now boast modern buildings, whereas “cities like Novi Pazar have preserved their Eastern character.”⁴⁸ This Eastern character is depicted with connotations such as attractive, unspoilt, rural, natural, original or traditional. To name a few examples, Poland’s countryside “remains delightful and very traditional,”⁴⁹ which the author illustrates by mentioning horses as a common sight as means of transport and for agriculture; then, Romania’s “rural villages [...] are among the most unspoilt and

⁴¹ *Fodor's 1992*, 911.

⁴² *Fodor's 1986*, 142.

⁴³ *Fodor's 1992*, 183.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 905.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 629.

⁴⁷ *Fodor's 1986*, 611.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 767.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 572.

unchanged areas in Europe.”⁵⁰ These notions invoke romantic imaginations of a natural space away from Western modernity and industrialization. Of course, Eastern Europe is not untouched by modernity but the writer delightfully proclaims that “the unattractive effects of industrialization are generally confined to the cities, with life in the countryside remaining picturesquely simple.”⁵¹

Not only the nature is depicted as simple and original, so are the people. The Albanians for instance are described as “extraordinary single minded people,”⁵² and “nor have the Bulgars wholeheartedly become city dwellers, even though more than half of them are.”⁵³ The authors of the chapters about Romania and Czechoslovakia especially admire the folk culture that is still alive and can be seen authentically instead of being staged as a tourist attraction. Although industrialisation and urbanisation did not spare Romania, “there are still many regions that boast a way of life that barely exists outside folklore museums elsewhere in Europe.”⁵⁴

Just as Eastern Europe is portrayed as less modern than the West, so it is shown as developing. Especially after the collapse of communism the standards of tourist facilities and transport are being improved. This implies a teleological view in which Western Europe is far ahead in the development and Eastern Europe is on the way to undergo the same stages of modernity. An example to illustrate this notion is the description of the railway network in Eastern Germany, which apparently shows improvement thanks to Western German investment but is still not as efficient as it is “still in the steam age.”⁵⁵

Travelling to Eastern Europe is for the Western traveller, according to the rhetoric of the authors, not only a journey to another place but also to a bygone time. This is connected with the romanticism of Eastern Europe’s largely natural state, the teleological view of it being on a lower stage of development than the West and the image of it being a museum displaying the past of Europe. Not only Hungary offers “Old World charm,”⁵⁶ and the author of the chapter on Romania states, “the intrepid independent traveller will experience that rare sensation of having stepped back in time to a world that, for the most part, exists only in the memories of another generation.”⁵⁷

This quote leads to the next point, namely the notion of the Western adventurer who discovers the East. Many regions of Eastern Europe have at that time not been enclosed by the tourism industry. The *Fodor’s* authors recommend ventur-

⁵⁰ *Fodor’s 1992*, 905.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Fodor’s 1986*, 59.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 611.

⁵⁵ *Fodor’s 1992*, 362.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 612.

⁵⁷ *Fodor’s 1986*, 767.

ing these “less frequented trails,”⁵⁸ given that the traveller is ready to leave his comfort zone. This rhetoric of discovering and exploring is reminiscent of romantic depictions of expeditions to distant continents.

To sum up, the denotations of Eastern Europe reinforce the strongly emphasized division between Western and Eastern Europe. The admiration of a romantic, natural state is patronizing and implies Western superiority just as the image of the adventurous Western traveller exploring the East and the notion of development do.

4.4 Europe meets Asia: Turkey

It is remarkable that Turkey is represented in the *Fodor's Europe* guidebooks and the Soviet Union is not. Even though the largest part of Turkey is on the Asian continent it is shown to be politically, historically and culturally connected to Europe. Not only is the above mentioned Mediterranean cuisine a connecting element but first and foremost the legacy of Ancient Greece and Rome. Istanbul used to be the capital of the Roman Empire, then named Constantinople, and the author does not fail to point out numerous reminders of Byzantine time. The majority of places recommended in Turkey are those that host ancient heritage, such as the restored ancient cities of Troy, Pergamum and Ephesus. Even though these sites are located on the Asian continent, they used to be part of the Greek and Roman empires and therefore part of Europe's invented history. Besides the tangible heritage, many places in the Asian part of Turkey were furthermore home to prominent figures such as Thales of Miletus and Anaximander, who are incorporated in Europe's intellectual canon.

Moreover, Turkey is shown to be close to Europe in a political way. The author puts much effort into pointing out Turkey's Western character as it “has faced west politically since 1923”⁵⁹ and became a “secular state with Western outlook.”⁶⁰ Turkey was accepted as a member of the NATO in 1952, which until then only included Western European countries. Turkey politically cooperating with Europe and being incorporated in a Western alliance seems surprising regarding the fact that Islam had for centuries been depicted as the Other the counterpart and enemy to Europe. However, in the twentieth century religion seems to have played a minor role in politics and politically communist Russia was Europe's first bogey.⁶¹ The guidebooks only mention the Soviet Union in context with Eastern European countries that politically distance themselves from it, such as Albania and Yugoslavia. As the proximity of other satellite states to the Soviet Union is not pointed out, the latter is clearly illustrated as the Other.

⁵⁸ *Fodor's 1992*, 199.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1087.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Cf. Delanty, *Inventing Europe*, 58–63.

Although the guidebooks emphasize Turkey's connection to Europe on political and historical grounds, at the same time they depict present-day Turkey's character as Muslim and oriental. Istanbul for instance is described as an "Oriental wonderland of mosques, opulent places, and crowded bazaars."⁶² Turkey is a country where "East meets West [...] both literally and figuratively,"⁶³ meaning geographically and culturally, as it shows a mixture of Western and Eastern elements. But it is also a country "where Asia meets Europe"⁶⁴ which once again reinforces the image of Europe as a unity once opposed to Asia.

4.5 Opening East: Europe after 1989

As the main sources of this paper are the *Fodor's* guidebooks on Europe from before and after 1989, a decisive date in European history, this chapter is concerned with the differences in the representations of Europe in these two editions. As developed above, the differences between the two editions are not significant; despite the collapse of the Iron Curtain, the dichotomy between Western and Eastern Europe is maintained in the edition from 1992 and the attitude in the representation of Eastern Europe is similar in both editions. However, two aspects seem to be noticeable.

At first, it is apparent from the first page that the *Fodor's 92* conveys the mood of upheaval of that time. After the end of the Cold War and the abolishment of communism, travelling in the countries "behind the Iron Curtain"⁶⁵ became easier for Western European and American tourists. The rhetoric of the authors illustrates an image of openness and accessibility. Less obstacles in terms of visa, customs and currency exchange regulations and the extension of the transport network – including an increased number of direct flight from North America – make the East more accessible for Western travellers, although tourism facilities are still not fully developed.

Unified Germany illustrates the differences between West and East that clashed after the fall of the Iron Curtain. According to the author there are "very visible differences between the glitter of west Berlin and the relative shabbiness of the east."⁶⁶ Despite the abolishment of formal restrictions for travellers the gap is still apparent and "there's still a strong feeling of passing from one world into another when crossing the scar that marks the line where the wall once stood."⁶⁷ While the differences are still remarkable, as between Western and Eastern Europe

⁶² *Fodor's 1992*, 1098.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1087.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1097.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 425.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

in general, the authors predict that these will gradually cease and the East will develop further in terms of tourism infrastructure.

Interestingly, the author remarks that in the case of Germany “the 40-year division was an artificial one,”⁶⁸ while the border between Western and Eastern Europe as constituted by the now ceased Iron Curtain is not questioned but instead maintained throughout the book. All countries that were designated as Eastern European in the 1986 edition still are in 1992. While Berlin has become a “Western metropolis,”⁶⁹ the other countries east of the Iron Curtain remain in the East. What is new, however, is the discourse on Central Europe. Whereas the *Fodor’s 1986* only mentions it once, namely Czechoslovakia being “historically part of [the] Central European kingdoms,”⁷⁰ the 1992 edition counts several other countries belonging to Central Europe, for instance Hungary and Poland. Neither Germany nor Austria, which in Friedrich Naumann’s idea of Central Europe are part of it, are designated as such; instead they are identified as Western European. Thus, the term Central Europe appears to be merely a substitute for the term Eastern Europe which is used likewise in the same chapters.

5 Conclusion

As the paper has shown, the *Fodor’s Europe* guidebooks from 1986 and 1992 represent Europe as a unity but at the same time reinforce a sharp distinction between West and East along the lines of the Iron Curtain. Even after the Cold War this division persists as visible although the Iron Curtain has ceased to exist. The case of unified Germany, whose internal border dividing West and East Germany is acknowledged as artificial, illustrates how the two opposing sides of West and East clash after the opening of the Iron Curtain. However, with the exception of Germany, the countries selected in the 1992 edition are still ascribed to the categories Western Europe and Eastern Europe, in the same way as in 1986. In the former, the term Central Europe is frequently used for countries of the former Eastern bloc, however not uniformly but parallel to the term Eastern Europe. Although the East is depicted as more accessible, it is still for the greater part a space for the adventurous traveller. Notions of Eastern Europe as traditional and less modern and developed than the West are plentiful in both editions of the guidebook. Then again, Europe is shown as a cultural space, especially when facing the Other, the Soviet Union and the Asian continent. Europe is presented as an Old World museum of ancient remains reinforcing the perception of Europe as a cultural space rather than merely a geographical one, which justifies that Turkey is selected as a part of it and the Soviet Union is not.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 355.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 428.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 132.

As this paper mainly concentrates on the representation of Eastern Europe and only for a short timeframe, there is the possibility of further research on a larger scale. *Fodor's* first guidebook from 1936 as well as recent editions would be an interesting subject for further analysis to examine if the sharp distinction between West and East had not yet been as consolidated before the Second World War, and whether it becomes more dissolved towards the twenty-first century.

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