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**Title**

Co-operation through cultural interaction : lessons from the past and an agenda for the future

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**Abstract**

Although term much used to describe a major sub-region in South Eastern Europe, the Balkan, has unpleasant political connotations, evoking the ultimate in political fragmentation, its peoples share a long common history and many common cultural traits. In particular, there has been the heritage both of Orthodox Christianity and of the Byzantine Empire. Even the coming of the Ottoman Turks was not as divisive as has traditionally been thought. The "pax ottomanica" also brought elements of unity to the area, even attempts at religious syncretism involving Orthodox hesychastic mystics and Muslim Sufi "bektasi" dervishes. Recently, a community of the black sea nations has come into existence that, extending to the Caucasus, could form a new South-East European-Pontic supranational unifying structure. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Theodorescu, Razvan, E-Mail: mc-ministr@pro.ro