

THE SERBIAN FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN 1900-1908

by

DRAGAN DENNIS MILIVOJEVIĆ

B.A., University of British Columbia, 1955

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of

Slavonic Studies

We accept this thesis as conforming to
the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April, 1959

ABSTRACT

The period under consideration is divided into four chapters. I. The Serbian Situation During the Nineteenth Century. II. The Reign of Alexander Obrenović. III. The Aftermath of the Revolution; and IV. Concluding Reflections. The chapters are interrelated topically and chronologically. Thus the first chapter starts in the year 1900 with a brief review of the events which preceded it. The topic connecting the chapters is the relations of Serbia with the major Powers with especially that of Russia and Austria.

The interest of these two powers clashed, but nowhere was their conflict so apparent as in their desires for control of independent Serbia. That small country not only survived as a political and ethnic entity but gathered her kinsmen into a larger political unit--Yugoslavia.

The success of Serbia in her struggle for political and economic emancipation was in the opinion of this writer due to two principal factors--Serbian nationalism and Russian opposition to Austrian schemes for Serbian subjugation. In the chapter: The Aftermath of the Revolution, particular emphasis was laid on the Serbian role as a unifying nucleus for South-Slavs. In the last chapter under the title Concluding Reflections, the feud between Imperial Austria-Hungary and Serbia is shown as a struggle not only between two different states, but of two different ideologies. The nationalist democratic spirit of Serbia as against the aristocratic and feudalistic thought of Austria-Hungary.

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of _____

The University of British Columbia,
Vancouver 8, Canada.

Date _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My acknowledgments are due to
Dr. James O. St. Clair-Sobell and Dr. Cyril
Bryner, as well as to Dr. Stanley Pech, for
useful criticism and guidance.

THE SERBIAN FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN 1900-1908

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
I. The Serbian Situation During the Nineteenth Century	1
Serbia and the Congress of Berlin	5
Serbia and the Great Powers at the End of the Nineteenth Century	11
Development of Political Parties in Serbia and the Reign of Milan Obrenovic'	17
II. The Reign of Alexander Obrenovic'	33
Serbian Relations with Austria and Russia	33
King Alexander's Marriage	37
Relations with Russia During the Reign of Alexander	38
Domestic Affairs During King Alexander's Reign.	41
The Conspiracy	43
The Assassination	51
The Reaction of the Western Countries to the Serbian Coup d'Etat	55
III. The Aftermath of the Revolution	62
King Peter	62
The Question of Montenegro	66
The Diplomatic Boycott	70
The 'Pig War' and the Struggle for the Serbian Economic Independence	75
The Annexation and the Western Powers	82
The Reaction of Great Britain	89
The Russian Reaction	93
The Serbian Reaction	96
The Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	100
The Extremist Tendencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina	105
IV. Concluding Reflections	109
Summary	121
BIBLIOGRAPHY	126

CHAPTER I.

THE SERBIAN SITUATION DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The foundations of the Serbian state were laid during the first and the second uprisings against the Turks in 1804 and in 1813. The result of these uprisings was a partial autonomy within the Turkish Empire. This autonomy was strictly limited; for Turkish garrisons remained in the chief towns of Serbia. Owing to Russian diplomatic pressure on Turkey, however, and as a result of innumerable wars between Russia and Turkey, Serbia acquired a greater degree of autonomy. The Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 dictated by Russia to the Ottoman Sultan, and the 'hatti sheriff' of 1830, assured Serbia of an autonomous existence, and her status was guaranteed by the great powers in the Paris peace treaty of 1856. In 1867 the Turks evacuated the Belgrade garrison, their last military stronghold in Serbia. The Serbo-Turkish war of 1876 and the Treaty of Berlin of 1878 brought Serbia full political independence and additional territory. And, in 1822, Serbia was elevated from a principality to a kingdom. The autocratically governed principality of Montenegro was populated by pure Serbian stock and had managed to preserve its independence despite a long drawn out struggle with the Turks. Bosnia and

Herzegovina, the two provinces populated alike by Serbs, Croats and Moslems, however, were not free. For the Turkish occupation which began in Bosnia in 1463 was replaced in 1878 by the Austrian occupation when the last Bosnian king, Stjepan Tomašević, died. It was under Stjepan Tomasević's rule that the union of Serbia and Bosnia was completed.

Serbia's external relations were characterized by a close association with Russia and Austria in the realization of its nationalism. "Ever since Peter the Great, Russia stood forward as the champion of the subject races."¹ The ties of blood and race combined with a common Orthodox religion exerted a powerful attraction. Between 1774 and 1856 successive rights by treaties had assured Russia a vague and elastic protectorate over the Balkan Christians. Public opinion in Russia, especially that inspired by the Slavophiles, was always ready to support an aggressive Balkan policy. A somewhat less idealistic aspect of Russian policy was its desire to acquire control of the Straits.

Austro-Serbian ties were a result of geographical proximity, economic interdependence and a common struggle against the infidel. It was Austria who organized the South-Slavs in the so-called military frontiers. The border zones of the South-Slav settlers lived there on condition of defending their possessions. During the first uprising in 1804, the Serbian leader, Karadjordjević, sent a letter to

¹ R.W. Seton-Watson, The Role of Bosnia in International Politics, British Academy, 1931, p. 22.

the Austrian major Miteser in Semlin in which he wrote "As you order us, so shall we behave."² In the eighteenth century, Austria had three wars with the Turks (1716-1718, 1737-1739, and 1788-1791). In all of these wars, Serbia was the battlefield. It was after the third war that the Serbs were ready to become subjects of the Austrian Empire. In a letter of January 22, 1790, from the Serbian clergy, they declared that they wished the mercy and protection of the Austrian Emperor.³ But, then the traditional policy of Austria-Hungary was changed, the passive policy of defence gave way to an aggressive policy of acquisition of territories, whose inhabitants were Christians. That step could be justified on any grounds except those imperialistic. Russia, then, played her favorite role of "Christian Defender", in a very narrow sense. Both countries moved from an idealistic viewpoint in foreign policy to a realistic one. Slavophilism was for the moment forgotten for the sake of expediency. Russia and Austria were not against the formation of independent states, but they were definitely "against the formation of a big and powerful Slavic state,"⁴ although Russia worked against the spirit of this agreement when she tried to create a big Russian dominated Bulgaria by the Treaty of San Stefano. Under this treaty any

² Vladimir Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Srbije i Austro-Ugarske u xx veku, Belgrade, 1936, p. 83.

³ Ibid., p. 92.

⁴ Pribram, Secret Treaties of Austria, Oxford University Press, 1920, vol. 2, p. 203.

type of Balkan union was prevented for Austria and Russia divided the Balkans into spheres of influence. Serbia came under the influence of Austria, and Bulgaria under that of Russia. On September 11, 1876, Alexander II wrote to Francis Joseph:

Je comprends ta répugnance pour la formation d'un grand état Serbe. Je répousse comme toi cette combinaison. 5

and again:

Il faudrait donc que tes troupes fussent prêtes à entrer en Bosnie, tandis que les miennes entreraient en Bulgarie. 6

This concession of Russia must be attributed to the change of Russia's feeling towards Serbia. She decided to choose Bulgaria as her protégée in the realization of her Balkan ambitions. Serbia was forced to enter into closer relations with Austria-Hungary. The Congress at Berlin sanctioned the above-mentioned settlement. It was called by the Western powers, who were frightened by the advance of Russia in the Balkans and attempted to check her influence. The Congress of Berlin was the logical conclusion of the previous agreements between Austria-Hungary and Russia, and especially the secret convention of the "Reichstadt" in 1878 which divided the Balkan peninsula into two spheres of influence: Russian and Austrian. Russia's protégée, big Bulgaria, was

5 R.W. Seton-Watson, "Russian Commitments in the Bosnian Question," Slavonic Review, June 1929, v. 8, no. 22, p. 578.

6 Ibid., p. 581.

made smaller and the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina took place. The Congress of Berlin meant the ascendancy of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans and a defeat for Russia. Bessarabia was small compensation for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The equilibrium in the Balkans was thus disturbed and the infiltration of Austria into the Balkans was deeply resented by Russia. Bulgaria was reduced from 163,000 to 64,000 square miles, and her population from four million to one and a half million. Russian prestige in the Balkans fell very low. At the same time, the annulment of the Treaty of San Stefano was a necessity. It was a Russian solution to the Balkan problem and not a Slav one.

Serbia and the Congress of Berlin

Although Serbia's independence was recognized, the Congress of Berlin was a blow to Serbian national aspirations. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the provinces inhabited by Serbs, Croats, and Moslems speaking the same language, were given as a mandate to Austria-Hungary. The Serbian representative at the Congress was not allowed to be present while discussions about the fate of his country were going on. The feeling among the South Slavs was that of despair. Franjo Rachki wrote to a friend on March 24, 1878: "How do they want us to be liberated by those who would drown us in a drop of water, who work steadily to cause quarrel and

disagreement between us."⁷ The only hope of the Serbian delegation led by Jovan Ristić during the Berlin Congress was to appeal to the Pan-Slavic feelings of the Russian delegates. When he asked the Russian delegates "What consolation could we have?", the latter replied "In fifteen years our accounts with Austria-Hungary will be settled."⁸

The Congress of Berlin was a document which Serbia could neither appeal against nor change, because she did participate in it. The principle which Serbia espoused, that of self-determination on national grounds, did not come under consideration. The Congress of Berlin made the mistake of having faith in the old conception of power-politics which failed to see the strength of nationalism. Austria had to order a mobilization and use 200,000 men to subdue Bosnia and Herzegovina. Austria abandoned the conservative Metternichian policy of the status quo in Turkey. "Its occupation was in contradiction to the motto, 'The Balkans for the Balkans', enunciated by Baron Kalnoky."⁹ Benjamin Kallay, the able Austro-Hungarian diplomatic agent, judged this change in the Austro-Hungarian policy to be dangerous. In his dispatches to Beust and Andrassy, he laid

7 Seton-Watson, Russian Commitments, p. 518.

8 Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Srbije, p. 36.

9 Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, Belgrade, Geza Kon, 1923, p. 373.

7

stress upon the sensitiveness of Serbian national feeling.¹⁰

The population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was of the same national stock. They numbered 1,737,000 in 1909 and consisted of 43 per cent Orthodox, 35 per cent Moslems, 21.3 per cent Catholic Croats, and 0.7 per cent Jews. This fact has been established by Kallay himself, who stated in his History of the Serbs that there were three religions and only a single Serbian stock in Bosnia and Herzegovina, omitting the existence of Croats, whose expression of nationalism was not so intense as that of the Serbs. The revolt of Bosnia and Herzegovina against the Turks in 1875 was directed against the Ottoman rule, and the aim of the rebels was the union of Bosnia-Herzegovina with the kingdom of Serbia. The Austrian Imperial proclamation emphasized that the Austrian troops "do not come as enemies, but as friends."¹¹ Jovan Cvijić expressed aptly the feelings of his compatriots in 1908. "Serbia became a surrounded country and we became an arrested people." The Austrian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was not only an insult to the national aspirations of Serbia, but Serbian commercial ties by way of sea routes towards the Aegean were threatened in Macedonia and towards the Adriatic Sea in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The result was not only national subjugation but an economic one as well.

¹⁰ Konstantin Dumba, Memoirs of a Diplomat, trans. Morrow, London, 1933, p. 88.

¹¹ Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslawiens Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea, 1929, p. 190.

Despite the betrayal by Russia in the Reichstadt secret convention, and the great disappointment of Slavophiles in Berlin and San Stefano, Ristić, the Serbian delegate, still believed in Russia's friendship. He was not so naive as not to be able to see through Russian machinations, but he knew that with the acquisition of Bosnia, Austria would become the main enemy of Serbia. The tragic position of Serbia was made evident in the decision of the Berlin Congress, which formulated the treaty with the approval of the great powers of Europe. It meant that the status quo was guaranteed not only by Austria, but by Great Britain, Germany, and Russia as well. It was the English Representative, Lord Salisbury, who brought up the question of Austrian occupation. Bismarck suggested to Austria the acquisition of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the hope of setting Austria and Russia against each other. In this he completely succeeded. The basic idea of the Berlin Congress was expressed by Aehrenthal in a letter to Prince Bülow in February, 1909 when the annexation crisis reached its critical point:

With the weakening of Turkey and its gradual retreat to Asia, the process of creating states started again on one south-eastern border. We had to have a policy, and, therefore we had to occupy and then 30 years later to annex. With these two acts, the dream of a Great Serbian state ceased to exist. 12

12 Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Srbije, p. 210.

Austria did not have any policy in the Balkans: "Our Balkan policy failed for want of a definite aim."¹³ If there was any aim, it was to prevent and make impossible a big and powerful state in the Balkans. Serbia had to be either Austrian or Russian, but under no circumstances could she remain free and independent. The Serbian politician, Vladan Djordjević, one of the best friends Austria ever had in Serbia, maintained in a lecture given in Berlin, that no final solution for the Serbian question was possible except by means of a national union of all of the Serbs and Croats in a single state, and this could be carried out only with the consent of Austria-Hungary.¹⁴ Austria would not give such a consent. The internal situation was precarious. The idea of Austria and Hungary ruling the Slavs was too deeply rooted to allow any modification. Any democratization of the Empire would enhance the political influence of the Slavs. Any solution which the representatives of the Big Powers imposed on the Balkans did not last long. In the first place, the solution belonged to an age long past. Experience should have taught Austria that the ideology of national unification could not be stopped. Events in Italy in 1859 and in Germany in 1866 proved that Austria did not keep pace with events. Napoleon's saying could best be applied to the Austria of Francis Joseph's

13 Dumba, Memoirs, p. 89.

14 "Future of the Balkans," Fortnightly Review, 1909, p. 104.

time: "L'Autriche est toujours en retard d'une année, d'une aimée, et d'une idée."¹⁵ In this particular case, the idea was that of nationalism.

One of the most prominent features of the Treaty of Berlin was its lack of touch with reality; borders were cut across national entities leaving one part of the population on one side and the rest of it on the other side. Disraeli foresaw that the clauses of the Treaty of Berlin would soon be broken. After seven years, the first violation of the Treaty by Bulgaria occurred.¹⁶ Greece soon followed. Only Serbia was to fulfill the clauses of the Treaty which were described by Prince Alexander of Battenberg as "a monstrous monument of European diplomatic ignorance."¹⁷ Bosnia and Herzegovina occupied an ambiguous position in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In order to eliminate friction between Austria and Hungary, this province was placed under the Joint Ministry of Finance. Its status in the Austro-Hungarian Empire continued to be semi-legal. No attempt was made to evaluate and give expression to Bosnia and Herzegovina's desire for self-determination. The Ausgleich, by which the Hungarians tried to seize the political power in one part of the Empire, while the Austrians would try

¹⁵ Denis, E., La Grande Serbie, Paris, Delagrave, 1915, p. 131.

¹⁶ Seton-Watson, The Role of Bosnia, p. 25.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

to seize the political power in the rest of the Empire, was applied to Bosnia and Herzegovina, except that here both actions were simultaneously pursued.¹⁸ The national idea of the Serbs and the Imperialist policy of Austria were directly opposed to one another. A basis for reconciliation was nowhere to be found. Only radical measures would help. In the phrase of Field Marshal Conrad von Hötzen, the issue was "whether the union of the South-Slavs was to be achieved inside the Hapsburg Monarchy at Serbia's expense or under Serbia, at the Monarchy's expense."¹⁹

Serbia and the Great Powers at the End of the Nineteenth Century

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Serbia had a choice of two diametrically-opposed foreign policies. Either she could live on good terms with its powerful neighbour, Austria-Hungary, enjoy her protection and be subservient to her, or else she could insist on a broad national policy of unification which would estrange and bring her directly into conflict with Austria-Hungary. At various times, Serbia pursued both. A third direction found adherents too. In the opinion of that group, the foreign policy of Serbia had to follow the foreign policy of Russia. Ties of race and religion counted in the opinion of this

¹⁸ "Irredenta Servia," Edinburgh Review, 1919, p. 41.

¹⁹ Seton-Watson, The Role of Bosnia, p. 32.

political group more than geographic and economic factors. These aspirations of some Serbian politicians tied in with Russian schemes for the conquest of Constantinople and the establishment of a Greek Empire under Russian aegis. Russia was territorially satiated, so ran the arguments of the Russian foreign office and the Serbian Slavophiles, and she did not and would not pursue a policy of territorial aggrandizement.

Historical precedent was to be found in the union of the crowns of Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland in the fourteenth century. Why could not a similar federation be concluded between Serbia, Roumania and Greece? Constantinople would be the capital and naturally the Russian Emperor would be the ruler of the proposed confederation. A publicist of Greek origin, J.G. Pitzipios Boy, proposed in 1858 in his work, L'Orient, les reformes de l'Empire Byzantin, the formation of a Balkan confederation under Russia! If Russia "were to take the course of giving back to Poland the right of self-government, and were to facilitate the reunion of that country into a single independent State ... would not this confederation too be in a position to lay down the law to the rest of the world?"²⁰ These plans for a Balkan confederation under the Russian aegis were utopian. All the Balkan states pursued contradictory aims. The

²⁰ "The Future of the Balkans," Fortnightly Review, 1909, p. 1041.

willingness of Russia to grant self-government to the members of the federation was questionable, especially in view of the Polish experience. Also, the ability of the Russian government to create such political confederations was doubtful.

The number of Serbian politicians favouring union under Austrian auspices was negligible. The political party which represented such a programme gradually died away. There were few politicians even in the Progressive party who would agree with the Czech historian Palacky that "If Austria did not exist, it would be necessary to create her." The views of one of the former adherents of the Austrian "orientation" were summed up in the brochure by Vladan Djordjević:

I will remain a grateful student of the German school and a faithful friend of my dear Vienna, but especially because of that, I must from now on fight the suicidal policy of Austria-Hungary, which unmercifully persecuted my Serbo-Croat nation for the last two centuries.²¹

A most difficult course for Serbia was its policy of non-orientation and that of complete independence. This political conception was developed by a Serbian politician, Ilija Garašanin, in his work Nacertanije. His political programme was based on a Balkan confederation, whose slogan was "The Balkans for the Balkans." Garašanin maintained that since Serbia could have no assured existence with her

²¹ H. Wendel, Die Hapsburger und die Südslawenfrage, Leipzig, Geza Kon, 1924, trans. by author.

present boundaries, she must strain every nerve to unite kindred peoples to her. And if this aim was not realized, Garašanin believed that outside influences would toss her about like a small boat on an open sea and end in her being wrecked. Garašanin foresaw that the Turkish Empire in Europe would either end by being partitioned or it would be replaced by a new state formed from its Christian inhabitants. And if such a partition took place, Serbia would be under Austria; following most naturally the division of the Balkan peninsula from Vienna to Salonika, Serbia would be under Austria. "Austria, therefore, will always be the enemy of the future Serbian state,"²² and an understanding with Austria would always remain impossible. As for Russia, Garašanin agreed with Friedrich Engels who wrote as early as 1853 about the future relations between Russia and the Slav states. Even if religion and blood ties the South-Slavs to Russia, their interests would become different on the day the South-Slavs obtain their freedom.²³ It is natural, argues Garašanin, that the other Western powers, particularly France and Great Britain, should oppose this aggrandizement of Austria and Russia but not the formation of a new Christian Balkan state. This statement of Garašanin's found its expression in the speech of Gladstone at Blackheath,

22 Ludwig Brittnner, "Österreich-Ungarn und Serbien," Historische Zeitschrift, München, 1931, p. 78.

23 Wendel, Die Hapsburger, p. 40.

in September, in which speaking strongly against the Turks he said:

If anybody asks me how I would distribute the spoil, my answer is, I would not distribute it at all. I say that these provinces were not destined to be the property of Russia or the property of Austria, or the property of England. They were for the inhabitants of the provinces.²⁴

That state which will gather the other Balkan peoples into the projected federation could only be Serbia, said he. And, according to Garašanin, Serbia would have become the successor to the Byzantine Empire if the Turks had not destroyed her. To secure the leadership of the Balkans, Garašanin felt that Serbia must have an outlet to the sea which would insure her of economic independence. This scheme was bold and simple. However, Prince Michael, the ruler to whom Garašanin was an advisor, ruled for only nine years, and nine years was too short a time for the fulfillment of such an ambitious project. Prince Michael started this new bold course in Serbian foreign policy. He clearly saw what the principal obstacle was for the independence of Serbia. "The immediate neighbourhood of Austria condemns us to the alternative either of remaining tributary to Turkey with the prospect of being dominated by Austria, or of becoming the vassals of Russia. All Serbs feel this instinctively as much as I do."²⁵ I am of the opinion

²⁴ "The Future of the Balkans," Fortnightly Review, p.1043.

²⁵ Loc. cit.

that the dissolution of Turkey is only a question of time. I am certain [he wrote to Kossuth] that if the Turkish Empire must perish, she should not fall a prey to Russia and Austria, but that it should mean freedom for the people that inherit it."²⁶ Prince Michael cherished the dream of a war against Turkey, which would realize his ambition during his own lifetime. However, the time was not yet ripe. The status quo of Turkey was jealously guarded by the Big Powers who hoped to destroy Turkey only when it suited their interests. Garašanin wanted to win over Russia to his plan; however, the Russians were not willing to help Serbia. Baron Stachelberg, the Russian ambassador to Vienna, wrote to Michael:

The general necessity for keeping within bounds the complications caused by the present situation prevents the possibility of provoking hostilities in the East ... the interest of Serbia demands that you should husband your resources.... The great day of deliverance has not yet come.... Russia will not encourage the step which she considers premature. 27

In his activity, Prince Michael created the basis of a board national policy for the unification of the Balkans, which was repeated in the work of King Peter Karadjordjević. We can agree with E. Denis:

26 "Europe and the Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina," Fortnightly Review, 1909, p. 135.

27 "The Future of the Balkans," Fortnightly Review, p. 1043. It is interesting to note that exactly the same words were directed to Serbia by the Russian foreign office on the eve of the war with Turkey in 1912.

Le meurtre de Michel, au moment qu'il travaillait à la formation d'une union^e balkanique, était pour la monarchie habsbourgeoise un coup de fortune. Pour la Serbie c'était un immense malheur. 28

Development of Political Parties in Serbia
(and the Reign of Milan Obrenović)

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, Serbia was an agricultural country of small peasant landholdings. There were no considerable class differences. In 1885, there were only eight people in the whole country who possessed more than two hundred hectares.²⁹ Since the class struggle was not an essential political issue, other issues stepped into the foreground of political life. The most important political questions dealt with the foreign policy of the country. The influence of the West increased. Many students were educated in Germany, France, and Switzerland, from which democratic ideas were introduced to Serbia. Since Serbia and Western Europe were at different levels of political and economic development, an introduction of Western institutions was bound to bring about painful readjustments. The Western world, however, was not the only factor which influenced Serbian political life. Because of the similarity of the Serbian and Russian economies, Russian ideas and Russian methods of solving

28 Denis, La Grande Serbie, p. 94.

29 "Serbia and the Rival Dynasties," Contemporary Review, 1903, p. 13.

problems penetrated and became popular among the students who were the forerunners in the development and application of new ideas. The political parties did not have, especially in their beginnings, a clear-cut programme, neither did they represent any particular interest group.

There were three major parties in Serbia: the Radical Party which represented the interests of the small bourgeoisie of the city and village: the Liberal Party which represented the interests of the middle classes; and Naprednjachka or Progressive Party, which represented the conservative social group. This party consisted of an upper bourgeoisie, which was financially and economically poor in comparison with the Western bourgeoisie.³⁰ What distinguished one party from another was its attitude towards vital national questions. Since the Serbian people in times of crisis reacted as one, the differences of party programmes, insofar as programmes existed, were blurred. The Progressive Party, which advocated friendship with Austria, disappeared completely during the annexation crisis when Austria threatened the annihilation of Serbia as a state.

The Radical Party was formed from a socialist group led by Svetozar Marković, a socialist, who had studied in Petrograd and in Zürich. In Switzerland, Serbian socialist students found their way to the circles of Bakunin anarchists

30 Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, 1950, v. 5, p. 617.

and other extremists. The founders of the Radical Party were influenced by the Utopian socialists, Owen and Fourier, as well. But most of all they were influenced by the Russian Narodniki. The Serbian radicals like the Russian Narodniki wanted to go to the people, and cultivate the peasant masses in order to enable them to accept the responsibilities of self-government. The institution of the state was an instrument of oppression to them and in the beginning of their "political activity" they did not hesitate to use terrorist methods against it. In a book, What is a State?, one of the favourites of the Serbian students, the general attitude towards the state is neatly summed up in a brief sentence, "It is to perpetuate tyranny by those who have some property against those who do not possess any."³¹ Russian influence predominated in the development of the Serbian Radical Party, and its radical programme was not an expression of a clear-cut Western Marxian socialism. The extremes to which the Serbian radicals went expressed almost religious and mystical fervour. Those young idealists usually returned to their country, where their sublime ideas had to stand the test of reality. The ruler of Serbia at that time was King Milan, whose views were diametrically opposed to the views of the intelligentsia. The Radical Party demanded firstly, that

³¹ Quoted in Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, v. 2, p. 117.

the King should relinquish absolutist rule and give self-government to the people. Secondly, they asked that the people's assembly have full legislative power and the monarch should have only the right of suspensive veto. Thirdly, the King would be deprived of the political power which would accrue to the national assembly. Their most important principle was the first: That the people were to be sovereign and as such the beginning and the end of every sovereignty.³² The names of the Radical Party's paper was "Samouprava," or "Self-government," indicating the main aim of the party. Its views on foreign policy were Russophile. The Russian government encouraged the Radicals, although the latter were ultra-leftists, and the same Russian ambassadors who at home were the adherents of absolutism, in Serbia supported the rights of the people against the rulers.³³ The programmes of democratic reforms at home and of friendship with Russia abroad made the Radical Party extremely popular. During the elections of 1883, the Radicals won an overwhelming victory over the government-sponsored party, though the pressure against them was strong and the election public and indirect. The election victory, however, did not assure a majority for the Radical party in the government. Radical leadership was prevented by a

32 "Radikalna Stranka," Nova Europa, 1926, Vol. XIII, p. 386.

33 "The Foreign Policy of Serbia," Nova Europa, v. 18, April 26, 1928, p. 256.

royal decree from accepting the majority in the government which it had legally won.

The regime of absolutism at home was further compromised by a weak and anti-national foreign policy. During the rebellion in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1875, the Serbian government was in a dilemma: should it support the national aspirations of her compatriots under the Turkish rule or pursue a noncommittal foreign policy in deference to Austria and Turkey? The new cabinet installed by King Milan was opposed to any form of military intervention in Bosnia. The tide of patriotic and national feelings, however, threatened to overthrow the government. In municipal elections, the Radical Party won the majority of seats. Public meetings celebrated the victory with great enthusiasm, and processions followed the red flag.

Economic problems added, too, to the distress. Serbia was heavily in debt; mainly to Austria from where most foreign capital came. The programme of railway building in 1887 indebted Serbia to an amount of 286,000,000 dinars although Serbia was described in 1872 by Dudley Baxter in his work, National Debts, as the "only country without any state debts."³⁴ The Viennese State Bank, the Paris Comptoir d'Escompte, and the Berlin Trade Bank, using high-loan percentages, plundered the Serbian nation. The most

³⁴ "Radikalna Stranka," Nova Europa, 1926, Vol. XIII, p. 386.

predatory power was Austria-Hungary, to which went 80 per cent of the Serbian exports and which used the economic dependence of Serbia as a political whip.³⁵ The cumulative effect of absolutism, wretched economic conditions, and an anti-national foreign policy brought about a bloody uprising in 1883 which lasted for ten days. Twenty-one persons were killed, more than seventy-three executed, and five hundred and sixty-seven were committed to long prison terms.³⁶ The Radical party was then declared illegal. In order to understand these events it is necessary to analyze the personalities who embodied the struggle between the forces of representative and responsible government and those of Absolutism in Serbia; namely, the leader of the Radical Party, Pašić, and King Milan, who ruled the country.

Pašić was an engineer by profession. A man of few words, precise and self-possessed, he represented an exception among his compatriots who often tended to lose themselves in passionate outbursts, with erratic changes of emotion. Always taciturn and a hard worker, he distinguished himself at school and obtained a government fellowship to study in Zürich. At that time, Zürich was the refuge of political exiles and a centre for students from all over Eastern Europe and Russia. He was about thirty when he reached

³⁵ H. Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, 1925, Frankfurt-am-Main, p. 482.

³⁶ "Serbia," Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, v. 38.

Zürich on his first trip to Western Europe. Here he had the opportunity to listen to every possible creed, but he was not a convert to any. The doctrines and creeds did not appeal to his analytical mind, neither did the clever and learned conversation. An anecdote is told about his conversation with Bakunin and his zealots. Bakunin appreciated the silent young Serb, and urged him to devote himself to the cause. "I like you, I even admire you," Pašić answered at last, "but I find myself quite unable to adopt your certitudes, as I cannot see clearly what is to be substituted for existing conditions once your social revolution is accomplished." Then, thinking probably he had been too bold, added, "I am studying to be a civil engineer, you know, and I would not allow myself to tear down a house unless I saw what I might build up in its place."³⁷

Pašić's enthusiasm for the cause, if there was any, was extinguished in the first battle. After the unsuccessful rebellion against King Milan in 1883, he realized the futility of terrorism and decided to achieve his political ends by parliamentary means. From then on, Pašić talked and practised the policy of coalition and conciliation. The radical side of his programme acquired in Zürich under the influence of Bakunin was gradually abandoned, only leaving the national Russophile programme still intact. "He is not," wrote an observer who knew him during that

³⁷ Count Sforza, Fifty Years of War and Diplomacy in the Balkans, New York, 1940, p. 11.

period, "a great master in the realm of higher ideas and principles but in the practical struggle for power. His skill is not in oratory and in persuasive propaganda, but in the patient skill of setting a trap for his victim by magical surprises. He is not an opponent who approaches his enemies from the front, but one who remembers and when the time of revenge comes, strikes."³⁸ The policy of coalition and compromise did much to dilute the original revolutionary zeal of the Radical Party, and to make Pašić a "professional" politician, who abandoned high principles to expediency. The peaceful and loyal Liberal Party and the revolutionary Radical Party formed an alliance. As a result Pašić became a leader of a respectable middle-class party. The Constitution of December 22, 1888 was another example of compromise. Pašić, who in his student days thought that every state was an instrument of oppression, abandoned half of his revolutionary programme including the notion that people are the source of sovereignty. The people's assemblies were not any more frequent and the King retained the right of veto. The indirect tax, too, was not abolished. There was no common voting system, and the bureaucracy was not destroyed. However, the Constitution represented a step forward towards the development of the young Serbian democracy. Personal freedom was guaranteed as

³⁸ "Ličnost Nikole Pašića", Nova Evropa, XIII, Simplex, p. 410.

well as the freedom of association and the secrecy of the mails.

It is difficult to compare King Milan and Nikola Pašić as there was little resemblance regarding their ideas, temperament and personality. King Milan was a "bon vivant," a man of the world, who despised his own people. Dissolute in his private life, he shocked his people by family quarrels and a divorce. In his letters to his Greek mistress, he referred to his only son as "the little worm-let."³⁹ He frequented race tracks in Europe, and was known there as "le mastoqueur," or the cad. Whenever he needed money, he returned to Belgrade. Often obtaining millions of francs in gold from the wretched Serbian tax-payers, he would leave, swearing never again to return to Serbia. He even went so far as to renounce his title of Prince and his Serbian citizenship.⁴⁰ Such was the moral fiber of the King who was supposed to unify the southern Slavs. A district was the only territorial gain he obtained for his country. He was beaten, in three wars, with the treasury showing a debt of two hundred and fifty million francs gold. His ideas about foreign policy were directly opposed to those of the Radicals and the majority of his people. He was opposed to the Pan-Slavic ideas: "La pensée slave a dans le panslavisme son principal ennemi."⁴¹ In his opinion, Russia

³⁹ Denis, La Grande Serbie, p. 116.

⁴⁰ Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, v. 2, p. 199.

⁴¹ Sforza, Fifty Years in the Balkans, p. 19.

represented a retarded civilization; a semi-barbarian state threatening the main streams of European culture and political and economic development. He was afraid of Russia.

"La Russie est insatiable, elle veut engloûtir la Serbie, tandis que la germanization n'est guère redoutable."⁴²

He envisaged as a main political issue of that age the struggle between the Slavs and the Germans. In such a conflict he wanted to remain neutral. "Dans le conflit imminent, entre la germanisme et le slavisme, mon intention et ma volonté est que la Serbie reste neutre."⁴³ In fact King Milan was forced to institute a foreign policy which would rely on Austria. At the Berlin Congress it was the Russian delegate, Count Shuvalov, who urged Ristić to come to terms with Austria and advised him not to resist Andrásy's proposals. The Russian Foreign Minister, Giers, admitted to the Serbian ambassadors, that "First came the Russian interests, then the Bulgarian and only afterwards follow the Serbian interests; sometimes the Bulgarian and the Russian interests coincide." In an open speech the Russian Tsar praised the valour of the Montenegrins, but as much as he regretted it, could not say the same about the Serbs.⁴⁴ So King Milan was forced by these events to pursue the only

⁴² Sforza, Fifty Years in the Balkans, p. 117.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 116.

⁴⁴ Ćorović, Odnosi, p. 150.

foreign policy which was left to him, namely a friendly policy toward Austria. That policy estranged the people from him, and was the cause of his biggest political mistakes, the war against Bulgaria and especially the secret treaty concluded with Austria in 1881. "Crime suprême et inéxpiable - d'avoir vendu à l'Autriche les droits essentiels et les intérêts vitaux de son royaume."⁴⁵

This secret convention of 1881 was a unique document in the diplomatic history of Europe. It was concluded by a king with a foreign power against the vital interests and aspirations of his own people. One of the cherished hopes of the Serbian people was Gorchakov's promise that the arrangement regarding Bosnia would be changed some time in the future and that the inhabitants of Bosnia would be able to exercise a free choice in regard to their political allegiance. This wish was expressed in the letter of the Bosnian rebels to the Russian Tsar Alexander II on March 1, 1878. "It is our eternal wish to become part of Serbian principedom. We cannot enter the entity of Austria-Hungary and we do not desire her occupation."⁴⁶ As the French had regarded as their sacred duty to regain the provinces taken by the Germans in the war of 1871, so did patriotic Serbs desire to help their compatriots in Bosnia. This was the most sacred and important national ambition of Serbia at the

⁴⁵ Denis, La Grande Serbie, p. 96.

⁴⁶ Wendel, Der Kampf, p. 441.

end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. King Milan concluded a secret convention with Austria-Hungary which sacrificed these national aspirations. In Article II of the secret convention, King Milan, in the name of the government of Serbia, promised the Austrian government, "That Serbia will not tolerate political, religious or other intrigues, which, taking her territory as a point of departure, might be directed against the Austro-Hungarian monarch, including therein Bosnia, Herzegovina and the Sandjak of Novi Pazar."⁴⁷ Austria undertook similar obligations "with regard to Serbia and her dynasty, the maintenance and strengthening of which she will support with all her influence."⁴⁸ If Austria feared Serbian penetration into Bosnia, Prince Milan feared a Karadjordjević penetration into Serbia. Austria further promised that "if the Prince of Serbia should deem it necessary, in the interest of His dynasty and of His country, to take on behalf of Himself and of His descendants the title of King, Austria-Hungary will recognize this title ... and will use her influence to secure recognition of it on the part of other powers" (Article III). To establish her role as virtual protector of Serbia, Austria-Hungary sought to control Serbian foreign policy. Thus Article IV of the convention

⁴⁷ Pribram, Secret Treaties, p. 52.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 52.

bound Serbia "neither to negotiate nor conclude any political treaty with another government and not to admit to her territory a foreign armed force, regardless of type without a previous understanding with Austria-Hungary."⁴⁹ The secrecy of the convention was closely guarded. Besides King Milan, only three or four political leaders knew about it. The convention was in a sense corollary to the 'Dreikaiserbund' signed on June 18, 1881.⁵⁰

The secrecy of the document was quite justified in view of the opposition it would encounter among the people. Article IV which bound Serbia neither to negotiate nor to conclude any political treaty with another government was incompatible with the goal of independence for Serbia. Prime Minister Piroćanac, after reading this clause of the convention concluded that Serbia's subservience to Austria-Hungary was no different than that of Tunis to France,⁵¹ and immediately resigned.

It is difficult to see what King Milan's motives were in concluding such a humiliating treaty. Austria-Hungary's guarantee to support his dynasty and title was certainly a dominant reason. For the existence of his dynasty was not secure. He had to reckon with two powerful rivals: King Nikola of Montenegro, the ruler of an independent Slav state, and Prince Peter Karadjordjević,

⁴⁹ Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, p. 181.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 180.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 181.

the descendant of the leader of the first Serbian uprising in 1804, who participated in the Bosnian Rebellion of 1875. Relations between King Milan and Russia were near the breaking point. King Nikola of Montenegro, of whom Alexander III of Russia called his only friend, had become Russia's protégé.⁵² Russia meanwhile, gave refuge to the exiled Bishop Mikhail; and Prince Peter, the most dangerous rival of King Milan, was given an unofficial reception.⁵³ This, too, contributed to the decision of King Milan to enter into a close association with Austria-Hungary.

The length to which he went in his subservience to Austria, however, cannot be justified by any of the above-mentioned reasons. It was one of the axioms of the Serbian foreign policy that Serbia in the fulfillment of her national aspirations could count only on Russia. That was the formula introduced by the Serbian diplomat Jovan Ristić, after the bitter disappointment of San Stefano and the Congress of Berlin. With the secret convention, this axiom of the Serbian foreign policy was discarded, and a shameful bargain was concluded at the expense of the oppressed Serbian nationals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. King Milan had conducted a selfish dynastic policy at the expense of the national policy. His ministers feared that by the implementation of Article IV of the secret convention, Serbia would be

⁵² Wendel, Der Kampf, p. 483.

⁵³ Witte, Vospominania, Berlin, 1922, p. 241.

reduced to the status of an Austrian protectorate. As a result, Article IV of the secret convention was changed, and the following declaration was issued on October 25, 1881: "Article IV cannot impair the right of Serbia to negotiate and to conclude treaties even of a political nature, with another government. It implies for Serbia no other engagement than that of negotiating and of not concluding any political treaty which would be contrary to the spirit and the tenor of the said secret treaty."⁵⁴ This declaration called Piroćanac-Kallay, after its creators, was annulled by Prince Milan who condemned the action of Piroćanac and promised to "assume the formal engagement on my honour and my quality as Prince of Serbia, not to enter into any negotiations whatsoever relative to any king of a political treaty between Serbia and a third state without communication with and previous consent of Austria-Hungary."⁵⁵ Metternich once said that Serbia should be either Turkish or Austrian; King Milan did everything to realize the second solution. "Chez un peuple," wrote E. Denis, "qui, depuis des siècles, ne vivait que par l'enthousiasme et la foi arrivait de Paris un adolescent de niaise qui ne croyait à rien, ni à l'honneur, ni au droit, ni à la patrie ni à l'humanité."⁵⁶ This judgment is hard, but seems justified. The foreign policy was subservient. In domestic policy the rise of the

⁵⁴ Wayne S. Vucinić, Serbia Between East and West, Stanford, University Press, 1954, p. 174.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 175.

⁵⁶ Denis, La Grande Serbie, p. 95.

Serbian young democracy was retarded until 1903. In the meantime, little was being done toward national unification. In the same year when the secret convention was concluded, the newly-established Radical Party took as its principle platform the establishment of complete national independence and the unification of all Serbs into one state.

The great success of the Radicals in Serbia can be attributed to their fiery nationalism. Serbia was firmly tied to Austria and Russia had every reason to regret her behaviour during the Congress of Berlin. King Milan was referred to in the Russian Foreign Office as "Milan, the incorrigible" and Nicholas II commented: "Nothing can be done about Serbia; it must be left to its fate."⁵⁷ Thus, any interference by Russia in Serbian affairs would break any agreements which Russia had concluded with Austria in 1877, and, according to the Congress of Berlin in 1877, Serbia belonged to the Austrian sphere of influence. The direct enemy of Serbia was therefore Austria-Hungary. Russia, however, did not live up to the hopes of the Serbs, who saw in her their protector and defender. This could be seen from the behaviour of the Russian Foreign Office.

⁵⁷ Loncarević, Jugoslavien's Entstehung, p. 34.

CHAPTER II

THE REIGN OF ALEXANDER OBRENOVIC

Serbian Relations with Austria and Russia

With the departure of King Milan from Serbia, the foreign policy of friendship to Austria-Hungary lost its initiative. The future of Serbia was uncertain. Russia was trying more than ever to eliminate Austrian influence from Serbia by relying on the Radical Party. Russia exercised increasingly greater power. The Radical Party slogan of national unification and union with Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina won many adherents in the areas under Austria-Hungary as well as in Serbia. Popular feeling felt instinctively where the danger lay. News of the oppressive policy of denationalization in Bosnia-Herzegovina penetrated into Serbia and became clear to everyone. The number of Austrophiles who thought with Vladen Djordjevic that "Serbien selbst dann, wenn es jedem Befehl aus Petersburg blind gehorchte und sich wie eine richtige russische Provinz benahm, dennoch nie von Russland eine wirkliche Wohltat erlebte,"¹ was becoming smaller and the author of this statement became convinced at the end of his life of its futility. Foreign

¹ Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt A.M., Societäts Druckerei, 1925, p. 444.

observers could perceive that the solution of the Balkan problem would be neither a federation sponsored by Austria nor a Balkan league of nations in which Russia would play a predominant role.

Austrian foreign policy was obsessed with the fear of Panslavism, without realizing that the Slav nations had other interests, different from those of race or religion. Cunibert, in his Essais sur les révolutions et l'indépendance de la Serbie, envisaged that Serbia would "devenir un jour le centre, autour duquel se retiendront toutes les nationalités slaves." The Hungarian politician, Eotvos, in his work "Über die Gleichberechtigung der Nationen in Österreich", warned that the inevitable disintegration of Turkey would take place and that Serbia would then play the role of a Piedmont in the union of South Slavs.²

All hopes and dreams about the future role of Serbia were integrated into the personality of King Milan's successor and son, Alexander. Serbia and her expatriates in the provinces under Austria-Hungary looked up to him. Alexander was not the man to fulfill the role of the unifier which circumstances had prepared for him. He began his reign with a proclamation that should his father return to Serbia, he was to be imprisoned, and if he resisted, he was to be shot. Such a step made him unpopular at the very beginning of his reign. In his speech to the Narodna Skupština in Nish,

² Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, Beograd, Tucović, 1925, p. 46.

Alexander declared that King Milan had left the country forever. Such a declaration was necessary to describe the changed political relation of Serbia to Russia, with which a firm friendship was established. This campaign against Milan was futile for Milan died January 29, 1901. Before his death, he declared that he was too good a soldier to rebel against the King, too good a father to undertake anything against his son, and too good a Serb to instigate a civil war in his fatherland.³ The campaign was directed not against the Austrophile policy of King Milan, but against the King personally. If that campaign had had political implications, i.e., liberation of Serbia from Austrian influence, the nationalistic feelings of the people would have responded to it. But in a patriarchal Serbian society, threats of physical violence directed from son to father aroused contempt.

Normal relations with Russia would have greatly enhanced Alexander's position at home. But, there were serious hindrances in the way. Prince Peter Karadjordjević's reputation at the Russian court was very high, since his sisters-in-law, daughters of the Montenegrin King, Nikola, were married to Peter Nikolaievich, and the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich respectively.⁴ Through their husbands,

³ Vasić, Devetsto Treća, p. 48.

⁴ Witte, Vospominania, Berlin, Slovo, 1922, p. 239.

the Montenegrins "Number one" and Number two" as Witte called them, they approved of Alexander. The Austrian Foreign Office did not look favourably upon Alexander, after the marriage scheme arranged by Franz Joseph failed. Alexander, after some hesitation, refused to marry the Austrian or German princesses who were offered to him, and started his own marriage plans which were ultimately the cause of his disaster. He was isolated diplomatically abroad, and he cut himself off from the people of the country he ruled so autocratically. E. Denis describes him as "un grand et gros garçon lourd, myope, barbu, bonasse, sans résistance contre ceux qui l'entouraient."⁵ He has been described as the last Borgia, and as a lunatic. To his ministers, he confided his favourite wish, that of seeing the Bishop of Serbia hanging from a chestnut tree in front of his official residence. His Minister of the Interior was asked whether it would be possible to poison the Prime Minister, Ristić, and offered the former ten thousand ducats to commit the crime. Yet the Austrian Ambassador in Serbia, who was personally acquainted with Alexander, testifies that:

It is quite a mistake to suppose that the King was physically or mentally deficient or abnormal. What was unfortunately completely lacking was any sort of home training, a mother's influence and decent surroundings in his youth.⁶

5 E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, Paris, Delagrave, 1915, p.120.

6 Konstantin Dumba, Memoirs of a Diplomat, London, Ian Morrow, 1933, p. 95.

It was clear that King Alexander had need of some home training: lying became second nature to him, and cunning and insincerity became synonymous with political ability. With such a person possessing absolute power, the Serbian state was bound to be erratic and unstable in both foreign and domestic policy.

King Alexander's Marriage

There was some hope that a successful marriage might help the tottering Obrenović dynasty to preserve its absolute reign. His marriage was significant, politically, for Milan had eagerly expected his son to marry a German princess, thus connecting Serbia with the Triple Alliance and assuring his own continued control of Serbian foreign affairs.

Goluchowski, the Austrian Foreign Minister, promised the Serbian Foreign Minister that both the Austrian and German Emperors would join efforts to find Alexander a suitable princess. This would be an Austrian diplomatic victory. The scheme was proposed by the Austrian Foreign Minister and the bridegroom's father and nearly realized. But in 1897, Alexander had already found a future bride and queen. Draga Mašin was a widow, much older than Alexander, and came from a middle-class family. She had many admirers and was probably free in her way of living. Alexander's mother Queen Natalie elevated Draga Mašin to the position of her dame d'honneur, and in that position she met young Alexander. He was impressed

by her modesty and wisdom, and decided to marry her. Perhaps this decision was influenced by the knowledge that the marriage would be well-received by the Russians, and could serve as a basis for the establishment of better relations. This marriage was resented by Alexander's Ministers, because Alexander and Draga were socially not equal. The reputation of the Mašin family was not good. It was known that Draga's former husband died of "delirium tremens," and on her father's side of the family, there were known cases of mental disease.

Relations with Russia During the Reign of Alexander

One of the first acts of King Alexander was to give amnesty to the leaders of the Radical party, of whom Giers, a Russian diplomat, said that on several occasions they had attempted to induce Russia to help in their rebellion against King Milan.⁷ The Radical leaders had been deprived of political power for twenty years. They had been gradually shedding all leftist ideas and emerged during the reign of King Alexander as a party which better deserved the name Conservative. Their Russophile programme was not abandoned, however, but their new reactionary political orientation pleased the Russian Foreign Office more than their previous revolutionary mood. As a new King, Alexander did not have any

⁷ Wendel, Der Kampf der Suedslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, p. 432.

political support, but the bargain had been made. The Radicals would support the unpopular regime and the King would be forced to create ministers from former prisoners.

This new situation combined with the King's marriage was most favourable to Russian interests. Although the agreement between Austria and Russia reaffirmed the previous division of the Balkan peninsula and expressly stated that "the advantages accorded to Austria by the Treaty of Berlin are and remain acquired by her." The Russians did not adhere to that agreement. King Alexander told his Foreign Minister that Pašić, while Minister in Russia, had negotiated with the Russians to replace him with a Russian Duke and thus extend Russian influence to Serbia.⁸ He also related how he had been taken to Cetinje, ostensibly to return the visit of Prince Nikola, but actually to prevail upon him to marry the Prince's daughter, Ksenia. Mijatović, Milan's Foreign Minister, believed that the Russians wanted to use Draga Mašin "as a wedge between father and son in order to separate them forever."⁹ From the same source, came the information that Draga Mašin, while vacationing with Alexander in Merano in Tyrol in 1897, had been visited by Alexander Isvolsky. Mijatović affirmed that Draga at that time placed herself at the service of the Russian cause. There was indication enough to show that the Russians were pleased with the marriage. At diplomatic

⁸ Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, Beograd, Getsa Kon, 1925, p. 87.

⁹ Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, p. 15.

receptions in Belgrade the Russian Ambassador, Pavel Mansurov, was most cordial to her.

Confirmation of the new developments in the relations between Russia and Serbia came with the startling announcement at the Russian court that Tsar Nicholas II would be the King's best man. This act was interpreted as a new orientation of the regime and temporarily helped King Alexander. There could be no doubt now that Russia approved officially of the King's marriage. In his speeches, King Alexander dwelt on the traitorous Austrophile policy of his father, King Milan. In a speech on Topchider Hill near Belgrade in the presence of thousands, he denounced the regime of his father, and announced his solidarity with the principles of radicalism and nationalism.¹⁰ It seemed, however, that Tsar Nicholas was not informed of the character of Draga Masin, and that his emissary Mansurov did not follow his instructions. He elaborated on his role of a best man by proxy, by interpolating more expressions of sympathy than were contained in the original message. There are some doubt about the political implication of this act, because of the low rank of the Tsar's deputy, who was only a second Secretary of the Russian Embassy in Belgrade.¹¹

¹⁰ Wayne S. Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1954, p. 16.

¹¹ Živanović, op. cit., p. 210.

Domestic Affairs During King Alexander's Reign

The government of Alexander was the embodiment of contraries, the practical outcome of political paradoxes; today he would proclaim a veritable Saturnalia, to-morrow, a regime of absolute despotism. His political maxims, if one may give name to uncontrolled impulses, remind one of the simple notions of the Hibernian farmer who fed his pigs to excess one day, and kept them wholly without food the next, in order that "the fat and the lean of the bacon might be properly mixed." According to a then contemporary politician, all decrees issued on a certain date must be benevolent, and those issued on the other must be malevolent because those were the lucky and unlucky days of the sovereign. It became clear that the task of national unification could not be accomplished under such a sovereign. The regime of his father, King Milan, had already introduced many corrupt practices into the administration of the country. Bribery and corruption were commonplace occurrences, while the whims of King Alexander changed cabinets in a matter of days or even hours. It was not a bloody reign, but it was a selfish and brutal one in which the pursuit of personal interests overlooked the interests of the Serbian people.

The personality of King Alexander's wife made the reign worse. Draga Mašin was a social upstart, whose Western veneer, bad taste in romantic and cheap literature could not

hide the manners of the low or middle class to which she belonged.¹² "Draga avait plus de vanité que de coeur et moins d'intelligence que d'ambition. Elle se compromit dans de sottes combinaisons que lui aliènerent la cour de Russie, et elle invita l'armée par les faveurs dont elle combla ses frères."¹³ A system of bestowing favours on those related to the Queen's family was installed. The basis for promotion was not ability but allegiance to the regime and to Queen Draga personally. The two brothers of the Queen were given exceptional honours. Further opposition was aroused by the announcement of the coming birth of an heir. This, however, was a deliberate falsehood, manufactured by the Queen herself. The intention of the lie was to endear the regime to the people by the hope that the marriage of the King and Queen would not remain as fruitless as had been rumoured. Foreign doctors were consulted about the alleged pregnancy of the Queen and one of them created an international scandal by publishing an article "La fausse grossesse de la Reine de Serbie" in Semaine Medicale, the week of May 22, 1901.¹⁴ The question of royal succession was open. Popular opinion held that one of the Queen's brothers was to be declared successor to the throne. Even official denial by King

12 Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, p. 13.

13 Denis, La Grande Serbie, p. 45.

14 Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, Vol. IV, p. 249.

Alexander was not believed.¹⁵ King Alexander's parents were sending postcards to Serbia in which they referred to the Queen in the most vulgar manner. A certain politician, who had to flee the country referred to the regime as a "Central Asiatic Khanat." Despite the strict censorship opposition raised its head and spread. During those past ten years sixteen cabinets had held office, two constitutions had been abolished and two others promulgated. It is difficult fully to comprehend the terrible absolutism of the reign. The regime of "Dragijada" was so oppressive that one of the Serbian politicians declared that "the fact that we still carry heads on our shoulders should not be attributed to the kindness of our authorities but to the free press in the West."¹⁶

The Conspiracy

The democratic forces, no matter how strong, could not have threatened the regime without an alliance with the army. It was believed that the revolution was coming, and only the army, being the pillar of the regime, could have tipped the balance of power in favour of the opposition. By that time, in the middle of 1902, the regime was discredited both at home and abroad. A visit of King Alexander to his father in Karlsbad and the meeting with Francis Joseph did

¹⁵ Veselin Vukicević, "Političko Idolopoklonstvo," Nova Europa, 1926, Vol. XIII, p. 29.

¹⁶ Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, p. 32.

not result in an improvement of relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. Alexander's last hope of obtaining an Imperial reception by the Russian court was not fulfilled. Everything depended on the army, which was composed of young patriotic peasants, many of whom were exceptionally intelligent. This was due to a special law promulgated in Serbia at the end of the nineteenth century, by which the number of high-schools was reduced. This led to an overflow in the high-schools¹⁷ causing many students to enroll in the military academies. In a way, they resembled the Russian Dekabrists with their Western and progressive ideas. They were conscious of their historic mission which was the unification of the South Slavs and they were much more liberal and broadminded than most of the Radical party.

In the political history of Serbia, the army had always been a passive instrument of the sovereign's will. In the regime of King Milan, the army was reorganized according to the Russian model, and was afforded generous privileges as a reward for steadfast loyalty to the House of Obrenović. The army had never been an independent factor in politics and it was generally believed that the army would continue to be subservient. King Alexander never doubted the loyalty of his officers even when proofs to the contrary were produced.¹⁸

¹⁷ Veselin Vukicević, "Političko Idolopoklonstvo," Nova Europa, 1926, Vol. XIII.

¹⁸ Wayne Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, p. 54.

The test of army loyalty came in the demonstration of March 23, 1903, an event which foreshadowed the extinction of the House of Obrenović. This demonstration did not have the character of a trade-union demonstration, although it was led by a socialist, Dimitrije Tucović. Neither did it have any class character. It started with tradespeople and spread to the students. Police were helpless in their attempts to control the demonstration. Army units were called out for additional help, and they confronted the crowd which had already suffered casualties by police bullets. The whole affair ended with fraternization between the people and the army. It showed plainly that there was a unified front against tyranny, and that the army was a part of that front. After the demonstration, a conference of army officers was called. King Alexander questioned his officers concerning their loyalty and particularly their attitude towards his marriage. The officers who had been informed of the topic of the forthcoming conference decided in a resolution that they, as officers, would remain faithful to their oaths, but as Serbs, could not approve of King Alexander's marriage.¹⁹ The atmosphere in the conference room was tense. The king brusquely approached the rostrum and with a clear voice read a prepared statement:

Recently rumours have spread that I was abnormal in connection with my wedding. I call on you officers to suppress these rumours. That is why I called on you.²⁰

19 Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, p. 47.

20 Loc. cit.

There was a painful silence. A senior officer exclaimed "Long live the King," but only a few voices joined him. At the end of the conference, the officers felt ashamed of the confidence that the King had put in them. They protested loudly after dispersing slowly through the streets of Belgrade.

It was this situation which provided a basis for the movement which started in the ranks of the army and later spread to the civilians. Seven officers comprised the core of the conspiracy. Several plans for assassination were made, but all failed. However, they did not give up. Djordje Gencić, who had recently been released from prison, led the civilian branch of the conspiracy. This consisted of members of all political parties. The first meeting of the military and the civilian branches was held on Topčider Hill. "At once, discussions were initiated regarding the future of the vacated throne."²¹ It was at this point that the predominant domestic issue assumed an international aspect. The questions facing the conspirators were: What would be the attitude of Austria and Russia towards a change on the throne? What kind of state would these powers favour? And finally, would their nominee be acceptable to both powers? These questions urgently needed answers. Neither the military nor the civilian branch of the conspiracy had any clear-cut idea as to the future form of Government.

Another question that was to be dealt with was the

21 Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, p. 49.

future government organization of Serbia. It was commonly agreed that a monarchy would be the only form acceptable, both because of the preferences of the big powers, and because of Serbian historical traditions. There was, however, a republican current of opinion which was popular, especially among the students.²² Students, however, were not represented in the conspiracy. It was agreed that the most suitable person to succeed to the throne would be Peter Karadjordjević, the descendant of the leader of the first Serbian Uprising, Karadjordje. Several meetings were arranged with him to determine his willingness to ascend the Serbian throne, were it to become vacant. It seemed that the Austrian authorities knew about the conspiracy but did not attempt to stop it. Benjamin Kallay, the joint Austro-Hungarian Finance Minister, predicted in March, 1903, to the English journalist, Wickham Steed, that King Alexander was in a perilous position, and might not have many more weeks to live. This same person expressed the official Austrian view on the question of the royal succession in Serbia.

The Karadjordjevićs have always had two elements in their policy - not to quarrel with Austria-Hungary, and not to quarrel with Turkey, their most powerful neighbours.²³

Some writers go as far as to claim:

Il est établi que le Ballplatz connaissait la conspiration qu'il n'avait en rien essayé

²² Ruski, Jedan, "Savremeni Dokument o 29om Maju," Nova Europa, 1927, p. 225.

²³ Wickham Steed, The Habsburg Monarchy, London, Constable, 1914, p. 241.

de l'arrêter et qu'on l'assassinat d'Alexandre, l'organe officiel, le Fremdenblatt, parlait du meurtre avec un cynisme tel qu'il provoquait un scandale universel. M. de Kalley exprimait à M. Steed sa satisfaction de l'avènement du roi Pierre.²⁴

Towards the end of May (the assassination took place on May 29, 1903), the Minister of War requested that the Austro-Hungarian Military Attaché, Major Pomiankowski, enquire in strict confidence, if the Emperor would receive King Alexander at the Imperial manoeuvres of Temisvar, and also to explore carefully whether on this occasion the Queen might also be received officially either in Vienna or in Budapest. This request was refused. When the change on the throne took place, Dumba wrote, "We recognized King Peter immediately, and did everything possible to consolidate his position."²⁵

Peter Karadjordjević was compared to his father Alexander Karadjordjević (1842-1858) who had been docile in his attitude toward Austria. Several pro-Austrian writers affirmed that King Peter owed his throne to Austrian help.²⁶ As far as the Russian reaction was concerned, it was widely known that Peter was favourably regarded at the Russian court, due to the all-pervasive influence of the two daughters of Prince

²⁴ E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, p. 176.

²⁵ Konstantin Dumba, The Memoirs of a Diplomat, p. 106.

²⁶ Edith Durham, Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle, London, Allen, Unwin, 1920, p. 23.

Nikola. There was apprehension at the Russian court that any action with regard to the royal succession might result in the act of Austrian annexation. Consequently an immediate recognition of Peter Karadjordjević was accepted.²⁷ The Russian attitude, however, was not simple support of Peter Karadjordjević. Support of the independence and the leading role of Montenegro among the South Slavs was a Russian creed of faith. Therefore, the son of Prince Nikola, Mirko, was regarded by them as a possible candidate. In view of the 1897 understanding with Austria, Russia did not pursue an active policy in the Balkans; still, Charikov, the Russian Ambassador, found it necessary on one occasion to assure his Austrian colleague Dumba that Russia had no candidate for the Serbian throne. At the same time, he asked why Austria opposed the candidacy of the Montenegrin prince.²⁸ He did not receive an answer. It has been established that a Russian agent, Vaisman, gave warning to King Alexander before his assassination and that the conspirators popularly called "Majevci" were suspected by the Russian Government of being republicans.²⁹ Further difficulties in the way of Peter Karadjordjević were revealed in the instructions of Charikov, the Ambassador in Belgrade,

²⁷ Ruski, Jedan, "Savremeni Dokument o 29 om Maju," Nova Europa, 1927, Vol. XVI, p. 225.

²⁸ Majevci, D. Semiz, Nova Europa, 1927, Vol. XVI, p. 9.

²⁹ Jedan, loc. cit.

to his agent, Vaisman: it was necessary, according to these instructions, that Peter Karadjordjević should obtain the Tsar's approval of his election; also, it was advisable that he should obtain the unanimous vote of the Skupština.³⁰ The paradox in the respective attitudes of Austria and Russia was the benevolence with which Peter Karadjordjević was regarded in Vienna and the suspicion of official Russia.

Officers handled the technical part of the conspiracy. It had been decided to murder Alexander. Not to do so might have resulted in his exile to Austria, and then, in combination with Austria, King Alexander might have occupied Serbia, or brought about civil war. Neither alternative was acceptable. It is necessary to point out that the assassination was prepared for and planned by the officers only, and that neither Austria nor Russia helped in its execution. In view of the later developments and the particularly friendly relations between Russia and Serbia after the assassination, it was affirmed in some Austrian newspapers that the plot was organized by the Secret Service branch of the Russian Foreign Ministry. In connection with the above-mentioned attitude of Russia, and in view of a categorical denial by the Austrian Ambassador, this view is unacceptable.³¹ The main organizer of the plot was

³⁰ Loc. cit.

³¹ Konstantin Dumba, Memoirs of a Diplomat, p. 26.

Dragutin Dimitrijević - Apis*. He was known as a nationalist, and a leader of youth. His discussions with Artamanov, the Russian military attaché, were frequent, but one can not attribute to them any particular significance. The officers were suspected of Republican tendencies, and the Russians did not trust them. As amongst the Dekabrist, the plotters saw that the reason for the decline of their country in absolutism. They did not have an elaborate political programme, but nevertheless, had the support of popular Yugoslav nationalism. Their goal was the liberation of the Balkan peoples and a Balkan federation. For politicians, they had nothing but contempt. Their slogan was "Union or death." The plotters did not have a sense of orientation, which was the plight of Serbian politics in the nineteenth century. They were neither Russophiles, like the members of the Radical party, nor Austrophiles like the Progressive party, but were true nationalists.

The Assassination

Much has been written about the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga. In most articles dealing with the subject, emphasis was laid on its more gruesome aspects. Few attempts have been devoted to the political and sociological background of the assassination and to the causes which

*Apis was a school nickname.

ultimately led to it. For the Western world, it was a spectacle of horror and violence which reminded their contemporaries of the practices of the French Revolution. For the inhabitants of Serbia, this was the end of a nightmare which had begun with the reign of Alexander.

The conspirators met, according to a plan, in a fashionable tavern. They planned to act the part of young, intoxicated, happy people. A palace concert was to take place that evening at which the King and Queen were to be present. On that particular night, the plotters had an accomplice who guarded the palace gate. There had been rumours before of assassination. Some Belgrade papers had published "The prophecies of the clairvoyant peasant, Mata of Kremna," and the King and Queen were much disturbed by the news, hence they seldom appeared in the streets of Belgrade. In the midst of festivities, the King received an anonymous letter about the conspiracy, and very elaborate security precautions were arranged. Vasić vividly and dramatically describes the evening of the fatal May 28, 1903. At 12:30 p.m. the plotters gathered on the premises of the Officers Tavern. They feigned drunkenness so as to allay any suspicion. The agents and the spies returned home with the conviction that the government, and the King and Queen would be perfectly secure. In the midst of their gaiety and their happy mood, the officers carefully gathered around the leaders of their groups, Antić, and Dimitrijević, who told them that there would be no procrastination that night. It was

1:45 a.m. when the leader, Dragutin Dimitrijević, shouted abruptly, "Gentlemen, Forward!" The conspirators soon reached the main gate of the palace. Lieutenant Živković, their accomplice, took several seconds to unlock the heavy iron gate. Hastily, they rushed through the palace rooms in groups, in search of the King and Queen. They were nowhere to be found. Detonations and the exchange of gunfire between the plotters and the guards alarmed the members of the Russian embassy who resided in a house situated opposite the King's palace. Thus, the Russian ambassador, Charikov, was a witness to the assassination.³² Since the whereabouts of the King and Queen could not be ascertained, some of the plotters proposed the destruction of the whole palace with dynamite. The position of the plotters was precarious. They could not trust the loyalty of the surrounding troops and the night was rapidly passing. At that moment, one of the plotters remembered that one man who would know the whereabouts of the Royal couple was the King's adjutant, Lazar Petrović. He was found, and was told to reveal the whereabouts of the royal couple in ten minutes time. He was conducted through the empty halls, calling at the door of each room for "Your Majesty." No one answered. Suddenly one of the conspirators noticed that on the side of the chamber which faced the street, there were no windows behind the draperies. Petrović assured the conspirators that they hid

³² Živan Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, Beograd, 1924, p. 326.

nothing. At the insistence of the conspirators he was asked to call the King and Queen. Thinking probably that the storm was over, King Alexander answered the call and stepped out. He was felled by a volley of bullets from the plotters' guns. Thirty bullets riddled his body and eighteen that of the Queen.³³ The troops outside, confused as to their mission, and under the impression that they were called out to protect the King, suddenly heard the shout from the palace window, "The tyrant is no more." Peter Misić, commandant of the troops, who had surrounded the palace, shouted "Long live Peter Karadjordjević." The soldiers followed suit, and thus the plot was ended. Besides the King and Queen, the Queen's brothers and several members of Alexander's government were also killed. The coup d'état, however, did not amount to a revolution. A change of leading personalities took place, but the evils of the regime were not entirely eliminated. However, the political atmosphere of the capital became lighter and the joy and happiness of the people were apparent. Students marched through the streets of Belgrade shouting, "Long live Freedom! Long live the Republic! Long live Freedom!" In the words of the Austrian Ambassador in Belgrade, Konstantin Dumba:

The capital had accepted the new order. No shooting was going on and there would be no more bloodshed. I wander all over Belgrade without being molested. The officers had been so certain of their power that they had not even held

33 Živan Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, 1925, p. 35.

up the 5:30 a.m. train from Belgrade to Budapest and Vienna, and the local steamers were departing from Zemlin as usual.³⁴

The main concern of the plotters was an uninterrupted continuation of Serbia's sovereignty. Any internal disturbance would have given Austria a legitimate excuse for interfering. The thought of military intervention was present in the Austrian Foreign Office. A request for military intervention would have been quite useless; said Dumba:

We had scarcely five hundred rifles in Zemlin. On the other hand, Belgrade was garrisoned by five or six regiments. If King Alexander and Queen Draga had fled from the palace to seek refuge with Tscharibyov (the Russian envoy in the palace) or myself, the question of requisitioning military assistance would no doubt have become actual.³⁵

The Reaction of the Western Countries to the Serbian Coup d'état

The assassination of the King and Queen was a necessity. There had been a current of thought among the plotters who advised milder measures such as expulsion.³⁶ But, any such measure might have had a fatal consequence for the independence of the country. The policy of Goluchowski, the Polish-born Austrian Foreign Minister, was not aggressive. But Serbia had always been apprehensive in her relations with Austria. Jovan

³⁴ Konstantin Dumba, Memoirs of a Diplomat, p. 117.

³⁵ Loc. cit.

³⁶ Nova Europa, 1921, Vol. III, p. 402.

Ristić, one of the most illustrious Serbian statesmen of the nineteenth century, commented about the Conference of Berlin:

L'expérience acquise en traité de Berlin est suffisante pour nous convaincre que la monarchie voisine (Austria-Hungary) se sent de plus en plus d'appétit pour l'Orient et que nous, gens d'Orient, Serbe en particulier, nous ne pouvons gagner à son amitié. Tôt ou tard, nous devons nous engager dans une politique de résistance, de défense.³⁷

Still, the assassination of a King and Queen was a blow to monarchy as an institution, and as such was bound to be resented by monarchies throughout Europe. Serbia was a small country, and the larger, monarchist countries thought that their duty consisted in giving a proper lesson to the regicides, and the country which harboured them. It is true that the assassination caused indignation all over Western Europe. In the words of E. Denis:

Dans l'Europe entière un cri de stupeur et d'indignation s'éleva contre les prétensieux qui renouvelaient au XX siècle les orgies sanglantes de la Rome impériale ou de Byzance.³⁸

No matter how hideous the Serbian crime appeared to them, the foreign powers did not have a moral right to expose the whole country to a long diplomatic and commercial boycott. They allowed the Sultan and the governors of his provinces to participate in the massacres and tortures of Armenians in Turkey. They were not concerned over the fate of socialists in Catalonia

37 E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, p. 177.

38 Ibid., p. 121.

and Jews in Kishinev. Why then should they meddle when subjects massacred Kings? The Journal of St. Petersburg³⁹ betrays uneasiness at the example set in Belgrade and had every reason to do so. Two of their Kings, Peter III and Paul I, had been murdered by courtiers. The most terrible part of the crime, in the opinion of the Western press, was the fact that the nude bodies of the King and Queen were thrown from a balcony of the Royal palace into the courtyard. What were the motives of such a gruesome deed? According to an explanation of one of the plotters,⁴⁰ there was too much uncertainty as to the behaviour of the troops surrounding the palace and in order to show the troops that the assassination had been already accomplished and that the oath which bound them to the sovereign was no longer valid, this act was resorted to. The European press judged the whole country too severely and at the same time showed ignorance of the background and the reasons for the regicide. According to them, the participants in the assassination were dissatisfied army officers and the prime reason for their dissatisfaction was the slow pace of their promotions. The motives behind their conspiratory action was sheer self-interest. This "assassination à la serbe" was the cause of threats and sharp reproaches in which the enemies of Serbia indulged. The Roman Praetorian Guard, the Russian streltsy, and the Turkish Janissaries were

39 Loc. cit.

40 "The Servian Massacre," Contemporary Review, 1903, 'p. 63.

no match for the Belgrade patriots. Europe was deceived when she thought that Serbia was more civilized than the Turks or Albanians.⁴¹ Le Temps in an introductory article wrote that the heroes of Slivnica were revenged and washed the shame from their weapons on men and women, who were sleeping in their beds.⁴² In Le Temps' opinion, Serbia and its army had been compromised in Europe and the whole world. Also European countries should cut all diplomatic relations with Serbia and should not help her in case her existence becomes endangered. The European press, however, did not know or choose to acquaint itself with the causes of the unfortunate assassination. For instance, the Serbian State Treasury was empty while the investments of the late Queen amounted to thirty thousand pounds in London and elsewhere in Europe. The financial situation was desperate. The national debt was more than 450 million francs and interest alone absorbed more than a quarter of the total budget.⁴³ Parliament and other democratic institutions were suppressed. What was the best solution in such circumstances?

It was obvious that the Western press was misinformed and therefore incapable of a correct judgement. Most of the foreign embassies were completely unaware of any conspiracy. They were not certain at first who the assassins were and what

41 Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, p. 128.

42 "The Servian Massacre," Contemporary Review, 1903, p. 63.

43 Vasić, loc. cit.

were their motives. The British Ambassador in Vienna observed that the Serbian people had not grieved, but apparently rejoiced at the extermination of the Royal family. It is interesting to note that the British government was the initiator of the diplomatic boycott and the most antagonistic to Serbia. The British Prime Minister, Balfour, severely criticized the Serbian murders before the House of Commons. Edward was particularly alarmed and insisted on the "recall of the ministers of the Great Powers in Belgrade."⁴⁴ In several countries, court mourning was ordered.⁴⁵ Italy for the moment refused to recognize the new Government but later the Members of Parliament agreed that the events which took place at Belgrade were primarily related to internal affairs.

According to Vasić, the Western press and the Western diplomats misjudged the motives of the conspirators-

They were acting in the name of the people; they regarded themselves as its executors. Their task was to liberate the country from the crowned bandit and after the accomplished fact, give the representatives of the political parties their places in government. Modest and satisfied with their successes, convinced that they had saved their fatherland, these admirers of freedom in uniform went to their former jobs, like Cincinnatus, who from the military dictatorship went to his plough.⁴⁶

It would be wrong to think that the plotters thought in terms of Serbia alone. The removal of the Obrenović dynasty

⁴⁴ Wayne Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, p. 77.

⁴⁵ Loc. cit.

⁴⁶ Vasić, op. cit., p. 127.

was regarded as a step nearer to the realization of the unity of South Slavs. In that year three events took place almost simultaneously; and each event brought closer that unity. The oppressive regime of Ban Kluen-Hedervary in Croatia was abolished; Benjamin Kallay, the Governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina, died, and the dynasty of Obrenović was extinguished. The reaction of the Balkan countries to the news of the Palace murders was quite different than those of Western Europe. In Montenegro, (an independent kingdom at the time) the affair as a whole was regarded as a blessing. Not only was the populace pleased, but childishy ignorant of the Western point of view and actually expected Europe to rejoice with them. It was a cleansing of the Temple; a casting-out of abominations
 Everywhere the crime was approved.⁴⁷

In Bulgaria, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister stated that the Serbian affair was a matter which did not concern the Bulgarian Government at all. As far as they were concerned it made little difference who the next Serbian King would be.⁴⁸

Public opinion in Croatia was difficult to evaluate, because any expression of sympathy for Serbia would have been regarded as treason by the Austrians. But, when Peter Karadjordjević passed through Vienna on his way from Geneva

⁴⁷ Edith Durham, Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle, London, Allen & Unwin, 1920, p. 77.

⁴⁸ Wayne Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, p. 77.

to assume the crown at Belgrade, the crowd of Croatian and Serbian students that assembled to welcome him at the Western Railway Station cheered for "Peter, King of Croatia."

There were two forms of foreign reaction to the assassination in Serbia. Western countries criticized the assassination severely and unreservedly on the basis of humanity and the inviolability of the sovereign's person. These countries, excepting France, were monarchist countries. The other reaction, typical of the South Slav countries, thought in terms of a South Slav solidarity (at least the common man in those countries did) for they realized that the assassination of Obrenović created a new epoch in the history of Serbia, which was going to be marked by the development of parliamentarianism and democracy along Western lines. They saw that their own history, was henceforth, going to be characterized by their closer association with Serbia, which would play the role of the Piedmont of the Balkans. From 1903 onward, this tremendous surge of nationalism was realized, resulting in the destruction of the old order. New nation-states emerged in its stead.

CHAPTER III

THE AFTERMATH OF THE REVOLUTION

King Peter

After May 29, 1903, the new revolutionary government and King Peter found themselves in a very unpleasant situation. The Westerners had been for weeks elaborating on the details of the death which befell his predecessor and he was suspected of "spiritual leadership in the matter." A French observer wrote, "The situation of Peter Karadjordjević is, morally speaking, as bad as it can be; and its legality is more than doubtful. He is the receiver of the stolen goods. If he had no foreknowledge of a massacre, he knew of the conspiracy, and whether he did or not, he is an accomplice after the fact."¹ There is no doubt that Peter Karadjordjević was chosen by the people according to the required parliamentary procedure. Of 158 deputies and senators, all but one voted for Peter, and the voting was accomplished in less than three quarters of an hour.² The monarchical spirit in Europe was so strong that monarchy was

1 "The Serbian Massacre," Contemporary Review, 1903, p. 63.

2 Wayne Vucinić, Serbia Between East and West, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1954, p. 63.

the only acceptable political system. It was known that there were demonstrations after the coup d'état during which the demonstrators hailed the Republic³ and that the Russians were apprehensive about these occurrences. Although Serbia retained the monarchial form of the government and although Peter Karadjordjević was elected by an overwhelming majority, the international position of Serbia was nevertheless very critical.

The personality of the newly elected Peter Karadjordjević did not warrant such a hostile attitude from the Western powers. He was a Western man by upbringing and temperament and held liberal political views. In his 24th year he translated the treatise of John Stuart Mill, On Liberty. In the preface to this book he declared his attachment to liberal principles and affirmed that the Serbs were ripe for political freedom.⁴ Not only did he praise liberty as a theoretical political ideal but fought for it in the Bosnian uprising of 1875 under the assumed name of Peter Mrkonjić. During the Franco-Prussian War he fought under the French general Bourbaki, and was decorated for his exploits. In one, he was: "Fait prisonnier sur les bords de la Loire, il s'échappe, traverse le fleuve à la nage."⁵ His military exploits and his education at St. Cyr,

3 Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, Beograd, Tucović, 1925, p.112.

4 Nova Europa, 1921, Vol. III, p. 395.

5 Émile Haumont, La Formation de la Yugoslavie, Paris, Bossard, 1930, p. 549.

the famous French military college and in the artillery school at Metz left its military imprint on him. This was expressed in his simplicity and modesty. But the greatest influence on him was certainly the parliamentary and constitutional government systems of Western Europe and particularly that of Switzerland where he had spent thirteen years. When leaving for Serbia he told his Swiss friends that his intention was: "To teach the Serbs to rule the country and to be as happy and as free as you are."⁶

In his first proclamation to the Serbian people on June 25, 1903, he declared his views on the constitution and parliament: "Die Verfassung und alle Verfassungsmässigen Garantien für die Freiheit und Rechte des Volkes, diese Grundlage einer ordentlichen und glücklichen Entwicklung und des Fortschrittes des nationalen und staatlichen Lebens sind für mich Heiligtümer, welche ich immer in der aufmerksamsten Weise achten und hüten werde."⁷ This promise could be made only by a constitutional ruler.

His deeply-rooted patriotism was another feature of his character. Despite the fact that he had spent most of his life abroad and had learned to appreciate Western ideas, he retained the simple and unpretentious manners of his compatriots. His patriotism was not narrowly Serbian,

6 Nova Europa, 1921, Vol. III, pp. 402.

7 Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslawien's Entstehung, Amalthea Verlag, 1929, p. 43.

but Yugoslav. "The national energy was unharnessed. Henceforth begins the real national-Serbian and Yugoslav policy."⁸ Unity was the political slogan of that time and cultural Illyrian idea ripened into a quest for political union of the South Slavs.

The marriage of Peter Karadjordjević served the political interests of unification. His wife Zorka was a daughter of King Nikola of Montenegro. The union of these two countries became one of the first goals of the Yugoslav national movement. There was no longer a question as to which one of the two countries should play the role of the South Slav 'Piedmont.' Thanks to Peter Karadjordjević, Serbia developed along the lines of constitutionalism. On the other hand, Montenegro until 1905 was the only corner in Europe in which there was no free press and no free politics, except that led by Nikola.⁹ The marriage to Peter Karadjordjević had an international political significance. Karadjordjević's father-in-law was on the best terms with the Russian court, where two of his daughters had been married. The pro-Russian orientation of the Serbian government after May 29, 1903 was not only due to this fact, but also to the well-known opposition of Austria-Hungary towards

⁸ Wayne Vucinić, Serbia Between East and West, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1954, p. 65.

⁹ Jovan, "Crna Gora u Europi," Nova Europa, 1926, Vol. XIII, p. 301.

any act, no matter how small, of South Slav unification. Peter Karadjordjević was well aware of the Austro-Hungarian attitude. In 1912 when a meeting between King Peter and Francis Joseph was to take place, King Peter remarked to his Foreign Minister that his foot would not touch Austrian soil and that he would deliberately spoil the arranged visit because, "When my mother was dying she left me these words to remember: 'Remember son, our greatest enemy is Austria.'" ¹⁰

It is correct to say that "Karadjordjević's dynasty would never have attained power, had it not received the active support of Count Goluchowski." ¹¹ For the Austrian Foreign Office hoped that Peter Karadjordjević would continue the policy of his father who was a docile instrument of the Austro-Hungarian policy in the Balkans. But, the domestic policy of Peter Karadjordjević was the democratization of the country and his foreign policy that of unifying the South Slavs.

The Question of Montenegro

Until 1903, there were two centers of the national movement and two potential Piedmonts in the Balkans. From 1856, when Montenegro was recognized as a state there were two dynasties which competed for leadership in the task of

¹⁰ Peter Karadjordjević, Nova Europa, 1921, Vol. III, p. 395.

¹¹ M. Bogitschevich, Causes of the War, Berlin, 1921, Chapter I.

national unification. Due to the impotency of the Serbian Obrenović dynasty, Montenegro enjoyed greater popularity among the South Slavs. However, there were serious disadvantages in Montenegro's bid for supremacy. The economic resources of the country were negligible compared with Serbia's, and its government was based on a harsh absolutism. The ruling dynasty of Petrović encouraged provincial particularism. A distinct Montenegrin history was created as opposed to that of Serbia. Such particularism was a poor ideology for a national unification movement. It seems that an overwhelming vanity blinded the Montenegrin ruler to the realities of the situation. Austria-Hungary knew this and supported the ambitions of King Nikola.¹² But, the younger generation imbibed progressive democratic ideas and rebelled against absolutism and particularism, and demanded liberty at home and national union with Serbia. One youth leader, Andrija Radović, summed up the experience of three generations in one sentence: "My grandmother was a member of his tribe, my father was a Montenegrin and I am a Serb."¹³ Without any support from his people King Nikola turned to Austria-Hungary for diplomatic and economic help. "The proclamation of himself, King of

12 M. Edith Durham, Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle, London, Allan and Unwin, 1920, p. 33.

13 Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt A.A., Societäts-Druckerei, 1925, p. 559.

Montenegro was the apex of Nikola's anti-nationalism and vanity."¹⁴ The country was not enlarged, for no success in foreign policy warranted this step. This act was understood as representing only a challenge to Serbia. The Montenegrin nationalists were particularly enraged by his trip to Vienna where he was promoted to the rank of colonel. The friendship of Austria was fatal to Prince Nikola, for at least two reasons. In the first place he was morally obligated to Austria and in the second place many Montenegrins were convinced that he took the Austrian side. After 1903 Russian friendship gave way to suspicion. The Russian representatives accused Prince Nikola of betraying Slavdom. This produced an hostility to Prince Nikola among the people, "where the cult of Russia carried great weight."¹⁵

The development in Montenegro was characteristic of the national movement for unification, which was not only progressive on account of its nationalist ideology, but socially progressive as well. The movement for national liberation went hand in hand with the struggle against feudalism and for democracy. The triumph of Peter Karadjordjević in Serbia was not only the triumph of nationalism but a victory of democracy over absolutism. In Bosnia the unsolved agrarian problem was as an acute a problem as the realization of national liberation. Austria-Hungary's policy was an

¹⁴ Marko. Daković, "O padu Crnogorske Države i njene dinastije," Nova Europa, 1926, Vol. XIII, p. 315.

¹⁵ Loc. cit.

embodiment of conservatism to the extent that according to Hermann Wendel, "Von jetzt ab führte die habsburgische Politik immer die Sache der Türkischen Unterdrücker gegen die der slawischen Unterdrückten."¹⁶

Austria-Hungary which had been the defender of the Christian faith in the Balkans against the Islamic invasion, was transformed after the French revolution into the bulwark of the European principle of legitimacy against revolution and democracy. Under such circumstances Serbia had to rely on Russia's political support although according to a prominent Serbian politician Vladan Djordjević, "Russia had always used the Serbian nation as convenient 'loose change' in negotiations with Austria-Hungary."¹⁷

Serbia was not a natural outpost of Panslavism and as such after 1903 followed an independent national policy. That power which would be willing to identify its foreign policy with the national aspirations of Serbia was bound to win its friendship. With Peter Karadjordjević as ruler and the Radical Party in the government, Russian influence had to increase irrespective of the Russian attitude. The Radical party leaders were affiliated in their youth, with the radical ideology of Chernyshevsky and Dobrolubov. With the gradual abandonment of radicalism,

¹⁶ Hermann Wendel, Die Habsburger und die Südslawen Frage, Leipzig, Geza Kon, 1924, p. 24.

¹⁷ Heinrich Friedjung, Historische Aufsätze, Berlin, Cotta, 1919, p. 180.

the party became more acceptable to the Russian Foreign Office. (The accusation that they were financially supported by Russia in order to combat Austria does not correspond to the facts.)¹⁸ The Radical party not only favoured the cooperation of Serbia with Russia but proclaimed as its foreign political programme, friendly relations with other Balkan nations of non-Slavic origin such as Rumania, Greece and Albania. As a beginning toward the achievement of this aim a Balkan tariff-free economic union was envisaged. Such a plan would gradually eliminate the fierce economic competition among the various Balkan states.

The Diplomatic Boycott

Because of the assassination of the last Obrenović contact between European rulers and the Serbian court was abruptly interrupted. The foreign diplomatic representatives which were accredited found themselves in a peculiar position. Thus, as they were accredited to the late King their mission was terminated. The foreign representatives had to find a solution to this dilemma quickly because on June 11, 1903, Peter Karadjordjević occupied the King's residence in Belgrade. Those countries which did not have direct dealings with Serbia and which were not interested in the South-Eastern

18 M. Bogitschević, Causes of the War, Berlin, 1921.

question based their diplomatic break with the revolutionary government on a moral issue. The new regime according to their opinion was established by a group of unsatisfied elements in the army who broke their oath and murdered the King. Great Britain and Holland recalled their representatives in Belgrade. A. J. Balfour defined British Serbian relations in the following way: "They came ipso facto to an end with the death of the King of Serbia, because our representative in Serbia was accredited only to the King."¹⁹

There was a great deal of anxiety in the Serbian parliament because of Great Britain's refusal to enter into diplomatic relations with the Serbian government. Hope was expressed that good relations with Great Britain might make it possible for the Serbian government to improve Serbia's position in Macedonia. When Balfour's cabinet resigned and the leader of the Liberals, Campbell Bannerman, came to power the Serbian government expected relations with Great Britain to improve because the Liberals and especially Gladstone were friendly toward the national aspirations of the Balkan peoples. Attempts were made through the good offices of the Italian ambassador in Belgrade to bring about a reconciliation and Serbian politicians inquired about British conditions for a settlement.²⁰ The British demanded

¹⁹ Wayne Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1954, p. 80.

²⁰ Dragisa Vasić, Devetsto Treća, Beograd, Tucovic, 1925, p. 207.

that the officers who participated in the assassination should either be released from their duty or transferred from the capital.

The representatives of other European states with the exception of Austria and Russia did not recall their representatives. They were instructed to remain in their Belgrade posts and abstain from any diplomatic functions. Austria-Hungary and Russia were not able to follow the attitude of Great Britain, nor would it have been realistic for them to adopt an attitude of 'wait and see.' Suspicious of each other, they were eager to establish their political influence in Serbia, paying only lip-service to the indignation following the regicide. The governments of Austria-Hungary and Russia insisted on the removal of the regicides from responsible posts in the Serbian court, but the fact that they were not removed did not disturb regular diplomatic relations. "We recognized King Peter immediately and had done all we could to consolidate his position in the country on the understanding that he should muster the strength and courage to punish the murderers and satisfy the outraged sense of justice of the whole civilized world,"²¹ wrote Konstantin Dumba, the Austrian ambassador in Belgrade. The phrase "he should muster strength and courage" expressed a belief that Peter Karadjordjević was not the master of the newly created situation but only a puppet of the officers' clique.

²¹ Konstantin Dumba, Memoirs of a Diplomat, London, Ian Morrow, 1933, p. 132.

This argument served as justification for continuing normal relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia despite the regicide. After accepting the throne, Peter advised the Austrian and the Russian emperor by telegraph from Geneva, and asked for their recognition and assistance. The Russian Tsar addressed his telegram to the 'King of Serbia' and recognized him as a sovereign. This attitude was "mit den verwandtschaftlichen Banden, welche die Dynastie Karadjordjević mit der Dynastie Romanov sowie die beiden Völker Verbinden."²² The conditions for the normalization of relations with Russia was the punishment of those officers who had participated in the murder of the last Obrenović.²³ The Russian as well as the Austrian government agreed that prior to any improvement in their relations with Serbia the regicide officers had to be removed from the Serbian court. The threat was not only in a diplomatic boycott, but in an economic pressure which the Serbs would find difficult to resist. The landlocked position of a country without any outlet to the sea would make her vulnerable to an economic blockade. When the whole diplomatic corps had been conspicuously absent from a Court Ball in the first week of February a cabinet crisis occurred.²⁴ Measures had to be found to solve the thorny question of

²² Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslawien's Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea Verlag, 1929, p. 48.

²³ Wayne Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1954, p. 81.

²⁴ Konstantin Dumba, Memoirs of a Diplomat, London, Ian Morrow, 1933, p. 135.

diplomatic relations with other powers without compromising the sovereignty of the country. Time was precious, for Russia had temporarily abandoned the Balkans and devoted her attention to the Far East. With unsettled conditions at home, Serbia was left to the mercy of the ambiguous status quo of 1897 between Russia and Austria. There was apprehension that Austria would use this opportunity to interfere in the internal policy of Serbia. A compromise was found which preserved the form of Serbia's sovereignty and at the same time corresponded to the wishes of the foreign governments who had participated in the diplomatic boycott. At the end of March, a royal decree appeared by which all the compromised officers were removed from their positions at Court and the majority of them promoted to other spheres of activity. In that way the main obstacle in the relations between Serbia and the foreign powers was removed. The revolutionary officers were recognized as patriots but removed from Court. The foreign powers were satisfied. The diplomatic strike was over when the Austrian ambassador returned to his Belgrade post on April 11, 1904. Other powers followed excepting Great Britain, who persisted in her 'private' diplomatic 'strike' until 1906. The formal act of foreign recognition took place on the anniversary of King Peter's residence in Beograd. "Nach der Begrüssung der diplomatischen Vertreter gab der König seiner Freude Ausdruck, dass es ihm gelungen sei, in seinem ersten Regierungsjahre die Freundschaftsbände

zwischen Serbien und der fremden Staaten enger zu knüpfen."²⁵

Thus the end came to the diplomatic strike.

The 'Pig War' and the Struggle for the Serbian
Economic Independence

One of the basic points in the programme of the Radical party was its principle, 'The Balkans for the Balkan peoples.' Interpreted in economic terms, it meant the abolition of customs' barriers amongst the various countries of the Balkans. This would be a first step towards a probable political union of the Balkan peoples. The Serbian government particularly insisted on an economic union, which might permit an escape from the economic pressures of Austria-Hungary. The nearest country to Serbia, geographically, religiously and racially was Bulgaria and so the proposal of Serbia for a customs union was favourably received by Bulgarian politicians. The original idea was to keep the Serbo-Bulgarian trade document secret. Economically, Serbia was completely dependent on the Austrian market. This dependence represented a political weapon which might be used against Serbia in case the latter showed a sign of an independent foreign policy. Thus in 1903 from the sixty million francs worth of exports, fifty two million went to Austria-Hungary.²⁶ The exports presented a one sided picture - cattle

²⁵ Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslaviens Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea Verlag, 1929, p. 69.

²⁶ E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, Paris, Delagrave, 1915, p.137.

and fruits were the main items of the overall exports. The Austrian market dominated Serbian trade and Austrian capital found its way to Serbia to such a degree that the latter began to "exploit Serbian national resources."²⁷

Austria-Hungary was opposed to any change in the commercial policy of Serbia, which would threaten the preferential tariffs which Austria enjoyed in Serbia, according to treaties, concluded during the time of the Obrenovics. This was a purely economic reason. A customs union between Serbia and Bulgaria was disliked by the Austrian government not only on economic but also on political grounds. Even Baron Goluchowski, the Austrian foreign minister, who followed a moderate policy of territorial non-aggrandisement, saw in the Serbo-Bulgarian commercial agreement a danger to the Dual Monarchy. Such an alliance, it was feared in Vienna, would lead to an exclusion of Austria from the Balkan peninsula. Goluchowski expressed the opinion to Milovanović, the Serbian foreign minister, that a Serbo-Bulgarian customs union could not be recognized.²⁸ The official organ of the Austrian foreign office 'Neue Freie Presse' on the 4th of January published an article dealing with the Serbo-Bulgarian customs treaty. "The Danube monarchy will act with the biggest energy" the article said, "and the Danube monarchy is going to perform a blow (Den Gegenstoss) against the alleged customs

27 Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, No.38, 1955, p. 544.

28 V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u Xveku, Beograd, 1936, p. 72.

union between Serbia and Bulgaria. This will be done not by severance of diplomatic relations, but on another field, where this will have more effect."²⁹ It was generally believed in the Austrian foreign office that a complete closure of the Austrian market for Serbian cattle would result in the economic collapse of Serbia. In the opinion of a friendly Austrian writer "Das Kleine Land ohne die Gefahr wirtschaftlichen Ruine keinen Zollkampf gegen Österreich-Ungarn wagen könne."³⁰ An economic collapse would produce turmoil in the country where the new dynasty had not yet consolidated its power. The peasant who constituted the bulk of the Serbian population would especially suffer from any economic boycott undertaken by Austria-Hungary. This viewpoint was represented by the members of the Austrian Embassy in Belgrade who moulded the views of the Austrian foreign office. Herr Von Löwenthal the legal adviser to the Austrian Embassy was of the opinion that the economic interests of the Serbian peasants would force the government to yield, "Wenn der serbische Bauer spürt, dass er sein Vieh überhaupt nicht verkaufen kann, dann wird Serbien in weniger als Monatsfrist auf den Knien liegen."³¹ The struggle for the economic independence of Serbia was understood by its inhabitants not

²⁹ V. Ćorović, Odnosi Iz Medju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX veku, Beograd, 1936, p. 73.

³⁰ Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt A.M., Societäts Druckerei, 1925, p. 588.

³¹ Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslawien's Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea Verlag, 1929, p.112.

only as an economic, but as a national struggle, as well. The issue of the conflict was not only economic independence, but the continuity of the existence of the Serbian state as a legal entity. The population of the country subordinated economic interests to national interests and gave its full support to the government in its pursuit of an independent foreign policy.

On January 22, 1903, the Austrian government closed the Austro-Serbian border. The official explanation was the fear of infectious diseases which the cattle imported from Serbia might spread in Austria-Hungary. The real reason disclosed by a Viennese newspaper, was the negative answer of the Serbian government to the Austrian ultimatum for the renunciation of the Serbo-Bulgarian customs union.³² The beginning of the so-called 'pig war' between Austria and Serbia found the latter not unprepared. Parliament accepted an emergency credit in the amount of 500,000 dinars, and representatives abroad were given directions to establish trade agreements with Italy, Egypt and Sweden.³³ An overseas trade route via Salonika was organized and steps were taken for the erection of a slaughter-house, which would be able to conserve meat products. All these measures were voted for in Parliament and represented the popular will. For the

³² Dušan Lončarević, Jugoslawien's Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea Verlag, 1929, p. 111.

³³ Narodna Entsiklopedija, Zagreb, 1920, Vol.IV, p. 875.

first time since Milan Obrenović the country pursued not a dynastic, but a national policy. The Habsburgs had been accustomed to deal with kings but they found difficulties in dealing with democratic governments. Thus the Viennese press reminded King Peter of the docility of his predecessors. 'Neue Freie Presse,' wrote on 5th of January, 1903 "King of Serbia, Peter forgot Slivnica, otherwise he would have not concluded an alliance with his old enemy (Bulgaria).

Obrenovićs have always realized that they were at the mercy of the goodwill of Austria. And the monitors on the Danube should always remind Serbia that she needs the goodwill of her great neighbour This customs union was not caused by any necessity and will bring about retaliation, which could have fatal consequences for Serbia." ³⁴ The pressure of Austria was two-fold, economic in the first place and military in the second. The economic conflict was a test-case of the genuineness of the Serbian revolution of 1903. The appeal of the revolution was patriotic and nationalistic, the ideological foundation of the new regime. The uncompromising attitude of Austria put Serbia into a dilemma. Was she to repudiate the ideological contents of the May revolution and to yield to Austrian pressure or to pursue an independent course regardless of the sacrifices and in that way continue the legacy of 1903? That the country

³⁴ V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske Srbije u XX Veku, Beograd, 1936, p. 73.

decided to defy its powerful neighbour proved that it had reached a sufficient national maturity. Success in economic conflict gave additional strength to this national pride. At the same time the necessity of economic self-sufficiency produced a rapid advancement of home industry. The 'pig war' was on the whole beneficial to Serbia. "For the first time she became free of fear and for the first time she felt her strength."³⁵ In the opinion of foreign observers "Sur le terrain économique l'Autriche subissait une défaite incontestable et ses diplomates étaient dans une posture ridicule."³⁶ It is significant to see that the hostile attitude of the western European powers toward Serbia subsided and that the British informed the Serbian government they considered the Austrian demands on Serbia not compatible with the usual "stipulations in commercial understandings between independent states."³⁷ Not only Western Europe approved of the independent policy of Serbia, but large segments of population of the Dual Monarchy shared pro-Serbian feelings. The principal Hungarian newspapers (Pester Lloyd, etc.) criticised the policy of their government on the ground of economic incompetency. The accusations

³⁵ Narodna Enciklopedija, Zagreb, 1920, Vol. IV, p. 874.

³⁶ E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, Paris, Delag, 1915, p. 137.

³⁷ Wayne Vucinić, Serbia between East and West, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1954, p. 183.

were that the economic war waged against Serbia, with the exclusion of the agricultural Serbian products on the Austrian market, favoured the big producer at the expense of the smaller. In this light the economic war against Serbia seemed to be aimed at enriching only a certain strata of population of the Dual Monarchy. The Hungarian press assured Serbian public opinion that it could count on the support and sympathy of the Hungarians."³⁸ The most decisive fact was that the Austro-Hungarian predictions about the total collapse of the Serbian economy proved to be false. The Budget for 1906 showed a surplus of 1,500,000 dinars (& 60,000 pounds).³⁹ According to Denis "à la fin de 1906 les revenus des douanes n'avaient presque pas diminués."⁴⁰ The Serbian market was lost for Austrian trade and the country which profited to the greatest extent by the new situation was Germany who concluded a trade agreement with Serbia.

Austria had to accept the brutal fact of her defeat. In early February of 1906 Goluchowski and Francis Joseph told the Serbian representative in Vienna on several occasions that it was to the mutual benefit of the two countries to resume normal trade relations. They advised, probably as a

³⁸ Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslavien's Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea Verlag, 1929, p. 113.

³⁹ "The Serbian Massacre," Contemporary Review, 1903, p. 63.

⁴⁰ E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, Paris, Delagrave, 1915, p. 136.

face-saving device, that the Serbs should make the first move toward re-opening negotiations. Arrangements were made for a different version of a trade agreement which only to a very limited extent corresponded with the wishes of Austria-Hungary. The attempt of an economic strangulation of Serbia failed. This was the first defeat of the Habsburgs in their plan to "subjugate the South Slavs."⁴¹

The Annexation and the Western Powers

The loss of prestige suffered by Austria-Hungary in the economic struggle with Serbia brought about a change in Austrian policy. This change was more pronounced when Conrad von Hötzendorf became Chief-of-Staff of the Austrian army. It was known that he was the candidate of Franz Ferdinand and that he favoured an aggressive policy of military expansion into the Balkan peninsula. In his numerous conversations with the Emperor, the heir-apparent, and other members of the cabinet he persistently urged military action the aim of which was: "Eine gewaltsame Ausmerzungen des freien Serbiens."⁴² If Austria-Hungary sincerely wanted to establish a predominant influence in the Balkans, it would be only possible through the possession of the Morava valley "Erst

⁴¹ Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt A.M., Societäts-Druckerei, 1925, p.113.

⁴² Ibid, p. 589.

mit dem Besitz Serbiens, speziell des Moravatal, erscheint dies gewährleistet."⁴³ This attitude of the military men influenced politicians, usually not inclined to think in military terms. Two years after the coup d'état in Serbia, Aehrenthal seemed to regret that missed opportunity which might have been used for the occupation of Serbia. The cool relations between Austria and Russia did not permit such an intervention. Aehrenthal's missed opportunity for 1903 was "dass Österreich mit einem befristeten Mandat in Serbien einmarschiere und Ordnung mache."⁴⁴ The reason for such a hostile attitude of the Austrian 'military' party was that the Serbian question became an internal question of the 'ramshackle' Empire. It gave an opportunity to various national and social elements to voice their own sentiments in favour of Serbia. The solution of the South Slav question became the main problem of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The initiative and the power of making decisions on that problem passed into the hands of military and political extremists, who were inclined to refrain from peaceful measures and rely mainly on brute force. Thus the official 'Danzers Armee Zeitung' wrote in 1905 "Il nous faut à Salonique par la seule route aisément praticable, celle de Serbie, et par conséquent, imposer à cet état un accord

⁴³ Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt, A.M., Societäts Drückerei, 1925, p. 589.

⁴⁴ Loc. cit.

45
militaire qui tournera à l'absorption." When vital questions were approached in such a irreconcilable and hostile attitude it was clear that the seeds were sown for future military conflict.

The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina gave to those utterances additional emphasis. The intentions of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans were revealed and they were proved in practice to correspond to the theory of the military party in Vienna. Emile de Lavaleye informs us that the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been the personal and persistent desire of the Emperor Francis Joseph, and that the visions of the greatness of the "Österreich continually haunted the Imperial Burg. The chancellors succeeding one another at the Ball-Platz, all denied the intention of 'a march towards Salonika' but the 'Burg' never forgot the tradition of Empire and of Eugene of Savoy.⁴⁶ Not only 'Burg' but certain politicians shared identical views. In the Aehrenthal's memorandum of August 9, 1908, which covered the aims of Austria-Hungary in the event of a complete break-up of Turkey in Europe, the guiding principles underlying the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina were clearly and succinctly expressed. Aehrenthal's assumption

⁴⁵ Emile Haumont, La Formation de la Yougoslavie, Paris, Bossard, 1930, p. 541.

⁴⁶ "The Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina," The Fortnightly Review, 1909, p. 1.

was that the war between Bulgaria and Serbia was inevitable since both states claimed Macedonia. "If in this struggle (between Bulgaria and Serbia) we promote the Bulgarian cause and favour the creation of a Greater Bulgaria at Serbia's expense, the way will be open to us to lay our hands on what remains of Serbia."⁴⁷ This was the traditional policy 'divide et impera' carried to the extreme. The first step in this policy would naturally be the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There were two reasons why annexation occurred in the October of 1908. The revolution of young Turks made the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina very confused. For if Austria-Hungary wanted to establish its sovereignty in Bosnia-Herzegovina this was her most favourable moment. The chosen moment for annexation coincided also with the anniversary of Francis Joseph's reign. The annexation as a political act confirmed the existing situation in these provinces, which had been ruled by Austria-Hungary for thirty years. The geographical map of Europe was not changed, claimed the Austrian apologists on this point. "Aus der Okkupation war eben eine Annexion, aus einem Provisorium ein Definitivum geworden; ein anderer Name für dieselbe Sache nicht mehr."⁴⁸ The difference between the previous and the existing situation was one of the quality, not quantity. At the Berlin

⁴⁷ Baernreither, Fragments of a Political Diary, London, Ian Morrow, 1930, p. 43.

⁴⁸ Theodor von Sossnosky, Die Balkanpolitik Österreich Ungarns, Berlin and Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlag-anstalt, 1914, p. 154.

congress, the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was entrusted with governing Bosnia and Herzegovina by a mandate given her by the major European powers. This mandate was regarded by Lord Beaconsfield as a 'great duty' imposed upon Austria-Hungary which consisted of the maintenance of order and the establishment of prosperity and above all in "strengthening the Ottoman government."⁴⁹ The implication of this statement was that the Austrian occupation was temporary, until the time came when normal conditions could be re-established. The temporary character of the occupation was explicitly stated in a secretly written memorandum stating that the Sultan's sovereignty would not be diminished by the act of occupation which was only provisory (que l'occupation sera considérée comme provisoire). This document was signed on the 13th of July, 1878, in Berlin.⁵⁰

In the law of the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on February 22, it was explicitly stated that the occupation was only provisory.⁵¹ According to the Serbian ambassador in Paris, M. Vesnic of Austria made a proposal to Belgrade that the greater part of Bosnia should be united with Serbia, while the north-west portion - the

⁴⁹ "The European Powers and the Annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina," The Fortnightly Review, 1909.

⁵⁰ V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX Veku, Beograd, 1936, p. 207.

⁵¹ Loc. cit.

so-called Turkish Croatia - should revert to Austria-Hungary. This offer was made by Benjamin Kallay, himself, in the beginning of his service as the governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁵²

The change of status for these provinces from temporary to permanent, amounted to the acquisition of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a new territorial unit in the Dual Monarchy. In other words a mandatory territory was to be converted into a permanent possession of the Dual Monarchy without the previous knowledge of the major powers who entrusted the Dual Monarchy with the mandatory rights.

The opposition to the annexation was very strong within the Empire itself. The Independent Hungarian party was against it, mainly because it feared that the numerical strength of the Slavs would endanger their privileged position within the Empire.

The sudden news of the annexation produced a wave of indignation abroad. The main reason for such indignation was the unilateral act of Austria-Hungary in regard to the annexation. Hints were made by Aehrenthal to Isvolsky about the annexation but no date was set. Even Germany, Austria's ally was not informed beforehand. The Emperor Wilhelm only learnt about the annexation on the very day it was announced. "I am deeply hurt in my feelings as an ally at not being

52 "The European Powers and the Annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina," The Fortnightly Review, 1909.

taken into the confidence of his majesty (Francis Joseph)."53 He complained of Aehrenthal's 'frightful stupidity' and described the action of Austria-Hungary as felonous.⁵⁴ His attitude at the beginning of the annexation crisis was far from 'Nibelungen Treue' which was characteristic of his changed attitude at the end of the crisis. Under the first impact of the annexation Emperor Wilhelm II wrote about Aehrenthal's step: "He [Aehrenthal] did not tell us anything [to Isvolsky and Tittoni], he gave only very distant warnings, so that they feel betrayed. He did not have any regards for the Sultan, who was mostly concerned with the annexation act."⁵⁵ The Serbian ambassador in Istanbul was told by the German ambassador that 'Germany was not informed beforehand' about the annexation. If she had been informed, Germany would possibly have tried to prevent it for she was in a position to see the difficult position of Serbia."⁵⁶ The German attitude however, was completely changed at the end of the annexation crisis. Emperor Wilhelm became reconciled to the loss of German prestige in Turkey. In vain did the leaders of the Serbian government plead "dass es unter den siebzig Million Menschen, die das grosse deutsche Volk.

53 "William II's Balkan Policy," The Slavonic Review, June, 1928.

54 Loc. cit.

55 Loc. cit.

56 V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske Srbije u XX veku, Beograd, 1936, p. 201.

zählt, auch noch welche gibt, deren Seele Spuren der grossen Bewegung, der grossen Ideen und der grossen Männer bewahrt, die die deutsche Nationaleinheit geschaffen haben."⁵⁷

German foreign policy was conducted by Wilhelm II, who appreciated the value of Austrian friendship more than any personal advantage which Germany might gain. In that way Germany became the Austrian satellite in her Balkan adventure, and followed blindly her mistakes with a slogan 'Nieder mit Serbien. Neider mit den Slawen. Hoch Osterreich.'⁵⁸ It was due to the German démarche of March 21, 1909, in St. Petersburg that the Bosnian annexation crisis ended favourably for Austria.

Adolf Hitler commented on this strange Austro-German alliance: "A Jew at Radom once said to one of my officers that he could not understand why so strong and vital a body as Germany should ally itself with a corpse? He was right."⁵⁹

The Reaction of Great Britain

The attitude of Great Britain towards the annexation crisis was particularly significant in view of the

⁵⁷ Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, p. 610.

⁵⁸ Loc. cit.

⁵⁹ Bulloch, Hitler, London, 1952, p. 44.

fact that it was the British representative, Lord Salisbury, at the Congress of Berlin who proposed the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Relations between Austria and England were relatively free of conflicts. Austria was predominantly a land power with a very weak navy, and she was incapable of threatening the British rule of the sea. Austria-Hungary was a natural ally of Great Britain against Russia and disagreement between the two seemed unlikely.

The British attitude however, on the question of annexation was uncompromising. The Austrian mistake was, in the words of Goshen, the British Ambassador in Vienna, "wrong in principle, precedent, time and the way in which the affair was conducted."⁶⁰ The explanation for Great Britain's attitude was sought by the pro-Austrian writers, in the increasing hostility of Great Britain towards Germany, and the attempt of the British to show themselves as the friends of Turkey and Islam. In German opinion, King Edward was the initiator of the 'Einkreisungspolitik.' The British attitude was described as hypocritical by them because while the British encouraged the slogan, "The Balkans for the Balkan peoples," they disregarded the same principle in India for the Indians.

The breach of international agreement in the case of the annexation was so obvious that British foreign policy

60 V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX Veku, Beograd, 1936, p.203.

must be credited with more nobler motives than the ones mentioned by pro-Austrian writers.⁶¹ The reason for the excitement in the British press and the firm attitude of the foreign office was the breach in the observance of the treaty. This was repugnant to the strong British sense of fair play. The feeling of friendship in England towards Serbia was lacking because of tension between them since the time of the Serbian coup d'état. Sir Edward Grey and Sir Charles Harding declared in the name of the English government that they could not recognize Austria's right to annexation. Austria-Hungary was obliged by the protocol of January 17, 1891, added to the London Treaty, not to change or fail to observe the agreement without the contact of the other powers concerned.⁶² "The annexation," said Prime Minister Asquith "is a violent disregard of public European law."⁶³ Slavko Grujić, the Serbian ambassador in London, was told on October 7, 1908, by Sir Edward Grey that the conduct and behaviour of Austria and Bulgaria cannot in any way be justified.⁶⁴ The act of annexation came as a complete surprise to Edward who in the summer of 1908 dismissed as improbable a suggestion that Austria-Hungary

61 Theodor von Sosnosky, Die Balkanpolitik Österreich-Ungarns, Stuttgart, 1914, p. 159.

62 V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX veku, Beograd, 1936, p. 203.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid., p. 202.

was preparing to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. His optimism was derived from the conversation with Emperor Francis Joseph, that same summer. However, it turned out to be unjustified and the British monarch felt betrayed and cheated.⁶⁵ The letter of King Edward to Emperor Francis Joseph as an answer to the news about the annexation was full of reproaches. The Austrian ambassador Count Mensdorf was afterwards received with an insulting coolness by the King.⁶⁶

The words of Lord Beaconsfield which had previously described Austria-Hungary as a power that never thought to interfere with the interests of other nations in any quarter of the globe were still remembered and the present views of England were regarded as a victory of humanitarian Gladstonian foreign policy on the 'Eastern' question. Public opinion in Great Britain was in sympathy with Serbia and the dispute between Serbia and Austria-Hungary was regarded as a question of moral values in which Austria-Hungary was found to be in the wrong. Gladstone's words, "There is no place on the map where one could put a finger and be able to say 'here Austria did something well,' were quoted."⁶⁷ The Daily Telegraph wrote, "the annexation is a deadly blow against moral

⁶⁵ Wickham Steed, The Habsburg Monarchy, London, Constable 1914, p. 245.

⁶⁶ V. Ćorović, loc. cit.

⁶⁷ Theodor Von Sosnosky, op. cit., p. 161.

principles."⁶⁸ This animosity towards Austria and sympathy for Serbia was confined to the liberals. The Conservatives, on the other hand, drew a parallel between Egypt and Serbia.⁶⁹ A typical Imperialist argument was advanced. Bosnia and Herzegovina according to this view were colonial possessions in which large Austro-Hungarian capital was invested. "Are we prepared to return Egypt to the Egyptians?" the Conservatives asked their compatriots.⁷⁰ The influence of such arguments however, was diminishing. The conviction of the Balkan-committee of the brothers Buxton that the Crescent had to retire to Asia and that its inheritance had to be divided among the Balkan nations became a guiding principle of English foreign policy. These self-appointed ambassadors did much to arouse sympathy in British public opinion for the cause of the small Balkan nations.

The Russian Reaction

The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina came as a result of direct negotiations between Aehrenthal and Isvolsky at Buchlau. There are various interpretations of these negotiations, but one conclusion seems to be beyond

⁶⁸ Theodor von Sosnosky, loc. cit.

⁶⁹ Edith Durham, Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle, London, Allan and Unwin, 1920, p. 162.

⁷⁰ Theodor von Sosnosky, op. cit., p. 162.

any dispute - Russia agreed to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷¹ Disagreement occurred, but only concerning the time and manner of its execution. In view of the previous history of the Austro-Russian treaties on Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no doubt as to the willingness of Russia not to oppose the annexation in exchange for a free passage through the Dardanelles. Isvolsky was known as 'Westerner' in Russia and to him the opening of the Straits seemed more important than the interests of a small Slavonic nation. The defeat of Russia in its war with Japan was attributed to the inaction of the Russian Black Sea fleet which was not allowed to pass through the Dardanelles. In order to understand properly the attitude of Russia during the annexation crisis, it is necessary to recall that her diplomacy was handicapped by the bankruptcy of the Russian state after the unsuccessful revolution of 1905 and Russo-Japanese war. Serbia could not rely on Russian support. After October 7, 1908, when the annexation was proclaimed and Serbian representatives were asking for compensation the only support which Russia could give them was to tell them through its foreign minister, Isvolsky, 'that Serbia's loss by the annexation would be more than offset by the Austrian retreat from Sandjak' which according to Isvolsky happened at the Russian request. "You Serbs, cannot drive

⁷¹ Bernadotte Schmitt, The Annexation of Bosnia, Cambridge, 1937, p. 20

away the Austrians by force from these provinces and we Russians are not prepared for an armed conflict. With this step Austria does not obtain anything. It is intended only to give satisfaction to the old Kaiser at the end of his reign."⁷² The Serbian government was disappointed with such an interpretation of the annexation. M. Milovanović the Serbian foreign minister was told by Isvolsky about a month before the annexation was going to take place, that it was imminent, and asked Milovanović to suggest some compensation for Serbia.⁷³ The implication was that the Serbian demand for compensation would enjoy Russian diplomatic support. When the official declaration of the annexation was proclaimed, Isvolsky was caught unaware, and the promised diplomatic support of Russia was weakly implemented. M. Milovanović sent a telegram to the Serbian ambassador in Petrograd: "Tell Charikov that we get new reasons every day to fear that annexation is very near ... This annexation would be understood by Serbia as a national catastrophe. Could Russia give us any hope that such a catastrophe would bypass us?"⁷⁴ There was a non-committal answer and the consolation that in the future the cause of Serbia would win. Prime minister Pašić and the crown prince George soon afterwards visited Russia

⁷² V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX Veku, Beograd, 1936, p. 206.

⁷³ Steed, The Habsburg Monarchy, p. 247.

⁷⁴ Ćorović, loc. cit.

with the intention of soliciting its support on the annexation question. They were received by Tzar Nikolas and assured that the Tzar would not recognize the unilateral act of Austria-Hungary. But the feeling in Serbia was that of disillusionment. Sazonov described Serbian public opinion as feeling "dass es vom Schicksal verfolgt sei, und dass sich Russland ihm gegenüber teilnahmslos verhalte."⁷⁵ The general view in Serbia was that the behaviour of the Russian foreign office followed closely its tradition in dealing with the South Slav question which the notorious general Kuropatkin summed up in a sentence, "Konstantinopel den Russen, Saloniki den Österreichern"⁷⁶ In that scheme Serbia belonged to the Austrian sphere of influence and any Russian support of Serbian aspirations would be out of place.

The Serbian Reaction

The reaction of Serbian public opinion to the act of annexation was full of excitement and apprehension. Huge crowds paraded the streets of Belgrade and cries of 'Down with Austria' were heard. Almost the entire population was stirred to a fervour of national feeling. The government was obliged to follow public opinion, if it wanted to stay

⁷⁵ Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt A.M. Societäts-Druckerei, 1925, p. 604.

⁷⁶ Loc. cit.

in power. Parliament was summoned as an extraordinary measure and patriotic speeches were made. The news of annexation according to a Pro-Austrian writer produced an alarming effect on the population. "Die Kunde von ihr [annexion] wirkte wie eine Bombe, deren Explosion das ganze Land erschütterte."⁷⁷ The windows of the Austro-Hungarian legation in Belgrade were broken and the Austro-Hungarian flag was burned.⁷⁸

The annexation was understood in Serbia as a preliminary to further Austrian expansion on the Balkans. The territory which was granted to Austria was beyond Mitrovitza which was the center of the old Serbian medieval state. Serbia was surrounded from the north and the west, without any outlet to the sea. Austria knew well that with the annexation the vital Serbian national interests were threatened. In the secret convention of 1881 which King Milan Obrenović negotiated with the Austro-Hungarian government Serbia was explicitly asked to abstain from tolerating 'any political, religious or other intrigues, which starting from the Serbian territory would aim at Bosnia and Herzegovina.'⁷⁹ The compensation for this Serbian concession was that Austria-Hungary would consider Serbian aspiration directed towards Macedonia

⁷⁷ Theodor von Sosnosky, Die Balkanpolitik Österreich Ungarns, Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlag-Anstalt, 1914, Vol. II, p. 154.

⁷⁸ Loc.cit.

⁷⁹ Ćorović, Odnosi Ismedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX veku, p. 12.

in case the disintegration of Turkey took place. When the annexation took place the Austro-Hungarian government did not fulfill the latter clause of the treaty, and Serbia did not receive any compensation. The Serbian stand-point was that the question of annexation did not concern Austria-Hungary and Serbia alone, and that this question had an international and European character. The Serbian government sent a note to the signatories of the Berlin treaty in which it demanded compensation for the lost provinces.⁸⁰ The demand for compensation was the work of foreign minister Milovanović and it was not very popular. Milovanović's idea of compensation was in the view of the public both paltry and impracticable. In the opinion of an Italian diplomat, "It would have offered the Slavs of the Habsburg Monarchy the spectacle of a Serbia bargaining for advantages based upon the loss of any hope the Bosnians might have for independence."⁸¹ The hope of a territorial compensation which would consist of an outlet to the Adriatic sea and at the same time connect Serbia to Montenegro, (10, 518 square km. with 317,117 inhabitants) was not politically expedient. The Austrian viewpoint was that Serbia did not have any right to ask for compensation because she was not a signatory

⁸⁰ Dušan Lončarević, Jugoslawien's Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea Verlag, 1929, p. 112.

⁸¹ Carlo Storza, Fifty Years of War and Diplomacy in the Balkans, New York, 1940, p. 65.

of the Berlin Treaty. Serbia's protest against the annexation was not accepted by Aehrenthal for that reason.

Humiliation was added to the injury.

Milovanović's demand for compensation came after the Austrian refusal, and was directed to the Western powers. It was the Western powers that had to be won over to the Serbian cause. Milovanović made a tour of European capitals, but did not achieve any success. The demand for compensation was then tacitly abandoned both by its authors and supporters.

Another line of reasoning, summed up by Pašić, rejected the idea of compensation or conference. "Serbia does not wish a conference because we will obtain nothing; Serbia does not wish a war either, because no-one would help her. So much the better: Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain an open wound."⁸² The sequence of events forced the Serbian government to accept this view. The arguments of Milovanović were legally sound and very ingenious, but they were futile when confronted with the single but effective argument of Austro-Hungarian force. No state in Europe was prepared to wage a war for Serbia. Milovanović saw clearly the futility of his attempts. "Die Lage für uns Serben ist leider schwer. Wir müssen uns biegen." At the same time he realized that the aims he was fighting for, would be realized in the future - "I give my vow that by 1920, Bosnia will be free."⁸³

⁸² Storza, loc. cit.

⁸³ Loncarević, op. cit., p. 48.

The Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Perhaps Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina would have been more palatable to the inhabitants if the Austrian government had provided the Serbs, Croats and Muslims in that province with a sense of loyalty to the Dual Monarchy. That loyalty was, however, deeply lacking among the Serbs and Muslims and was not very strong among the Croats. Austria had never known how to win sympathy for itself in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The influence of neighbouring Serbia was too powerful, and Austrian authorities were unable to counteract the Serbian propaganda and substitute allegiance to the Dual Monarchy for Serbian nationalism. The proper way to achieve that aim was, in the opinion of biased Austrian free thinkers - "through energy and vigilance, always accompanied by due regard to national idiosyncracies; a careful handling of the religious question, improvement of material conditions. We must act in such a way as to win confidence in our rule so that any comparison made by Bosnia is favourable to us."⁸⁴ Austrian policy did not follow these precepts. There was no regard for national idiosyncracies on the part of the Austrian government in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Acquisition of Bosnia-Herzegovina was a time honoured project of Austria-Hungary, but the methods of the Austrian government when the annexation was finally

⁸⁴ Baernreither, Fragments of a Political Diary, London, 1930, p. 31.

accomplished, did not show any evidence of a premeditated and clear-cut plan. The Pan-Serb national movement was under estimated and profoundly misunderstood. "The unification of the Serbs is not an original idea," wrote Leopold Mandel, "but a plant imported from the Germanic and the Romanic countries."⁸⁵ Vieser, professor at Vienna University claimed, "that there were no centrifugal tendencies" in the realm of the Habsburgs. The methods of governing these provinces did correspond with such unrealistic statements. The fear of Yugoslav propaganda, led to the removal of Bishop Strossmeyer, who expounded the 'Yugoslav view' and to his replacement by an Austrian sympathizer Bishop Stadler. Instead of a careful handling of the 'religious question' as Dr. Baernreither demanded, the Austrian government openly supported the Catholic Church at the expense of other denominations and encouraged the idea of a Croatian nationality. "In the beginning of the occupation Catholics possessed one church, one school and one parochial establishment in the two provinces. In 1903 there were 179 churches, 12 monasteries, 11 convents, 11 colleges and 7 philanthropic institutions organized by the Catholic Church."⁸⁶ The newly nominated Bishop Stadler started his work in Bosnia with

⁸⁵ V. Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX Veku, Beograd, 1936, p. 170.

⁸⁶ "Europe and the Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina," The Fortnightly Review, 1909, p. 1.

the conversion of three unwilling persons - a Moslem woman and her two children. When this affair became known and the bishop was asked to justify his religious zeal, he directed a letter to the representative of the Austrian Government in Sarajevo, saying "I cannot accept the conditions regarding proselytizing which exist as law in Bosnia because they are in conflict with the order of the Vatican."⁸⁷ Protests arose from the Orthodox and Muslem communities. The Orthodox and the Muslems united in their opposition against the privileged position accorded the Catholic Church and issued a common declaration on 'that' provision of the royal proclamation which spoke about the equality of all religious denominations. "Der Erhabene Kaiser und König befiehlt, dass alle Söhne dieses Landes das gleiche Recht nach den Gesetzen zu geniessen haben, dass das Leben und der Glaube aller geschützt werden müssen."⁸⁸ The Serbian priesthood found their work very difficult because of various laws limiting their religious autonomy. A delegation of Serbian priests were sent to Russia, and Pobedonostsev showed much understanding of their problems.⁸⁹

Any attempt by the Orthodox priesthood to establish good relations with their co-religionists in Russia and Serbia

⁸⁷ Ćorović, op. cit., p. 169.

⁸⁸ Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslawiens Entstehung, Leipzig, Amalthea, Verlag, 1929, p. 190.

⁸⁹ Ćorović, op. cit., p. 170.

was regarded as an act of subversion. Thus any exchange of Church literature between Russia and Serbia was forbidden.⁹⁰

The difficulties which the Serbian Orthodox Church had to endure were many: some are enumerated by E. Denis as "On opposait des difficultés de toute nature à la construction des églises orthodoxes; on les éloignait du centre de la ville on proscrivait le nom de St. Sava, parce qu'il est le patron de l'église serbe; on dissolvait les maîtrises qu[^]e avait chanté des cantiques serbes; le nom m[^]ême de serbe est proscrit et il n'est permis de parler que de la langue Iosniaque."⁹¹

In the opinion of the Serbian population, Monseigneur Stadler, l'[^]évêque catholique est le véritable gouverneur de la Province."⁹² How could such a policy win the Serbian population and how could such a policy induce the Serbs to entertain any loyalty to the Dual Monarchy? At the same time it was obvious that Serbian loyalty was needed because according to an unprejudiced Austrian politician, "the Serbs make up 43% of the population and are the richest, most energetic and efficient human beings that we have in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their prosperity is visibly on the increase and they dominate trade and intercourse."⁹³

90 E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, Paris, Delagrave, 1915, p. 192.

91 Loc. cit.

92 Loc. cit.

93 J. Baernreither, Fragments of a Political Diary, London, MacMillan, 1930, p. 95 and p. 128.

Not only was there no religious freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the essential right of self-government did not exist. The Austrian government in the opinion of a Bosnian politician was not able to give the Serbian population in Bosnia anything 'to look forward to.' The Serbian national aspiration was treason and their requests for the abolition of feudal privileges were regarded as revolutionary and socialistic. There was no way to express these grievances in a normal, democratic parliamentary way, because the constitution given to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1911 and the election system prevented this. According to Hermann Wendel the reading of a Bosnian constitution would be the key to the understanding of Habsburg policy towards the South Slav problem.⁹⁴ No efforts were spared to prevent the real purpose of the constitution, namely the exercise of political aspirations by the majority of the population. Thus religious differences were exploited and the whole electorate was divided according to religious denominations. Religious and social jealousies were to prevent the normal function of the elected authority. The decisive vote was always the privilege of the representatives, and they were elected according to their social standing. In that way, the crucial issues in the Bosnian parliament were always voted for

⁹⁴ Hermann Wendel, Die Habsburger und die Südslawenfrage, Leipzig, 1924, p. 19.

according to the wishes of the Austrian governor, B. Kallay.

The Extremist Tendencies in
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Austrian oppression engendered feelings of bitterness and frustration among the younger generation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The young intellectuals were fully aware of the social and cultural backwardness of their province and desired to better the material and cultural lot of their compatriots. The so-called cultural and social mission of Austria-Hungary left much to be desired. After thirty years of Austrian rule the percentage of illiterate people was 88%,⁹⁵ while in Serbia there was 2264 inhabitants per public school and the percentage of illiterates was 72%. In Bosnia there was 4052 inhabitants per school and the percentage of illiteracy was 16% higher than in Serbia.⁹⁶ Not only culturally, but socially the provinces resembled more the feudal conditions of the Middle Ages than those of the 'enlightened' twentieth century. In 1909 there was seventy-nine thousand families who were not allowed to leave the plot of land they tilled.⁹⁷ This situation existed despite the fact that Austria

95 Hermann Wendel, Die Habsburger und die Südslawenfrage, p.23.

96 Loc. cit.

97 Hermann Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt A.M., Societäts Druckerei, 1925, p.543.

obtained the mandate over Bosnia and Herzegovina under conditions of alleviating the poor social and economic lot of its inhabitants. Andrassy at the Congress of Berlin spoke about urgent reforms, "des reformes urgentes et profondes qu'exigeait l'organisation de la propriété rurale et que seule une grande Puissance telle que l'Autriche avait la force de réaliser."⁹⁸

It is not surprising that a large proportion of Bosnian youth belonged to left-wing circles and entertained socialistic ideas. Their socialistic ideas coincided with their national aspirations. The sham constitution of Bosnia did not give enough scope to their radicalism. Their political life as well as the political life of the majority of the Bosnian population existed independently of the government. The conviction that the existence of Austria-Hungary was a main hinderance to the realization of their dreams, and that their future lay in the union with their brothers in Serbia grew strong in them. The most radical newspaper in Bosnia, Otacbina, wrote: "We do not refuse the idea of a unified Serbian state. What kind of a man would be a German who would oppose the unification of Germany, what kind of a man would be an Italian who would fight Mazzini and Garibaldi?"⁹⁹

The wave of nationalism among Bosnian youth had to

⁹⁸ E. Denis, La Grande Serbia, Paris, Delagrave, 1915, p.197.

⁹⁹ Ćorović, Odnosi Izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije XX Veku, p. 179.

be expressed. When legal means did not suffice, new methods were resorted to. Although their professed aim was 'evolution and not revolution, by legal means and ways',¹⁰⁰ the absence of the latter however, led many to the formation of the 'KRUŽOCI'; their own political associations. The 'KRUŽOCI' were very much influenced by the Russian terrorist doctrines. The sacrifice for national causes was glorified and terrorist activities were regarded as a necessity. Thus the model virtues of a member of KRUŽOCI were that, "He must be an artist and a conspirator, must have strength and capacity for endurance, must be a martyr and a plotter, a man of Western manners and a 'hajduk'".¹⁰¹ Their aim was to throw off the Habsburg yoke and achieve Yugoslav unity under Serbia. Many of the students studied abroad and were able to establish valuable contacts with the leaders of the oppressed nationalities in the Habsburg Monarchy. Especially beneficial was the influence of Dr. Masaryk, who with his realist doctrine managed to convince some of the Bosnian students that the national idea does not consist in heroic deeds only, but in the patient, slow work as well. The demonstrations in the streets of Prague and the shouts of 'Long live Serbia'¹⁰² showed them that they were not alone in their struggle and this helped to enhance their morale. But, the harsh Austrian

100 Loc. cit.

101 Seton-Watson, Sarajevo, London, 1925, p. 70.

102 Sosnosky, Die Balkanpolitik Österreich Ungarns, Vol.II, p.201.

rule produced a fanatical core among the young intellectuals. They discarded the legal means of national struggle and resorted to assassination as a means towards the realization of their aims. Because of the Austrian policy of oppression the initiative in the Southern Slav question passed from the hands of politicians into those of fanatic youth of whom even more dire consequence could not deter. Thus the cult of Zerajic, the first assassin, became a cherished tradition which led to a series of other assassinations. Such an atmosphere produced Gavriilo Princip and led to a violent solution of the South Slav problem.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Austria and Serbia after the Revolution of 1903

The relations between Austria and Serbia after May 29, 1903, assumed prime importance in Serbian foreign policy. Russia's internal weakness made it impossible for her to conduct an independent foreign policy.¹ Also, she was too occupied in the Far East and was neglecting her Balkan policy. The emergence of the Karadjordjević dynasty in Serbia gave Serbo-Austrian relations a new turn. Not only for Serbia, but for Austria as well, the importance of these relations was not warranted by the size of Serbia and its international status. The reason for this must be sought for in the new ideology which the Karadjordjević dynasty represented. For the first time since the uprising of 1804, the nation had a ruler who pursued, not a narrow dynastic policy, but a truly nationalist policy which corresponded to the will of the majority of the people in Serbia, as well as that of their fellow subjects in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. The gospel of separate nationalism was in its very nature unacceptable to the multi-national Habsburg Empire, imbued with

¹ Isvolsky's Personal Correspondence, Slavonic Review, July 1937, Kerensky, V. 16, p. 386.

the Staatsidee. The new Laboral head represented a centrifugal tendency which threatened to dissolve Austria into separate national and sovereign entities. In 1871, Treitschke said about Austria-Hungary that it was a country without understanding of the future, but with its full interest toward the past, and that "Alle Grundlagen dieses Staates gehören einer Zeit, die nicht mehr ist."² In such an interpretation, the differences between Serbia and Austria-Hungary assumed a new light. It was not only a struggle between two countries, but a struggle between the two radically opposed ideologies which those two countries represented.

In the history of Austria, the nationalist movement of Serbia had at least two precedents. The national Risorgimento in Italy and the success of German nationalism were two blows which were directed against Austria. This happened before the acute South Slav problem fed by Serbia finally gave rise to the First World War. Thus ended the existence of Austria-Hungary as a multi-national state and as a power in Europe. Essentially the Italian, German and Serbian movement were only three aspects of the same national idea. In a sense, the Serbian nationalism had peculiar traits which distinguished it from other Western national movements especially those of the English and the French. The national awakening of the Serbs came later and appeared on the historical scene not as a revolt

² Wendel, Die Habsburger und die Sudslawenfrage, Leipzig, G. Kon, 1924, p. 12.

of the middle class struggle against the social and political institution of feudalism, but as a reaction to foreign domination and oppression. The final aim of that new ideology was the establishment of a nation-state. Where there is a soul, there must be a body in which that soul can reside. Across the border of the independent Kingdom of Serbia was situated the multi-national Habsburg Monarchy. That border separated people of a common religion, common language, and common race, because many citizens of Austria-Hungary were Serbian nationals. Such a situation presented many difficult and delicate problems. It meant that the citizens of the Habsburg Monarchy had dual loyalty. A loyalty to the Empire and a loyalty to a nation. There was no Austrian nationality, there were only peoples over which Austria ruled. The Austrian Imperial conception was that of paternalism. The peoples were governed by the dynasty whether they served the Habsburgs or not. The Serbian national idea preached that sovereignty is not contained in the whims of the rulers but in a collective national body. The subjects of Austria-Hungary, whose nationality was Serbian, might have told the Habsburgs as did similarly the French revolutionaries that, "We love all men, we love particularly all free men, but we love the free men of Serbia more than all the others of the universe." Today, it is taken for granted that the national idea is justified 'per se.'

"Ein grosses Volk das politisch einig sein will bekundet

damit auch schon sein Recht auf die "Einheit,"³ wrote H. Wendel. The right of nationality is deeply rooted in us, as is our innate sense of justice. If we, in this light, look upon the Serbian struggle as the affirmation and realization of her national ideals against imperial designs of Austria, we cannot but recognize the justice of the Serbian case. "Nous admettons aujourd'hui sans discussion que la Serbie devait triompher, parce qu'elle représentait le droit qui s'identifie pour nous avec le principe des nationalités. Mais d'abord en admettant que la victoire de droit soit fatale, la date de cette victoire demeure problématique, et ici sous certaines circonstances, elle pouvait parfaitement être retardée de quelques siècles."⁴ The application of the national principle in its simplest form - the political union of a people speaking the same language and willing to share the same destiny implied the inevitable dissolution of the Austrian empire. The national consciousness of the South Slavs was more enthusiastically expressed as the years went by and the solution of this question became the most important issue of Austrian politics. The South Slav question had two main aspects. One was represented by the tendency of all branches of the Serbo-Croatian people to form a political union, and the other by the formidable obstacle which the Dual system placed in the way of any national Austro-Hungarian South Slav policy. The political solution of this

3 Wendel, Die Habsburger, p. 13.

4 E. Denis, La Grande Serbie, Paris, 1915, p. 127.

problem theoretically might have had two variants. Either the South Slav question would be solved within the Austro-Hungarian Empire or it would be solved outside its borders. The first possibility can be regarded as the political union of free Serbia with other provinces of the Habsburg realm. But, the internal structure of the Austro-Hungarian Empire made such a solution impossible. The Dual system guaranteed the domination of two nations, Germans, and Magyars, over all the other Slav nationalities. Any introduction of a new ethnic national group would disturb the ethnic balance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in that way would endanger Austro-Magyar hegemony in the Empire. It is well-known that the mandatory status of Bosnia and Herzegovina was due mainly to the obstacles created by the Magyars, who objected to outright annexation because of their reluctance to admit a large number of Slavs into the Empire.

A second reason against the Austrian solution of the South Slav question was the sociological and economic status of Serbo-Croats in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Here are a few examples to illustrate this point - the province of Dalmatia was without any railway connection with the interior - of six hundred villages, more than half did not have any drinking water - in 1910, over three hundred village communities were without public schools, and 62% of the population was illiterate⁵ - In Croatia and Slavonia, several hundred landowners, mostly of

⁵ Wendel, Die Habsburger, p. 22.

foreign origin, possessed a quarter of the land and 180,000 peasants. If Austria-Hungary wanted to accomplish a union of the South Slavs, she would have had to be an enlightened country. For a wise internal policy might have served as an attraction for Serbia. This, however, was not the case.

The third reason operating against such a solution of the Slav question, (often called Trialistic)* was the clericalism which permeated the upper regions of the Austro-Hungarian government. The union of the other peoples of the Austrian Empire, who were mostly Roman Catholics, with the Serbs who were Greek Orthodox, would be to the detriment of the latter.

It is difficult to understand the views of many foreign observers on the South Slav question. They felt that Austro-Hungary could alone find the solution despite the obstacles which such a South Slav union would encounter. The Serbian solution to the South Slav question meant the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, and that was a possibility which even the boldest minds dare not contemplate. Thus Seton-Watson recognized that "the problem of Serbo-Croatian unity might be described without exaggeration as the decisive problem of the Habsburg Monarchy."⁶ He was sure that the day of their unity

⁶ R.W. Seton-Watson, The Southern Slav Question, London, Constable, 1911, Ch. XIV, p. 335.

* TRIALISTIC SOLUTION intended to give equal rights to the Slavs, Hungarians and Germans. It would have introduced the equality of the nations in the Austrian realm.

would come in the same way as the Italian and the German unity were realized. The real problem was the time and manner of its achievement. The union of the South Slav race could not have been realized by peaceful means and neither could Austria-Hungary have been expected to surrender parts of her territory willingly. In 1911, Seton-Watson wrote "Austria-Hungary is far from being decadent, it is a powerful and progressive state, with one of the finest and best prepared armies in the world."⁷ Serbia in his opinion was too poor and too small to accomplish such a tremendous task of unification. "En 1911, dans sa 'Southern Question', M. Seton-Watson met en cause non sans ironie, le rêve des serbes de démembrer leur puissante voisine" wrote E. Haumont.⁸ Goluchowski, the Austrian foreign minister called Serbia "Quantité négligeable" and said to the German ambassador "Wir erdrücken einfach Serbien, wenn es ernst auf dem Balkan wird und Serbien etwa wagte, andere Politik zu machen als wir wollen."⁹ Other writers predicted that if Vienna and Budapest would continue to sacrifice the economic development of the Serbo-Croatian lands to the maintenance of the Dual System in its present form, economic suffocation would be added the sense of political oppression. For the result of such economic and political oppression would be the strengthening of the national

7 Loc. cit.

8 Émile Haumont, La Formation de la Yougoslavie, Paris, Bossard, 1930, p. 552.

9 H. Wendel, Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit, Frankfurt, A.M., 1925, Societäts Druckerei, p. 589.

ties within Serbia. And when Serbia would develop its national resources and advance in prosperity, it would become a powerful magnet attracting the Balkan South Slavs. But, the Southern Slav question would involve great danger for the Monarchy.¹⁰ Austria-Hungary did not have a constructive policy on the South Slav question, and used the Southern Slav question only when it was necessary to frighten the Magyars. Wrote H. Wendel, "Trialismus ist der Rheinbundgedanke der Habsburger."¹¹ Francis Ferdinand too, was in favour of the Trialistic solution of the South Slav question which would give the South Slavs more influence in the Empire. His bold conception of the reconstruction of the Habsburg Monarchy on the Trialistic basis would, had it been implemented, have encountered the bitter opposition of the Magyars and the hostility of official Serbia. Pashić and his colleagues feared that such a scheme might thwart their greater ambitions for Serbia.

If we examine the racial composition of the Austrian Empire, we come to the conclusion that the German and Magyar elements were only comparatively small minorities which had by various means obtained for themselves the dominion and direction of majorities. The Germans numbered some 11,500,000 or 25.3% of the population; the Magyars 8,750,000 or 19.1%, and the Southern Slavs amounted to 4,700,000 or 10.5%. The total Slav

¹⁰ W. Steed, The Habsburg Monarchy, London, Constable, 1914, p. 287.

¹¹ Wendel, Die Habsburger, p. 21.

population was 22,600,000 as against 20,250,000 Germans and Magyars.¹² The introduction of electoral equality would quite naturally affect the dominant position of the Germans and Magyars and as such would sound the death-knoll of the "Ausgleich", the rule of two historic nations, the Germans and Magyars over the others. The two master nations would of course, not permit any infringement upon their privileges and rights. Thus their policy represented an inversion of the legitimate idea of democratic progress. Such a situation where a large majority of the population was deprived of any decisive influence in the government was bound to be explosive when national forces work in opposite directions, the result is conflict. "The Austrian Empire is a mosaic of many various and varying races and nations but the various stones of this mosaic have little community of thought or desire as do the stones of a real mosaic that belong together; they just happen to be collected together."¹³ The emergence of new Serbia after the revolution of 1903 was, therefore, an event of prime European and international significance.¹⁴

Serbia was opposed to the Dual Monarchy, not only in the intense form of her nationalism, but also in her democratic ideology. That country where the saying went, "that a man

¹² "The Situation in the Near East", Fortnightly Review, 1907, p. 695.

¹³ Loc. cit.

¹⁴ Živan Živanović, Politička Istorija Srbije, Beograd, Getsa Kon, 1924, p. 334.

starts only to be a man after becoming a Baron" was opposed in Serbia where the wave of democracy which was sweeping Europe was most apparent. A nation of rigid classes could never have possessed the same force as a nation like Serbia where the egalitarian spirit reigned supreme. Serbia comprised for the neighbouring Habsburg Monarchy not only a national but a social revolutionary danger. To the exploited peasants of Austria-Hungary, some of whom were still tied to the land, Serbia appeared not only as a potential national liberator, but as a promise of a better and more just social system. Thus, according to the writer of the article in the Oesterreichische Rundschau, February 15, 1909, "the task of civilizing these countries can be only entrusted to Austria, which is a forward country, tolerant of national feeling....A Balkan King would lose none of his dignity by taking his seat before the Emperor of Vienna, just as the Kings of Saxony Bavaria, and Wurtemberg take their places before the Emperor of Berlin."¹⁵ The only thing wanting in this Austrian scheme was the consent of the Balkan states themselves.

There were some Serbian politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina who were pro-Austrian and had looked forward to such a confederation. Thus Baernreither reported his conversation with some Serbian leaders in Bosnia who cherished the notion of uniting all Serbs under Habsburg sovereignty. They

¹⁵ "The Future of the Balkans", Fortnightly Review, 1909, p. 1043.

would have liked to put a son of the Austrian house (by secundogeniture) at the head of the new union.¹⁶ This new confederation was to inherit Serbian territories in old Serbia and Montenegro. This last demand of the Serbian leaders was a cardinal point. Konstantin Dumba, the Austrian ambassador to Belgrade, recalled that during his tenure of office and during the terms of his three predecessors, the only oral instruction given them from the Austrian foreign office was "In no circumstances can we permit a union of the Kingdom of Serbia with the Principality of Montenegro; we shall prevent it even if it means going to war to do so."¹⁷ But, the Austrian scheme of South Slav confederation did not give enough scope to the South Slav national feeling. Such a federation could not offer the South Slavs any substantial gains. Baernreither's conclusion was that "If the monarchy had been able to give the Serbian people something to look forward to along these lines,¹⁸ the course of events in the Balkans would have been different."

After Austrian schemes of South Slav federation failed and it became increasingly clear that only Serbia could provide leadership among the South Slavs, the Austrian foreign office represented Serbia as being a nest of conspirators resolved on the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. All expressions of solidarity with Serbia by her compatriots

¹⁶ J. Baernreither, Fragments of a Political Diary, London, MacMillan, 1930, p. 95.

¹⁷ K. Dumba, Memoirs of a Diplomat, London, Morrow, 1933, p. 92.

¹⁸ Baernreither, loc. cit.

in the Austro-Hungarian provinces were looked upon as treason. The nationalist movement in the provinces of Austria-Hungary was artificially created from Belgrade, and Serbia claimed to have been accused of hostile acts towards her neighbour. This dispute between Austria-Hungary and Serbia should be judged according to the ethical contents of the national idea per se. Another viewpoint would be to evaluate the dispute strictly from the legal aspect.

The will to unite was recognized as one of the most obvious characteristics of the national idea. This was regarded as a superior moral force. This moral force has its origin according to E. Denis, "de dette aspiration au bonheur que chacun de nous porte en soi."¹⁹ Finally, it was recognized as the principle of self-determination and one of the principles on which post-war Europe was to be founded. The pro-Austrian view although not denying this principle dwelt on the obstacles which a union between the Serbs and the Croats would encounter. The opinion was often advanced, that the majority of Croats did not want such a union. For the realization of the Great Croat idea was possible only within the frame of the Habsburg Monarchy. South Slav nationalism in this interpretation was nothing more than extension of the Great Serbian idea, whose roots go back to the year 1844, when Garašanin formulated his thoughts on the future of the South Slavs.²⁰ Hence the national

19 Denis, Grande Serbie, p. 128.

20 L. Brittner, "Oesterreich-Ungarn und Serbien," Historische Zeitschrift, München, 1931, p. 78.

movements in the southeastern provinces of Habsburg Monarchy were not supposed to be indigenous and therefore they were an expression of Pan-Serb agitation. This viewpoint, represented by some of the Austrian observers and politicians was denied by the Croats, themselves. Thus the Croat Medo Pucić defined the relations between the Balkan peoples and the Croats and Serbs in particular; "Que serait le Serbe sans le Croate, ce qu'est le frère sans son frère. Et le Croate sans le Serbe? Ce que sans son frère est le frère."²¹ Despite this opinion, it must be taken into account that Croats and Serbs had never formed a common political unit. The Croats gravitated towards Western culture and differed in their religion and alphabet from the Serbs.

Summary

There are two questions concerning the South Slav problem which, because of their importance, deserve full attention. Why did the South Slav problem have to be solved by "blood and iron" and not by peaceful means? And why did the solution of the problem not occur within the Dual Monarchy?The multi-national Austrian Empire had potentialities of becoming a federation of equal nations, and furthermore, that federation would be economically justified in an age of industrial revolution, when economic considerations became of paramount influence. Yet the national policy of Austria-Hungary suffered

21 E. Haumont, La Formation de la Yougoslavie, p. 365.

one defeat after another. Baernreither wrote before 1914 "No one can say that the reason why we lost Lombardy to Piedmont is that we were defeated at the battles of Magenta and Solferino. We lost Lombardy because the living centre of the Italian idea came to be outside of Austria. We shall now lose Bosnia and Herzegovina and compromise the whole South Slav question unless we succeed in placing the centre of the South Slav world inside Austria."²²

The reasons for the repeated failure of the Habsburgs to solve the national question was their ideology of feudal cosmopolitanism. The Dual Monarchy did not sympathize with national movements on two grounds: because they were nationalistic and because they were democratic. Nationalism is not confined to a narrow segment of the population, and is above social and class differences. Austria was too conservative to understand the wave of nationalism and democracy sweeping over Europe after 1848.

If the centre of gravity of the Serbo-Croat problem was to be placed with the Monarchy, the policy of annexation should have been followed by a policy of attraction, freedom, and self-government.²³ But the recognition of the national rights of the Serbs and Croats would have encouraged other nations in the Habsburg Monarchy to do the same which was

22 Baernreither, Fragments, p. 51.

23 Ibid., p. 92.

precisely what the Habsburgs would not allow. And so, it was impossible to draw Serbia into the cultural orbit of the Austrian Monarchy. "It would be madness", wrote Baernreither, "to bring a people, free and independent for a hundred years under the control of the Austro-Hungarian government." There were means under which such a scheme might have been realized, but the whole structure of the Austrian state would have had to be changed. These changes according to a leading Serbian politician were "Wenn Österreich-Ungarn darauf bezichtet, eine Grossmacht zu sein, wenn es sich entschliesst, die Rolle einer 'östlichen Schweiz anzunehmen."²⁴ After annexation, such a reform became improbable.

Even without the incorporation of Serbia into the Dual Monarchy, relations might have been better than they were had the Austrian government showed more willingness to realize some of the modest demands of the Serbian government. There were three outstanding problems whose solution might have brought better relations between Austria-Hungary, and at least the solution of one was the "sine qua non" for Austro-Serbian understanding. M. Milovanović in his speech in the parliament mentioned the necessity for Serbia to have "a window" into the Adriatic. Since Austria would not permit this corridor, the relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia could never be peaceful. "Durch die Annexion Bosniens und der

²⁴ T. von Sosnosky, Die Balkanpolitik, Stuttgart, Österreich-Ungarn, 1914, p. 205.

Herzegovina, durch die Abdrängung vom Adriatischen Meer... zwingt Österreich-Ungarn, Serbien, und die Serbische Nation in naher oder entfernter Zukunft zu einem Kampf auf Leben und Tod."²⁵ It was one of the axioms of the Habsburg Balkan policy never to permit the union of Serbia and Montenegro. For, in that way they prevented any outlet of Serbia to the Adriatic.

The second problem in which Serbia was particularly interested was the future of Macedonia after the partition of the Turkish Empire. After the way to the West was blocked by the Austrian annexation, the Serbs hoped to have an outlet to the Middle East and Mediterranean, by a passage to the Aegean through Saloniki. The Austrian government was bound by various treaties, starting with the secret convention of 1881 to fulfill this Serbian demand. When the Serbian foreign minister M. Milovanović, in his conversation with the Austrian foreign minister, Aehrenthal, in November, 1909, asked the latter, "Für eine bestimmte Zusage über den Anteil Serbiens, an der türkischen Verlassenschaft in Makedonien."²⁶ Aehrenthal was evasive, "Let us speak of the present; when it improves we can begin looking into the future."²⁷

Finally, the demand for cultural exchanges between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina was likewise refused. Serbia and the national movement which she represented were then

25 Dušan Loncarević, Jugoslawiens Entstehung, p. 264.

26 Aehrenthal, und Milovanović, Deutsche Revue, Nov. 19, 1909.

27 Baernreither, Fragments, p. 92.

threatened and suppressed. But, the ideology which that tiny country propagated provided the vital force which destroyed the foundations of the ramshackle Empire.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

- Baernreither, J. Fragments of a Political Diary. London: MacMillan, 1930.
- Boghitchevitch. Causes of the War. Berlin, 1921.
- Ćorović, V. Odnosi izmedju Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u XX Veku. Beograd, 1936.
- Denis, E. La Grande Serbie. Paris: Delagrave, 1915.
- Dumba, Konstantin. Memoirs of a Diplomat. London: Ian Morrow, 1933.
- Gueshoff, The Balkan League. London, 1915.
- Maur, Gilbert in der. Die Jugoslawen einst und jetzt. Berlin: Verlag Anstalt, 1936.
- Pribram, A. Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920.
- Protić, Stojan. The Aspirations of Bulgaria. London: Simpkin, 1915.
- Schmitt, Bernadotte. The Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937.
- Seton-Watson, R.W. The role of Bosnia in International Politics. British Academy, Raleigh Lecture, 1931.
- Seton-Watson, R.W. Sarajevo. London: Hutchinson, 1926.
- Seton-Watson, R.W. The Southern Slav Question. London: Constable, 1911.
- Sosnosky, Theodor von. Die Balkanpolitik Oesterreich-Ungarns von 1866. Berlin: Verlags Anstalt, 1914.
- Steed, Henry Wickham. The Habsburg Monarchy. London: Constable, 1919.
- Stieve, F. Isvolsky and The World War. London: Allen and Unwin, 1926.

Vasić, Dragisa. Devetsto Treca. Beograd: Stamparijo Tucovica, 1925.

Vucinić, Wayne S. Serbia between East and West. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954.

Wendel, H. Der Kampf der Südslawen um Freiheit und Einheit. Frankfurt A.M.: Societäts Druckerei, 1925.

Wendel, H. Die Habsburger und die Südslawenfrage. Leipzig: G. Kon, 1924.

Witte. Vospominania. Berlin: Slovo, 1922.

Zivanovic, Zivan. Politička Istorija Srbije. Beograd: Getsa Kon, 1923, IV Volumes.

PERIODICALS

Schmitt, Bernadotte E. "The Bosnian Annexation Crisis." Slavonic Review. June 1930, Vol. 9, p. 312.

"The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina," The Fortnightly Review. 1909, p. 1.

May, Arthur. "Trans-Balkan railway scheme," Journal of Modern History. 1952, p. 352.

Seton-Watson, "William II's Balkan Policy," The Slavonic Review. June 1928.

Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia. 1955, No. 38, p. 544.

"The future of the Balkans," Fortnightly Review, 1909, p. 1041.

Baernreither, J. "Aehrenthal und Milovanovic," January, 1922.

Prodanović, Josa. "Radikalna Stranka," Nova Europa, 1926. Vol. XIII, p. 386.

Vukicević, Veselin. "Politicko Idolopoklonstvo," Nova Europa. 1926, Vol. XIII.

Pinon, E. "Le Conflit Austro-Serbe," Revue des deux Mondes. 1907, p. 638.

"The situation in the Near East." Fortnightly Review. 1907, p. 695.

Ruski, Jedan. "Savremeni Dokument o 29om Maju," Nova Europa. 1927, Vol. XVI, p. 225.

- Dimitrijević, Dragutin. "Apis," Nova Europa. 1927, p. 51.
- "Spoljašnja politika Srbije pre prvog svetskog rata,"
Nova Europa. April, 1928, Vol. XVIII, p. 256.
- Karadjordjević, Peter. Nova Europa. 1921, Vol. III, p. 395.
- Majevci, D. Semiz. Nova Europa. 1927, p. 217.
- Marco. "Ujedinjanje ili Smrt," Nova Europa. 1927, Vol. XVI,
p. 9.
- "Servia Irredenta," Edinburgh Review, 1914.
- Jovan. "Crna Gora u Evropi," Nova Europa. 1926, Vol. XIII, p. 301.
- Daković, Marko. "O padu Crnogorske Drzave i njene dinastije,"
Nova Europa. 1926, Vol. XIII, p. 30.
- Brankovici, Novak. "Dragutin Dimitrijevic - Apis," Nova Europa.
July 1927, p. 51.
- Organizacija 'Ujedinjenje ili Smrt' (Crna Ruka), Nova Europa.
1927, Vol. XV, p. 396.
- Rad organizacije 'Ujedinjenje ili Smrt,' Dr. Oscar Tartaglia.
Nova Europa. July 1927, p. 67.
- "The Serbian Massacre," Contemporary Review. 1903, pp. 63 and 131.
- "Serbia and the rival dynasties," Contemporary Review. 1903,
p. 131.
- Faissler, Margaret. "Austria-Hungary and the disruption of the
Balkan League," Slavonic Review. July 1939, No. 52, p. 14.
- Brittner, Ludwig. "Oesterreich-Ungarn und Serbien,"
Historische Zeitschrift. Munchen, 1931.
- Ličnost Nikole Pašića. "Simplex," Nova Europa. Vol. XIII,
p. 410.
- Nastas Petrović. "Pašić i Galuchowski," Nova Europa. Vol. XIII,
1926, p. 416.
- Caclamano. "Reminiscences of the Balkan Wars," Slavonic
Review. July 1937.
- Seton-Watson. "Russian Commitments in the Bosnian Question."
Slavonic Review. June 1929, Vol. VIII, No. 22, p. 578.
- "Berlin Congress 1878," Bolskaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia.
1950, No. 5, p. 39.

"The real history of the Near Eastern Crisis," Fortnightly Review. 1909, p. 225.

Bolskaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia. 1955, No. 38, p. 544.

Seton-Watson. "Le procès de Salonique (juin 1917) by M. Boghitchevitch 1927," The Slavonic Review. June 1927, March 1928, No. 8, p. 710.