The Chronicle Of The First World War And Its Impact On The Balkans

Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın Tarihi ve Balkanlar'a Etkisi

Erjada Progonati*

Abstract

The process of the two Balkan Wars (1912-1913) remained incomplete until the First World War started. The aim of this study is to give some informations about The First World War and the role that Balkan region played to this war when the national consciousness of Balkan peoples began to crystallize. After the two Balkan Wars, all the Balkan states continued their efforts to gather their co-nationals into their national states. It's concluded that the Balkan Wars leaded to the internationalization of this crisis spreading it to an ample area while many other crises at the same region were resolved without a general war in Europe. It appears that the First World War that began in 1914 in the Balkan region was a continuation of the wars that started in 1912-1913 period in the same are.

Key Words: *World War I, Balkans, Nationalism, Balkan Wars, History.*

Özet

İki Balkan Savaşı (1912-1913) süreci, Birinci Dünya Savaşı başlayana dek eksik kalmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Birinci Dünya Savaşı ve ulusal bilinçlerin belirginleşmeye başlayan Balkan halklarının savaşta oynadığı roller hakkında bazı bilgiler vermektir. İki Balkan Savaşlarından sonra bütün Balkan devletleri ulus-devletlerine ortak vatandaşlarını toplamak için çabalarını sürdürmüştür. Aynı bölgede birçok krizin Avrupa'da genel bir savaşa götürmeden çözüme kavuşurken Balkan Savaşları bu durumu daha geniş bir alana yayarak krizin uluslararasılaşmasına yol açtığı sonucuna varılmaktadır. 1914 yılında ve Balkanlar bölgesinde başlayan Birinci Dünya Savaşı, aynı bölgede ve 1912-1913 döneminde yaşanan savaşların devamı niteliğinde olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Birinci Dünya Savaşı, Balkanlar, Milliyetçilik, Balkan Savaşları, Tarih.*

Introduction

A good deal of the European tension prior to World War I was derived from incidents and events in the Balkans. On the other side the spirit of nationalism in Balkans has dominated every event and process. Nationalism was transformed by the 1789 French Revolution. The revolution against the traditional political order legitimised a West European concept of nationalism allowing people to identify themselves with a territory on which they were entitled to establish a state and government of their own.[1] The Balkans region remained under the Ottoman rule for a period approximately five and a half centuries (1371-1912/13) that's why in the late 19th century and early 20th century has

* Dr. Erjada Progonati, Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, Hitit Üniversitesi, e-mail: erjadaprogonati@hitit.edu.tr

1 Tom Gallagher, "Folly and Failure in the Balkans", *History Today*, Volume 49, Issue 9, 1999, pp. 28.

been the subject of significant developments.[2] The appeal of romantic nationalism for Balkan community's opinion was first signalized by the Greek War of Independence in the 1820s. In 1824, a series of privately financed loans, which in effect made the City of London the financier of the revolution, proved critical in ensuring Greek success.[3]

The diplomatic destruction of the region that ensued under the guidance of Bismarck (1815 - 1898) ruled out the creation of a compatible pattern of states. The Balkans had been in a state of pandemonium especially since the early 1900s, with years of guerrilla warfare in Macedonia followed by the Young Turk Revolution and the protracted Bosnian Crisis. The wars of 1914-1918 period in the Balkans, turned out to be only the next phase of political, national and economical rivalry in this important part of European continent. The Ottoman Empire was deeply affected from this situation in Europe.[4] This Empire's disintegration was hastened after the Young Turk revolution of 1908. The Balkan nations' main goal in their foreign policies was to achieve theirs national unification. That agitation resulted in a set of crises like, the union of Eastern Rumelia with Bulgaria and the subsequent Serbo-Bulgarian war in 1885, the Greco-Turkish war of 1897, the uprising in Macedonia in 1903, the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary and the proclamation of Bulgarian independence in 1908, the Albanian uprising of 1910-1912 and some more minor tensions. Additionally the Italian-Ottoman war of 1911-1912, which resulted in the Italian conquest of Libya and the Dodecanese.[5]

In this situation the European powers didn't contribute for establishing a Balkan confederation or large ethnically mixed states where minority rights were protected by international guarantees. On the contrary the European powers left two South Slav states with unsatisfied national programmes who would clash in wars over the next sixty years: Serbia and Bulgaria. Theirs territories were annexed by the other powers: Bessarabia was taken by Russia despite its mainly Romanian population; while Bosnia had been occupied by Austria-Hungary in 1876.

Another factor that encouraged the Balkan revolt was the unification and formation of Italy (1861) and Germany (1871) as countries. The revolt was spread through the Balkan Peninsula and with the aid of Russia, the Ottoman Empire was defeated. The biggest losers were the region's Muslim peoples, several million of whom were driven out of Serbia, Bulgaria and Bosnia, due to the absence of a powerful protector.[6] The culmination of nationalism in

2 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 641.

3 Tom Gallagher, *Outcast Europe: The Balkans, 1789-1989: From the Ottomans to Milosevic*, Routledge, 2013, p. 37.

4 Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, "Bismarck'ın Osmanlı Imparatorluğunu Taksim Fikri", http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/26/1036/12502.pdf, (Access Date, 15.04.2014)

5 Valery Kolev; Christina Koulouri; *The Balkan Wars*, Second Edition, Thessaloniki, 2009, p. 24.

6 *Nationalism*,http://mrtrainor.sharepoint.com/Documents/W5E24CAD%20Unification%20of%20

the Balkans left the region fragile to foreign pierce. Some of the communities that had been slow to acquire a national identity, quickly asserted their own demands. In October 1912, the Balkan League began what was to be known as the Balkan Wars (1912-13). The European Powers became alarmed with the success of the Balkan States in the war. Austria-Hungary felt threatened by Serbia's growing power. Serbs tried to unify all the Slavs in the Balkans. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina belonged to Slavic race as the Serbs do and demanded to join Serbia. That time they were controlled by the Austria-Hungary Empire. Serbian nationalists were angered with Austria-Hungary's control and wished free Bosnia and Herzegovina. On June 24th, 1914, a young Serbian nationalist killed the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Francis Ferdinand. The fuse was lit and First World War started.

The Pre-First World War

From a Balkan perspective, it is important to look at the international actors and decision-makers who meddled during the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, the two states involved in the original Sarajevo crisis.[7] Until the establishment of the German and Italian unions the most important topic of the foreign policy of the European states was the *Eastern Question*. This question consisted of three main elements: (1) the diplomatic struggles between the Great Powers for influence in the Ottoman territories, (2) the gradual decline of the Empire of the Sultan and (3) the national liberation movements of the Balkan peoples in striving for the establishment of their nation-states.[8]

At its culmination the Ottoman Empire run most of Eastern Europe countries, including the Balkan states. But by the late 1800s the weakening Ottoman Empire was in retreat, freeing up the Balkan states for self-rule.[9] Since the end of 1870s the Germany's empowerment; its engagement with the acquisition of colonies in various parts of the world and the close relationships it has with the Ottoman Empire since 1890 attracted the attention of Britain, France and Russia. These states developed a strong interest in the region, concerned about what might happen if the Ottoman Empire disintegrated. They referred to this dilemma as the "Eastern Question" and each of them developed their own foreign policy objectives.

From the Congress of Berlin (1878) up to 1908 the Eastern Question was pushed to a second plan and it was replaced by the competition of European states to acquire colonies. In 1894 France and Russia tried to reach a bilateral agreement about the colonies. The same topic was also treated by the agree-

Italy%20 and%20Germany.pdf, (Access Date, 16.04.2014).

7 "The Balkan Causes of World War One", http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/balkan_causes.htm, (Access Date, 10.04.2014).

8 Valery Kolev; Christina Koulouri; *The Balkan Wars*, Second Edition, Thessaloniki, 2009, p. 22.

9 "The Balkans as a Cause of World War I", http://alphahistory.com/worldwar1/balkans/, (Access Date, 15.03.2014)

ment between Great Britain and Russia. After the defeat of Russia against Japan (1904-1905) it focused the attention once more towards the Balkans.[10]

Meanwhile, another state that was interested in the Balkans, was Austria-Hungary. It was extremely preparing to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus Austria-Hungary intended on one hand to take under control the secessionist movements in Bosnia, on the other hand it was trying to give a lesson to Serbia that was provoking the Slavs inside Austria-Hungaria. However, this step should be taken without the Russia's reaction. After the Crimean War (1853–1856), Russia realized that the other Great Powers would spare no effort to prevent her from gaining access to the Mediterranean.[11] As a consequence she started engineering an ambitious plan for indirect expansion through the creation of friendly and closely allied states under Russian patronage in the Balkan peninsula. In fact, Russia wouldn't be against the Austria-Hungaria action towards Bosnia and Herzegovina till Austria-Hungaria provided her domains in the other Balkan region countries. At this point, the two countries interests were crossed out.

In September 1908 the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, Alois Aehrenthal and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Aleksander Islovski held a very important meeting. The meeting results were detected differently from the two sides. According to Austria-Hungaria when Aehrenthal asked Islovski what would be the Russian attitude towards the annexation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungaria, Islovski's approach was positive. But Russia, in return for turning a blind eye to such a step, was determined to the Straits to be opened to the Russian war ships. The Russians wanted to control the strategic Straits linking the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea. According to Aehrenthal, the Straits is a subject connected to the international regulations. If on the agenda would be any conference with this issue Austria-Hungaria pledged not to oppose this Russian request. This crisis over the annexation of Bosnia was a diplomatic defeat for the Russians. They began to seek a means to restore their position in the Balkans.

Since 1908, the peace had been threatened on two occasions and both timesaverted by the last-minute resolve of European statesmen. The disintegration ofTurkey's Balkan empire was leaving a vacuum that both Austria-Hungary(backed by Germany) and the Slav succession state of Serbia (backed by Russia and by extension France) sought to fill.[12] In July 1908 a plot of officers in the Ottoman army, led by Enver Pasha, took the control of the Empire and announced a program of reforms. They called themselves the Committee for

10 Nihat Erim, "Trablusgarp ve Balkan Harbi Andlaşmaları (1912-1913)", *Devletlerarası Hukuku ve Siyasi Tarih Metinleri: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Andlaşmaları*, Cilt I, Ankara, 1953, pp. 448.

11 Yusuf Sarınay, *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kırım Savaşı (1853-1856)*, Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, Yayın No: 84, pp.14.

12 John F. Williams, *Corporal Hitler and the Great War 1914-1918. The List Regiment*, Frank Cass, London and New York, 1993, p. 26.

Unity and Progress, but were popularly known as the Young Turks. They announced the restoration of the 1876 Constitution. This Constitution had never served as the basis for Ottoman government. They were especially eager to infuse among all the various peoples of the Ottoman Empire a sense of Ottoman identity, and thus foil its further disintegration.

In July 1908, with the proclamation of the II. Constitution (II. Meşrutiyet) in the Ottoman Empire the Austria-Hungary had to move quickly for the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, because together with the Constitutional Era it was established the Parliament and Bosnia and Herzegovina was still counted from the Ottoman Empire.[13] Bosnia and Herzegovina should submit the deputies to the new Parliament and the Ottoman State had to ensure revisioning the relevant provisions connected to this region in the Treaty of Berlin. The Austrians and Russian, rivals for Great Power domination in the Balkans, attempted to achieve some of their goals before the Young Turk reforms took effect. By a rescript of October 7, 1908, Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. From this annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina there were three states that was effected the bilateral relations with the Austria-Hungary: Ottoman Empire, Serbia and Russia. Izvolsky was unprepared for such immediate action and he couldn't control the strong popular opposition to the annexation. But Russia failed to secure a strong support from its ally France and could not be playing against both Austria-Hungary and Germany for Serbia's sensitivities. In March, 1909 Izvolsky notified Germany that Russia accepted Austria's annexation.

Serbia geographically and ethnically was related to Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was outraged by the annexation. It demanded that Austria cede a portion of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia. Austria-Hungary was tightly supported by its ally Germany that's why it threatened to invade Serbia if that country persisted in its demands. Although the crisis was resolved without immediate warfare, the resulting sharp relations between Serbia and Austria-Hungary and Russia's umbrage at having been duped and humiliated contributed to the outbreak of World War I.

The Balkan Wars

The Balkan Wars were a bloody series of conflicts in Southeastern Europe during 1912-1913. The Balkan wars were a result of the collapsing and retreating Ottoman Empire who had control of the area at the time.[14] The complex and obscure Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 represent the beginning of an era in European history dominated by nationalism and conflict. These wars were the first concerted effort by the Balkan peoples to emulate the Italian and German examples and establish large nationalist states.

13 For detail informations see: İhsan Güneş, "II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi Hükümet Programları (1908-1918)", http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/19/1150/13502.pdf, (Access Date, 15.04.2014)

14 "Balkan Wars", http://worldwarcauses.wikidot.com/warone:revolutions, (Access Date, 9.04.2014).

In 1912 several Balkan nations, incited by Russia, signed a series of military alliances that formed the so-called Balkan League. The Balkan League was an alliance formed by a series of bilateral treaties concluded in 1912 between the Balkan states of Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro. The agenda of this coalition was to wage war on the Ottomans and drive them out of Eastern Europe entirely.

The First Balkan War was declared by this league in October, 1912. This war broke out between a coalition of Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia and their former ruler, the Ottoman Empire.[15] Until 1913, the Bulgarians looked to Russia as their Great-Power patron.[16] This was because after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1888, Russia managed to establish an autonomous Bulgarian state. From being deflated by the Austrians at the Bosnian crisis, Russia sought to gain the upper hand by creating a Russophile "Slavic block" in the Balkans. The "Slavic block" would be directed against both, Austria-Hungary and the Ottomans. Consequently, Russian diplomacy began pressuring the two countries, Serbia and Bulgaria, to reach a compromise and form an alliance.

Another issue that initiated the formation of the League was the Albanian Uprising in 1911. The plans about the negotiations between Serbia and Bulgaria proved that progress paralleled the success of the Albanian revolt in Skopje and Monastir obligating the Ottomans to recognize the autonomy of Albania in June, 1912. The Albanian rebellion in 1911 presaged radical changes in the balance of power in the Balkans. The Great Powers, particularly Italy and Austria-Hungary, were concerned with Albania's fate while the neighbouring Balkan states had territorial aspirations in the same region. The Albanian leaders, before the nightmare of partition among their neighbours wardecided upon a full-scale insurrection in order to establish their autonomous position. By 1912 the Albanian uprisers were victorious over the Ottoman troops. They demanded the dissolution the Ottoman Parliament.[17] In this situation Serbia now had to struggle against time to avoid the establishment of the Albanian state. In a search for allies, Serbia was ready to negotiate a contract with Bulgaria. The agreement enabled the event of a victorious war against the Ottomans. After this Bulgaria would receive all of Macedonia. Serbia's enlargement was accepted by Bulgaria as being to the North of the Shar Mountains. The intervening area was agreed to be "disputed"; it would be arbitrated by the Tsar of Russia in the event of a successful war against the Ottoman Empire.[18]

As Assoc. Prof. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol spotted, historycally the developments inside the so-called "Macedonian Question" are discussed in three groups:

15 Richard C. Hall, "Bulgaria in the First World War", *The Historian*, Volume 73, Issue 2, 8 June 2011, pp. 301.

16 *Ibid*, pp. 302.

17 Hale Şıvgın, "İttihat ve Terakki Politikalarının Balkan İttifaklarını Hızlandırmadaki Rolü", *Gazi Akademik Bakış*, Volume 6, Issue 11, 2012, pp. 12.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 11.

1. *From the beginning of the 19th century the Balkan states that won their independence or semi-independences. Among these Balkan countries, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia effected directly the Macedonian issue.*
2. *At the end of 19th century when the the Ottoman Empire continued to collapse Macedonia geopolitically, strategically and economically had a very important place in this region. Using the internal dynamics in the region the European powers focused in this area and entered into a competition with each-other. Among the internal dynamics of this phenomenonthe most effective have been the nationalism and the religion.*
3. *The legal ruler of the region, the Ottoman Empire. Officially, the Ottoman Empire was the ruler of the region, though in practice this has not always occurred.*[19]

In August 1909, in Greece the army officers had rise in a rebellion. They secured the engagement of a progressive government under Eleftherios Venizelos planning to change their defeat of 1897 against the Ottomans. An emergency military reorganization led by a French military mission had been started for that intetion, but its work was intercepted by the outburst of the war in Balkans. In the discussions that led Greece to join the Balkan League, Bulgaria refused to commit to any agreement on the distribution of territorial gains, unlike its deal with Serbia over Macedonia.

In December, 1912 a cease-fire interrupted the fighting until January 1913. The participants in the First Balkan War on 30 May 1913, signed a preparatory peace treaty in London. As a result of the war, almost all remaining European territories of the Ottoman Empire were captured and partitioned among the allies. The west of the Enez-Kıyıköy line was ceded to the Balkan League, according to the *status quo* at the time of the armistice.

Ensuing events led the creation of an Albanian state. Almost all of the territory that was designated to form the new Albanian state was currently occupied by either Greece or Serbia, which inadvertently withdrew their troops. Unwilling to yield to any pressure Greece and Serbia settled their mutual differences and signed a military alliance directed against Bulgaria on 1 May 1913, even before the Treaty of London had been concluded. Despite its success, Bulgaria was dissatisfied over the division of the spoils in Macedonia, which provoked the start of the Second Balkan War.

Second Balkan War: Bulgaria's main objective in the Balkan War was Macedonia. In June, 1913 Bulgaria launched a surprise attack on its former Balkan League allies, in what was little more than an opportunistic grab for territory. The Bulgarians were quickly defeated by the Greeks, Serbians and Romanians in barely a month. In the Second Balkan War of 1913, Bulgaria confronted her erstwhile Balkan allies as well as the Ottoman Empire and Romania. The Treaty of Bucharest of 10 August 1913 confirmed Bulgaria's defeat and the loss of Macedonia to Greece and Serbia and the fertile agricultural region of southern

19 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Makedonya Sorunu'nun Temel Dinamikleri", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 2, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 249.

Dobruja to Romania. Russia's failure to defend Bulgaria against the predations of her Balkan allies in 1913 led the Sofia government to seek redress in the camp of the Triple Alliance. In the Second Balkan War, Bulgaria fought a looser coalition of Greece, Montenegro, Serbia, Romania, and the Ottoman Empire. The war began on 29 June 1913 and it ended a month later. The allies had overcame Bulgaria. The Second Balkan War finished the Turkish rule in the Balkans, except Istanbul and small part of Thrace's territory around the Ottoman capital. Direct war between Balkan states for the legacy of Ottoman Empire opened new field for mutual hostilities. Firstly, the Bulgarian defeat meant the end of existence of Balkan League.[20] From that time Bulgaria had to seek for a new political partner. Peace treaty signed in Bucharest, in August 1913 and Constantinople in September 1913 concluded the Second Balkan War. In less than one year the Balkans would again be at war.

The Spark in the "Powder Keg"

The main tendency in the history of the Balkan countries was of peaceful development and modernisation. In countries like Bulgaria and Turkey the trauma of the defeat triggered a quest for 'responsibilities' while the identification of the instruments of the war had political targets. In Serbia and in Greece, who were the triumphants of the war, the Balkan wars were, for different reasons, integrated into a longer scope which included World War I in the first case and the Asia Minor war in the latter.

The First World War took place only about one year after Second Balkan War. That time in almost all Balkan nationalist movements the elements of a revolutionary plot were present. Extremely romantic discourses of violence and terror had played a major role in the realization of certain targets and goals. There were common the secret societies which elaborate ceremonies with peculiar symbols, flags, with oaths.[21]

Before First World War, Serbs increased the national sensitivities and led the establishment of two associations: Narodna Odbrana (National Defense, 1908) and the other commonly known as the Black Hand with the name Ujedinjenj Ili Smrt (Union or Death, 1911). The National Defense was formed following the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908. When the army officers found the National Defense very passive in the relations with the Dual Monarchy, they fonded the Black Hand in 1911.[22]

The scintilla that started World War I was the assassination of Austria's Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie on June 28, 1914 while Ferdinand was visiting the city of Sarajevo. This visit was poorly planned and they

20 Piotr Mikietynski, "World War I in the Balkans, 1914-1918 – Third Balkan War?", *Journal of Social Sciences Special Issue on Balkan*, SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences, 2009, p. 120.

21 http://pusuladernegi.org/wp-content/uploads/balkan_tarihi.pdf, (Access Date, 09.04.2014).

22 http://www.historyonair.com/pdf/Intro_Balkans_Situation_Prior_WWI.pdf, (Access Date, 09.04.2014)

hadn't taken adequate guards to protect the guests. It was the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo and historically this has been the Serbian national holiday (Vidova Dan). The assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand actually was performed by a Bosnian revolutionary called Gavrilo Princip. The assassins of that time were all extreme Serb nationalists.

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serb nationalist was viewed as a great excuse to attack Austria-Hungary's troublesome neighbor, Serbia. The assassination in Sarajevo was only useful pretext "to settle accounts" and make "definitive and total settlement" with Serbia.[23] Instead of reacting immediately to the incident, Austria-Hungary made sure they had the counterfront of Germany. In 1914 Austria-Hungary declared war to Serbia in the situation of the guarantee on strong and loyal support from the side of German Empire. In consequence, Russia could not accept possible Serbian defeat and full Vienna's domination in the Balkans. Serbia get the support from Russia.

Finally, why did the Balkan crisis of 1914 lead to World War I, when many other crises were resolved without a general war in Europe? There are several answers about this issue but it is important that both governments, Austro-Hungary and Serbia, believed that their prestige and credibility were on the line, not only in the international community, but also at home. On the international stage, both sides were one defeat away from being marginalized: Austria-Hungary had no intention of replacing the Ottoman Empire as the "Sick Man of Europe" and Serbia refused to be treated as a protectorate. On the other hand, these governments believed that they were in a strong position to win if war came, because the Austrians had German backing and the Serbs had promises from Russia. Neither side considered the chance that the war would spread across Europe. And above all no one foresaw what the World War would mean, so there was no fear of any side.[24]

The Balkan States Into the First World War

During the First World War, Serbia, Greece, Romania and Montenegro supported the Entente. On the other side, *Bulgaria* joined the Central Powers. The Bulgarian participation in the First World War has been of its big interests in that country. Bulgaria's alliance with Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, is in itself lurid. The explanation lies in the Macedonian issue. In the XIX century Bulgarians, Greeks, and Serbians all considered Macedonia as integral to the establishment of their national states.[25]

23 Holger H. Herwig, *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1914-1918*, London-New York, 1997, p. 10.

24 "The Balkan Causes of World War I", http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/balkan_causes.htm, (Access Date, 10. 04. 2014).

25 Richard C. Hall, "Bulgaria in the First World War", *The Historian*, Volume 73, Issue 2, 8 June 2011, pp. 301.

There appear to be three distinct types of "others". The first one could be qualified as the "far away other", who is involved in the problem without direct national interests. Very close to that are the Great Powers, who seem to be involved into the problem because of the sophisticated relations between them. In that group one could place the Catholic and Protestant propaganda. On the other hand the Greeks and Serbs are presented as the main and "close others" who rival the Bulgarian ethnic domination in the region. The contrast is that the Greeks somehow have legitimate rights in Macedonia, in terms of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and in terms of the significant rate of the Greek population there. The Serbs are the "undesirable alien" into the region. The interests of Romania in Macedonia were not presented directly. Romania, presented itself as a "neutral other" and the intention was directed against the Bulgarian cause. The historical role of all those "others" is to prevent the national unification of the Bulgarians in a nation state for "selfish" reasons.

Bulgaria entered to World War I in October 1915, with the aim of changing the consequences of the Second Balkan War and obtaining Macedonia. Catching the Entente by surprise, Bulgarian forces pushed the Serbs out of Macedonia and into Albania and occupied a part of Greek Macedonia by mid- 1916. British, French, and Serbian troops landed at Salonika and stopped the Bulgarian advance, but the Entente's holding operation in Greece.[26] When Romania relinquished to the Central Powers in May 1918, Bulgaria rescued Southern Dobruja. At home public opinion is agitated by mismanagement, severe food shortages, and the seemingly endless war.[27]

At the end of the First World War, Bulgaria lost most of territorial spoils gained during First Balkan War. The Kingdom of Bulgaria was the state situated strategically on the way between Austria-Hungary and Ottoman Empire. Being rushingly defeated Bulgaria signed the Treaty of Bucharest on August 10th, 1913. Sofia managed to possess a part of Macedonia known as Pirin Macedonia and a part of the Aegean coast. Instead, Sofia had to give up Southern Dobruja for Romania. Bulgaria signed also Provisions of the Treaty of Istanbul on September 29th, 1913. This forced Sofia to return Edirne to the Ottoman Empire.[28]

Prior to the First World War *Serbia* was politically unstable country and there has always been a nationalistic enthusiasm. Serbia aspired to become a great nation uniting all the South Slavic people. The tensions within Serbia and Balkans and the disputes amongst Balkan nations caused the territory to be regarded as the "powder keg" of Europe. Austria-Hungary hindered the realization of Serbian aspiration of a Greater Serbia. Through the Balkan Wars

26 Glenn E. Curtis, *Bulgaria a Country Study*, Second Edition, June 1992, Sofia, p. 31.

27 "Guide to territory and governance in the Balkans during and after the Balkan Wars and World War *I*", http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm, (Access Date, 08. 04. 2014).

28 Risto Stefov, "What's Europe's Problem with Macedonia?", http://www.historyofmacedonia.org/PartitionedMacedonia/MacedonianQuestion.html, (Access Date, 05. 04. 2014).

against Turkey and Bulgaria, Serbia acquired Macedonia, Kosovo, Metohija and a part of the Sandzak of Novi Pazar.[29]

The period between 1903-1914 marked rejuvenation in Serbian nationalism. The period between 1912 and 1944 was full of irredentist wars and internal political turmoil. By 1900 Serbia and Greece were the major territorial rivals.[30] The Serbian government in December 1914 raised the vague program of a union of the South Slav peoples. Serbia's leaders and many of its intellectuals viewed this prospect as a form of "Greater Serbia", an expansion of Serbia. In 1914, the Serbian government stated that, "the struggle for the liberation and unification of all our captive brethren Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes" (Nish Declaration December 7, 1914) would be one of its chief war aims.[31] Serbia had sustained most territory of northern and central Macedonia and also direct border with Montenegro (Novi Pazar). The Corfu Declaration of July 20, 1917 outlined the basic structure of the future South Slav state. The Serbian government and the Yugoslav Committee members agreed to form a parliamentary monarchy under the Serb Karadjordjevic dynasty; some local autonomies that will work based on social and economic conditions and a constituent assembly that will adopt a constitution by a numerically qualified majority.[32]

In the early phases of World War I Serbia repeled two Austrian invasions, counterattacking into Bosnia and Hungary. Its armies also reoccupied the Northeastern and central Albania. But a massive Austro-German attack in October 1915, combined with Bulgaria's entry into the war, spells defeat. Rather than surrender, the Serbian army and many civilians escaped through the Albanian mountains to the sea suffering tragic losses. Nearly the entire country is under harsh occupation from late 1915 to the end of the war. Overall, a fifth of the population perishes.[33]

Toplica insurrection was a rebellion of the Serbian chetniks in the Toplica District against the Bulgarian occupation forces. At that time Eastern Serbia was occupied by Bulgaria during World War I. It lasted from February 21 to March 25, 1917.[34] The Serbian Toplica Uprising was crushed by Bulgarian and Austrian forces. On the other side the Macedonian Front was mostly silent. On November 1916 the French and Serbian forces retook limited areas of Macedonia by recapturing Bitola. In September 1918, the Entente Armies forced Bul-

29 http://www.historyonair.com/pdf/Intro_Balkans_Situation_Prior_WWI.pdf

30 Richard C. Hall, "Bulgaria in the First World War", *The Historian*, Volume 73, Issue 2, 8 June 2011, pp. 301. Glenn E. Curtis, *Bulgaria a Country Study*, Second Edition, Sofia, June 1992, p. 4.

31 "The Ottoman Empire Enters WWI on the Side of the Central Powers", http://www.thenagain.info/webchron/easteurope/YugoKingdom.CP.html, (Access Date, 10. 04. 2014).

32 "The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes is Founded", http://www.thenagain.info/webchron/easteurope/YugoKingdom.CP.html, (Access Date, 10. 04. 2014).

33 "Guide to Territory and Governance in the Balkans During and After the Balkan Wars and World War *I*", http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm, (Access Date, 08. 04. 2014).

34 "Toplica Uprising", http://en.cyclopaedia.net/wiki/Toplica-uprising, (Access Date, 05. 04. 2014).

garia to leave the war and eventually two-weeks before the end of the War managed to liberate Serbia. The victorious Serbs assumed the role of first among equals in the creation of the postwar Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Greece on 1912 conquered Janina and most of Southern Epirus, Salonika, Southern Macedonia and Crete. After the Balkans Second War Greece conquered the Western Thrace and the islands of the Northern and Eastern Aegean. Greece territories became the double of theirs prewar size. With the collapse of Ottoman power, the Greeks claimed the Eastern Thrace, Constantinople, the Straits and much of the Western Anatolia. Greece was neutral at the start of World War I Greece entered to the war on the Allied side only in June 1917 after contradictions and ongoing interventions by the Allies, which used the Greek territory as a base of operations from 1915 and on. The Greek engagement to the First World War is connected to the King Constantine I, who became related with German Emperor, Wilhelm II. His biggest antagonist was the Prime Minister, Eleftherios Venizelos, who was the supporter of the "Megali Idea".[35] He thought that the greatest occasion for the realization of this project is only becoming an alliance with Great Britain and France.[36]

After autumn 1916, the Balkan front approached to the Greek-Serbian border. On 1918 an Allied offensive finally breaks through in Macedonia, the Central Powers' front collapses, and Bulgaria left the war.[37] Greece after the First World War run after the "Megalo Idea" shadow. As the Greek historian Vacalopulos wrote the support of the Entente Powers and especially the Britain's incentives, Greece embarked on the adventure of the rebirth of Byzantine Empire.[38] The Treaty of Sevres of August 1920 offered to them much of this, but Constantinople and the Straits became internationalized. These plans smashed up when the Turkish army serving a new Turkish state rebuffed the Greek army back into the sea. In the Treaty of Lausanne of July 1923, the 1913 border with Turkey were restored and the populations are exchanged, contributing to the 1.300.000 million immigrants that Greece must absorb in the 1920s.[39]

In the political sense as the result of the war in the country began to experience a split. In this context, it appeared the birth of the royal wing biased against the Republicans. The political turmoil in the country included the intervention of the army to the regime for times in 1922, 1926, 1933 and 1936

35 The unification of all Greeks in one national state.

36 Ayrıntılı bilgi için bkz.: "Venizelos' Rise to Power, The Balkan Wars and the Division of Greee, 1909-1917", http://www.arts.yorku.ca/hist/tgallant/documents/edgarvenizelos40-85.pdf, (Access Date, 04. 4. 2014).

37 "Guide to territory and governance in the Balkans during and after the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm, (Access Date, 08. 04. 2014).

38 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 644.

39 "Guide to territory and governance in the Balkans during and after the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm, (Access Date, 08. 04. 2014).

that resulted in the seizure of power. In 1936 citing the political turmoil in the country, the military interventions, could not go beyond the dictatorship rule.[40]

Greece's borders today are those of 1923, except that it gains the Dodecanese from Italy after World War II. The conflicts of the extended war compounded by the drastic population movements, leave a legacy of turbulent politics for the interwar years. *Romania* didn't take part at the First Balkan War of 1912-1913. In the Second Balkan War of June-July 1913 Romania gained Southern Dobruja from Bulgaria. On August 3rd, 1914 the question of Romanian behaviour to the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia became the main subject of meeting of the Crown Council. Romania accepted the neutrality and the Romanian government guaranteed that Romania "will not fight against Bulgaria in the case of Bulgarian attack against Serbia".[41] Despite its alliance commitments to Austria Romania remained neutral at the threshold of World War I. The chances that Romania would take part together with the Central Powers were weak. The circumstances of her entry still occupied the Allies. Ferdinand told the formal Council that the country was going to war.[42]

Romania joined the war on the Allied side in August, 1916 after receiving territorial promises. Romanian forces moved to Transylvania but were driven out within two months. Success for the Central Powers was neither easy nor cheap, but they had broken the Romanian Army and shaken the nation state to its foundations. By January, 1917 German-Austrian and Bulgarian offensives have overrun most of the country. Further, tortuous negotiations resulted in the "Preliminary Peace"of Buftea on 5 March 1918. The Treaty of Bucharest followed on 5 May. Romania ceded Dobruja and the mouths of the Danube partly to Bulgaria, partly to a condominium of Germany, Austria and Bulgaria. The Central Powers accepted Romania's acquirement of Bessarabia from Russia.[43]

Romania ended the war with a dull glory and not extremely good results. There are a few allies and no strong neighboring countries. A less happy result is the acquisition of large minority populations of Hungarians, Germans (in Transylvania) and Ukrainians (in the Bukovina and Bessarabia).[44] Romania's war had been a painful see-saw between ecstatic victory and abject defeat, but the Treaty of Trianon in March 1920 nearly doubled the country's territory and population.[45]

40 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 645

41 Piotr Mikietynski, "World War I in the Balkans, 1914-1918 – Third Balkan War?", *Journal of Social Sciences Special Issue on Balkan*, SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences, 2009, pp. 120.

42 Glenn E. Torrey, *Book Reviews: New Perspectives on World War I*, "The Romanian Battlefront in World War I", 42 (4)/ 43 (1), Press of Kansas, Winter-Spring 2012, p. 93.

43 "Bessarabia annexed by Romania", http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/bessarabia-annexed-by-romania, (Access Date, 06. 04.2014)

44 "Guide to Territory and Governance in the Balkans During and After the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm, (Access Date, 08. 04. 2014).

45 James D. Scudieri, (Article excerpt) "The Romanian Battlefront in World War I", (ed. Glenn E. Torrey), http://www.questia.com/read/1G1-335070004/the-romanian-battlefront-in-world-war-i, (Access Date, 04. 04. 2014).

After their neighbors broke the Ottoman power in the First Balkan War and started to occupy *Albanian* territories, the Albanian leaders in November, 1912 declared independence of the state. This was confirmed by the Treaty of London in May, 1913.[46] In this situation Greece and especially Serbia were prevented from controlling a key place of the Adriatic coast. The borders are set by international commissions in December, 1913 and June, 1914. But a large number of the Albanian population was left in Greece (Epirus-Chameria), Montenegro, and above all in Serbia (Kosovo). No one treated the borders as definitive. That is why an Albanian state remained a lot of time more a fiction than a reality. Early at World War I Greece, Serbia and Montenegro reoccupied most of Albanian state. The secret London Treaty of May 1915 anticipated dismembering Albania. Serbia defeated in fall 1915. In January 1916 most of Albania is overruned by Austria and Bulgaria. By autumn 1916 Allied forces occupied the Southern part of the country, where they remained for the rest of the war.

The Paris Peace Conference of 1919, considered to enlarge Albania including the Albanian population stated in Greece and Yugoslavia. In February, 1920 Albanian leaders refound their state, driving out the Italians and winning the international recognition. The country's affairs were turbulent and unstable until the King, Ahmed Zogu gained power in the mid-1920s. During the period following World War I, Ottoman state was in a whole disorder related to domestic and foreign affairs. Turkey was both militarily fighting against the outsiders who were competing with each other to have any part by sharing the Ottoman territories and testifying the peak of an uneasy reform process inside. Within the destructive ruins in the wake of the First World War and the following the War of Independence, Turkey tried to consolidate integrity inside and sovereignty outside, in order to survive as a newly established nation-state.[47]

On June 28, 1919 the Versailles Peace Conference gave the real shape to the Yugoslav state. This drawn map put Yugoslavia in conflict with all its neighboring states except Greece. Moreover, Germany accepted the demands of the Entente countries towards Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the Treaty of Saint-Germain (10 September 1919), forced Austria to separate the Klagenfurt Basin thus, by the vote of the people of the Southern region the Slovenes living there became the minority of Austria. With this Treaty Austria recognized the independence of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. Bosnia-Herzegovina was resigned to Yugoslavia; Tirol, Tireste and Dalmatians islands to Italy; Transylvania, Bukovina, and the Banat Timisoara to Romania; Galicia to Poland.[48] The *Ottoman Empire* attitude to the events on

46 Sokol Pacukaj, "The Independence of Albania", *Mediterranean Journal of Social Siences*, Vol. 4, No. 11, pp. 767.

47 Gülbahar Yelken Aktaş, *Turkish Foreign Policy: New Concepts and Reflections* (Unpublished MA Thesis), Middle East Technical University, Ankara, December 2010, p. 1.

48 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 643-644.

the Balkan Peninsula in June-July 1914 was very equable. The Ottoman Empire was closely connected with Germany. The War Minister, Enver Pasha's plans didn't concern to the Balkans but rather to the Caucasus, Crimea and Central Asia. The Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers signing on August 1914, a secret Turco-German Alliance. Enver Pasha chose to ally with the Central Powers, justifying the alliance by citing Germany's early victories in the War. Being on the winning side would provide the opportunity to forge a swift victory over neighboring enemies and avoid the imminent disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. On June-July 1914, Ottoman Empire was absorbed by the conflict with Greece on the base of affiliation of Aegean Islands.

Turkey formally entered in World War I, on 28 October 1914 bombing the Russian Black Sea ports. The Allied Powers declared war on the Ottoman Empire on November, 4th.[49] The closing of the Straits for allied navies cut off successfully naval communication routes between Russia and its western allies. In response, British government accepted controversial plan of the opening of the Straits. It took the form of two unsuccessful allied operations in Dardanelles on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

The Impact of the Aftermath to the Balkan Region

There were two main objectives of the Allies. Firstly, the political objective. Dividing the large and small Balkan states they could create a buffer zone between Soviet Russia and the Western European states. The emergence of an independent Poland, the division of Ukraine into three parts, the partition of Macedonia by the neighboring countries, were the ongoing political efforts to create a strong Serbia and Greece. However, as a result of this policy it would be easier for the strengthened Russia and Germany to swallow these small Balkan states. The second important objective was the economic one. The economy of these countries was mostly based on agriculture and the target of Allies was to drive them into semi-colonial countries. Inevitably, the Balkan countries were full of contradictions; economically dependent on foreign economies; politically, fragmented and open to foreign interference. All these mean that Balkan peninsula was a powder keg ready to explode any time.[50]

The first influental formulation of the post First World War order was Woodrow Wilson's "Peace without Victory" of January 1917. He did not mention self determination by name, but expressed his belief that "no peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all thier just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to seo-

49 "The Ottoman Empire Enters WWI on the side of the Central Powers", http://www.thenagain.info/webchron/easteurope/YugoKingdom.CP.html, (Access Date, 10. 04. 2014).

50 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 643.

veregnty as if they were property."[51] This talked about "autonomous development" for the peoples of Austria-Humgary as well as the non Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire and about the border adjustments in Italy and Balkans consonant with the lines of nationality. The self-determination principle was applied there where states became weakened such as the Ottoman Empire and the Austria-Hungary Empire. Even the fundamental principle of the peace treaties, the so called "self-determination" was already declared, in this region the nation-states boundaries were not drawn compatible to this principle. This situation broght problems to the Balkans future.[52] By 1918 there are created three regional nation-states with irredentist aspirations: Italy (1915), Romania (1916), and Greece (1918). After the First World War a new European order based on the national self-determination of peoples and operating under the aegis of the League of Nations was meant to guarantee the peace.[53] Told in other words, this aftermath created a durable a lasting hierarchy of peoples that has guaranteed 75 years of regional instability: Firstly there were cretaed the victorious Greeks, Italians, Romanians and Serbs, together with the Poles and Czechs whom were identified as key allies on Germany's immediate eastern flank; each acquired territory in which its own people were in a decided minority, so long as it could be justified by some historic claim or by a tangible strategic or economic need. With Versailles in 1919 the victorious Allied states rejected the precedent of the Congress of Berlin and instead of this sponsored territorially powerful states in the Balkans such as Romania, Yugoslavia, and Greece. The peace arrangements of 1919-1920 brought uncertainties to all the Balkan societies. On one hand, many of them, followed the French nation-state model and realized their dreams providing states by uniting their nation partners and communities within common borders. This was realized from Romania, Greece, Yugoslavia and partly from Albania, to some extent taken place. The peoples believed that these results led to the fight that thier revolutionary movements like Alba Julia Union or Belgrade Union did. In reality, these "revolutions" triumphed with the consent of the four Great Powers and the nations that joined the war. Versailles also determined the peninsula's map counting the requests of the Balkan societies and the interests of the winner states. Rather than negotiations this results were realized by consensus.[54] Therefore some of the Balkan peoples such as the Albanians, Bosnian Muslims, Croats, Slovaks, Slovenes, and Ukrainians existed in a kind of ambiguity. These peopples were not presented at the peace conference, either as winners or losers. Their interests were represented by the victorious allies, with decidedly mixed

51 Speech of the President Wilson to the Senate, January 22, 1917, James Brown Scott (ed.), *Official Statements of War Aims and Peace Proposals: December 1916 to November 1918,* Washington DC: Carneige Endowment for International Peace, 1921, p.52.

52 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 641.

53 Tom Gallagher, "Folly and Failure in the Balkans", *History Today*, Volume 49, Issue 9, 1999, p. 30.

54 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 643.

or catastrophic results. Finally there were the nationalities that had lost the war. Having been denied the right of self-determination, the Germans, Magyars, Bulgars and Turks all yearned to revise the peace settlements. The Turks achieved many of their objectives four years later after a successful war with Greece and a new round of forced population exchanges. The others would have to wait two decades for their opportunity to revise the settlements.[55]

As Assoc. Prof. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol analyzed, the process of building the nation-state of Yugoslavia has been literally painful. Yugoslavia's political map is drawn by the Treaty of Versailles from the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Its ethno-religious mosaic image is quite effective. With the instigation of Allied Powers, the Orthodox Serbs planned to unify the Southern Slavs and to build the "Greater Serbia". In June 1918, at the Corfu island, the South Slavic Union representatives met for the establishment of the "Pact of Corfu". In October, in Zagreb was established the "Yugo-Slav National Council". However, the proclamation of the "Serbian, Croatian, Slovene Kingdom" on December 1, 1918 in Belgrade and that form the basis of Yugoslavia state didn't reflect the truth. Except these three peoples, in Yugoslavia lived the Germans, the Hungarians of Vojvodina, the Albanians of Kosovo and Macedonia, Romanians of Banat, the Turks of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, Czechs and Slovaks, the Italians, White Russians and 70 thousand people of different origins. In total they represented 17% of the population. Many of these minorities as the Hungarians, the Germans, the Albanians, the Romanians and the Italians lived in contact with their own states. This was the ground of all the kinds of the nationalist trend. As for the three founder nations even if they wanted a "unity " they didn't dream a "Greater Serbia".[56]

The collapse of Yugoslavia, caused severe depressions and destabilized the region. This federal country established after the First World War, rested under the communist regime and embraced different nationalities, cultures and religions. The crisis also revealed the challenges of the coexistence of ethnic groups. There erupted a civil war that caused in mass mortality. The world remained silent to the drama of the Muslim women exposure that were sistematically violated, the collapse of the old city of Dubrovnik and Mostar Bridge and several analogous situations. The UN was helpless in despatching the humanitarian aid. The religion and the nationality axis divided the country. The political problems, already has exacerbated the situation causing the explosion. The Yugoslav Federation was replaced by Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo.[57]

55 Charles Ingrao, "Unlearnt Lesson. Central-European Idea and Serb National Program", *Helsinki Files, 2001*, pp.10.

56 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol vd, "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 646-647.

57 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Balkanlar", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay ve Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 679.

The Balkan's region multi-ethnic demography, the decision to replace a multinational entity with nation-states worsened the interethnic tensions. As a consequence of the First World War it was very close the Balkanization of the Central Europe. The Western peacemakers concluded that it was impossible to create a system of contiguous geography and ethnically homogeneous political entities. Orient is usually equated with passivity and supersitition, the Balkans are further characterised by "cruelty, boorishness, instability and unpredictability".[58] This stereotype which led to the derogatory term "Balkanisation" in the early 20th century was revived and reinforced in the last decade as a result of the war in Yugoslavia. Once again, this was used as a pretext for translating the essentialised cultural differences into political messages. In this situation the settlements with Austria (St Germain), Hungary (Trianon), Bulgaria (Neuilly), and Turkey (Sévres) were no less instrumental in fomenting the outbreak of World War II, the Holocaust and five decades of Soviet hegemony in eastern Europe. Moreover, it is the legacy of these 'other' Paris treaties that informed the Balkan region's continuing instability**.**

Conclusions

Balkan area in World War I served as a junction between the Ottoman, Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires. In this region are housed a rank of governments and nationalist movements motivated by ethnicity or self interest. It was also a breeding ground for illegal separatist and terrorist groups, which challenged the authority of existing governments and the influence of imperial powers like the Ottomans and Austria-Hungary.

It has been noted that First World War spew out after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914. The causes of this war are stil disputable among historians' circles and most of them include the political changings and economic situations in major European nations, the Industrial Revolution, and social turmoil. Whatever, the cause, the First World War (The Great War) was the first man-made catastrophe of the 20th Century.

At the end of 19th and begenning of 20th century nationalism became a significant ideological force in political life in the Balkan states. By the 1900s three old dynastic monarchies, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Russian Empire of the Romanovs were threatened with disintegration by the rising of nationalistic agitation. They were disintegrated as a consequence of their defeats in the First World War. The aftermath of all these wars (Balkan Wars and First World War) demonstrated how nationalist movements affect the state building process in the Balkans region. It can be added that nationalism was also a product of state development.

World War I catalyzed the Russian Revolution, the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire in Southeastern Europe. In each case, these events would destabilize their respective regions and lead to future conflicts.

58 Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 119.

The Hapsburg Empire and Ottoman Empire were broken up into new democratic nation states. By World War I erupted some of Balkan states like Serbia, Greece, Montenegro, Albania, Romania, and Bulgaria. At the end of World War I, the defeated Ottoman and Habsburg Empires were carved up, preparing the political atmosphere for a unified Yugoslavia in the Balkan region. These new Eastern Europe and Balkans states were a patchwork of unstable states, providing Hitler ample opportunity for aggression that would start the Second World War.

References

AKTAŞ, Gülbahar Yelken; *Turkish Foreign Policy: New Concepts and Reflections* (Unpublished MA Thesis), Middle East Technical University, Ankara, December 2010.

INGRAO Charles, "Unlearnt Lesson. Central-European Idea and Serb National Program", *Helsinki Files, 2001*.

CURTIS, Glenn E.; *Bulgaria a Country Study*, Second Edition, June 1992, Sofia, 1992.

ERİM, Nihat; "Trablusgarp ve Balkan Harbi Andlaşmaları (1912-1913)", *Devletlerarası Hukuku ve Siyasi Tarih Metinleri: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Andlaşmaları*, Cilt I, Ankara, 1953.

EROL, Mehmet Seyfettin ve Aydın, Abdurrahim F., "İki Savaş Arası Dönemde Balkanlar (1919-1939)", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay and Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006.

EROL, Mehmet Seyfettin, "Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Balkanlar", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay and Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 1, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006.

EROL, Mehmet Seyfettin, "Makedonya Sorunu'nun Temel Dinamikleri", *Balkanlar El Kitabı*, der. Osman Karatay and Bilgehan A. Gökdağ, Cilt. 2, Karam ve Vadi Yayınları, Ankara, 2006.

GALLAGHER, Tom; "Folly and Failure in the Balkans", *History Today*, Volume 49, Issue 9, 1999.

GALLAGHER, Tom; *Outcast Europe: The Balkans, 1789-1989: From the Ottomans to Milosevic,* Routledge, 2013.

HALL, Richard C.; "Bulgaria in the First World War", *The Historian*, Volume 73, Issue 2, 8 June 2011.

HERWIG, Holger H.; *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1914-1918*, London-New York, 1997.

KOLEV, Valery; KOULURI, Christina; *The Balkan Wars*, Second Edition, Thessaloniki, 2009.

MIKIETYNSKI, Piotr; "World War I in the Balkans, 1914-1918 – Third Balkan War?", *Journal of Social Sciences Special Issue on Balkan*, SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences, 2009.

PACUKAJ, Sokol; "The Independence of Albania", *Mediterranean Journal of Social Siences*, Vol. 4, No. 11.

SARINAY, Yusuf; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kırım Savaşı (1853-1856)*, Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, Yayın No: 84.

SCOTT, James Brown; *Official Statements of War Aims and Peace Proposals: December 1916 to November 1918,* Washington DC: Carneige Endowment for International Peace, 1921.

ŞIVGIN, Hale; "İttihat ve Terakki Politikalarının Balkan İttifaklarını Hızlandırmadaki Rolü", *Gazi Akademik Bakış*, Volume 6, Issue 11, 2012, pp. 1-15.

TODOROVA, Maria; *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 1997.

TORREY, Glenn E.;, "The Romanian Battlefront in World War I", *Book Reviews: New Perspectives on World War I,* 42 (4)/ 43 (1), Press of Kansas, Winter-Spring 2012.

WILLIAMS, John F. ; *Corporal Hitler and the Great War 1914-1918. The List Regiment*, Frank Cass, London and New York, 1993.

"Balkan Wars", http://worldwarcauses.wikidot.com/warone:revolutions

"Bessarabia annexed by Romania", http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/bessarabia-annexed-by-romania

"Guide to territory and governance in the Balkans during and after the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm

"Guide to Territory and Governance in the Balkans During and After the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm

"Guide to territory and governance in the Balkans during and after the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm

"Guide to territory and governance in the Balkans during and after the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm

"Guide to territory and governance in the Balkans during and after the Balkan Wars and World War *I",* http://dmorgan.web.wesleyan.edu/balkans/wwone.htm

"The Balkan Causes of World War I", http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/balkan_causes.htm

"The Balkans as a Cause of World War I", http://alphahistory.com/worldwar1/balkans/

"The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes is Founded", http://www.thenagain.info/webchron/easteurope/YugoKingdom.CP.html

Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, *Bismarck'ın Osmanlı Imparatorluğunu Taksim Fikri*, http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/26/1036/12502.pdf

GÜNEŞ, İhsan; *II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi Hükümet Programları (1908-1918)*, http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/19/1150/13502.pdf

Nationalism, http://mrtrainor.sharepoint.com/Documents/W5E24CAD%20Unification%20of%20Italy%20and%20Germany.pdf

STEFOV, Risto; "What's Europe's Problem with Macedonia?", http://www.historyofmacedonia.org/PartitionedMacedonia/MacedonianQuestion.html