

Austro-Hungarian Balkan politics on the eve of First World War

Ass. Prof. Dr. Fati Iseni

fati.iseni@unt.edu.mk

Full Profesor Dr. Fehari Ramadani

fehari@gmail.com

MA. Sc. Agim Jakupi

agim.jakupi@unt.edu.mk

Abstract

Austria (Austro-Hungary), after losing the war for dominance towards Prussia with the German world, redrew its foreign policy towards the Balkans that was still part of the Ottoman Empire. Favored by the Cultural Protectorate, the Vienna government continued to pursue a policy aimed at gaining sympathy of Albanians. Initially it supported the development of education and culture and later the political demands of Albanians. In the Balkans, Vienna faced the rivalry of the Russian Empire, which also saw the Peninsula as its area of influence. The rivalry between the two great powers of the time increased by the beginning of the 20th century. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austro-Hungary (1908), the creation of the Balkan Alliance (1912) with the help of Russia, the development of the First Balkan War and the London Conference of Ambassadors in London, though Austro-Hungary and Russia opposed each other for a long time, finally the rivalry between them would end by waging a war.

Key words: Austro-Hungary, Balkans, rivalry, Albanians, Russia.

During the 60's, of the 19th century, the Foreign Policy of the Habsburg Empire was oriented towards Central Europe. Habsburg Empires a leader of the German Confederation, had the intention to strengthen her role within its community, but the growth of Prussia's military power, which had the same territorial claims on German lands, rose her concerns therefore this brought the Austrian government at a quandary.

The Austro-Prussian rivalry of the domination in Germany began in the late 40s of the 19th century and culminated in 1866 when they fought a war against each other, though it ended with the victory of Prussia.

Since then, the Vienna government has completely refocused its foreign policy towards the East. In this context, the Balkans and the Albanian issue will become part of its political and strategic future program. Mr. Enulenburg with the expansion of A-H to the Balkan Peninsula, according to the German ambassador in Vienna had to compensate to Austria the lost territories in Italy and also the lost leading role in Germany¹, therefore it had to restore the lost prestige of the Habsburg dynasty.

The Austro-Hungarian foreign policy in the Balkans faced the rivalry of the Russian Empire. Both of these powers had opposing interests on the Peninsula. While St Petersburg had Slavic people its natural allies on the Balkan Peninsula, Vienna had to build alliances with Albanians even though she had no backing of any European power for this policy.

During the 19th century, the two Great powers, Austro-Hungary and Russia were moving carefully with their operations on the Peninsula and very often they agreed for the actions in this territory. With the Reichstad agreement (July 8th, 1876) and Budapest agreement (January 15th, 1877), these two powers agreed that the Balkan territory would be divided between them in two zones of influence.²

¹ Compare with: Prela, Zef. 1965. Problemi kombëtar shqiptar dhe Kultusprotektorati austro-hungarez- (Fundi i shek. XIX-Fillimi i shek. XX). Në *Studime Historike*, Nr. 3. Tiranë, p. 143; Prela, Zef. 1962. Problemi shqiptar dhe politika austro-hungareze (1897-1912). Në *Mbi Lëvizjen Kombëtare Shqiptare*, (Përmbledhje studimesh kushtuar 50 vjetorit të shpalljes së Pavarësisë). Tiranë, p. 102-103; Krasniqi, Rexhep. 2007. *Kongresi i Berlinit e Verilindja e Shqipërisë*. Tiranë: Qendra Ndërkombëtare e Kulturës "Arbnori", p. 41; Тејлор, Алан Џ. П. 2001. *Хабзбуршка Монархија 1809-1918*. Београд: Clio, с. 143-144; Rich, Norman. 2006. *Diplomacia e Fuqive të Mëdha 1814-1914*. Tiranë: Toena, p. 205; Xoxi, Koli. 1972. Politika e shtetit austro-hungarez ndaj zhvillimit të arësimit në Shqipëri në fund të shek. XIX e në fillim të shek. XX. Në *Revista Pedagogjike*, Nr. 2. Tiranë, p. 304.

² Ismaili, Ismail. 2010. *Dorëshkrimet frënge të viteve 1853-1897 për çështjen shqiptare*. Prishtinë: Trend, p. 51; Rexha, Riza. 1998. *Ulqini në vitet e Lidhjes Shqiptare të Prizrenit*. Ulqin: Art Club, p. 27.

Also, in 1897, after the Crete war began Austro-Hungarian Emperor Franz Joseph and Russian counterpart Nicolas II Aleksandrovich discussed the recent situation of the Balkans. At the meeting that took place in the Russian capital, the two emperors agreed to discuss the future of the Peninsula in the event of the breaking of the status quo in that part of Southeast Europe. Then a diplomatic note was exchanged between Foreign Minister of the Austro-Hungary Mr. Gołuchowski and Russian Foreign Minister Mr. Muravyov.

In the Note that Vienna sent to St. Peterburg, was demanded, among other things: 1. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 2. The creation of an independent Albanian state "with the exception of any foreign rule ... the territory of the new state to be stretched from Ioannina to Shkodra, with enough through space on the eastern side." In response to the note, the Russian government replied to Vienna on May 17th, telling that the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania's independence were premature.³ Even though these were only proposals by the Austro-Hungarian government and were not transposed into concrete actions, it is important to bear in mind that Austria-Hungary, by the end of the 19th century, will begin to become more interested in the Albanian issue.

With the beginning of the 20th century, Austro-Hungarian interest towards the Balkans will increase. Financial aid for the development of education and culture in the Albanian territories marked an increase by the beginning of the 20th century, that had started to be delivered by the mid of 19th century. Therefore, Vienna works on the ground to strengthen its position on the Peninsula, it has continued to maintain contact with Russian government, where Balkan issues were at the center of the talks. In this context, in September 1908 a meeting was held between the two foreign ministers, the Austro-Hungarian Mr. Aehrenthal, and the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Izvolsky. According to what the Viennese diplomacy chief later stated, the two ministers agreed for the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austro – Hungary, in return the latter to engage in international recognition of the war ships to pass freely on Istanbul's strait.⁴

The annexation caused great disappointment in Russia. Her minister denied that they had agreed with Aehrenthal for such a move. This political move of Vienna not only led to the breach of relations with St. Petersburg, but at the same time turned Serbia into its hostility. The Serbs considered Bosnia and Herzegovina as a territory that in the future would belong to them, even though it was conquered by Austria-Hungary but still known and considered as part of the Ottoman Empire, they hoped that in the near future will be included within its state borders. The annexation that took place in October 1908 was a blow to these claims, which led to an even greater rapprochement between Serbia and Russia.

Vienna's efforts to remove the attention of European opinion and diplomacy from the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, prompting Bulgaria to declare full independence from the Ottomans, did not have the expected effect.⁵ Moreover, the annexation also caused dissatisfaction with the Italian government. In response to Vienna's action, the Rome government signed a bilateral agreement with the Russian Czarist government (Racconiggi, Agreement, October 1909)⁶. This agreement testified the mistrust and dissatisfaction of the Italian government with its two allies from the Triple Alliance, Austro-Hungary and Germany.

³See at: Haus Hof und Staats Archives, Politisches Archives, Wien, Arkivi i Institutit të Historisë në Tiranë, F. Document brought from the Archives of Vienna and translated into Albanian (Next: *AIH*), A-IV-152/1, Timo Dilo, Shqipëria në vitet e fundit të shek. XIX, Kap. XVI-1229-C. (text in manuscript), p. 22; Skendi, Stavro. 2000. *Zgjimi Kombëtar Shqiptar 1878-1912*. Tiranë: PHOENIX & Shtëpia e Librit dhe e Komunikimit, p. 265-266; *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar, vëllimi i dytë, Rilindja Kombëtare, Vitet 30 të shek. XIX-1912*. 2002. Tiranë: Toena, p.266; Swire, Joseph. 2005. *Shqipëria- ngritja e një mbretërie*. Tiranë: Dituria, p. 73-74; 266; Puto, Arben. 1984. *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare të periudhës së imperializmit, vëllimi I, (1867-1912)*. Tiranë: 8 Nëntori, p. 45-46; *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar, vëllimi II*. 1984. Tiranë, p. 332; Mançev, Kërsto. 2008. *Lidhja Shqiptare dhe çështja shqiptare në politikën e shteteve ballkanike*. Find at: "Lidhja Shqiptare e Prizrenit dhe vendi i saj në histori", Prishtinë, p. 261; Arsh, G. Ll. & Senkeviç, I. G. & Smirnova, N. D. 1967. *Histori e shkurtë e Shqipnisë*. Prishtinë, p. 131; Prifti, Kristaq. 1984. *Lidhja Shqiptare e Pejës- Lëvizja Kombëtare 1896-1900*. Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë, p. 148; Bozborra, Nuray. 2002. *Shqipëria dhe nacionalizmi shqiptar në Perandorinë Osmane*. Tiranë: Dituria, p. 188-189, 195-196; Levanti Kocaqi, Elena. No date. *Planet për zhdukjen e shqiptarëve-Si u krijua Serbia dhe Greqia në trojet shqiptare*. Tiranë: Emal, p. 196; Дюлгерова, Нина. 1994. *Българският национален въпрос в политиката на Русия и Австро-Унгария 1894-1903*. София: Българската Академия на Науките, p. 66.

⁴See also: Puto, Arben, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare... I*, p. 66; *Књига о Балкану II*. 1937. Београд: Издавање Балканског Института, с. 168-169; Ivetic, Egidio. 2008. *Luftërat ballkanike*. Tiranë: Dituria, p.35.

⁵See: Skendi, Skendi, *cited book.*, p. 321.

⁶Puto, Arben, *Çështja shqiptare në aktet ndërkombëtare... I*, p. 67.

In fact, the rivalry between the two allies of Triple block existed since the late 30s of the 19th century. Though these two countries were allies within the Triple block, they developed fierce rivalry within their self for dominance in the Western Balkans. In 1899, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austro-Hungary, Mr. Goluchowski expressed his concerns regarding the policy that the Roma government pursued in Albania. Therefore, he noted that such a policy should be put to an end. According to him, "her propaganda (in Italy- our remark)... or it is intended to prepare the future occupation, which Austria would have to stop even by war"⁷. Austro-Hungary was determined to stop anyone who intends to take the place of the Ottomans in Albania.⁸

During talks with the German Chancellor, Mr. Bülow, in May 1900, Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Mr. Goluchowski had pointed out that his government was determined not to allow any other Great Power to be deployed in Albania and such a thing Italy had known well.⁹

The conflict between these two Powers forced them to agree for the future policies over Albania. The agreement was reached through the exchange of Notes between Vienna and Rome, which took place from 20th December 1900 until 9th February 1901. After the exchange of notes, between the Kont Mr. Nigra, the Italian ambassador to Vienna and Visconti-Venosta the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the one side and Mr. Pasetti the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to Rome and Mr. Goluchowski the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, on the other side, reached an agreement on Albanian territories. They agreed on two main points of the deal: the first envisioned the preservation of the status quo, as long as circumstances allowed, and the second envisaged that if the status quo collapsed, then both Powers would support Albania's independence.¹⁰ To obstruct the domination of one or the other, the two powers agreed to support the creation of an independent Albanian state, therefore each claimed to turn it to its side.

The rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Italy, for dominance in Albania, had increased from year-to-year. In July 1902, the young Italian king, Victor Emmanuel III, visited St Petersburg. At the meeting with the Russian Tsar, they had been discussing the policy of the Vienna government over Albania. In the accord between the two monarchs, it was stressed out that "Vienna should be forced to remain satisfied with the Balkan status quo".¹¹ The same year an agreement was reached between Italy and Austro-Hungary to maintain the status quo in the "Adriatic Sea and Albania".¹² This rivalry continued until the beginning of World War I, when Italy changed its way, passing from the Triple Alliance to Entente.

The post-annexation period of Bosnia and Herzegovina was followed by the growing commitment of Austria-Hungary and Russia to strengthen their positions in the Balkan Peninsula. While Austro-Hungary supported the Albanians and enabled the Culture Protectorate*, Russia committed itself to an approach between the Slavic States and Greece, with a final point of establishing a Balkan Alliance, which according to Russian diplomats had to be anti-Austro-Hungarian. Therefore by 1912 Vienna had supported Albanians by financing only the education and cultural development of the people, from now on they will support their political demands also.

The successes of the Albanian General uprising of 1912, were seen with sympathy in Vienna. On August 13, one day after the insurgents had liberated Skopje, Foreign Minister of Austro-Hungary, Mr. Berchtold considered as reasonable the 14 demands of the Albanians, summarized in the Memorandum of Hasan Prishtina, therefore he made efforts that the same Document to be supported by other Great Powers.

Mr. Berchtold proposed to their governments to undertake a collective move in Istanbul to demand the implementation of decentralization policy, which would fit the ethnic realities in the Ottoman Empire. He also demanded that the Balkan governments be advised by the Great Powers to hold a peaceful stand. This diplomatic activity in Vienna was intended to force Istanbul to uphold Albanian demands and prevent the intervention of Balkan States. But the Vienna proposal did not find support to its European partners.

⁷Prela, Zef, *Problemi shqiptar dhe politika austro-hungareze...*, p. 121.

⁸Vickers, Miranda. 2004. *Midis serbëve dhe shqiptarëve- një histori e Kosovës*. Tiranë: Toena, p. 111.

⁹Prela, Zef, *Problemi shqiptar dhe politika austro-hungareze...*, p. 114; Joseph Swire, *cited book.*, p. 131.

¹⁰Compare.: AIH, A-IV-152/1, Timo Dilo, *vep. e përm.*, p. 24; Viezzoli, Zef. 1937. Shqipnija në gjire të diplomacisë- që prej Traktatit të Berlinit deri në Luftë Botnore. Can be found at *Leka*, Nr. VIII-XII. Shkodër, p. 487-488; *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar...*, 2002, p. 299; Puto, Arben, *Çështja shqiptare...*, I, p. 51; Skendi, Stavro. 1958. *Mendimi politik dhe veprimtaria kryengritëse shqiptare 1881-1912-* (Përkthyer prej Sejfi Protopapës). New York, p. 14; Kristaq Prifti, *Lidhja Shqiptare e Pejës...*, p. 149; Rappaport, Alfred. 1928. *Rrjedhja e punëve në Shqipëri*, (përkthyer prej Karl Gurakuqit). Tiranë: Mbrothësija, p. 13.

¹¹Prela, Zef, *Problemi shqiptar dhe politika austro-hungareze...*, p. 121.

¹²Томић, Јов. Н. 1913. *Аустро-Бугарска и арбанаскопитање*. Београд, p. 36.

Mr. Berchtold's proposal was also opposed by the Balkan monarchies, who declared that the implementation of the decentralization policy would lead to the creation of autonomous Albania which would "disturb" in this case the fate of their compatriots in the Empire.¹³

While Vienna supported the Albanian National Movement meanwhile Russia helped to reduce the disputes between the Balkan States that lead the formation of an alliance between them. The Balkan Alliance was created in contradiction of the interest of Austro-Hungary and Triple Alliance.¹⁴ Though the Dual Empire made great efforts to dissiminate by inciting hostilities between Serbia and Bulgaria but couldn't achieve it.¹⁵

When Russian Foreign Minister Mr. Sazonov understood the agreement reached between Serbia and Bulgaria on March 13, 1912, which laid the foundations of the Balkan Alliance, he claimed, "This is a miracle 500,000 bayonets to protect the Balkans. This must permanently block the path for German penetration and the Austrian invasion."¹⁶

At the Conference of Ambassadors in London, Austro-Hungary that was supported by Italy, persistently sought the creation of an Albanian State. Also the Austro-Hungarian diplomacy protected some territories which were recognized to the new Albanian State not to be given to the neighbours as they were intending to conquer them.

In the following period until the beginning of First World War, Austro-Hungary was the main protector of Albania's sovereignty and integrity. In the fall of 1913, Vienna received strong assurances from Berlin that the German government would support the Austro-Hungarian government in its Balkan policy. This encouraged the Viennese government on 17 October 1913 to send an ultimatum to the government of Belgrade, demanding that the Serbian government respect the borders of the new Albanian state and within 8 days to withdraw its troops from Albania. On the contrary, Austro-Hungary would be forced to use "... the appropriate measures to ensure that its requirements are met". Mr. Sazonov himself advised the Belgrade government to retreat and for the moment to enjoy the territories gained during the First Balkan War and to wait for the right moment to avenge Austro-Hungary.¹⁷

Austro-Hungary was interested in Albania because its interest was to provide a balance in the Balkans, preventing the increase of Serbian power on the Peninsula.¹⁸ For Austro-Hungary "... Albania and Albanians, as non-Slav people in the Balkans, were a natural sphere of interest".¹⁹

The Viennese government was aware that it was impossible to establish its protectorate over Albania and therefore decided to create an Autonomous Albania under international control, which would become an obstacle to Serbia's aim reaching the Adriatic Sea. Serbian intentions for expansion towards the Adriatic were also supported by its allies, were unsuccessful. To avoid the conflict with Austro-Hungary, Russia demanded from Serbia to abandon its ambition reaching the Adriatic Sea, but to suffice only to secure an economic outbreak in the sea, free transportation to northern Albania without customs and the provision of a railroad from Serbia to the sea. Therefore the Serbian government was forced to retreat.²⁰

¹³Compare: *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar II...*, 2002, p. 493; Abdyl, Ramiz. 2004. *Lëvizja Kombëtare Shqiptare 1911-1912*, Libri 2. Prishtinë: Instituti i Historisë (KGT), p. 379-380; Skendi, Stavro, *Mendimi politik dhe veprimtaria ...*, p. 31-32; Murzaku, Thurzaku. 1987. *Politika e Serbisë kundrejt Shqipërisë gjatë Luftës Ballkanike 1912-1913*. Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë- Instituti i Historisë, p. 89; Prela, Zef. *Problemi shqiptar dhe politika...*, p. 182; Puto, Arben. 1978. *Pavarësia shqiptare dhe diplomacia e Fuqivetë Mëdha 1912-1914*. Tiranë: 8 Nëntori, p. 99-100; Mehmeti, Drita. 1987. *Politika e Fuqive të Mëdha imperialiste ndaj kryengritjeve çlirimtare shqiptare të viteve 1908-1912*. At: *Studime Historike*, Nr. 3, Tiranë, p. 172-173; Mousset, Abert. 2004. *Shqipëria përballë Europës (1912-1929)*. Tiranë: Dituria, p. 11; AIH, Vj. 22-14-1435. Coded Telegram nr. 160 of kont Szögyény for Vienna, Berlin, 16 August 1912; AIH, Vj. 22-22-2260. Dokument nr. 3744. Vjenë 29 gusht 1912; AIH, Vj. 22-14-1449. Njoftim për ambasadorin austro-hungarezë në Petërburg, Berlin, Londër, Romë dhe Paris. Vjenë 29 gusht 1912; Métais, Serge. 2006. *Histori e shqiptarëve- nga ilirët deri te Pavarësia e Kosovës*. Tiranë: Shtëpia Botuese 55, p. 270; *Përmbledhje dokumentesh mbi kryengritjet shqiptare (1910-1912)*, përgatitur nga Nika, Nevila. 2003. Prishtinë: Instituti i Historisë, p. 322; Rappaport, Alfred, *vep. e përm.*, p. 20.

¹⁴Murzaku, Thoma, *Politika e Serbisë...*, p. 80.

¹⁵Topalović, Živko. 1931. *Za Balkanski sporazum*. Zagreb: Jugoslovenske Štampe, p. 24.

¹⁶Rich, Norman. 2006. *Diplomacia e Fuqive të Mëdha 1814-1914*. Tiranë: Toena, p. 426.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 432.

¹⁸Alfred Rappaport, cited book, p. 16.

¹⁹Buhberger, Karl. 1972. *Vjetët e mija në Shqipëri*. Në *Studime Historike*, Nr. 4. Tiranë, p. 143; Сенкевич, Ирена Г. 1959. *Освободительное движение Албанского народа в 1905-1912 гг.* Москва: Издательство Академии Наук СССР, p. 47.

²⁰Димитров, Страшимир & Манчев, Кръстьо. 1975. *Историја на Балканските народи 1879-1918*. Софија, p. 375-376.

On the eve of First World War Austro-Hungary and Germany were losing ground in the diplomatic field as well. Their two formal allies, like Italy and Romania, could hardly effectively support the two Empires of Central Europe in the event of a crisis. Moreover, the two governments, Rome and Bucharest, had already been lured by the enemies of Berlin and Vienna, due to the possibility of the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire.

This meant that if Austro-Hungary facing a Russian-backed Serbian conflict, had to count on a possible attack to Serbia by Italy and Romania (as it really happened during First World War). So she faced the possibility of a war on four fronts.²¹ Thus Italians and Romanians claimed to acquire Austro-Hungarian territories which mostly were inhabited by their respective populations.

Serbia, which was entirely under Russian influence, was the main opponent of the Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans. Expanded both territorially and in terms of the population, after the invasions carried out in 1912-1913, though Russia saw Vienna as the main obstacle to further territorial expansion in this area. Romania, the Eastern ally of Austro-Hungary, approached Russia and could at any moment declare itself as opponent to the Triple Alliance. Romanian nationalists also had claimed on the territories of Austro-Hungarian Transylvania dominated by the Romanian population.²²

The Habsburg Empire represented a conglomerate of territories that were characterized by size, tradition, culture, economy, and the language. In 1910, 55% of Transylvania's population were Romanians while 34% were Hungarians. South Dobruja was also pretended to be taken by the Romanian government, which in 1913 led to deteriorating of relations with Austro-Hungary, as the latter protected the Bulgarian interests. However, the alliance between Vienna and Bucharest did survive. Romania had a close co-operation with Serbia, which in 1913, they jointly fought against Bulgaria. The Serbian hostility against Austria-Hungary was increasing.

In 1914, by supporting the irredentism of the Southern Slavs within the Habsburg Empire and particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Belgrade government helped to get more and more strained of its relations with the Viennese government. In 1910, 62.5% Croats lived in Croatia while 24.6% were Serbs. The Serbs also lived in Banat and Bačka, as parts of Vojvodina. The dilemma of Serbian and Croat leaders were whether they had to fight for the creation of their own national states or a common Yugoslav state.²³

The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austro-Hungary in 1908 was a blow to Serbian territorial claims. However, the government of Prime Minister Nikola Pašić, supported any individual or group that could help Serbian claims. Therefore, he encouraged every effort in this regard. Even the Serbian government maintained secret relations not only with the Serbs, but also with Yugoslav sympathizers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vojvodina and Croatia.²⁴

On June 28th 1914, the 19 years old Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist fanatic, shot and left dead Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne. This event also sparked the ignition of the First World War.

The ultimatum that Vienna sent to Serbia on the 28th of July 1914, highlighted some demands such as: ending anti-Habsburg publications of any written material in Serbia; to dismiss teachers and other anti-Habsburg officials; Austro-Hungarian officials to participate in investigations that will be conducted in Serbia in connection with the assassination and to arrest those who were involved. The Serbian government accepted all, except the demand for Austro-Hungarian participation in investigations to be conducted in Serbia. This rejection was sufficient for the Habsburg government to declare war on the Serbian government.²⁵ At first it seemed that the war between the two countries (Austro-Hungary and Serbia) would draw within it the two opposing blocs, the Entente alongside Serbia and Triple Alliance on the side of Austro-Hungary. Also predictions were that it would remain only European war, without including other continents. But soon this war got a world character, spreading to other continents, or at least soldiers from all continents fought face to face.*

²¹Rich, Norman, *cited book*, f. 436.

²²*Ibid*, p. 436-437.

²³Jelavich, Charles dhe Barbara. 2004. *Themelimi i shteteve kombëtare të Ballkanit, 1804-1920*. Tiranë: Dituria, f. 217, 226-228.

²⁴*Ibid*, p.. 238.

²⁵*Ibid*, p. 243.

*The First World War included all the Great Powers and certainly all European states, with the exception of Spain, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the three Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden and Denmark). Moreover, troops from beyond the world were sent to fight outside their own countries. Canadians fought in France, Australians and New Zealanders on the Galipol Peninsula and most importantly the United States violated George Washington's order to stay away from the "European ambiguities" and send their boys to fight in Europe. Indians were sent to Europe and the Middle East, many

Conclusion

Austria (Austro-Hungary) after losing the war with Prussia for dominance in the German world refocused its foreign policy towards the Balkans, the only area where it could extend its influence. With the exception of its South-Eastern border, the Habsburg Empire confined itself to powerful states (Russia, Germany, Italy), which made it impossible to spread the influence in those areas. Therefore, the Vienna government from the middle of the 19th century developed an increasingly powerful policy towards the territories that were part of the already weak Ottoman Empire.

However, the Balkan politics of the Vienna government, in spite of the steady growth of domestic nationalist movements, faced Russian and Italian rivalries. With the beginning of the 19th century the rivalry between these three Great Powers of dominance in the Balkan Peninsula were increased. To attract the Balkan people to their side, these states have increased their investments in the territories inhabited by the respective population. Whereas Russia had an alliance with Serbs, Montenegrins, etc., and support their claims. Austro-Hungary and Italy are trying to approach the Albanians.

Therefore, with the support of Austro-Hungary provided to Albanians, especially during the London Conference of Ambassadors (1912-1913), also defended its interests on the Peninsula. It was vital for Vienna to prevent the expansion of any Great Power on the Eastern Adriatic coast, which was the only way to be connected to the open sea. Austro-Hungary considered Serbia related to Russia's interests in the Balkans so they got openly against Serbian claims in Bosnia and the Albanian territories. Austro-Hungary by fighting Serbia set itself against the Russian Empire.

Major Serbian claims to dominate the Balkans, which consistently had the support of St. Petersburg, led to the ignition of the fire that marked the beginning of the First World War.

Africans fought on the side of the French Army and so on. Although war actions outside Europe were of no relevance, with the exception of the Middle East, the naval war became global.