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Serbia's Diplomatic Preparations for the Creation of the First Balkan Alliance, 1861–1864

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Our aim in this article is to investigate the case of diplomatic preparations for the creation of the First Balkan Alliance (1866–1868) against the Ottoman Empire by the Principality of Serbia in its initial stage which covers the years of 1861–1864 in the light of territorial requirements of the Balkan states and nations at the expense of the decreasing military and political power of the Ottoman authorities and the territorial integration of the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire. Methodologically, the investigation is based primarily on the use of the primary archival-historical material from different Serbian and international archives.

Key words: Balkans, Ottoman Empire, Serbia, diplomacy

Author's Abstract

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**Diplomatske priprave srbske kneževine na
ustanovitev Prve balkanske zveze v obdobju
med 1861 in 1864**

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En., Sn.)

Članek obravnava prva leta diplomatskih priprav na ustanovitev Prve balkanske zveze (1866–1868), ki je bila uperjena proti Osmanskemu cesarstvu. Osredotoča se na začetno obdobje med 1861 in 1864 in na ozemeljske zahteve balkanskih držav in narodov, katerih cilj sta bila usihanje vojaške in politične moči turške države in kasnejša ozemeljska integracija večetničnega turškega cesarstva. Metodologija, uporabljena v raziskavi, sloni predvsem na primarnih zgodovinskih virih iz srbskih in tujih arhivov.

Ključne besede: Balkan, Osmansko cesarstvo, Srbija, diplomacija

Avtorski izvleček

“Outline of Serbian-Greek Convention from 1861”

The sources are telling us that the pivotal impetus for the making of the First Balkan Alliance came from the side of Serbia's prince Mihailo I Obrenović whose predominate political task in the Serbian foreign policy was to create a united South Slavic state under Serbian leadership, which would be composed by all South Slavic territories within the Ottoman Empire. For this purpose he needed close cooperation with other Balkan Christian states and people as Serbia was not strong enough to alone defeat the Ottoman Empire on the battlefield. Consequently, the most reasonable solution was to create a joint Balkan military-political defensive-offensive coalition, which would militarily defeat Turkey and expel Ottoman authorities from the Balkans as a fundamental precondition to the creation of the united South Slavic state in the Southeast Europe.

It has to be said that the Second Balkan Alliance (1912–1913), which was put into effect during the First Balkan War 1912–1913 against the Ottoman Empire, was actually to a great extent a revitalization of the First Balkan Alliance (1866–1868). The nucleus of both of these Balkan Alliances for the general Balkan war against the Ottoman Empire can be found in the project from 1861 by the Serbian prime minister and minister of foreign affairs from 1861 to 1867, Ilija Garašanin (1812–1874) – the author of *Načertanije* 1844 (a secret program of Serbian political unification into a single national state) – to make a political-military pact with the Kingdom of Greece. To be more precise, Ilija Garašanin submitted in early March of 1861 a secret memo to Serbia's Prince Mihailo Obrenović (1825–1868, prince from 1839 to 1842 and from 1860 to 1868) in which the author urged the prince that Serbian national interest called for a pact with Greece¹ that would be a foundation for a wider Balkan pact against the Ottoman authority. This memo was based on Garašanin's previous proposal on the Balkan coalition in which he dealt with the Albanian question and relations with the Habsburg Monarchy. The memo was detailed instruction to the chosen Serbian deputy to the Greek court to negotiate with Athens about the creation of bilateral Serbian-Greek military-political alliance that was directed against the Ottoman Empire. The deputy was obliged to investigate the inner political and military situation of Greece with special attention on the questions of: 1) what was the main task of Greek national policy, and 2) which foreign power had the predominant role in Greek foreign policy.

¹ DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *Agreement with the Greeks*, 1861.

The deputy was authorized to inform the Greek king that the Serbian prince hoped that Greece was willing to conclude a pact with Serbia for the common Christian interest in the Balkans.

According to the memo, there were crucial reasons for the alliance, firstly between Serbia and Greece and later on among all other Balkan Christians interested in the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire: 1) the common Christian faith of the Serbs and Greeks; 2) the common necessity and desire for freedom; 3) the creation of united national independent states of the Serbs and Greeks; 4) as a good example for the rest of the Balkan Christian nations for their own national liberation from the Ottoman yoke; 5) the fact that if Greece and Serbia did not liberate their brothers who still lived in Turkey both Greece and Serbia would disappear as independent states; 6) both of these countries could lose their independence, which could be prevented by their alliance, otherwise the great European powers could conclude that the Greeks and Serbs were not mature enough to enjoy their own independent national states for the reason that at the time of the memo only a minority of the Serbs and Greeks lived within the borders of their own national states; 7) the creation of a Greek-Serb pact would disrupt the belief and practice that the destiny of the Serbs and Greeks mainly depended on the decisions of the great European powers in their diplomatic cabinets; and 8) the "Eastern Question" had to be resolved by the Balkan peoples themselves but not by the great European powers.

The initial aim of the Greek-Serb pact was to form a joint cooperation, which would be recognized by Europe as a justifiable political-military alliance for the purpose of realization of their national requirements based on Serbian and Greek ethno-historic rights at the expense of the Ottoman Empire. However, the fundamental aim of this pact was territorial dismemberment of the Ottoman European possessions, which would be divided by the signatories of the pact. The signatories had to prevent European diplomacy to support Ottoman territorial integrity or to partition the lands of Turkey among the great European powers without participation of the regional Balkan Christian states whose compatriots lived in the Ottoman Empire. Finally, both Serbia and Greece had to assist their brothers from Turkey to rise in arms against the Ottoman yoke. Serbia's prince Mihailo accepted the ideas from the memo and from that time the main task of Serbia's foreign policy was to create the Balkan political-military alliance.

In the same year (1861) Garašanin was appointed by the Serbian government as a deputy to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul to discuss a delicate problem of the position of the Muslims in the Principality of Serbia.² Garašanin used this diplomatic mission in Istanbul to become more familiar with the inner political conditions within

² AMAE – *Mission de M. Garachanine*, 1861, by Luis Doson (1822–1890), French vice-consul in Belgrade, to Eduard Thouvenel (1818–1866), French ambassador in Istanbul from 1855 to 1860 and minister of foreign affairs from 1860 to 1863; AD – vol. IV, 1861, 148; DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *Ilija Garašanin to Filip Hristić*, 1861; *Ibid*, *Ilija Garašanin to Ali-Pasha*, 1861. Filip Hristić (1819–1905) was the prime minister and minister of foreign affairs of Serbia from 1860 to 1861 and the state councillor from 1861 to 1870. Ali-Mehmed Pasha (1815–1871) was five time grand vizier and several times Ottoman minister of foreign affairs from 1856 to 1871.

the Ottoman Empire and to establish many contacts with the foreign ambassadors in the Ottoman capital. Surely, the biggest achievements of Garašanin's diplomatic activity in Istanbul were the very successful negotiations between him and Marco Renieris – the Greek representative in Istanbul (1861–1863) on the creation of the Serbian-Greek alliance.³

The Greek motive for these negotiations was the desire to reestablish the Byzantine Empire (lost to the Turks in 1453 and all the time considered by the Greeks as the Greek national state), while the Serbian vision was the remaking of the Serbian Empire from the mid-14th century and state unification of all Serbs who had been living within the Ottoman Empire. The Greek diplomatic contacts with the Serbs in regard to the creation of the anti-Ottoman political-military alliance dated back to the beginning of the 19th century, i.e. from the time of the existence of the Greek national secret society – *Philiki Hetairia* ("Friendly Society").⁴ However, the main dispute in Greek-Serbian relations and negotiations have been the questions of Macedonia and Albania for the reason that both sides pretended to include major parts of these two Ottoman provinces into their own united national states according to their ethnic and historical rights.⁵ For instance, the whole portion of geographical Macedonia (from Mt. Olympus to Mt. Šara and from Ohrid Lake to Mt. Rhodope), southern Bulgaria (south from the Balkan Mountain), southern Albania and all of Thrace were claimed by the Greek champions of "Megali Idea" who fought for reconstruction of the Byzantine (Greek) Empire.

For the purpose of resolving both the "Macedonian Question" and the "Albanian Question" Garašanin proposed to Renieris that the geographical territory of Macedonia and Albania be divided into Serb and the Greek spheres of influence: I) the Serbian influence was to be established in the districts of Albanian cities of Durrës and Elbasan and the districts of Macedonian cities of Ohrid, Prilep, Veles, Štip, Kratovo and Kyustendil, and II) the Greek influence would dominate in the Albanian districts of Berat and Korçë and in Macedonian districts of Bitola, Demir Kapija, Radović and Razlog. Therefore, according to this proposal, the territories of Albania and Macedonia would be shared into two spheres of influence – northern Serbian and southern Greek. This Garašanin's proposal was accepted in the same year by the Greek diplomacy and Garašanin's proposal was accepted in the same year by Greek diplomats and it became a key point of two documents: the "Outline of Serbian-Greek Convention from 1861" and the "Outline of Contract between Greece, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro from 1861". Both of them later became the basis for the creation of the First Balkan Alliance in 1866–1868.

³ DAY – *Description of the work about general agreement for uprising and unification*, 1876. Atanasije Nikolić (1803–1882) was a member and secretary of Serbia's Council from 1861 to 1868; DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *Ilija Garašanin to Filip Hristić*, 1861 and *Ilija Garašanin to Jovan Ristić*, 1867. Jovan Ristić (1831–1899) was a head of Serbia's ministry of foreign affairs from 1858 to 1861 and Serbia's representative in Istanbul from 1861 to 1867.

⁴ Castellan, *History of the Balkans*, pp. 253–255; Јакшић, Вучковић, *Спољна политика Србије*, p. 72; Стојанчевић В., *Милош Обреновић*, pp. 67–71. About Serbia's struggle for national unification in the 1830s see: Љушић Р., *Кнежевина Србија*, pp. 381–394.

⁵ AMAE – *Montero to Walewsky*, 1859, 78. Count Alexander Walewsky (1810–1868) was a French minister of foreign affairs from 1855 to 1860.

According to Article V of the "Outline of Serbian-Greek Convention from 1861", the Principality of Serbia assumed obligations to: 1) increase its regular (standing) army to 12,000 soldiers; 2) organize in the best way its people's (territorial) army; and 3) supply with arms and ammunition the peoples from Bosnia, Herzegovina and Bulgaria for the purpose of armed struggle ("revolution") against the Ottoman Empire. The precise territorial division of the Ottoman Balkan possessions between the Balkan states and reconstruction of Balkan political outlook was fixed in the "Supplement to the Article III" of the same document which states that: 1) the Kingdom of Greece will annex Thessaly, Epirus (including and the northern Epirus what is today southern Albania), Macedonia, Thrace and the Aegean Islands; 2) the Kingdom of Serbia will be established by unification of (at that time) the Principality of Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Upper (present day northern) Albania and Montenegro (only in the case that the Montenegrin authorities accepted unification with Serbia; if not, Montenegro would be separate and independent state); 3) the Kingdom of Bulgaria will be established and its borders fixed later; and 4) the Principality of Walachia and the Principality of Moldavia will become united into a single Kingdom of Dacia.

Garašanin's proposal on the division of Serbian-Greek spheres of influence in Albania and Macedonia became a part of the "Supplement to the Article III" of the "Outline of Serbian-Greek Convention from 1861" as well. However, in the same convention it was anticipated that if Bulgaria did not join the Balkan alliance and Greece did not occupy Thrace with Constantinople (Istanbul), the central portion of Albania would become part of the Greek sphere of influence as territorial compensation for the lost Thrace and Istanbul, but at the same time Serbia would annex north-western Bulgaria (from Timok River to Isker River) in order to keep the balance of power in the region. Finally, the convention finished with the belief that this Serbian-Greek-Bulgarian-Albanian alliance would prevent partition of the Balkans by Russia and the Habsburg Monarchy.⁶ Therefore, the "Outline of Serbian-Greek Convention from 1861" became the foundation for the "Outline of Contract between Greece, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro from 1861".⁷ The ultimate purpose of both documents was to create the Balkan political-military "alliance on the basis of the ancient historical rights of the Balkan nations and principles of justice and ethnic rights for the ultimate goal to bring happiness and security to the Balkan peoples".⁸

The "Outline of Serbian-Greek Convention from 1861" was a kind of Balkan declaration of national rights drafted on the principles of: 1) making single and free nationally homogenous states of Balkan peoples instead of the multi-national, multi-religious and multi-linguistic heterogenous and oppressive Ottoman Empire; 2) "the

⁶ DAS – Archives of Jovan Ristić, *Outline of Serbian-Greek Convention from 1861*.

⁷ DAS – Archives of Jovan Ristić, *Outline of Contract between Greece, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro from 1861*.

⁸ DAS – Archives of Jovan Ristić, *Konduriotis to Renieris*, 1861, Athens. At that time Konduriotis was Greek minister of foreign affairs. About the Greek-Serbian alliance from the 1860s see: Lascaris, *La première Alliance entre la Grèce et la Serbie*.

Balkans to the Balkan peoples”; 3) self-determination of small nations who lived in multi-national states; 4) independent self-administration of each nation; and 5) non-interference of the great European powers into Balkan affairs. However, both Serbia and Greece excluded the people(s) from Macedonia and the ethnic Albanians from these rights and principles because of the two crucial reasons. Firstly, for both of them a separate Macedonian ethno-nationality did not exist (like for Bulgarians as well) and consequently an independent state of Macedonia as a national state of the “Macedonians” could not be established. Secondly, while Serbia and Greece recognized the existence of a separate Albanian ethno-linguistic nationality they came to the conclusion that an independent state of Albania, as a national state of Albanians, also could not be created for the simple reason: the Albanians were not “mature enough” to be given responsibility of self-government of their own independent state. Therefore, “the best solution” was to divide the territory of Macedonia and Albania between Serbia and Greece: Serbia would rule northern Albania and northern Macedonia, while Greece will do the same with the southern portions of these two Balkan provinces. A demarcation line between Serbian and Greek-administered portions of Albania and Macedonia would run from Durrës on Albanian littoral, south from Albania’s Elbasan, between Macedonia’s Prilep and Bitola and Razlog and Kyustendil to the western slopes of Mt. Balkan.⁹ It has to be stressed that the Balkan allied states of Montenegro, Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria adopted the same attitude in regard to the Albanian and Macedonian questions during the creation of the Balkan Alliance in 1912. On the other hand, at that time neither the Albanians nor the Macedonian Slavs had any ideas and plans for the creation of their own national states. The Albanians did it for the first time only in 1878.¹⁰

Soon after reaching on agreement with Greece about a joint action against the Ottoman Empire Serbia started to arm its military forces and to reform the army. For that purpose the Serbian authorities obtained several loans, but the main problem was with transportation of the armaments and ammunition to Serbia through the territories of the Habsburg Monarchy (from France) or the Ottoman vassal principalities of Walachia and Moldavia (from Russia).¹¹ In mid-August of 1861 Serbia’s People’s Assembly (the national parliament) passed a new law establishing the people’s army of 50,000 soldiers. However, this decision was strongly opposed by both the Ottoman Sublime Porte and Austria as a violation of the sultan’s decrees (*Hatti Sheriffs*) from 1829, 1830 and 1833 regarding Serbia’s autonomy within the Ottoman Empire.¹²

⁹ DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *Ilija Garašanin to Filip Hristić*, 1867.

¹⁰ On the Albanian case see: Bartl, *Albanien*.

¹¹ AMAE – *Tastu to Thouvenel*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Thouvenel to Tastu*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Tastu to Thouvenel*, 1861. Tastu was a French general consul in Belgrade 1861–1862. Eduard Thouvenel (1818–1866) was a French ambassador in Istanbul from 1855 to 1860. See also: Ристић Ј., *Спољашњи одношаји Србије*, p. 177.

¹² OSH – *Rapports von Konstantinopel*, *Ludolf to Rechberg*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Oral protest by Austrian consulate in Belgrade*, 1862. Count Ludolf was an officer in Austrian embassy in Istanbul. Count Johan von Rechberg-Rothenlöwen (1806–1899) was an Austrian foreign minister from 1859 to 1864.

Bombing Belgrade, the crisis of 1862 and the Italian Question

The Ottoman authorities prepared a counter-attack on Montenegro and Serbia in the case of their proclamation of the war against Turkey. The deterioration of bilateral Serbian-Ottoman political relations at that time is evidenced by the following case. In May 1862 the French consul in Belgrade reported to his government that the Turks were ready to bomb the Serbian capital from Belgrade's citadel (Kalemegdan), which was still under Turkish control according to the *Hatti Sheriffs*.¹³ Unfortunately, the Turkish threat to bomb the lower (civil) districts of Belgrade was accomplished on June 17th, 1862 when the Turkish artillery for almost five hours continuously and heavily bombed the Serbian capital from the citadel (Upper Town or Upper Belgrade) regardless of the fact that at the time Serbia was not at war with the Ottoman Empire. All foreign consuls in Belgrade, except for the Austrian one, placed responsibility for this incident on the personality of Belgrade's pasha – a commander of Belgrade's citadel (located on the confluence of the Sava and Danube Rivers) and representative of the Ottoman sultan in Serbia as Serbia's suzerain.¹⁴ For instance, the British consul reported to his foreign minister: "...Pasha has behaved very wrong and in consequence no alternative but to join my colleagues in refusing to treat with him again. The conduct of my Austrian Colleague has left a most painful impression. Admits he was two hours in the Fortress during the Time of Bombardment and yet as he informed... the Consular Body, Pasha desisted from Bombardment as soon as he requested him".¹⁵ This incident was used by prince Mihailo of Serbia to require all Turks to leave the territory of Serbia. In other words, he internationalized the problem of the presence of both the Ottoman authorities and Muslim inhabitants of the territory of the Principality of Serbia and launched the question of the destruction of Ottoman military fortresses in Serbia.¹⁶

Serbia's prince officially raised this question in several appeals to the Russian and French emperors on June 28th, 1862.¹⁷ The answer of the Russian and French diplomats was positive. In their "Memorandum from July 8th, 1862" they agreed that: 1) the Serbian military had to be improved; 2) the number of Serbia's soldiers increased; 3) the Ottoman military fortresses in the inner Serbia had to be destroyed; and 4) the Turkish military presence in Belgrade has to be restricted.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the Turkish bombardment of the lower districts of Belgrade, when two thirds of Belgrade's citizens left the city, became justification for Serbian military preparation and agitation among Balkan Christians against the Ottoman government.¹⁹

¹³ AMAE – *Tastu to Thouvenel*, 1862.

¹⁴ AMAE – *Tastu to Thouvenel*, 1862.

¹⁵ PRO – F O 78 – *Longworth to John Russell*, 1862.

¹⁶ Стојанчевић, *Историја српског народа*, p. 295.

¹⁷ AMAE – *Prince Michael to Napoleon*, 1862; The British "blue book".

¹⁸ Никитин, *Европейская дипломатия и Сербия*, pp. 80, 92, 95; AMAE – *Thouvenel to de Moustier*, 1862. About this problem see more in: Поповић, *Политика Француске и Аустрије*; Попов, *Србија и Турска*; Алексић, *Став Француске према Србији*.

¹⁹ AMAE – *Thouvenel to de Moustier*, 1862; *Ibid.*, *Tastu to Thouvenel*, 1862; Riker, *Michael of Serbia*; OSH – *Reichberg-Rothenlöwen to Prokesch-Osten*, 1862; Ристић, *Бомбардовање Београда (1862. год.)*.

To the foreign diplomats it was obvious that Serbia was preparing for the final struggle against Turkey even before June 1862. For instance, in the spring of 1862 the British foreign minister Earl John Russel informed the Austrian foreign minister Count Johan von Rechberg-Rothenlöwen that the principal aim of Serbian military reform was the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and division of its territorial possessions in the Balkans.²⁰ These military preparations and political agitation became even more intensive after the bombardment when Serbia continued to work on establishing the Balkan coalition against Turkey. The turning point in this action was when France sided with the Balkan states and revolutionary Balkan movements.

The French policy towards the “Eastern Question” underwent significant changes in the Fall of 1861. In previous years the French had opposed any revolutionary action of the Balkan states or peoples against the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. However, in October and November of 1861 Eduard Thouvenel, the French minister of foreign affairs in 1860, for the first time expressed French sympathies towards the idea of joint activities of Serbia, Walachia, Moldavia, Montenegro and Greece against the Sublime Porte.²¹ The real cause of such change in French Balkan policy was the decision of the French emperor Napoleon III Bonaparte (also known as Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte 1808–1873; emperor 1852–1870) “to resolve the Italian Question in the East”.²² Napoleon’s plan was to support revolution of the Christians against the Ottoman authorities in the Southeastern Europe. The revolution was to help Napoleon to realize his political ambitions in this part of Europe. In the course of the anti-Ottoman revolution in the Balkans Napoleon III supported the idea that Bosnia and Herzegovina would be ceded to the Habsburg Monarchy as territorial compensation for the Austrian dominated province of Venice (Venezia) which would be united with Italy.²³ Thus, both Italian nationalists and Austrian imperialists would be satisfied, while Napoleon III would play the leading role in European politics. But above all, the French emperor was convinced that the Italian nationalists, who demanded the integration into Italy of the whole territory of the Papal State (*Patrimonium Petri* or *Stato della Chiesa*, established in 754/756), including and the Vatican City,²⁴ and the French Catholic rightists who fought for political independence of the Papal State would be reconciled by the realization of this plan.

Several French diplomatic reports indicate that Napoleon’s new Balkan policy with its ultimate aim of solving the Italian problem of national unification was beginn-

²⁰ OSH – *Rechberg-Rothenlöwen to Vasić*, 1862; *Ibid.*, *Prokesch-Osten to Vasić*, 1862; PRO – FO 78 – *John Russell to Longworth*, 1862. Vasić was Austrian vice-consul in Belgrade from 1862 to 1864. Baron A. Prokesch-Osten was Austrian representative in Istanbul from 1855 to 1871.

²¹ AMAE – *Thouvenel to Lallemand*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Thouvenel to Tasta*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Tasta to Thouvenel*, 1861.

²² Bourgeois, *Manuel Historique*, p. 638.

²³ Христић, *Србија и Енглеска*, p. 126.

²⁴ The period from 1859 to 1870 is known in Italian history as “Il risorgimento e l’unità d’Italia”.

ing to be realized at the end of September 1861. For instance, Montenegrin prince Nikola I Petrović-Njegoš (1844–1921, prince 1860–1910 and king 1910–1918) with French diplomatic support decided in September–October 1861 to give military support to the Orthodox Christian rebels in eastern Herzegovina who rose in arms against the Ottoman government fighting for separation from the Ottoman state. At the same time prince Nikola I demanded that French authorities along with other great powers recognize: 1) *de jure* Montenegrin independence from Turkey; 2) Montenegrin occupation of part of the Adriatic seashore; and 3) the correction of the Montenegrin-Ottoman border.²⁵ At the same time as a part of Napoleon's plan, in which Italian volunteers led by Guisepe Garibaldi (1807–1882) and Hungarian revolutionaries would participate as well, one Italian vessel tried unsuccessfully to reach Albanian littoral carrying 3,000 rifles and 4 cannons in November 1861. Simultaneously, the Italian government prepared diversionary actions in Albania and Dalmatia against both the Ottoman and Habsburg authorities.²⁶

The French government was at that time directly involved in the process of arming the Balkan states. In mid-September 1861 Greece received 20,000 rifles from France, while the Serbian government was promised by Paris armament from France either through the Ottoman territory or via the Russian sea port of Odesa.²⁷ At the same time, the Balkan states had been receiving arms from the other European Great Powers. For example, the Serbian deputy in Bucharest, Kosta Magazinović, reported to his government on March 20th, 1862 that the Romanian prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1820–1873, Romanian prince from 1859 to 1866) would permit free passage via Romania of the Russian arms being sent to Serbia.²⁸ Further, the Serbian government in April 1862 was negotiating with one British company for transport of armaments to the Serbian border.²⁹ French major Hippolite Mondain was from 1861 to 1865 Serbia's minister of military affairs helping in the reorganisation and modernisation of Serbia's new people's-territorial army. In the spring of 1862 the Greek government received from the French diplomats a strong confirmation that Paris would pursue a policy of neutrality in the upcoming Balkan war which was a clear sign to Athens that France supported the Balkan action against the Turks.³⁰ The Serbian government signed a contract with Russia for a loan to Serbia for military purposes on March 29th, 1862 in St. Petersburg.³¹

²⁵ AMAE – *Lallemand to Thouvenel*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Prince Nicholas to the members of the European Commission in Dubrovnik*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Lallemand to Thouvenel*, 1861.

²⁶ AMAE – *Bourée to Thouvenel*, 1861; *I Documenti Diplomatici Italiani*, № 50, 271, 363, 450. N. Bourée (1811–1886) was French ambassador in Athens from 1859 to 1866, and ambassador in Istanbul from 1866 to 1879.

²⁷ AMAE – *Bourée to Thouvenel*, 1861; *Ibid.*, *Tastu to Thouvenel*, 1861; *I Documenti Diplomatici Italiani*, № 369.

²⁸ DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *Garašanin's "Instructions to the deputy to prince Cuza"*, 1862; *Ibid.* *Kosta Magazinović to Ilija Garašanin*, 1862; Archives of Jovan Ristić, *Ilija Garašanin to Jovan Ristić*, 1862, Belgrade.

²⁹ AEME – *Tustu to Thouvenel*, 1862.

³⁰ AEME – *Bourée to Thouvenel*, 1862.

³¹ Јовановић, *Ера страних зајмова*, р. 4; Цвијетић, *Први зајам Кнежевине Србије*, pp. 130–134.

On this occasion Serbia's deputy in Russia, who signed this contract – Milan Petronijević, an assistant to Serbia's minister of justice, revealed to the Russian authorities the Serbian plan to bring Bosnia, Herzegovina and northern Albania into Serbia's sphere of influence.

At that time the Greek king Otto I (1815–1867, king from 1832 to 1862) secretly negotiated with Giuseppe Garibaldi for a joint Greco-Italian action in the Balkans and the organisation of an uprising of Ottoman Christian subjects. The mediator in these negotiations was the Committee of the Ionian Islands. In the spring of 1862 Garibaldi was preparing one military detachment of his volunteers in Naples for the diversion in the Balkans. According to his plan, this detachment would start military action in the area of Preveza in southern Epirus nearby the Ionian Sea. The other option for the place of military invasion was northern Albania or Herzegovina. Nevertheless, Garibaldi's volunteers would after landing on Balkan territory as soon as possible get in touch with the Montenegrins while the Greek irregular troops would cross the border into Turkey waging guerilla warfare.³²

However, Garibaldi's military preparations were not realized because Napoleon cancelled his Balkan plan in mid-1862 for the following reasons: 1) financial, diplomatic and military lack of preparation of the Balkan states for war against the Ottoman empire; 2) disputes among the leaders of Herzegovinian rebels; 3) British support of the Ottoman authorities against Montenegro and London's protest to Belgrade and Athens because of their preparations for the action.³³ Because of these three reasons Napoleon III was compelled to reject the plan of Sardinian-Italian king Vittorio Emanuele II (1820–1878, king of Sardinia and Italy from 1849 to 1878) that simultaneously with the Balkan uprising, Hungarian revolutionaries would rise against the Habsburg Monarchy and that the Italian army would invade the Austrian province of Venice.³⁴ More precisely, according to the plan of Vittorio Emanuele II, Italian and Hungarian revolutionaries, led by Hungarian dissident and emigrant general István Türr (1825–1908), who was in the service of the Italian king as his adjutant officer, would invade Turkey with 8,000 soldiers in May 1862 followed by Garibaldi's invasion of the Austrian Adriatic littoral nearby Senj or Bakar in northern Dalmatia with four divisions of the Italian volunteers. Simultaneously, when general Türr was to invade Turkey either nearby Bar on the present day Montenegrin littoral or Durrës on the Albanian littoral, Montenegrin troops were to attack the city of Scodra (old Montenegrin capital) in northern Albania.³⁵

³² AEME – *Bourée to Thouvenel*, 1862.

³³ Thouvenel, *Thouvenel to Benedetti*, p. 342; AMAE – *Thouvenel to de Moustier*, 1862; PRO – F O 78 – *John Russell to Longworth*, 1861. Marquise Lionel de Moustier (1817–1869) was French ambassador in Istanbul from 1861 to 1866 and minister of foreign affairs from 1866 to 1868. Earl John Russell (1792–1878) was British minister of foreign affairs from 1859 to 1865 and the Prime Minister from 1865 to 1867. Longworth was British general consul in Belgrade from 1860 to 1873.

³⁴ Thouvenel, *Pages de l'Histoire*, p. 342; *I Documenti Diplomatici Italiani*, № 271, 363, 450, 468.

³⁵ *István Türr to prince Nikola and Major Adam Vranešević to prince Nikola* published by Predlog M.

The Italian king and Giuseppe Garibaldi especially championed the so-called "Adriatic plan" of joint Italian, South Slavic, Greek and Albanian military action in the Balkans against Austria. During their conversation in Turin in May of 1866 Vittorio Emanuele II and Garibaldi developed a plan for the participation of 30,000 Italian volunteers in a joint action with the South Slavic frontiersmen from the Austrian Military Border („krajšnici"). After the conversation Garibaldi reestablished neglected relations with the peoples on the eastern Adriatic seashore.³⁶

According to general Türr, the Montenegrin prince Nikola I reached an agreement with Giuseppe Garibaldi for military action against Turkey³⁷ that would also include the Greek king Otto I. However, the Serbian government refused to participate in the Italian plan of "Liberation of the Balkan Christians" drafted in 1861–1862. By supporting the Balkan uprising against the Ottomans as Serbia's prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, Ilija Garašanin saw as the main goal of Italian diplomacy in the Balkans: 1) to make use of Balkan rebels to complete Italian unification by annexation of Venice; and 2) as compensation to Vienna, to allow Austria to occupy Bosnia & Herzegovina (settled primarily by the ethnolinguistic Serbs of Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim faith). Both of these two points (especially the second) were in his view directed against Serbian national interest, i.e. to prevent unification of Bosnia & Herzegovina with Serbia. Finally, he predicted that the Balkan Christians would be the main losers in case the plan was realized. Russian diplomacy also played a great role in the Serbian decision not to establish relations with "Garibaldi, Hungarians and Poles".³⁸ Thus, the mission of Garibaldi's deputy, Marco Antonio Canini, failed in Belgrade for the reason that the Serbian government refused to negotiate with the Italian representative regarding the Serbian-Italian joint cooperation in the Balkan uprising.³⁹

The French Balkan policy in the years of 1863-1864

The Polish uprising against the Russian authorities in 1863 influenced Napoleon III to create a new plan for redrawing European national borders which would have great consequences for Balkan affairs in the case of its implementation. More precisely, in March of 1863 the French emperor informed the Austrian ambassador in Paris, count Metternich, regarding his idea of a new political map of Europe: 1) the historical Kingdom of Poland would be reestablished within the borders which Poland had before its First partition in 1772; 2) the reestablished united Kingdom of Poland (including and Grand Duchy of Lithuania) would be governed by one

³⁶ Garibaldi, *Pro-memoria al generale Cialdini*.

³⁷ *Report by general Türr; I Documenti Diplomatici Italiani*, № 9, 33, 227, 271, 363.

³⁸ DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *Milan Petronijević to Ilija Garašanin*, 1862.

³⁹ OSH – *Vasić to Rechberg-Rothenlöwen*, 1862; Archives of Jovan Ristić, *Ilija Garašanin to Jovan Ristić*, 1862; DAS – *Miloje Lešjanin to Ilija Garašanin*, 1862; *Ibid.*, *Marco Antonio Cannini to Ilija Garašanin*, 1862. Miloje Lešjanin (1830–1867) was at that time the head of Serbia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Habsburg archduke; 3) Italy would gain the province of Venice from Austria; 4) Austria would be territorially compensated by annexation of Silesia and Serbia; 5) France would annex the region of Rhine; 6) Prussia would, as territorial compensation, annex the Kingdom of Saxony and the Kingdom of Hanover; and finally 7) the European possessions of the Ottoman Empire would be divided between the Balkan states. However, Franz Joseph I (1830–1916, the emperor of Austria and the king of Hungary from 1848 to 1916) rejected this plan because the British diplomats saw in this plan Napoleon's intention to reestablish French supremacy in Europe.⁴⁰ At the same time, the Serbian government became acquainted with Napoleon's new plan to cede Serbia to Austria in July 1863 through Italian deputy in parliament, Vegezzi-Ruscal.⁴¹ As a consequence of these events Serbia lost any confidence in France's Balkan policy.

As a kind of political answer Belgrade intensified its own propaganda among the South Slavs and developed a network of agencies for the preparation of an anti-Ottoman revolution, especially in Bosnia & Herzegovina. The fundamental task for intensification of the Serbian national work in the Ottoman province of Bosnia & Herzegovina (the so-called Pashalik of Bosnia that also included the territory of Rashka/Sanjak) at the time of Polish uprising 1863–1864 was Garašanin's intention to impede the realization of Napoleon's idea of ceding this Turkish province to Austria as compensation for Austrian evacuation of Venezia Giulia – an idea that was contrary to the Serbian national interests. For this reason, Serbian national propaganda and other activities in the Pashalik of Bosnia were developed to such extent that in February 1864 the governor of this province, Osman-pasha, warned the Sublime Porte in Istanbul that Belgrade had already completed preparing the Bosnian Serbs for the uprising: 1) Serbia had armed them with weapons and ammunition produced in Serbia; 2) Serbia had established a revolutionary network within the whole territory of the province; and 3) Serbia had concentrated its own military forces along its border with Bosnia. By the spring of 1864 the Ottoman authorities were so convinced that the Balkan revolution would soon break that they started concentrating their forces along the Serbian and Romanian borders in Bulgaria, Rumelia and Bosnia. As a part of military preparations against Serbia and Romania the Porte instituted obligatory military service in both Bosnia and Albania. According to Russian diplomatic reports from Albania, the Ottoman policy towards the Albanian tribal aristocracy became softer and many Albanian feudal lords (beys) returned to state offices.⁴² A new number of the Muslim Tatars and the Cherkezs were settled in Bulgaria along the Serbian border as a protective measure against Serbian aggression on Turkey in addition to 150,000 Tatars and Muslim Circassians living in Bulgarian territory after the Crimean War (1853–1856).⁴³ The Ottoman military plan was to have these Muslim settlers, expelled by the Russian

⁴⁰ Seton-Watson, *Les relations de l'Autriche-Hongrie*, p. 433; Bourgeois, *Manuel Historique de Politique Étrangère*, p. 369.

⁴¹ DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *Ilija Garašanin to Vegezzi-Ruscal*, 1863.

⁴² DAS – Archives of Ilija Garašanin, *A copy of report of Russian consul*, 1864.

⁴³ Poulton, *The Balkans*, p. 117.

authorities from the Caucasus area, serve as frontiersmen along the Ottoman military frontier in the Balkans. Nevertheless, the Turkish military intervention against Serbia and Romania was finally thwarted only because of the French diplomatic intervention in Istanbul in 1864.⁴⁴

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⁴⁴ AMAE – *Botmillian to de Lhuys*, 1864.

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POVZETEK

Diplomatske pripreme srbske kneževine na ustanovitev Prve balkanske zveze v obdobju med 1861 in 1864

Vladislav B. Sotirovic

V obdobju med 1861 in 1864 je bila politična vloga srbske kneževine v diplomatskih pogajanjih o ustanovitvi balkanske vojaške in politične zveze, ki je bila uperjena proti osmanskemu cesarstvu, odločilenega pomena za dokončno oblikovanje Zveze med letoma 1866 in 1868. Srbija ni bila zgolj pobudnik, pač pa tudi najbolj zagreta udeleženka v zapletenih diplomatskih prizadevanjih za njeno ustanovitev. Končni politični cilj Zveze je bila zmaga nad Turki in poveljna priključitev vseh pokrajin v turškem cesarstvu, ki so bile poseljene s srbskim prebivalstvom. Čeprav zaradi potencialnega negativnega vpliva na balkanske notranje in zunanje zadeve načrt ni bil realiziran vse do leta 1912/1913, so bila diplomatska prizadevanja v omenjenem obdobju ključnega pomena zanj.

Članek se osredotoča prvenstveno na vprašanje teritorialne delitve ozemlja, ki je bilo poseljeno z albanskim prebivalstvom, med Srbijo, Črno goro, Grčijo in Bolgarijo. Ključne diplomatske in politične aktivnosti balkanskih zaveznic so se odvijale na ozemlju ožje Albanije, Epira, Makedonije in Kosova in Metohije.