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British Interests and the Struggle of Russia and France for Leases and Spheres of Influence in China (1897–1898)

*Aleš Skřivan Sr. – Aleš Skřivan Jr.**

China found itself in massive debt after its defeat in the war with Japan (1894–1895), and it was progressively put under significant pressure by the Great Powers who were seeking to define their exclusive spheres of influence and gain economic concessions. Russia was the first to take measures in this regard, its objective being to acquire dominant influence in northern China building on the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway. France too, Russia's ally, began to pursue a similar status in the southern Chinese provinces neighbouring French Indochina. Great Britain, after decades enforcing the principle of China's territorial integrity, and equal trade opportunities in the country for all, was somewhat taken by surprise by these developments. Russia took advantage of the situation to increase pressure on China, culminating in the lease of Port Arthur and Dalian and the recognition of Russian claims regarding the Liaodong Peninsula. Great Britain found itself in a particularly adverse position. Several members of Britain's government were determined to support resistance to Russia's advances in the Far East even at the cost of war. In contrast, Prime Minister Salisbury had been promoting an understanding with Russia for many years, but after Russia's occupation of Port Arthur he realised this was no longer possible. Britain managed to maintain its position in China, but many leading British politicians realised that the policy of "splendid isolation" would no longer suffice to maintain Britain's position.

[First Sino-Japanese War; Spheres of Influence in China; Leases to Russia and France; Crisis in the Policy of "Splendid isolation"]

Defeat in its war with Japan in 1894–1895 was catastrophic for the "Middle Kingdom" from a number of perspectives. Beijing had undertaken to pay Japan massive war reparations within a very short period, which plunged it into financial dependence on Western states, or more specifically their banks. Furthermore, European powers, primarily those which

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had forced a victorious Japan to return China the strategically important Liaodong Peninsula as part of the so-called Triple intervention,¹ soon began putting pressure on Beijing with the objective of asserting their interests.²

The first steps in this regard were taken by Russia, which had far-reaching plans for the Far East relating above all to its position in China.³ A key tool in implementing this was to be the Trans-Siberian Railway, which had been under construction since 1891. There were three options for the final section of the railway leading to the Pacific Ocean. The first was that the railway would be built only on Russian territory, curving along the Amur River. This would have been the longest line, and would naturally have involved the highest construction costs and would have been completed in 1916. The second option was based on the idea that the railway would be built from Kyakhta on the Russia-Mongolia border straight to Beijing, and this was likely to come up against much resistance from other powers because "*Peking will be in greatest danger as soon as the Siberian railway is made*".⁴ The third, and in a way most favourable option for Russia, involved construction of the railway through Manchuria in China to Vladivostok. On 25 October 1895, a commentator on *The Times* of London stated: "*It is obvious that with Russian fleets in the harbour of Port Arthur, and a railway connecting that place with the great Siberian trunk line, Manchuria would practically become a Russian province.*"⁵ It was this opportunity which became the objective of the policy of so-called "peaceful penetration" in China, whose main protagonist was Russia's Finance Minister Witte, who on 9 December 1895 submitted the appropriate proposal to the Tsar, who expressed his consent to it.⁶ But there was far from consensus on the construction of a line through Manchuria in St Petersburg.⁷ A vehement opponent of the Finance Minister's plan was influential head of the Foreign Ministry's Asian Division, Count Kapnist, who expressed his

¹ This diplomatic intervention was undertaken jointly by Russia, Germany, and France on April 4, 1895, and is sometimes termed the Far Eastern Triple Alliance (or also the Triple Intervention).

² For more details, see K. Van DIJK, *Pacific Strife: the Great Powers and their Political and Economic Rivalries in Asia and the Western Pacific, 1870–1914*, Amsterdam 2015, pp. 305–315.

³ The National Archives, London, (hereinafter TNA), Foreign office (hereinafter FO) 800/163, Bertie Papers, Francis Bertie to Foreign Office, May 19, 1899.

⁴ Ibid., Francis Bertie to Foreign Office, May 20, 1899.

⁵ *The Times*, October 10, 1895.

⁶ A. MALOZEMOFF, *The Russian Far Eastern Policy 1881–1904*, Los Angeles 1958, p. 72.

⁷ For opinions on building the section of the line through Manchuria cf. *ibid.*, 72ff.

considerable concern over the construction. According to him, it would end up leading to the military occupation of the whole region, would arouse an undesirable response from the Great Powers, and could trigger the division of China, which at that time was certainly not in Russia's interest. The governor of Amur province, General Dukhovskii even termed the project a "*great historical error*" in regard to possible military problems.⁸ The Finance Minister countered these objections by arguing that a situation would soon arise when it would not be possible to build any railway in northern China without Russia's consent.⁹ Despite these differences in opinion, Russian political leaders agreed that Chinese affairs should be left alone until completion of the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway.¹⁰ In the end, Witte pushed through his concept thanks to the support provided to him by Tsar Nicholas II, Prince Lobanov-Rostovsky and War Minister Vannovsky.

Around February 1896, Russian experts completed a survey of the anticipated railway route, and on 18 April 1896, Count Cassini, the Russian Envoy in Beijing, informed officials in the Zongli Yamen of their plan to build the railway line through Manchuria. To begin with, however, the Envoy failed in acquiring China's consent.¹¹ His activities over the following months are commonly linked with the controversial so-called Cassini Convention. The *North China Herald* newspaper, published in English in Shanghai, in an article entitled *Special convention between Russia and China*,¹² said that during negotiations in spring 1896, the Envoy had managed to make China sign a document which related to Russo-Chinese co-operation in the event of war, and also gave consent to the construction of a railway line through Manchuria.¹³ Eventually,

⁸ W. L. LANGER, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism 1890–1902*, New York 1951, p. 399.

⁹ Dukhovskii and Witte submitted a memorandum regarding this matter on 23 January and 12 April 1896 respectively. Cf. A. Popov, *Pervye shagi russkogo imperializma na Dal'nem востоке*, in: *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, LII, 1932, pp. 83ff. and 91ff. Cf. A. MASAFUMI, *The China-Russia-Japan Military Balance in Manchuria, 1906–1918*, in: *Modern Asian Studies*, 44, 6, 2010, p. 1286.

¹⁰ C. J. LOWE, *The Reluctant Imperialists. British Foreign Policy 1878–1902. Vol. I*, London 1967, p. 230.

¹¹ LANGER, p. 401.

¹² *North China Herald*, October 30, 1896.

¹³ For more on the so-called Cassini Convention, see TNA, FO 17, China/1278. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. MacDonald to Salisbury, No. 248, confidential, Peking, December 17, 1896.

a number of different variations of the “convention” appeared in the press; according to journalists, Cassini was waiting for negotiations to end and as such had delayed his planned departure for Russia until as late as 30 September 1896. Russia, however, consistently denied the existence of such a document,¹⁴ and the great likelihood is that it truly never came into existence.¹⁵

Viceroy and Grand Secretary Li Hongzhang’s foreign trip in 1896 was to be of great importance for pursuing Russia’s objectives. Although he had co-operated with the European powers in regard to the return of the Liaodong Peninsula to China, as a signatory of the Peace Treaty of Shimonoseki, he had fallen upon the Emperor’s disfavour, and his enemies in the court accused him of betrayal, even recommending removing him by murdering him.¹⁶ He escaped the worst above all thanks to support from Empress Dowager Cixi, and probably also the intervention of Russia’s Envoy Cassini and huge bribes, sometimes estimated at 5 million dollars.¹⁷ Although originally participation of the imperial prince was anticipated, Li managed to be named official representative of the Chinese Emperor at the coronation of Russian Tsar Nicholas II.¹⁸ On 8 March 1896 and accompanied by his son, Li Qingfang, and a large accompanying party, he left Beijing¹⁹ to sail on board a French steamship from Shanghai to Europe. In Port Said, Minister Witte’s emissary, Prince Esper Ukhtomskii,

¹⁴ P. JOSEPH, *Foreign Diplomacy in China, 1894–1900. A Study in Political and Economic Relations with China*, London 1928, p. 168.

¹⁵ The wording of the alleged Cassini Convention with relevant information and commentary is given in J. V. A. MACMURRAY, *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China 1894–1919. Vol. I. Manchu Period (1894–1911)*, New York 1921, pp. 79–80. According to B. A. Romanov, who undertook an extensive analysis of the document, it was a secretly made copy of a draft of preliminary report which Cassini had prepared for his meeting in the Zongli Yamen of 18 April 1895. B. A. ROMANOV, *Russia in Manchuria (1892–1906)*, Ann Arbor (Michigan) 1952, pp. 98–102.

¹⁶ For more on Li Hongzhang’s role during peace negotiations, see A. LITTLE, *Li Hung-Chang: His Life and Times*, New York 2010, pp. 233–248.

¹⁷ LANGER, p. 401.

¹⁸ Tsar Alexander III died on 31 October 1894, and Nicholas II’s coronation took place at the end of May 1896. For more on Li Hongzhang’s nomination and his foreign trip, see TNA, FO 17, China/1277. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. MacDonald to Tsungli Yamen. Peking, July 6, 1896; *ibid.*, MacDonald to Salisbury, No. 184, confidential. Peking, July 10, 1896.

¹⁹ For more details of Li Hongzhang’s accompanying party, see H. B. MORSE, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire. Vol. III. The Period of Subjection, 1894–1911*, London, New York, Bombay, Calcutta 1918, p. 103.

President of the Russo-Chinese Bank and publisher of the influential paper *Peterburgskie vedomosti* was waiting for him. Accompanied by him, Li arrived on board a Russian cruiser on Saturday 27 April 1896 heading for Odessa, and he stayed in Russia until early June 1896.²⁰ Formally, he had several principal tasks,²¹ but as the results of his journey showed, the most important was the negotiations he held in Russia. During his stay, he was received several times by the Tsar and met with Witte²² and other Russian politicians. To begin with, Li insisted that that section of the railway line which was to go through Manchuria should be built by the Chinese using Chinese funds, and that the line would be of European gauge. Witte was realistic in his arguments that it would be very difficult to undertake the construction under these conditions because China did not have the necessary funds, and he insisted upon using Russian gauge. In his second audience with the Chinese dignitary, the Tsar repeated his fundamental arguments – the railway was essential if Russia was to assist China in case of threats, Russia had no territorial claims, and Beijing did not have the necessary funds. Britain received a report on the course of negotiations at the end of May 1896, their source informing them that Russia had put great pressure on the Chinese politician to allow the construction of the final section of the Trans-Siberian Railway through Manchuria.²³

Although Viceroy Li was not formally authorised to conclude any kind of agreement, the outcome of his talks in Russia was a document of fundamental importance. For decades, historians have been posing the question of what brought Li Hongzhang to drawing up the document. It has been often noted that at that time, he was probably one of the most

²⁰ From Russia, he went to Germany where he remained until 6 June 1896, and he subsequently visited the Hague (7 July), Paris (13 July), London (3 August), and arrived in the USA on 28 August 1896 then sailing back to China from Vancouver, Canada.

²¹ Li Hongzhang was meant to represent the Chinese Emperor at the coronation of the Russian Tsar, express his official thanks to Russia, Germany, and France for their intervention regarding the return of the Liaodong Peninsula, hand over courtesy letters to Queen Victor and the President of the United States, and probe whether there was an opportunity to revise the customs tariff. MORSE, p. 104.

²² For more to the negotiations Witte's with Li Hongzhang see *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, translated and edited by A. YARMOLINSKY, Garden City, New York, Toronto 1921, pp. 82–108.

²³ TNA, FO 17, China/1277. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. MacDonald to Salisbury, No. 172, confidential. Peking, June 16, 1896.

corrupted politicians in the world, and there were no shortage of bribes being paid in his vicinity.²⁴ On the other hand, there is no doubt that Li had been very disappointed by Great Britain's position during the Sino-Japanese War and had turned his attention towards co-operating with Russia. His biographer claims that the bribe in regard to the agreements made in Moscow was not the most important aspect.²⁵ Baron de Wolff, former departmental deputy director at Russia's Foreign Ministry claims in his memoirs that, "*Li Hung Chang, the great man of China [...] returned to Peking with the treaty signed and two million roubles in his pocket,*"²⁶ and historians admit this is possible,²⁷ but on the other hand some are of the opinion that Li did it because of his disappointment with Great Britain's stance and fears of Japan, and a bribe may not necessarily have been paid. Moreover, Witte, who acknowledged Li's susceptibility to corruption in other cases, and who took part in the negotiations with the Chinese politician, denies that in this case, no matter how contentious it was, a bribe was paid to the Chinese dignitary.²⁸ The fact that Li had decided to turn towards St Petersburg does not indicate that he had correctly evaluated the international situation and the objectives of Russian policy. He clearly believed that railway construction would facilitate Russian assistance to China were it to be attacked again, but on the other hand he appeared ignorant of the fact that "*Russia had absorbed every weak state which she had taken under her protection*".²⁹ In fact, he only facilitated Russia and France's efforts at controlling China, and was further unaware that the other Great Powers would do everything they could to prevent this, or to acquire similar advantages. In other words, the path he chose played a large role in the fact that the Great Powers began to fight for spheres of influence in China, something which further weakened the Qing regime.

The outcome of Li Hongzhang's negotiations was a treaty whose significance for Russia's position in China was huge. Witte, Lobanov and Li signed a secret treaty of alliance on 3 June 1896 focused against Japan³⁰

²⁴ LANGER, p. 403.

²⁵ J. O. P. BLAND, *Li Hung-chang*, New York 1917, pp. 199–200.

²⁶ JOSEPH, p. 161.

²⁷ T. G. OTTE, *The China Question. The Great Power Rivalry and British Isolation, 1894–1905*, Oxford, New York 2007, p. 87; MALOZEMOFF, pp. 79–80; ROMANOV, p. 116.

²⁸ *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, p. 95.

²⁹ JOSEPH, p. 186.

³⁰ MacMurray gives the date the treaty was signed as the end of May 1896. May 1896, Russia & China. Treaty of Alliance, MACMURRAY, pp. 81–82. Elsewhere, the date of

to apply for fifteen years. Article IV of the treaty gave Russia the right to build the final section of the Trans-Siberian Railway through Manchuria. In this case, the terms were specified and confirmed by a contract of 8 September 1896 and other documents.³¹ The project was financed by the Russo-Chinese Bank, controlled by the Russian Finance Ministry. The actual construction and management of the railway was taken on by the newly established Chinese Eastern Railway Company, whose president was named by the Chinese government, with its Vice-President and main engineer named by Russia's Finance Minister, and whose shares could only be owned by Russians and Chinese, and whose share capital, issued by the Russo-Chinese Bank, amounted to 5 million roubles.³² The company was to own the Chinese Eastern Railway for 80 years, with the Chinese earning the right to buy it back after 36 years. Management of track operations was in complete control of Russia, which determined carriage tariffs, with Russia's armed forces, war material and post carried free of charge. The railway was exempt from paying all taxes.³³ The company acquired extensive rights for mining raw materials and exploiting natural resources. Formally, the semblance of a private independent company was maintained, but in fact it was a business under the full control of Russia's government.

It is undisputed that in this way, Russia took a key step towards implementing Witte's plan and its possible control of northern China. At the time, France was also exerting similar pressure in the southern Chinese provinces. Furthermore, Russia and France had already jointly provided Beijing with its first large loan of 400 million francs in 1895 to pay its war reparations to Japan. These factors led to the real threat that these new

3 June 1896 is given. MALOZEMOFF, pp. 79–80; ROMANOV, p. 80. It is interesting to note that China only published the contents of this treaty at the Washington Conference following the First World War. Its secrecy was not perfect, however; according to some testimonies, Li's son Li Jingfang sold a French version of the wording to British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph*, which printed it after significant delay on 15 February 1910. This episode is mentioned in MALOZEMOFF, pp. 79–80; ROMANOV, p. 265, note 85.

³¹ 8 September 1896, Russia (Russo-Chinese Bank) & China. Contract for the Construction and Operation of Chinese Eastern Railway, MACMURRAY, pp. 74–78; 16 December 1896, Statutes of Chinese Railway Company, *ibid.*, pp. 84–88.

³² This involved 1000 shares at 5000 roubles, of which 700 were reserved for the Russian government, and 300 for French shareholders of the Russo-Chinese bank. No shares were held by the Chinese government or private shareholders. LANGER, p. 408.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

allies³⁴ would achieve the financial and political control of China. It is often said that it was Germany in its annexation of the region around Jiaozhou Bay in November 1897 which first undermined China's territorial integrity, beginning the Great Powers' fight to define their spheres of influence. The truth is, however, that it was Russia's acts in 1895–1896 which had already initiated this process, despite St Petersburg's repeated declarations on its interest in the territorial integrity of the "Middle Kingdom", and which since at least 1895 had been considering occupying part of Chinese territory. It is hard to agree with Witte, then, when he writes in his memoirs that, *"by the seizure of Kiaochau, Emperor William furnished original impetus to our policy"*. But on the other hand, the claim of the Tsar's former minister that *"German diplomats and the German Kaiser were clearly making effort in those days to drag us into Far Eastern adventures. They sought to divert our forces to the Far East, as to ensure the safety of their Eastern frontier,"*³⁵ should be accepted. Russian policy's main objectives in China were for many years to achieve a decisive position in Beijing and weaken Great Britain's influence – these were the main objectives of Russian policy in China. *"For our future plans, the fact that China should be dependent on us is no less important than that we do not allow England to expand its influence here,"*³⁶ wrote Count Lobanov-Rostovsky in the mid-1890s to Russia's Ambassador in Paris, Baron Mohrenheim. Germany's annexation of Jiaozhou did not result in any major change in Russian policy in the Far East. This was clearly defined by Witte, who intended to control China through "peaceful penetration", i.e. through mainly economic means, at the time of the German act, and had been since at least 1895. Russian efforts to gain exclusive influence in Manchuria, or even the whole of northern China, naturally clashed with the interests of Great Britain and Japan especially, and the former Russian Foreign Minister Alexander Petrovich Izvolskii gives it as one of the causes of the first Russo-Japanese War in his memoirs: *"If one wishes to locate the initial act which led to the unfortunate war between Russia and Japan, it will be necessary to go back to the decision adopted by the Russian Government at the Count Witte's behest to push the main line of the*

³⁴ The treaty of military alliance between France and Russia was concluded in 1892 and ratified at the turn of 1893/1894.

³⁵ *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, p. 105.

³⁶ Emprunt chinois. Politique en Asie. Saint-Petersbourg, le 11/23 mai 1895. Copie d'une lettre très confidentielle de S. Exc. M. le prince Lobanow-Rostovsky à S. Exc. M. le baron Mohrenheim, ambassadeur de Russie à Paris. *Correspondance diplomatique du baron de Staël (1884–1900)* publié par A. MEYENDORFF, T. II, Paris 1929, p. 274.

Trans-Siberian railway through to Vladivostock by way of Chinese territory, thus shortening the distance considerably, but at the same time creating of the eastern confines of the Empire a singularly complicated and dangerous situation."³⁷

During 1897, the strengthening of Russia's position became apparent in Beijing. This was reflected to some extent over the course of the visit of Russo-Chinese Bank President, Prince Ukhtomskii in the Chinese capital.³⁸ Formally, his main task was to hand over a gift of £20,000 to the Emperor and Empress dowager "in return" for the gifts which Li Hongzhang had brought to Russia in the previous year, and to officially open the Russo-Chinese Bank branch. The Tsar's confidante arrived in Beijing on 21 May 1897 and was received with honours which had never before been shown to any foreign visitors. Several facts were startling. Immediately upon his arrival, several Zongli Yamen officials reported to him. After just a few days, he was received for an audience with Emperor Guangxu, being received again three days later to receive gifts for the Empress Dowager, which was totally without precedent for a court ceremony.

Although this all testified to the position Russia had gained in Beijing, on the other hand Ukhtomskii failed in terms of the main objective of his mission. The prince had been commissioned to acquire Chinese consent to construction of a branch line leading off the Chinese Eastern Railway to the south to one of the Korean ports and linking it to the Chinese Imperial Northern Railway. He was also to probe the Chinese opinion on the request that the Chief Engineer of the Chinese Eastern Railway could meet directly with the governors of the three Manchurian provinces and ensure Chinese law allowed the circulation of coins and bank notes issued by the Russo-Chinese Bank in Manchuria. In June 1897, the prince began necessary negotiations in the Zongli Yamen, but as soon as Li Hongzhang had received the necessary bribe, his willingness to accommodate the Russian emissary faded, and "*Ukhtomskii's mission was therefore a complete failure*".³⁹

³⁷ *The Memoirs of Alexandre Iswolsky*, edited and translated by C. L. SAGAR, London 1920, pp. 122–123. For more on the German occupation of Jiaozhou, see D. BÖNKER, *Global Politics and Germany's Destiny "from an East Asian Perspective"*: Alfred Von Tirpitz and the Making of Wilhelmine Navalism, in: *Central European History*, 46, 1, 2013, pp. 68–70.

³⁸ British Envoy in China, MacDonald, gave very detailed information on the course of the visit of Prince Ukhtomskii to Beijing in May 1897. TNA, FO 17, China/1312. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. MacDonald to Salisbury, No. 65. Peking, June 1, 1897.

³⁹ MALOZEMOFF, p. 95.

At this time, Britain's Envoy MacDonald received a confidential report that during Prince Ukhtomskii's visit, the so-called Cassini Convention had been ratified. As such, he visited Li Hongzhang and mentioned that he had information that the convention secured Russia the right to fortify Jiaozhou, Port Arthur (Lüshun) and Dalian and use these fortifications in the event of war. The Grand Secretary resolutely denied this, with justification it must be said, as the lease of these ports, or regions, to foreigners was to be decided upon in subsequent months. Li stated that ceding these locations would trigger similar demands from other Great Powers, which could in the end lead to the division of China. He informed the British diplomat that during his visit to Russia, and now in Beijing, they had discussed only construction of that section of the Trans-Siberian Railway leading through Manchuria. The Chinese politician, however, tactically concealed certain facts which could have caused an unfavourable response from Britain's diplomat. The fact that China had promised the Russian emissary that construction of the railway north of Shanhaiguan was to be given to Russia, and that they were planning to dismiss British instructors from the Naval School in Tianjin, could have been perceived by MacDonald as an act of hostility.⁴⁰

St Petersburg then was able to benefit from its undoubtedly favourable international position, something which expressed itself during two major state visits when Germany's Emperor Wilhelm II and French President Félix Faure visited Russia in August 1897.⁴¹ In 1895–1898, Wilhelm repeatedly assured the Tsar that he would “watch Russia's back” while it was engaged in the Far East. In January 1897, for example, he dramatically told the Russian Tsar: *“Even if you had to send all your troops to the East, following political aims in accordance with your interests, I not only will not attack France, but will not allow anyone in Europe to stir there, that is what I mean by my promise to guarantee your rear.”*⁴² During the visit, the Emperor repeatedly stressed his friendly relationship with Russia, and he must have been satisfied with certain signals from Russia; Foreign Minister Count Muravyov allegedly declared privately that he would prefer an alliance

⁴⁰ Envoy MacDonald provided information on his meeting with Li Hongzhang in an extensive report for Prime Minister Salisbury. Cf. TNA, FO 17, China/1312. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. MacDonald to Salisbury, No. 76. Peking, June 15, 1897.

⁴¹ For more on both visits, see LANGER, pp. 446–447.

⁴² Ibid., p. 448.

with Germany to one with France.⁴³ The Emperor also discussed the idea of a Continental alliance against Great Britain with Witte and Chief of the Main Staff, General Obruchev, and the issue was discussed at the time in the Russian and German press. Chancellor Hohenlohe and Bülow, Head of the Foreign Office, who accompanied the Emperor, were much more cautious, not wishing above all to allow a deterioration in relations with Great Britain. This is one reason why when Obruchev proposed a Continental offensive and defensive alliance for three years in September 1897, Germany was evasive, and even informed British Prime Minister Salisbury of the Russian proposal.⁴⁴

During autumn 1897, several signals appeared suggesting increased Russian pressure in China. Russia's chargé d'affaires in Beijing, Pavlov, was to inform Britain's Envoy MacDonald that the "*Russian Government intended that the provinces bordering at the Russian frontier must not come under the influence of any nation except Russia*".⁴⁵ A similar signal, clearly unfavourable for Britain, was the report that Russia was considering achieving the replacement of Sir Robert Hart in the role of Inspector-General of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service with a Russian,⁴⁶ and that Germany was allegedly supporting them in this. There were repeated reports that Russia wanted to acquire a Chinese port. For Britain, the information that Russia had transferred its envoy in Korea, de Speyer, to the legation in Beijing was not positive. It was possible to assume that this "*energetic, narrow-minded and extreme Anglo-phobe*" would apply the same aggressive policy in China as he had beforehand in Korea, and according to the words of the former Secretary of the British legation in Beijing, Henry Bax-Ironside, "*His Majesty's Government can have no more bitter enemy to deal with from the diplomatic point of view*".⁴⁷

⁴³ Ibid., p. 445.

⁴⁴ *Die Große Politik der Europäischen Kabinete 1871–1914. Sammlung der diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes* (hereinafter GP). Hg von J. LEPSIUS – A. MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY – F. THIMME, Bd. 13, Die Europäischen Mächte untereinander 1897–1899, Berlin 1924, Nr. 3451. Der Stellvertretende Staatssekretär des Auswärtigen Amtes Bernhard von Bülow, z. Z. in Semmering, and das Auswärtige Amt, den 13. September 1897, pp. 88–89.

⁴⁵ *Correspondence respecting the Affairs of China* (hereinafter CRAC), London 1898, Despatch 14, MacDonald to Salisbury. October 10, 1897, p. 6.

⁴⁶ TNA, FO 17, China/1313. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. MacDonald to Salisbury, No. 162. Peking, December 1, 1897.

⁴⁷ Speyer had previously served in Persia, where according to his own words he helped

Something which undoubtedly contributed to the dramatization of developments in China was Germany's occupation of territory around Jiaozhou Bay and the port of Qingdao in the province of Shandong in mid-November 1897.⁴⁸ But the idea that the German step was the key trigger for Russia's decision to send warships to Port Arthur can hardly be accepted, as Russia had already been considering this prior to the event. This port, on the southernmost point of the Liaodong Peninsula, protected by a partially modernised fortification system, was of exceptional strategic significance for controlling maritime routes in the Yellow Sea, and its position at the access route to the Chinese capital was also of general importance in terms of influence on Beijing and northern China. China consented to Russia's presence (the Russian ships were to spend the winter in the port), as they thought that in this way, they could gain a counterbalance to Germany's activities in Jiaozhou. Beijing attempted to manoeuvre between the Great Powers, which is also why they allowed British warships to sail to Port Arthur too. For Russia, it was in no way about meeting the terms of its treaty of alliance with Beijing, but rather an important step to implementing Russia's plans to control northern China. At the same time, it was evidence of a certain change in Russia's approach. Witte, a supporter of "peaceful penetration" this time had to give in to pressure put on the Tsar by Foreign Minister Muravyov and War Minister Vannovsky, to occupy Port Arthur and Dalian. Muravyov submitted a memorandum to the Tsar on 23 November 1897 in which he recommended the occupation of both Chinese ports and part of the Liaodong Peninsula, and three days later the Ministerial Council discussed this document, though did not issue its verdict yet.⁴⁹ The proposal's sole opponent remained Witte.⁵⁰ The decision was likely made sometime between 26 November and 11 December 1897. On Tuesday 14 December, the Russian fleet received the order to sail to Port Arthur, where they arrived on 19 December 1897. To begin with, the Russians were restrained, and did not attempt any action on land for two months.

"destroy Britain's influence". In Korea he used indiscriminate tactics to pursue Russian objectives, even proposing deporting the Korean king to Vladivostok. TNA, FO 17, China/1313. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. Memorandum of H. O. Bax-Ironside. Peking, December 14, 1897.

⁴⁸ For more on the development in Jiaozhou, see also Van DIJK, pp. 295–315.

⁴⁹ MALOZEMOFF, p. 100.

⁵⁰ LANGER, pp. 457–458.

When two British cruisers sailed into Port Arthur on 25 December, the Russian commander did not protest.

Supporters of a bolder approach in the Far East acquired a stronger position in St Petersburg with the arrival of General Alexey Nikolaevich Kuropatkin in the role of War Minister on 1 January 1898. To allow Russian plans to be implemented, the General considered it to be strategically essential to gain a large part of the Liaodong Peninsula including Port Arthur and Dalian and begin construction of a railway line to join them to the Chinese Eastern Railway.⁵¹ At the end of January 1898, a group of supporters of the permanent occupation of Manchurian ports including important ministers and representatives of army and navy command⁵² gained the upper hand over Witte.⁵³

At the time, discussions were ongoing both with Russia and Britain on China's third loan to repay its war reparations to Japan. Russia had submitted an offer for a loan of £16 million whose terms, along with the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway and any lease of Port Arthur and Dalian would have made China to a large extent a de facto Russian protectorate. Witte submitted a proposal on 26 December 1897 in which in exchange for providing the loan, Russia would acquire a monopoly on the construction of all railways, mining operations and the establishment of industrial enterprises in Manchuria, Mongolia and northern China, along with a promise that "*a Russian should be appointed Inspector-General of Customs when that post became vacant*".⁵⁴ Furthermore, Russia was to gain the right to build the railway connection from the Chinese Eastern Railway to a port on the Yellow Sea coast which they would choose themselves. Russian agents in Beijing were authorised to give Li Hongzhang or people in his circle bribes to a total of 1 million roubles.⁵⁵ On 20 January 1898,

⁵¹ JOSEPH, p. 225.

⁵² These included in particular Foreign Minister Muravyov, War Minister Kuropatkin and Naval Minister Tyrtov.

⁵³ For more see OTTE, pp. 107–108.

⁵⁴ TNA, FO 17, China/1314. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic telegrams. MacDonald to Salisbury, Tel. No. 95. Peking, December 22, 1897. Also, CRAC, 1898, Despatch 36, MacDonald to Salisbury. December 22, 1897, p. 9.

⁵⁵ LANGER, p. 463. According to Malozemoff's version, Witte instructed the Russo-Chinese Bank in Beijing's agent Pokotilov to offer Li Hongzhang 1 million roubles if he could secure China's acceptance of the third loan for its indemnity to Japan from Russia under the conditions offered, plus an additional million if the pro-Russian Chinese agent who signs the agreement could be sent St Petersburg. MALOZEMOFF, p. 103.

Foreign Minister Muravyov instructed chargé d'affaires Pavlov to probe the possibility of lease and stressed that he was to “*submit the request with great caution so as not to disturb loan discussions*”.⁵⁶

When Britain's Ambassador in St Petersburg O'Connor met with Witte on 22 January 1898, Russia's Finance Minister asked him what stance Britain would take if Russia's occupation of Port Arthur and Dalian became permanent and expressed a willingness “*to support what he calls England's practical and commercial policy provided that England will not impede Russian ambition in the North*”. He didn't reject the idea of a mutual agreement either, declaring: “*If we came to an understanding our rule would be law in the Far East*.”⁵⁷ In this way, he was essentially proposing a compromise based on the division of China into spheres of influence for individual Great Powers, something which for Britain, nevertheless, was unacceptable.

Britain put considerable diplomatic efforts into preventing Russian domination in northern China. The idea of an alliance with Japan appeared quite early. This idea was strongly supported by Secretary of State for the Colonies Joseph Chamberlain, and especially Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Curzon, who at the end of December 1897 was already recommending Prime Minister Salisbury to assume co-operation with Tokyo. Envoy MacDonald in Beijing repeatedly warned China of the risk involved in accepting Russia's requirements. In this regard, he considered the possibility of an alliance of Great Britain, Japan and China, and even of transferring the capital of the “Middle Kingdom” back to Nanjing,⁵⁸ outside the area of immediate Russian pressure.⁵⁹ Some of Britain's ideas were somewhat bizarre, such as a violent uprising being staged in Beijing which would lead to the removal of pro-Russian elements, something which was rejected as dangerous.⁶⁰ It can be said that at the last minute, the British Government was unexpectedly conciliatory in a number of regards. Prime Minister Salisbury sent a telegram to the

⁵⁶ ROMANOV, p. 198.

⁵⁷ *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898–1914* (hereinafter *BD*), ed. by G. P. GOOCH – H. TEMPERLEY. Vol. I, End of British Isolation, London 1927, No. 8, O'Connor to Salisbury, Tel. No. 12, secret. Peking, January 23, 1898, p. 7.

⁵⁸ Nanjing had been China's capital under the previous Ming Dynasty.

⁵⁹ TNA, FO 17, China/1334. Political and other Departments. General Correspondence before 1906. Diplomatic despatches. MacDonald to Salisbury, No. 47. Peking, March 18, 1898. TNA, FO 800/163, Bertie Papers, Francis Bertie to Foreign Office, May 20, 1899. *Ibid.*, Bertie to Salisbury, May 21, 1899.

⁶⁰ *BD*, I, No. 34, Minute by Salisbury, private, March 22, 1898, pp. 22–23.

ambassador in St Petersburg stating that, “*Her Majesty’s Government would not regard with any dissatisfaction the lease by Russia of an ice free commercial harbour and its connection by rail with the Siberian Railway now under construction*”.⁶¹ The telegram went on to explain the reasons for Britain’s disquiet: “*The occupation of Port Arthur which is useless for commercial purposes and whose whole importance is derived solely from its military strength and strategic position, would be inevitably considered in the East as a standing menace to Peking and commencement of the Partition of China.*”⁶² Another passage in the Prime Minister’s message demonstrates the British position’s conciliatoriness: “*Her Majesty’s Government are prepared to give assurances that beyond existing Treaty Rights they have no interests in Manchuria, and to pledge themselves to occupy no ports in the Gulf of Pechili so long as the same policy is pursued by other Powers.*”⁶³

A special commission was formed in St Petersburg for dealing with the issue of leases in China made up of the highest authorities,⁶⁴ and in mid-February 1898 it came to the conclusion that Russia should ask for the lease of the southern part of the Liaodong Peninsula (the northern part was to remain a buffer zone), pursue the right to build a railway line from the Chinese Eastern Railway to one of the ports on the Liaodong Peninsula and send landing forces to Port Arthur to ensure these requirements were met. On 3 March 1898, Russia asked China to lease a part of Liaodong and the ports in question, and in mid-March, Britain’s final attempts at making the Russians change their mind failed. Russia’s Foreign Minister Muravyov informed Britain’s Ambassador O’Conor that, “*Russia desired to respect the integrity of China, but he absolutely refused to admit that the proposed lease of Port Arthur violated this principle or constituted a dismemberment of the Chinese Empire. Anyhow he held that its occupation was a vital necessity for Russia, that what was allowed to Germany and to Japan, could not be denied to Russia*”.⁶⁵ The Russian minister declared that Port Arthur would be open to all traders and warships.⁶⁶ He also stated that no other government had raised any

⁶¹ Ibid., No. 36, Salisbury to O’Conor, Tel. No. 90, Foreign Office, London, March 22, 1898, p. 23.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ This group included Grand Duke General Admiral Alexei Alexandrovich, Witte, Muravyov, Kuropatkin, Tyrtov, head of the naval staff Admiral Avellan and head of the army staff General Sakharov. MALOZEMOFF, p. 104.

⁶⁵ BD, I, No. 37, O’Conor to Salisbury, Tel. No. 57, St. Petersburg, March 23, 1898, p. 24.

⁶⁶ For more on Port Arthur, see R. NIELD, *China’s Foreign Place. The Foreign Presence in the Treaty Ports Era, 1840–1943*, Hongkong 2015, pp. 188–190.

objections to Russia's operation, and only Britain was standing in Russia's way.⁶⁷

Sergei I. Witte describes in his memoirs how Chinese consent to the Russian demands were acquired.⁶⁸ Emperor Guanxi and Empress Dowager Cixi went to their summer residence in Beijing, and likely under the influence of British and Japanese diplomats, rejected Russia's requirements and left decision-making in the hands of high officials, these being Li Hongzhang and Zhang Yinghuan. Once these officials had received "gifts" to the value of 500,000, or 250,000 roubles,⁶⁹ they went to persuade the Emperor and Emperor Dowager, something they succeeded in doing, and the lease agreement was signed on 27 March 1898.⁷⁰ On the same day, Chinese troops left both ports and were replaced just two days later by Russians.⁷¹ The agreement applied for 25 years and its content differed significantly from the recent promises given to Britain. Port Arthur was declared an exclusive military port which only Russian and Chinese ships could use, remaining closed for war and trading shops of other countries, something which violated Britain's Most Favoured Nation status. Dalian became an open port.⁷² The leased territory's borders were determined in a further agreement of 7 May 1898.⁷³ The Russians ran a civil and military administration on the leased territory, although it was formally under Chinese sovereignty. In contrast to its original promises, Russia acquired the right to fortify the leased territory, and a buffer zone was created between the leased territory and Chinese territory in which members of other countries could not carry out their business without Russia's permission. Although the British Government protested these terms on 28 March 1898, Russia knew that in essence London could do nothing which could change the situation. One can say that in terms of the lease, construction of the line from Port Arthur to the Chinese Eastern Railway, its position in Manchuria and though this recognition of its sphere of

⁶⁷ CRAC, 1898, Despatch 132, O'Connor to Salisbury, March 23, 1898, p. 56.

⁶⁸ *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, p. 103.

⁶⁹ MALOZEMOFF says that both were to receive 500,000 taels each. MALOZEMOFF, p. 104.

⁷⁰ MACMURRAY, pp. 119–121.

⁷¹ MORSE, p. 113.

⁷² For more on Dalian, see NIELD, pp. 82–84.

⁷³ MACMURRAY, pp. 127–128. No. 1898/9. Additional agreement defining the boundaries of the leased and neutralised territory in the Liaotung Peninsula, May 7, 1898, pp. 127–129.

influence, Russia achieved a success which in the end Britain was unable to prevent.⁷⁴

It seems that Britain was somewhat incorrect in its assessment of Russia's advances and the consequences of its activities, something which was also affected by Salisbury's idea of the possibility of agreement with Russia. Britain's generally unfavourable international position certainly also played a role, having been determined by deteriorating relations with Germany, the United States and subsequently also France. Russian pressure and threats to British interests in China made Disraeli's famous statement that "*in Asia there is room for us all*"⁷⁵ somewhat implausible. The activities of St Petersburg's ally, France, contributed to this, as although its weight in China had never been equivalent to both its major rivals, in the end it too played a successful part in the battle for leases and spheres of influence. In terms of influence in Beijing, France co-operated so closely with Russia that there was an idea in Britain that there was a certain "encirclement" because of Russian pressure in the north of China and French pressure in the south of China.

In March 1897, Paris had already forced Beijing to declare that the island of Hainan off the southern Chinese coast would not be transferred to another power in future.⁷⁶ France was undoubtedly inspired by the successes of its Russian ally, and this related to its ideas of its objectives in China. French interest was primarily focused on the southern Chinese provinces of Yunnan, Guanzhi and Guangdong, which neighboured French Indochina. In 1895, the Lyon Chamber of Commerce sent a mission to China to investigate conditions for trading there, during which it was to mainly focus on the extensive and wealthy western Chinese province of Sichuan. The mission prepared 100 reports for the French government and completed its mission in 1897. The outcome was a truly generously conceived plan linking Chongqing in Sichuan with Tonkin in French Indochina by a railway line which French companies would build, and which would result in the diversion of trade from four provinces, which had previously mostly been realised via Shanghai and Hong Kong (Xiang-gang), to ports in Tonkin. In this way, the French would acquire major

⁷⁴ For more on the Chinese Eastern Railway, see S. URBANSKI, *Kolonialer Wettstreit: Russland, China, Japan und die Ostchinesische Eisenbahn*, Frankfurt, New York 2008.

⁷⁵ *The Times*, November 10, 1895.

⁷⁶ March 15, 1898. France & China. Declaration concerning Non-alienation of Island of Hainan. MACMURRAY, p. 98.

economic influence over an area of roughly 1.28 million km², in which about 95 million citizens lived.⁷⁷

Despite these facts, French Foreign Minister, Gabriel Hanotaux, declared as late as February 1898 that France was not intending to acquire a naval base in China⁷⁸ and even termed the steps taken by Russia and Germany as “*premature and consequently regrettable*”.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, on 7 March 1898, France asked China not to provide economic benefits in the southern Chinese provinces to other powers, to award a concession to France for the construction of the railway from Tonkin to Yunnanfu, to allow France to set up a ‘coaling station’ on the south Chinese coast, and to name a French Inspector-General of the Chinese postal service.⁸⁰ The French demands aroused disquiet in London, which warned Beijing that further states would come with similar demands, including Britain.⁸¹ *The Times* even reported that France was attempting to acquire the whole area south of the Yangzi (Yangtze River; Chang Jiang) under its sphere of influence.⁸² Britain tried to make China turn the French down by promising they would place no more demands upon them. When they couldn’t achieve this, they submitted their own demands, which were to restrict France’s exclusive position in southern China if they were to be met.⁸³

Despite Britain’s warning, China accepted France’s demands on 10 April 1898.⁸⁴ France received Guangzhouwan Bay and adjacent islands for a naval base on a 99-year lease, and its troops annexed the area on 22 April, although the port remained open to ships of all countries. Furthermore,

⁷⁷ JOSEPH, pp. 229–230.

⁷⁸ *North China Herald*, March 7, 1898.

⁷⁹ JOSEPH, p. 475.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 476. For more on the development of the Chinese postal service, see MORSE, pp. 57–71.

⁸¹ CRAC, 1898, Despatch 151, MacDonald to Salisbury, April 4, 1898, p. 103.

⁸² *The Times*, March 19, 1898.

⁸³ Britain’s terms included lease of the so-called New Territories, comprised of Hong Kong, concession for the building of certain railway lines, an assurance France would not receive any exclusive railway or mining rights, a promise that Nanning would become a treaty port, and an agreement that China would not cede any territory within the provinces of Yunnan and Guangdong. CRAC, 1899, Despatch 21, Balfour to MacDonald, April 13, 1898, p. 19; *ibid.*, Despatch 40, MacDonald to Salisbury, April 25, 1898, p. 31.

⁸⁴ April 10, 1898. France & China. Declaration concerning Non-Alienation of Chinese Territory bordering Tonking. MACMURRAY, pp. 123–124; April 10, 1898. Agreement regarding Concession for Railway from Tonking to Yunnan, Lease of Kuangchowwan, and Organisation of Chinese Postal Service, *ibid.*, pp. 124–125.

France acquired a concession to build the railway from Tonkin to Yunnanfu, and China restated its promise that it would not give the island of Hainan to anyone else and that a French citizen would become Inspector-General of the Chinese postal service. Although the convention was discussed in the Zongli Yamen on 27 May 1898, China didn't ratify it until 5 January 1900.⁸⁵ But it wasn't just the pressure and activities of the Russian and French allies which represented a threat to British interests, but also the fact that Germany too had decided to gain a firm foothold in the Far East and acquire a sphere of influence within China. Finally, not only the gains of Russia and France, but also the occupation of Jiaozhou and the exercise of exclusive rights in Shandong province forced the Germans in the last years of the 19th century to reconsider the basic approach to defending British interests in China.

⁸⁵ China postponed the matter for a long time but following the murder of two French naval officers near Guangzhouwan on 12 November 1899, they hastily ratified the convention. MORSE, p. 113.



Austro-Hungarian Foreign Policy and the Independence of Albania

*Sylë Ukshini**

This paper aims to analyze the role and impact of the Austro-Hungarian policy on maintaining the territorial status quo in the Balkans at the time when the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was becoming inevitable. The independence of Albania was because of three main factors: the Albanian revolt in 1912, First Balkan War in 1912/13 and the diplomacy of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The Albanian revolt in 1912 gave the decisive blow against the Ottoman administration in Kosovo, which even resulted with the occupation of Skopje, but, due to internal differences Albanians did not declare independence from the Ottoman Empire. The First Balkan War hastened the decision of the Albanian leaders to declare independence, which can also be seen as a reaction of a threat of occupation to the Albanian territories by the Balkan Alliance (Serbia, Greece, Montenegro, and Bulgaria). However, Serbia and Montenegro managed to occupy Northern Macedonia (part of the Vilayet of Manastir). In this context, the role of the Austro-Hungarian diplomacy during the London Conference (1912–1913), was crucial for the recognition of the independence of Albania and the determination of the borders of the Albanian state. Since the occupation in 1878 and the later annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was strongly interested and involved in the Balkans, both economically and politically. The rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Russia over the dominance in the Balkans intensified since the beginning of the twentieth century and led to a deterioration of their relations. In this context, Austria-Hungary was interested in creating the Albanian state as a counterbalance to Serbian and Russian influence in Southeast Europe, as a barrier to prevent the territorial extension and to block the road of Serbia, which had already occupied Kosovo, toward the Adriatic.

[Albania; Kosovo; Austro-Hungarian Monarchy; Balkan Wars; Balkan League; Ottoman Empire]

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Introduction

Not only in specifically Albanian literature, but on the international scale – that which pertains to the developments related to the declaration of Albanian independence there are in many cases unclear or incorrect data. However, we must say that during the last years, there have been many papers, even Ph.D. thesis, that either did not bring anything new, or were kept “closed” and unpublicized, since the authors were aware of their scientific limits. So, the situation of historiographic studies has remained in a kind of a *status quo*. In some cases, the level of scientific feed has been lower than during the period of the socialist and monist systems. Although the science of the last two decades has formally managed to be free of control over the way the history is written in Prishtina, Tirana, and Tetovo, it did not manage to break old clichés. Written history has not been able to surpass the traditional ideological course of the theory of social sciences.

Therefore, a detailed analysis, absent of any selection and factual instrumentalisation, has been missing of all the factors that brought about the moment of independence of the Albanian state. It has happened that three merits were given either to one internal factor, or a national hero. But due to this absence, we have not been rightfully, deservedly, acknowledged by Austria-Hungary, which played the most important role of all the actors in the foundation of the Albanian state.

As a result, there are few scientific works or commentaries that go beyond the old clichés and challenge the traditional interpretation- many events or historical figures still remain taboo. Data taken from Western archives provide us with answers to various issues and present opportunities to reconstruct the local and international events that led to the proclamation of Albanian independence. This writing is mainly based on the data taken from the Austro-Hungarian archives at the Austrian State Archive in Vienna and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin. The aim is to provide a paper that goes beyond the “stereotypes” of the Albanian historiography and pushes a different interpretation of the historical events during the period leading up to the independence of Albania. The goal is to stimulate scientific debates of a quality that will revise the usual interpretations and at the same time will offer orientation for the readers and studies of this historical period. I am not pretending to give a sole answer, let alone the final one. Therefore, I will try to unveil the significance of Austro-Hungarian diplomacy in the proclamation of Albanian independence. I will also highlight the key role of the anti-

Ottoman uprising in Kosovo. I would even consider this paper an attempt to deepen my knowledge within the broader theme of heroism.

Albania, the farewell Symphony of the European Concert

The essential idea of this writing is to analyze the internal and external legitimacies which brought about the independence of Albania, more than one hundred years ago. It is a well-known fact that the Balkan states – among them Albania – were created as a consequence of the dynamic between the demands of the people for political independence, and the engagement of European powers. Since the establishment of the European Concert during the 1815 Vienna Congress, the main focus of the European states had been to maintain the status quo and avoid a continental war.¹ The State foundation was a product determined by the intersection of internal ethnic and political factors coupled the external factor of the European powers. The first foundations encompassed the idea of freedom, while the following focused on ensuring security and maintaining the regional and European balances.

Seeing the insufficiency of the Albanian factor to independently resolve their national dilemma, the Albanian elite of European orientation gave the right to be closer to Austria-Hungary. This positioned Albania as the only European state that would benefit from a protector's role in the formation of their state.² In this framework, Vienna officially supported

¹ J. DÜLFER, Die Kreta-Krise und der griechisch-türkische Krieg 1890–1898, in: H.-O. MÜHLEISEN V. TORUMSKY (eds.), *Inseln als Brennpunkte der internationalen Politik. Konfliktbewältigung im Wandel des internationalen System 1890–1984*, Köln 1986, p. 13; H. Ch. LÖHR, *Die Gründung Albaniens. Wilhelm Wied und die Balkan-Diplomatie der Grossmächte 1912–1914*, Frankfurt am Main 2010, p. 13.

² When Austria was excluded from Germany in 1866, its interests returned very quickly towards the Balkans, as the only region that bore expansion possibilities. While the Russian-Ottoman (1877) war was happening, Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs engaged to compile a memorandum for Albania. Considering the possibility to create, new Slavic states, at the eastern borders shared by Austria-Hungary. In the Ballhausplatz, they thought that the Albanians and their land would serve as strongholds to prevent the expansion of the Slavs. If the Albanians were to be left alone, they would be too weak to face the impending Slavism, as stated by F. Lippich, an Austro-Hungarian Consul in Shkodra. As part of a larger Austro-Hungarian force, they had the potential to be valuable allies, “since they are not only a strong nation, with totally anti-Slavic thoughts, but also because they owned a land territory which went up the border with Serbia, on one side, and up to Bulgarian Morava on the other”. The Albanians would clearly prevent the expansion desires of Serbia and Bulgaria. Supported by the Danubian Monarchy, they would gain a post that would make it impossible for the

the notion of the Albanian National Movements, which would establish an Albanian autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire. This was to act as an intermediary phase towards the implementation of external self-determination.³ The political elite, although not integrated within the Ottoman system, formulated the idea for Albanian state development. As the Albanian national movement of 1912 reached its peak, Kosovo took center stage for the first time since the East Crisis. Due to the internal and external premises, Kosovo took the primary role of the state-created political nationalism movement.⁴ Kosovo maintained this role until the other Albanian regions particularly the Southern regions became the bearers of cultural nationalism.

The formation of Albania seems today a coincidental chain of historical events. The First Balkan War forced the great European powers to face the demands of Albanians. The formation of Albania came also as the result of equilibrium of the great European powers. Albania was the farewell symphony of the European Concert.

Austro-Hungarian Foreign Policy and Albanians

For Austria-Hungary, which had the status of a major European power in the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, the Balkans were the last possible region in which it could apply an active foreign policy and played an important role in the alliances between the most powerful European states.⁵ At that time Austria-Hungary became part of the European ensemble not only because of its merits, but also because of its alliance with Russia and its good relations with Eng-

Russian-protected Slavs to fight in the Western Balkan, which was within the interest sphere of Austria-Hungary. Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Politisches Archiv (PA) XII/256, Türkei 1–V, “Denkschrift über Albanien” von k. und k. Consul F. Lippich, Wien, Juni 20, 1877.

- ³ H. D. SCHMANDER, *Die Albanienpolitik Österreich-Ungarns und Italiens 1877–1908*, Wiesbaden 1971; S. SKENDI, *Albanian National Awakening*, Tiranë 2000; *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik von der Bosnischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914*, Wien 1930; R. SCHWANKE, *Das Pretoktorat Österreich-Ungarns über die Katholiken Albanien*. Diss., Wien 1961; A. H. BENNA, Studien zum Kultuspretoktorat Österreich-Ungarns in Albanien im Zeitalter des Imperialismus (1888–1918), in: *Mitteilung des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, VII, 1954, pp. 13–47.
- ⁴ K. SCHMITT – J. OLIVER, *Kosovo. Kurze Geschichte einer zentralbalkanischen Landschaft*, Wien 2008, pp. 166–168.
- ⁵ I. DIÓSZEGI, *Die Aussenpolitik der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie 1871–1877*, Wien 1985.

land.⁶ In this context, the four Albanian vilayets in the Ottoman Empire⁷ were of particular importance for the protection of the interests of the monarchy for the Austro-Hungarian Empire as well as for Russia, Italy and the countries of the region. In the last three decades of the 19th century, Austria-Hungary played a prominent role through its cultural, political, and economic protectorate.⁸ In this way, Vienna played a historic role in the national awakening of the Albanians and in expanding its “vital interests” in the Balkans.⁹

What were the motivations for the Austro-Hungarian involvement in the Balkans? The main reason for an active Balkan policy lay in the great efforts of the Habsburg monarchy to expand his military, religious and economic influence on the east.¹⁰ Another incentive was the loss of the Austro-Hungarian leadership in the German states, but also in northern Italy. In 1859 Austria-Hungary lost the war against France. In the northeast was Russia, who was also aimed at penetrating the interior of the Balkans and saw itself as the protective power of the Orthodox Slavic population. In addition to that, their relationship has been turbulent since the Congress of Vienna and the Crimean War, and they have almost remained rivals. The price of the anti-Russian attitude in this war, which led to the reversal of Tsarist policies in the Balkans and the Aegean Sea, prolonged the Balkan rivalry between the dual monarchy and Russia until the outbreak of World War I.¹¹

⁶ F. R. BRIDGE, *The Foreign Policy of the Monarchy 1908–1918*, in: M. CORNWALL (ed.), *The last Years of Austro-Hungary, Essays in Political and Military History 1908–1918*, Exeter 1990.

⁷ The Albanian Vilayet (Ottoman Turkish: دوانراتي الو Vilâyet-i Arnavid) was a projected vilayet of the Ottoman Empire in the western Balkan Peninsula, which was to include the four Ottoman vilayets with substantial ethnic Albanian populations: Kosovo Vilayet, Scutari Vilayet, Manastir Vilayet, and Janina Vilayet. In some proposals, it included the Salonica Vilayet as well. N. CLAYER, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais: la naissance d'une nation majoritairement musulmane en Europe*, Karthala 2007, p. 463.

⁸ BENNA, pp. 13–26.

⁹ Z. PRELA, *Aspekte ekonomike të depërtimit paqësor të Austro-Hungarisë në Shqipëri (1900–1912)*, in: *Studime Historike*, 3, 2, 1966, pp. 77–104 (here p. 102).

¹⁰ K. GOSTENTSCHNIGG, *Wissenschaft im Spannungsfeld von Politik und Militär: Die österreichisch-ungarische Albanologie 1867–1918*, Wiesbaden 2018, p. 263.

¹¹ I. MÜLLER, *Die Handelspolitik der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie am Balkan zwischen 1890 und 1914*, Diss., Wien 1979, p. 185.

Based on that, Austro-Hungarian politics initially focused on the Catholic Albanian population, whom they offered protection against the attacks of the Ottoman Empire. Given the growing opposition to Russia and Serbia, as well as the ongoing weakening of the Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungary has committed himself since the end of the 19th century, to the national consciousness finding of the Albanians. The Albanian question was the main objective of Austro-Hungary and aimed at the founding of the Albanian state, which would make it for Serbia impossible for gain access to the Adriatic Sea.¹² In northern Albania, respectively in Kosovo, for example, it pushed the campaign to build a railway line that would connect Vienna through Sandzak with Thessaloniki, but unfortunately it was never realized.¹³

In addition to this with the Reichstadt Agreement of 1876 Austria-Hungary had made it clear that she would oppose the formation of a great Slavic state in the Balkans.¹⁴ This was reaffirmed in the secret Austro-Russian Convention of January 15, 1877, where the creation of an independent Albanian state was mentioned as possible in the event of a territorial remaniement or a dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵ Austro-Hungarian policy at the Congress of Berlin consequently endeavored to keep to a minimum the annexation of Albanian territory by the South Slavs. The importance to Austria-Hungary of northern Albania as a counterpoise to Slavism is also shown in the memorandum of 1877 by F. Lippich.¹⁶

This interest was not only a result of the geographical proximity and its strategic position in this part of Eastern Europe, but especially due to a great interest of Austro-Hungarian government to ensure control on the eastern of the Albanian Adriatic Sea. On the other hand, Slavic people of peninsula related to Russia, because of common origin and

¹² See the memoir written by Zwiedinek „Die albanesische Action des k. und k. Ministeriums des Aeussern im Jahre 1897“, Wien, Januar 11, 1898. HHStA, Botschaftsarchiv Konstantinopel, Kt. 422.

¹³ I. F. PANTENBURG, *Im Schatten des Zweibundes. Probleme österreichisch-ungarischer Bündnispolitik 1897–1908*, Wien, Köln, Weimar 1996, pp. 411–413.

¹⁴ A. NOVOTNY, Österreich-Ungarn auf dem Berliner Kongress, in: E. ZÖLLNER (Hg.), *Diplomatie und Außenpolitik Österreichs. Elf Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte*, Wien 1977, pp. 113–123, (here pp. 114–115).

¹⁵ Article 111 of the Additional Austro-Russian Convention of 15 January 1877, pp. 284 and 601.

¹⁶ HHStA, PA XII/256, Türkei IV, „Denkschrift über Albanien“, Vienna, June 1877, pp. 15–18.

culture. Albanians were the only people in the Balkans, which could not count on Russian support. Since Austria-Hungary needed to go out to the Adriatic Sea to become part of trade in the Mediterranean, the existence of the new Albanian state would serve them well, primarily as an obstacle against the expansion of the Slavic states. For this reason, Vienna was gradually jeopardizing its relations with its ally Russia. Especially with the appointment of Gyula Andrassy¹⁷ as Foreign Minister, anti-Russian orientation prevailed in foreign policy. At the Congress of Berlin in 1878 he was the principal Austrian plenipotentiary and directed his efforts to diminish the gains of Russia and aggrandize the Dual Monarchy. Before the Congress opened on 13 June, negotiations between Andrassy and the British Foreign Secretary Marquess of Salisbury had already “ended on 6 June by Britain agreeing to all the Austrian proposals relative to Bosnia-Herzegovina about to come before the congress while Austria would support British demands”.¹⁸ Furthermore, Andrassy wanted to block any attempt to create a large Slavic state to the south of Austria. In fact, Andrassy once said, “Austria’s mission remains [...] to be a bulwark against Russia, and only so long as she fulfils this mission is her existence a necessity for Europe”.¹⁹

Due to the above circumstances, Albania was the only area where the Austro-Hungarian Empire could extend its influence. Initially, this interest was limited to penning and funding some schools for the needs of preparing the Albanian Catholic clergy and to the financing of church and Catholic clergy, whereas later this activity kept increasing.²⁰ The Government of Vienna provided funds for the publication of textbooks in Albania, and helped with the publication of scientific works, which scope dealt with Albania and the Albanians. Although the Austro-Hungarian

¹⁷ Count Gyula Andrassy de Csíkszentkirály et Krasznahorka (8 March 1823 – 18 February 1890) was a Hungarian statesman, who served as Prime Minister of Hungary (1867–1871) and subsequently as Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary (1871–1879). Andrassy was a conservative; his foreign policies looked to expanding the Empire into Southeast Europe, preferably with British and German support, and without alienating Turkey. He saw Russia as the main adversary, because of its own expansionist policies toward Slavic and Orthodox areas. He distrusted Slavic nationalist movements as a threat to his multi-ethnic empire.

¹⁸ F. R. BRIDGE, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo: the Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1866–1914*, London 1972, p. 49.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

²⁰ F. RAMADANI, Albania in the Austro-Hungarian Policy during 1912, in: *100 Years of Independence. Speeches of the International Scientific Conference*, Tirana, November 26–27, 2012, Vol. I, Tirana 2014, pp. 191–208 (here pp. 191–193).

Empire gave significant contribution to the development of the Albanian education and culture, it had a reserved attitude of Ottoman Empire *status quo*, therefore, it opposed any action that could undermine. According to Austro-Hungarian diplomats, cultural and economic development of Albania was a prerequisite for ensuring autonomy or independence of Albania. In this context the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy did not support the idea of the organization of an Albanian upspring, also because Serbia and Montenegro Russian-backed could exploit these uprisings for their own interests. Breaking the status quo was contrary to the policy pursued by the Austro-Hungarian Government in the Balkan Peninsula.

But Austria-Hungary wanted to include Albania had the most direct interest in the survival of Albania. Vienna wished to add the area to its own sphere of interest and to check the expansion of the neighboring Slavic.²¹ For Foreign Minister Andrassy, partition of Turkey in Europe was almost as abhorrent to him as its domination by Russia.²² On the other hand, Serbian policy was more cautious at this stage the crisis in relations between Austro-Hungary and Serbia after the latter's annexation of Bosnia had made the Serbian government less hostile to the Ottoman state. Serbs thought that they would seize any opportunity to march in again and annex that territory, and perhaps even vilayets of Kosovo and Monastir (Macedonia) too.²³ The invasion of Kosovo and Macedonia was also aimed at Serbia, which at least since the Berlin Congress enjoyed the support of Russia, whose ultimate goal was to reach the shores of the eastern Adriatic.

The completion of the treaty reinforced Russia's suspicions that at the Congress of Berlin, Germany threw its complete support behind Austria-Hungary, and now with the 1879 treaty, Bismarck intended to continue that policy. Dual Alliance of October 1879 "*generated counter-alliances, which generated further mistrust and tensions, leading to an arms race, and the further polarization of the alliance structure*".²⁴ Eventually, the Tsar's regime felt compelled to look for another friend to protect against this threat on the crucial western border. Although many other things had to occur between 1879 and 1894 to prompt the Romanovs to turn to the French

²¹ C. JELAVICH – B. JELAVICH, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920*, Seattle, London 2000, p. 229.

²² A. J. P. TAYLOR, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848–1918*, Oxford 1954, p. 248.

²³ N. MALCOLM, *Kosovo: A short History*, London 1998, p. 243.

²⁴ J. S. LEVY, Alliance Formation and War Behavior. An Analysis of the Great Powers, 1495–1975, in: *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 25, 4, 1981, p. 582.

Republic, Russia finally completed this step with their alliance with France in 1894.²⁵

At the beginning of the 20th century, the European part of the Ottoman Empire was made up of Macedonia, Thrace, and Albania. These regions, however, were the focus of permanent tensions in relation to the ethnic, denominational and national diversity of its citizens, and the inability of the central government to implement necessary reforms and achieve law and order.²⁶ During this time, when most of the nationalities in the Balkans had already managed to create their own nation states and were struggling to expand their territories, the Albanians were still part of the Ottoman Empire, where religious affiliation was more important than the ethnic (Millet System). This delay in Albanians was due to the lack of sufficient support of European powers as well as the even rudimentary national awareness of the Albanians. The Albanians, divided into four Ottoman vilayets, belonged to the most secluded and isolated nationalities. For example, the well-known Austro-Hungarian diplomat and Albanologist J. G. von Hahn stated during a trip to Albania that there was no organic compound and no communication between the provinces.²⁷ Isa Blumi emphasizes that there were only two schools in Albanian in 1900 and that around 1914 in Mirdita, a predominantly Catholic region in the northwest of Albania, could read only three people in Albanian.²⁸

In this background, Albanian leaders were becoming more aware every day of the shaky structure of the Ottoman empire, supported only by interested powers for political motives. They feared, should the empire collapse, that a disunited Albania would be partitioned. On the other hand, they thought that union of the Albanian people could be achieved by remaining for some time within the framework of the Ottoman empire.²⁹ Their demand was, therefore, for administrative autonomy. Russia's increasing presence at the beginning of the 20th century, which

²⁵ K. A. SHAFER, *The Congress of Berlin of 1878: its Origins and Consequences*, Portland State University, Diss. 1989, p. 87.

²⁶ M. URBAN, *The Balkans and Austria-Hungary 1908–1912*, in: *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations*, 2014, 2, pp. 112–127 (here p. 115).

²⁷ J. G. von HAHN, *Albanesische Studien*, Jena 1854, p. 4.

²⁸ I. BLUMI, *The Role of Education in the Foration of Albanian Identity and Myths*, in: S. SCHWANDER-SIEVERS – B. J. FISCHER (eds.), *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, Bloomington 2002, pp. 49–59 (here pp. 51–52).

²⁹ W. EFFENDI, *La verite sur L'Albanie et les Albanais*, Paris 1879, pp. 94–95; S. SKENDI, *Albanian National Awakening 1878–1912*, Princeton 1967, p. 88.

also resulted in the opening of a consulate in Mitrovica in 1903, made the Albanians in northern Kosovo to perceive Austro-Hungary more and more as a protective power, which opposed Serbian and Montenegrin ambitions.³⁰ This was why the Albanian majority population had warmly welcomed the arrival of the Austro-Hungarian consul in the newly established consulate in Mitrovica in 1904.³¹ According to the Austro-Hungarian Consul Zambaur, the Austro-Hungarian consulate was seen both by Albanians and Muslims (Bosniaks) as a “counterweight” to the Russian consulate in Mitrovica, which was “[...] *completely openly hostile to the Turks* [...]”.³²

In this situation the great powers could not remain disinterested, particularly Austria-Hungary and Russia. In September 1902, the reform project was elaborated by Calice and Zinoviev in Istanbul and was delivered to the Grand Vizier. One of the proposals recommended that the security forces, gendarmerie, and police, should also include Christians, their number to be proportionate to the Christian population of the region.³³ As there was fear of a clash between Bulgarian and Ottoman armies which could ignite Europe, the emperors of Russia and Austria-Hungary met, on October 2–3, 1903, at Müritzsteg, in Austria, and made a series of proposals for reform, embodied in the so-called “Müritzsteg program”.³⁴ On the basis of article 3 of this agreement, the powers would ask the Ottoman Government, following the appeasement of the country, to modify the territorial delimitation of the administrative units, with a view to a more regular grouping of the various nationalities.³⁵ This article also concerned the situation of the Albanians.

In the framework with the efforts of the European diplomacy to expand its influence in this part of the Balkans, Austro-Hungary represented the

³⁰ E. FRANTZ, *Gewalt und Koexistenz: Muslime und Christen im spätosmanischen Kosovo (1870–1913)*, München 2016, p. 139.

³¹ HHStA, PA XXXVIII, Kt. 385, Zambaur an Gołuchowski, Mitrovica, Januar 22, 1904.

³² Ibid., Zambaur an Gołuchowski, Mitrovica, Februar 18, 1904, Nr. 11.

³³ T. von SOSNOSKY, *Die Balkanpolitik Österreich-Ungarns seit 1866*, 2 Bde, Berlin 1914, p. 131.

³⁴ In 1903, the Macedonian Question was at the roots of the first concerted European international intervention. The Müritzsteg Agreement, which was signed by the six great powers and the Ottoman Empire, was an attempt at common European diplomacy. See: N. AKHUND, *Stabilizing a Crisis and the Müritzsteg Agreement of 1903: International Efforts to Bring Peace to Macedonia*, in: *The Hungarian Historical Review*, 3, 3, 2014, pp. 587–608.

³⁵ See the articles of the “Müritzsteger Programm”, pp. 133–134; SKENDI, p. 204.

position that the interests of the monarchy were best protected, if the status quo would be maintained in the Ottoman Empire, with the help of the English and Russian Entente. The position of the Habsburg Monarchy was determined by the fact that this European power had to face two major political forces of the time; Pan-Slavism, supported by Russia and Italy, who had become since 1891 the third official Balkan power, along Austro-Hungary and Russia. In the fight against both currents, the Albanian area played an increasingly important role to preserve the vital interests of Vienna. For this reason, the politics prepared the secret plan "Albanien-Aktion",³⁶ which focused on the question about the future of the Albanian population. On the one hand, the Albanian territories formed the foundation of a bulwark against the Serbian penetration to the Adriatic and allowed a way to Thessaloniki at the same time, while on the other hand, as part of the Ottoman Empire, it guaranteed the free shipping of the monarchy of the street of Otranto.³⁷ In the case of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, Vienna aimed to create an autonomous Albania and at the same time preventing the deployment of Italy on the Adriatic coast of Albania.³⁸ This autonomous Albania had to fulfill three functions for the Habsburg monarchy: guarantee the road to Thessaloniki, ensure free transportation on the Adriatic and the protection against the spread of Panslavism.³⁹ For this reason, it was now time that Austro-Hungary to achieve an agreement with his new rival in the Balkans, Italy. An expansion of Serbia or Bulgaria to the Adria had to be prevented so that Russia's "iron ring" is not wrapped around the dualistic monarchy.

The acceptance by Austria-Hungary of the Monastir sector for the Italian gendarmerie prepared the way for the meeting of Abbazia (Opatija) (April 9, 1904) between Goluchowski and Tittoni, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Both parties reiterated declarations in favor of the status

³⁶ F. R. BRIDGE, Österreich(-Ungarn) unter den Großmächten, in: P. URBANITSCH – A. WANDRUSZKA (Hg.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918. Bd. VI/1: Die Habsburger Monarchie im System der internationalen Beziehungen*, Wien 1989, pp. 196–373 (here p. 290).

³⁷ GOSTENTSCHNIGG, pp. 273–274.

³⁸ *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik von der bosnischen Krise bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914. Diplomatische Aktenstücke des österreichisch-ungarischen Ministeriums des Aussern* (hereinafter ÖUA), ausgewählt von L. BITTNER – A. F. PRIBRAM – H. SRBIK – H. UEBERSBERGER, Bd. 1, Wien, Leipzig 1930, p. 31.

³⁹ GOSTENTSCHNIGG, p. 276.

quo in the Balkans and preservation of Albanian integrity.⁴⁰ They stood for the principle of autonomy based on nationality.⁴¹ The two powers were suspicious of each other and relentlessly watched each other's activities, particularly in Albania, but their public statements were always in favor of the maintenance of the Triple Alliance.⁴²

The appointment of Conrad von Hötzendorf as Chief⁴³ of Staff for the Austro-Hungarian military forces and Alois Lexa Freiherr von Aehrenthal as the new Foreign Minister in 1906 marked a turning point in the Austro-Hungarian foreign policy. Together with his successor Franz Ferdinand, they were representatives of the aggressive hegemonic policy towards the Balkans. They were supported by military and political circles in the German Empire, which regarded Austria-Hungary as a pioneer of economic and political penetration of Germany in the Balkans and the Middle East.⁴⁴ While the question of Macedonian reforms was encountering great difficulties, Aehrenthal announced (January 27, 1908) the plan for the construction of the railway line Sarajevo-Uvac-Mitrovice-Salonica. This would give a powerful impetus to Austria-Hungary's Orientpolitik.⁴⁵ Italy responded with a project to build a railway line from Vlore to Monastir, following for the most part the ancient Via Egnatia. This would

⁴⁰ SKENDI, p. 253.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 254.

⁴² Since there was no denunciation of the treaty of the Triple Alliance by July 8, 1907, the treaty was tacitly prolonged for another period of six years, that is, until July 8, 1914. *ÖUA*, Bd. 8, Wien, Leipzig 1930, p. 132.

⁴³ Count Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf (1852–1925), as chief of the Austro-Hungarian general staff, was the foremost proponent of preventive war as the means of solving both the foreign and domestic problems of the multinational Habsburg Monarchy in one grand action. The combination of Conrad's insistence on war and Serbia's official, and frequently reckless unofficial, nationalist policies set the stage for the outbreak of a Balkan conflict that would shake Europe to its very foundations and change the world forever. In 1914 he was one of the main proponents of war on Serbia in response to the assassination in Sarajevo of Franz Ferdinand. After disastrous military campaigns, Field Marshal Conrad was sacked from the General Staff in March 1917. His voluminous German-language memoirs "Aus meiner Dienstzeit, 1906–1918" contain some clear insight into what motivated Austro-Hungarian policies towards Albania during the chaotic events that took place there in 1914, just before the fall of Prince Wied. See: J. G. BEAVER, *Collision Course Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, Serbia, and the Politics of Preventive War*, Lulu.com 2009.

⁴⁴ PRELA, p. 79.

⁴⁵ T. von SOSNOSKY, *Die Balkanpolitik Österreich-Ungarns seit 1866*, Vol. 11, Stuttgart, Berlin 1914, pp. 141–142.

be dangerous for Austria-Hungary for it would establish for Italy a sphere of interest in southern Albania, which could be “*perhaps the forerunner of an occupation*”.⁴⁶ Neither plan materialized because of the Young Turk revolution of 1908.⁴⁷ Although the formula of the two powers, status quo and, in the event of the collapse of Ottoman Empire, the autonomy of an Albanian province or state, corresponded to their fundamental wish, there were differences in their particular interests. The size of Albania was not immaterial to her. Austria-Hungary wanted the northern part at least to be within the Albanian state, for in this way the exit of the Slavs to the Adriatic would be blocked.⁴⁸

When in July 1908 the Young Turks staged a revolution in Constantinople, established a constitutional government, and inaugurated a reform program, the Austrian foreign minister Graf (Count) Lexa von Aehrenthal resolved to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina before the new Turkish regime could regain control over them. To that end Aehrenthal met the Russian foreign minister, Aleksandr P. Izvolsky, at Buchlau, in Moravia; and, on Sept. 16, 1908, Izvolsky agreed that Russia would not object to the annexation. Izvolsky felt Aehrenthal had deceived him. The Russian Foreign Minister's defeat was further augmented by the fact that he did not have the consent of the government, nor of Emperor Nicholas II for his actions.⁴⁹ Furthermore, Serbia, which was closely related to Bosnia and Herzegovina geographically and ethnically, was outraged by the annexation.

As the so-called Balkan League was forged, Austria-Hungary rode on the coattails of its prestige triumph in Bosnia in 1909. Vienna adopted a “sphinx”-like posture to frighten Serbia into inaction, refusing to confirm or deny rumors that it intended to march to Salonika if it perceived any threat to the status quo.⁵⁰

Russia tried to unite the Balkan States and the Ottoman Empire in an alliance against the alleged expansionist goals of Austro-Hungary. Of course, the Ballhausplatz feared that a Russia-controlled Balkan league at the southern border of the dual monarchy would not only endanger its trading interests on the Balkan's peninsula, but also mean a military

⁴⁶ L. Freiherr von CHLUMECKY, *Österreich-Ungarn und Italien. Das westbalkanische Problem und Italiens Kampf um die Vorherrschaft in der Adria*, Leipzig, Wien 1907, p. 201.

⁴⁷ SKENDI, p. 255.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 256.

⁴⁹ BRIDGE, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo*, p. 305.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 339.

siege by Russia and his loyal states. Under these circumstances, all the powers were interested in a status quo in the Balkans: United Kingdom, Italy, Russia, and Austria-Hungary. However, Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal, Foreign Minister of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy (1906–1912), made special efforts to get closer to Italy and Great Britain because of the Russian danger. In December 1909, the foreign ministers of Austria-Hungary and Italy signed an agreement, according to which any proposal of a third party, that intervenes and tries to change the status quo in the Balkans and other regions of the Ottoman Empire, should be discussed between them.⁵¹ But the Ottoman Italian War of 1911–1912 in North Africa led to a new threat of the status quo in the Balkans. At the same time, between 1909 and 1911 in Kosovo and the other Albanian areas, there were successive uprisings against the Young Turks regime, which gave the political status quo in the Balkans the final blow and shook the relations between Austro-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, as well as Austro-Hungary and the Albanians. Austro-Hungary's ambivalent policy, which is not interested in destroying the Ottoman Empire, but engaged in a decentralization of the Ottoman Empire. Vienna rightly feared that a Serbia-supported War in the Balkans endanger the Austro-Hungarian interests in the Balkans and would risk Albania's division through his neighbours. In the meantime, the military leadership circling stands chief Blasius Schemua⁵² demanded a solution through war, while the circles and in particular the government of the Ballhausplatz continued to build on military pressure and threat. However, when the uprising broke out in March 1911 in Northern Albania, Austro-Hungary called High Port to treat the Albanians the most humane way, and thus risk a deterioration in bilateral relations. The Ballhausplatz signalled the Albanian leaders that Austro-Hungary was ready to support the creation of an autonomous

⁵¹ PRELA, p. 153.

⁵² In 1910, Schemua was responsible for nationwide mobilization in the Ministry of War. From 1911 to 1912 he was Chief of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff, the highest position in the hierarchy of the Austro-Hungarian Army. At the beginning of the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 he was appointed commander of the 16th Corps in Dubrovnik and promoted to Feldmarschalleutnant (lieutenant field marshal). In 1913 he was promoted to general of the infantry. At the beginning of World War I in 1914, during the Battle of Galicia, he commanded the 2nd Corps, but failed to distinguish himself at the Battle of Komarów. He was replaced by Johann von Kirchbach auf Lauterbach. He was then appointed commander of the defense of Danube from Krems to Pressburg. In 1915 he retired at his own request. See: P. BROUCEK, Schemua, Blasius, in: *Österreichisches biographisches Lexikon 1815–1950*, Bd. 10, Wien 1994, p. 76.

Albania.⁵³ Of course, Austro-Hungary intended to take over a leading role in this Balkan policy. The change of their attitude towards the High Port and the Albanian national movement led to the outburst of a new uprising in Kosovo in May 1912 and then throughout Albania. As a result, the reputation of Austro-Hungary gradually increased both within the Catholic and the Muslim population of Albanians.⁵⁴

Kosovo, the State Nationalism Epicentre

As the center of the Ottoman state weakened, seemingly endless conflict commenced between the peoples of the geographical outskirts and the center itself. The crumbling centre acted as a decisive battlefield: this was the case on the anti-Ottoman uprising at Kosovo Vilayet, in the spring of 1912. Led by Hasan Prishtina, the uprising's agenda centered on utilizing the unity of the innermost four vilayets, which held most of the Albanian population. This was the most substantial limit to implement internal self-determination, which was influenced by the internal and external legitimacies. Although the Albanian uprising at Kosovo Vilayet reached large dimensions, it still lacked the unique leading centre that could coordinate, organize, and adequately express direction, in contrast to the circumstances at the time of and also have an adequate organizational centre, as it happened the Albanian League of Prizren.⁵⁵

Fractioned, the Albanians became a playing ball for the Ottoman state and Balkan and European powers. At the same time internally, Albanian politicians – with old-fashioned ideas and lacking political direction – raced for the Albanian primate. This continued until the Balkan states secretly established an agenda to divide the European heritage from the Ottoman state.⁵⁶ The expansionist plans of the Balkan countries risked the idea of the Albanian autonomous principate foundation. At the same time, they countered the expansion of the political and economic influence of Austria-Hungary.⁵⁷

⁵³ GOSTENTSCHNIGG, pp. 288–289.

⁵⁴ HHStA, PA XXXVIII, Kt. 405, Adamkiewicz an Berchtold, Prizren, März 4, 1912, Nr. 22.

⁵⁵ HHStA, PA XIV/41, Albanien XXXIV, Heimroth an Berchtoldt, Üskup, August 21, 1912, vertraulich.

⁵⁶ S. UKSHINI, Role of Isa Boletini at the anti-Ottoman (National) Movement, in: *Albanology, II*, Prishtina 2011, pp. 229–260.

⁵⁷ In 1912, Albania penetrated to the centre of the Great European Powers' politics due to the First Balkan War. However, prior to the Balkan war there was the formation of

The subject of the Albanian uprising in Kosovo led by Hasan Prishtina, manifested into the political and national agenda of the Taksim Meeting. This gave strong incentive for the idea of a national congress to achieve the unity of the Albanian vilayets.⁵⁸

These events, which had a strong Balkan and European resonance, were however followed very closely by the official Vienna. For the sake of maintaining the status quo at a time when the Balkan countries were preparing to implement attacks against the High Porte, the official Vienna was attempting to reach a political agreement between the Istanbul Government and the Albanian insurgents. The Istanbul Government had not clearly understood the situation in Albania and was unaware of the aggressive plans of the Balkan states. This was seen very clearly during a meeting in Istanbul with the great vizier and minister of war, Mahmut Shefqet Pasha, and the Ambassador of Austria-Hungary at Constantinople Markgraf von Pallavicini, who assured Pasha that the Albanian uprising would be crushed quickly. This stand of the Ottoman vizier gave the right to the Austro-Hungarian diplomat to write to Vienna regarding the attitude of the Istanbul government, which was to be taken as *cum grano salis*.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, the High Porte was forced to negotiate with the Albanian delegation. During these negotiations, which were used moreso to waste time and fraction the national movement leaders than to give a stable solution – three groups were present within the Albanian leadership:

The autonomous wing, led by Hasan Prishtina and Nexhip Draga, which continued the efforts to come closer to the conservatives and Hamidists. The autonomous wing, although having the declarative support of Middle and Southern Albania, did not get the support promised by the Taksim Agreement.⁶⁰ Hasan Prishtina's power was greatly undermined, as Ismail

a Balkan Alliance in the spring of 1912, which was comprised of the military alliance of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece. The plan to create such an alliance came from the Russian delegate in Belgrade. Thus, Russia became the initiator and the protecting force behind this alliance, since at the beginning of its expansion projects focused at heart on the division of the Ottoman Empire and the Albanian territories. K. BOECKH, *Von den Balkankriegen zum Ersten Weltkrieg. Kleinstaatenpolitik und ethnische Selbstbestimmung auf dem Balkan*, München 1996, p. 34.

⁵⁸ See: H. B. PRISHTINA: Brief Memoir on the Albanian Uprising of 1912, http://www.albanianhistory.net/1921_Prishtina/index.html [2021–10–31].

⁵⁹ HHStA, PA XIV/39 Albanien XXXIV, Pallavicini addressed to Berchtoldt, Janiköi, Juni 25, 1912, No. 54.

⁶⁰ HHStA, PA XIV/41, Albanien XXXIV, Heimroth an Berchtoldt, Üskup, August 21, 1912, confidential.

Qemali did not come to him, arguing that he was abroad with intentions to meet directly with officials of Gazi Pasha's government in Istanbul. Ismail Qemali not coming to Prishtina and have in Trieste and that he had to go to Istanbul to discuss with the government of Gazi Pasha, weakened very much the position of Hasan Prishtina internally. As the minority actor, combined with materialization of the 14-point compilation, known in history as "14 Points of Hasan Prishtina", Prishtina was forced to make compromises with the *Hamidian* and *Turkoman* courses. On August 9, 1912, Hasan Prishtina, the ideologist and strategist of the uprising of Kosovo presented the 14 demands of the insurgents to Marshall Ibrahim Pasha in Prishtina, on behalf of all of the Albanian regions. Pasha in turn forwarded them to Istanbul. Later, the Albanian insurgents, at the beginning of August 1912, marched to Shkup/Üsküp with no resistance at all by the Ottoman army. Never before had unity of the four vilayets come so close to being a true and autonomous Albania.

Furthermore, a question is raised here: Why would the discussion in Istanbul between Ismail Qemali and the Istanbul government take place now when these events were occurring in Prishtina and Skup/Üsküp? Was this a diversion devised by the High Porte to divide the Albanians, or was the war for the political primate within the Albanian political scene in question? This is a topic to be studied thoroughly with a high level of scientific accuracy and no compromise to the historical truth. It is well-known that during the uprising of 1912 at Kosovo Vilayet – led by Hasan Prishtina as the ideologist of the Albanian modern nationalism and state – Ismail Qemali did not use any influence, and in fact abstained from it.⁶¹ When the uprising of Kosovo Vilayet marked the first successes in July and August of that year, Ismail Qemali went to the northern part of Albaniathen passed through Cetinje to converse directly with the king of Montenegro. In September of 1912, again finding himself in Istanbul, the great vizier Qemal Pasha offered Qemali a position as minister post, an offer to which. Naturally at this moment, he understood that the Ottoman Empire was headed for the abyss. The Albanian politician, having enjoyed a long career of political experience, saw the solution to the Albanian problem: The recognition of the Albanian nation and its language, in the frame of an autonomy within the Empire.

Despite this recognition, we cannot suppose a correlation between the 14 demands of Hasan Prishtina and the viewpoints of Ismail Qemali.

⁶¹ Interview with Ismail Qemal bey: *Neue Freie Presse*, August 27, 1912.

He did not mention, in any declaration or even during the interview he gave in August 1912 for Vienna journal *Neue Freie Presse*, the uprising of Kosovo Vilayet. To distance this from the memorandum of Gërçe, this time his role on projecting the demands of the Albanian insurgents was invisible. The latest developments and his rivalry with Syrja and Eqrem bej Vlora for the primary position, in convening the National Convent, are evidence that Ismail Qemali was long preparing to emerge as the leader of Albania. This is also confirmed by the Balkans archive sources, which have made known the fact that, several months prior to the proclamation of Albanian independence, Ismail Qemali was preparing himself to be the prince.⁶² He knew better than anyone else the internal and external legitimacies of that time in Albania, as well as the mechanisms to redirect politics and rise as the lead of these developments. This would lead later to the independence of Albania.

Apart from that, paralleling the uprising of Kosovo and the compilation of the “14 demands” of Hasan Prishtina,⁶³ Shkodra and South Albania presented demands and memorandums that differed from one another. It is important to note that the demands of the Albanian insurgents, although prepared on *behalf* of all Albanian regions, did not truly echo the other Albanian areas. This is explained by the fact that very few representatives of the regions outside Kosovo resided in Skup/Üsküp. Regarding the formative background of the Albanian elite, their differences and orientations made it impossible to create a unique political platform. Based on this fact, we can say that the Kosovo Vilayet uprising of the summer of 1912 did not have a general national character. Because of that, direct responsibility fell on the Albanian leaders who did not show the required level to implement the tasks formulated at the Taksim Meeting.

Following the intervention of the Balkan powers, the lack of the unity and a greater Albanian indecisiveness, as well as the prolongation of the Ottoman Empire to complete Albanian demands, even after the intervention of the Balkan powers, ensured that the epicentre of Kosovo Vilayet – Shkup/Üsküp – did not become the main center for the proclamation of Albanian independence.

Now when the organization level could have been revised, following the uprising of the summer of 1912, we observe a disorganization of the

⁶² Z. CANA (ed.), *The Albanian Uprising of 1912 in the Serbian Documents*, Prishtina 2008.

⁶³ HHStA, PA/41, Albanien XXXIV, Tahy addressed to Berchtoldit, Mitrovica, Sugust 11, 1912, No. 48, confidential.

national movement in the second half of August. It is for this reason we lack a nationwide leading centre.

The Diplomatic Initiative of Berchtold

Though failing to fulfill initial expectations, the Albanian uprising of Kosovo Vilayet and the entrance of the Albanian insurgents in Shkup/Üsküp in August 1912 shifted the frame of European diplomacy, starting with Austro-Hungarian ties. For a long time, Austria-Hungary had shown interest in the national movement, and had expressed sympathy towards its goal of unification of the four Albanian vilayets into a single autonomous entity. On August 13, 1912, the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary, Leopold von Berchtold, undertook the diplomatic initiative to safely maintain the political *status quo* in the Balkans and create circumstances for the achievement of an Albanian autonomy within the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁴ He followed closely the flow of developments in the Albanian space and monitored the preparations of the Balkans Alliance.

In this context, the synchrony is clearly seen between the 14 points of the Albanian insurgents and the diplomatic initiative of Foreign Minister Berchtold, who proposed to the great European power to undertake a collective step at the High Porte. This would be to force implementation of the gradual decentralization policy in accordance with the real ethnic relations within the empire. Observed independently of time and the other constraints of this Vienna diplomatic proposal, we can easily correlate the position of Austro-Hungarian politics with the Albanian issue and the demands of the Albanian insurgents compiled by Hasan Prishtina. At that time, sources revealed that Count Berchtold re-actualized the idea of his former, Aehrenthal, to take the necessary steps in a position closer to Istanbul to determine a general governor for the entirety of Albania.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ The Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary, Berchtold, sent a proposal to representatives of its state at the residency of Great Powers in July 1912. It included this content: a proposal to the governments of the Great Powers of the mutual exchange of viewpoints, and encouragement of the Ottoman Empire to implement a principle of decentralization. At the same time, the Balkan states would be responsible for any action against the Empire. See: A. WERNER, *Vom Ende der Habsburgermonarchie bis zur Ersten Republik*, Diss., Wien 2009, pp. 60–61.

⁶⁵ At the speed of the Albanian uprising of 1911, Aehrenthal, proposed in front of the Great Powers a collective step to address the issue of the Porte, to implement the reforms and decentralization of the Ottoman Empire. The bloody crush of the uprising by Shefqet Turgut Pasha made the initiative of Vienna impossible. Z. CANA, *Serbia's Policy towards the Albanian Issue*, Prishtina 2006, p. 223.

The goal of Ballhausplatz was to secure support of the neighboring Great Powers for the Albanian demands. This was to ensure Istanbul's acceptance, and on the other hand, to avoid the intervention of the Balkan states, which would make it impossible to achieve the goal of the Danubian Monarchy.

By this initiative, Berchtold also aimed to create European diplomatic preconditions. These would prevent the expansion of Serbia towards Sanxhak and Novi Pazar, Kosovo Vilayet, the Albanian part of Adriatic or Manastir, to prevent the violation of vital economic and political interests of Austria-Hungary.

This initiative was the last chance to peacefully start the process of the separation of the Albanians and accept the transitory phase as the foundation of the autonomous Albania. This was the chance to consolidate its position in front of the Balkan states, or at least avoid the same fatal directions taken by the Ottoman state. It is not by accident that Russia spearheaded the failure of this Austro-Hungarian initiative.

If such a plan could have been brought to action, the Albanian state and its borders may have been very different in 1913. The High Porte did not realize the gravity of the Balkan situation, even as the initiative was presented by official Vienna. The High Porte refused, as the Balkan and European states – Russia in particular – opposed the diplomatic initiative of the foreign minister, of which the starting point was division of the Ottoman heritage. The High Porte's decision was highly motivated by the fear that Vienna's proposal would give way to the intervention of the European powers, as they did in the Mürzsteg Agreement (1903).⁶⁶ The Ottoman Empire, unaware of the aggressive plans of the Balkan states, refused the diplomatic initiative of official Vienna. In the end, this initiative would have maintained for a period the status quo of its territories from the foreign perspective, while internally would have avoided the pushing factors that would bring permanent conflicts and wars between Albanians and the Ottoman state. Moreover, Vienna's original initiative demonstrated that the Albanian uprisings were channelled on the institutional reforms floor, through which it would have opened a path for the foundation of an Albanian state with the widest ethnic borders.

To better understand the weight of the Austro-Hungarian commitments regarding the Albanian issue, we must firstly observe the position that

⁶⁶ HHStA, Sonderbestände, N1. Berchtold 1, Typoskript d. Memoiren Berchtolds, Bd. I, pp. 61–62.

existed at that time within the European Concert, which is likewise the Contact Group of our days. On one side, we had Russia and France, and somehow even England backing the commitments. All three supported the Balkan states as a counterbalance towards the countries of the Triple Alliance and the Ottoman Empire. On the other side, Austria-Hungary was not consistently backed by Germany or Italy, the former, which was not ready to sacrifice for Vienna, the latter which detached itself from the Alliance whenever an interest was violated and was prepared to make compromises with Austro-Hungarian opponents. Alongside this, the powerful European states, all except Russia, protected the concept of maintaining the political *status quo*, until the end of the First Balkan War.⁶⁷

Under these circumstances, Austria-Hungary was searching for an alliance to push forward Albanian state foundation, as the projection of the economic and political interests of Austria-Hungary was in concordance with the goals of the Albanian National Movement. Based on these premises, we can see also the discussion that took place done in September 1912 between Count Berchtold and German Chancellor, Theobald von Bethman Hollweg, regarding Austrian politics in Balkans.⁶⁸ The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister declared the goals of his country: Vienna was first aiming to prevent Italian establishment on the Albanian coastline of Adriatic. Second, in case of the Ottoman loss, the independent Albania should be founded.⁶⁹ This was the first time that Vienna, only a few weeks after the Albanian uprising, presented the idea for the foundation of the Albanian state. At the same time, the disorganized Albanian elite simply for the completion of the promised 14 points. In the end, the policy of Austria-Hungary was motivated primarily by strategic aspect.⁷⁰ That is why the Austrian-Hungarian Council of Ministers decided on September 14, 1912 not to intervene in the event of a war in the Balkans.⁷¹

⁶⁷ G. D. SCHANDERL, *Die Albanienpolitik Österreich-Ungarns und Italien 1877–1908*, Wiesbaden 1971, p. 57.

⁶⁸ Der Botschafter in Konstantinopel Freiherr von Wangenheim an das Auswärtige Amt, Nr. 12158, Therapia, September 22, 1912, in: *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871–1914. Sammlung der diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes* (hereinafter GP), J. LEPSIUS – A. MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY – F. THIMME (Hrsg.), Bd. 33, Berlin 1926, pp. 113–114.

⁶⁹ H. CH. LÖHR, *Die Gründung Albaniens: Wilhelm zu Wied und die Balkan-Diplomatie der Großmächte 1912–1914*, Frankfurt am Main 2010, p. 35.

⁷⁰ See: HHStA, Sonderbestände, N1. Berchtold 1, Typoskript d. Memoiren Berchtolds, Bd. III, p. 167.

⁷¹ BRIDGE, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo*, p. 345.

The theoretical acceptance of the Albanian demands by the Istanbul Government⁷² was only a ploy to gain time and to avoid the pressure of the Balkan states. Aiming to start a war against the Ottoman state, the Balkan states presented this pressure through an ultimatum that the same rights given to Albanians should be given also to Christian minorities. The purpose was to put Hight Porte in a precarious situation- to force, if not fulfill, the meeting of the Albanian demands, and to therefore make impossible the unity of the four vilayets. The Balkan Alliance was not interested in the demands of the Christian minorities, neither the reforms themselves, but were instead interested in the creation of preconditions in the decisive war against the Ottoman Empire.

The Eruption of the First Balkan War

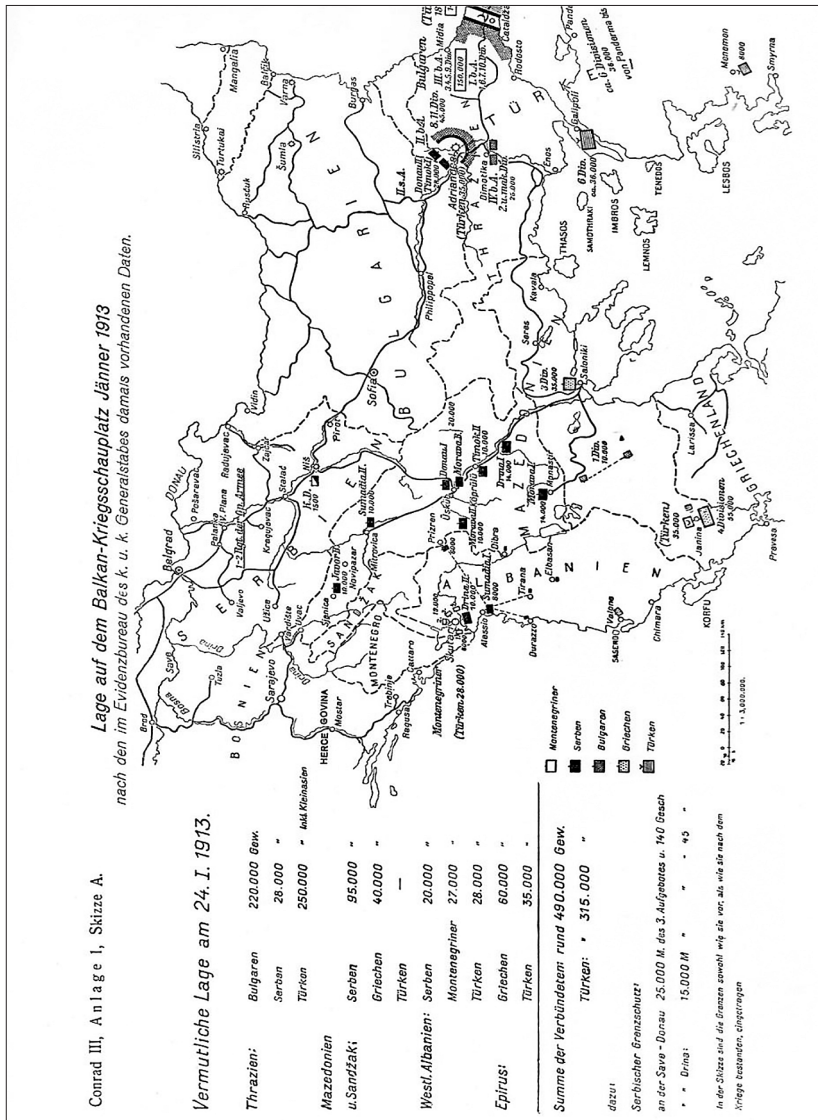
The preparations of Serbia for war were fastened up through many factors: after the occupation and the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the road to expansion of the Serbian state was free towards the south Balkans. This was a direction towards which Austria-Hungary was also interested in expanding its influence (*“Drang nach Thessaloniki”*). Austria-Hungary competed with Serbia for the plans on constructing a railway through Sanxhak of Novi Pazar, Kosovo Vilayet and Manastir. For the sake of the truth, whoever would have owned this railway would be in control of the entire Balkan. At the time when the Ottoman Empire was heading toward the dissolution, the Danubian Monarchy was undertaking all the diplomatic and military actions to prevent Serbia from having a direct line to the Albanian coastline in Adriatic Sea.

In August of 1912, when the negotiating Ottoman commission technically accepted the 14 points of Hasan Prishtina⁷³ later forwarded to the Istanbul Government – the potential of the rising Albanian autonomous state became visible, alarming the Belgrade and all the other Balkan centres.

According to the data given by the Office of the Royal and Empire General Headquarters of Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire Army was divided into three fractions, each of them having 315,000 soldiers. The countries of the Balkan Alliance had 490,000 soldiers (see below the map of the Empire General Headquarters of Austria-Hungary).⁷⁴

⁷² On 14 September 1914, Ottoman government officially notified that it accepted the Albanian conditions, except two points.

⁷³ HHStA, PA XIV/41, Albanien XXIV, Heimroth addressed to Berchtoldit, Üsküp, August 21, 1912.



⁷⁴ CONRAD, III, Anlage 1, Skizze A: Situation in Balkan – the war theatre 1913, prepared at that time by the and Empire General Headquarters of Austria-Hungary. See: F. CONRAD von HÖTZENDORF, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit 1906–1918*, Bd 3, Wien, Leipzig, München 1922, p. 828.

In front of the great military force of the member countries of the Balkan Alliance, the army of the Ottoman empire was weaker, because it lacked sufficient qualified forces, and because it was unreformed with no military moral and nor internal cohesion. Two Ottoman armies were established in Europe: one that protected Trakia and its capital city, the second was retired in Macedonia. In parallel with these troops, under a common command were found also divisions of Shkodra and Ioannina.

Observing that the Balkan states were preparing for war, the Istanbul government reacted quickly. Under the layer of military exercises, the High Porte started the first regiments to Macedonia and Trakia in September 1912. The Balkan states mobilized their forces between September 13 and October 3, 1912.

In the end, on October 8, 1912, the Montenegrin troops passed the northern-west border of the Ottoman Empire, inciting the First Balkan War. Serbia and Greece joined on October 17 and later the same step was followed by Bulgaria.⁷⁵

This was the beginning of the First Balkan War. This also presented the challenge of which position the Monarchy would take in this case: In favour or against the Balkan Alliance? What would it mean to be in favour or against Serbia? This presented two military policy possibilities for Austro-Hungarian intervention in the Balkan conflict: Unification with the Balkan Alliance, which vied for the permanent solution of the "Serbian issue" with the usage of the arms; or to fight Italy, which was weak against the forces of the Ottoman Empire, despite being very active on Balkan. To do this, Austria-Hungary tried to gain the support of Romania, since they had already a preexisting alliance from 1883. In contrast to the prior agreement, this alliance proved unstable, following discussion with General Conrad in December 1912 in Bucharest. This was due to Romanian foreign entanglement with Russia. In November 1912, military actions ceased, leaving only Greece to continue fighting on the sea until a cease-fire was reached on December 3, 1912, bringing peace on May 30, 1913. The Balkan Alliance, which was disintegrated on May 28 that same year, was found again at the center of another conflict between them: how best to determine the division of the Ottoman heritage. Meanwhile on June 26, Bulgaria started the operation against Serbia for Macedonia. Greece and Romania both attacked on July 5, 1913, while

⁷⁵ Der Staatssekretär des Auswärtigen Amtes von Kinderlen an Kaiser Wilhelm II, *GP*, 33, Nr. 12244, October 9, 1912, pp. 178–179.

the Second Balkan War was at its peak. On July 21, Turkey entered war to try and capture Adrianopolis.

This war, to conclude, started because the Balkan states were trying to prevent the expansion of Austria-Hungary on the European part of the Ottoman Empire and to delay the direct penetration of Germany in the East. On the other side, Germany and Austria-Hungary wished to stop the path towards Balkan state victory as soon as possible, while, Russia, France, and Great Britain preferred to give them free space at this time.⁷⁶

The First Balkan War ended successfully for the Balkan allies, marking the end of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and the beginning of decomposition of the Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans. This was fatal for the fate and the future of the Albanians. The strong Balkan states became the third factor for the international division of the influence in these regions of Europe. Serbia expanded its territory by 80% by occupying Sanxhak and replacing the territorial connection with Montenegro. In this way, Serbia began to present a risk for the Danubian Empire. Even Serbia, forced by Russia to withdraw from the goal to get access to the Albanian coastline, refused Vienna's demands to cease the military march headed to Kosovo Vilayet.⁷⁷ In its refusal, Belgrade had the political and military support of Russia. For this, Nikola Pašić emphasized that "*Albanians have a Serbian origin, but they have converted into another religion under the pressure and persecution of the Ottoman power*", as well as that he "*will not give up on the access to the sea, because it has a vital interest for Serbia, and without it, the country would boil and explode like a closed pot*".⁷⁸

In the general international overview, the Balkan wars present the most important development in Europe, as well as the most tragic for the many people of the Balkans, especially the Albanians. All the Balkan states were bordered by the Ottoman Empire, and all were aiming to invade the lands of this empire in the European part. Serbia and Montenegro wanted Sanxhak of Novi Pazar – the territorial nib between them – while

⁷⁶ R. POINCARÉ, *First and Second Balkan Wars and the London Conference (1912–1913)*, Skup/Üsküp, Prishtina, Tirana 2005, p. 266.

⁷⁷ Serbia refused to accept the customs alliance – offered on November 6, 1912, by Austria-Hungary – that would have been very favourable to it, in exchange for withdrawal from north Albania. This brought about a new aggravation between the states, while the occupation of Lezha and Durrës strengthened the decision of Austria-Hungary to enter war with Serbia. ÖUA, Wien 1930, Bd. IV, No. 4317.

⁷⁸ D. JANJIK, *National Identities, Movements and Nationalism of Serbs and Albanians*, in: *Balkan Forum* (Skopje), 3, 1, 1995, 28, p. 125.

Serbia, Montenegro and Greece wanted Albania. All of them had their own projections for the regions of the Southern Balkans.

Although the Balkan wars of 1912/1913 comprised only one year from the 20th century, they impacted the fate of Balkan people and developments during the entire 20th century. Since that time, these wars have remained as a point of interpretation for all the people of the region. Although they were first referred to as national liberation wars, they were wars fought for territories, wars for domination, wars to divide the European side of the Ottoman Empire and to keep away the Austrian-German influence. The rush of the Balkan states shows that they aimed to implement the plans as prepared by the Balkan Alliance, and to use the internal and external difficulties of the Ottoman Empire to eradicate it forever from the Balkans and divide between the Ottoman heritage.⁷⁹ Internal and external mobilization defined this war against the Ottoman Empire, which was also used as a religious mission against Islam. Thus, all the Muslim people of the Empire were, in the eyes of the Balkan powers, considered as an obstacle to the implementation of their expansion plans. For this reason, the Balkans remains an object of the contradictory interests, of the rivalries between the main worldwide powers.

When the Russian-backed Balkan Alliance started the war against the Ottoman Empire, Kosovo, North Albania (Kosovo) was still during war; the Serbian army was killing and destroying Albanian villages and cities and held presence in other Ottoman vilayets inhabited by Albanians. Tens of thousands were murdered and deported. From that moment on, Albania and Kosovo have taken separate roads: Albania as an independent state, while Kosovo as a region occupied by Serbia, namely Yugoslavia.⁸⁰

As it is known, the battle that decided the fate of war happened in Kumanovo, North Macedonia, close to what today is known as the border triangle of Kosovo-Macedonia-Serbia. Exactly right there, on June 9, 1999, the Serbian commanders signed the Technical-Military Agreement with NATO. Thus, in a certain way, Kosovo was won and lost at the same ground by the Serbs.

Serbia was forced to withdraw from North Albania, but not Kosovo, under the pressure of Austria-Hungary, namely the member forces of the states belonging to the European Concert, much like the "Contact

⁷⁹ Ch. HELMRICH, Russland Einfluss auf den Balkan-Bund im Oktober 1912, in: *Berliner Monatshefte*, 11, 1932, pp. 217–230, (p. 224).

⁸⁰ N. MALCOLM, *Kosovo. A Short History*, Prishtina, Tirana, 2001, pp. 262–274.

Group” of today. These included: Austria-Hungary, Germany, Italy, France, Great Britain, and Russia. However, following the Sanxhak occupation by Serbians and Montenegrins, Austria-Hungary was not able to intervene using military force, since after Sanxhak was occupied by Serbians and Montenegrins, being as it would disrupt the relations of the time between these two Slavic people, as well as the bridge between Bosnia and Kosovo. Even within the governmental circles in Vienna, there were differences between the political and military attitudes towards Serbian access. This was due to the fear of confrontation with the miserable Balkan state, which would drag Russia and France with it into war. Likewise, during the Balkan crisis, the official Germany was not decisive for the same war-related concern.

However, the formula for reforms and status quo in the lands, based on which the first agreements with the European diplomacy were reached, after the First Balkan War, seemed to come a moment too late. Nevertheless, at that time, this consisted of a common effort of the great powers to preserve the equilibrium and avoid confrontations on a continental scale.

Serbia itself, at the London Conference, resigned from the “ethnographic principle” and declared itself in favour of the “natural, geographic and strategic border.” According to Belgrade, “the ethnographic considerations” were unfavourable to define the borders in the Balkans.

Due to the acceptance of the war results and preservation of the equilibrium between the European powers, the London Conference sealed a fragile peace, although not one that could avoid the impending start of World War I.⁸¹ This was an unjust peace, because it legalized the territorial changes in the Balkans, which became an altogether unstable factor of the region and Europe as a whole.

The Second Initiative of Berchtold

The First Balkan War consisted of a military threat to Austria-Hungary: if the Serbians were to occupy the other part of Albania, then its Russian ally would gain access to the Adriatic Sea. And the sea would not be anymore, an inner Austrian-Italian sea, as it had been since the Congress of Berlin.⁸² For this reason, Berchtold wanted to prevent a Serbian port in Adriatic using any means available.

⁸¹ See: R. KRITT, *Die Londoner Botschafter Konferenz 1912–1913*, Diss., Wien 1960.

⁸² W. N. MEDLICOTT, *The Congress of Berlin and after. A Diplomatic History of the Near Eastern Settlement 1878–1880*, London 1963, p. 97.

With the fate of the First Balkan War defined, the fall of the Ottoman Empire inevitable, and the Serbian campaign to occupy Kosovo and proceed to the Adriatic's east coast already underway, and when it was clear that the existence of the Ottoman Empire could not be saved anymore, and when Serbia had occupied Kosovo, and was proceeding towards the east coast of the Adriatic, the Vienna diplomacy warned Belgrade not to proceed.

Berchtold made every diplomatic effort to prevent Serbia's access to the Albanian coast of Adriatic. He instructed the diplomatic delegates in Belgrade and Cetine to object to this military action within the Albanian territory. The Serbian prime minister was to respond to the Austro-Hungarian delegate, Ugron, upon the submission of his formal request that *"they could not withdraw whatsoever from a port into Adriatic Sea"*, because this was *"a condition for existence"*⁸³ for Serbia.

There is no doubt that the way these two countries, Serbia and Montenegro, refused the requests of the Danubian Monarchy was not accidental. Tzarist Russia had demanded to support the actions of these Balkan states, and regarding this, more military measures were taken. Not only did these two states refuse the demands, but the Serbian troops undertook attacks even against the Austro-Hungarian forces.

In addition to that, the Serbian military forces also carried out arbitrary activities directed towards the consulate representatives of Austria-Hungary in Kosovo. It should be noted that the Danubian Monarchy could not change the situation on the southern border of the enemy neighbour, as military intervention was impossible following the creation of Balkan state factions in the terrains.⁸⁴ The occupation of Sanxhak was fatal for the position of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, since the wedge was taken off and the territorial continuity was destroyed from Bosnia-Sanxhak up to Kosovo.

The Austro-Hungarian diplomatic offensive continued also in the first part of November, when the idea for a European conference started to formulate.

After the results of the First Balkan War, with the Balkan states having emerged the winners Austria-Hungary clearly anticipated the improbability of unifying the four Albanian vilayets – Kosovo, Ioannina, Manastir

⁸³ ÖUA, Bd. IV, No. 4351.

⁸⁴ E. Ritter von STEINITZ, Berchtolds Politik während des ersten Balkankrieges, in: *Berliner Monatshefte*, März 1931, p. 243.

and Shkodra – into a singular state. Given the circumstances, the official Vienna presented the foundation of an independent Albania.⁸⁵ This part of the program, resulting from proposals within the governmental circles of Austria-Hungary, was communicated to the other two members of the Three Parties Alliance, Germany on October 30, and Italy on November 3.⁸⁶ At the same time, through the 7-point program made public on November 3, 1912 by the ambassador to Germany, Berchtold requested assurance of a common attitude for the protection of the vital interests of Austria-Hungary, to be included in a free development of Albania.⁸⁷

This program defined the future lines of the foreign policy of Danubian Monarchy, namely the frame of Vienna's actions after the First Balkan War. The first point emphasized that the Monarchy would agree to the territorial expansion of Serbia, on the condition that Serbia would not pursue aggressive policies towards it. But on the second point, Vienna was consistently opposed to the access of Serbia to the eastern Adriatic coastline, emphasizing that the expansion of Serbia harmed the interests of the Albanians. On the third point, it was stressed that a free development of Albania could benefit the interests of the Monarchy.⁸⁸

Wanting to strengthen the position related to the foundation of an Albanian state, Berchtold proposed to Russia on November 17 a diplomatic exchange over the border definition and internal organization of Albania. In this phase, the main Austro-Hungarian objective was solely the foundation of an independent, secure Albanian territory.⁸⁹ As for the internal organization of Albania, it was suggested to select a prince who did not belong to any of the religions practiced in Albania.

The Road to Independence

The fourteen points of the Albanian insurgents, formulated by Hasan Prishtina⁹⁰ in August of 1912, aimed to create the preconditions for the foundation of the Albanian independent state. The lack of a central nationwide organization ensured that the uprising stayed under the shadows

⁸⁵ ÖUA, IV. Bd. No. 4170.

⁸⁶ SKENDI, p. 410.

⁸⁷ HHStA, PA XIV/42, Berchtold an Szögyeny, Wien, October 30, 1912.

⁸⁸ HHStA, Sonderbestände, No 1. Berchtold 1, Typoskript. Memoiren Berchtolds, Bd. III, pp. 291–292.

⁸⁹ H. HANTSCH, *Leopold Graf Berchtold, Grandseigneur und Staatsmann*, Graz 1963, p. 324.

⁹⁰ HHStA, PA XIV/41, Albanien XXXIV, Tahy an Berchtold, Mitrovitza, August 11, 1912, No. 48, confidential.

of the First Balkan War, which some Albanian leaders considered to be necessary to undertake radical steps. The goal of the Albanian elite was to combat the open intentions to divide the Albanian territories among the Balkan states. Ismail Qemali was a leading voice in discussing the future of Albania opening his path to serving as the head of the Albanian autonomous state. During a meeting in Bucharest, in November of 1912, the participants were not able to make a clear decision. They still faced the dilemma between autonomy and independence but were together on the points of not allowing any division of the Albanian territories and the convocation of a National Convent. On November 5, at the end of the meeting, a decision was taken in which the participants declared that the Albanians would form a Leading Committee for the administration of Albania, since the actual Ottoman government did not have the means to secure that for them at the time.⁹¹ At the same time, Ismail Qemali expressed his desire to play a decisive role for the fate of Albania. He instructed his supporters from Bucharest to prevent the efforts of Syrja bej Vlora, who also sought to gain power in the newly forming Albania. In parallel, as Syrja bej Vlora did with his men, Ismail Qemali started his campaign to convene the National Convent, deepening the chaos in Albania.⁹²

It was a well-known fact that Vienna preferred Syrja bej Vlora and his son, Eqrem bej Vlora, to raise the flag of independence of Albania, rather than Ismail Qemali. Vlora's son ventured to Vienna for this reason, and agreed with Austrians that together with his father, he would make every effort to convene a Convent in Vlora and proclaim Albanian Independence. In this ensuing Vloran convocation, not all representatives of the Albanian regions were present, and nothing came of the event. Syrja Vlora faced many difficulties: prejudice, heartbreak, and passivity characterized all the participants of the convocation. However, Syrja bej Vlora did not withdraw from his goal to proclaim independence and ensure the support of great powers namely the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

In fact, most Albanians did not believe that the Balkan states would win the war against the Ottoman Empire. Despite this, the First Balkan War erupted. When the first news arrived from the war front, Syrja bej Vlora

⁹¹ *Qeveria e Përkohëshme e Vlorës dhe veprimtaria e saj – nëndor 1912 – janar 1914*. Edit. by D. KOTINI, Tiranë 1963, pp. 15–16.

⁹² HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, Telegramm von Lejhanec aus Valona, November 6, 1912, No. 61.

decided to campaign from Vlora to the Middle and Northern Albania, attempting to convince regional leaders to help him devise a National Assembly in Middle Albania. Likewise, Eqrem bej Vlora went to Vienna to negotiate the eventual proclamation of independence and neutrality.⁹³ At this time, Ismail Qemali was in Vienna to discuss plans with the Austrian minister of foreign affairs. The arrival in Vienna of Eqrem bej Vlora, his cousin and adversary, forced Qemali to Budapest for the duration of Vlora's stay. When Ismail Qemali returned to Vienna, Berchtold no longer wished to enter detailed discussion on the topic of the future of Albania.⁹⁴ In his diary, Count Berchtold wrote that Ismail Qemali demanded diplomatic support for the Albanian national goals, as well as information regarding the position of Vienna on the future organization of Albania and the possible convention of a National Assembly. Although he pledged diplomatic support, Berchtold refrained from further detail until the end of the war.⁹⁵ Berchtold took a stand only to combat the goal of the Serbs to have access to the Albanian coastline of Adriatic: Austria-Hungary would prevent Serbia from having access to the east part of Adriatic Sea. The lack of interest to discuss with Ismail Qemali was characterized not only by insecurity following the end of the Balkan war, but by the interest of Ballhausplatz that the National Assembly should be convened by Syrja bej Vlora. Like the Italians, they considered Ismail Qemali an unsecure figure.⁹⁶

The same viewpoints of the discussion that Ismail Qemali had with the foreign minister in Vienna were expressed in a cablegram sent on November 22 by Berchtold to the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Rome, Merey, Berchtold confidentially conveyed to Marchese di San Giuliano, Antonino Paternò Castello, Marchese di San Giuliano, an Italian diplomat and Minister of Foreign Affairs, that the meeting with Ismail Qemali was "general" because he shared "*the same unfavourable opinion for this politician*". He did not plan to assign him any special role during the future development in Albania.⁹⁷

⁹³ M. A. GODIN, *Aus dem neuen Albanien. Politische und kulturhistorische Skizzen*, Wien 1914, p. 12.

⁹⁴ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, XXXXV/6, Daily Bulletin of Ballhausplatz, November 22, 1912.

⁹⁵ HHStA, Nachlass Berchtold, Kt. 1. Bd. IV, November 13, 1912, p. 366.

⁹⁶ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, Tagesbericht, Wien, November 12, 1912; Telegramm von Berchtold aus Wien an Merey nach Rom, November 22, 1912, No. 196.

⁹⁷ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, XXXXV/6, Karton 417, Telegramm von Berchtold an Merey, November 22, 1912.

On the other side, Eqrem bej Vlora was holding meetings with a myriad of Austrian state officials. He discussed with foreign minister Leopold Graf Berchtold, General Headquarter Chief Conrad von Hötzendorf, and experts on the service of the Foreign Ministry of Albania, among them Karl Macchio and Alfred Rappot. He was expecting answers from Berchtold on nine key issues, from which we can mention three: whether Vienna would take the assurance of the Albanian coastline until Preveza; whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary would support the new territorial and organizational definition, and an Austro-Hungarian control “*of the territories inhabited mainly by Albanians under the Ottoman regime*”⁹⁸; and whether the Monarchy was ready to diplomatically represent the Albanians and monetarily support the Albanian League, in case the integrity of the Albanians could not be protected by the international conference. In this issue posed the question of an eventual royal Austro-Hungarian occupation.⁹⁹

Naturally, Berchtold gave rhetorical answers to maintain the *status-quo*, as was the collective duty of the European Concert. In the case of the continuance of the wars and the decomposition of the Ottoman Empire, the goals of the Austria-Hungary would be the foundation of an Albanian state up to the bounds of the Kalama River territorial mark. Berchtold rejected the possibility of an intervention, and of military control over the Albanian vilayets. Since Vienna considered that alone, it might not be able to prevent the division of the Albanian territories, the foreign minister was ready to support an Albanian eventual resistance in secret.¹⁰⁰

It is necessary to emphasize that Vienna went further in instructing Eqrem bej Vlora: in the event of the fall of Ottoman Empire, he instructed Vlora to convene the National Assembly to proclaim the independence and the neutrality of Albania. Currently there was no unity among the Albanian leaders, even among the larger Vlora family, namely Syrja bej Vlora and Ismail Qemal Vlora. It was precisely these differences that prevented Syrja bej Vlora from holding an assembly mere weeks before. Therefore, Eqrem bej Vlora returned to the country with no results.

In the beginning of November, Syrja bej Vlora started his own cam-

⁹⁸ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, letter written by Eqrem bej Vlora from hotel Sacher Wien (no date).

⁹⁹ K. CSAPLÁR-DEGOVICS, Der Erste Balkankrieg und die Albaner. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Unabhängigkeitsproklamation Albaniens (28. November 1912), in: *Südost-Forschungen*, 67, 2008, pp. 168–201 (here p. 181).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

paign through Albania. He met with individuals in Tirana and Durrës. His National Assembly had many objectives, including the formation of an Albanian delegation to protect Albanian interests on the international level. This would be a formal act in response to European evaluation of the emerging Albanian state circumstances for which Albanians themselves were not present.¹⁰¹ In part due to Vlora's efforts, the principle of the proclamation of independence was supported Middle Albania, leaving the Toptani family and Northern Albanians to be convinced of it especially in Mirdita.¹⁰² Likewise, the place where the independence would be declared was presented for discussion: should it be Elbasan, or Tirana, or Durrës? At that time, the population resistance was taken into consideration, as well as the conservative Muslim leadership, which had expressed through various public demonstrations loyalty to the Sultan.¹⁰³ This situation presented another challenge to the organization of a National Assembly. Despite this obstacle, as he wrote in his memoirs, Eqrem bej Vlora went to Shkodra to advocate for the organization of a national assembly. There, he met with the Ottoman military commanders, Hasan Riza Pasha and Esat Pashë Toptani. On this occasion, he proposed to them the notion that if the Ottoman Empire were to be dismantled, Albania would proclaim independence, raising their flag for the first time at that strategic point.¹⁰⁴ Esat Pasha maintained his reservations, while Riza Pasha was very enthusiastic. Following the news that the Serbian and Montenegrin troops were approaching Northern Albania, Toptani agreed to convene the National Assembly. This stand changed the situation among the Muslim population in Middle Albania, who at last supported the notion of Albanian independence.¹⁰⁵ With this change, hopes of organizing the National Assembly in Tirana were high. For this reason, Syrja bej Vlora instructed his son, Eqrem, who just returned from Vienna, to send to Tirana the last available representatives of Vlora.¹⁰⁶ But

¹⁰¹ HHStA, PA XII, Türkei, Kt. 417, 6a, Telegramm von Lejhanec aus Valona, October 31, 1912, No. 1359.

¹⁰² A.-G. KRAUSE, *Das Problem der albanischen Unabhängigkeit in den Jahren 1908–14*, Diss., Wien 1970, pp. 269–270.

¹⁰³ HHStA, PA XII, Türkei, Karton 411, 5a, Bericht von Lejhanec aus Valona, November 4, 1912, No. 59.

¹⁰⁴ E. bej VLORA, *Lebenserinnerungen, Vol. I (1885 bis 1912)*, München 1968, p. 258.

¹⁰⁵ HHStA, PA XII, Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, telegram von Rudnay aus Durazzo, November 15, 1912, No. 2846.

¹⁰⁶ HHStA, PA XII, Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, Brief von Lejhanec aus Valona, November 13, 1912, No. 64.

Eqrem bej Vlora failed in following his father's instructions.¹⁰⁷ Without the help of all the Albanian leaders, Syrja bej Vlora could make his goal a reality. The proclamation for independence failed again because he could not gather all the Albanian leaders. Syrja bej Vlora was attacked by his opponents and the mission of his son in Vienna ended in a fiasco. Syrja bej Vlora, disappointed by this failure, left for Istanbul, leaving his son to uphold his crumbling status.¹⁰⁸

Meanwhile the predictions of Syrja bej Vlora were realized at the beginning of November the troops of the Balkan Alliance entered mercilessly and occupied nearly the entirety of the Albanian territories. Now the Albanian leaders understood that the critical moment had arrived, and they had to decide for the future of their country: seek their fate within the Ottoman state or declare the independence of Albania.

Threatened by the Greek armies in the south of Albania's Ioannina Vilayet, the Albanian leaders decided to fight to protect the country. Kosovo in the North was already occupied by the Serbian and Montenegrin troops. The Austro-Hungarian consul in Ioannina, Konstantin Bilinski, was informed by the Albanian leaders that the Tosks would demand protection from Austria-Hungary and, if necessary, would declare it through a National Assembly in the case of the fraction of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, Albanian Catholic intelligence called by Syrja bej Vlora, requested the possibility to negotiate a solution in Durrës. They held a meeting with the vice-consul to determine whether Austria-Hungary would, if necessary, take military measures to prevent the further penetration of the Serbian armies into the Albanian territories. The vice-consul, Lajos Rudnay, denied the possibility of an Austro-Hungarian intervention per the instruction of Vienna. Several days later, on November 12, several Albanian leaders in Durrës¹¹⁰ sent a letter to the Emperor, Franz Joseph, and requested help, to organize an autonomous administrative unit of the four vilayets (Kosovo, Manastir, Ioannina, and Shkodra) within the Ottoman Empire. In case this would not be possible, they also requested the Emperor's help to bring together the four

¹⁰⁷ DEGOVICS, p. 182.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, Brief von Bilinski aus Janina, November 7, 1912, No. 86 and No. 87.

¹¹⁰ Nikollë Kaçori (Durrës), Mustafa Kruja, Fuad Toptani, Abdi Toptani, Murat Toptani (Middle Albania), Rexhep Mitrovica, Sali Gjeka and Bedri Pejani (North Albania-Kosovo).

vilayets to create an Albanian state according to the example of the other Balkan states.¹¹¹ That which could not be achieved in August of 1912 in Skup/Üsküp at the hands of Syrja bej Vlora was achieved by the Serbian, Montenegrin and Greek occupation, which influenced the unification of the different Albanian groups around the necessity to unify the vilayets and form a capable, autonomous state. This was previously only perceived possible in case the Ottoman Empire lost the war. We must admit that the Muslim population of Middle Albania and beyond did not sympathize with the faltering reach of the Ottoman Sultan's influence in Albania. On the other side, representatives of the North Albania population, who had escaped to Kotorr, were on the same page with the Albanian leaders gathered in Durrës. They addressed Count Berchtold for help, in making the four Albanian vilayets in one autonomous state. They even demanded that, in case of the decomposition of the Ottoman Empire, Albania be put under the control of Austria-Hungary.¹¹² Catholic clerics emphasized the necessity of having the Austro-Hungarian military intervene.¹¹³

Meanwhile, in the Himara region of South Albania, the Greek troops had landed. The Ioanninan commander, Esad Pashë Halasti, sent a group of 500 Kosovars under the command of an Ottoman officer, and requested Eqrem bej Vlora to organize further resistance against the Greek army. When Eqrem bej Vlora left Vlora to combat the Greeks, a once-in-a-lifetime possibility was created for Ismail Qemali, to at last declare independence. What could not be done in times of peace by Syrja bej Vlora, was realized by Ismail Qemali under the threat of total Balkan occupation. Ismail Qemali a clever and experienced politician, who in the years 1911–1912 was heavily involved in relations between Cetinje, Bucharest, Sofie, Istanbul and Vienna.¹¹⁴

Upon his return to Durrës on November 21,¹¹⁵ Ismail Qemali had meetings with several Albanian leaders of different regions of Albania. At the same time, Vienna took action to meet and support the Albanian leaders starting with Syrja, Eqrem bej Vlora and Ismail Qemali. Count Berchtold,

¹¹¹ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, Brief von Rudnay aus Durrazzo, November 13, 1912, No. 86 and No. 74.

¹¹² HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, Telegramm aus Cattaro, November 20, 1912.

¹¹³ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, 6a, Telegramm von Zambaur aus Skutina, November 16, 1912, No. 3862.

¹¹⁴ DEGOVICS, pp. 184–185.

¹¹⁵ HHStA, PA XII/Türkei, Karton 417, Liasse XLV/6a, 6b, 6c, Telegramm von Berchtold an Rudnay aus Durrazzo, November 21, 1912.

in an instruction given to the vice consul in Durrës, Ludwig von Rudnay, repeated the necessity to ensure unity between the Albanian leaders. He demanded him to meet with them to devise the future governmental structure of Albania.¹¹⁶

Overall, the call of Berchtold for unity between the Albanian leaders aimed to create a favourable situation within Albania, which would eventually premise an eventual Albanian independence after several previous unsuccessful efforts. Overcoming the internal differences would be the alleviating factor for official Vienna to diplomatically protect the Albanian issue. This was a critical moment for diplomatic support, as diplomatic European conferences were being organized to regulate the problems following the First Balkan War. After Syrja bej Vlora's departure to Istanbul, Ismail Qemali found himself at the cusp of achieving the Albanian's ideal of independence. He took the set out to Vlora, and while in Fier was joined by large families of Kosovo refugees Draga, Deralla and Begolli, who supported his idea to convene the national convent in Vlora. Interestingly, these families were considered as delegates of the regions they were coming from. Although a considerable part of the delegates was still on the way to Vlora for example Isa Boletini and his troops engaged in Serbian conflict a short meeting was held to decide that the next day, on November 28, 1912, the independence of Albania would be declared. After the Albanian politicians declared the independence of the Albanian state and the Serbian troops arrived at the Adriatic coastline, both Vienna and Rome instructed their diplomats to proclaim that Austria-Hungary and Italy were in favour of the independent Albania. The policy frame and the decisive stand of Austria-Hungary made the dream of the Albanian nationalism for the national state a reality. The proclamation of the Independence of Albania in 1912 in Vlora was not an ideal ending, as it was forced by the nature of internal and external historical events which brought about the foundation of a truncated Albanian state.

The proclamation of independence simultaneously closed an era and marked the beginning of another ridden with continuous instability for the next century. Although Albania was recognized as a neutral state in the London Conference, its stability and consolidation depended on the direct support of the great European powers. Even after the Balkan wars 1912/13 the situation in Europe was unstable and in case of a European

¹¹⁶ ÖUA, No. 4498, Telegramm von Berchtold an Vizekonsull Rudnay aus Durrazzo, November 19, 1912.

war, in Vienna there is vital for Albania to acquire military forces the, otherwise it could be invaded by neighboring countries. In this regard, the Chief of Staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, in a letter to Foreign Minister Count Berchtold proposed that: *"the military situation in Europe is such that we must reckon in the coming years with a new Balkan war or a major European conflagration. If this should come about, Albania would of course be involved, too. This country was, however, declared neutral at the London Conference, as guaranteed by the Great Powers. But only military might is of importance in times of war, and it is evident that, should the Triple Alliance be defeated in a European conflict, Albania would, as a natural result,¹¹⁷ be divided up among its neighbours."*¹¹⁸ These intentions of neighbouring countries regarding Albania are clear even in the official communications between Russia and Serbia. How Russia thinks about Albania can be seen in the following passage in the often-quoted report of the Serbian Prime Minister Pašić of 2 February 1914 on his audience with the Tsar.

*"He (the Tsar) was surprised at how Prince Wied could have himself elected monarch of Albania because, in his view, Albania was not a viable state and ought to be divided up between Serbia and Greece. Albania would perhaps become an apple of discord between Austria and Italy. I (Pašić) expressed the view that Italy and Austria were already in competition for it and had only concluded an alliance out of fear of a military conflict, and that even today they had probably only decided on joint occupation of Vlora out of fear of war."*¹¹⁹

In this context, the above-mentioned facts show that the creation of an army in Albania is one of the most urgent and important problems to be solved by the new monarch. The creation of such an army would be decisive for the foundation of an independent Albania because it would serve as an important factor for Austria-Hungary, enabling it to pin down Serbian and Montenegrin forces. Conrad thought this army would be severely handicapped by the lack of funds in the country. It would therefore seem essential to me that Albania be subsidized with copious funds for military purposes.

¹¹⁷ *"Für die Gründung eines selbständigen Albanien war wesentlich die Schaffung einer solchen Wehrmacht maßgebend, weil dieselbe für die Monarchie einen wesentlichen Faktor im Kraftkalkül bilden wird, da sie befähigt wäre, serbisch-montenegrinische Streitkräfte zu binden. Mehrjährige intensive militärische Tätigkeit vorausgesetzt, wäre Albanien immerhin imstande, zirka 80.000 wehrfähige Männer ins Feld zu stellen."* CONRAD von HÖTZENDORF, p. 587.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 586.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 591.

During a conversation between candidate for the Albanian throne, Prussian officer Wilhelm von Wied¹²⁰ and Count Berchtold, held in Vienna in February 1914 after meeting with Count Berchtold, the necessity of raising a military force to the level of that of the front countries was again discussed. In this meeting Conrad explained to Wied that no one had as great and altruistic an interest in Albania as Austria-Hungary did and told him he could always address the government of Vienna for support. I stressed the necessity of armed forces, saying: *“Take Austro-Hungarian instructors with you.”* With regard to possible jealousy that might arise among the other Great Powers, in particular Italy, I added: *“Spread your instructors among the various branches of service, but give us the infantry and the cavalry.”* I also noted that, of the Dutch officers designated for the gendarmerie, Thomson was not particularly supportive of Austro-Hungarian interests,¹²¹ underlined General Conrad.

The Austro-Hungarians had their doubts, however, as to whether Wied was indeed the rigorous “man of action” we needed in the Balkans, because he did not know the Balkans, and specifically Albania. For this reason, it would seem expedient to instruct our official representative of Austria-Hungary in Albania to exert continuing influence upon the prince in all his endeavours.

It is evident from the above remarks just how useful Albania could have been to Austria-Hungary. This would have been in the form of an independent country with close economic, cultural, and political ties to the Dual Monarchy and allied to it, against Serbia and Montenegro. Instead of this, Albania was the theatre of conflict between various powers and parties. Rivalry with Italy was the most pronounced. The seeds of conflict derived from the agreements Austria-Hungary had made years earlier with Italy over Albania.

As Austria-Hungary considered its options in Albanian affairs, event was taking place in the country itself that had no important link to the First World War but were of significance for the consolidation of that country and provided insight into the continuing chaos there. Austria-Hungary was doing its utmost to create a sovereign Albania upon which it would be able to rely as an ally. But even European and Balkan opponents

¹²⁰ Prince Wilehm von Wied and his wife (née Princess Schönberg) left for Albania and landed in Durrës on 5 March 1914. He was welcomed on the country's behalf by Essad. The atmosphere in the country was, however, not universally in the prince's favour. Many of the Muslims were against him, and this soon led to an uprising.

¹²¹ CONRAD von HÖTZENDORF, p. 688.

of Austria-Hungary endeavoured to torpedo this goal, and they reached their objective.

Conclusion

One can say that the Albanian uprising against the Ottoman regime of 1912, twenty-four years after the League of Prizren (Kosova), was local in its character. It took place in Northern Albania, namely in the Kosovo Vilayet. The uprising of 1912, although it had passed the rudimental phase, lacked centralized leadership, and did not achieve nation wide recognition. There was no unity at that moment in time. Three fractions comprised Albanian leadership, and with or without their knowledge the fate of the Albanian regions was placed under the neighbours' or the Ottoman state's agenda. Only the autonomous wing, the most progressive of the time, was fractured under Turkish and Hamisit influence. In fact, this division came because of the High Port play, in which one side invested to deepen the differences within the Albanian National Movement, and the other side made vain promises in response to the demands of the Albanians. Another handicap to Albanian unity was a large portion of the Albanian elite rendered unable to communicate with the European governments, to bring messages across and clearly declare the national goal. The uprising of 1912 in Kosovo did not manage to spread to greater Albania, although it did not consider local interests, focusing instead on national demands. The uprising of Kosovo in 1912 was not followed by the other regions of Albania. Therefore, the event of 1912 did not correspond to the Albanian national political thought, and the national projections of Taksim Meeting. In addition, during the liberation movements of the Balkans, there was never a common front against the Ottoman suppression, as the Albanians were always excluded. They differed from the other populations due to religion and language. For this reason, its initial objective was the foundation of an autonomous Albania, but in the end included achieving a compromise between the conservatives/Hamidists, and the autonomous wing, led by known intellectuals Hasan Prishtina and Nexhip Draga. Another important obstacle to achieving the intended goals of the 1912 uprising in Kosova came from the neighbouring Balkan countries, aggressively projected the denial of the existence and interests of the Albanian nation. Religion also served as a prohibitive force in the national consciousness. In the Ottoman Empire, the church devised the criteria for Albanian treatment, rather than the state. Since most Albanians were Muslim, they had a privileged

post within the empire, at the expense of their Orthodox and Catholic brothers. This circumstance was not only an obstacle to national unity, but also to finding support among the European countries. The liberation of the Albanian nation, as the other Balkan nations, could not be made possible without the help of any Great European Power. However, these European states helped mainly the Christian nations of Balkans ignoring the fate of the Albanians, since most of them were Muslim and identified either as Ottoman or Turks. They had no common connection with any of the European powers in the manner of their connections to the nations existing between the Balkans and Russia, which were based on common Slavic heritage and orthodox religion.

Austria-Hungary paid attention to Albania, but did so in favor of its own foreign influence, particularly to gain an upper standing in its rivalry with Serbia. The European Concert's policy of maintaining the *status quo* protected Albania from the invasion of its neighbouring countries, but it was not enough for the national independent consciousness of the Albanians and the foundation of an autonomous state. Nevertheless, the most important role during this period was played by Kosovars. In a twist of fate, the Kosovo people, who had helped the young Turks to come to power, now were contributing more than anyone else to the dismantling of their empire. The best solution in these circumstances was an autonomous Albania, one step closer to independence. We must also consider Austro-Hungarian diplomatic initiatives for the decentralization of the Ottoman Empire.

Just as the Balkan states created their Alliance under the protection of Russia, Austria-Hungary undertook the diplomatic initiative to convince the High Porte and the other European powers of the necessity of the decentralization of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the unity of the four Albanian vilayets into an autonomous Albanian principate.

Encouraged by the strong international efforts of Austria-Hungary – and in turn the support of Germany and Italy the Albanian National Movement leaders were able to achieve independence for Albania. The 1912 uprising in Kosovo Vilayet also played a substantial role in this victory, from which Kosovo and other Albanian regions were left out. The London Conference for the most part recognized the results of the war, leading to the formation of a truncated Albanian state. This was just a partial completion of the idea of the National Albanian Renaissance. But we must acknowledge that, during the process of the border determination and state formation, the official Vienna's role remained

decisive. It was the decisive attitude of Austria-Hungary against the claims of Serbia and Italy to the Greeks that further ensured Albanian survival. Although unconsolidated, the foundation of Albania marked a decisive turn on the development of political consciousness and national identity among Albanian people within the borders, and in Kosovo, Macedonia, and other Albanian-inhabited regions for the ensuing decades. As for modern Albanian nationalism, the George Kastriot-Skanderbeg period solidified the base of Albanian state foundations, and for the Albanians of Kosovo, Macedonia, and other Albanian ethnic regions. Although Tirana never managed to claim any kind of irredentism, it has been the base for Albanian independence and political movements in Kosovo, Macedonia, and the Presheva Valley. With the independence of Kosovo, the original ideal of Albanian independence has been realized, bringing true closure and significance the 109-year anniversary of the declaration of independence of the Albanian state.

Financial Reconstruction in Central and Eastern Europe after World War I: The Case of Hungary

Endre Domonkos – András Schlett‡*

The First World War and the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had profound impacts on the further development of East Central Europe both economically and politically. In October 1918, the former self-sufficient economic unit broke into six different entities, which meant that the countries of the region had to adjust to the new circumstances. Post-war economic chaos was exacerbated by rampant inflation – except in Czechoslovakia – coupled with increasing budgetary problems caused by war expenditures. Additionally, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, Poland, and Romania had suffered very considerable war damages, which hindered their economic recovery. At the beginning of the 1920s, financial consolidation became an urgent task for all countries of the region, which coincided with the interests of the victorious Great Powers in the post-war years.

This paper seeks to evaluate the consequences of the reconstruction schemes in the countries of East Central Europe. Because of the low level of domestic accumulation, stabilisation could be carried out by the loans of the League of Nations. The only exception was Czechoslovakia, which was able to halt inflation and introduce stable currency in April 1919 without any external assistance.

As far as financial consolidation is concerned, the study also focuses on analysing the case of Hungary by introducing the main features of the stabilisation measures in the 1920s. The Hungarian stabilisation in 1924 also performed under the control of the League of Nations. The second part of the study presents the conditions of the loan extended by the League of Nations, analyses the elements of the stabilisation both in the budgetary and monetary sectors, as well as the features of the currency system established with English mediation.

Because of length constraints, the paper will not give an insight into the domestic politics of East Central Europe during the interwar period, rather it strives to represent the results of financial reconstruction in the region from macroeconomic perspective.

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[Financial Reconstruction; Economic Stabilisation; League of Nations, Central and Eastern Europe; Hungary]

Introduction

In the last three decades, the main focus of economic history research was to compare the Western and Eastern European countries in terms of their economic performance. Most of these studies analysed the development of certain sectors, such as agriculture, industry and trade by highlighting the strongholds and weaknesses of each country's national economy. Financial reorganisation, which played an exceptionally important role after World War I in East Central Europe, was not among the key objectives of research activities.

The reconstruction of the Central and Eastern European (CEEs) countries compared to Western Europe was a complicated task after the Great War, because virtually all the new states of the region had to face serious problems, inherited from the past and from the immediate post-war years. As Aldcroft and Morewood pointed out that the list of difficulties in Central and Eastern Europe was enormous: physical devastation and resource losses; territorial changes made by the dismemberment of the Dual Monarchy and the peace treaties. In economic terms, the countries of the region were hit by accelerating rate of inflation and currency instability, which coupled with balance of payments disequilibrium. Political instability was another main concern, which was accompanied by weak administrative systems. Finally, post-war territorial adjustments further complicated the political and economic unification of the component parts of the newly established states in the region. All these factors hindered the fast economic recovery in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1920s. At the same time, political conditions were quite unstable: ethnic conflicts and border disputes occurred between Czechoslovakia and Poland, which aggravated the economic problems of these countries.¹

Considering of the precarious economic situation that the new states had to face immediately after the end of hostilities, the chief victorious Powers were interested in mitigating the supply crisis, which emerged because of the war. Therefore, between 1918 and 1923, appreciable

¹ D. H. ALDCROFT – S. MOREWOOD, Inflation, Reconstruction and Stabilization, in: D. H. ALDCROFT – S. MOREWOOD (eds.), *Economic Change in Eastern Europe since 1918*, Aldershot, Hants 1995, pp. 22–41.

quantities of relief supplies, mainly foodstuffs, were sent to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Serbia and other countries of the region. As Teichova noted that credits-financing of aid and deliveries during the period 1918–1923 came to 86.7% from the United States, 11.7% from Britain and 1.6% from Canada.² Despite these efforts, economic situation of the CEEs countries hardly improved and several countries, including Bulgaria and Hungary were compelled to pay reparations.

Berend and Ránki stressed that the victorious Entente Powers placed emphasis on the economic stabilisation of the countries in East Central Europe. After the consolidation of the Soviet system, they turned their attention to the states in the neighbourhood of the Soviet Union. They were afraid that Bolshevik regimes would spread to other countries and destabilise them politically. To avoid any possibility of potential revolution, they recognised the importance of economic consolidation in the region.³

In the mid-1920s, the League of Nations played an increasingly important role in the economic and financial stabilisation of the Central and Eastern European countries. The reconstruction schemes for Austria, Bulgaria and Hungary are remarkable examples of concerted international efforts to restore the economy and public finances to normalcy. The issue of international loans required reparations settlement and a comprehensive programme of financial consolidation. The programme of financial stabilisation encompassed the introduction of stable currencies, the creation of central banks with the issue of banknotes and the restoration of balanced budget.

The paper provides a theoretical background and a detailed analysis about the reconstruction schemes, which were carried out in the Central and Eastern European countries. For this purpose, its main aim is to evaluate the overall impacts of economic and financial stabilisation measures in each country of the region in the 1920s. As Nötel rightly noted that the elaboration and execution of these financial reconstruction schemes was no easy matter. First, conditions of financial stability had to be created in countries, which were hit severely by the strains and losses of World War I

² A. TEICHOVA, East-central and South-east Europe, 1919–1939, in: P. MATHIAS – S. POLLARD (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe. The Industrial Economies: the Development of Economic and Social Policies*, Vol. VIII, Chapter XIII, Cambridge 1989, p. 927.

³ I. T. BEREND – Gy. RÁNKI, *East Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, Budapest 1977, p. 89.

and the accompanying economic problems, such as rampant inflation, cumulative budgetary deficits, deteriorating exchange rates and terms of trade. Second, creditworthiness had to be assured by introducing convertible currencies in the international money markets and manage the incurring debts.⁴

The paper is organised as follows. Section 1 tries to explain the reasons of international cooperation for the financial consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe in the post-war years. Section 2 introduces the reconstruction schemes in the Central and Eastern European countries based on relevant literature. Section 3 focuses on a case study by evaluating the main characteristics of the Hungarian stabilisation performed under the control of the League of Nations. The subsections are formed in the following order: 3.1 antecedents of the stabilization, 3.2 Loan from the League of Nations, 3.3 restoration of the budget equilibrium, 3.4 establishment of the National Bank of Hungary, and finally subsection 3.5. highlights the impacts of the reconstruction crisis, while it gives a brief overview of the credit expansion. Finally, concluding remarks are presented in Section 4.

Reconstructions Schemes: a Comparative Approach Austria

The first country of the region, which submitted a request for an international loan was Austria. According to the Treaty of Saint-Germain, signed between Austria and the Allied Powers in September 1919, the country was compelled to pay reparations, however, reparation charges had never been clearly defined. Although the burden of repairs was not considerable, but the main structural problems of the national economy, such as the loss of traditional markets, the scarcity of raw materials and agricultural products and difficult financial conditions remained during the interwar period.⁵

The first attempt to request for an international loan by Austria occurred in 1920, but efforts were wrecked. Due to strong inflationary pressures inherited from the war, the Great Powers in the League of Nations dispatched a Financial Committee to the country. As Teichova

⁴ R. NÖTEL, International Credit and Finance, in: M. C. KASER – E. A. RADICE (eds.), *The Economic History of Eastern Europe 1919–1975. Interwar Policy. The War and Reconstruction*, Vol. II, Oxford 1986, p. 193.

⁵ I. NÉMETH, Az első Osztrák Köztársaság (1918–1938): történeti áttekintés, in: I. NÉMETH – R. FIZIKER (ed.), *Ausztria a 20. században. Az „életképtelen” államtól a „Boldogok szigetéig”*, Budapest 2011, p. 131.

stressed the value of the Austrian gold crown equalled 14,000 paper crowns, the price level in Austria had risen 15,500 times and wages had on average increased 9,000 times in Autumn 1922.⁶ Although inflation provided a stimulant to the economy, which was manifested by powerful investments, production and export boom from the late 1919 until the second half of 1922, but the balance of trade remained unfavourable, partly because of the limited supply capability of the economy initially and partly due to high import content of exports.⁷ The new republic had continuous budgetary deficits between 1919 and 1922.⁸

Despite the strong opposition made by Social Democrats against the right-wing government led by Ignaz Seipel, the chancellor submitted a request for a reconstruction loan of 650 million gold crowns on 4 October 1922. According to the Geneva Protocol, Austria's sovereignty was guaranteed by the Great Powers in return for the renunciation of Anschluss with Germany.⁹

The Geneva Protocol consisted of three parts: the first guaranteed to respect Austria's economic and financial sovereignty and its integrity, the second granted a loan of the League of Nations under the supervision of Great Britain, France, Italy and Czechoslovakia, for the purpose of restoring budgetary equilibrium and repay loans taken from 1919 onwards. Protocol III contained the detailed implementation of the financial stabilisation.¹⁰ The government undertook to introduce austerity measures by reducing public expenditures and increase tax revenues to achieve a balanced budget. The reconstruction scheme was controlled by the League's Financial Committee, headed by Alfred Zimmermann, who possessed a wide range of budgetary powers. According to Bachinger, the Geneva Protocol reflected the general economic and financial interests of foreign bankers and businessmen. Because all important decisions were taken by the Financial Committee, therefore, the fiscal manoeuvring room was narrow. As securities, Austria had to pledge their state property, their

⁶ TEICHOVA, p. 930.

⁷ D. H. ALDCROFT, Inflation, Currency Depreciation and Reconstruction in Europe, in: D. H. ALDCROFT (ed.), *Studies in the Interwar European Economy*, Aldershot, Hants 1997, pp. 65–66.

⁸ K. W. ROTSCCHILD, *Austria's Economic Development between The Two Wars*, London 1947, pp. 19–23.

⁹ NÉMETH, p. 131.

¹⁰ I. T. BEREND – Gy. RÁNKI, *Közép- és Kelet-Európa gazdasági fejlődése a 19-20. században*, Budapest 1976, p. 307.

customs and match monopolies, and if necessary additional revenues. One of the most important objectives was to assure the creditworthiness of the economy.¹¹

In compliance with the instructions of the League of Nations, the government stopped the issuance of unbacked banknotes and revalued the crown slightly between October and November 1922. In December, one gold crown was worth 14,500 paper crowns and it was stabilised at the same exchange rate. On 1 January 1925, the new gold schilling was put into circulation, which replaced the worthless paper crowns.¹²

The report, which was prepared by League's Financial Committee underlined the necessity to pursue a strict fiscal and monetary policy to restore budgetary equilibrium. Sustainable financial balance was achieved by credit control and increasing gold and foreign exchange reserves. The central bank's interest rate remained high to attract the inflow of foreign capital. As far as the reconstruction loan was concerned, financial reorganisation was successful because inflation was stopped and with the introduction of the schilling, economic life returned to normalcy. The restructuring of the finances ended officially in 1926, thus, Austria regained the control over its economic policy. Thanks to the strict implementation of the stabilisation programme, the budget was balanced and ended with a surplus over the period 1925–1929. At the same time, currency backing was increased from 54.6% to 78.6%, whereas interest rate was reduced from 15% to 7.5% by the central bank between 1924 and 1930, however, it still remained high compared to other European countries.¹³ The reconstruction loan of the League of Nations became the model for the financial stabilisation schemes both to Hungary in 1924 and Bulgaria in the years 1926–1928.

Bulgaria

Bulgaria, similarly, to Austria and Hungary, also received foreign loans, which were essential to stabilise its currency. Inflation was less severe than in Austria and Hungary, but the Balkan country was compelled to pay 2.25 billion gold francs reparations according to the Treaty of Neuilly signed in November 1919. The latter was modified by a Protocol, adopted

¹¹ K. BACHINGER, Österreich von 1918 bis zur Gegenwart, in: F. WOLFRAM – J. A. VAN HOUTTE – H. KELLENBENZ et al. (eds.), *Handbuch der Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, Bd. 6, Stuttgart 1987, p. 556.

¹² BEREND – RÁNKI, *Közép- és Kelet-Európa*, p. 307.

¹³ BACHINGER, pp. 556–557.

on 21 March 1923, which substantially reduced these burdens to 550 million gold francs. As a result of the introduced reliefs, around 30 million gold francs were repaid, and 90% of reparations were fulfilled by goods deliveries up to 1928.¹⁴

In Bulgaria, all necessary steps were taken by the government to halt inflation. A decree was issued in the Summer of 1922, which maximized banknotes in circulation. From 1923 onwards the amount of money in circulation did not surpass that of 3–4 billion leva. In early 1923, the Bulgarian lev declined rapidly, therefore, authorities had to impose exchange controls. Parallel with these measures, a new foreign exchange rate was settled: 1 USD was made equal to 137 leva. Despite these efforts, both the wholesale prices and the cost of living increased almost 30 times compared to the pre-war level. Although monetary disaster was avoided by the introduction of austerity measures, the government's scope for budgetary action was reduced to minimum. Due to the deterioration of economic conditions, Bulgaria submitted a request for an international loan of the League of Nations in 1926 to carry out financial consolidation.¹⁵

Economic and financial stabilisation was implemented in two closely interrelated stages. As Nötel stressed the first Protocol was approved by the League's Council on 7–8 September 1926, the loan successfully issued on 21 September. The main objective of this agreement was to provide finance for refugee settlement but contained the elements of the reconstruction scheme. The second Protocol was adopted on 10 March 1928 and the loan issued eight months later, from 21 November to 3 December 1928. The latter arrangement brought further foreign finance for stabilisation, and it encompassed the creation of the central bank with the exclusive right to issue of banknotes. Bulgaria's Settlement Loan amounted to USD 16.2 million averaged at about 88.5% of the nominal total with an interest rate of about 7%. The 7.5% Stabilisation Loan, to an equivalent of USD 26.9 million was issued to one half in the United States and to the other half in Switzerland, Belgium, and Italy. More than 52% of the reconstruction scheme was used to restore budgetary equilibrium. Another part was allocated to transport investment (25%), agricultural credit (13%) and finally, to emergency expenditure in earthquake-stricken regions (10%).¹⁶

¹⁴ BEREND – RÁNKI, *Közép- és Kelet-Európa*, pp. 271–272.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 309–310.

¹⁶ NÖTEL, pp. 197–199.

Financial reorganisation was completed in 1928, when Bulgaria switched to the gold-exchange standard. The lev was stabilised on 21 September of the same year: one lev was being equivalent to 0.72 US cent or 1.92 gram of fine gold. As security for the loan issue, all sequestered revenues, including excise on salt and alcohol and the match monopoly, were released by the Reparations Commission. At the same time, foreign-exchange control was abolished six months after successful implementation of the stabilisation loan.¹⁷

Czechoslovakia

The only country of the region, which was able to stabilise its economic affairs immediately in the post-war years, was Czechoslovakia that can be explained by several factors. As Teichova rightly noted that compared to its neighbours, Czechoslovakia was not hit by the wave of inflation and avoided post-war confusion. Thanks to an early separation of the currencies accompanied by a currency reform, the Czech crown (Kč) remained stable during the interwar period.¹⁸ After the end of the First World War, the relatively adequate supplies of essential foodstuffs and the absence of war devastation in the country contributed to the economic reconstruction. Political stability and the fact that Czechoslovakia inherited 70 percent of industrial capacities of the Dual Monarchy also played an important role in the fast recovery. As a result of stringent exchange controls and protective tariffs, favourable trade balances had been reached since 1920, whereas the value of the Kč on foreign exchanges was raised artificially by open market operations of the Minister of Finance, Dr. Alois Rašín. This resulted the relative overvaluation of the Czechoslovak currency, which erased the price advantages of Czechoslovak exports. Although deflationary policy had negative impacts on output and employment, but the adverse effects were offset by the flight from the German mark into safer currencies and the French occupation of the Ruhr in 1922, which brought new orders to Czechoslovak industries despite the rigours imposed on exports by the overvalued Kč.¹⁹ All these factors promoted that inflation was held in check, the budget was balanced, and currency stabilisation was carried out at the end of 1922 a rate, which provided a fair basis for the Czechoslovak export trade. Czechoslovakia was able

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 199.

¹⁸ A. TEICHOVA, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1918–1980*, London, New York 1988, p. 22.

¹⁹ TEICHOVA, *East-central and South-east Europe*, p. 930.

to find new markets for their manufactured goods in the 1920s.²⁰ The National Bank of Czechoslovakia also contributed to the financial reorganisation of the country with the accumulation of adequate gold and foreign exchange reserves and by the pursuance of credible monetary policy.

Romania

Although Romania belonged to the victorious Entente Powers during World War I and was enlarged by the addition of Transylvania and Partium from Hungary, had to face severe inflation due to the economic losses caused by temporary occupation of the country between 1916 and 1918. The territory and population of the post-war Kingdom of Romania trebled which coupled with increasing public expenditures. Therefore, the government issued unsecured banknotes to cover rising public spending. Additionally, the former crown used as a legal tender in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, had to be exchanged. As a result, the quantity of money in circulation rose significantly, whereas the value of the leu declined sharply up to 1922. However, depreciation of the national currency slowed down thanks to the British-American loan of £37 million, but the leu further weakened: one Swiss franc was equivalent to 44.5 leu. In the Summer of 1922, a complete moratorium on all transfers of money was ordered by the government and foreign liabilities were seized. The first stage of the stabilisation was carried out from 1922 to 1926, when an agreement was reached between the National Bank of Romania and the Ministry of Finance to stop securing expenditures with the issue of paper money. A liquidity fund was set up to settle all remaining liabilities of the state. Berend and Ránki stressed that inflation culminated in 1924, when the value of the leu declined to 2% of the pre-war level. From May 1925, the depreciation of the national currency ceased, and the value of the leu increased slightly, however, fluctuation of the exchange rate continued because one Swiss franc was worth 50 leu.²¹

The second stage of financial reconstruction was accomplished on 7 February 1929, with the aid of a long-term government loan of USD 101 million and a rediscount credit of USD 25 million granted to the National Bank of Romania by thirteen cooperating central banks. The

²⁰ E. A. RADICE, General Characteristics of the Region, in: M. C. KASER – E. A. RADICE (eds.), *The Economic History of Eastern Europe 1919–1975. Economic Structure and Performance between the two Wars*, Vol. I, Oxford 1985, p. 42.

²¹ BEREND – RÁNKI, *Közép- és Kelet-Európa*, pp. 311–312.

7% Stabilisation and Development Loan was constituted as a direct obligation of the Autonomous Monopolies Institute, and it was unconditionally guaranteed by the Romanian state. In return, all monopoly revenues were mortgaging except for those of the match monopoly, which were guaranteeing the portion of the loan granted by the Swedish Match Corporation. As Nötel emphasized of the total receipts of estimated USD 85 million, USD 25 million were used to improve the liquidity of the National Bank by taking over one part of its portfolio; USD 20 million served for repaying short-term debts and restore budgetary equilibrium and USD 35 million were used for railway investment. The remaining was applied to other investments.²²

The legal parity of the leu was fixed by the currency law, adopted on 7 February 1929, which was tied to gold. In terms of the law, 1 USD was worth 167 leu and 1 leu was made equal to 10 milligrams of gold of nine-tenths pure content. The modified status of the National Bank of Romania, approved on 3 March 1929 stipulated to maintain a minimum reserve of 35% of its note issue and other liabilities in gold or foreign exchange of gold-standard countries.²³

Poland

In Poland, the road to economic and financial stability was to be long and difficult. Reconstruction was retarded by the massive physical destruction and devastation on Polish territory caused by World War I. As a result of war operations, both the industrial plants and the agriculture suffered from serious losses. Because external frontiers with the USSR (the Polish-Soviet War ended in 1921) and with Germany (the final agreement on the division of industrialised Upper Silesia was signed in 1922) were not settled, therefore, economic chaos emerged in the country. Morewood highlighted the problems, which arose from the unification of three different segments, formerly belonged to Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary.²⁴ The new republic experienced large budgetary deficits that could only be covered by the issue of unsecured banknotes because governments recognised this as a useful tool in the reconstruction process.²⁵

Berend and Ránki rightly noted that hyperinflation paralyzed the

²² NÖTEL, p. 207.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ ALDCROFT, Inflation, Currency Depreciation and Reconstruction in Europe, p. 69.

²⁵ W. ROSZKOWSKI, The Growth of the State in the Polish Economy in the Years 1918–1926, in: *Journal of European Economic History*, 18, 1, 1989, pp. 105–126.

entire economic life in Poland over the period from 1918 to 1924. The currency in circulation rose from 150,000 million Polish marks to 570,698 million marks between November 1918 and April 1924. By the Spring of 1924, the value of the Polish mark sank to virtually zero: 9.3 million marks were equal to one dollar.²⁶ To stop the process of depreciation, a series of reforms were introduced by the right-wing government of Władisław Grabski. The measures included the introduction of a new currency, the zloty, which replaced the worthless Polish mark and the creation of the Bank of Poland. Budgetary equilibrium was achieved by reduction in state expenditures and increased and more efficient collection of taxes.²⁷ Moreover, economic stability had to be restored by the sales of some public-owned industrial and commercial enterprises. As a part of the austerity measures, railway tariff rates were raised, and the number of public employees and state authorities was reduced.²⁸

Despite the efforts of the government, the economic situation of the country hardly improved. Because the parliamentary regime was too weak, fiscal measures could not be implemented successfully. According to Aldcroft and Morewood several other factors contributed to the renewed weakness of the currency, including a deterioration in the trade balance, poor harvests, a tariff war with Germany in 1925 and the absence of external aid, which could have bolstered confidence.²⁹ Therefore, the first attempt to stabilise the Polish economy failed, and the exchange rate of the zloty further weakened and reached its nadir in May 1925. Teichova stressed that when the Polish government got into renewed difficulties during her second inflation it was Montagu Norman, the Governor of the Bank of England, who refused to grant an international loan to Poland. Thanks to the support of the Governor of the Bank of France, Emile Moreau, and the Governor of the Federal Reserve Bank of the USA, Benjamin Strong, an international consortium of banks extended a stabilisation loan of USD 62 million to Poland in 1927. Charles Dewey was dispatched to Warsaw to supervise the fulfilment of the loan's strict conditions for three years.³⁰ The 7% Stabilisation Loan contained a series of measures for the preservation of budgetary balance. It included a substantial increase

²⁶ BEREND – RÁNKI, *East Central Europe in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, pp. 88–89.

²⁷ P. D. STACHURA, *Poland 1918–1945. An Interpretative Documentary History of the Second Republic*, London 2004, p. 50.

²⁸ K. SZOKOLAY, *Lengyelország története*, Budapest 2006, p. 162.

²⁹ ALDCROFT – MOREWOOD, p. 40.

³⁰ TEICHOVA, *East-central and South-east Europe, 1919–1939*, pp. 932–933.

in budgetary revenues accompanied with the reduction of administrative expenditures. Budgetary equilibrium was to be safeguarded through a special reserve, which was constituted from one part of the loan receipts. The government undertook not to contract foreign or domestic loans for three years for budgetary purposes.³¹

The general strike in Britain in 1926 gave a considerable boost to Polish coal exports, which improved Poland's foreign trade balance, and this enabled the zloty to be stabilised in October 1927.³² The new parity rate of the zloty was fixed at 11.22 US cents, instead of the former 19.30 US cents, which meant a devaluation to 58% of the original parity rate.³³ With the help of the reconstruction loan, confidence was restored in the currency and exchange rate fluctuations ceased too.

Yugoslavia

Post-war reconstruction of Yugoslavia was the most difficult task of any of the countries of the region. As Radice stressed some regions had suffered from very considerable war damage, including the territory of Serbia, which became a battlefield during World War I. Therefore, both the transportation infrastructure and the industrial plants were devastated, and livestock was also decimated. The unification of different fiscal and administrative systems hindered the fast economic recovery. Budgetary problems arose from the fact that Serbian fiscal methods were applied in the whole country.³⁴ The successor states used the common currency of the former Dual Monarchy, the crown, whose value declined sharply. Between January and December 1919, the old banknotes were overprinted to stop the issue of unsecured money. Finally, they were withdrawn completely from circulation. As a result of financial stabilisation, carried out in January 1920, the Yugoslav dinar replaced the four different currencies that were worthless. The withdrawal of money in circulation and the loans granted to the state led to the increase of the volume of the new currency, which amounted to 2.7 billion dinars. State assets, including mines and forests as a guarantee of the government were assigned to the National Bank of Yugoslavia to preserve liquidity.³⁵

³¹ NÖTEL, p. 205.

³² RADICE, p. 43.

³³ NÖTEL, p. 206.

³⁴ RADICE, p. 44.

³⁵ V. RAB, *Diagnózisok és terápiák. Javaslatok az európai gazdaság újjáélesztésére az első világháború után*, Budapest 2010, p. 99.

Increasing state expenditures, which served direct military aims could not be covered by normal tax revenues and customs receipts and the profits of state-owned enterprises. Therefore, budgetary deficits were financed by issuing of unbacked banknotes. This led to the depreciation of the dinar. Foreign liabilities comprised the bulk of the burdens that reached 30 billion dinars. A major part of these burdens, 15.3 billion dinars originated from the war debt of the Kingdom of Serbia. The pre-war loans and debts contracted by the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy amounted to about 2.2 and 1.4 billion dinars.³⁶

According to Radice, at first there was a strong desire by Yugoslavia to stand on its own feet and was particularly suspicious in the early years on foreign capital, which in the Yugoslav mind, was associated with the dominance of Vienna and Budapest.³⁷ Legal stabilisation of the Yugoslav dinar was accomplished in the Summer of 1931. At the same time, a new currency law was adopted on 11 May 1931 and the revised status of the National Bank of Yugoslavia was also approved. The 7% Stabilisation Loan of 1,025 francs or USD 40 million were guaranteed by French, Swiss, Czechoslovak, Swedish and Dutch banks. The bulk of the international credit (USD 33 million) were paid to the National Bank of Yugoslavia as reimbursement for “past advances to the State”, and the remaining part were used for the purposes of economic consolidation. The legal parity of the dinar was fixed at 26.5 milligrams of pure gold. 1 Yugoslav dinar was made equal to 1.7612 cent, and 1 dollar was worth 56.78 dinars.³⁸ In the 1920s, financial reorganisation in Yugoslavia was accompanied by the introduction of a convertible currency, which was tied to the gold standard.

The Case of Hungary

Antecedents

After the First World War not only with the effect of the Treaty of Trianon covering every economic and social dimension but the total isolation of the country had to be considered in Hungary. In addition to the huge loss of territory and population the production, logistic and market networks

³⁶ H. SUNDHAUSEN, Jugoslawien von 1914 bis zur Gegenwart, in: F. WOLFRAM – J. A. VAN HOUTTE – H. KELLENBENZ et al. (eds.), *Handbuch der Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, Bd. 6, Stuttgart 1987, p. 910.

³⁷ RADICE, p. 44.

³⁸ NÔTEL, p. 210.

organically established within the framework of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were also thrown into disorder. Until the Treaty of Trianon the country operated within one regional economic integration, a 50 million market and within its part of a one currency zone. Starting from the 1920s Hungary was highly dependent on joining the international division of labour and the changes of the international prosperity.³⁹

Having addressed the realities, the starting point of the consolidation strategy of the Bethlen government was joining the international political and economic life. Temporary adjustment to the circumstances established by the Treaty of Trianon, the acceptance of the status quo was the first step in the direction of the normalisation of the situation, consolidation. Already in his national assembly speech held on 19 April 1921, while speaking about foreign affairs, Count István Bethlen emphasised the necessity of integration into the forced situation established by the Treaty of Trianon. Hungary requested its accession to the League of Nations on 22 August 1922 and on 18 September 1922 it was granted by a unanimous verdict. Although after the wartime period the inflation policy played a large role in moving the Hungarian national economy from the rock-bottom, it was clear to everyone that it could not continue indefinitely. Between 1914 and 1924 the prices grew 8 thousand times while the wages “only” 3.5 thousand times. The value of money decreased continuously, the public budget showed huge deficit year by year. The depreciation of the korona (crown) almost completely destroyed that small capital, which was left after the series of disasters. All this resulted in a poverty of a degree, which could have easily led to another political destabilisation.⁴⁰

After the conclusion of peace several attempts were made to regularise the economic situation and stabilise money. The first attempt for stabilisation based on internal resources was made by Lóránt Hegedüs, Minister of Finance, in 1921. The idea was to link korona to the French franc and it expected the drastic reduction of expenses and increase of incomes, primarily from the newly levied assets taxes. In addition to this deflation measures were also taken. The improving rate of the korona, however, made exports significantly more expensive deteriorating thus the export opportunities considerably. The attempt was also highly disapproved by

³⁹ J. HONVÁRI, A gazdaság a két világháború között, in: J. HONVÁRI (ed.), *Magyarország gazdaságtörténete a honfoglalástól a 20. század közepéig*, Budapest 2003, pp. 320–321.

⁴⁰ Z. KAPOSÍ, *Gazdaságtörténet*, Pécs 1997, pp. 190–191.

the Hungarian reigning élite due to the costs they were made to pay in the interest of the financial stabilisation. The stabilisation attempt built exclusively on internal resources collapsed by the autumn of 1921. To avoid control by the League of Nations – after the fall of Hegedüs – the Bethlen Government attempted to take out foreign private loans. The influential centres of the international capital market were monitored steadily in the attempt of looking for an opportunity to obtain a larger loan. Despite the efforts it became clear by 1922 that the direct interest undertaking of the New York money market was not an option for us. The Hungarian orientation for taking out a loan finally turned to England. The role of the English political and financial circles was influential all throughout the negotiations concerning the preparatory works for the stabilisation and the loan. England, however, also insisted that the country had to turn to the League of Nations. Under this condition England did promise every support.⁴¹ The unsettled reparation and the fact that the main income sources of the state had been seized as security for the war reparation make it more and more obvious that the country could not expect a long term foreign private loan.

Despite every effort and the promise of Bethlen, according to which we would not give up our sovereignty, we were forced to take the loan offered by the League of Nations resulting in constant control and supervision from part of the winning states. On 6 November 1923 the delegates of the League of Nations and the Reparations Commission arrived at Budapest to survey the general economic condition of the country and give a recommendation about the amount of the loan, the period of restructuring and the measures of stabilisation. The foreign experts came to the opinion that Hungary required a loan of 200–250 million gold koronas, from which the reconstruction could be implemented in 2–2.5 years. The Hungarian standpoint requested a loan of 400 million gold koronas and a 3-year stabilisation period.⁴²

The central element of the whole financial settlement was ensuring monetary stability. This goal was wished to be achieved via three cardinal principles. The first was to establish the balance of the state budget at all costs to avoid the state resorting to the mint to cover its expenses resulting in depreciation. The second principle was the establishment of

⁴¹ Gy. PÉTERI, Montagu Norman és a magyar szanálási mű. Az 1924-es magyar pénzügyi stabilizációról, in: *Századok*, 1, 1985, pp. 138–140.

⁴² M. ORMOS, *Az 1924. évi magyar államkölcsön megszerzése*, Budapest 1964.

a central bank operating according to strict rules and the third one was the return to strict coverage principle in money supply.⁴³

After the negotiations the Reparations Commission approved the suspension of the reparation security right, by which the granting of the loan by the League of Nations was given a freeway.

Loan from the League of Nations

The scheme of the financial reconstruction and Protocols I and II additional to it were signed in March 1924, which the Hungarian legislation enacted in April 1924. The establishment of a central bank independent of the government was also enacted together with the conventions and contracts concluded with the different states during the negotiations related to the reconstruction.

Protocol I was of political character, in which the states signing it (England, France, Italy, Czechoslovakia, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Romania) guaranteed to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Hungary and Hungary guaranteed the loyal implementation of the peace-treaty. Protocol II incorporated the detailed scheme of the reconstruction also establishing the sphere of activities of the high commissioner delegated to its control and management if necessary. The Council of the League of Nations sent Jeremiah Smith,⁴⁴ financial expert from Boston, the confidant of John Pierpont Morgan to Hungary. Smith began his work on 1 May 1924.⁴⁵

The above-mentioned laws vested full powers in the Hungarian government in order to allow it to take every necessary action for the success of the reconstruction. In these terms the only duty of the government was to previously present the decrees to be issued to a parliamentary committee, which could, however, not prevent the issue of the decrees.

More than half of the League of Nations loans was taken over by the English money market and a further six countries, among them USA,

⁴³ E. DOMONKOS, A gazdasági és pénzügyi stabilizáció eredményei Kelet-Közép-Európában a két világháború közötti időszakban, in: S. CSILLAG (ed.), *Alkalmazott Tudományok Fóruma*, 3, 2016, p. 195.

⁴⁴ Jeremiah Smith financial lawyer and legal counsellor joined the work of the peace conference after the war as a financial expert. He participated in the negotiations related to the Austrian and Bulgarian peace-treaties and worked in Japan, China and Mexico in preparations and management of international loan transactions.

⁴⁵ Z. PETERECZ, *Jeremiah Smith és a magyar népszövetségi kölcsön, 1924–1926. Egy Jenki pénzügyi ellenőr története a Magyar Királyságban*, Debrecen 2018.

Switzerland, and Italy, participated in the subscription of the rest. The loan was issued on extraordinarily adverse conditions. The creditors took over the loan at issue rates between 80–88%, therefore the 7.5% interest accounted for 9.0589155% converted to net profit. As security of the loan the creditors pledged the incomes of the sugar tax, the tobacco, and the salt excise. The loan was subordinated to any other state debt.⁴⁶

Table 1. State Loan of the Kingdom of Hungary, 1924

| Issuing country | Interest | Loan face value | | | Rate | Rate for sales | | |
|-------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | Original currency | Gold korona | Pengő | | Original currency | Gold korona | Pengő |
| <i>Great-Britain</i> | 7.5% | 7,902,700 £ | 168,722,645 | 195,465,184 | 84% | 6,638,268£ | 141,727,022 | 164,190,755 |
| <i>USA</i> | 7.5% | 9,000,000 \$ | 44,414,986 | 51,454,761 | 80% | 7,200,000\$ | 35,531,989 | 41,163,809 |
| <i>Italy</i> | 8.5% | 170,000,000 Lira | 36,228,046 | 41,970,191 | 88% | 149,600,000 Lira | 31,880,680 | 36,933,768 |
| <i>Switzerland</i> | 7.5% | 30,000,000 sv. Fr. | 26,196,364 | 30,348,488 | 85% | 25,500,000 sv. Fr. | 22,266,909 | 25,796,214 |
| <i>Sweden</i> | 7.5% | 4,585,000 sv. K | 5,994,482 | 6,944,607 | 84% | 3,851,400 sv. K | 4,195,365 | 4,860,330 |
| <i>Netherlands</i> | 7.5% | 5,000,000 Hol. Ft. | 9,257,466 | 10,724,774 | 84% | 4,200,000 Hol. Ft | 7,776,271 | 9,008,810 |
| <i>Czecho-slovakia</i> | 7.5% | 83,620,000 cs.K. | 12,144,840 | 14,069,797 | 84.75% | 70,867,950 cs.K. | 10,292,752 | 11,924,153 |
| <i>Hungary</i> | 7.5% | 850,000 \$ | 4,194,752 | 4,859,620 | 86% | 731,000 \$ | 3,607,485 | 4,179,271 |
| Altogether | | | 307,153,581 | 355,837,422 | | | 257,278,473 | 298,057,110 |
| <i>Issuing costs</i> | | | | | | | 5,100,965 | 5,909,468 |
| <i>Amounts received</i> | | | | | | | 252,177,508 | 292,147,642 |

Source: State Loan of the Kingdom of Hungary, 1924. Reports on Hungarian State Loan 1924–1944. Ministry of Finance, General documents. National Archives of Hungary. General Archives (MNL OL), K 269, parcel 543, item 340.

The net profit of the League of Nations loan amounted to 257.2 million gold koronas at the rates of 26 June 1924, of which the portion exceeding 252 million gold koronas was imputed to the issue costs. Pursuant to the

⁴⁶ Gy. DOMÁNY, *A magyar szandálás*, Budapest 1927.

conditions of the League of Nations loan every partial issue of the loan must have been repaid until 1 February 1944.

The utilisation of the loan was controlled by Smith high commissioner. He, furthermore, controlled the Hungarian budget and vetoed every expenditure, which would have endangered the implementation of the scheme. If he judged so, he even had the right to levy new taxes. He made sure that the state incomes pledged as security were paid to a separate account, from which payments could only be made with his approval. According to its specified goal the loan could only be utilised to finance the budgetary deficit.

Restoration of the Budget Equilibrium

János Bud, Minister of Finance, submitted the restoration budget in December 1924, which strictly followed the budgets established by the Financial Committee of the League of Nations.⁴⁷

Act IV of 1924 on reconstruction was titled “Restoring the balance of the state budget” and its measures also emphasised the same. A separate chapter was devoted to the reduction of the costs, the backbone of which was the issue of clerks and civil servants. It, however, also took care of reforming certain areas of the administration, moreover, it demanded the simplification of the administration and judicial proceedings. A serious reduction of the expenditure was the reduction of the headcount of state employees and the restriction of the emolument of pensioners. Pursuant to the reconstruction scheme the headcount of state employees (including the employees of state-owned factories) had to be reduced by 15,000 persons by the end of June 1926. Their headcount was 198,874 persons according to the budget of 1923/24.⁴⁸ As opposed to this, according to the budget of 1926/27, this headcount was 160,548, meaning that the headcount of persons in state employment was reduced by 38,326, more than twice the number of the prescribed 15,000 persons.

The establishment of the National Saving Commission (Országos Takarékosági Bizottság) served the overall implementation of simplifying the administration and the enforcement of austerity. The Commission

⁴⁷ Speech of János Bud (Minister of Finance) in meeting 353 of the National Assembly, December 12, 1924. *Diary of the National Assembly*, Vol. XXIV, December 12, 1924 – January 29, 1925, pp. 1–5.

⁴⁸ Between 1913 and 1939 the budget year began on 1 July.

put great emphasis on making the administration more efficient and on elaborating its disciplinary-accountability system. It reviewed every area of the state bureaucracy and achieved significant results in cost reduction. It aspired to eliminate parallelism and actively contributed to raising awareness in the Hungarian state life and administration of concepts such as economy or profitability.⁴⁹ As a result of the saving measures the ministry of food was closed, the in-kind supply provided to public servant employees at discount price stopped, the price review committees and the coal government committee ceased. Part of the state offices and institutions was merged, and the procedures were also simplified. Starting from July 1924 monthly budgets and profit and loss accounts were prepared for the continuous control of the state budget, which were published in the reports of the League of Nations high commissioner.

The next chapter incorporated the increase of incomes intended to be achieved by increasing the tax rates and tax bases. The primary task of the reconstruction policy was the restoration of the almost completely destroyed tax morality. To achieve this a well-functioning financial administration had to be established, in the interest of which tax administration was transformed into first degree tax authorities bringing financial administration closer to the society. Strict measures were taken, which were embodied primarily in rather high default interests and other fines. In the case of certain taxes, especially in the case of sales taxes, special rewards and shares were allocated to the revealers of hidden tax bases.⁵⁰ Income tax was defined progressively, the tax rate of which varied between 1% and 40% and also took the number of persons dependent on the income into account. The lowest item of the assets tax was 0.1% for 4000 gold koronas tax base and its highest item amounted to 1% for 16 million gold koronas tax base.⁵¹

⁴⁹ E. BARACSI, Országos Takarékosági Bizottság (1925–1931). A magyarországi racionalizálási mozgalom megindulása, in: *Levéltári Szemle*, 3, 1980, pp. 305–327.

⁵⁰ *Memorandum of the Hungarian Government to the League of Nations in the Subject of the Financial and Economic Situation of Hungary and the Supply of Civil Servants*. MNL OL, Collection of Documents regarding the Reconstruction of Hungary 1923–1926, K 26, 1387 parcel, folder d.

⁵¹ DOMÁNY, p. 42.

Table 2. Appropriations and Revenues in the Budgetary Years of 1924/25
(million gold korona)

| Type of tax | Revenue Appropriation | Revenue |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| Direct taxes* | 94.60 | 93.10 |
| Sales taxes | 80.00 | 157.80 |
| Dues | 30.03 | 59.90 |
| Consumption tax | 31.00 | 57.80 |
| Custom duty | 23.50 | 104.80 |
| Salt excise duty | 14.60 | 16.80 |
| Tobacco excised duty | 51.00 | 89.20 |

* Direct taxes: Land tax, Income- and wealth tax, corporate tax.

Source: Domány, p. 73.

As it is seen from the table, the indirect taxes levied on the wide consumer strata, incomes from the sales taxes and excises increased most compared to the plan. The quadruplication of the customs revenues was the result of the new customs system including tariffs significantly higher than before coming into force on 1 January 1925.⁵²

As a result of the measures the structure of the tax incomes also changed. In the income structure the percentage of the direct taxes, duties and revenues increased at the expense of sales taxes. Decrease was only experienced in the customs incomes from 1926/27 because of the concluded commercial treaties. The increase in the direct tax incomes was mostly the result of the reforms and tightening in the execution system and the increase of the income from the other tax types was undoubtedly due to the improving economic situation and the growing purchasing power of the population.

The strict implementation of the reconstruction yielded a result within a very short time. In 1923/24 it was still really necessary to use part of the loans to cover the deficit, however the 1924/25 budget not only was not closed with a deficit but resulted in 90.3 million gold koronas income surplus.⁵³

⁵² HONVÁRI, p. 345.

⁵³ Pursuant to the reconstruction scheme the 1924/25 budget was based on gold korona, however, as the effective tender was paper korona, the establishment of the relation only caused unnecessary difficulties. For this reason, the 1925/26 budget was already drawn up in paper korona and the 1926/27 estimates had to be made on "pengő" basis as in the budgetary year (from 1 January 1927) this new legal tender was introduced.

Table 3. Percentage Share of Tax Revenues over the Budgetary Years

| | 1923/24 | 1924/25 | 1925/26 | 1926/27 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Direct taxes | 15.90 | 16.20 | 21.20 | 24.90 |
| Sales taxes | 40.80 | 27.50 | 18.50 | 18.90 |
| Dues | 5.90 | 10.80 | 13.70 | 11.70 |
| Consumption tax | 11.00 | 10.10 | 11.40 | 10.30 |
| Custom duty | 9.40 | 17.70 | 16.20 | 10.60 |
| Salt excise duty | 2.00 | 2.10 | 2.40 | 2.20 |
| Tobacco excised duty | 15.00 | 15.60 | 16.60 | 21.40 |

Source: Annual Tax Revenues 1923–1927. Ministry of Finance, General Documents, National Archives of Hungary. General Archives, (MNL OL) K 269, parcel 518, item 1, parcel 515, item 1.

As it was clear that the achieved result was not a one-off, the minister of finance was prompted to rethink certain elements of the economic policy. One such pursuit was the launch of tax reforms aimed at the reduction of the tax burdens and another one was the launch of resolute investment schemes.⁵⁴

Having examined the budgetary balance of the different years it is seen that from 1924/25 every year ended with a surplus.⁵⁵ As starting from 1924/25 there was no deficit in the state budget at all, the remaining portion of the loan gave an opportunity to finance investments contributing to the strengthening of the financial and economic situation of Hungary.⁵⁶ A mere 70 million gold koronas from the loan were used to finance the deficit and from the remaining amounts - upon the approval of the Council of the League of Nations – 50 million gold koronas were used in 1925/26 and a further 50 million gold koronas in 1926/27 to perform investments and the remaining amounts were utilised in the following two years of 1927/28 and 1928/29.⁵⁷ The loans mainly served

⁵⁴ B. KENÉZ – I. TEMESVÁRY, *A nemzetgyűlés pénzügyi bizottságának jelentése az 1925/1926. évi állami költségvetésről*, in: *Nemzetgyűlési Irományok*, No. 963, Budapest 1925.

⁵⁵ While the state budget was significantly growing in the given years.

⁵⁶ S. HAJDRIK, *Államháztartásunk a szanálás óta*, in: *Közgazdasági Szemle*, 1, 1933, pp. 632–682.

⁵⁷ *Memorandum of the Hungarian Government to the League of Nations in the Subject of the Utilization of the State Loan and the Investments*. MNL OL, Collection of Documents regarding the Reconstruction of Hungary 1923–1926. K 26, 1387 parcel, folder h.

the reconstruction of the public utilities and were also channelled into agriculture.

Establishment of the National Bank of Hungary

The establishment of the National Bank was also supervised by the Financial Committee of the League of Nations, which specified rules and took actions. To control the monetary policy Royal Tyler arrived at Hungary.⁵⁸

“Act V of 1924 on the founding and patent of the National Bank of Hungary” was based on the agreements with the League of Nations. The articles of association stipulated that the central bank was not allowed to extend loans to the government.

The articles of association obliged the central bank to introduce a currency on gold basis. When the proportion of the bullion reserve was prescribed the so-called “one third security” system, which became a dogma by then, served as a starting point. The “Gold Committee” of the League of Nations, however, became slightly more lenient stating that “*lower percentage of security could also serve its purpose*”.⁵⁹

The National Bank of Hungary commenced its operation on 24 July 1924. Pursuant to the contract⁶⁰ concluded by and between Sándor Popovics⁶¹ and Montagu Norman, the governor of the Bank of England, korona was stabilised by taking pound sterling linked to gold as basis. One English pound equalled 346,000 koronas and one gold korona equalled 17,000 paper koronas. By this korona was indirectly linked to gold via the English pound. Due to the problem of the overpriced English pound, however, Hungary already dismissed the pound base in the following year, in 1925. By the cessation of the underlying English guarantee the monetary system returned to the direct gold base, which also meant that the country could implement its commitments from its own resources.

⁵⁸ Royal Tyler had previously been the director of an English bank in Paris. He received his first serious assignment in the American peace delegation, after which he became member of the Reparations Commission. He was delegated to Hungary in 1924 to the side of Jeremiah Smith and he remained in Hungary even after Smith finished his job. Later he returned to England and came back to Budapest in 1931 as the financial high commissioner of the League of Nations.

⁵⁹ *National Body of Laws*, Act V of 1924, April 26, 1924, p. 18.

⁶⁰ For the English and Hungarian background of the stabilisation please refer to Gy. PÉTERI, Montagu Norman and the Hungarian “Reconstruction Work”. About the Hungarian Financial Stabilisation of 1924, in: *Századok*, 1, 1985, pp 121–151.

⁶¹ Chairman of the National Bank of Hungary from 1924.

After the beginning of the financial reconstruction trust in the Hungarian economy and finances grew both domestically and abroad. It resulted in being able to increase the bullion reserve from 20% prescribed for the first five years to 54.5% on 21 December 1924 already. This then caused a serious conflict between the chairman of the central bank and the minister of finance. The minister of finance regarded the 400 million gold koronas banknote quantity insufficient compared to the payment and credit turnover of the country. And the central bank noticeably made a point of honour of the large security.⁶²

One serious consequence of the interest of the League of Nations loan, which was high in the circumstances of that time, was the increase of the Hungarian interest rate level and the growth in the price of further foreign loans. The amount of the banknote turnover of the country, which was prescribed rather tightly, was also specified by the experts of the League of Nations. For deflation monetary policy considerations, the National Bank of Hungary also cooperated in this action. The high interest rate level almost sucked the economy dry. In autumn 1924 the interest rate was 12%, which the supreme council of the National Bank of Hungary reduced to 11% in March 1925, to 9% in another two months and to 7% at the end of October, which then remained unchanged until the end of the reconstruction.⁶³ Due to the shortage of cash the otherwise viable companies also became disabled. They would have needed start-up funds. As it was said at that time only the “ignition energy” was missing.

While the central bank followed a deflation monetary policy, János Bud, Minister of Finance, continuously urged the widening of the banknote quota. Every economic sector experienced the lack of credit limits. As the main drawback of the rigid policy of the central bank Bud called attention to the fact that the high interest rates completely disabled the agriculture and forced the major industrial companies to take out short-term loans abroad.⁶⁴ The central bank, however, was protected from the intervention of the state by the provisions set out at the time of the stabilisation.

⁶² We wish to add that at the same time the Austrian National bank and the German Reichsbank took the same actions and had the same level of bullion reserves.

⁶³ Gy. KOVÁCS, A bankrendszer és stakeholderei történeti megközelítésben, in: K. BOTOS (ed.), *A bankrendszer és stakeholderei*, Szeged 2006, pp. 54–109.

⁶⁴ *National Archives of Hungary. General Archives*, MNL OL, K 269, Ministry of Finance, General Documents, parcel 518, item 1, parcel 515, item 1.

The new legal tender, “pengő” was introduced on 1 January 1927.⁶⁵ According to the conversion rate 12,500 koronas equalled one pengő, one kilogram gold was worth 3,800 pengő.

Reconstruction Crisis and Credit Expansion

The League of Nations reconstruction period ended on 30 June 1926, for which reason Hungary requested the termination of financial control. Smith high commissioner left the country shortly, but as there were still significant amounts to repay from the League of Nations loans Royal Tyler stayed in Budapest as an observer.

The stabilisation austerities resulted in a so-called reconstruction crisis by 1925–1926. The rate of unemployment grew significantly reaching the level of 15% and the real wages per one worker also fell considerably. The restrictive interest and credit policy, the rigid keeping of the pound rate resulted in the 20% appreciation of the Hungarian currency putting high pressure on the already significant problems of the export sector.

The official interest rate was extremely high at the beginning of the reconstruction, and the financial institutions/banks found a way to further increase it by charging higher costs under the titles of commission and management fee. This resulted in even the highest-ranking debtors having to count on interest rates of around 10%. In the country 13–14% was general, moreover, 17–20% interest rates were not infrequent either. The process moved the financial governance to take firmer steps and the minister of finance declared that he would not be averse to regulating the issue legally either. As the minister wanted to avoid every appearance of intervening with the interest rate policy of the central bank the only goal was to make sure that the credit organisation was tightly following the interest rate objectives of the Central Bank. Surprisingly, precisely the National Bank was against this goal even though it did not find the principles of the regulation opposing the laws of the economic life or the operation of the Central Bank.⁶⁶

The high interest rates of the domestic loans channelled the credit demands to the direction of foreign loans. The domestic credit hunger and the foreign capital abundance found each other. The League of Nations loan and the security of foreign financial control changed the traffic light to green opening a tide of private loans.

⁶⁵ Pengő as a calculation value had already been introduced earlier, in November 1925.

⁶⁶ Documents of the Credit Department of National Bank of Hungary. National Archives of Hungary. General Archives (1925–1926), MNL OL Z, parcel 15, item 4.

We can gain information about the inflowing foreign capitals in the years between 1926 and 1930 based on the balances of payments. According to these data the following amounts of new foreign loans flew in the country: 168.7 million pengős in 1926, 294.6 million pengős in 1927, 299.8 million pengős in 1928, 234.4 million pengős in 1929 and 320.3 million pengős in 1930. The main reason for the flow of foreign capitals – as we could see – was abundance abroad, on the one hand, and the appeal of the high interest rates achieved in Hungary, on the other hand, which pushed the considerations arising in terms of the bearing capacity of the Hungarian economic life to the background. In addition to the quantity of foreign loans taken out by the banks within a few years the short-term debts of the financial institutions also grew conspicuously.

Conclusion

During the interwar period, economic and financial reorganisation of the Central and Eastern European countries were carried out by granting of international loans. In the post-war years, the victorious Entente Powers recognised the importance of stabilizing the region both economically and politically to avoid the spread of the Bolshevik regimes and any possibility of potential revolution. Another important objective was to foil the resurgence of the Mitteleuropa Plan in East Central Europe.

According to the prevailing economic thinking in the 1920s, budgetary equilibrium and the stability of the exchange rate were considered as the most important preconditions to achieve sustainable economic growth by curbing inflation and raise the rate of capital accumulation. All countries of the region stabilised their economies with substantial loans of the League of Nations or with the participation of international consortium of commercial banks. From the very beginning, Czechoslovakia was the only country in East Central Europe, which could successfully implement its economic consolidation. Based on domestic resources, the Czechoslovak crown was stabilised in the Spring of 1919 and was tied to the gold and dollar. Other countries of the region were compelled to introduce austerity measures that implied the reduction of public expenditures and the increase of revenues. Finally, the creation of central banks on an internationally recognised pattern served to restore the confidence of Western creditors to these countries. Although inflation was halted and the balance of the budget was achieved, the unusual high nominal interest rate of the international loans, which varied between 7 and 8.5%, was meant an additional burden on the national economy.

Post-war inflation in the years 1918–1924 was accompanied by a deflationary period. The latter led to a cash shortage, which had harmful impacts on domestic accumulation and economic growth. Monetary scarcity was further exacerbated by the fact that because of hyperinflation a considerable part of the accumulated capital was depleted. As Berend and Ránki rightly noted that by the Summer of 1925, the sum of total deposits was still only 11% of the pre-war level.⁶⁷

Although financial reconstruction in Central and Eastern Europe contributed to the end of the economic chaos in the post-war years, the problems of low capital accumulation, poor investment rate and high indebtedness still remained in most of countries of the region.

The Hungarian stabilisation scheme also focused on monetary and budgetary issues and did not cover the recovery of the economy. The League of Nations agreement and control, however, offered a guarantee to the international creditors: the country had an economic policy, which guaranteed the repayment of the instalments and the payment of the interests. The political objective of the League of Nations loan outwardly was to make the system presentable and its economic goal was to maintain the solvency of the country.

As we saw it, Hungary stabilised the state financial affairs much faster than anybody would have expected. The balance was restored fundamentally because due to the stabilisation of the value of korona, the lifting of turnover restrictions and the growth of solvent demand the state tax incomes grew much faster than planned. The introduction of the gold currency standard, however, made the enforcement of a monetary policy in which the considerations of improving, supporting the domestic economy would have dominated, impossible.

The take-out of foreign loan was explained by the government by stating that after the stabilisation the potential deficit of the state budget would be covered from that loan to avoid another inflation generating money supply. Yes, however, for a very short time in reality: The deficit of the state budget had to be financed from the yield of the loan until the autumn of 1924 and such utilisation amounted to 70 million gold koronas. Many were on the opinion that this amount could have been produced from internal funds, too.

⁶⁷ BEREND – RÁNKI, *East Central Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries*, p. 88.

University of Ibadan and International Encounters, 1948–2011

*Mutiat Titilope Oladejo**

Between Ibadan and London, there evolved an international education linkage in the twentieth century, precisely, it started in 1948. The relationship was meant to establish university education in a British colony of Ibadan city in Nigeria. This paper analyses the terms and engagement of Inter-University Council in the planning and administrative decisions that internationalised University of London in Ibadan society. The curriculum and assessment system developed synergised the relationship that actually qualified University College Ibadan (UCI) as an extension of University of London, which is an African Campus. The levels of internationalisation created the ideal academic space for research which brewed academic capital that has proven to be sustainable within the Nigerian state. The paper examines the evidence that affirm the relationships. It creates a narrative of the knowledge systems and academic management. The paper traces the trend of internationalisation till contemporary times. The work depends on primary and secondary sources.

[University College Ibadan; University of London; Decolonisation; Internationalisation]

Introduction

This paper historicizes the position of University of Ibadan (U.I.) as an African campus of University of London. Internationalization in the history of University of Ibadan is a consequence and catalyst of globalization, but also a feature of decolonisation. From its historical antecedents in Nigeria, U.I. was a product of decolonization and globalization. Therefore, the paradigms exposed therein feature decolonisation in the expansion of academic and research activities. Sections in this paper conceptualized the narratives that evolved various learning models and systems from its inception in 1948 till contemporary times. In this regard, the argument advanced is that U.I. had resolved to gradual decolonization of its research and curriculum from its early years. This is evident in its

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international engagements from the era of internal self-rule of the 1950s in Nigeria. This experience is aptly captured in Smith's description that the elements of decolonization entails: "*deconstruction and reconstruction; self-determination and social justice; ethics, language, internationalisation of indigenous experiences, history and critique.*"¹

Furthermore, Santos clarified how colonialism undermined indigenous people by decimating knowledge.² Unlike Santos example of South African challenges of decolonisation of knowledge, the case of U.I. was wary of colonial imposition at the outset. From the 1950s, the idea of gradual decolonisation manifest in the paradigms of international education in the case of University of Ibadan. Before then, western education was vital to the social life since the nineteenth century, the value it accords enhanced the interest of indigenous citizens to accede land spaces for the establishment of University College Ibadan in 1948. The need for intellectual development influenced the thoughts of Ibadan indigenes to offer land to build the university. University of Ibadan, one of the foremost in West Africa was established in 1948. This form of acquisition exposes the interest of colonialism in the development of the peripheries. At least to control problems that might mar governance. Education and health became sectors for intervention and the urgency of it raised the question of compensation for the owners of land acquired for the university. Colonial induced changes in Nigerian society had education and health development as necessities which warranted land acquisition for expansion.³

In the establishment of UCI, the intent of British colonial administrators was profound in theoretical context of imposing the foreign learning culture. The idea was practiced by the observation of indigenous interest and capability, but to a large extent, there was enforcement of British curriculum. Invariably, the African environment and resources were considered at UCI. From inception, the establishment of universities in Africa by the British was aimed at fostering an education strictly meant for Africans. However, the process of decolonization quickly de-emphasized the models created and introduced African initiatives.

¹ See L. SMITH, *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, London 1999.

² This was very applicable in South Africa, whose colonial experience extremely disadvantaged Africans. See B. SANTOS, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*, Boulder 2014, p. 92.

³ Nigerian National Archives Ibadan (hereinafter NAI), Oyo Prof 1 432, Vol. I., Compensation for Land in Ibadan.

Scholarly works on the development of higher education in Africa tend to attach it to the theoretical frameworks of dependency and modernization. The internationalization of University of Ibadan is profound along the lines of standardizing international African relations. Thus, the neo-colonial outlook of University of Ibadan is domesticated for Africa's development in a global context.

Partnership is a fundamental factor that shaped the phases of international education. McGregor was of the view that creating regional networks of excellence in Africa is critical for its global visibility.⁴ The interwoven systems of partnership and curriculum thus defines the paradigms of international education. The internationalized nature of University of Ibadan is well explained in the words summed up by International Association of Universities that Universities derive great prestige from their history, in the perspective of European Universities. However, the quite the same because it was an Africa campus of University of London. The basis of internationalized university education at UCI was based on colonial experiences. Assie-Lumumba explained that: *"From the 1930s to the 1950s the demand for new African Western educated elite and nationalists to establish in African countries the full European system of education was articulated in all African sub-regions and countries regard less of the type of colonial power that was ruling. In the context of social policies defined by the ideology of colonization, the mere fact that higher education was reserved for the colonisers was in itself a sufficient condition for the Africans who were fighting for social justice and racial equality to demand it. More important than proving that Africans and Europeans could be treated equally, the Africans themselves had realized the power vested in the European education in the Europeanising context: demand for Western Education was substantiated by the arguments that it. European education was good to Europeans, it was good for the Africans too."*⁵

Deliberations for the curriculum make-up of University of Ibadan constantly ensued before the 1960s and the idea of internal self-rule in national politics permeated into the education system. Thus, the idea of Nigerianisation resonated and influenced the transformation from UCI to UI. The decolonisation of the curriculum as in the case of UI is such that Le Grange articulated as a possibility of emerging trans-disciplinary

⁴ K. MCGREGOR, Africa: Higher Education and Development' University World News, October 11, 2009, www.universityworldnews.com/article.php.

⁵ N'Dri ASSIE-LUMUMBA, *Higher Education in Africa: Crises, Reforms and Transformation in Africa*, Dakar 2006, p. 31.

knowledge produced by the university and expanded to include ordinary citizens and indigenous communities.⁶ Such implication means a sense of Africanism in the process of learning and it involved unlearning to re-learn. This disposition while it remains quite difficult is an impetus to contextualise the trajectories of internationalisation in University of Ibadan.

Inter-University Council

Following the recommendations of the Asquith and Elliot Commission, the Inter-University Council was established in 1946 to plan higher education for West Africa.⁷ From the outset, the activities of nationalists and the way Nigerians perceived the Inter-University council. In an editorial in *West African Pilot*, the roles of Kenneth Mellanby were stated thus: “[...] *It will remain for the doctor to adjust and adapt himself to the physical and psychological circumstances of present-day Nigeria. The country looks up to him with eyes raised by curiosity and expectancy. As in our politics, so in our education – independence is our ultimate ambition. Let the doctor note that.*”⁸

The need for independent higher education was a factor in the way Mellanby handled academic development at UCI. It was obvious that African needed affiliations but were cautious and it was a process. Fairly though, the Asquith and Elliot Commission through its recommendations strike a nexus between coloniality and decoloniality in its recommendations, by its decision to:

- “• *establish a University College in Ibadan which should aspire from the outset to academic standard equal with those of the university and university colleges in British;*
- *establish an inter-University Council with members drawn from British Universities and the Colonial territories to safeguards and advise the colonial office on how to assist the new University College;*
- *Make colonial universities (including that at Ibadan) should enter ‘special relationship’ with the University of London and prepare students for London University Degrees; and that courses should be suitably adapted to make them relevant to local problems and local conditions;*

⁶ L. LE GRANGE, Curere’s Active Force and Africanisation of the University Curriculum, in: *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 28 (4), 2014, pp. 1284–1294.

⁷ O. A. ADEWOYE, Higher Education: The Birth of an Idea, in: B. A. MOJUEAN (ed.), *Ibadan at 50. 1948–1998: Nigeria’s Premier University in Perspective*, Ibadan 2010, p. 18.

⁸ *West African Pilot*, August 11, 1947; see also ADEWOYE, p. 19.

- *make grants available for the project by the British Treasury under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act;*
- *that Colonial Universities should from the outset be autonomous institutions free from government control.”⁹*

From the tone of the recommendations, there were plans to make University of Ibadan sustainable despite its position as an African campus of University of London.

The Oxbridge Factor in University of Ibadan

The University College, Ibadan (UCI) was established in 1948, as an affiliate of University of London. The personnel drawn to work were either from University of Oxford or University of Cambridge.¹⁰ The presence of Kenneth Mellanby inspired the model of Cambridge as his styles showed that he studied in Cambridge. The manifest of education administration system from Cambridge influenced the work of Kenneth Mellanby. He acted the scripts of the objectives placed by Inter-Universities Council for Higher education in the colonies. For the first batch admission, the entrance examination was modeled after the Cambridge Local School Certificate questions. The examination was conducted at Yaba Higher College in 1947. The Cambridge style was found extremely hard and yet, the type of the students in UCI classes were not satisfactory. The Cambridge model made English a compulsory subject in entrance examination. Invariably, the use of English was considered extremely important to satisfy desired communication skills within UCI.¹¹

The Oxbridge Model as adopted by Kenneth Mellanby in entrance examination created a dichotomy that regarded students of the colonies as less intelligent than that of the British. Apart from English, others were a combination of subjects. In screening the performance of entrance examinations to UCI, Mellanby adopted the *Raven’s Progressive Matrix Test (RPMT)*.¹² The test created the impressions that Africans were not intel-

⁹ F. J. ELLAH, *My Era at Ibadan*, in: T. N. TAMUNO (ed.), *Ibadan Voices: Ibadan University in Transition*, Ibadan 1981, p. 12.

¹⁰ S. A. AJAYI, *A Historical Analysis of Staff Student Relationship in the Nigerian University System: The University of Ibadan Experience, 1948–2008*, in: *Ibadan Journal of Humanistic Studies*, Vol. 19 & 20, 2009/2010, p. 153; see also O. IKIME, *Problems of Student Welfare*, in: J. F. ADE-AJAYI – T. N. TAMUNO (eds.), *The University of Ibadan, 1948–73: A History of the First Twenty-five Years*, Ibadan 1973, p. 237.

¹¹ K. MELLANBY, *The Birth of Nigeria’s University*, London 1958, p. 146.

¹² *Ibid.*

ligent as expected by British standards. However, this resonates the idea of orienting Africa's development, because the whole education system was an import that defied the relevance of traditional education system. Despite the application of RPMT and the critic of its impact, Kenneth Mellanby was objective that the twenty (20) students who passed the entrance examination in 1949 passed the intermediate examination in 1951.¹³

In a way the evaluation and assessment system in the Oxbridge Model of Kenneth Mellanby was interpreted to mean the "politics of inferiority". The hard-line stance in the Oxbridge model obviously delayed Africans from graduating from UCI. The narrative given by Mellanby of his methods went thus: *"The fact that courses were longer in Ibadan than in London give rise to much ill-informed criticism outside the college. We were told that Nigerians who went to England completed degree courses there in minimum time and passed 'with flying colours'. This was true in a number of cases; but our critics did not remember that the individuals concerned had not entered the universities straight from school but had usually undergone a good deal of further education."*¹⁴

Africans perceived the Oxbridge model as a way of proving that higher education in Nigeria should not be commensurate with those of England. It was taken as a deliberate act to display colonial superiority. Thus, the process of making an international standard of Nigeria's university education to that of Britain imbued in Mellanby and others, the initiatives that doused the tension of the allegations of inferiority. Yet, the standards set till the 1950 was always not good, as the performance of students indicate les of Oxbridge model. Yet, Mellanby narrated that they accepted to groom the students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at least, the concessions given were since there are expanding infrastructure to teach and learn.

*"It was suggested for political reasons, we were deliberately trying to keep our African Students down and that we made our courses unnecessarily long to demonstrate that they were 'inferior'. We were always anxious to shorten the length of our courses, but this could only happen if the schools in Nigeria adopted higher standards and introduced sixth-form work."*¹⁵

This intervention pontificates to the fact that colonised and de-colonised ideas of educational development intersect. While Africans

¹³ Ibid., p. 147.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁵ Ibid.

perceived the policy as inferior, the British system prioritized preferences for standard. Relatively, the challenges of inferiority expressed by Africans reflected in the strengthening of science courses to meet manpower needs in secondary schools.

The initiative to improve standard based on RPMT prompted Mellanby to advocate for the introduction of sixth form work in Higher School (Secondary School).¹⁶

Another Oxbridge model in teaching was the tutorial system. Tutorials were considered important in improving the standards in Ibadan. Beyond ordinary lectures, the tutorial system intimated undergraduates to get more of learning contents from lecturers. Rejection of students to maintain standards was the hall mark of Oxbridge model. Non-compromise meant that several professional courses were not allowed to have its way from Yaba Higher College. Survey and teacher education were abandoned and limited to a diploma level despite the efforts of Randall Hogarth to groom teachers in training.¹⁷

Special Relationship and Curriculum Decolonisation

Decolonisation is a process of reconstructing the African past in all ramifications. Often, it is usual to view decolonisation from the perspective of politics and economy. It involves levels of rethinking and reframing to evolve the African meaning of development. Decolonisation of education remains uneasy to actualise a clear-cut agenda for the African ideal. Damtew and Albach posit different factors that mar decolonisation of higher education, but it is fundamental to the existence of Africa as it mirrors the general problem of development. Odora-Hoppers and Richards describes that decolonisation has phases and attests to the new forms of neoliberalism that contextually affects the realities.¹⁸ However, the features of decolonisation had manifested in the academic administration of University of Ibadan from the 1950s.

After ten years of adopting the Oxbridge Model, the Special Relationship scheme was placed for revision to evaluate courses, its evaluation became imperative in the cause of political development in Nigeria.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ In 1948, 21 post-intermediate diploma students from Yaba were brought to Ibadan but they were not absorbed to obtain degrees rather, they were awarded teaching diploma.

¹⁸ See C. OCHERA HOPPERS – H. RICHARDS *Rethinking thinking: Modernity' Achieving goals of decolonisation created the quest for internationalization*, Pretoria 2011.

Autonomy resonated in the polity and it reflected in all spheres. The phenomenal changes were because of national self-determination imbued in principle of independence. The idea of special relationship gradually effaced in the light of political aspirations. Even in the curriculum contents, it was felt that the courses be decolonized. Nationalism colluded with the Oxbridge rigid system that disallowed flexibility that suited Nigerian standard. The University of Ibadan Act replaced the past models that stifled admission process. Thus by 1962, UCI became University of Ibadan and the decolonized effect gave the opportunity to matriculate 600 students at the Trenchard Hall on the 3rd of November 1962.¹⁹

Beyond the rigidity in Oxbridge and special Relationship, the decolonization process injected ideas of an African model of higher education learning. Therefore, courses that were excluded in 1948 were thus included such as economics, sociology, psychology, music, African and European languages, Arabic, and Islamic studies. The decolonized objectives were at inception to make University of Ibadan an internationalized University. Thus, there were proposition to introduce French and German studies in Faculty of Arts. Of course, the introduction of French became necessary because of the French existence in neighbouring West African states. Deeply, the internationalization of the curriculum was solved by making French and Arabic support subjects for history students.

In the Faculty of Education, the process of internationalization was profound in the way Constance L. H. Alexander and Andrew Taylor handled the Institute of Education. Specifically, West African Journal of Education was managed in collaboration with University of Cambridge to cover educational research from West African nations from 1957–1962.²⁰ Of the Ibadan school of history, the study of history was one of the foremost courses in Special Relationship. Initially, African history was less significant rather, European history was emphasized. Thus, the appointment of African staff gradually imbued the decolonization of knowledge to integrate African studies. The Africans in History department could not insist on African studies, as such, the gradual introduction of African history courses matched with the process of decolonization.²¹ The gradual

¹⁹ J. O. O. ABIRI, The Making of the University of Ibadan, 1957–62, in: J. F. ADE-AJAYI – T. N. TAMUNO (eds.), *The University of Ibadan, 1948–73: A History of the First Twenty-five Years*, Ibadan 1973, p. 55.

²⁰ See ABIRI, p. 61.

²¹ The African staff were K. O. Dike, H. F. C. Smith, J. F. A. Ajayi, C. C. Ifemesia, J. C. Anene and A. B. Aderibigbe. See *ibid.*, p. 63.

involvement of Nigerians in the affairs of the university was evident when Kenneth Mellanby interacted with the representatives of the student union in the 1950s.²²

International Medical Education: The Ibadan Nexus

A life history narrative of the travails Nigerian students faced in the 1940s attests to the fact that the motives international education was not purposely meant for Africa's development. In a way Africans suffered to attain desired qualified education. Initially, British interest in health care development was basically to train health assistants. The Asquith and Elliott Commission in 1943 submitted reports for the establishment of university education in Nigeria.²³

The standard set was placed on a higher standard and the perception was that Africans lacked the initiative and psycho-motor requirements to study and practise medicine. The "special relationship" formed the context of curriculum that affiliated medical education in Nigeria to university of London.

The recruitment of foreign staff localised the practices of "special relationship". Professor Beatrice Joly was appointed in March 1948 to fill the gap of an "abridged" learning system that models University of London.²⁴

Internationalisation of medical education within Africa has a template from research discoveries in Ibadan. Community Health was globalised in the research effort of Thomas Adeoye Lambo in the research theme of mental illness that made Aro Village a centre of mental healthcare in Africa in 1956.²⁵ Thus Neuro-Psychiatric Practice was referenced to Ibadan in West Africa.²⁶ The decolonization of knowledge had it take off from scholarship and curriculum of medical education in Nigeria. In the 1960s, the curriculum developed in Ibadan medical education was replicated in medical schools of Anglophone West Africa.²⁷

²² See picture in MELLANBY, p. 161.

²³ Report of the Commission on Higher Education in West Africa, Cmd. 6655 (1945).

²⁴ See O. E. OLAPADE-OLAOPA, *The 21st Century College of Medicine in Nigeria: Bejewelled or Bedevilled*, in: O. OLORUNSOLA – O. BABALOLA – A. I. ALARAPE (eds.), *Collection of Lectures Postgraduate School Interdisciplinary Discourse*, Ibadan 2014, pp. 47–53.

²⁵ J. SADOWSKY, *Imperial Bedlam: Institutions of Madness in Colonial Southwest Nigeria*, California 1999.

²⁶ OLAPADE-OLAOPA, p. 74.

²⁷ In 1963, the African Medical Schools Association was formed based on the initiative of medical alumni from Ibadan working in other African medical schools.

In the while before 1962, the special relationship model worked for the development of medical education and by 1962, a comment on medical visitation in 1961 stated that: *“There can be no doubt that the standard of medical and surgical care offered by the University College Hospital is equal to that found in most of the teaching hospitals of the United Kingdom and North America. The hospital has only been in operation for a short time and its local reputation is being established.”*²⁸

The template of medical education developed in Ibadan was internationalised from the 1960s and the standard practices in curriculum dissemination of Ibadan medical school attracted grant of Medical Education Partnership Initiative in Nigeria (MEPIN) from United States Government.²⁹ Internationalising medical education within Ibadan was a platform that displayed its iconic status in Africa. The Ibadan reach defines the paradigm of international education to mean inclusive development within Africa. Right from the attainment of independence, scholars and intellectuals in Ibadan already understood the implication of decolonization and internal self-proclamation of knowledge with the standardisation of postgraduate medical education in 1961. From Ibadan, the Association of Surgeons of West Africa was formed known as West African College of Surgeons).

From 1980, the Postgraduate Institute for Medical Research and Training (PIMRAT) evolved as an academic unit of the College of Medicine. The research and teaching programmes are funded by international donor agencies such as World Health Organisation, Deutsche Volkswagen-Stiftung Foundation, European Commission, Welcome Trust, Alexander Von Humboldt Foundation and European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership.

The Ibadan nexus was profound in the internationalisation of medical education postgraduate medical education and training distinguished its relevance in Africa. In 2009, the Master of Science in Biomedical Education was introduced. The collaboration in disseminating the curriculum defined internationalisation within Anglophone West Africa as Universities from Ghana, Gambia, and Sierra Leone network with University of Liverpool to implement online mode of curriculum.

²⁸ *Report of Visitation to the University College, Ibadan, January 1961*, p. 38. See also ABIRI, p. 59.

²⁹ OLAPADE-OLAOPA, p. 76.

International Partnership and Academic Exchanges

The historical backgrounds of international education in University of Ibadan are like those of other countries. In Japan for instance, a Euro-American model sufficed initially from the late nineteenth century³⁰ such tractions were inevitable in the context of influences that shaped modernisation. This affirms the fact that Universities in Africa constantly experience shades of internationalisation. Therefore, maturation beyond colonial international education to self-organised styles forms most of the post-colonial era. However, the newness of self-organised styles of internationalisation often creates debates about ingenuity that fosters independence, and sustainability for desired African development. Invariably, this kind of internationalisation implies the ability to “scan globally and reinvent locally” as taken from the words of Damtew and Greljin.³¹

Given the position of University of Ibadan in West Africa, series of international partnerships evolved. The development of Faculty of Technology benefited largely from this. Initially, the Institute of Applied Science and Technology operate two-year postgraduate programmes, however, the viability became questioned in the context of Nigeria’s developmental needs. Amidst the dilemma of consolidating the discipline of Technology, University of Ibadan was invited to attend United Nations Economic commission for Africa (UNECA) meeting in Manchester in the summer of 1971.³² The aim of the meeting was to assist African Universities in developing curriculum in Applied Science and Technology. The early 1970s was a period of implementing the Second National Development Plan, hence it was advised that technology course revolve around the natural and environmental resources in Nigeria.

Prior to Manchester meeting, efforts to develop the Institute of Applied Science and Technology were tied to sourcing funds from international donors. Thus, there was an application to Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to seek the sum of two million, eight hundred and fifty-eight thousand naira for five years³³ and the international

³⁰ H. DE WIT, *Internationalisation of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe: A Comparative and Conceptual Analysis*, Greenwich, CT 2009.

³¹ T. DAMTEW – H. GREJLN, Introduction: Globalization and African Higher Education, in: T. DAMTEW – G. HEINZ (eds.), *Higher Education and Globalisation: Challenge, Threats and Opportunities for Africa*, Boston 2010, pp. 1–7.

³² AYANDELE, p. 268.

³³ W. J. Jenkins (Canadian High Commission) to Vice Chancellor, January 4, 1972. Put before the Board of the Institute, January 21, 1972, AST Paper 4; see also AYANDELE, p. 269.

collaboration to develop new courses were sustained despite the post-colonial era. Funds from CIDA enabled recruitment of international consultants from Universities of Waterloo and Calgary and for the development of academic exchange programmes were connected to Canada.³⁴ Resources for teaching were organised by book support from Russia and Canada.³⁵ For example, Overseas Books Centre, Ottawa, and Russian technical books were valuable for teaching and learning.

Manifestation of African International Education Model (AIEM)

The idea and features of AIEM manifests and recurs in contemporary times. Its peculiarity within University of Ibadan is attuning to how Knight and Schoole expressed that: *“The potential of higher education’s contribution to Africa’s development remains underdeveloped and often misunderstood. In today’s globalised world, which prioritises economic growth through liberalised trade and competitive market strategies, much emphasis has been placed on higher education’s abilities to produce graduates to serve the labour market and produce new knowledge for the knowledge economy.”*³⁶

The paradigm of international education as profound from the history of University of Ibadan is that which Knight defined as: the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of post-secondary education.³⁷ Therefore, the process of internationalisation is an indigenous driven process aimed at evolving post-colonial ideals of development. Internationalisation of higher education takes new waves of interests in contemporary times. But a revision of the history of University of Ibadan vividly attests to the fact that international education is a process that had existed. Contemporary debates on internationalisation are misconstrued and often taken to mean new forms of colonialism because mostly, the problems of funding are important in the university system. The problematic drives the forces for newness.

Often, the contemporary paradigm of international education in University of Ibadan is hinged on partnership. However, there are doubts

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Modernisation defined the evolution of technology education in Nigeria, thus from inception the support system was largely internationalized.

³⁶ See J. KNIGHT – Ch. SEPHEOLEU, *Internationalisation of African Higher Education: Towards Achieving the MDGs*, Rotterdam 2013.

³⁷ J. KNIGHT, *Higher Education Turmoil: The Changing World of Internationalisation*, Rotterdam 2008, p. 11.

about the intent of international partnership for real development. This was reviewed in a colloquium between Emory University and African universities in 2007. The political interests of academic partnerships reached a consensus that: *"We seek to promote research that will help to improve the lives of those living in poverty; to developing scholarship on and teaching about global and local inequalities in ways that emphasise local understandings of problems and solutions and to working towards re-imagining and reforming development practice. We are committed to pursuing these goals in the context of collaboration and partnerships with local research experts in developing world."*³⁸

The doubt for foreign donations to fund institutes within African universities questioned the agenda behind funding was based on the fears that such interventions create structural inequality and promotes neo-colonial ideologies. Yet, African international education system should less emphasise the problems of inequality, but a kind of model that evolved the needs for Africa's development. Therefore, the AIEM is on its tracks in line with Ranchod Nilsson's view that Africans need to reconstruct for development and the internationalized system in University of Ibadan is evidential on the path.

Contemporary AIEM in University of Ibadan was idealized in the formation of the Office of International Programme (OIP). Basically, the MacArthur Foundation granted facilitates for the actualization, with the aim of presenting U.I. to international academic exchange and relations.³⁹ Facilitation of academic exchanges increased U.I. visibility in the AIEM. Various disciplines attracted international collaboration to create a learning system targeted at specific objectives. Indigenous languages spoken in the community of University of Ibadan was advantaged for specific learning initiative. Thus, in 2009, America Councils of International Education (ACIE) Washington DC, USA actualized a cooperative agreement to initiate Yoruba language Flagship Project (YLFP).⁴⁰ The funds enabled the senate of the University of Ibadan to establish Yoruba Language Centre (YLC). The aim was to internationalize indigenous language of

³⁸ See statement made by S. RANCHOD-NILSSON at the October conference on "Research Partnerships and Collaborations for Development: Strengthening Structures of Reciprocity and Responsibility," 2008 between Emory University Institute for Developing Nations and University of Cape Town as emphasised at https://www.emory.edu/EMORY_MAGAZINE/2008/winter/idn.html.

³⁹ V.O. EDO – R. O. OLANIYI – P. K. NDUKWE – M. O. MURITALA (eds.), *Names and Monuments in the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria*, Ibadan 2015, p. 241.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 227.

Yoruba through various learning support systems.⁴¹ The YLFP boosted internationalization of Yoruba language.

In 2011, the AIEM manifest in the founding of Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.⁴² and the Centre for Petroleum and Energy Economics and Law.⁴³ Centre for control and Prevention of Zoonoses, Centre of Drug Discovery, Development and Production and U.I.-CARTA Partnership for Training and Research Capacity Building in Population and Public Health⁴⁴. Specifically, the Africanised international learning system influenced curriculum development for postgraduate training in courses that aided development across disciplines. The AIEM strengthened the focus of postgraduate school in U.I.

Collaboration among African universities made sense of AIEM. The foray of Professor Isaac Olawale Albert's work in peace research enhanced the formation of Centre of Peace and Conflict Studies (CEPACS) in U.I.⁴⁵ From inception, CEPAS was a manifestation of AIEM because its postgraduate curriculum was based on African challenges of crises and conflicts. And by a take-off grant from Association of African Universities (AAU), Accra, Ghana, Professional Masters of Humanitarian and Refugee Studies (MHRS) started in 2001/2002 academic session.

Either way AIEM meant that U.I. research and training centres attracted funds from international organisations to maintain its standard as evolved from Kenneth Mellanby's Oxbridge model. The AIEM had been globalized within University of Ibadan right from the moment UCI transformed to U.I. in 1962. Being the most populous black nation in the world, the initiatives and innovation of learning defies the theory of social Darwinism to evolve developmental paradigms.

Conclusion

In contemporary times, internationalization manifests in the emphasis on academic publications in international journals to enhance global

⁴¹ The programme sponsored six students to visit Nigeria and study Yoruba as a foreign language. Of the students, Kevin Barry (Kayode) was a student from University of Wisconsin. The rate at which he assimilated Yoruba language made him an iconic actor in Nollywood movies.

⁴² EDO – OLANIYI – NDUKWE – MURITALA, p. 209.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ The Senate of the University of Ibadan approved it on Senate Paper No. 454; see *ibid.*, p. 203.

recognition and branding. However, like the universities in developed countries, developmental agenda behind international branding remain implicit. In the US for example, universities are commercialized, learning credentialised, management corporatized, faculty casualised, knowledge commoditized and students consumerised.⁴⁶ However, U.I. has evolved the model of international engagements in all ramifications to fulfil the aims of developing human capital for Africa's development. Though, the want for international education still ravages in the thirst for knowledge in contemporary times, However the African International Education Model (AIEM) developed at U.I positions a decolonised concept of intellectual reproduction that sets for global competition and recognition. According to the Task force on Higher Education, it is articulated that for the integration of African economies into the global market the knowledge economy must worth viable sustainable development.⁴⁷ The paradigms, established the fact that University of Ibadan defied theoretical frames but its approach drifts towards globalizing the local. That is, the university evolved from the historical reality of its society to set a pace for education systems. Thus, internationalization placed the University as a frame of pragmatic transformation. Thus, the forms of international collaboration for teaching, research and learning continue to accentuate the relevance of U.I. in the global stature of Africa's development.

⁴⁶ P. T. ZELEZA, *Cultivating Academic Excellence: The Power and Promise of Liberal Arts*, UCLA Dean's Fall Convocation, October 21, 2010.

⁴⁷ See ASSIE-LUMUMBA, p. 156.

Tensions and Adaptation in Tropical Medicine: Lagos in the Networks of Malaria Science, 1890s–1906

*Adedamola Seun Adetiba**

This paper probes into the wide array of networks that shaped malaria control in the colonial Lagos during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It highlights the role of tropical locales in the production of medical knowledge, emphasizing the ways colonial doctors read and contributed to imperial discourses on tropical diseases. Existing histories suggest the existence of wide-ranging inclusive and complex circuits of knowledge production networks of European institutions and persons who ventured into the field of tropical medicine. Malaria research undertaken in Lagos between the 1890s and the early 1900s generated key ideas and findings that impacted on imperial medical science. Attempts to deal with malaria also created sites for contestations between the imperial blueprint that emphasized racial segregation as a disease control measure from the local view that regarded outright segregation as economically suicidal, advocating instead for environmental control.

[Malaria Control; Lagos Medical History; Colonial Sanitation; Tropical Medicine]

Introduction

A peculiar feature of European empires is the interconnectedness of colonial states through their integration to the imperial network. The major agents of these interactions were “cosmopolitan groups” that navigated territories, impacting arts, culture, literature, and politics in Europe and in European empires.¹ In the sciences, foreign scientists colonial bureaucracies in small but efficient numbers occupying key administrative positions. The permeation of colonial bureaucracies and locales by

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¹ D. NEILL, *Network in Tropical Medicine. Internationalism, Colonialism, and the Rise of a Medical Specialty, 1890–1930*, Stanford 2012, p. 2.

foreign interest groups (like scientific organizations, missionary societies, trading firms and philanthropists) implies that developments within colonies were a product of this transnational system of engagement and exchange.²

For medicine, the trans-nationality of medical research emerged initially as a tool of empire that facilitated European imperial expansion in the tropics.³ When they settled in the colonies, officials realized that the array of problems they faced required them to collaborate and share information with professional colleagues in neighbouring colonies. These collaborations deeply informed imperial medical science. Also important are the metropole-colony interactions that defined the mode of scientific knowledge production. In essence, colonies were integral in the development of tropical medicine not merely as testing sites but as contributors to ideas about tropical diseases, particularly malaria. Contrary to a one-directional transfer of medical knowledge as portrayed by modernization theorists,⁴ Douglas Haynes argues that a dynamic and dialectical relationship existed between the imperial metropole and the periphery that underlay the institutionalisation of tropical medicine in Britain.⁵ Additionally, the mobility of colonial doctors and metropolitan scientists to and fro colonies and metropolitan areas contributed to the framing and development of tropical medicine.

In this study, I examine the ways tropical medicine ideas were appropriated and reimagined by colonial scientists and administrators to suit their local contexts. Thus, local colonial officials and medical experts

² D. ARNOLD, Globalization and Contingent Colonialism: Towards a Transnational History of British India, in: *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, 2, 2015.

³ J. FARLEY, *Bilharzia: A History of Imperial Tropical Medicine*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 18–20; R. MACLEOD, Introduction, in: R. MACLEOD – L. MILOTON (eds.), *Disease, Medicine and Empire*, London 1988, pp. 1–18; M. WORBOYS, Manson, Ross, and Colonial Medical Policy: Tropical Medicine in London and Liverpool, 1899–1914, in: R. MACLEOD – L. MILOTON (eds.), *Disease, Medicine and Empire*, London 1988, pp. 21–37; M. WORBOYS, The Comparative History of Sleeping Sickness in East and Central Africa, 1900–1914, in: *History of Science* 32, 1994, pp. 89–102; L. LAPEYSSONNIE, *La médecine coloniale. Mythes et réalités*, Paris 1984, pp. 1–20; M. WORBOYS, The Emergence of Tropical Medicine: A Study in the Establishment of a Scientific Specialty, in: G. LEMAINE, (ed.), *Perspectives in the Emergence of Scientific Disciplines*, Paris 1976, pp. 73–96.

⁴ G. BASALLA, The Spread of Western Science, in: *Science* 156, 3775, 1967, pp. 611–622.

⁵ D. HAYNES, *Imperial Medicine: Patrick Manson and the Conquest of Tropical Disease*, Philadelphia 2001, p. 14.

are viewed here as a part of a gigantic international medical network. Yet, they remained important as stakeholders in the colonial medical service.⁶ While tropical medicine was supported by the colonial office and metropolitan-based institutions of tropical medicine as a panacea to the complex problem of European mortality in tropical colonies, its development was due to the contribution of other local and transnational entities. As explained by Mark Harrison, Indian medical men had “criticized widely-held medical opinions in Europe on the basis of their experience of ‘new’ diseases in the tropics and of the environmental conditions thought to be responsible for their propagation”.⁷ This transnational intellectual activity was prior to the 1880s and was important in shaping the understanding of tropical diseases in India and other tropical locales.⁸ At the heart of this exchange were medical officers of colonial administrations and trading companies who had received prior knowledge of tropical diseases at reputable universities in Britain like Edinburgh University and transverse Europe and India with a hybrid of knowledge.⁹

Our story begins with the complicated interactions among the early experts of malaria science who sort to advance a plethora of theories and by extension position themselves as authorities in the field. I further explain how these theories were read by colony-based scientists, sometimes challenged, and sometimes implemented locally in certain ways. The colonial service in Lagos became actively involved in efforts to study malaria since the 1890s. The lead experts, William MacGregor (the governor of Lagos) and Henry Strachan (his principal medical officer) pursued advocated the policy of health publicity and the distribution of free quinine to the whole population of Lagos and its suburbs.¹⁰ Beginning in 1899, William MacGregor prioritized the policy of compulsorily distributing quinine prophylaxis to government officials, further urging the distribution of the same to Africans in Lagos and its vicinity.

⁶ WORBOYS, *The Comparative History of Sleeping*, pp. 89–102.

⁷ M. HARRISON, *Tropical Medicine in Nineteenth-century India*, in: *British Journal of History of Science* 25, 1992, pp. 299–318.

⁸ Ibid.; A. STOLER – F. COOPER, *Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda*, in: F. COOPER – A. STOLER (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois*, Berkeley 1997, pp. 1–58.

⁹ HARRISON, pp. 299–318.

¹⁰ P. CURTIN, *Medical Knowledge and Urban Planning in Colonial Tropical Africa*, in: S. FEIERMAN – J. JANZEN (eds.), *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa*, Oxford 1992, pp. 594–613.

McGregor's approach was different from British imperial policy of segregation that was also advocated for by some scientific experts from the Royal Society's Malaria Committee. In 1898, Joseph Chamberlain (the Colonial Secretary) wrote to Lord Lister, the President of the Royal Society (1895–1900) on the need for the society to conduct a special study on malaria in colonies. In that same year, the Society constituted a Malaria Committee which would undertake intensive clinical and entomology studies to ascertain the presence of the malarial Plasmodium in humans.¹¹ In an 1899 study carried out in Freetown, two members of the committee, J. W. W. Stephens and S. R. Christophers advanced that the congested and unhygienic state of African houses were responsible for the breeding of *Anopheles*.¹² They argued further that "natives powerfully attract anopheles" because of the prevalence of Plasmodium strains in their blood.¹³ They justified this with an experiment that was carried out in an African village called Mabang in Freetown, Sierra Leone. In a 1900 report on Malaria in West Africa, they identified Africans as the "prime agents of malarial infections". They concluded that the prevalence of malarial infections in European settlements was connected to the proximity of such settlement to Africans.¹⁴ They recommended segregation of Africans as the panacea to the health of European settlers. Later that year, Chamberlain received the society's report and agreed to its recommendation on segregation. In a memorandum to the authorities in West Africa, he cited Christopher and Stevens' report as a "*compelling justification for wide separation of European living quarters from concentrations of African children*".¹⁵

MacGregor presented one of strongest opposition to the committee's report and the colonial office's instruction on segregation in West Africa. He disapproved of segregation on several grounds – more importantly on the impracticality of delineating colonial territories along racial lines due to the need for day-to-day political and economic engagements within the colonial state. In one of his lectures, MacGregor argues that "*to carry the idea of segregation to a logical conclusion, the governor of Lagos would have to*

¹¹ Joseph Chamberlain to William Macgregor, September 7, 1899. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine Archives (hereafter LSHTM), Ross/66/27.

¹² J. STEPHENS – S. CHRISTOPHERS, Distribution of *Anopheles* in Sierra Leone, in: *Royal Society. Reports to the Malaria Committee*, London 1900, pp. 12–41.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹⁵ Chamberlain to Governors of Gold Coast and Lagos, May 31, 1900; Colonial Office Miscellaneous, 129, 47, p. 22.

take shelter in a mosquito net when he receives the chiefs of the country [...].¹⁶ For him, the only way to tackle malaria was to “*advance ourselves and take the natives along with us*”.¹⁷

There is a noticeable connection between MacGregor’s policy on malaria and theories advanced by his professional colleague and friend, Ronald Ross (one of the pioneers of the malaria theory). From 1899 to 1904, MacGregor and Strachan exchanged correspondences with Ronald Ross culminating in them inviting him to visit Lagos to do further malaria research. Ross and his colleagues at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine had since 1898 advanced a radical and holistic approach towards malaria that emphasized a rigorous sanitation program to destroy the habitats of the *Anopheles* larvae.

MacGregor’s relationship with Ross and his unwillingness to enforce the colonial policy of segregation suggests hidden and enduring internal politics and tensions between specialists within the British empire. Scientists and colonial authorities were aligned to diverse intellectual networks and perhaps factions. The internal rivalries of colonial authorities and scientific organizations impacted on the ideas of these scientists. For instance, despite his profound opposition to segregation and some other ideas of the Royal Society Malaria Committee, Ross at a later stage became submerged into the committee’s episteme as his superiors subsequently persuaded him to recognise the viability of segregation as a preventative measure against malaria.¹⁸ In Lagos, MacGregor and Strachan also exhibited some seemingly noticeable inconsistencies in their approach towards malaria. While they did not support segregation, at least in their correspondences and speeches, their policies nonetheless laid the foundations for racial segregation in Lagos. There was a noticeable difference between their discourse and their policies. In their reaction to the complex internal politics within the scientific communities in the British Empire, they introduced slum clearance policies and forcefully removed Africans from their original habitats to ensure a convenient environment for European settlers. I depict the duo as gradual segregationists whose discourse on malaria contravened actual policies implemented.

¹⁶ W. MACGREGOR, A Lecture on Malaria, in: *The British Medical Journal* 2, 2190, 1902, pp. 1889–1894.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ R. DUMETT, The Campaign against Malaria and the Expansion of Scientific Medical and Sanitary Services in British West Africa, 1898–1910, in: *African Historical Studies* 1, 2, 1968, pp. 153–197.

A Metropolitan Network: The Early Years of Malaria Science in European Empires

The last two decades of the nineteenth-century were important in the trajectory of medicine for several reasons. First, as already established in existing histories, this period launched a remarkable and sophisticated scientific episteme for solving the medical problems obstructing European imperialism in tropical colonies. The germ theory of disease was a part of a series of bacteriological and parasitological discourses that remodelled age-long explanations and assumptions about tropical diseases. In the case of malaria, explanations furthered in the 1880s by Alphonse Laveran, Patrick Manson, Robert Koch, Ronald Ross, and many others challenged the old miasmatic and humoral assumptions that malaria was caused by vapours in the air and certain imbalances in the human body.

The works of pioneers in tropical medicine was geared towards improving knowledge of these tropical diseases. They leveraged on scientific traditions that had commenced in the 1850s with Louis Pasteur's pioneering works on micro-organisms. Pasteur, by pioneering the microscopic study of microbes, he demystified the dominant "zymotic theory of disease" which like its close relative, *miasmatism*, furthered the assumption that tropical diseases were caused by "*the emission of miasmatic poison from fermented organic materials into the air under the favourable conditions of soil, temperature, and moisture*".¹⁹ By building on these established traditions and also working closely with Pasteur, Alphonse Laveran pioneered the parasitological explanation on malaria. He demonstrated that a parasite, which he named *Oscillaria malariae*, was transmitted by mosquitoes and caused malaria in the bodies of its hosts.²⁰ The works of Patrick Manson, Giovanni Grassi, and Ronald Ross established the life cycle of the parasite and traced its transmission to the anopheles mosquito.

Of these pioneers, Ross earned the highest reputation for his discovery that malaria can be transmitted from infected mosquitoes as they bite healthy hosts. This distinguished Ross's work from that of his pioneers as they had not yet speculated that malaria is be transmitted through mosquito bites.²¹ This earned him a Nobel Laureate in Medicine and reputation in tropical medicine.

¹⁹ F. SNOWDEN, *Epidemics and Society. From the Black Death to the Present*, New Haven, London 2019, pp. 184–203.

²⁰ S. JARCHO, Discovery in the Retrospect of a Century, in: *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 58, 2, 1984, pp. 215–224.

²¹ J. GUILLEMIN, Choosing Scientific Patrimony. Sir Ronald Ross, Alphonse Laveran,

Ross's popularity in malariology, like those of other pioneers, were influenced by the works of his colleagues within the scientific community. His profound but soon to deteriorate relationship with Patrick Manson revealed the strength of his thesis, exposing it to a wide-group of scientific audience.²² He also enjoyed the support of his teachers – especially Surgeon-General Maclean who taught him about treating malaria and dysentery during his preliminary training at Netley prior to his deployment to the Indian Medical Service.²³ The rivalry between Ross and some of his colleagues, especially the Italian zoologist, Giovanni Grassi, also shaped his work on malaria. To update his knowledge of the *Anopheles* mosquito, Ross kept track with Grassi's work. By 1898, Grassi had proven to the scientific world that human malaria was transmitted by *Anopheles*.²⁴ To this end, Ross relied on the English physician Edmonston Charles to spy on Grassi at his laboratory in Via de Pretis.²⁵ The pace at which he advanced his research was influenced by his suspicion of Grassi's work and the urgency of publishing on the *Anopheles* before his Italian colleagues. The race went on till 1906 when Ross won the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine.

Further, Ross broadened his epistemic network to accommodate a transnational and trans-colonial community of doctors since they were at the forefront of efforts to combat tropical diseases. He built this relationship during the various malaria expeditions of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. His science was defined by some ideas borrowed from this community, especially from colonial doctors interested in tropical medicine. In 1899, Ross led the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine to Freetown, Sierra Leone to study the distribution of the *Anopheles* in puddles and attendant mortalities among European population. This expedition and others that followed brought Ross in close contact with his primary subject of research, the *Anopheles*. It was also an opportunity to test some of his ideas on malaria control with the experts in the colonies.

and the Mosquito-vector Hypothesis for Malaria, in: *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 57, 4, 2002, pp. 385–409.

²² R. ROSS, *The Beast in the Mosquito. The Correspondence of Ronald Ross and Patrick Manson*, Amsterdam, Atlanta 1998, pp. xi–xix.

²³ R. ROSS, *Memoirs. With a Full Account of the Great Malaria Problem and its Solution*, London 1923, p. 48.

²⁴ I. SHERMAN, *Malaria Vaccines: The Continuing Quest*, London 2016, p. 152.

²⁵ E. CAPANNA, Grassi versus Ross. Who Solved the Riddle of Malaria?, in: *International Microbiology* 9, 1, 2006, pp. 69–74.

He recommended regular oiling of puddles to kill mosquito larvae. During the expedition, his team drew a map of the puddles in Freetown and subsequently oiled them. He also set up informal communication with Frederick Cardew, the Acting-Governor of Freetown to communicate their findings on how malarial fever could be reduced.²⁶

While Ross was interested in building this network, one of his biggest concerns was the apathy of the host government towards his findings. At various points, the governor and his principal medical officer, Dr. William Prout were skeptical about Ross' ideas on how malaria spread. Prout argued at some stage that while it is true that mosquitoes were responsible for the spread of the germ, it did not produce the parasite that affects humans. Instead, he believed that the parasites were produced in the puddles, picked up by the parasite and transmitted to humans.²⁷ Prout's idea differed from Ross's in that the latter believed that the colonial government's efforts should be geared towards eradicating mosquitoes through mosquito brigades. To Prout, the mosquitoes were not actually the problem. The problem was the insanitary environment that bred the parasite.²⁸

Ross's hypothesis encountered another setback. This time, two scientists commissioned by the Royal Society Malaria Commission (J. W. W. Stephens and S. R. Christopher) queried the investigations and recommendation of the Liverpool School at Freetown on the ground that it failed to recognise the peculiarity of the tropical climate. The scientists discovered that the method of oiling puddles was only effective while the exercise lasted; the *Anopheles* larvae reappeared immediately when the team stopped oiling.²⁹ They also noted that the puddles illustrated in Ross's map were just a few of the several that bred *Anopheles* in Freetown. Further, they argued that Ross's assumption was wrong as he counted the puddles during the rainy season without taking cognizance of those that sprang up during other seasons. To this end, "*mosquitoes survived the dry season by using relict pools in the beds of two streams that ran through town*".³⁰

²⁶ E. AUSTEN, *Report of the Proceedings of the Expedition for the Study of the Causes of Malaria*, London 1899. Available from: <https://archive.org/details/reportofproceedi1899brit/page/n4/mode/2up>.

²⁷ G. HARRISON, *Mosquitoes, Malaria, and Man. A History of the Hostilities since 1880*, New York 1978, p. 17.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ J. BUSVINE, *Disease Transmission by Insects. Its Discovery and 90 years of Effort to Prevent it*, Berlin 1993, p. 18.

In place of the radical idea, Stephen and Christopher opted for what they saw as the cheaper and more realistic alternative, “to move the Europeans to a higher location above the town, while relying otherwise on quinine”.³¹ Overall, Ross’s problem with professionals at Sierra Leone was the stern resistance and apathy of the local colonial officials towards what seemed like a radical sanitation policy.³²

Local Appropriation of Malaria Theories: Lagos, 1898–1906

While ideas and works of metropolitan scientists were important in shaping the aetiology of the disease, it took support from colonial doctors for some of their ideas to materialize. These scientific works were appreciated by a group of European doctors based in Africa that shared similar ideas and some political positions. Some local authorities embraced metropolitan theories that confirmed their existing or proposed antimalarial programs.³³ Ross’s ideas on malaria, that were criticized in Sierra Leone were embraced by colonial doctors and administrators in Lagos and in most colonies of French West Africa. The French West African authorities immensely admired Ross’s *Mosquito Brigade*, even while it was disapproved by the British Colonial Office and scientific institutions like the Royal Society Malaria Committee.³⁴ They liked it because it tallied with ideas that were already popular in their territories.

In Lagos, Ross’s idea gained remarkable currency especially Lagos under William MacGregor and Henry Strachan. After his visit to Freetown, Ross spent a considerable time undertaking entomological studies of the *Anopheles* mosquito species in Lagos swamps. With the assistance of Dr. Henry Strachan, he studied major swamps in Lagos from where he discovered swarms of *Anopheles* larvae in roadside puddles, which he immediately treated with oil.³⁵ Henry Strachan, the Principal Medical Officer, Lagos, wrote to Ronald Ross on malaria.³⁶ Among several reasons,

³¹ Ibid.

³² DUMMETT, p. 176.

³³ C. STROTHER, Waging War on Mosquitoes. Scientific Research and the Formation of Mosquito Brigades in French West Africa, 1899–1920, in: *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 71, 4, 2016, pp. 447–468.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ R. ROSS, The Malaria Expedition to Sierra Leone. Habits of *Anopheles* Continued – Possibility of Extirpation – Explanation of the Old Laws of Malaria, in: *The British Medical Journal*, October 14, 1899, 2(2024), p. 1034.

³⁶ Ronald Ross to A. H. Milne, August 13, 1899. LSHTM, Ross/66/26.

Strachan wanted Ross to visit Lagos because he could prove the abundance of *Anopheles* and *Culex* mosquitoes in Lagos.³⁷ Ross wrote to the Liverpool School on this subject and convinced them of the need to extend the scope of his work to Lagos and the Gold Coast.³⁸ The school authorized the mission and appointed Dr. Fielding Ould, a pathologist to join Ross and his colleagues in West Africa.³⁹ With this development, the second (malarial) expedition kicked off. It was headed by Ould and was dispatched to the Gold Coast and Lagos in the winter of 1899.

The expedition report reveals Ross and his colleagues' inconsistent stance on segregation. Upon visitation to Freetown, the team recommended that colonial authorities should consider building European quarters in elevated sites, quite far from the houses of the townspeople who could easily transmit the plasmodium to Europeans.⁴⁰ Kortright Hill was selected as a viable place to house Europeans in the colony. With this, the team was simply advancing an idea that was already popular elsewhere in the British Empire, specifically India. Philip Curtin laid hands on some British-Indian sources which justified the fact that the British adopted segregation schemes in the early 1860s to safeguard British troops, first against Indian mutiny, and subsequently from the appalling number of deaths from malaria among British soldiers.⁴¹ This scheme, which drastically reduced the rate of mortalities among British soldiers, was highly instrumental in the adoption of a replica scheme in British West Africa, starting from 1900.⁴²

When the Liverpool School arrived in Lagos, the team discovered a wide spatial distribution of *Anopheles* (larvae) to the extent that it was impossible "*to make any distinction in favour of one part of the town as compared with another*".⁴³ They found samples in every native hut, all European quarters, even in the Government House and hospital. While it was imperative to adopt a separatist policy in Freetown, it became unscientific to apply

³⁷ William Strachan to Ronald Ross, August 28, 1899. LSHTM, Ross/66/22.

³⁸ Ronald Ross to A. H. Milne, August 13, 1899. LSHTM, Ross/66/26.

³⁹ A. H. Milne to Ronald Ross, August 30, 1899. LSHTM, Ross/66/23.

⁴⁰ R. ROSS – H. ANNETT, *Report of the Malaria Expedition of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and Medical Parasitology*, Liverpool 1900, p. 20.

⁴¹ P. CURTIN, Medical Knowledge and Urban Planning in Tropical Africa, in: *American Historical Review*, 90, 1985, 3, pp. 594–613.

⁴² J. CELL, Anglo-Indian Medical Theory and the Origins of Segregation in West Africa, in: *American Historical Review*, 91, 1986, pp. 307–335.

⁴³ FIELDING-OULD, *Observations at Freetown, Accra, and Lagos. In Malaria Expedition of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and Medical Parasitology*, Liverpool 1900, p. 56.

the same rule in Lagos. When Ross wrote independently in less-official correspondences, he projected segregation as unscientific. This was a sharp contrast to what he presented through his scientific community. Ross firmly discounted segregation in his 1902 book, *Mosquito Brigades*. He argued that it was not cost-effective and unrealistic. He argued thus: “Unfortunately, segregation will in many cases necessitate the construction of fresh settlements at a large cost; it will protect only the persons who are segregated, and then only if such persons absolutely refrain from going into other parts of the town. It will often be very difficult for business men to adopt these measures.”⁴⁴

As earlier observed, the discoveries made during these malaria expeditions were relegated by the British colonial office. Instead, studies carried-out by the duo, Stephen and Christophers (both Royal Society Malaria Committee) were selected as the official template of malaria control policies in British West Africa. While the tropical school recommended a mild, gradual, and cautious approach in the implementation of segregation, the colonial office wanted radical and rigid segregation policies. They believed that it was scientifically impossible to accommodate Africans and Europeans in the same community as this would further complicate the health of Europeans and jeopardize imperial expansion. In their words, they argued that Europeans dwelling “in this quarter is thus living in the midst of dangerous sources of infection [...] the residents here are certain sooner or later to suffer from malaria”.⁴⁵ The Colonial Office took Christophers and Stephen’s recommendation as a justification to implement segregationist schemes, which were at the heart of colonialism anyway. Joseph Chamberlain starting from 1900 sanctioned that all colonial administrators promulgate segregation laws in their respective colonies. Existing literature on the study of racial segregation in the empire in the twentieth century are divided as to whether the need to guarantee the health of Europeans was the underpinning basis for the CO’s adoption of segregation policies. Thomas Gale in *Segregation in British West Africa* explores the series of deliberations between the CO and the Malaria Committee of the Royal Society on one hand, and the CO and colonial administrators on the other. He deduced from these official conversations that the CO’s approach towards segregation was objectively influenced by the need to safeguard European lives.⁴⁶ Maynard W. Swanson’s *Bubonic*

⁴⁴ R. ROSS, *Mosquito Brigades and how to Organise them*, New York 1902, p. 62.

⁴⁵ STEPHENS – CHRISTOPHERS, p. 47.

⁴⁶ T. GALE, Segregation in British West Africa, in: *Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines*, 20, 80, 1980, pp. 495–507.

Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900–09 explores how colonial authorities used European fears of epidemic diseases as a justification for residential segregation in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth.⁴⁷ Unlike Gale, Swanson explains how medical officials and other public authorities used scare tactics around epidemic diseases to promote segregation. Segregation was influenced by the prevalent racial thinking of the nineteenth-century, and not necessarily by the issues around European health. One could read from this literature that segregation was neither a scientific solution to health issues. Segregation only made it easier to concentrate medical services to a defined white population, occupying a defined area to the exclusion of the colonized.

In Lagos, the CO's mandate to their colonial officials to enforce segregation was heavily contested. In effect, available evidence suggests that the colonial administration in Lagos rarely received and appropriated ideas from CO and metropolitan institutions without reshaping them to suit their local realities and their theoretical inclinations. The key players in the control of malaria in Lagos were William MacGregor and Henry Strachan. They became renowned for their disagreement with the CO's positions on segregation as a disease control measure. They believed that adopting segregation policy in Lagos was apolitical and unscientific. While delivering a lecture on malaria to medical students in Glasgow University in 1902 he argued that *"it would be surely highly unscientific to leave the natives alone as a permanent prey to malaria, as perennial centers of infection to one another as well as to Europeans"*.⁴⁸ Also in a sarcastic remark, MacGregor argued that *"to carry out the idea of segregation to a logical conclusion, the Governor of Lagos would have to take shelter in a mosquito net when he receives the chiefs of the country; and when he sits in church immediately behind a choir of two or three scores of native boys, he would have to occupy a glass case or a wire cage"*.⁴⁹

With this development, it was obvious that the government in Lagos was willing to take full responsibility for the control of malaria on their own terms. Speaking at the inaugural meeting of the Lagos Institute (an institution established by his government to cross-fertilize literacy, scientific, and intellectual ideas on the peculiar problems on Lagos) in October 1901, MacGregor made it clear that his government was fully committed

⁴⁷ M. SWANSON, *The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900–09*, in: W. BEINART – S. DUBOW (eds.), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth Century South Africa*, London 1995, pp. 25–42.

⁴⁸ MACGREGOR, pp. 1889–1894.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1890.

to effecting a holistic antimalarial scheme that would completely root out the mosquitoes in Lagos.⁵⁰ He recounted suggestions within his government on the need for the government to establish special townships (which should take the forms of enclaves) for Europeans on the Oloke-Meji hill. According to him, “*it would be indolent folly to remit our efforts for the sanitation of Lagos on account of what may be done at Oloke-Meji [...] Do not deceive yourselves. Lagos is necessary and must be cured*”.⁵¹ One could read the view of his government from this. The government was geared towards controlling the malaria problem in every part of Lagos which include Lagos Island and the Mainland. Geographically, Lagos Island is a very flat island with large areas of swamps on its North, West, and East sides.⁵² The mainland was not entirely different from the Island as it bred mosquitoes just like the Island.

MacGregor’s stance on malaria control was shaped by his in-depth reading of Ross’s theory. There was a strong correlation between MacGregor’s justification for a holistic antimalarial policy and Ross’s discovery in Lagos. Ross and his team had earlier explained that the *Anopheles* was spatially distributed across Lagos and that it was practically impossible to confine European settlers to a terrain less-endemic of malaria. The slight difference between Ross and MacGregor’s idea on malaria is that the latter exhibited a stern opposition to segregation in official and unofficial discourses. Ross on the contrary advanced the possibility of segregation if an elevated terrain, suitable for European settlement, existed in Lagos. In the 1900 malaria expedition report, the team advanced the possibility of relocating the government house “*some twelve miles up the railway from Abutemetta*”.⁵³

As much as MacGregor’s disapproval of the implementation of segregation supposedly reflected a posture of benevolence and sympathy to the colonized, one could read that it was dictated by practical economic considerations. Like him, the British traders in Lagos at that time thought it was impracticable for the colonial government to adopt a policy that would separately handle the medical problems of the diverse races (Africans and Europeans). They thought it would imply that the traders would incur more medical and other costs in their dealings with Africans

⁵⁰ Lagos institute, Proceedings of the inaugural meeting, October 16, 1901, LSHTM, Ross/83/02.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Lagos, *Annual Medical Report, 1900–1901*, p. 142.

⁵³ FIELDING-OULD, p. 56.

further inland than they could afford. Coupled with this is the fact that it would be impossible for European traders to practically carry out their businesses when such a scheme was in place.⁵⁴ The reason for this was explained in a 1900 publication of the Lagos Weekly Record: *“Individuality counts for a good deal in the conduct of a successful mercantile business, and individuality as such can only be developed and sustained by keeping in contact and touch with those dealt with. On the other hand, supposing that temporary segregation should be effected in the case of the European trader, it is doubtful if the few hours’ separation at night would even compensate for the wear and tear which the daily travelling from one place to another would entail, to say nothing of being beneficial in any other respects. Everything points to the conclusion that the most efficacious measure all round would be to improve conditions generally without introducing any line discrimination.”*⁵⁵

The government at that time also felt that there were no means European settlements would thrive without African labour. At this time, Africans were employed by European traders, clergies, and officials as servants. Therefore, it was obvious that the only way to realize the implementation of the scheme was to replace African servants with Europeans. Also is the fact that the government thought it was unwise to construct European living spaces on Lagos Island when they were in the process of expanding British official presence to the hinterland. Starting from 1861 when the government took official control of Lagos, European officials were often meant to navigate through the Yoruba forest to negotiate land and trading agreements with Yoruba towns and villages located in the interior. If these realities existed, the segregation of Europeans and Africans was only a chimerical suggestion.

While it was imperative for the colonial administration in Lagos to adopt a distinct stance on segregation, it became by implication more important to adopt an alternative scheme that would recognize certain local realities in the territory. To this end, MacGregor sought for a scheme that would cut across every community and race in Lagos. One of the ways he sought to realise this was to encourage malarial research among his medical officials that would provide details of the complexities of the problem. At this time, this was perhaps more unrealistic as the segregation scheme as Lagos lacked the requisite manpower and technologies to

⁵⁴ The Lagos Weekly Record, August 25, 1900; The Lagos Weekly Record, October 20, 1900.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

effectively carry out entomological and clinical research on malaria. Only two medical professionals could efficiently and successfully conduct these researches. Macgregor's government had to rely on a collaborative effort between medical officials in Lagos and the Liverpool school in solving this problem.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, colonial officials like Henry Strachan and J. D. Small (an Assistant Colonial Surgeon) had very interesting professional relationships with the tropical schools. Strachan who was one of the key colonial scientists in Lagos had a robust relationship with Ronald Ross and on several occasions collaborated with him in collecting mosquito species in marshes and swamps in Lagos. In 1900, Strachan and J. D. Small examined some swamps in Lagos where they found hundreds of larvae of both the *Anopheles* and *Culex* Genera, more especially the former. They found *Anopheles* larvae in abundance even in the large pieces of swamp where there are plenty of mud fish.⁵⁶ Another important discovery is the fact that there were no traces of *Anopheles* and *Culex* larvae in the Lagos Lagoon (because of her quick running tide), shallow pools of water containing soap suds, which were frequently seen near the numerous washing sheds. Most of the findings of this research were presented to the Liverpool School and contributed to the aetiology of the disease.

Series of experiments were conducted on African bodies by Strachan. Africans were used in several cases as subjects to advance an understanding of the lifecycle of the Plasmodium in human hosts. On one occasion, Ross wrote to Strachan requesting him to conduct medical trials on African soldiers that were in-patients in the African ward of the Lagos Hospital. One of Ross' requests was that these patients should be exposed to mosquito bites to ascertain the condition of life of the Plasmodium in the human bloodstream.⁵⁷ Strachan failed to acquire approval from his superiors to extract the samples on ethical grounds. In 1901, he subsequently commenced the collection of blood samples in Ikerun, Oshogbo, Ogbomosho, Ede, and Iwo (all communities in southwestern Nigeria) to ascertain the incidence of malaria in African communities.⁵⁸ He subjected the blood samples to microscopic research during which he investigated the medical history of some of his research subjects, who

⁵⁶ Lagos, *Annual medical report, 1900–1901*, p. 143.

⁵⁷ Strachan to Ross, July 14, 1899. LSHTM, Ross/66/13.

⁵⁸ Notes on a tour to inspect the chief towns on the route from Ibadan to Ikerun, October 18, 1901. LSHTM, Ross/83/13.

were in most cases children.⁵⁹ From his experiment, Strachan discovered the presence of leukocytes which proved that the malaria *Plasmodium* was predominantly available in the bloodstream of his subjects.⁶⁰

Strachan's study at this point contributed significantly to some of the complex issues around the aetiology of the disease. It brought to question ideas around 'native immunity' that had earlier been advanced by Robert Koch, a German bacteriologist. In the 1800s, Koch was commissioned by the German Foreign Service to study the aetiology of the disease in German New Guinea. He discovered in his research that continuous infections during childhood made adults living in malaria endemic areas less susceptible to the disease.⁶¹ Apart from the fact that Koch's position made it quite difficult to imagine malaria as a major problem confronted by the indigenous peoples in the tropics, it served as a justification for the adoption of segregation policies by the British colonial office. Koch's theory on "native immunity" further laid credence to suspicions about supposedly malaria-ridden African domiciles. In its proposal to the CO, the Royal Society Malaria Committee cited Koch's explanation on immunity as a justification for the separation of Europeans from African children.⁶²

In his *Diseases and how to Prevent Them*, a lecture delivered to Africans in 1901, Strachan presented a very strong criticism of the existing scientific traditions of African immunity. He argued that Africans actually died "in terrible numbers" from the disease and that the government had the duty to "prevent the loss to the population".⁶³ In a 1904 rejoinder to Koch's "native immunity" theory, Strachan further argued that African adults (not only children) suffered as much as Europeans from malaria.⁶⁴ He noted further that African adults only acquire partial immunity during their formative years as they were susceptible, either at greater or lesser intervals to more or mild attacks of malaria. To buttress his argument, Strachan presented figures of malaria mortality among Africans of various ages in Lagos.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ I. SHERMAN, *Malaria Genome Projects. Promise, Progress, and Prospects*, London 2012, p. 195.

⁶² Malaria Committee of Royal Society to C. O., pp. 1, 25–26.

⁶³ A course of simple lectures on elementary hygiene. LSHTM, Ross/66/30, p. 5.

⁶⁴ H. STRACHAN, Alleged Negro Immunity to Malaria, in: *British Medical Journal* 1, 2307, 1905, pp. 625–626.

| Year | Total for all ages | Under 1 Year | 1 to 5 Years | 5 to 20 Years | 20 Years to 75 Upwards |
|------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|
| 1900 | 491 | 282 | 50 | 34 | 125 |
| 1901 | 493 | 311 | 53 | 27 | 102 |
| 1902 | 473 | 263 | 55 | 42 | 113 |
| 1903 | 427 | 258 | 46 | 26 | 97 |
| 1904 | 493 | 314 | 71 | 28 | 80 |

Strachan's research presented to Macgregor's government, empire, and the community of tropical medicine that the nineteenth-century science of African immunity was not sufficient in explaining malaria in Africa. He contended therefore that policies of the colonial governments should be geared towards the entire races in colonies.

How Ideas Materialize into Actions: Antimalarial Policies in Lagos, 1900–1906

Strachan laid considerable emphasis on domestic sanitation and other capital-intensive antimalarial schemes as opposed to segregation. First, he and Macgregor emphasized on sanitizing government offices and residential areas (both Native and European) in Lagos Island and the execution of various reclamation schemes in Iddo Island, Ebute Metta and some parts of Yaba. MacGregor's sanitation schemes came in form of land reclamations, the construction of drainages and the enactment of a series of sanitary laws. These were carried out in most parts of the colony.⁶⁵ One of the major works of the government was the landfilling of the Kokomaiko and adjoining swamplands in 1901. By 1906, the government had implemented reclamation works in Alakoro Swamp, Ajassa, Elegbata, Isale-Gangan, Magazie Point and Idumagbo.⁶⁶ The government justified the overconcentration of her reclamation schemes to Lagos Island because the area lies so low; the highest part being only a few feet above sea level with a population of over 70,000.⁶⁷ To effectively implement the sanitation in Lagos Island, the government demarcated Lagos into four districts (A, B, C, D) under the administration of four sanitary inspectors. The inspectors were charged with the responsibility

⁶⁵ Lagos, Report of anti-mosquito campaign, December 1929, Vol. 1. National Archives Ibadan (hereafter NAI), CSO 26/981.

⁶⁶ Lagos, Blue Book, 1904, September 9, 1905, No. 470, para. 9.

⁶⁷ Southern Nigeria, Colonial Annual Report, October 21, 1907, para. 77, p. 190.

of performing vaccination and the supervision of sanitation regimes in their respective districts. They were placed under the control of the District Medical Officer.

While MacGregor and Strachan presented strong vocal opposition to the CO's prescribed policy on segregation, a closer glance at their policies reveal some disconnect between official discourses and actual actions. To some extent, they laid the basis for future segregationist policies through some of their racist and separatist policies. One of such was their involvement in the slum clearance project in Lagos. This policy was the forceful removal of the urban poor (invariably Africans) from their original settlements to new improvised communities. It took the form of a land expropriation ordinance. The Ordinance gave power for the compulsory expropriation of land for public use. It read thus: "*It shall be lawful for the Colonial Secretary to agree with the owners of any lands required for the service of the Colony paying such reasonable compensation thereon as may be due to the owners thereof.*"⁶⁸ The government took the first step to implement the ordinance in Ebute Metta in 1902. In a bid to renovate certain parts of Lagos, most especially Lagos Island and Ebute Metta, the government sought "*to clear and clean sweep most parts of Ebute Metta so as to cause St. Paul's Church to form the line of future frontage.*"⁶⁹ Two central objectives could be discerned from the decision of the government. First, the government made the African landowners realize that they (landowners) owned these properties subject to the will of the government and that the government could step in at any time and appropriate the land by paying as compensation a price that would be determined by the government. The major victims of this rule were African landowners. Second is that landowners were obliged to clear, fence, and properly care for the land; failure to do so would necessitate heavy penalties from the government.⁷⁰ One could read through the policy and infer that while the government was enforcing the landowners to take responsibilities for their lands, their security of tenure were not guaranteed. They were relegated to the position of mere caretakers and not necessarily, owners. The policy raised so much suspicion and criticism from the African public in Lagos.

Some Lagos residents felt Macgregor's government was covertly laying a foundation for a segregation policy and that he was only trying to

⁶⁸ *The Lagos Weekly Record*, July 29, 1903.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, May 17, 1902.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, December 27, 1902.

establish the legal framings for a future move.⁷¹ There were hints in the public that the government was only trying to dislocate the Africans from their lands and reallocate it to European industries and traders. *The Lagos Weekly Record* captures one of these popular biases: “It is generally held that the object of the scheme is to clear the native away from the railway environment, while it is hinted that a portion of the land will be used for the construction of a hotel by a European. It is not likely that the native owners of the property will be paid adequately for their properties, and the scheme, whatever it is, must work to the detriment of the local industry. At all events, the future will disclose whether the scheme involves segregation as is supposed or not.”⁷²

The public could also read that the ordinance and the scheme in Ebute Metta was a means for the government to pervasively allocate lands when any colonial official or soldiers need dwellings or barracks (as the case might be), the colonial government has the power within the law to forcefully expropriate the properties of Africans without their being rewarded anything like reasonable compensation.⁷³ While these suggestions were roaming the press and the public, the MacGregor’s government dismissed them as mere rumours. They emphasized that the government was committed to pursuing a general antimalarial policy and not one that delineated races.

MacGregor’s tenure as governor ended in 1904. Within a few years after his departure from Lagos, the impact of some of his policies became evident. For instance, his land expropriation ordinance shared remarkable similarities with Frederick Lugard’s Town Planning Ordinance of 1917 which further delineated Lagos into European reserves and native settlements. While the former laid the foundation for segregation, the later consolidated these policies and formalized racial segregation in Lagos. Also, the difference between MacGregor’s talk from his actions proves further that while colonial and metropolitan authorities were swayed by diverse influences and epistemic networks, there were no remarkable differences in the ways these authorities approached issues central to imperial advancement. While they were involved in some epistemic debates on medical issues, they rarely relegated issues that affected their primary mandates to the background. On some occasions, the talk was a facade that accentuated a sense of belonging to a rival epistemic community.

⁷¹ Ibid., May 17, 1902.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., July 29, 1903.

In the case of Macgregor and Strachan, they were gradual segregationists who did not want to radically introduce segregation outright.

Conclusion

Recognizing the influence of imperial science on colonial spaces, our paper focused on a neglected theme – the role of colonial locales in debates and in policies on disease control. From our study of early colonial Lagos, medical knowledge transmitted through imperial apparatuses usually had a one size fits all approach that rarely took into cognizance the nuances of the locality in which such recommendations were to be implemented. This bred resistance and tensions within epistemic networks and colonial bureaucracies. This resistance impacted on the overall imperial medical project. Knowledgeable colonial administrators and their doctors exercised their agency and powers to reject, and sometimes to accept with modifications key ideas of medical experts to make them more relevant to their local peculiarities. In instances when such expert knowledge from metropolitan medical institutions was discarded, they did so without recourse to official hierarchical structure within the colonial bureaucracy. In Lagos, colonial authorities intervened in debates by presenting superior arguments based on their lived experiences and research to challenge instructions from above.

This reality presented here points to the fact that metropolitan institutions and scientists were only as powerful as colonial administrators and doctors made them to be. This view reasserts David Wade Chambers and Richard Gillespie's argument that the intricacies of colonial science was pivoted by a "polycentric communications network," with multiple layers of authority and interactions.⁷⁴ So, in some cases, medicine like other sciences was swayed by forces beyond those prescribed from imperial headquarters. The local appropriation of malaria ideas and policies by colonial administrators and doctors persuades one to think of Western medical policies in African colonies as a product of a hybrid of ideas, some of which were not out-rightly imperial. Colonial doctors and their colleagues in metropolitan areas had a profoundly professional relationship

⁷⁴ D. CHAMBERS – R. GILLESPIE, Locality in the History of Science: Colonial Science, Technoscience, and Indigenous Knowledge, *Osiris* 15, 2, 2000, pp. 221–240; also see, H. TILLEY, *Africa as a Living Laboratory. Empire, Development, and the Problem of Scientific Knowledge, 1870–1950*, Chicago, London 2011, p. 314; M. HARRISON, Tropical Medicine in Nineteenth-century India, in: *British Journal of History of Science* 25, 1992, pp. 299–318.

that facilitated a two-way exchange of ideas between colonies and the metropolis. When MacGregor and Strachan engaged Ross, they sought a professional relationship with a highly respected medical authority. They collaborated with Ross to justify their ideas of malarial control as Ross was not initially in favour of segregation, and even disregarded the ideas promoted by the colonial office and the Royal Society Malaria Committee.

The Military Foray into Nigerian Politics and Nation-Building: Historical Reflections on Murtala/Obasanjo Military Regime

*Sunday Abraham Ogunode**

The Nigerian military, after each successful coup d'état in the second half of the twentieth century, advanced no reasons to justify their intervention in the nation's politics beyond corruption and mismanagement of the economy. While these reasons were obvious, the political workings and institutional framings of the various military regimes that ruled Nigeria for over three decades did not reflect any significant change in the nation's fortune. If politics of ethnicity and religious bigotry were adduced by the army as other reasons for their interventions, the military was, in the end, guilty of the same. This chapter is, therefore, concerned with retrospective historical reflections on the efforts of the Murtala/Obasanjo military regime at nation-building. The historical methodology of critical analysis, concise chronology, and objective interpretation were applied to the cross-examined data obtained from primary and secondary sources. In-depth interviews were conducted with purposively selected informants based on their knowledge of the subject matter and excerpts of Murtala speeches were analyzed while secondary data sourced from history and political science texts. Through these sources, the chapter argues that, though the regime made appreciable efforts at breathing new life into the troubled socio-economic and political waters of the nation, their inability to grapple with the complexities of the Nigerian polity proved beyond every reasonable doubt, their non-readiness to be the change and development agents they presented themselves to be. The chapter concludes that military intervention in Nigerian politics did more harm than good to the country as state institutions and structures that would have given a new direction to the nation were fundamentally damaged and this has been part of the bane to Nigeria's inclusive development and nation-building since the 1960s.

[Historical Reflections; Murtala/Obasanjo Regime; Nation-building Narrative; Nigerian Military]

Introduction

Problems are expected to be opportunities waiting to be explored but what the opportunities are deployed to accomplish is what resonates after

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some time. In this frame, politically conscious individuals and interest groups often give contextual perspective on the performance index of public servants and the impact of their policies on the people. The historical journey of Nigeria especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was heavily burdened with internal crisis and political instability which manifested in the over a century internecine war in Yorubaland and the Sokoto Jihad of 1804. These events caused disunity and mutual distrust as the people could not muster the needed political will to check the gradual incursion by the British imperialists which manifested in the bombardment of Lagos in 1851 and its annexation as the territory of British Crown in 1861. By 1900, it was certain that the British would impose their rule on Nigeria after the imperialist revoked the charter of the Royal Niger Company, which was immediately followed by the official occupation of southern and northern Nigeria as colonial property. Even with the amalgamation of 1914, Nigeria inherited¹ the problem of a disunited front. The merger of peoples of diverse histories of migration, cultures, and geographical peculiarities became the basis of the problems that have shaped the nation's growth and development since independence. The fall of the first Republic with the intervention of the men in uniform reflected not only the obvious cracks in the foundation of Nigeria as an emerging polity but also the legacies of colonialism.

The arguments in this chapter draws from the submission made by Murtala in his July 30, 1975, inaugural speech when he observed that: "[...] *events of the past few years have indicated that despite our great human*

¹ It is trite to note that the territories that became Nigeria were inhabited by different people before the colonial amalgamation of 1914. Prior to this episode, different communities in Nigeria were uniquely grouped by their history and tradition of migration, language similarity, geographical boundaries and culture. Their political formation was a direct function of the dictates of their prevailing social, economic and geographical milieu. The different groups that later formed Nigeria co-existed peacefully even though instances of internal wrangling and disputes were reported among them due to communal issues and other related challenges. Intergroup relations were also manifest in accordance with the terms set by the relating communities. The politics of divide and rule deployed by the Europeans beginning from the period of the Atlantic slave trade up to the time of the scramble for and partition of Africa caused sharp division and promoted mutual distrust along ethnic lines. So it was wrong not to have countenanced the obvious disunity among the different groups in Nigeria before the merger. Certainly, the proponents of the merger never wanted a united Nigeria that would have stopped colonial wealth extraction, especially in the oil producing areas and regions with link to international waterways like Lagos.

and material resources, the government has not been able to fulfill the legitimate expectations of our people. Nigeria is being left to drift. This situation, if not arrested would inevitably have resulted in chaos and bloodshed. In the endeavor to build a strong, united and virile nation, Nigerians have shed much blood. The thought of further bloodshed for whatever reasons, must I am sure be revolting to our people. The Armed Forces having examined the situation came to the conclusion that certain changes were inevitable. After the Civil War, the affairs of State hitherto a collective responsibility became characterized by lack of consultation, indecision, indiscipline and even neglect.”²

This chapter reflects on the extent the Murtala/Obasanjo regime was able to build a strong, united, and virile nation as promised in his maiden speech. This will help to properly critique the regime’s rhetoric of inclusion and nation-building given the fact that Murtala presented himself as a crusading reformer who was poised in fighting corruption headlong.

In this chapter, two important concepts: military intervention and nation-building are briefly theorized for clarity of presentation and analysis. Fawole conceptualized military intervention as the conscious act of displacing and supplanting an existing political order, a government, by soldiers with the objective either of governing or influencing the political affairs of the country in particular direction determined largely by the interventionists themselves.³ It is directed at the political system of a state or its agents involving the threat or actual use of force to accomplish certain predetermined objectives which may be political, economic, social, or even military. This description reveals that military officials usually intervene in politics to achieve certain preconceived objectives within a state or polity. Fawole observed that maladministration, failed economy, indiscipline among politicians, and other public officers; political instability, and the recurring crisis of ethnic coloration are some of the reasons the military often anchored its intervention on. Whatever means the military exploit to attain power is not as significant as the impact such intervention has on the populace because performance is central in any kind of leadership or government – military or civilian. This is the thrust of this chapter. Nation-building, on the other hand, has been theorized as constructing or structuring a national identity using

² Reuters News, “Brig. Murtala Muhammed Addresses the Nation After Coup that Deposed Gen. Yakubu Gowon July 1975”, July 30, 1975, video, 1:50, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGK8WXn8KzA>.

³ W. A. FAWOLE, *The Military and the Future of Democracy in Africa*, Benin City 1994.

the power of the state.⁴ Nation-building aims at the unification of the people within the state so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. According to Harris Mylonas, “*legitimate authority in modern national states is connected to popular rule, to majorities. Nation-building is the process through which these majorities are constructed*”.⁵ Nation-building can involve the use of propaganda or major infrastructure development and sometimes forceful means to foster social harmony and economic growth. In the modern era, nation-building refers to the efforts of newly independent nations,⁶ to redefine the populace of territories that had been carved out by colonial powers or empires without regard to ethnic, religious, or other boundaries.⁷ These reformed states would then become viable and coherent national entities.⁸ This is a feat no Nigerian leader has been able to attain since independence. It is not without a good reason that some political scientists have observed and submitted that by their nature, military regimes are not designed to protect human rights or foster participatory politics – the main reason why they always suspend the constitution upon seizing power. Without the constitution and its provisions, the power of the people to demand basic socio-economic and political rights becomes eroded. Even when the military makes space for the people to vent their opinions on issues of great importance, such avenue is often tightly censored with anti-citizenry conditions to fulfill. Thus, the possibility of having reformed states which can metamorphose into viable and functional national entities under the military is, more often than not, mere rhetoric and delusion of political grandeur. The core of the argument here is that nation-building is likely to materialize faster when the citizens are actively involved in all ramifications of governance and the managers of institutions of the state enjoy popular support which is needed to validate the legitimacy of their authority. These progressive ideals that permeate the reformed states are the ones that function in a real federal system of government where there is equitable distribution of resources and quality social services assured. Where the military regimes appear to put in place such ideals, it is the view of this chapter

⁴ K. W. DEUTSCH – W. J. FOLT, (eds.), *Nation Building in Comparative Contexts*, New York 1966.

⁵ H. MYLONAS, *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities*, New York 2012, p. 17.

⁶ B. POSEN, Nationalism, The Mass Army and Military Power, in: *International Security*, 18, 2, 1993, pp. 80–124.

⁷ MYLONAS, p. 17.

⁸ Ibid.

that they are often not intended to improving the social condition of the people but deployed as instruments of governmentality meant to curry the people's acceptance of their unpopular rule.⁹

This chapter is, therefore, a perspective view on the efforts of the Murtala/Obasanjo (July 1975 to September 1979) military government at nation-building in Nigeria. In all Murtala Muhammad's actions as the head of the military government, the one that had the most lasting consequences was a program of transition to civilian rule that he initiated before his death, even though it was brought into fruition by his Chief of Staff and successor, General Olusegun Obasanjo. The stages of the transition agenda included creation of more states, local government reformation, drafting of a new constitution, reformation of local and foreign policy. The transition process was to culminate in the handing over of power to a civilian government on October 1, 1979. It is in this light that this chapter examines the different policies and programmes of the Murtala/Obasanjo military administration with a view to analyzing its role(s) in the nation-building project and the lessons to learn therefrom.

Restoration of Military Integrity

By the time Murtala assumed office, the Nigerian military had been in the reins of power for nine uninterrupted years. This meant that a new class of military politicians had emerged. This is not a case that the Nigerian army had had a meaningful grasp of the socio-economic and political situation in the country let alone enacting viable policies to mitigate the problems. This was perhaps the understanding Murtala had when in August 1975,¹⁰ he embarked on a cleanup exercise that was unprecedented

⁹ Using the example of Ghana under Rawlings, one could see how difficult it was to pretend to hand over power to the people under the guise of inclusion, restoration of lost values and fighting corruption which are ideals obtainable in reformed states. Rawlings who claimed to restore power to the people and wage a 'holy war' against corruption and build a virile Ghana ironically suspended the constitution, banned political parties, detained party leaders, and took a number of extra-legal actions. It is clear that Rawlings promises when matched with his actions were mere rhetoric as later events showed. See details in: R. C. CROOK, 'No-party' Politics and Local Democracy in Africa: Rawlings' Ghana in the 1990s and the 'Ugandan Model', in: *Democratization*, 6, 4, 1999, pp. 114–138; E. GYIMAH-BOADI – D. ROTHCHILD, Rawlings, Populism, and the Civil Liberties Tradition in Ghana, in: *African Issues*, 12, 3–4, 1982, pp. 64–69.

¹⁰ See for instance; AP Archive, "SYND 5 8 75 Brigadier Murtala Muhammed Takes over Nigeria," August 5, 1975, video, 1:59, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AzRRRabBV0>.

in the history of the nation.¹¹ Apart from cleaning up the military, he was also eager to restore sanity in the nation.¹² Former military governors, civil servants, judges, police commissioners, and their deputies were retired. Many analysts have argued that the coup, though bloodless, recorded unprecedented casualties in terms of job loss and truncated careers as many fine officers with good training that could have helped in the advancement of the nation's military had their careers terminated on account of the coup.¹³

The task of nation-building is no doubt a herculean exercise and to execute policies meant for national development requires strong courage and determination in a country like Nigeria with its historical diversity and cultural complexities. Murtala certainly possessed all these qualities and it was not surprising that he made real his promise to sanitize the military and the nation at large shortly after he came to power. By the time the cleanup exercise was over, more than one hundred thousand senior civil servants lost their jobs.¹⁴ Vice-Chancellors and other members of the management team in the nation's universities did not escape the Murtala cleansing ritual. Two hundred and sixteen officers were retired from the army, thirteen officers from the Nigerian Navy, and 15 officers from the Nigerian Air Force were equally relieved of their jobs.¹⁵ The sanitization policy of the Murtala administration was aptly captured in Major General

¹¹ K. I. PERETEL, *Military Adventurism in Nigerian Politic*, Abuja 2004, pp. 34–35.

¹² Murtala's speech of July 30, 1975 lent credence to this statement. For details see: Reuters News, "Brig. Murtala Muhammed Addresses the Nation After Coup that Deposed Gen. Yakubu Gowon July 1975", July 30, 1975, video, 1:50, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGK8WXn8KzA>.

¹³ M. M. OGBEIDI, Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria Since 1960: A Socio-economic Analysis, in: *Journal of Nigeria Studies*, 1, 2, 2012, pp. 7–8. The author engaged the efforts of the Murtala/Obasanjo regime at building a virile nation and concluded that endemic corruption occasioned by lack of accountability and poor leadership has been the bane of meaningful development in Nigeria even under the military regime. See also PERETEL, pp. 34–35.

¹⁴ PERETEL, pp. 34–35.

¹⁵ Interview with Afe, Adedayo E. 49, Senior Lecturer in the Department of History and International Studies, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, 12/09/2018. His wide knowledge of the Nigeria political history was helpful in the analysis of issues related to the theme of this chapter. He gave a balanced historical narrative on the impact of military rule in Nigeria. See also: M. SIOLLUN, The Rollercoaster Life of Murtala Muhammed, in: <https://dawodu.com/siollun2.htm> [2020–07–21], N. J. GIMBA, Military Rule and Nation Building Process in Nigeria, in: *Journal of Arts, Humanities and Diplomacy*, 2, 1, 2012, pp. 102–104.

James Oluleye's memoirs where he remarked that: *"it later dawned on us that we had ruined so many lives through the desirable but reckless exercise. Many high officials of government who suddenly became retirees became emergency poultry farmers in the backyard of houses and many became Coca-Cola sellers. The sufferings forced the Administration to set up Colonel Pedro Martin's panel in order to see how to alleviate the suffering unwittingly caused. The report was baffling. Officers of Government officially sponsored to attend courses were retired for absenteeism while on courses. Many other atrocities done by man to man were highlighted."*¹⁶

Going further, Oluleye submitted that: *"The head of the panel thinking that restoration of officers wrongly dismissed was a way of alleviating the sufferings, ordered some officers to be restored in Benue State. The man of God had misfired and incurred the wrath of the administration. After the submission of the report, the Holy man earned almost a dishonorable discharge from the service. The episcopal gown could not save him because of many injustices that attended the exercise; the report could not be published for public consumption."*¹⁷

The Murtala sanitization efforts ended up creating threatening tensions within the army and the international community particularly the Western world which chides his effrontery despite the fact that Great Britain had by August 1, 1975, given official recognition to the new military administration. No doubt, the Murtala regime created more enemies than courting friends because of the stern adherence to his administration agenda of a new Nigeria. Within the space allowed him, he succeeded in achieving his lofty policy of restoring professionalism in the military and sanity to other segments of the society. It is nevertheless, worthy of note that, much as Murtala pursued his sanitisation policy with the needed political will, he became guilty of the very reasons that brought him to power. Rather than establishing a united front towards ensuring the actualization of a sane society safe enough for all to live and contribute their quota as citizens, he ended up polarizing the country to contending blocs of varying grievances among the top echelon of the army and the civil service. For instance, there were cases of mistaken identities as well as vindictive retirements, all in an attempt to face out all Gowon's links in the civil service and the Nigerian army.¹⁸ In this regard,

¹⁶ Major General J. J. OLULEYE, *Military Leadership in Nigeria 1966–1979*, Ibadan 1985, p. 173.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Interview with V. O. Edo, 52, a Lecturer and Professor of Political History, Department of History, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 21/9/2018. His views on the sanitization policy of the Murtala Mohammed military regime were instructive. While he ap-

the Murtala regime became more peevish in its approach to issues of sensitive coloration which most of the time heightened tension in the fledgling nation.

Sadly, those who were retired unceremoniously went to the society disenchanted, frustrated, and waiting for the next available opportunity to take their pound of flesh. This situation was not in any way good for an already tensed nation which was barely in the process of healing past wounds caused by the previous bloody military coups that almost tore the emerging nation apart along ethnic lines. Lessons are always there to learn from, but when these lessons touch on the selfish interests of certain individuals, they are quick to look the other way to ensure the actualization of their anti-people policies. The return of Dimka from a course in Lisbon and his later activities within the ranks and files of the military formed the cluster of events that led to the assassination of General Murtala on February 13, 1976.¹⁹ The death of Murtala more than anything else divided the country the more on strong ethnic and regional biases. This has been one of the banes of inclusive development and growth in Nigeria since independence. Building a better nation requires among other things, a united people with patriotic commitment to the task of achieving a functional society with working institutions. This was one of the failings of the Murtala administration under review.

The New Constitution, Federal Capital, and the Nineteen State Structure

The Murtala administration apart from the policy of sanitizing the military made some epochal decisions that would later have far-reaching impact on the socio-economic and political fortunes of the country. One of the important instruments of running a viable society is to have a working document on which its affairs are coordinated and policy implementation is based. The government of Murtala would be remembered for his novel decision in giving Nigeria a new document of operation. A 50 man committee headed by Chief Rotimi Williams was set up to draft a new constitution for the country as part of the preparation towards handing over to a democratically elected government in 1979. It is important to applaud Murtala for this landmark decision because it came three months

plauded the readiness of the regime to purge the military and sanitize the society, he was critical of his style of implementation.

¹⁹ K. OMOTOSO, *Just Before Dawn*, Ibadan 1988, pp. 6–9.

after he assumed office.²⁰ It shows that he was prepared to return the military to the barracks and restore power to the civilian. The choice of Rotimi Williams and other legal eggheads like Awolowo revealed the readiness of the government to work with the right persons as the job was well delivered even though Murtala did not live to witness the success of his lofty idea. The new constitution became a strong instrument that helped to guide operations of government at all levels. That the military suspended the constitution each time they take over power is enough to doubt the reasons often adduced for their intervention in politics. The Murtala regime left its mark as the first to give muscle to the sacredness of the constitution as one of the instruments of running a functional state. While it appears some efforts were made at encouraging the participation of people across the country to discuss the draft document,²¹ substantive input came almost exclusively from the Constitution Drafting Committee and the Supreme Military Council.²² Even though the constitution was a good legacy of the Murtala/Obasanjo administration, the top-to-bottom approach which is a colonial legacy subsisted throughout the process that saw to the eventual enactment of the constitution.

The putting together of the famous Akinola Aguda panel that identified Abuja as the new Federal Capital Territory (FCT) was also key in the unity of the country.²³ Since Lagos doubled both as Federal and State capitals and given its non-centrality to all the geo-political zones in Nigeria, the eventual relocation of the FCT to Abuja as a more central location helped reduce the likely tension its continue location in Lagos could have caused.²⁴

²⁰ R. SUBERU, Nigeria's Permanent Constitutional Transition: Military Rule, Civilian Instability and 'True Federalism' in a Deeply Divided Society, in: *Canada: Forum of Federation – The Global Network on Federalism and Devolved Governance*, Occasional Paper Series Number 34, 2019, pp. 1–25; O. OYEDIRAN (ed.), *The Nigerian 1979 Election*, Lagos 1981, pp. 8–9, 10; J. SIMPKINS, The Role of Constitution-Building Processes in Democratization, Case Study Nigeria, in: *International IDEA Democracy-Building & Conflict Management (DCM)*, 2004, pp. 1–4.

²¹ OYEDIRAN, 10.

²² SIMPKINS, p. 2.

²³ J. MOORE, The Political History of Nigeria's New Capital, in: *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 22, 1, 1984, pp. 167–175.

²⁴ Moore's analysis of the politics that characterized the relocation of the Federal capital to Abuja revealed that the individuals assigned the responsibility by the Federal Military Government only viewed the new federal capital as a major construction project not as an opportunity to unite the already disoriented zones in the country. The events of later years, especially after the assassination of Murtala show that the Abuja project was largely a northern affair. For details see: MOORE, pp. 167–175.

Abuja represented a point of unity given its strategic location. As herculean and money consuming as this task of building a new FCT was during the time, credit must be given to the Murtala administration for helping to reduce the burden of a State having to shoulder the cumbersome task of managing two important capitals. Governance in itself is a complex enterprise and a situation where a State would have to combine the burden of managing its affairs and also seeing to the security of the Federal government capital and its related challenges become a task too huge to bear. The Aguda panel submission of the relocation of the FCT to Abuja is a laudable decision achieved through the required political will. On December 10, 1975, the Committee submitted its report, even before its December 31 deadline.²⁵ It was the outcome of this report that initiated the series of activities, including the production of the Master plan and the subsequent development of Abuja as we have it today.²⁶ According to Max; the federal capital project, though a lofty plan, it has in retrospect proved to be one of the least auspicious decisions that Murtala's regime took as construction work in Abuja subsequently proved to be a major strain on the Federal budget and a source of corruption.²⁷

The country also witnessed the creation of seven additional states which conferred a 19 state structure on Nigeria.²⁸ The created states are Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Imo, Niger, Ogun, and Ondo. The seven states that were created and the citing of their capitals were done relatively on a professional basis with key factors put into consideration. The example of Akure as the Ondo state capital comes handy. Development indeed got to Ondo town before Akure but the choice of the latter as the capital was based on two important factors; its geographical proximity to all the major towns in the State and its historical antecedence as the capital of the Old Ondo Province.²⁹ When it was eventually declared as the new Ondo State seat of government, there was no serious issue raised thereafter. The creation of states was an exercise that stood the military government

²⁵ Federal Military Government of Nigeria, Report of the Committee on the Location of the Federal Capital, Lagos, 1976.

²⁶ J. A. UNACHUKWU, Remembering Akinola Aguda, in: *The Nation*, May 14, 2013.

²⁷ SIOLLUN, The Rollercoaster Life of Murtala Muhammed, in: <https://dawodu.com/siollun2.htm> [2020-07-21].

²⁸ R. T. SUBERU, The Struggle for New States in Nigeria, 1976–1990, in: *African Affairs*, 90, 361, 1991, pp. 499–522.

²⁹ Interview with Afe, Adedayo E., 49, Senior Lecturer in the Department of History and International Studies, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. 12/09/2018.

out from the civilian as the former had the advantage of taking a decisive decision with ease. Peretei captured it thus: *“the creation of states was one event that put smiles on the faces of Nigerians. Politicians would have found it nearly impossible to create states but the soldiers did it with such ease that even those not satisfied with the boundary adjustments surrendered to the wishes of the majority.”*³⁰

Ajayi’s view on the creation of states by the military fit perfectly into the argument of this chapter. He observed that: *“Up to 1979 the military in Nigeria had a track record of some good political performances. The military has been credited with the creation of states ostensibly to enhance the nation’s federal status. But it must be noted that the state creation exercises led to the balkanization of the polity and progressively weakened the position of the polyglot states vis-à-vis that of the federal military government at the centre. This was a peculiar form of federalism.”*³¹

The kernel of Ajayi’s argument hinges on the erosion of the regional arrangement in existence before the intervention of the military in Nigeria polity in January 1966. Under the regional governments, united fronts were presented to implement policies and execute programmes. True federalism was practiced during this period as there were strong component units with appreciable control of their resources and a dependent centre that holds its survival to the benevolence of the federating units, unlike the military administration which reversed the control of the resources with the centre having the upper hand.

The vacuum created by the demise of Murtala paved the way for the emergence of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976. By the end of the same year, the Obasanjo administration had settled down and left no one in doubt that it was a continuation of his former boss’s regime. Therefore discussions on the regime are usually presented collectively but Obasanjo’s period is certainly different from that of Murtala as he was also Head of State with his policies. This is not, however, a tenable reason to undermine the short period of Murtala’s regime. The Murtala/Obasanjo regime continued to show resilience in achieving its set goals despite the odds against it. The regime made commendable strides in the area of foreign policy. It presented as it will be revealed later, a better understanding of the workings of the international system than the Gowon era. Discussion on its foreign posture is presented in turn.

³⁰ PERETEI, p. 39.

³¹ G. AJAYI, An Overview of the Nature and Character of Military Rule in Nigeria, in: S. O. ARIFALO – G. AJAYI (eds.), *Essays in Contemporary Nigerian History*, Lagos 2003, p. 129.

Murtala/Obasanjo Foreign Policy Thrust

The setting up of a committee made of individuals of reputable status in their professional callings to review the whole essence of Nigeria's foreign policy and to formulate new guidelines³² was a signal to the seriousness of the regime to be more assertive in its relations with other countries. The regime did not play with words when it openly declared that Africa would occupy the central position in its foreign policy without necessarily affecting the national interest negatively.³³ The quest for the liberation of Angola by nationalist groups namely: Union for the Total Independence of Angola – UNITA, MPLA: Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and the FNLA – National Front for the Liberation of Angola was the first development that put the Murtala/Obasanjo regime's 'no-nonsense' posture of confirming the centrality of Africa in Nigeria foreign policy thrust. The initial desire of the regime was to work out ways the three nationalist factions can come together and work as one united front towards the struggle for the independence of Angola. Due to the existence of many vested interests from Apartheid South Africa (supported UNITA because of its pro-apartheid posture, the West: Britain and USA (supported FNLA), USSR and Cuba (pitched their tent with MPLA), the groups did not cooperate and instead they "*simply engaged in cut-throat struggle for power*".³⁴ Under this complex situation, Nigeria demonstrated an independent action by backing the MPLA. Nigeria gave 13.5 million to MPLA and thereby showed that Africa and Africans were no longer to be used for the advancement of racist policies. Nigeria recognized the MPLA government of Agostinho Neto on November 25, 1975, unreservedly condemned foreign involvement and advocated the withdrawal of all foreign troops fostering division of Angola.³⁵

Asides the material and monetary intervention, the Murtala/Obasanjo regime gave Angola the needed political and diplomatic support. Delegations were dispatched to various African countries to pursue recognition for MPLA. This effort paid off as many of those states which had hitherto maintained neutrality recognized the MPLA's government promptly.

³² B. J. DUDLEY, *An Introduction to Nigerian Government and Politics*, London 1982, p. 278.

³³ J. GARBA, *Diplomatic Soldiering: The Conduct of Nigerian Foreign Policy, 1975–1979*, Ibadan 1991, p. xiv.

³⁴ O. S. ABIODUN, *Nigeria's Recognition of the MPLA Government of Angola: A Case Study in Decision-making and Implementation*, Lagos 1981, p. 12.

³⁵ S. T. OKAJARE, *A History of Nigeria's Foreign Relations, 1960–2000*, in: S. O. ARIFALO – G. AJAYI (eds.), *Essays in Contemporary Nigerian History*, Lagos 2003, p. 175.

Even though the unanimous decision was not immediately accorded, Nigeria's powerful diplomatic lobby won for MPLA the sympathy and understanding of some of the delegations.³⁶ Given this benevolent diplomatic disposition between the Nigerian government and the MPLA, one would have convincingly taught that it would engender a cordial pattern of relations between Nigeria and Angola. This was not exactly so. It is crucial to note that some forces within Nigeria were averse to the pro-MPLA stance of the Murtala/Obasanjo regime.³⁷ Even as Obasanjo continued as the new leader, he vehemently reiterated Nigeria's uncompromising dedication to the total emancipation of Africa. His reassuring speech when Nigeria played host to the World Conference for Action against Apartheid is a point of reference. In the speech, Obasanjo accused the multinational companies of aiding and abetting the evil machinations of apartheid. He added that Nigeria was "*mounting surveillance on all those enterprises that depend on our raw materials and markets but continue to support our enemies: such enterprises must decide to choose between us and our enemies*".³⁸

Still on foreign policy, the Indigenization Decree which was promulgated in 1972 to enhance local content and resources control was consolidated by Obasanjo's regime. He broadened the provision of the Decree on the premise that "*a dynamic foreign policy had to be based first on control over local resources*".³⁹ The new arrangement had three schedules of 100%, 60% and 40% Nigerian participation respectively through either private owners or institutions. Foreign companies were ordered to Nigerianise their sales, marketing, and personnel departments while those that failed to comply by July 1976 were taken over by the Federal Government.⁴⁰ The impact of this development was aptly captured by Okajare when he observed that: "*Apart from improving the recurrent revenue of Nigeria, the government was now able to prop up the various liberation movements in the continent. In 1976, \$250 000 was given to such movement in Zimbabwe while a National Relief Fund was launched for Southern Africa with \$2.5m donation by the Nigerian Government.*"⁴¹

³⁶ Ibid., p. 176.

³⁷ DUDLEY, p. 298.

³⁸ A. I. AJAYI, *Non-Alignment and Nigeria's Foreign Policy 1960–1979: An Historical Perspective*, an unpublished M.A Thesis, University of Ife 1985, p. viii.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 72.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 73.

⁴¹ OKAJARE, p. 176.

The various activities that characterized the Murtala/Obasanjo regime's foreign policy which made the emancipation of all African countries from any form of external domination were indicative of the Afro-centric dimension of Nigeria's external relation during the period. Despite some of the failings recorded by the regime in the area of its foreign policy goals attainment, the Murtala/Obasanjo administration did far better when compared to previous governments especially that of Gowon. The Murtala/Obasanjo regime demonstrated an appreciable measure of independence in foreign policy-making and understanding of the complex power play in the international system. The success recorded by the regime in the pursuit of its foreign policy objectives was directly linked to the ability of the government to identify qualified hands in the business of policy-making. The selection of personnel to advise the government on the policy-making process was merit driven. This is not the case anymore in Nigeria. Today, appointments are made to key sectors in the country without countenancing the delivery capacity and professional qualifications of those so appointed. The results have always been the same for over four decades now: recurring infrastructural deficits, low investment on education, corrupt civil service, low returns on investments, and many more.

Indigenization of Shell – British Petroleum (Nigeria) Limited

The giant step towards the indigenization of Shell BP was taken in July 1979 in the third Participation Agreement through NNPC; the Federal Military Government increased equity to 60%. On August 1979 Fourth Participation Agreement, Shell BP's shareholding was nationalized as NNPC got 80%, while Shell got 20%.⁴² The indigenization of the nation's major source of revenue with the magnitude of wealth flowing through it, caused many things to fall apart. Other viable economic sources of income were relegated; this ends up subjecting the country to a mono-economy, thereby reducing the resources generated from oil and gas which was incapable of satisfying the need of the ever-increasing and demanding population of Nigeria. The process constrained the resources of the country into the hands of a few privileged and greedy individuals. Consequently, there came further elasticity to the disparity between the rich and the poor and blocked the chance of citizens crossing the line of status. If one is born in a rich family, such a person is likely to end up being

⁴² I. OKECHUKWU, *Civil Society and Conflict Management in the Niger Delta: Scoping Gaps for Policy and Advocacy*, Lagos 2006, p. 23.

rich no matter how lazy he/she is and the same goes the other way round. This is identical to the situation that fanned the ember of revolution in the old French society. With the economic power of the country placed in the hands of a few individuals, it became very easy for them to influence the decisions and policies of the government. This made it difficult for the poor to make headway in all ramifications. The huge revenue turnover that could have been invested in critical sectors like health, education, agriculture, and industry was misappropriated and the opportunity to make the nation an industrial hub and foreign investment attraction was missed. Ironically, the corruption that the military came to fight became well entrenched in the country during their regime.

Other Impacts of the Murtala/Obasanjo Regime

Obasanjo administration introduced the Operation Feed the Nation Programme, which was meant to boost agriculture and food production. Sadly, this well-thought out scheme was short-circuited and the expected long-term contribution to the alleviation of hunger and the promotion of the exchange capacity of the nation were achievement only in dreams. A more significant impact of the administration was the historic 1976 Local Government Reform. The regime reorganised the local government system by implementing the well-conceived recommendations of the Dasuki Local Government Reform Committee. As laudable as this exercise might be, the reform succeeded in bringing the government closer to the people at the grassroot in principle.⁴³ The long-term yearning of the people to have some measure of access to the policies and programmes of government was not met. The reform also did more damage to the traditional political institution as it took most of the powers of the traditional rulers who are experts in local administration away from them. Local policing of communities and traditional mechanism of settling and resolving conflicts among the people at the grassroot level became imperiled as a result of the 1976 reform. As the traditional rulers became gradually alienated from the people, mobilizing them for communal developmental projects became difficult as the power to do so now rests largely on the local government chairmen or counselors who the traditional rulers now have to seek their audience before carrying out their duties.

⁴³ V. O. EDO – C. C. NWOBUEZE, The Military and Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria, 1966–1999, in: V. O. EDO – E. F. K. SALAMI (eds.), *Issues and Trends in Nigeria's Development. A Festschrift for The Rev. (Fr.) Abiodun F. Akinseye*, Ibadan 2012, p. 521.

National Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC) which was held in 1977, was part of the programme promoted by the regime as a vehicle of socio-cultural engineering. This second World Black Festival though helped in promoting our cultural heritage, its successful hosting was at a huge cost which seriously impacted the nation's economy. Yes, we took the pride of hosting a festival of international acceptance, the masses of the people still relish on the direct impact of the festival on their survival as a people. The huge funds expended in the hosting of the festival could have been channeled to more viable areas begging for attention rather than wasting millions of taxpayers' money in trying to make a name in the international while the country was still several decades behind other developing nations. This chapter is of the view that socio-cultural engineering can only be meaningful when the nation is on the right development track in terms of economic power which has a direct impact on the citizenry through provisions of basic amenities needed for their wellbeing.

Seaports were also built and made to function across the nation. As part of the effort to develop the agricultural capacity of the nation, the regime also established the River and Lake Basin Development Authorities which spread across all the geopolitical zones in the country. Steel Rolling factories were constructed in Aladja, Abeokuta, and Osogbo. Two additional refineries were built in Warri and Kaduna. All these huge projects executed at huge costs have not made any significant contribution to the development of the nation Nigeria. This was largely because most of the projects were not people-centered as funds allocated for their execution were diverted into private pockets at the detriment of inclusive development promised by the regime. These projects are now victims of long years of neglect due to lack of visionary leadership and the political will to revive them to face out the country's huge economic challenges and help reinvent local economy. The transfer of power to civilians in 1979 was one of the impacts of the regime that would stand the test of time. Ajayi, however, assessed all these achievements of the Murtala/Obasanjo regime and submitted that; but all these were achieved at considerable cost. Despite the intervention of the Murtala/Obasanjo military regime's efforts at nation-building, the events that characterized their administration revealed that rather than setting the nation on the path of greatness, the administration ended up promoting the very issues that brought it to power. It goes to say that after independence and despite our huge mineral and human resources, the country is yet to get out of the woods of social, political, and most especially economic underdevelopment.

Conclusion

The cleansing carried out by the Murtala military regime hunted it throughout its tenure. On a final note, this chapter found respite in the well-articulated observation made by Alexander Madiebo when he submitted that: *"A military government is a major setback for a nation and should be avoided at all costs. This is because military men are unqualified for the task of government and either lean too heavily on advice which may not always be in the best interest of their people or worse still attempt to rule with it. With the gun in his hand, it is difficult to remove the military leader particularly when he begins to enjoy full political power. It is however the greatest disservice an army officer can do to his country and people if he plunges them into political darkness and keeps them there simply because he wants political power and wealth."*⁴⁴

In a short time, few of his policies won him sizeable support, and his decisiveness elevated him to the status of a national hero.⁴⁵ He ruled for only seven months, however, within that short period, he endeared himself to most Nigerians because of his strong leadership and the radical reforms he introduced in domestic and foreign policies. Too bad he did not live to see the realization of some of his lofty ideas. In all, Murtala Muhammad's actions as the head of the military government, the one that had the most lasting consequences was a program of transition to civilian rule that he initiated before his death, even though it was brought into fruition by his successor, General Olusegun Obasanjo. The stages of the transition agenda include the creation of more states, local government reformation, a new constitution, reformation of local and foreign policy. The transition process was to culminate in the handing over of power to the civilians on October 1, 1979.

Nation-building theoretically appears quite easy; it becomes much more easy when one considers the fact that almost all learned persons have within the tip of their fingers measures to have a viable nation. The efforts of Nigeria's leaders toward nation-building since independence can best be described as unstable, making one step ahead and taking several steps backward. Democratically elected government and military alike adopt diverse measures toward achieving one major goal as they will always promise at the inception of every new government; nevertheless, the pace at which each government views the concept of nation-building differs

⁴⁴ A. A. MADIEBO, *The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafran War*, Enugu 1980, p. 387.

⁴⁵ N. UKO, *Romancing the Gun: The Press as a Promoter of Military Rule*, in: *Africa Research & Publications*, 2004, pp. 75–88.

from another. Democracy possessed appreciable compatible traits that will fast track nation-building against the concepts permissible by militarism. However, military intervention in Nigeria politics was claimed to be an attempt to purify the polity of the country and enhance a viable nation. The military is of the habit of accusing the civilian of inefficiency and lack of focus in their pursuit of nation-building, this thesis through thorough research has proved beyond a reasonable doubt that beyond the verbal supposition of the military they are guilty of the offense they accused the civilians of. This is evident in the intermittent coup and the counter-coup that characterized the military regime, followed by accusations of one offense or another, leading to the Murtala/Obasanjo regime and its subsequent violent assassination and continuation by his deputy. At this point, it is logical to posit that, despite its easy apprehension theoretically, the practical aspect of nation-building is more demanding as it is inclined to the disinclination of one to many immoral acts that may jeopardize the objective of the state. The end of their government left the same issues in the anal of leadership in the country. There is always an element of compromise in all; atrocities all over the country, tribalism, and nepotism were the bedrock of our national watchword. All these should not be the fate of the country should we have the real desire of progressing and competing with our contemporaries in the comity of developed economies.

Though the Murtala/Obasanjo regime contributed greatly towards the growth of the nation from the point of stagnation, however, despite the promise to adhere to norms and tenets of what will make Nigeria a viable nation in the community of others, the regime by virtue of the pieces of evidence available to the author was at a point or another guilty a victim of the same reasons they accused their predecessor and civilian government for. This chapter concludes by taking a cue from the submission made by Ajayi when he asserted that: *"It is hoped that the present civilian dispensation and others yet to follow would have learnt some useful lessons concerning the significance of performance in a development-hungry polity like ours. Thus, all known impediments to good performance, like unwarranted party squabbles, political distractions, corruption, nepotism, intolerance, ethno-religious crises, election rigging and mediocrity must be curtailed and contained in the nation's interest. The fact that military rule no longer enjoys popular support should not encourage nonchalance for, as noted previously, the best antidote against military rule is good governance based on equity, justice, fair play and better living standard of the people."*⁴⁶

⁴⁶ AJAYI, An Overview, pp. 131–132.

Constantin ARDELEANU

***The European Commission of the Danube, 1856–1948:
An Experiment in International Administration***

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Constantin Ardeleanu, a professor at the university in Galati, Romania, is an expert on the international relations and trade in the Danube and the Black Sea regions in the 19th and the 20th centuries. He also worked at the university in Utrecht and the New Europe College in Bucharest. Currently, he is the Vice President of the International Maritime History Association.

Ardeleanu's latest book is about the European Commission of the Danube, the world's second international organisation established in 1856, transformed in the inter-war period to be later dissolved in 1948 when the Soviet Union eliminated "western imperialism" from the largest European river. Recently, the interest in this organisation has considerably grown among historians. It focussed on various political, economic and hydraulic aspects, and the cooperation inside and outside the Commission. The growth in geographic and geological knowledge in the early stage of the Commission's work and the development in the Danube delta environment were investigated too. The historical legal studies

appraised the Commission's activities in the context of the international fluvial and maritime law. The outcomes of all of these studies were reflected in the Ardeleanu's synthesis that appraises how all these factors added to the Commission's formation and operation from the beginning until World War I. It is only one chapter that is devoted to the post-1918 period, which reflects both the project aim that had been in the background of the book, and the fact that the organisation's character and its role in the inter-war period markedly differed. The Commission became rather a tool for ensuring interests of victorious states, which kept conflicting with Romanian claims for enforcing the state sovereignty.

The book is framed in three analytic levels. The first deals with the international relations and the role of the Commission as an object, later on as an actor of the great power's politics. The second concentrates on the Commission as an experimental organisation that developed interior mechanisms and corporate culture that would be-

come the basis of trust in this body as a viable entity of the international system. The third line deals with science, technology and issues of the environment as part of the “river history”, and the Commission’s role as a technical manager ensuring navigation on the largest European river. The book points out the mutual influence of these factors and their impact on the Danube navigation “safety.”

The Commission establishment resulted from the great powers’ decision that was part of the Treaty of Paris, 1856. It aimed to limit the existing dominant influence of Russia in the Danube mouth region, and to eliminate insecurity that had prevailed in navigation and trade in the pre-war period. The aim was to include this region into the international trade and to enable food export from the Balkans to Western Europe. The position of the whole region in the periphery where international interests of several great powers had been clashing resulted in the emphasis on the navigation freedom, and the establishment of the Commission as a technical and political collective tool to ensure this aim. It was the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine that had become the model.

The Commission dealt with making the Danube navigable, first of all, the river’s three main mouths. It had the right to set fees used for financing these works. Although it had been originally proposed for two years it outlasted another 82 years. After completing the complex hydraulic works, delegates from single great powers

would gradually transform the Commission into an actor of the regional and international politics, which virtually worked independently on Romanian administration after 1878; from 1883 it acted as a stable international body. As one separate and independent body, the Commission used a complicated multinational bureaucracy, and regulated navigation on the Danube through a complex package of internationally accepted rules and methods. Therefore, the Commission is depicted in the book as an effective, precedent, experimental organisation, which became the model for cooperation in the international system. Although the Commission intervened in the sovereign rights of the independent Romanian state, it was the international guarantor of the country’s safety as to the power claims of both Russia and Austria-Hungary. So for Romania, the Commission was a sphere where the national interests were asserted easier than elsewhere.

The findings gathered within the second and the third lines show that the solution of technical questions linked with improvement in navigation on the Danube turned up to be more difficult than it had been expected, so they could not be put into effect during those two years as had been planned. The solution was a new, markedly bureaucratized commission, the establishment of extensive international apparatus, and a package of regulatory measures adjusting everything from maritime pilot service, gauge unification and methods of gauging, to lighthouses construction. Experience

gained from the success in making the Danube navigable was used by project engineer, Charles Augustus Hartley, for adjustments on other rivers worldwide.

The Commission acted against the sovereign rights of the Ottoman Empire, e.g. through the public act of 1865, as well as it would assume a range of functions of the state, whose real power in the region had been falling apart. It usurped extensive powers, police and legal in character, in the sphere of trade and navigation. The success

was conditioned by its financial independence, which increased after 1860 as a result of the right to impose the customs duty on the river. Due to this measure, the town of Sulina in Northern Dobruja changed into a sort of a small international “Suez.”

The book by Ardeleanu is a precedent work in many ways, both by the work concept and the complexity of approach. It is a significant piece that deserves attention.

Michal Wanner

Die internationale Konferenz *Post-war Period in Central and Eastern Europe and in World – Continuities and Discontinuities*

Am 18. September 2021, am Samstag fand an der Universität Pécs eine internationale Konferenz statt, deren Hauptthemen die Nachkriegszeit in Mittel- und Osteuropa und in der Welt – Kontinuitäten und Diskontinuitäten waren.

Nach langer Wartezeit konnten die Veranstalterinnen – Dr. habil. Csilla Dömök und Dr. Zsuzsanna Agora – zu unserer großen Freude diese Konferenz mit persönlicher Teilnahme organisieren. Neben der von verschiedenen ungarischen Universitäten angekommenen ReferentInnen konnten mehr als 10 ausländische Gäste willkommen, die aus Tschechien, Polen und Rumänien in die Universitätsstadt Pécs eingetroffen sind, um ihre zum Thema verwandten Forschungen und Gedanken mit der Hörschaft mitteilen zu können.

Neben der Plenarsitzung bekamen 2 Sektionen auch eine Stelle. Während in der Sektion A auf Deutsch, verliefen die Vorträge in der Sektion B auf Englisch, dementsprechend konnte man an einer echten internationalen Konferenz teilnehmen. Dank des Teams Plattformen hatten jene ausländische Vortragende auch die Möglichkeit, an der Konferenz teilnehmen, die persönlich nicht nach Pécs reisen konnten. Verdankend der VeranstalterInnen verliefen nach den einzelnen Sektionen

die Diskussionen der vorgetragenen Themen neben Kaffee und Kuchen. Die wiedergegebenen Themen waren sehr vielfarbig, nämlich könnten wir aus mehreren Direktionen in die oben genannte Periode ein Überblick schaffen. Abhängig der ReferentInnen wurden die Vorführungen von mehreren Fachbereichen präsentiert, dazu gehörten historische, wirtschaftliche, politische und gesellschaftliche Leitthemen.

Aus meiner persönlichen Hinsicht fand ich es sehr interessant und faszinierend, dass ein Thema, wie die Nachkriegszeit von so vielen Seiten geforscht werden kann und damit sogar neue Interpretationen geschafft werden können. Für mich war es ziemlich motivierend, dass im Rahmen einer Konferenz die Rede nicht nur um Austausch den Forschungsberichten, sondern auch ums Schließen neuer, internationaler Beziehungen geht.

Hoffentlich nach Ende der Pandemie können später weitere Konferenzen wieder organisiert werden, um die professionellen und persönlichen Kontakte noch weiter vertiefen zu können.

Zsófia Helga Papp

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