

Pašić and Milovanović in the Negotiations for the Conclusion of the Balkan Alliance of 1912

Summary: This essay examines the divergence in views and actions between the two leading Serbian statesmen, Nikola Pašić and Milovan Milovanović, during the course of negotiations with Bulgaria which led to the conclusion of the Serbo-Bulgarian alliance, a prerequisite for the successful military operations against the Turks in the Balkan War of 1912. Milovanović, the foreign minister, considered an agreement with Bulgaria as an indispensable diplomatic asset for Serbia which would allow her to preserve her independence in the face of the hostile Austria-Hungary and secure an outlet to the Adriatic Sea. Although he fully appreciated the difficulties of Serbia's position pointed out by Milovanović, Pašić was rather unbending in respect of the territorial concessions to Bulgarians in Macedonia to which Serbia had to agree in return for the conclusion of an alliance. This essay demonstrates that the difference between Pašić and Milovanović was a matter of tactics rather than principle. The former realised that the price had to be paid for the Bulgarian alliance but preferred to have the Serbian government accept an unfavourable borderline under duress, because of the arbitration of Russian Emperor, rather than on its own volition. Not willing to take the responsibility for the concessions made in Macedonia, Pašić chose to present formal rather than real opposition to his party colleague. It was Milovanović's diplomatic elasticity and courage that enabled the Serbo-Bulgarian agreement to come into being.

Keywords: Pašić, Milovanović, Serbia, Bulgaria, Balkans, alliance, treaty, Balkan Wars

The light is not sufficiently shed on the last year of Milovan Milovanović's life. In particular, his relations with Pašić during the course of negotiations for the conclusion of the Balkan Alliance remain unexamined. The contradictions in their mutual relations have already been noted:¹ Pašić distanced himself from Milovanović during the negotiations, he disagreed with his conduct, but did not prevent him from the conclusion of an agreement, maintaining a reserved attitude throughout, until the outbreak of the Balkan War. Therefore, in order to better understand not just the history of the Balkan Alliance, but also later events, especially the Second Balkan War of 1913, it is of interest for our political and diplomatic history to analyse what Pašić and Milovanović disagreed on and how their disagreement affected the negotiations with Bulgaria.

¹ Slobodan Jovanović, "Milovan Dj. Milovanović", *Srpski književni glasnik* LI (1937).

I

To analyse the workings of Pašić and Milovanović in 1912, it is necessary to find out what was their general outlook on the question of agreement and alliance with Bulgaria. They did not differ on that point at all — both of them saw an agreement with Bulgaria as a basis of political programme.² There was no difference in principle. Differences emerged in the matters of practical politics: What kind of an alliance Serbia needed? To what extent should Serbia meet Bulgaria's requirements? To put it simple, was an alliance necessary at any cost?

Milovanović's political programme contained two parts, negative and positive. The former concerned the suppression of Austro-Hungarian penetration in the Balkan Peninsula relying on the support of Russia and Western Powers, that is to say on that political grouping in Europe which accepted the principle "Balkan for the Balkan peoples". The positive part of his programme concerned a rapprochement and agreement between the Balkan states, particularly between Serbia and Bulgaria. Both parts of the programme were mutually compatible. The negative part was not sufficient in itself because Austria-Hungary, even if halted in its penetration, was still strong enough to paralyse Serbia's development. On the other hand, without the positive part of the programme — a Balkan agreement — Bulgaria might have realised her own pretensions without and even against Serbia.

Pašić accepted Milovanović's programme, just like the majority of politicians in Serbia. The first disagreement between them emerged in connection with the presumption that the positive part — an alliance with

² Politicians in Serbia were nearly unanimous in their assessment of the necessity of an agreement with Bulgaria. The Radicals, Aca Stanojević, Ljuba Jovanović, Lazar Paču, Stojan Protić took a favourable view of the agreement notwithstanding their reservations towards Milovanović personally. The Independent Radicals, Ljuba Stojanović, Jovan Žujović, Ljuba Davidović, Milorad Drašković, Jaša Prodanović often supported Milovanović more than Radicals themselves. The Progressives, the Marinković brothers, did away with the old Austrophile policy of their party and sought for an agreement with Russia which implied the necessity of a Balkan alliance. Stojan Novaković, the Prime Minister at the time of the Annexation Crisis in 1908, had personally laboured for a rapprochement with Bulgaria, although he had much doubted the likelihood of an agreement. The Liberals alone stood aloof. Public opinion, university professors and Serbian intelligentsia (Jovan Cvijić, Draža Marković, Stojan Stojanović, Aleksandar Belić) approved of an agreement with Bulgaria as well. The extreme nationalists — Apis and his friends from the Black Hand organisation — collaborated with Milovanović at the time of the negotiations. See Jovan M. Jovanović, "Milovan Dj. Milovanović and the Serbo-Bulgarian Alliance of 1912", *Politika*, 13 March 1932; Andrei Toshev, *Balkanskite vojni*, I (Sofia, 1929), 236; Jovan M. Jovanović, "Novaković u diplomatiji", in *Spomenica Stojana Novakovića* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruka XXIII, 1921), 164, 212.

Bulgaria — proved impossible to achieve. Milovanović approached the Serbian question viewing it from Balkan and Central European aspect. It was not just the question of emancipation of the Serbian people in the Balkans, but also, due to geographic position and political circumstances in the wake of the Berlin Congress, an internal and external issue of Austria-Hungary which indirectly involved it into Central European problems. Milovanović came to conclusion that Serbia had to, in the name of Balkan emancipation, spearhead the resistance to Austria-Hungary or, if that was impossible, submit herself to the Central European political system and become its *avant-garde* in the Balkan Peninsula.³

For the purpose of his political orientation, Milovanović paid most attention to the attitude of two capitals: Vienna and Sofia. He feared Austro-Hungarian attempts to divide the Balkans with Bulgaria. Milovanović felt that in such division Vienna would cheat both Serbia and Russia, and finally Bulgaria. It depended on Sofia's attitude towards tempting offers from Vienna whether Balkan matters would be primarily solved by Balkan states or Great Powers, and Austria-Hungary in particular. The former solution was possible provided Serbo-Bulgarian agreement was concluded; the latter would be the consequence of a failure to come to terms and would be fatal for Serbia's independence.⁴ Therefore, Milovanović conducted his policy under the motto: either in Skoplje with Bulgaria or in Salonica with Austria-Hungary! Milovanović claimed that Serbia needed Bulgaria against Austria-Hungary and Austria-Hungary against Bulgaria.⁵ In other words, Serbia's independence, threatened by the Dual Monarchy, could be saved only by an agreement with Bulgaria for the purpose of common defence. If such development was impossible, and Serbia was forced to sacrifice her independence, that loss would be compensated by territorial gains in the south, in Macedonia.

These Milovanović's conceptions further emphasised their positive part after the Annexation Crisis — although they did not undergo essential changes. In the wake of the annexation, Milovanović was increasingly pessimistic about the possibility of coming to terms with Austria-Hungary. From 1909 onwards, as the Bulgarian Minister at Belgrade, Toshev, stated, a Serbo-Bulgarian agreement became a fixed idea for him. Choosing between two alternatives — with Austria-Hungary or Bulgaria — Milovanović decisively opted for the latter. All his diplomatic activities in 1909–1912 — a rapprochement with Austria-Hungary and trade negotiations — were mostly

³ Arhiv Srbije [Archives of Serbia; hereafter AS], Milovan Milovanović Papers, XXVI/13.

⁴ AS, Milovanović Papers, XXX/155.

⁵ Ibid. XXX/157.

tactical manoeuvring in order to bring Bulgaria closer to Serbia and prepare the ground for negotiations. He focused on negotiations with Bulgaria; he approached them as a drowning man clutching at a straw. Milovanović was intent on concluding an agreement with Bulgaria at any cost.⁶

In comparison with this main goal, Milovanović found everything else of less importance. The partition of Macedonia which was the central issue of an agreement with Bulgaria was thus of secondary importance. In Milovanović's view, an agreement with Bulgaria was rather the means of defence from Austria-Hungary than leverage for penetration into Macedonia. By virtue of his vocation and intellect Milovanović was a diplomat who assessed the position of Serbia in the context of European and Balkan powers. He was not himself concerned with the matters pertaining to Macedonia in the way that other Radicals such as Sveta Simić, Ljuba Jovanović and Pašić were. Milovanović was convinced that the Macedonian nationality did not exist and that formation of it would be harmful; neither Serbs nor Bulgarians should stand as separate nations — therefore, an autonomous Macedonia would be an artificial and temporary solution. He regarded such a solution, in the aftermath of the events in Eastern Rumelia, as a first step towards unification with Bulgaria. In his view, "the state reason", i.e. life and rational necessities of Balkan states were crucial in the liquidation of Ottoman heritage.⁷ He was deeply convinced that it was impossible to determine any real demarcation line in Macedonia, just like it was "impossible to determine a point of division between two similar colours which gradually spill and merge one in another". He also found arbitrary the extant Serbo-Bulgarian state border "as any other border drawn to the left or to the right would be arbitrary".⁸ Milovanović was thus always willing to make concessions in his negotiations with Bulgaria. At the beginning of the negotiations

⁶ On 19 January 1912, Milovanović recorded: "We, Serbia, desirous of surviving as an independent state and forging our future as an independent state in a community with other Balkan states must firstly do all in our power to reach an agreement with Bulgaria which can only be done with consent and protection of Russia. If that turns out to be entirely impossible, our only path will remain — in the embrace of Austria-Hungary. And that solution might be definite and consequently faithful for the entire Balkan Peninsula". See AS, Milovanović Papers, X/1.

⁷ Milovanović had stressed this thought at the time he had been a Minister in Rome. In his telegram of 28 January/10 February 1904 [the first date is given according to the Julian calendar which was in use in Serbia until 1919], he wrote that an agreement with Bulgaria must be reached "not for the sake of solving the Macedonian question, but with a view to staying exclusively on the practical grounds of defence of the common and general Balkan interests against a foreigner". Quoted in Vladimir Ćorović, *Odnosi između Srbije i Austrougarske u XX veku* (Belgrade 1936), 55.

⁸ AS, Milovanović Papers, XXVI/22–23; XXX/159.

in 1909 he considered the frontiers encompassing Skoplje, Veles, Prilep i Ohrid to be *conditio sine qua non* and eventually, at the end of the negotiations, he renounced the latter three towns.

Milovanović's chief objective was an outlet to the Adriatic Sea and for that reason he endeavoured to close the road towards the south for Austria-Hungary; the borderline he requested in Macedonia was something of a strategic security for the communication leading to the sea.

Such a stance on the part of Milovanović was rooted in his profound suspicion that the Habsburg Monarchy was soon going to collapse. Always an exponent of rationalism and utilitarianism in politics, Milovanović discounted the assumptions based on wishful thinking and hopes. Much impressed by the Habsburg Monarchy's determination during the Annexation Crisis, Milovanović did not believe that Serbia could considerably contribute to and play an important role in the break-up of the Dual Monarchy on her own. Conservative to the core, he could not easily adapt to such far-reaching and revolutionary assumptions. Even if the break-up came to pass, Milovanović wondered, what would Serbia gain? Russia would get hold of the Galician Ruthenes and had a decisive influence in the Czech lands and Poland; Germany would descend on Trieste; the Balkan states and small nations would be smothered between Germany and Russia.⁹

The disagreement between Milovanović and Pašić lay in their differing views on the Serbian goals in Macedonia and the future of Austria-Hungary. Accepting the programme carried out by Milovanović as minister for foreign affairs (1908–1911) and prime minister (1911–1912), Pašić followed it up to a certain point. Milovanović's premises about the necessity of conforming Serbian programme to Austria-Hungary in case of a failure to come to an understanding with Bulgaria were the result of an intellectual speculation which sought for solution in all situations but did not take into account the mood of Serbian political circles and common people. An anti-German wave which had swept Serbia, particularly from the time of the Annexation Crisis onwards, was so strong that it would no doubt disallow any such policy. Pašić felt this current much deeper and better than Milovanović who was more given to theoretical musing. In Milovanović's chess game only men — Great Powers — were visible whereas Pašić took account of pawns too. In respect of Austria-Hungary's future Pašić did not share Milovanović's opinion that its break-up was a matter of distant horizons.¹⁰ Just in the rare moments of anger Pašić would threaten, for example to Italy, that the Serbs would prefer an Austro-Hungarian yoke,

⁹ Ibid. XV/1, a note written in Berlin, 7/20 October 1909.

¹⁰ Karlo Sforca, *Nikola Pašić i ujedinjenje Jugoslovena: ratne i diplomatske uspomene* (Belgrade 1937), 106.

together with their Slav brethren, than consent to domination on the part of any other power. Indeed, he was averse to such combination much more than Milovanović and used it rather as the means of a political blackmail. For that reason, Pašić did not make such a close connection between the positive and negative part of the Serbian foreign policy programme as Milovanović did, and he did not attach to alliance with Bulgaria the absolute importance of a salvation for Serbian diplomacy. As for Pašić, contrary to Milovanović, an alliance with Bulgaria was not just a defensive tool against the Dual Monarchy, but also, if not more so, a tool for penetration in the south, in Macedonia. In his estimation of benefits that Serbia could derive from such an agreement Pašić had two criteria, defensive and offensive, and he set his course depending on their mutual relationship. The gains that Milovanović wanted to achieve in the west, in the direction of the Adriatic Sea, were not sufficient compensation, in Pašić's view, for the territorial concessions to Bulgarians in Macedonia. In 1912, Pašić took the same line as in the Annexation Crisis of 1908: he refused a compromise which, in his opinion, infringed on the Serbian national programme. For the same reasons, he would prove to be "intransigent" in 1915 when he resisted the pressure from the Allies in a truly desperate moment.¹¹

Both Milovanović and Pašić saw an alliance with Bulgaria as a defensive means against Austria-Hungary. In order to win over Bulgarian support, Milovanović was prepared to make concessions. Far more distrustful, Pašić doubted much more that assistance from Sofia would be forthcoming. In his eyes, the dilemma was whether one should pay too high a price in return for an uncertain assistance. A European with broad horizons, Milovanović could not understand bargaining. This *procedé* was alien to him and he took it as an unpleasant necessity. Contrary to him, Pašić, a typical politician of a Turco-Byzantine style, knew how to bargain. As much as Milovanović did not have the strength and nerves to engage in such a trading striving to accomplish his objective in the negotiations with Bulgaria, Pašić was perfectly willing to haggle over a last village as he would do over a capital city.

II

The Serbo-Bulgarian negotiations for the conclusion of an alliance could be divided into two phases: the first one took place in 1909–1911 — it started in the midst of the Annexation Crisis and reached the Tripolitania War. The second phase began in the fall of 1911 and it was ended with the successful conclusion of the treaty. The first phase was characterised by uncer-

¹¹ A dramatic account is given in *Spomenica Ljubomira Davidovića* (Belgrade 1940), 107–108.

tainty, Milovanović's constant attempts to break the deadlock, the sounding and preparing the ground in Europe and Sofia's indecisiveness. The second phase was marked by serious efforts and negotiations which gradually led towards the successful outcome.

The first phase was rather general in nature and both Milovanović and Pašić acted in unison. That was beyond any dispute. As foreign minister, Milovanović had the initiative which was fully supported by Pašić. In this harmony, it should be noted that Milovanović was intent on pushing Pašić in the background — and that for personal reasons. On the occasion of the Bulgarian King Ferdinand's visit to Belgrade in November 1909, Milovanović entirely preoccupied the guest at a tea party at which King Petar and Pašić were also present. "He talked to me much longer than [he talked to] them," Milovanović noted, "the conversation was conducted almost entirely between the two of us".¹² The jealousy between Pašić and Milovanović was also visible in the relations with Russia. The latter constantly overshadowed the former during the conversations in St. Petersburg in 1910 when both Serbian statesmen tried to further involve Russia in Serbo-Bulgarian relations. Much better orator than Pašić, striking and well-mannered in salons, a man of "high society", Milovanović overshadowed his prime minister on such occasions. Giving account of his conversation with Izvolsky who was intellectually akin to him, Milovanović recorded with the greatest satisfaction: "It was mostly I who kept conversation going in French. From time to time Izvolsky explained to Pašić in Russian the subject of conversation and Pašić then expressed his agreement or, if Izvolsky would ask for his opinion, after having asked the same question to me, he would answer vaguely and with incomplete phrases".¹³

Pašić must have found his position rather unpleasant, but he endured it maintaining his reserved attitude. His caution probably stemmed from the Russian stance which neither he nor Milovanović could entirely decipher. Russian official diplomacy pressed forward the idea of a Serbo-Bulgarian rapprochement at that time, but it was reluctant to meet the request of the Serbian government and put pressure to bear on Sofia in the matter of partition of Macedonia. In March 1910, Izvolsky openly stated to both Pašić and Milovanović that he did not approve of the San Stefano treaty, but that treaty remained purely Russian creation and he was unable to get rid of it that easily. Izvolsky suggested the middle course — that the San Stefano treaty in principle remained "the basis of Russia's Balkan policy" but that it should undergo certain modifications "in order to meet Serbian interests and rights which were forgotten and infringed on at the time of its

¹² AS, Milovanović Papers, XVIII/5, 9.

¹³ *Ibid.* XVI/23.

making”.¹⁴ The Russian minister for foreign affairs pointed out the motto for relations with Bulgaria: *glisser et non appuyer* — because the truth that had to be told the Bulgarians was bitter. While Milovanović was satisfied with this outcome believing that the ice was broken, Pašić paid more attention to the geographic map that he and Milovanović had given to Izvolsky with marked Serbian territorial demands in the south.

The same difference emerged in the conversations with the Bulgarian minister Toshev in Belgrade in the spring of 1911. Milovanović stressed the necessity of a rapprochement in principle, on a broad basis, whereas Pašić said the same but he added the borderline Bregalnica-Ohrid.¹⁵

The second phase of negotiations, which started in the fall of 1911 and centred on the delimitation in Macedonia, brought about the first and real disagreement between Pašić and Milovanović. The arrival of Rizov in Belgrade in September 1911 opened serious conversations. It should be noted that Rizov addressed Pašić first although the latter had no portfolio in the government at that time and then Milovanović; the Bulgarian government seems to have known that Pašić’s consent was prerequisite. Rizov brought the first concession from Sofia — the proposal of a borderline along the frontier of the Skoplje *sanjak*, stretching southwards from the Šar mountain. Milovanović rejoiced on account of the change in Bulgarian opinion which had until then stood on the ground of indivisibility of Macedonia. He saw the abandonment of that principle as a victory of the idea of agreement. He was prepared to make concessions in order to strengthen that idea. Pašić also welcomed this step, but he met the Bulgarian frontier proposal with his own — from the Bregalnica river to Struma which gave Serbia, along with Skoplje, Veles, Prilep, Kičevo and Poreč. Milovanović

¹⁴ Izvolsky asked Milovanović for his assistance in the drafting of a “formula” which he could put forward to the Bulgarian government. On 11 March 1910, Milovanović handed him the following proposal for the modification of the San Stefano treaty: “De donner une juste et large satisfaction aux droits nationaux et historiques de la Serbie sur les territoires au sud de Katchanik et de la Schara Planina en lui permettant de s’assurer le littoral serbo-albanais de l’Adriatique avec un hinterland suffisant et de remplir ainsi une condition essentielle de son indépendance effective. — La renunciation au cours supérieur du Wardar de la part de la Bulgarie serait largement compensée par des avantages qui en résulteraient pour l’indépendance balkanique en général ainsi que pour sa propre sécurité.” Izvolsky was, however, not satisfied; he wanted something much more indefinite. Milovanović revised his draft and handed Izvolsky a new and much more moderate formula next day: “En se réservant d’examiner et de donner la juste et large satisfaction aux demandes de la Serbie, fondées tant sur les arguments d’ordre ethnographique et historique que sur les besoins impérieux d’ordre économique, qui sont la condition essentielle de son indépendance et, par conséquent de l’indépendance balkanique en général.” See AS, Milovanović Papers, XVI/9, 13.

¹⁵ Toshev, *Balkanskite voini*, a report to Geshov 3-I, 1911, 298–300, 307–308.

and Pašić differed in terms of tactics: the former, in his own words, wanted to avoid “further detailed discussion of that dismal question now,” insisting that both sides eschew “stubborn preservation of prejudices no matter how deep-rooted”. While Milovanović was trying to smooth over those questions which could dampen the Bulgarian zeal, Pašić regarded such compliance as a consequence of the circumstances forcing King Ferdinand’s hand and he thus intended to make the best out of these favourable circumstances. On the other hand, the conciliatory and compromise-prone Milovanović made use of Pašić’s mood; he was more comfortable with the mediating role between Pašić and Rizov than dealing on his own with the Bulgarian delegate. Rizov gave his own assessment of the Serbian negotiators with whom he had met in Milovanović’s house on the night of 21–22 September 1911 and discussed the delimitation in Macedonia: “The most intransigent and persistent was Pašić, the most approachable was Milovanović, whereas Ljuba Stojanović kept the middle course agreeing to make concessions in order to conclude an alliance”.¹⁶ It was Ljuba Stojanović who finally suggested, since Pašić and Rizov had failed to come to terms, that a straight line be drawn from Kratovo to Struga so as to give Veles and Prilep to Bulgaria while Kičevo and Poreč would belong to Serbia. Rizov rejected it; it was finally agreed to assign the entire region between the Šar and Rodopi Mountain to the arbitration of the Russian Emperor.¹⁷

Just like with Rizov, Milovanović tried to avoid conversations about the delimitation in Macedonia at his meeting with Goshev, the Bulgarian prime minister, on the train journey from Belgrade to Lapovo on 28 September.¹⁸ Geshov’s and Milovanović’s account tally in respect of Macedonia:

¹⁶ Prilozhenie km tom prvi ot doklada na parlamentarnata izpitatelna komisija, Sofia, 1918, I, Interrogation of Rizov, 371 [hereafter Doklad].

¹⁷ Milovanović provided a detailed account of this meeting in his notes — AS, Milovanović Papers, XXVI/81–83; there is also some information in *Die Internationalen Beziehungen im Zeitalter des Imperialismus — Documente aus den Archiven der zarischen und provisorischen Regierung 1888–1917*, Reiche III, i, No 545, 563; *Krasnyi Arhiv*, Diplomatičeska podgotovka balkanskoi voiny 1912, VIII, No 4, 7; Doklad I, no 1, 370/1. There are certain discrepancies in these reports. Rizov later claimed that the autonomy of Macedonia had been agreed on in principle and that the faith of Kičevo alone remained in dispute while Veles, Prilep and Kruševo had been given to the Bulgarians. See Guechoff, *L’alliance balkanique*, 48–49. Milovanović did not mention it; he professed just the opposite in the frontier matters.

¹⁸ AS, Milovanović Papers, XXVI/87–94. The historiographical coverage of this meeting has so far been based on Geshov (*L’alliance balkanique*, 22–27), the only participant who published the content of conversations. The accounts of Poincaré (*Les Balkans en feu*, Paris, 1926, 51–51) and Stanoje Stanojević (*Srpsko-turski rat 1912*, Belgrade, 1928, 47–48) were based on his writing. There are also the second hand reports by Hartwig and

they both claimed there was no discussion of a partition. Geshov also wrote that Milovanović had mentioned the possibility of Austria-Hungary's demise which would simplify the delimitation issue: Serbia would have Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Romania would receive Transylvania. Milovanović did not mention that; indeed, it seems highly unlikely that he would refer to so uncertain, and according to him even unbelievable, contingency — the break-up of the Dual Monarchy. That would amount to providing arguments against his own demands: to ask for a smaller piece of more-less certain in exchange for something larger but entirely uncertain. Milovanović was not so naïve a negotiator. Geshov's account was designed to serve its purpose — to keep King Ferdinand and the Bulgarian government in the favourable mood for an agreement.

Pašić authorised Milovanović's negotiations with Geshov. He was probably pleased with the fact that there was no talk of concrete delineation. Nevertheless, while Pašić, on one hand, gave assurances to Hartwig as to his full agreement,¹⁹ he was increasingly drawing back and distancing himself from Milovanović's work, on the other. In early October 1911, Pašić almost demonstratively rejected a chairmanship of his Radicals' club as well as presidency of the parliament. His behaviour suggested that something was brewing behind his peaceful exterior since the head of a ruling party was usually, in keeping with parliamentary practice, either prime minister or president of the National Assembly. There was a rumour among the Radicals, not without foundation, that Pašić "did not want to align himself with this political situation and preferred to have a free hand for some other [political] action".²⁰ There was also some talk about a new cabinet in which Pašić would take the place of Milovanović. However, such an act would bring about a split in the Radical Party. Pašić felt that and that was one of the reasons why he restrained himself from initiating a crisis.

Nehljudov (*Krasnyi arkhiv* III, no 16, 32; *Die Internationalen Beziehungen*, III, No 696, 589, 625). These reports are often inaccurate, for example that of Hartwig in which he mistook the *vilayet* of Salonica for the *vilayet* of Adrianople (Edirne) acknowledged by the Serbs as an indisputably Bulgarian territory. Hartwig also did not, perhaps inadvertently, mention the division of Albania for which Milovanović had stood. Milovanović's report makes clear the great extent to which Geshov was concerned about the attitude of Romania much discussed during the meeting.

¹⁹ *Die Internationalen Beziehungen*, III, i, No 625; *Krasnyi arkhiv* VIII, no 16.

²⁰ *Politika*, 15 October 1911.

III

In the course of negotiations about the territorial delimitation with Bulgaria in Macedonia Pašić and Milovanović stood and argued for two different conceptions. The former's view was that the delimitation issue should be postponed until the victory. It was sufficient to determine what is beyond dispute — up to the Šar and Rodopi Mountains — and the principle of division of Macedonia; the division itself would be carried out following a successful war and under supervision of the Russian Emperor. The latter's view was that it should be the other way round: the borderline in Macedonia, definite if possible, should be determined immediately. The arbitration of Russian Emperor would then be purely formal.

The first thesis was put forward by Rizov during his preliminary conversations in Belgrade in September. At first Milovanović hesitated. There was a good and a bad side to the proposition. If the details of delimitation were brushed aside, the making of an agreement would surely be easier for both sides. However, this uncertainty could induce both sides in case of a war to embark on conquering the contested regions with a view to making good their claims rather than throwing all their forces against the enemy. Before the Balkan Wars, there was little faith in the strength of the army in Serbia. Conflicts within officer corps, doubts regarding the quality of armament reflected in the bitter parliamentary debates formed the conviction that the Bulgarian army was better prepared than the Serbian army in both moral and material respect. To enter an uncertain situation with a stronger partner would mean to play a game against the better prepared player. That was the reason behind Milovanović's initial hesitation. As it soon became apparent that there could be no compromise between Pašić's and Bulgarian stance, he accepted a partial solution which allowed him to procrastinate as long as possible the dismal question of delimitation. When Rizov again broached this question at a meeting with Pašić, Milovanović had already accepted it and resisted only for the sake of appearance. He placed his hopes in Russia. Having obtained Izvolsky's consent to revision of the San Stefano treaty and believing that Russia had had a debt to Serbia from the time of the Annexation Crisis, Milovanović was hopeful that he managed to win over Russian diplomacy for the cause of Serbian pretensions in Macedonia.²¹ Therefore, he insisted on the absolute Russian arbitration at a meeting with Geshov and in his first draft of an alliance treaty sent to Sofia. It was not before the Bulgarian side declined to accept this procedure that Milovanović engaged himself in the detailed discussion concerning the prospective frontiers.

²¹ AS, Milovanović Papers, XXVI/84.

True to his mistrustful nature, Pašić did not entirely share Milovanović's confidence in Russia. For that reason, he immediately put forward maximal demands and put pressure on Milovanović to do the same. Pašić agreed to Russian arbitration at a meeting with Rizov so as not to incur the displeasure of Russia and because he was cornered due to the consent of other negotiators; he did not see it as a substitute for his own frontier proposal. While Milovanović made his mind, under Bulgarian pressure, to enter detailed negotiations, Pašić was getting closer to the idea of an absolute Russian arbitration for the simple reason that he realised he could not impose his own proposal for division — and he was not willing to renounce it. Both Milovanović and Pašić underwent evolution during the negotiations but it was in the opposite directions: the former was initially in favour of the absolute arbitration and in the end accepted the definite frontiers — in this case the arbitration was a sheer formality; the latter argued for the definite frontiers and then switched to the absolute Russian arbitration. This evolution was a natural consequence of their general attitude towards alliance with Bulgaria. Milovanović wanted the alliance at all costs and Pašić demanded maximal territorial gains in the south making the conclusion of an alliance conditional on that settlement. Unable to have his frontiers accepted, Pašić passed the decision for their abandonment on someone else — in this case the Russian arbiter.

IV

The first draft of an alliance treaty sent from Belgrade to Sofia was the fruit of Milovanović's and Pašić's common labour.²² The Bulgarian government was dissatisfied with it because it did not include the autonomy of Macedonia as a principle and it envisaged Russian arbitration over the entire area from the Šar to the Rodopi Mountains. The second draft produced by Milovanović and Pašić together partitioned the disputed territory of Macedonia in three zones: 1. the uncontested Serbian zone the borders of which were mostly those suggested by Ljuba Stojanović's compromise proposal — a straight line from Kratovo to Ohrid; 2. the uncontested Bulgarian zone across the Bregalnica river and southwards from Prilep up to Ohrid; 3. the contested zone in between which was to be the subject of Russian Emperor's arbitration. This proposal seems to have been something of a compromise between Pašić's and Milovanović's views: Pašić's border was moved northwards, from Prilep to Kičevo, but the Serbian minimal request

²² *Krasnyi arkhiv* VIII, no 34, 43; *Die Internationalen Beziehungen* III, i, no 801; Doklad I, no 9. A detailed history of the Serbo-Bulgarian negotiations is beyond the scope of this work. These are touched upon only so far as they demonstrate the attitude of Milovanović and Pašić.

was now final and not subject to any later decision. This definiteness, in particular, upset the Sofia government.

Aware of the powerful influence of Pašić, the Bulgarian government used the occasion of Milovanović's trip in Paris in November to send Rizov after him in order to pressurise him further far away from the leader of the Radical Party. There is no doubt that Milovanović wavered in Paris. He did not put much of resistance. Rizov skilfully pleaded to him with a mixture of personal and general matters appealing to his common sense as much as his sentiments. "I swear on my fatherland and honour that this is our last attempt to reach an agreement," Rizov told Milovanović. "As your old friend I ask you and beg you to attach your name to this great accomplishment. Have courage, persevere and overcome all obstacles that even your political friends might throw in your way."²³ This fiery rant must have made great impression. Following the Parisian conversations Milovanović's activities were marked by more energy and determination.

On his return from Paris, Milovanović sent to the Bulgarian government another proposal which envisaged an autonomous Macedonia and a new borderline in case the autonomy proved unviable with further concession on the left bank of the Vardar river.²⁴ The Bulgarian government responded with their own concessions moving the border from the Skoplje *sanjak* to the Serbian proposal of the frontier on the right bank of the Vardar — an agreement was thus reached in this area. In return, the Bulgarians requested Kratovo and Kriva Palanka on the left bank of the Vardar.²⁵ Gešov begged Milovanović to accept this as the final Bulgarian proposal.

Milovanović found himself in a difficult position hemmed in between the Bulgarians and Pašić. "With the full and deepest conviction," he recorded, he was "willing to entirely accept the Bulgarian proposal". At the same time, he was struggling as a typical bargainer: is the moment ripe for him to make concessions or is there more to be gained? Hartwig backed the Serbian side; Stepa Stepanović and the General Staff demanded Ovče Polje to which they attached great strategic importance. Therefore, Milovanović decided to make partial concessions rather than give in completely: Kriva Palanka and Kratovo would be given to Bulgarians but, in return, the frontier would run from the vicinity of Kratovo along the lines of the old Serbian border proposal and extend over Ovče Polje to the Ohrid lake. This compromise gave away Kratovo and Kriva Palanka, and kept part of Ovče Polje.

²³ Guechoff, *L'Alliance balkanique*, 51.

²⁴ The watershed Pčinja–Kriva Reka–Bregalnica with the borderline reaching the Vardar below the confluence of Pčinja rather than the confluence of Bregalnica.

²⁵ The Bulgarian proposal was: the watershed of the Pčinja and Kriva Reka and then along the Pčinja from the confluence of Kriva Reka up to the Vardar.

Not capable of maintaining the fight on two fronts, at home and abroad, Milovanović decided to force the issue with Pašić. In mid-December 1911, he convened a council consisting of Radicals, Independent Radicals and army officers to lay down his personal opinion, find out what was the dominant attitude towards the problem at hand and share the responsibility for further concessions to Bulgarians.

At this meeting, Milovanović underscored that the events did not allow any procrastination. "My conviction has always been that a Serbo-Bulgarian community is the first and the most important condition for both our and their future. Today more than ever I see no other way in which our independence as a state and further accomplishment of our national ideals could be secured". Bulgaria sought for agreement at the time, Russia made effort to facilitate it, the circumstances were favourable. It was a distrust in King Ferdinand alone that militated against the alliance. But that was a permanent reason and anyone who wanted an agreement with Bulgaria would have to take it into account. "We want and must want an alliance because there is no substitute for it. If Ferdinand is dishonest, he will cheat not just Serbia, but also Russia. We must hurry because we do not know what the spring will bring about and, in case of a crisis in the Balkans, we cannot remain in the open — not secured either from Bulgarian or Austro-Hungarian side. An Albanian revolution will bring Austro-Hungary in the Novi Pazar *sanjak*. Serbia cannot resist such contingency without an agreement with Bulgaria. Finally, Serbia might be compelled to force the issue herself as soon as European constellation allows it because the Serbian population is being systematically exterminated in Old Serbia, and Kosovo is the central position of the Serbdom. Our relations with [Ottoman] Turkey become increasingly pointless and even dangerous for us. They have served us well as a means of drawing closer Bulgaria, but the Turks blackmail us now — they threaten to take a favourable view of the Bulgarians again as soon as we raise our voice for the protection of our compatriots. After all, the Bulgarians could seek protection in an agreement with Austria-Hungary if they do not find us forthcoming, which would be bad for them but fatal for us". Concluding his report, Milovanović suggested that Kratovo and Kriva Palanka be abandoned and stated that he could not accept the responsibility for the breakdown of the negotiations in the existing circumstances. In other words, he was prepared to resign.

After having been asked first for his views, Ljuba Stojanović refused to express his opinion: it was for the government, and not the opposition, he said, to conduct policy. Milovanović was supposed, being a foreign minister, to make a decision by himself. Stojanović was actually in agreement with Milovanović and he said him as much in private after the meeting had been concluded. He encouraged Milovanović to persevere and overpower Pašić supporting his intention to resign if the latter continued to put a

spoke in his wheel. Other participants in the meeting did not shed any more light. Pointing out his exclusively military point of view, Stepa Stepanović stressed the strategic importance of Ovče Polje. Stojanović replied to him that in case of a war with Bulgaria the outcome will be decided in the direction Niš–Sofia and not Ćustendil–Skoplje. Andra Nikolić and Stojan Protić were inclined towards Milovanović's view, but they were reluctant to openly state their opinion out of consideration for Pašić.

Pašić finally spoke as well. He made a clear and open stand against further concessions. He even disputed Milovanović's last offer which renounced a part of Ovče Polje and fell back to his initial proposal for the frontier on the Bregalnica river made to Rizov at the beginning of the negotiations. Pašić reverted to the starting point: lets have both proposals — the Serbian and the Bulgarian — going to the arbitration of Russian Emperor. He categorically professed that he “does not consent to the amputation of Serbian nation” given that the indisputably Serbian lands were about to be given to Bulgarians. Pašić argued that Kratovo and Kriva Palanka were Serbian areas and claimed that he could bet on his life he would be able to gain these two towns for Serbia.

Pašić did not dispute Milovanović's assessment of the general situation — Serbia was in a difficult position and the faithful days were ahead. But he refuted Milovanović's thesis that an agreement with Bulgaria was the only way out of predicament. If that agreement proved impossible to reach, Pašić proposed another combination: to win over the Albanians and form joint Serbo-Albanian units which would, according to him, put an end to Albanian atrocities in Old Serbia, create a dam against Austria-Hungary and protect Serbian interests in Macedonia against Bulgaria. Pašić remained intransigent and met Milovanović's argument to the effect that Serbia could not withstand a two-front fighting with the remark that it was better to wait than to cede Kriva Palanka.

Having seen that Pašić could not be dissuaded, Milovanović stuck to his guns as well and paid a visit to Hartwig immediately after the meeting. He received full support from the Russian minister, enthusiastic about the Serbo-Bulgarian agreement, and also a promise of Russia's intervention in Sofia. Without hesitation and firm in his decision to proceed at his own risk, Milovanović sent instructions to Spaljčković on 15 December to make concessions regarding Kratovo and Kriva Palanka.²⁶ From that moment onwards Milovanović worked on his own without consulting Pašić.²⁷

²⁶ A note on this meeting is in AS, Milovanović Papers, XXVI/96–102; the instructions for Spaljčković can be found in *Krasnyi arkhiv* IX, No 65.

²⁷ There is also the account of Milan Gavrilović, Pašić's secretary, on the events on the eve of the conclusion of the Balkan Alliance which was drawn upon in E. C. Helmre-

Pašić did not fail to inform Hartwig about his stance making it clear that he was opposed to any further concessions and that Milovanović was working on his own.²⁸ His attitude was also known in Sofia. Nehljudov, the Russian minister to Bulgaria, accused him overtly in St. Petersburg of not wanting an agreement and pointed out the danger of Pašić's undermining Milovanović's efforts.²⁹ Such an attitude on the part of Pašić no doubt influenced the Bulgarian government not to press too hard. It also induced Russian diplomacy to back the Serbian desiderata more firmly so that Pašić's view would not prevail and the negotiations as a whole come into question.

Pašić intervened in the Serbo-Bulgarian negotiations one more time in January 1912 when Struga, which the Bulgarian government had previously ceded to Serbia, suddenly became a matter of contention. The agitated Pašić went straight to Hartwig and expounded that the Bulgarian request was absolutely unacceptable.³⁰ In the matter of Struga, Pašić was, just like Milovanović, frightened of the behaviour of the Russian military attaché in Sofia, Colonel Romanovsky, who interfered with the dispute and suggested his own frontier proposal. "The Romanovsky line" was dangerous

ich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars, 1912–1913* (Cambridge 1938), 58–59. Just like Milovanović, Gavrilović also did not specify the exact date of the meeting he referred to. Perhaps it was the same meeting, although there are considerable differences in the two records. Milovanović's notes make it clear that the meeting was held before 15 December 1911; his notes are entirely credible and written immediately after the event. Citing Gavrilović, Helmreich has mentioned a memorandum distributed to the participants at the conference — Pašić allegedly wrote down his objections on that document. Unfortunately, that document has not survived and Gavrilović laid it out from memory. According to Gavrilović, Milovanović convened a conference between the leaders of Serbian parties in order to consult them about the conclusion of an alliance. He justified major concessions made to Bulgarians by their assistance against Austria. All the participants except Pašić agreed — he was silent and simply remarked that Milovanović was foreign minister who had to make a decision. Having been asked later about his attitude on this occasion, Pašić pointed out too great concessions made to Bulgarians and his suspicion concerning their help against Austria. He was convinced that Ferdinand would never act against the Dual Monarchy. Moreover, he suspected that the Bulgarian King would inform Vienna about what was going on. Finally, Pašić himself spoke of the Bulgarian alliance at the Radicals' conference in Belgrade in 1920; he referred to the meeting of the Crown Council under King Petar's chairmanship during which he had said in the presence of Radicals' and Independent Radicals' leaders that "the royal government went further in making concessions to Bulgaria than our interests required..." See *Spomenica Nikole Pašića povodom desetogodišnjice smrti* (Belgrade 1937), 203–204.

²⁸ *Krasnyi arkhiv* IX, no. 66.

²⁹ *Ibid.* IX, no. 69, 70.

³⁰ *Ibid.* IX, no. 71.

as it prejudiced the Russian arbitration. Milovanović and Pašić opposed it together. They parted ways soon again when Milovanović, in order to have his treaty, ceded this town on the Ohrid lake to Bulgarians.

V

The contemporaries differed in their assessment of Pašić's conduct in 1911–1912: Milovanović, Rizov and Geshov held one opinion and Splajković was of different mind. According to the former opinion, Pašić wanted to do away with the accusations of him being a Bulgarian and Bugarophile which had haunted him since the time of the Timok Rebellion, the Radicals-inspired peasant uprising against King Milan Obrenović and conscription in Eastern Serbia in 1883. Basically, he was in agreement with the work of the Serbian government but, not being a member of the cabinet, could allow himself to criticise. According to the latter opinion, Pašić purposely obstructed any attempt at rapprochement with Bulgaria which was not carried out under his personal control and authority.

Both opinions were well-founded to some extent. His alleged pro-Bulgarian stance and his ambiguous conduct before the marshal court in connection with the 1883 Timok Rebellion had been a major hindrance in Pašić's political life. He was known as a politician prone to undermining his own party's government as long as he was not a member of it — the case in point was Vujić's cabinet in 1902. Nevertheless, these reasons were not the main ones. The issue was not so simple. There were two features in Pašić's conduct during the negotiations both of which implied the refusal of concessions to Bulgaria in Macedonia. Pašić first demanded the Bregalnica frontier and then proposed the arbitration of Russian Emperor between the requests of Serbia and Bulgaria; it was not before Milovanović refused it under Bulgarian pressure that Pašić wanted a breakdown of the negotiations or their procrastination. The essential in Pašić's manoeuvring was that he accepted an agreement with Bulgaria in principle but did not allow the Serbian government to voluntarily attach its signature on a borderline that he found unfavourable. Having been told by Milovanović that the Russian Emperor would at best decide along the lines of the Serbo-Bulgarian frontier agreement, Pašić replied: "Well, let it be so!" His unspoken intention was to have the Serbian government, if must be, accept a borderline for the sake of an agreement with Bulgaria under duress, because of the imperial ruling which could not be disputed, rather than on its own volition.

Hartwig justified Pašić's behaviour in St. Petersburg on account of his greater responsibility as the head of the party that that of Milovanović.³¹

³¹ Ibid. IX, no. 74.

Given the very strong nationalist feeling in Serbia, even more pronounced due to the *comitadji* activities and the fighting against the Bulgarian irregulars in Macedonia, Milovanović's conciliatoriness was bound, once it was made known, to cause stir of protest among parties and politicians in Serbia. From 1903 onwards, the entire Serbian nationalist press vehemently campaigned for the annexation of Slaavic Macedonia to Serbia referring to the Emperor Dušan's lands and the medieval Serbian state. It was rather predictable that the borderline envisaged in the 1912 alliance treaty would face damnation from the nationalist circles in Serbia. In addition, Pašić himself shared such views and gave them direction. His opposition and reserve during the negotiations with Bulgaria stemmed from his personal conviction and the fear of reactions from the nationalist current.

When the content of the agreement became known, the dissatisfaction predicted by Pašić erupted. Crown Prince Aleksandar openly stated his disagreement and bewilderment at the negotiated border.³² Unaware of the conclusion of the alliance until the outbreak of war, Novaković was markedly dissatisfied when he found out about "the contested zone".³³ Ribarac and the Marinković brothers were also against the contracted borders.³⁴ Jovan Cvijić refuted in the newspapers³⁵ the rumours to the effect that he had suggested the Serbo-Bulgarian borderline in Macedonia; he even claimed to have protested against this frontier in a letter to "a distinguished person" prior to the signing of the alliance treaty.³⁶ The frontier suggestions sent to Bulgarians (the watershed Pčinja-Bregalnica and the line which left out

³² Milos Bogitschewitsch, *Kriegsursachen* (Zurich 1919), 35. Cemović claimed that Crown Prince had promised him, while the negotiations were still underway, that he would wrack such a treaty through his activities in St. Petersburg. Cemović also provided additional information on Pašić's conduct but these have to be taken with a pinch of salt on account of his bitterness and strong qualifications. Cf. Cemović, "Srpsko-bugarski ugovor 1912", *Politika*, 1 August 1925; "Zavera" protiv g. N. Pašića", *Pravda*, 25 July 1925; "Izvrtnje istorije i istine", *Politika*, 2 September 1925; Djurdje Jelenić, "Nikola Pašić i srpsko-bugarski spor 1913", *Politika*, 31 August 1925).

³³ Jovan Jovanović, Novaković u diplomatiji, 217. Novaković learnt about the terms of the alliance just prior to his departure for the Conference of Ambassadors in London. See Dimitrije Djordjević, "Kako su velike sile saznale za sklapanje Balkanskog saveza 1912?", *Istorijski glasnik* 4 (1954), 132.

³⁴ Stenografske beleške Narodne skupštine [Stenographic Record of Proceedings, The National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbia], 32nd regular session, 16 May 1913, 525.

³⁵ *Štampa*, 20 January 1913.

³⁶ Cvijić took part in the first phase alone. He drew the delimitation map — Bregalnica, Demir Kapija — which Milovanović handed to Izvolsky in St. Petersburg in 1910. See AS, Milovanović Papers, XVI/35.

Kratovo and Kriva Palanka) were in fact made, under Milovanović's instructions, by two soldiers: General Staff Lieutenant-Colonel Živko Pavlović and General Staff Major Dragutin Dimitrijević Apis.³⁷ This co-operation was made possible by Milovanović's connections with the "Unification or Death" (Black Hand) organisation. The organisation was familiar with the course of negotiations through Apis and Bogdan Radenković. It should be noted that the two of them fully supported Milovanović's work although they were extreme nationalists. The "Unification or Death" organisation considered the victory over the Ottoman Empire the foremost objective of the alliance. Everything else was subordinated to that goal. In respect of the territorial delimitation with Bulgaria, the only condition was an outlet to the Adriatic Sea and the secured right bank of the Vardar River. The prevalent opinion in the organisation was that "the size of the territory to be allotted to Bulgaria should not be turned into a major issue since the unification between the Serbs and Bulgarians must inevitably come to pass".³⁸ There was more fear of the Albanians than the Bulgarians. The backing of the organisation and the support of Independent Radicals perfectly played into Milovanović's hands to overcome Pašić's opposition.

VI

Finally, all this begs the question: why did not Pašić oust Milovanović during the negotiations since he disagreed with his work? Pašić partially answered this question himself after the First World War when he contended that "the treaty had to be accepted as Bulgaria would otherwise relieve herself from the responsibility before Russia which facilitated the conclusion of the agreement".³⁹ Russia was too much involved in the Serbo-Bulgarian negotiations to take their breakdown lightly. In addition, Pašić realised the seriousness of situation in which Serbia found herself, particularly after the outbreak of the 1911 Italo-Turkish War. All the reasons that Milovanović advanced in favour of the agreement were too apparent for Pašić to oppose. His combinations with the Albanians could be the last and desperate resort in case the efforts for the conclusion of an agreement with Bulgaria failed, but they could not substitute for the Bulgarian alliance. Finally, the removal of Milovanović, which could have been effected, was bound to open a severe political crisis in Serbia. Milovanović had the backing of Independent Radicals and army officers as well as some Radicals. His elimination would

³⁷ Ibid.,XXVI/95.

³⁸ Čeda Popović, "Srpsko-bugarski rat 1913", *Nova Evropa* 10-11 (1928), 313.

³⁹ Speech at the conference of the Radical Party in 1920, *Spomenica Nikole Pašića*, 204.

not just bring about a rift in the Radical Party, but also turn all other parties against Pašić. In principle, a Bulgarian alliance against Ottomans was extremely popular in Serbia; after all, the Radicals themselves had been propagating it for quite some time. The same people who threw a stone on Milovanović, once they found out about the contracted frontiers, would turn against Pašić if he tried to disrupt the alliance at the time of its formation. Had Pašić brought Milovanović down, he would have found himself in a difficult position: either to break with the Bulgarians which would have drawn the wrath of Russia and Serbian public on his head or to continue the negotiations following in Milovanović's steps as the agreement could not be concluded otherwise? Fearing to plump for any alternative, Pašić resorted to half-measures: without taking responsibility for abolishing the agreement he stepped back and presented formal rather than real opposition — not strong enough to topple Milovanović or loud enough to put his disagreement on record.

Such behaviour on the part of Pašić was particularly conspicuous following Milovanović's death in June 1912. The entire public in Serbia expected the leader of the Radical Party to form a cabinet. Instead, Marko Trifković did it and Jovan M. Jovanović became a foreign minister in his cabinet. Pašić who had struggled to come into office all his life now renounced the premiership on his own volition and left for Marienbad as soon as the parliamentary crisis was resolved.⁴⁰ Pašić's taking over the government was expected not just in Serbia, but also in Bulgaria; Geshov and King Ferdinand sent messages through Spalajković to King Petar in that sense.⁴¹ However, it was not before mid-September 1912, on the eve of the war, that Pašić made the final decision and took the matters in his own hands.

VII

The divergence between Pašić and Milovanović in 1912 was rather practical than a matter of principle. Their disagreement was the consequence of their differing estimate of the relation between the extent of concessions and the benefits of alliance. Both Pašić and Milovanović had certain arguments to explain their conduct. Pašić believed that the alliance treaty was unfavourable for Serbia: its terms put in question even the territory from the Šar Mountain to Struga and Pčinja whereas Bulgaria was going to receive the somewhat revised San Stefano borders and emerge in the entire

⁴⁰ This strange outcome of the crisis was duly noted not just in Serbia, but also abroad. See Redlich, *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs 1908–1919* (Vienna 1953), vol. I, 169.

⁴¹ Miroslav Spalajković, "Kralj Petar i bugarski kralj Ferdinand", *Politika*, 6 January 1941.

area as Serbia's southern neighbour. The direction of Serbia's expansion was channelled towards the Adriatic Sea over the mountainous and hostile Albania. On the other hand, Milovanović's assessment that Serbia could not endure the conflict with Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria at the same time was a foregone conclusion. Peace was possible with the latter, and not the former, country and it was necessary to pay a certain price in order to have it. "If it had been possible to ask for all that was wanted," Marko Trifunović professed in defence of Milovanović in the parliament, "the alliance would not have been concluded".⁴² The Serbo-Bulgarian alliance treaty of 1912 no doubt played a valuable role in the historical development of the Balkan nations and served as a starting point for the great events that followed.

With his diplomatic elasticity, broad horizons and willingness to meet the Bulgarians more than half way for the sake of agreement Milovanović was instrumental to the conclusion of the alliance in the circumstances of 1911–1912. He carried out the negotiations with Bulgaria mostly on his own showing determination, energy and the clear vision of a goal. "With a clear conscience and full conviction I can state that I have done all that could be done for a favourable solution," he wrote down just before the signing of the treaty. The fact that the Balkan Alliance of 1912 rested on the shaky ground and was rooted in the then political constellation rather than profound transformation of mind in the two countries was neither his nor Pašić's fault. In any case, the compromise-prone Milovanović was certainly not an exponent of Serbian nationalism which fully blossomed prior to the Balkan Wars. The marked bearer of this trend in the Serbian society was and remained Pašić.

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⁴² Stenografske beleške Narodne skupštine, XXXII sastanak, 16 May 1913, 539.

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