

# The Balkans Geopolitics: Between a Bridge and the Battlefield

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## The Balkans and Geopolitics

*The peculiar geostrategic position of the Balkan Peninsula gives us an answer to the question of why **it has been throughout history both a bridge and the battlefield of different civilizations and cultures.***

*Thus, the history of the region was to a great extent determined by the location of the Balkans. Situated at the meeting point of Europe, Africa, and Asia both the Balkans experienced alternate imperial drives, competing ideologies together with conflicting social, political, and economic systems.[1] For the local people in the region, to live in the area of high international tensions meant primarily to find a way out from permanent pressure from abroad. It led to their resistance to any foreign realm and outside attempts to annex or dominate the region. Accordingly, it was exactly this part of the Old Continent to deserve the label of "Europe's worst trouble spot".[2] At the same time, Southeast European societies accepted many foreign institutions, customs, rules, or habits which were in many cases reshaped according to the local traditions and necessities.[3]*

The thoroughly high degree of international interest in the Balkans for the whole time of mankind's history comes in first place for the reason of its geopolitical and geostrategic value.[4] The Balkans was during the entire 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries a real "laboratory" for the expression and investigation of different attributes of geopolitics.[5]

The region of the Balkan Peninsula in geographical terms is straitened between the Mediterranean basin and the Danube watershed which, basically, means that one great long-time state-body could not be established. Moreover, for the reason of the mountain

face of the region, broken and interlaced with many smaller and bigger rivers, the local population was “destined” to live within smaller state organizations.



The ancient Greek city-state (*πολις*) was a typical product of the geographical conditions of the area.[6] When the borders of a newly independent state of Albania were drawn in 1913, they followed to a great extent the geographical shape of the area living many ethnic Albanians outside the motherland, a majority of them in Serbia’s province of Kosovo-Metochia as well as in West Macedonia, South-West Greece, and East Montenegro.

In other words, the regional geographical conditions became one of the most decisive hindrances for the Balkan people to realize their maximized territorial aims and requirements. Besides this factor, the long-time intermixture of different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups became the second obstacle which did not allow Southeast European nations to effectuate their dreams of national unification within a single national statehood without the conflict with their neighbors or co-dwellers who had similar national visions.

South-East European nationalism led by the basic idea that each *ethnos* has to live in one national state was an essential ideological framework for the constant inter-ethnic collisions.[7] The creation of a single national state body, composed of all ethnographic and historic “national” lands, was in the eyes of the leading Balkan politicians a final stage of national awakening, revival, and liberation which started at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century at the ideological basis of the German romanticist nationalism expressed in a formula: “One Language-One Nation-One State”.

The struggle upon the same “national” territories which belonged to “everybody” following historic, ethnic, military, or geostrategic principles and reasons resulted in the certitude that in this part of the world, there was more blood than land. In other words, there were not enough territories to satisfy all national aspirations. Thus, for example, Serbian, Greek, Ottoman, Montenegrin, and Albanian dispute over the destiny and fixed borders of the

independent Albania in 1912–1913, or the Yugoslav civil war in 1991–1995 followed by the Yugoslav-Albanian struggle over Kosovo-Metochia's province in 1998–1999 are only the episodes of the local nationalism but certainly not an exemption.[8]

The most important feature of the Balkan geopolitics is **the peninsula's geographical, historical, political, military-strategic, and economic connections with the Mediterranean Sea and basin**. The most convenient geographical definition of the Balkans is a **“Peninsula of the Mediterranean”**.

Almost all Balkan states are the Mediterranean ones. The seas which belong to them are parts of the greater Mediterranean Sea. For instance, since the Adriatic and the Ionian seacoasts are integral parts of the Mediterranean shore, located near Italy, their strategic importance often attracted in history many foreign powers to occupy and possess them like the Ancient Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Normans, the Hungarians, the Venetians, the Serbs, the Ottomans or modern Italians.

Historically, the notion of the Balkans was in conjunction with the Oriental Ottoman Turks who gradually spread their lordship over the peninsula from 1354 keeping it under their sway till 1913.

However, certain European Great Powers saw the Balkan seaside either as their legitimate historic possession or the sphere of influence, endeavoring to keep back the Ottoman Empire from the Balkan littoral. From the cause of historic-cultural factors, the continental parts of the Balkans were related to the Orient, while the littoral parts of the Balkans were cognate to the Occident.

The crucial reason for the Russian interest in the Balkans was an aspiration to possess the exit to the “warm seas”. For the German Second Reich's diplomats (1871–1918) and the Nazi politicians (1933–1945), South-East Europe became attractive as the “transversal corridor” which was connecting the Middle East and Asia with the German European possessions; in other words, a corridor very suitably located for Berlin's policy of *Drang nach Osten*. [9]

In the eyes of Austro-Hungarian foreign policy creators, the region was of pivotal prominence as the only overland way to Vienna's final goal – to have control over the Aegean seaport of Salonika (Thessaloniki) in Aegean Macedonia. A special point of interest in the Balkans by the European Great Powers at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century became the entrance (gate) to the Adriatic Sea bordered by Italy's and Albania's littorals. From this point of view, for Viennese politicians, Albania's territory, especially its seacoast, should play a role of the pivotal obstacle against the Italian penetration in the Balkans, especially towards the Salonika seaport which should be transformed into the principal Austro-Hungarian commercial export-import point in the Mediterranean Sea.

The Adriatic and the Ionian littorals became from the 1860s extremely attractive for the Kingdom of Serbia as one of the possible strips of the Balkan territory where Serbia could find the exit to the sea for commercial reasons. The Montenegrin Principality (from 1910 the Kingdom of Montenegro) was infatuated only by the ultimate north-western portion of present-day Albania – the area around the city of Scodra for historical reasons as Scodra was the capital of Montenegro in the early Middle Ages. The Kingdom of Bulgaria from its *de iure* acquainted independence in 1878 expressed its thirstiness for the Aegean littoral as well.

The Greek pretensions for the same territory led finally Sofia and Athens to the war in 1913 (the Second Balkan War). In the Balkan politics of Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Albanians and Albania were the wedges against the others. For instance, for Bulgaria, the Bulgarian-Albanian axis was imagined as the best impediment against the Serbian-Greek teamwork and joint political actions. Finally, the Ottoman Empire had its political-economic interest in keeping the Ionian littoral as its possession. For this purpose, for Istanbul's diplomats, the eastern entrance to the Adriatic Sea (Albania) should be under Ottoman control.

The Ionian littoral with its hinterland played a significant role for the Ottoman sultans at the time of the Ottoman wars for South-East Europe. For instance, Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror (1451-1481) established on the hinterland of the Ionian seacoast two of the most important Ottoman footholds at the Balkans for further intended military actions across the Adriatic Sea. These two military fortresses were built at Akçahisar (Kruja) and Avlonya (Valona). The Ottoman commanders (beys) on the north-east Ionian littoral were allowed by the sultan to increase their raiding expeditions into Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Dalmatia, respectively.[10]

## **The Military-strategic Factors of the Balkan Geopolitics**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the eastern portion of Southeast Europe was under the Russian sphere of influence because it was closer to the main Russian objects of acquisition - Constantinople (Istanbul), the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus, and the Dardanelles. Beginning with the time of the Empress Catherine the Great (1762-1796) the conquering of Constantinople was put on the pedestal of the Russian Balkan policy.[11] On the other hand, the western piece of Southeast Europe was considered the Austro-Hungarian (the Habsburg) sphere of influence. Consequently, the Russian-Austro-Hungarian spheres of influence overlapped on the territories of Serbia and Montenegro[12], while the territory of Albania experienced similar overlapping of the Italian-Austro-Hungarian spheres of influence. Taking this in mind, it was quite natural that the members of the European Great Powers supported different Balkan states during the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913 and the First World War in 1914-1918.

The military-strategic factors of Southeast Europe have five delicate points:

1. The "Ljubljana Door" adjoins Central Europe and North Adriatic.
2. The Morava-Vardar valley bounds Central Europe with the North Aegean Sea.
3. The Pannonian Plain is in the confines of the southern part of Central Europe and North Balkans.
4. The River Danube is the main bridge of Southeast Europe with Central and West Europe.
5. The Black Sea's seashore.[13]

Many invaders throughout history used these five points as roads to cross from Central Europe to the Balkans or vice versa (for example, the Crusaders and the Ottomans).[14] The Sub-Danubian region of Southeast Europe played a significant role in the German-Austrian foreign policy course of *Drang nach Osten* in the years from 1871 to 1918. Under this course should be grasped the German military-political-economic penetration into Asia Minor and when the Suez Canal was opened further into India (the German plans concerning the Baghdad and Anatolian railways). The Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary became the

locomotive of this course after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, interested in the first place to drive towards the Aegean Sea through the Sanjak of Novi Pazar (after 1913 divided between Serbia and Montenegro)[15] and the valley of the River Vardar. At the time of the Austrian-Hungarian Emperor Franz Josef I (1848–1916), a synonym for his country was a “Sub-Danubian Monarchy” referring to the importance of the River Danube for the very existence of Austria-Hungary which was composed by the Balkan and Central-European provinces. [16]

The Black Sea’s seashore became the principal battlefield area between imperial Russia and the Ottoman Empire from the time of the Russian Empress Catherine II (1762–1796) throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both belligerent sides tried to increase their political influence in Southeast Europe to provide their hegemony in the area of the Black Sea’s maritime.

Nevertheless, the other European Great Powers had as well as their particular interests in the sector of the European part of the Black Sea’s shore and its waters like the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and even Italy. The struggle of the European Great Powers upon mastering the Black Sea’s trade and military directly or indirectly affected the domestic affairs of Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Greece.

It was true particularly from the time of the Crimean War (1854–1856) to the time of the Great War (1914–1918) when the fight of the small Balkan nations for their national liberation and unification depended to a large extent on the result of the Russian-Ottoman wars and the Russian diplomatic support for the Balkan Christian Orthodox states. For instance, after the Russian military and diplomatic defeat during the Crimean War and the Paris Peace Conference in 1856, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Greece could not expect any territorial achievement until the next Russian-Ottoman War of 1877–1878 in which the Ottoman Empire was defeated. Therefore, due to the Russian victory and the San Stefano Peace Treaty in 1878, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia became independent states according to the Berlin Congress’ decisions in July 1878 and at the same time enlarged their state’s territories at the expense of the Ottoman Empire.[17] At that time, the Russian principal protégé in the Balkans was Bulgaria which was the prime reason for Serbia to turn her eyes towards Vienna and Pest after 1878. The Russian pro-Bulgarian Balkan policy during the war against the Ottoman Empire in 1877–1878 had its foundations in the Russian efforts to establish a firm foothold on the Black Sea’s littoral to easily acquire control over Istanbul and the Straits. For that purpose, Bulgaria was the most appropriate Balkan state as being a vanguard of the Russian Euro-Balkan policy and the main forerunner of St. Petersburg’s interests in the region.



## Possible and Real Political Axis-alliances in Southeast Europe

Southeast European geostrategic importance can be sublimated in the next three points:

1. The region is a significant overland tie between Europe and the Middle East.
2. The region has important reserves of natural wealth in raw materials, energy, etc.
3. The region located between Central Europe, the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea was and is an important point of the European and even global system of security and strategy of imperialistic powers.[18]

Southeast Europe had its highest geostrategic importance in international relations at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the region became a notable link in the chain of the European system of balancing powers. For that reason, both the Central Powers and the Entente made considerable efforts to obtain better military, strategic, political, and economic positions in the region before the outbreak of the First World War.

Taking into account historical, cultural, national, and religious aspects of the development of the Balkan civilization, there were and are three possible main political axis alliances to function in this European region:

1. An Islamic axis: The Turks, the Muslims from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sanjak, Albania, West Macedonia, East Montenegro, East Bulgaria, and Kosovo-Metochia.
2. The Orthodox alliance: Russia, Serbia, the Serbian portion of Montenegro, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbs from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo-Metochia, and the eastern regions of the Republic of North Macedonia.
3. The Roman Catholic bloc: Croats, Slovenians, Central European German

Catholics, Hungarians, Vatican, and Bosnian-Herzegovinian Roman Catholics).[19]

During WWII, Southeast Europe became the battlefield of three opposite political-ideological forces: 1) the Nazis and Fascists; 2) the Communists; and 3) the Parliamentary Democrats. After 1945 the region was sharply divided between the members of the NATO Pact (est. 1949) and the Warsaw Pact (est. 1955) while Socialist Yugoslavia as a member of the Non-Alignment Movement was to a certain extent a Balkan political mediator. Finally, the Balkans became once again in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the very focus of the world's attention during the process of bloody disintegration and destruction of Yugoslavia (1991–1995)[20] and the Kosovo War (1998–1999) followed by NATO's military intervention (in fact, aggression) in the Balkans (against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) in 1999 (March–June).[21]

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Southeast Europe is a geopolitical term that connotes peoples, cultures, and states that make up a region between the Black, Adriatic, Aegean, and Mediterranean Seas. There are three crucial points of the regional significance in the geostrategic point of view:

1. The territory of South-East Europe is an extremely important connection between West and Central Europe and the Near and Middle East.
2. A wealthy region's natural resources.
3. The region is a very important part of the Great Powers' political-military-economic strategy.

Located on the crossroads of different civilizations, Southeast Europe during its 3,000 years of historical and cultural development preserved many material remains from different civilizations and was under strong spiritual influence from West European, East European, Central European, Mediterranean, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and many other cultures. If some part of Europe deserved the name of "melting pot of civilizations" it is the case with its south-eastern part for sure.

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## Notes

1 Jelavich B., *History of the Balkans. Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, ix–xi.

2 Berend I., T., Ránki G., *East Central Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20 centuries*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977, 41.

3 Among selected bibliography of South-East European cultural, political, historical and social developments the following works deserve to be mentioned [Cvijić J., *Balkansko Poluostrvo i južnoslovenske zemlje. Osnove antropogeografije*, I, Zagreb, 1922; Stavrianos, L. S., *The Balkans, 1815–1914*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963; Jelavich B. and Ch., *The Balkans*, Prentice-Hall: New Jersey, 1965; Stoianovich T., *A Study in Balkan Civilization*, New York: Knopf, 1967; Jelavich Ch., (ed.), *Language and Area Studies: East Central and Southeastern Europe*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969; Edgar H., *The Balkans: A Short History from Greek Times to the Present Day*, New York: Crane, Russak, 1972; Jelavich B. and Ch., *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804–1920*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977; Sugar P. E., *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977; Castellan G., *History of the Balkans: From Mohammed the Conqueror to Stalin*, New York: Columbia University Press, East European Monographs, Boulder, 1992; Stojanović T., *Balkanski svetovi. Prva i poslednja Evropa*, Beograd: Equilibrium, 1997; Bideleux R., Jeffries I., *A History of Eastern Europe. Crisis and Change*, London–New York: Routledge, 1999; Mazower M., *The Balkans. A Short History*, Random House, Inc., 2002; Kaplan D. R., *Balkan Ghosts. A Journey Through History*, New York: Picador, St. Martin's Press, 2005; Wachtel B. A., *The Balkans in World History*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2008; Gleny M., *The Balkans. Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804–2012*, Granta Books, 2012]. One of the most useful guides of selected bibliography of our interest up to the 1970s is [Horecky, P. L., (ed.), *Southeastern Europe: A Guide to Basic Publications*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969].

4 Even today, there are suspicious scientists and researchers who are following before 19<sup>th</sup>-century attitude towards geopolitics as not scientific area or simply as the pseudo-science. It should be said that from the time of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the geopolitics was accepted more and more like a field to be equal with other academic disciplines primarily due to the works of the American Admiral Mahan A. T. (1840–1914) connected with the role of the navy in the ruling the world, then the works of the German geographer Ratzel F. (1844–1904) concerning the relations between geography and the living space (*Lebensraum*), the Swedish university professor of the political sciences Kjellén J. R. (1864–1922) about the state as an organism and the superiority of the German race, the British scientist Mac Kinder Halford John (1861–1947) with regard to the importance of the heartland and finally but at the same time mostly due to the German General and geographer Haushofer K. (1869–1946) who was writing primarily upon the geopolitical reasons of Hitler's wars of territorial expansion of the Third Reich. However, a Greek historian Herodotus (B.C. 484–424), a "father of history" and the author of the famous *History of the Greek-Persian Wars*, should be considered as one of the early founders of the geopolitics as the science. In sum, the geopolitics was primarily discredited as an academic field of research and investigation since it was seen only as a justification and projection of the German expansionism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Subsequently, the negative synonyms for the geopolitics were the doctrines of the "Blood and Soil" (*Blut und Boden*), the "Living Space" (*Lebensraum*), the "Will for Power" (*Wille zum Macht*) and the "Lord-Nation" (*Herren Volk*). On geopolitics, see in [Dodds K., *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2007; Black J., *Geopolitics*, London: The Social Affairs Unit, 2009; Cohen B. S., *Geopolitics: The Geography of International Relations*, Lanham, Maryland: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2009; Walberg E., *Postmodern Imperialism: Geopolitics and the Great Games*, Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, 2011; Flint C., *Introduction to Geopolitics*, New York: Routledge, 2012; Starr H., *On Geopolitics: Space, Place, and International Relations*, Paradigm Publishers, 2014].

5 Петковић Р., *XX век на Балкану. Версај, Јалта, Дејтон*, Службени лист СРЈ, Београд, 10. On the



„Balkan geopolitics of nightmare“, see in [Славољуб Б. Шушић, Геополитички кошмар Балкана, Београд: Војноиздавачки завод, 2004].

6 On ancient Greek city-state, see in [Adkins H. W., White P., *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization, 1 The Greek Polis*, Chicago–London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986; Hansen H. M., *Polis. An Introduction to the Ancient Greek City-State*, New York–Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006].

7 The pivotal nationality principle in Europe is: A nation is a people in possession of or striving for its own state. The relationship between state and nation in Europe was gradually transformed from the model of the Augsburg religious peace settlement of 1555 – “Cuius regio, eius religio” to the modern model of Switzerland, Belgium, Quebec or Bosnia-Herzegovina – “Cuius regio, eius lingua”. On ethnicity, national identity and nationalism, see in [Smith A., *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, 1986; Gellner E., *Nations and Nationalism*, Paris, 1989; Miller D., *On Nationality*, Oxford, 1995; Guibernau M., Rex J. (eds.), *The Ethnicity: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*. Reader, Cornwall: Polity Press, 1997; Jenkins R., *Rethinking Ethnicity*, SAGE Publications Ltd, 2008].

8 The cult of war is present in every Balkan nationalism. For example, Serbian Orthodox Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović stated on the day of the proclamation of the beginning of the First Balkan War in 1912 in his oration about “Young Serbia” that the “Lord is a great warrior” [Велимировић Н., *Изнад греха и смрти. Беседе и мисли*, Београд, 1914, 12]. On the Kosovo War in 1998–1999, see in [Hadjimichalis C., “Kosovo, 82 Days of an Undeclared and Unjust War: A Geopolitical Comment”, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2000, 175–180; Henrikson D., *NATO’s Gamble: Combining Diplomacy and Airpower in the Kosovo Crisis 1998–1999*, Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2007].

9 On the German *Drang nach Osten*, see in [Meyer C. H., *Drang Nach Osten: Fortunes of a Slogan-Concept in German-Slavic Relations, 1848–1990*, Peter Lang AG, 1996; Lewin E., *The German Road to the East: An Account of the ‘Drang Nach Osten’ and of Teutonic Aims in the Near and Middle East...*, Nabu Press, 2012].

10 The center of the Ottoman government in Albania was set up at Gjirokastra following the annexation of all the property of the nobility in Central Albania. Among the expropriated Albanian noblemen was and John Kastrioti the father of George Kastrioti Skanderbeg (1405–1468). The latter succeeded to liberate Albania from the Ottoman sway and ruled an independent Albania from 1443 to 1468. The day when Skanderbeg raised a flag bearing his family’s arms on the citadel of Kruja (November, 28<sup>th</sup>) 1443 became a national holiday for Albanians (the “Flag’s Day”). Knowing that it is not surpassingly that a restoration of the Albanian independent statehood in 1912 was announced exactly on the day of November 28<sup>th</sup>. A Skanderbeg flag became a national emblem of an independent Albania. The day of November 28<sup>th</sup> remained as the national feast day. However, the Ottomans finally subjugated Albania in 1479 taking control over the fortress of Scutari (Shkodër/Skadar) from the hands of Venice (according to the peace agreement signed between the Ottoman Empire and Venice in Constantinople/Istanbul on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1479. The capture of Scutari in 1479 became a part of principal anti-Ottoman propaganda among the Italians, the Albanians and the Montenegrins in their struggle against the Ottoman lordship in present-day North Albania. All of them claimed that the Ottomans captured “their” historical city of Scutari and a policy of liberation of the city from the Ottoman possession became a driving force of their national duty and prudence in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

11 Радовановић Љ., “Балкан и Средоземље”, *Међународна политика*, Београд, № 484, 1970.

12 Радовановић Љ., “Санстефански и Берлински уговор”, *Међународна политика*, Београд, № 498, 1971.

13 About the River Danube, see in [Ристић А. М., *Геополитички положај Дунава*, Београд, 1940; Wechsberg J., *The Danube*, The Book Service Ltd, 1980; Meszaros L., *The Danube*, John Beaufoy Publishing, 2009; Beattie A., *The Danube. A Cultural History*, New York–Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010].

14 About the Balkan military-strategic features during the Cold War, see in [Габелић А., “Гарантије”, *Међународна политика*, Београд, № 448, 1968; Mates L., *Međunarodni odnosi socijalističke Jugoslavije*, Beograd: Nolit, 1976].

15 On the history of the region of Sanjak (Sandžak), see in [Morrison K., Roberts E., *The Sanžak: A History*, London: C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers) Ltd., 2013].

16 See more in [Kann R. A., *The Habsburg Empire: A Study in Integration and Disintegration*, New York, 1973; Bérenger J., *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1273–1700*, London–New York, 1997; Bérenger J., *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1700–1918*, London–New York, 2000].

17 On the issue regarding the war and diplomacy in 1877–1878, see in [Sluglett P., Yavuz M. H. (eds.), *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, University of Utah Press, 2011; Druri I., *The Russo-Turkish War 1877*, Men-at-Arms, Osprey Publishing, 2012].

18 About general problems of the geostrategic importance and security of South-Eastern Europe, see in [Castellan G., *Le monde des Balkans: poudriere ou zone de paix?*, Paris: Voubert, 1994; Yazakova A. Shmelyov B., Selivanova I, Kolikov N. (eds.), *The Balkans: Between the Past and the Future*, Moscow, 1995; Lukić R., Lynch A., *Europe from the Balkans to the Urals*, Oxford: SIPRI–Oxford University Press, 1996].

19 In regard to the problem of a religious ground of national determination and making political alliances in the Balkans, see in [Пашић Н., *Национално питање у савременој епохи*, Београд, 1973; Janjić D. (ed.), *Religion and War*, Belgrade, 1994].

20 On this issue, see in [Woodward L. S., *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War*, Washington D.C.: Brooking Institution Press, 1995; Guskova J., *Istorija jugoslovenske krize (1990–2000)*, I–II, Beograd: Izdavački grafički atelje „M“, 2003; Finlan A., *Essential Histories: The Collapse of Yugoslavia 1991–1999*, Oxford: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 2004].

21 On the intervention, see in [Parenti M., *To Kill a Nation: The Attack on Yugoslavia*, London–New York: Verso, 2000; Gibbs N. D., *First Do Not Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009].

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