The Champions of Lasting Peace:

Pro-Yugoslav British Intellectuals’ Crusade for a United Southern Slav State in the Course of the Great War

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Introduction
Robert William Seton-Watson, an internationally acclaimed historian and expert in Central European affairs chose the above quotation\(^1\) in 1920 as the cover motto for the last issue of the political weekly called the *New Europe*, indicating that the ends of its founders had been met by the fundamental reorganization of Central Europe into independent nation-states. In the same year, the conclusion of the Treaty of Rapallo also marked the end of an enduring political crusade of a small but influential and well-connected group of British intellectuals who at the outbreak of the Great War had undertaken the agenda to promote the unification of the Southern Slavs in a single, independent state.

Due to the lack of British economic, territorial and strategic interests in the Balkans, the peninsula had remained an unknown and uninteresting region for the British public for a long time. In the turn of the 19\(^{th}\) century, the territory was eventually discovered by a few professionals and intellectuals who would patronize miscellaneous Balkan nations, and act as self-appointed regional experts with the intention to influence Allied policy-making in the course of the Great War. In effect, the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was the outcome of a successful pro-Yugoslav British lobby whose proponents believed that the unification of all Southern Slavs would have been vital for the stability and peace of Europe.\(^2\)

With the outbreak of the Great War, Serbia evolved into the ally of Great Britain, and suddenly found such influential, well-informed and devoted patrons as Henry Wickham Steed (1871–1956), an English political journalist and the Foreign Editor of the *Times* during the war, and Robert William Seton-Watson (1879–1951), a Scottish historian and journalist, who was among the first Western European intellectuals to write on the Southern Slavs. Their lifelong friendship and political alliance dated back to the years spent in Vienna as the

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\(^1\) Black caviar became available in England in the early 17\(^{th}\) century. Nonetheless, with the exception of gourmands, the general public disliked it.

\(^2\) It should be noted that the contemporaries had used both the terms ‘Yugoslav’ and ‘Yugoslavia’ before the unification of the Southern Slav lands commenced. Therefore, I take the liberty to use both as an alternative for ‘Southern Slav’ or ‘united Southern Slav state.’
correspondents of the *Times* and the *Morning Post*. Disillusioned with the Hungarian political elite and the Habsburg Empire, they would become the inseparable vanguards of the political movement advocating for the general reconstruction of European frontiers during the Great War.

Becoming the ardent proponents of Southern Slav unity, Seton-Watson and Steed made the dissolution of Austria-Hungary their self-appointed task (MacMillan 123; Masaryk 125), and introduced the idea of national self-determination as the principle of peace settlement and an alternative for the preservation of the Habsburg Empire. Their war-time articles, pamphlets, memoranda, books, lectures and speeches had a remarkable role in acquainting the British public and official thinking with the Yugoslav idea as the prevailing and widely accepted national ideology of the Southern Slavs. By overestimating the importance of the Yugoslav sentiments both in the Habsburg Empire and in the Kingdom of Serbia, Seton-Watson and Steed failed to appreciate the overwhelming differences between the Croatian and Serbian understanding of the Yugoslav idea, and insisted on the unification of the Yugoslavs in a single state – without taking into consideration the creation of an independent Croatia – as the sole guarantee for a lasting European peace endangered by the unresolved ‘Southern Slav Question.’

In the course of the Great War, among all Habsburg nationalities, the case of the Southern Slavs occupied the most precarious position in British foreign policy. Besides the British high officials' wish to reform and preserve the Habsburg Empire as a future counterpoise to Germany in the post-bellum epoch, Yugoslav territories became the object of bargaining for Bulgaria’s, Italy’s and Romania’s entry to the war. Furthermore, the negative assessment of Serbia – attributed to the general British Russo- and Turcophobia, and above all to the Belgrade regicides of 1903 – put the Southern Slav cause into a disadvantaged, almost hopeless position. Meanwhile, the disagreements between the Yugoslav Committee – an émigré political organization of the Habsburg Yugoslavs – and the Serbian Cabinet on the
method of unification and the future form of government antagonized the British pro-
Yugoslavs’ campaign, which intended to promote the Yugoslav idea as the embodiment of
Southern Slav national self-determination, and moreover, complicated the process of Allied
recognition of the future Yugoslav state.

Nonetheless, the case of the Southern Slavs would experience the most significant
turnaround in British war-time policy. As a result of several well-organized and intense
propaganda campaigns, the British Cabinet eventually approved the creation of a unified
Southern Slav state. Concurrently, Serbia not only emerged from the Great War triumphantly,
but with such a popularity that none of the Eastern European nations had ever enjoyed in
Great Britain. In an age when the national self-determination was not universally accepted as
the basis of state frontiers and peace-making (Mason 70), the pro-Yugoslav British
intellectuals’ crusade for the creation of an independent and unified Yugoslav state at the
expense of the Habsburg Empire’s dismemberment seemed to be a lost cause. Nevertheless,
in the pursuit of destroying a state Steed and Seton-Watson had regarded as an artificial
creation ever since the outbreak of the war,⁵ they did not realize that they were creating their
own artificial state in the form of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

The doctoral thesis studies the pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals’ struggle for the
creation of a united Southern Slav state with the intention to uncover how and to what extent
their interpretation of the Yugoslav idea influenced the shaping of the Southern Slav image
and the process of peace settlement.

The research process involved intensive research conducted in Budapest, Zagreb,
Belgrade and London, and the dissertation relies on a considerable range of primary sources.
These materials include contemporary books, pamphlets, memoirs, articles and archival
materials retrieved from the Imperial War Museum, the National Archives and the Archives
of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at the University College of London.
These sources reveal how the Yugoslav idea was propagated and how the Serbian image was
transformed in Great Britain. In this regard, the publications and the press coverage of the
Serbian Relief Fund and the Kossovo Day Committee, and the war diaries and memoirs of the
British medical units serving in war-stricken Serbia provide a valuable insight to the British
pro-Yugoslav propaganda. The dissertation also utilizes a number of collected documents as
well among which Seton-Watson’s extensive correspondence with the Southern Slavs (R. W.

⁵ Steed summarized his distaste toward the Habsburg Empire in the following way: ‘[…] the name ‘Austria’
meant every device that could kill the soul of a people, corrupt it with a modicum of material well-being, deprive
it of freedom of conscience and of thought, undermine its sturdiness, sap its steadfastness and turn it from the
pursuit of its ideal (Steed, Introduction 15).
Seton-Watson and the Yugoslavs: Correspondence 1906–1941) contributes the most to uncover the historian’s evolution of thinking and his involvement in the creation of Yugoslavia. Besides the memoir of Henry Wickham Steed (Through Thirty Years, 1892–1922), the dissertation examines the recollections of David Lloyd George, Harold Nicolson, Tomáš Masaryk, George Allardice Riddell, Carlo Forza, Lord Northcliffe and Frano Supilo as well. Furthermore, the records of the Foreign Office in the National Archives, and the materials of the R. W. Seton-Watson Papers and the Sir Arthur Evans Papers in the Archives of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies were significant contributions to the writing process.

The review of secondary literature shows that the political agendas of R. W. Seton-Watson or H. W. Steed were assessed in the works of Arthur May, Ágnes Beretzky, Géza Jeszenszky, László Péter, Mark Cornwall, Nicholas Miller pertaining to their affairs with the Habsburg Empire, Hungary and the nationalities. Nonetheless, no systematic work has been dedicated to investigate their involvement in the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Previous studies produced by Kosta Milutinović, Stjepan Matković and Ubavka Ostojić-Fejić focused solely on Seton-Watson and a particular segment of the Southern Slav Question. Most of these papers were written several decades ago, and centred on the historian’s correspondence or personal encounters with the Yugoslavs, dedicating less attention – with the exception of Matković – to discuss the evolution of Seton-Watson’s thinking in regard to the Yugoslav idea.

As for Steed’s contribution to the creation of the first state of the Southern Slavs, the literature is limited to his role in the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities and the Paris Peace Conference. In effect, H. W. Steed and R. W. Seton-Watson are oftentimes recurring names in the studies devoted to the nationality question and the destruction of the Habsburg Empire. Although these works – written by Cristopher and Hugh Seton-Watson, Harry Hanak, Géza Jeszenszky, Mark Cornwall, László Péter and René Albrecht-Carrié – cover miscellaneous aspects of their war-time endeavours, the pro-Yugoslav British pressure groups’ role in shaping the public opinion and foreign policy concerning the Southern Slav Question has been unstudied.

A similar gap in literature can be found in the war-time recollections of British medical units, who had their share in transforming the image of the Serbian nation as a suitable, gallant ally of Great Britain. The history of the British medical mission in Serbia is covered in the studies of Monica Krippner, Ivana Lazovkić and Radmila Sujić, while a considerable body of literature – written by Aleksandra Horváth, Andrew Hammond, Barbara
Korte, John Allcock, Maria Todorova and Wendy Bracewell – addressed the questions of female travel literature and the British perception on the Balkans. However, the war memoirs and diaries of British medical women have not been examined from the perspective of pro-Yugoslav propaganda.

The Great War and the questions of a united Southern Slavs state have been assessed from the view of inter-Yugoslav relations and the Entente Powers’ war policy in the thorough works of James Evans, Ivo Lederer, Dragan Živojinović, Andrej Mitrović, Kosta Pavlović, Dejan Djokić, Čedomir Antić, Dragošlav Janković and René Albrecht-Carrié. This dissertation supplements these studies by uncovering to what extent the British pro-Yugoslav lobby was able to influence and shape the war-time policy and inter-Allied relations with special consideration being given to the question and outcome of peace settlement in regard to the Southern Slavs.

Besides the introduction and the conclusion, the doctoral thesis is divided into five thematised chapters, starting with Chapter One investigating how the burdens of the Ottoman past, the Russian aspirations in the Balkans and the Belgrade regicide of 1903 shaped the Serbian image in the pre-war epoch. The chapter also examines the concept and evolution of the Yugoslav idea, and reveals the political opportunism of the Southern Slav movement in the last decades of the Habsburg Empire, dedicating special consideration to the developments of the Habsburg-Hungarian-Yugoslav relations in regard to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, the Croato-Hungarian Sub-Compromise, the Hungarian constitutional crisis and the annexation crisis. Furthermore, it introduces the two major future British proponents of Yugoslavism, Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson. Their experience and involvement in the affairs of the Dual Monarchy eventually led them question the future of the Habsburg Empire. Their visions and personal friendship forged in the last years of peace would be significant pertaining to the future of the Danubian Monarchy and the Southern Slavs as well.

Chapter Two reveals how the military priorities of the Great War fostered the sacrifice of the nationality principle in case of the Yugoslavs. Additionally, the chapter examines the evolution of Seton-Watson’s thinking on the solution of the Southern Slav Question during the war, while also explores the historian’s gradual involvement in the diplomatic aspects of the conflict. Despite his efforts to explain the significant nature of the Yugoslav national movement, the secret diplomacy of 1915 attested that the Allied Powers had expected the survival of the Habsburg Empire. As a result, the prospect of a unified Southern Slav state had
not been taken into consideration when territorial awards had been negotiated with the potential future allies.

Chapter Three examines how humanitarian relief work, the recollections of the British medical mission in Serbia, and the British guilt felt for the fall of Serbia were utilized to educate the British public opinion on the Yugoslav cause and on the historic role and sacrifices of Serbia. Simultaneously, these endeavours managed to transform the British image of the small Balkan country fundamentally.

Chapter Four investigates how the British proponents of Yugoslavism and the nationality principle took the political initiation from the Yugoslav Committee in the Southern Slav agenda by establishing a pro-Yugoslav British pressure group, the Serbian Society of Great Britain, and the New Europe political weekly to influence Allied diplomacy in regard to the future of Europe. Additionally, the chapter describes how the efforts of the pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals promoted the Pact of Corfu, an inter-Yugoslav agreement between the Serbian Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee, and the Pact of Rome, a joint declaration of the Italian Cabinet and the Habsburg Yugoslav expatriates.

Chapter Five reveals how Seton-Watson and Steed tried to sabotage British separate peace attempts with the Habsburgs by systematically damaging the image of the Habsburg Empire and convincing the Foreign Office to accept their political programme on the radical transformation of European frontiers. The chapter also examines how the political friction among the Yugoslavs, the Italian expansionism in the Eastern Adriatic, and the Romanian aspirations in Bánát complicated the process of Yugoslav unification and recognition at the conclusion of the Great War. Furthermore, it investigates the British pro-Yugoslavs cooperation with the United States’ peace delegation in pursuit to solve the Adriatic Question based on ethnic lines.
CHAPTER ONE

The Southern Slav Question in the Last Decades of Peace
At the dawn of the 20th century the Southern Slav peoples lived divided into two independent small states, Serbia and Montenegro, and several provinces under the auspices of two empires, Austria–Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Besides sharing the same language, overwhelming differences prevailed among them in regard to social structure, confessional identity, cultural and historic experience. The Serbian statehood disappeared along with the Serbian nobility at the beginning of the Ottoman era, and with the gradual liberation of the Balkan nations in the 19th century, its new statehood was constituted on ethnic nationalism and the French vision of centralized state-building. By the end of the Balkan Wars, Serbia had emerged as a regional power in the Balkan Peninsula, while its citizens possessed a strong national and confessional identity ingrained in centuries of struggles for independence. In contrast to the Serbian experience, the Croatian statehood had been preserved in the Habsburg Empire, and its features transgressed into the Dualist period in the form of a limited Croatian self-government. In effect, this became the symbolic guardian of a fragile Croatian identity in the Danubian Monarchy dominated by German-Austrians and Hungarians. Facing the political and ethnic realities of 19th century Croatia–Slavonia, the Croatian intellectual elite conceived the Yugoslav idea as a form of civic nationalism to eliminate the conflicting national claims of the Yugoslavs – coveting territories characterized by an ethnic mosaic of Yugoslav and other peoples – in order to foster political cooperation among the Habsburg Yugoslavs based on national equality.

With the rejuvenation of the Yugoslav idea at the beginning of the 20th century in the form of the Croato-Serb Coalition – an alliance of Croatian and Serbian parties championing the cause of Croatian self-government along the lines of the Yugoslav idea – together with the strengthening regional position of Serbia, the national question of Southern Slavs transformed into the most significant issue and a visible threat to the integrity of the Habsburg Empire. As both the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire occupied a pivotal role in the European balance of power, sustaining their integrities were regarded as British imperial interests. In liaison, Yugoslav aspirations for wider self-government, independence or territorial expansion came to be judged in Great Britain from the perspective of the balance of power. Eventually, the constitutional and annexation crises along with the anti-Yugoslav trials and the mistreatment of nationalities revealed the weaknesses of the Habsburg Empire, and shook British trust in the Habsburg dynasty’s ability to rule and contain their subjects for the first time.

The political developments of the Habsburg Empire also drew the attention of Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson – two contemporary British newspaper
correspondents in Vienna – to the many issues of the Monarchy who would later become the two major British advocates of Yugoslav unification and the dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire. To reveal their evolution of thought and changing views in light of their personal experience concerning the Yugoslavs and the Danubian Empire, the chapter pursues to identify the contexts of the Southern Slav question by exploring the national ideologies, aspirations and opportunities of the Yugoslav peoples in the last decades of peace, while also introducing the prevailing British perceptions on the Habsburg Monarchy and Serbia.

1.1. The Land of Regicides: Great Britain and the Beginning of the Karadordević Era

Knowledge concerning Serbia and the Serbian nation had been limited in Great Britain before the Great War. The Balkan Peninsula per se laid outside of British territorial aspirations, and with the exception of the continental balance of power neither did it play a significant role in British economic interests nor in strategic considerations. Corresponding with the general Western indifference towards the region, the British Foreign Office only interfered in the affairs of the peninsula, whenever the European order had been threatened by a crisis (Antić, Paget 48). Moreover, perceived as an ambiguous, paradox and complex borderland space (Horváth 364–366), the Balkans had been almost entirely neglected by the British press. The Times, one of the leading British newspapers dealing with foreign affairs, had employed a Balkan correspondent only for a short time, ever since then all news in regard to the Peninsula came to Western Europe via Vienna or Constantinople (Markovich, Perception of Serbia 91–92). Conclusively, very few people prior to the outbreak of the Great War knew or pursued to learn anything about Serbia, while the general conception being that it had been a land of swineherds (Woodhouse 71).

Due to the absence of scholarship devoted to explore and explain the region, the Balkans had remained an uncharted and ambiguous space subjected to Western imagination. In contrast to the colonies where the difference was codified, the Otherness of the Balkans

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6 Understanding native traditions and customs was essential in the establishment of colonial rule, and in effect, knowledge gathering began immediately after the annexation of native lands. In the course of scientific professionalization and institutionalization, amateur practitioners were replaced by professional scientists who were financed by the state, while science was credited with value to the society and the nation. These changes transformed the object of investigating nature, which became subject to the interest of the state. With the emergence of secular sciences, which reckoned the exploitation of nature as a way to maintain progression and prosperity, modern science was born during the 19th century. The colonial project of collecting and interpreting information concerning the natives relied upon a number of these modern disciplines encompassing area studies,
was not a product of secular sciences, but of travel literature. Subsequently, in the late 19th century, the void of academic knowledge on the Balkans was gradually filled by self-proclaimed Balkan experts,7 whose travel accounts and reports evolved to be the major source of information pertaining to the region. Unclaimed by secular scholarship, British travellers entering the unfamiliar and unknown territory of the Balkans could easily establish their own narrative authority over the region without being challenged.8 These accounts introduced South-Eastern Europe as a mysterious, exotic, unpredictable, violent, primitive and backward place, conclusively, as the absolute opposite of the rationality and progression embodied by Western Europe, where the rule of law, modern administration, and the self-control of citizens constituted order (Markovich, Identities 116; Todorova, Imagining 11, 109, 119).

Moreover, Western interpretation refused to acknowledge any individuality in the Balkans, and therefore, the whole region was treated as a unity (Wendy, Balkan 12–13) inhabited by people sharing the same attributes.9 For this reason, the Balkans came to be conceptualized as a transitional place perceived being either the part of the Orient or a frontier between the modern West and the pre-modern East (Horváth 364–366). Albeit the pre-industrial or early industrial nature of the Balkan Peninsula could have resembled the lost idylls of British rural life; nevertheless, in spite of the identified similarities, the Balkan peoples were conceived as being collectively ‘different,’ while the territory as a cohesive geographical unit (Wendy, Balkan 1), a European borderland, inhabited by ‘the tribal, the

7 Undoubtedly, Harry De Windt was one among those self-proclaimed authorities who strengthened these sentiments. His venturesome journeys from Peking to Paris, from New York to Paris, and Russia to India won De Windt a reputation and frequent readership in Britain, henceforth first the Pall Mall Gazette, then the Westminster Gazette contracted him to conduct reports on his latest travels. After two decades, De Windt, who defined himself as an explorer, revisited the Balkan Peninsula in 1905 (Markovich, Perception of Serbia 153), and thereafter published Through Savage Europe, a book with a title definitely disparaging for the Balkan peoples. Chapter one begins as follows:

‘Why “savage” Europe?’ asked a friend who recently witnessed my departure from Charing Cross for the Near East.
‘Because,’ I replied, ‘the term accurately describes the wild and lawless countries between the Adriatic and the Black Seas’ (De Windt 16).

8 As travel writers mediated knowledge on an unknown region, their travel accounts aimed to reveal and interpret social and political development. For that matter, the descriptions were always accompanied by interpretations based on social reality and beliefs of the authors. (Schulz-Forberg 24–25, 30).

9 In this regard, the representation of the Balkans was similar to the representation of colonies, where the colonial state imposed definition of ethnographic distinction between colonizers and colonized, creating the policy of enforced essentialism based on the inferiority of the natives (Steinmetz 593, 596). Statistical surveys on the population characteristics and census taking developed as the means for the institutionalization of knowledge. Serving the efforts of the colonial power in the exploitation and subordination of colonies, the collected data concerning the colony ignored most of the differences in the native society. The administrative and conceptual discourse subjected the native population to standardized enumeration, fostering the simplification and elimination of variations in the aboriginal society. The homogenization of the colonial society reduced the native inhabitants into mere statistical data (Appadurai 315, 319, 329–330).
backward, the primitive [and] the barbarian,’ whose qualities, traditions and customs served to reaffirm Western European identity by distinguishing ‘civilized Europe’ from the Orient (Todorova, Imagining 3).

As a result, the Ottoman Empire and its dominions had been associated with barbarism and corruption in Great Britain, and unfortunately, the independent Balkan states could not ‘escape [this] legacy of cultural backwardness’ (Miller 61). In effect, the very word ‘Balkan’ symbolized backwardness, poverty, corruption and violence in Western Europe. Due to the legacy of the Ottoman past, the liberation of Balkan nations did not considerably improve their so-far negative assessment by any means. Nonetheless, the political developments in the Balkan Peninsula in the late 19th century made the territory attractive for travellers. As individual interest rose in the region, the Slavic Christian peoples of South-Eastern Europe were rediscovered by travel literature. Undoubtedly, the growing number of British travellers in the second half of the 19th century produced the first advocates of oppressed Christians who championed the cause of a chosen Balkan nation and criticized Ottoman misrule. In effect, almost unknown nations were introduced through travel accounts, persistently changing the Balkan benefactors of British sympathy (Bracewell 14; Miller 19; Todorova, Imagining 97–98, 101). Undoubtedly, the creation of the Macedonian Relief Fund, a humanitarian organization, and the Balkan Committee10 in Britain during the Macedonian uprising marked a temporary peak in the rediscovery of the Balkans.

Undoubtedly, after the Congress of Berlin (1878), it was the Macedonian uprising11 and its brutal suppression in 1903 which garnered considerable international attention to the Balkan Peninsula (Pavlowitch, Serbia 82). Unfortunately for Serbia, the May Coup, a regicide commenced in Belgrade, coincided with the Macedonian crisis, which had already drawn the attention of the British press and benevolent organizations to the region. Along with the legacy of the Ottoman past, the coup d’état left an enduring mark on the Serbian assessment

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10 The founders of the Balkan Committee were self-appointed Balkan specialists who together acted as a pressure group and wished the termination of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. It composed of several Members of the Parliament such as Noel and Charles Buxton, Boyle, Bryce, humanitarian intellectuals such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, and journalists such as James David Bourchier, the Balkan correspondent of Times, and the personal friend of King Boris of Bulgaria operating from Sofia. Their primary concern rested on the question of Macedonia, and their cohesion was often challenged by the fact that they chose to patronize different Balkan nations. The conclusions of the Balkan Wars led to serious intra-group clashes (Bridge 166; Robbins 85–86). In the beginning, the pro-Bulgarian character of the Committee had been apparent, as the Buxton brothers and Bourchier allied themselves with the pro-Bulgarian Gladstonian Liberal tradition, and utilized the suffering of Christians in Macedonia to inform the public opinion and to pressure the Foreign Office into motion (Bridge 167; Pavlowitch, Serbia 82; Robbins 85–86).

11 The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization triggered an uprising and led an army of local peasants against landowners, the latter who utilized brutal measures to suppress and retaliate the revolt (Pavlowitch, Serbia 82).
in Britain (Antić, *Paget* 33; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 82; Robbins 85–86), earning the small Balkan country the infamous reputation of being the land of regicides.

In regard to the Serbian image in Britain, a special consideration should be devoted to Čedomir Mijatović (Chedomille Mijatovich), the Serbian Minister in London at the time of the May Coup. The European-educated Mijatović was a multiple-times Finance and Foreign Minister of Serbia. He had an immense diplomatic experience serving as the Serbian Minister in miscellaneous European capitals. Moreover, the Minister was a prolific writer and a historian,¹² the second President of the Serbian Royal Academy, and the Honorary Member of the Royal Historical Society of London. Being a dedicated Anglophile, he engaged in translating texts from English to Serbian, and married an accomplished English woman, Elodie Lanton, who later came to be known as the first woman to ever write on Serbian history (Markovich, *Anglophiles* 104–105; Milanović 11, 14).

Being a deeply religious, devout Christian, an Anglophile and a strong supporter of the ruling Obrenović dynasty, Mijatović learnt the news of the Belgrade regicide with the greatest horrors. In the course of the coup d'état, a group of Serbian army officers entered the Serbian royal palace, and slayed King Aleksandar Obrenović and Queen Draga – the remarkably unpopular pro-Habsburg royal couple – in their bedroom. With conflicting news spreading, an account reported that their bodies had been thrown out of the balcony (Markovich, *Anglophiles* 109; *Times*, 13 June 1903: 7). As the Serbian Minister, Mijatović had to encounter the unprecedented outrage and letter threats of British citizens. Lena Jovičić, the daughter of Aleksandar Jovičić, the soon-to-be successor of Mijatović in London (Markovich, *Anglophiles* 109) summarized the contemporary British attitude that her father and Mijatović were forced to endure in the following way:

> Since the news of the [Obrenović] tragedy had been received, [Mijatović] met with the cold shoulder wherever he went. Official doors were suddenly closed, and the circumstances of the murder put a strain even on personal friendship. […] To mention Serbia was enough to raise a wall of prejudice; English people could have no association with a race who had murdered their King. Every one of Serbian decent must be made to feel responsible for the terrible deed. [My father and Mijatović] were beyond the pale of a Society whose principles were irreproachable; with the best intentions Englishmen never lost an opportunity to proclaim the fact that moral

¹² He wrote the entry on Serbia in the eleventh edition (1911) of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Markovich, *Anglophiles* 106).
feelings were very high in their country, that what had happened in Serbia could not be condoned and must be expiated by the entire nation (Yovitchitch 190–191).

Mijatović’s initial shock and insurmountable contempt mixed with the hatred of British citizen led him to resign from his position, as his conscious had not allowed him to represent the land of regicides. ‘That some Serbian officers could commit such a crime [...] filled me with such a loathing and shame that I could not remain official representative of Serbia in London any longer, and at once resigned my position as Serbian Minister,’ Mijatović wrote in his memoir (Mijatovich 177).

As Mijatović expected the rule of the succeeding Karadžordević dynasty to be temporary, he did his utmost to blacken the reputation of the small Balkan state and its new dynasty. For this purpose, he wrote a number of letters and articles addressing the regicide, and later became the co-author for the Belgrade: The White City of Death, a book devoted to explain the coup also containing a sketch on the murder scene (Markovich, Perception of Serbia 144–148). Additionally, despite his resignation, he remained an unavoidable source of information for both the British press and the Foreign Office (Markovich, Anglophiles 106), thereupon his negative portrayal of Serbia aggravated British hostility towards the small Balkan state.13

Besides the Serbian Minister, the Times did not miss the opportunity to comment on the political crisis prevailing between the former Obrenović King and the governing Serbian Radical Party. As a result, several long articles were devoted to explain the military conspiracy of May. To make the readers understand the circumstances triggering the regicide, and moreover, to fill the void of knowledge on Serbia, the Times quoted passages from the latest edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica regarding Serbia and its competing ruling dynasties (Times, 12 June 1903: 4). Moreover, throughout June, the paper persisted publishing details of the coup, and gave accounts on the conflicting versions of the royal murder. Summarizing the reports and opinion of miscellaneous European journals and government officials, the Times concluded that the plot had seemed to be the work of a wider movement

13 Later Mijatović managed to reconcile with the new ruling dynasty after meeting King Petar I of Serbia. During the Conference of Ambassadors in London convened to conclude the First Balkan War, he became again the member of the Serbian Legation. In the course of the Great War, he exposed himself to journalism to foster sympathy towards Serbia. For this reason, he undertook a North American tour in the company of Emmeline Pankhurst; nonetheless, he became a marginal figure in the British-Serbian war-time relations as the pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals and other Serbian citizens residing in Great Britain did the utmost to neutralize him. R. W. Seton-Watson learnt Mijatović in December 1912, when Hinko Hinković – a member of the Yugoslav Committee, a war-time political organization in exile – arranged a meeting between the historian and the Serbian Legation (Correspondence I: 127; Markovich, Anglophiles 110–111).
of conspirators, involving party members of the governing Radical Party as well (Times, 13 June 1903: 7), concluding that the initiators would have been likely to remain unpunished. Such developments, in effect, strengthened the general conception that the Balkans had been a territory without law:

Servia, the land of assassinations, abdications, pronunciamientos, and coup d’État, has surpassed itself and caused all previous achievements pale into insignificance beside the tragedy […]. A Central Asian khanate, not a European city, would have been a fitting theatre for such ruthless and accurately planned regicide (Times, 12 June 1903: 5).

Albeit, the Times pointed out that the late sovereign overtly pursued a pro-Habsburg policy, and his wife had experienced exceptional unpopularity, the paper seemed to be perplexed about the overall situation in Serbia. Although a major crime had been committed, the regicide had no legal consequences at all:

Perfect tranquillity reigns in Belgrade. […] There is no sign of opposition to the new order of things, and Servia remains under civil government; but in reality the army is supreme […]. What is happening in the country nobody knows, but Ministerial reports state that all is quiet […] (Times, 15 June 1903: 7).

In reality, the Serbian indifference stemmed in the absolutistic measures and authoritarian tendencies of Aleksandar Obrenović. In 1901, the King had curbed the rights of the parliament by replacing the progressive Constitution of 1888 with an octroy statute, introducing a bicameral system designed to increase the power of the monarch. His unpopularity had grown further by marrying his mistress, a widow older than himself. Overall, the general public in Serbia had regarded the childless royal couple as an

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14 Alone the name ‘Servia’ attested British disinterest in the Balkans. The denomination most probably originates in the confusion over the Cyrillic and Latin alphabet. The letter ‘b’ in Cyrillic stands for the sound ‘v.’ However, the Latin letter ‘b’ was confused with the Cyrillic one. In the first year of the Great War, a Serbian reader addressed the issue in the Times by explaining that the name of his country had been ‘Serbia.’ Moreover, due to the English verb ‘to serve,’ the denomination ‘Servia’ was derogatory. Owing to the rising war-time prestige of Serbia, by 1915 ‘Servia’ had disappeared and was replaced by Serbia.

15 The Constitution of 1888 was drafted by an all-party commission which set to study the various political systems of Europe. Undoubtedly, it was a product of a compromise between the Serbian parties and the sovereign. It established Serbia as a parliamentary monarchy, strengthened the executive and legislative power, extended the rights of local governments, introduced a direct and secret male ballot with a reduced wealth threshold (Pavlowitch, Serbia 7).
embarrassment to the country, who had subjected Serbia to international ridicule (Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 73, 79).  

Irrespective of the background, the lack of interest attached to Serbia enabled the British Cabinet to confirm to the public opinion’s moral judgement and punish the Balkan state by severing diplomatic ties with Belgrade (Gosses 109). In essence, the circumstances leading to the accession of Karađorđević dynasty to the throne, considerably damaged the reputation of both King Petar and the ruling dynasty from the beginning. As a result, the new royal family’s image was solidified as being powerless, unfit and weak to rule, henceforth accommodating a marginal role besides the Cabinet and the army (Antić, Paget 38). Correspondingly, Petar was perceived as an impotent and inferior ruler among the royal sovereigns of Europe, even though he was a person of letters, who received education in France, and moreover translated John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* to Serbian. So far, he had spent his life in exile, and in effect, had not been well-informed on the internal situations of Serbia before. At the time of the regicide, he lived in Geneva, and in reality, the Serbian parliament invited him to the throne (Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 79), despite the *Times* reported that he had been proclaimed the new sovereign by the army. Subsequently, the army’s incrimination in the royal murder (*Times*, 13 June 1903: 7) was transferred to the King, who came to be seen as an accomplice in the coup. Unsurprisingly, Great Britain was the last among the Great Powers to recognize the Karađorđević reign. In contrast to the Obrenović dynasty – which retrospectively was reconceived as a suitable and acceptable member of the European royal families – the reputation of the Karađorđević dynasty was severely contested (*Entente* 213–215) also by Serbia’s economic and diplomatic reliance on Russian.  

Undoubtedly, besides Turcophobia, the Serbian image was also burdened by British Russophobia. With British territorial interests in the Middle East and India being threatened by Russian endeavours, Serbia as a traditional ally of Saint Petersburg could not escape the deep suspicion which fell on the Orthodox bloc. It was a widespread belief in Britain that the Russian aspirations for the emancipation of the Balkan Orthodox peoples had been a plot to achieve imperialist aims in the Mediterranean. For that matter, the Balkan Christian Slavs were oftentimes regarded to be the instruments of Russian expansion (Evans 56–57, 60;  

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16 Aleksandar’s removal coinciding with the assassination date of Mihajlo, a former Serbian Obrenović sovereign, was intended to be symbolic, marking the beginning of a new era.  
17 For instance, Russia annually subsidised Serbia during the ‘Pig War,’ a tariff war with Austria–Hungary (Antić, Paget 38–39).  
18 Turcophobia was not a traditional and general British stance. It evolved gradually since the uprising of 1875 in Bosnia–Herzegovina, and it was characterized by the growing British distaste towards the Oriental nature and practices of the decaying Ottoman Empire. Turcophobia did not necessarily transpired into a wish to replace the Ottoman Empire with independent Balkan small states.
Todorova, *Imagining* 109–110). Fearing the potentials of Russia mobilizing the Balkan Orthodox population, the replacement of the Ottoman rule with independent Balkan countries had been considered undesirable in London for a long time (Markovich, *Identities* 115; Todorova, *Imagining* 110). Despite the eventual British rapprochement with Russia over the Middle East in 1907, it is important to note that the Foreign Office did not feel bound to support Russian policy in the Balkans. On the contrary, Britain continued to pursue ways to side with the Habsburg Empire, which had neither any colonies nor desired any, and consequently, had never posed a threat to British territorial interests. Since Serbia was perceived as an outpost of Russian influence in the Balkans, neither the British Cabinet nor the public had any reservations towards the Habsburg annexation of Bosnia–Herzegovina, regarding it as a means to decrease Russian influence in the region (Antić, *Paget* 34–35, 57; *Entente* 213–215, 260; Lederer 6).

The arrival of Nikolaj Hartwig as the Russian Minister in Belgrade in 1909 further fostered British suspicion on Serbia and King Petar. Being a Minister in Teheran during the conclusion of the British-Russian rivalry in the Middle East, Hartwig earned an infamous reputation in Britain for being a vociferous supporter of Pan-Slavism. Consequently, the diplomat’s presence in the small Balkan burdened the image of both Serbia and its sovereign, who had been already proclaimed as the puppet of Russia in British press (Antić, *Paget* 38–39, 48), having his ‘two sons [...] educated in Russia’ at the time of May Coup (*Times*, 12 June 1903: 5).

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19 The reconciliation in colonial matters were triggered by a number of factors: the German challenge to British naval and economic supremacy; Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese war; the establishment of a Russian constitutional monarchy in 1906; and the person of Izvolsky, the Russian Foreign Minister, who was a liberal politician, and an opponent of Russian expansionism. Nonetheless, it must be noted that the treaty of 1907 only eliminated the discord concerning the Middle East, while the mission of Russia to liberate Constantinople had remained a possible source of clash ever since the mid-19th century. In reality, Russian devotion towards Orthodox Christianity was motivated by the ambition to secure free naval passage to the Mediterranean, as the Baltic ports were ice-locked for several weeks during each winter. Consequently, capturing the city or abolishing the international treaty on the neutrality of straits – which locked Russian navy in the Black Sea – was a long-standing goal of Russian diplomacy. As Germany was challenging British naval supremacy, Great Britain desired neither to open the Mediterranean for Russia nor to give reason for the execution of a Russian fleet programme. British concerns originated from the belief that a Russian war fleet in the Mediterranean could be a peril to the Suez Canal. Both Aleksandr Izvolsky and his successor, Sergei Sazanov approached the Foreign Office before the Great War to negotiate a free naval passage for Russia. Their mission, in essence, achieved nothing else than taunting British distrust towards the aspirations of Saint Petersburg (*Entente* xxii–xxiii, 220–223; Schmitt 62–66; Wallach 12).

20 Despite this, the unilateral fashion how the annexation had been eventually realized aggravated British-Habsburg relations.

21 Acting independently of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Hartwig might have facilitated the alliance of the First Balkan War. He died of heart failure in the midst of the July Crisis of 1914, while visiting the Habsburg Legation in Belgrade.
Ralph Paget, the British Minister in Belgrade between 1910 and 1913, also played a considerable role in solidifying the adverse and detrimental British perception on both the royal dynasty and the Serbian state. His reports on high profile corruption scandals, on the instability of political life, and swift fall of cabinets seemed to attest the prevailing conceptions on the weakness of Karađorđević dynasty, and on the influence of the army. Proving himself as worth of an expert in Belgrade, Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, appointed Paget the Assistant Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office in the late summer of 1913 (Antić, Paget 38–39, 41–43, 55, 89, 95; Pavlowitch, Salonica 479). However, in reality, Paget and the entire the British Legation did a substandard work in Serbia. Allying themselves with the traditional British perception, they resembled their country’s disinterest in Serbia. Consequently, lacking any enthusiasm or intention to promote their knowledge, Belgrade remained their only, and thus limited source of information. As a result, they failed to identify the underlying achievements and true intentions of Serbian domestic and foreign policy. By the outbreak of the First Balkan War, the Serbian Army had been modernized, while the Karadordević dynasty’s effective diplomacy had secured an anti-Ottoman Balkan alliance whose joint army had rivalled in numbers the military of a Great Power (Antić, Paget 39, 52–53).

In effect, the accession of the Karadordević dynasty to the throne marked a new era in Serbia. With the removal of the Obrenović dynasty, the Constitution of 1888 was readapted. Consequently, at the outbreak of the Great War, Serbia had a functioning parliamentary system with an almost complete universal male suffrage, organized parties, and political press. Albeit the political life was dominated by the Radical Party, and a clique of army officers exercised extra-parliamentary power, the Karadordević dynasty gradually strengthened its position, and took a share in devising the foreign policy of Serbia (Pavlowitch, Serbia 73, 79–81). By the end of the Balkan Wars, Serbia managed to double its

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22 The British diplomatic relation was restored with Serbian in 1906, when King Petar removed those people from his Court who had been responsible for the plot (Gosses 109), although, in effect, no officers had been charged for the May Coup (Antić, Paget 38–39). Such a diplomatic move was further fostered by Foreign Office’s temporary consideration in the eve of the ‘Pig War’ whether it would have been beneficial for British firms to invest in Serbia to fill the place of the Monarchy as a trading partner (Bridge 165).

23 Paget also perceived the dynasty to be unfit to rule physically. As Heir-Apparent Aleksandar had been seriously ill for a time, the diplomat anticipated his early demise. Although, the Crown Prince survived, Paget maintained his opinion on Aleksandar’s qualities (Antić, Paget 38–39).

24 In the course of the Great War, Paget was among the first high officials who championed the nationality principle as the premise of peace settlement, and embracing the idea of European reconstruction, proposed the creation a unified Yugoslavs state.

25 The coronation ceremony was intentionally postponed until 1904 to coincide with the centenary of the First Serbian Uprising (Pavlowitch, Serbia 81).
territory without the assistance of any Great Powers, and emerged as a regional power enjoying a considerable prestige in the world of Southern Slavs (Antić, Paget 65–66).

However, pre-1913 Serbia had been a homogenous state, and consequently, in contrast with the Habsburg Yugoslavs, its inhabitants had had no experience in national co-existence in a multi-ethnic environment. In reality, the Serbian national identity – ingrained in folk culture and the myths of medieval statehood – and evolved parallel with the creation of a modern, centralized and civic Serbian state throughout the 19th century. As a result, the Serbian identity emerged as a strong, distinct and inflexible identity, cemented in clear aspirations and a tendency for utilizing exclusive ethnic nationalism (Rusinow 16–17). Therefore, the accomplishments of the Balkan Wars could be partially accredited to the strong national communities of Serbia which not only did back the efforts of both the governing Radical Party and the army, but also elevated Serbian expansionist policy to victory.

Albeit the British public became firmly anti-Ottoman during the Balkan Wars, the Serbian victories did not alter the assessment of the Balkan country by any means (Antić, Paget 78). Visiting Great Britain in 1913, Francis Ferdinand, the Heir-Apparent of Austria-Hungary, received a warm welcome, while a strong and intense dislike still prevailed over the Serbian people (Watt 237). Overshadowed by the legacy of the May Coup, the phantasies over the Otherness of the Balkans, British Turco- and Russophobia, and the general disinterest in the region, the Serbian prestige was not solely abated, but in effect Serbia’s place among the civilized nations was questioned in Britain. Conclusively, prior to the Great War, Serbia became an example of British indifference towards the Balkans (Antić, Paget 53), with few Western Europeans engaging in studying and understanding the developments of the region. Among the very few scholars writing on Serbia, we find Robert William Seton-Watson, a Scottish historian and publicist, who would gradually abandon the oversimplified British perception on Serbia by the outbreak of the Great War. Uncovering the achievements of the Karadordević era, the historian realized the legitimate challenge an enlarged Serbia could pose to the continental balance of power unless the Habsburg dynasty solved the Southern Slav question.

1.2. The Habsburg Empire and the Evolution of the Yugoslav Idea

Yugoslavism, the idea of Southern Slav solidarity, developed in the 19th century on the belief that the various branches of Southern Slav ‘tribes’ were kin peoples who ought to have
United in a common state (Seton-Watson, *Making* 58); nonetheless, in essence, it mostly functioned ‘as a mobilizing force in the process of constituting the Croatian nation’ (Gross 642). Undoubtedly, the Yugoslav idea was a product of civic or political nationalism, which defined the shared political values and visions rather than cultural or religious uniformity as the criteria of nationhood and national belonging (Miller 31). Regions inhabited by the Yugoslavs were politically fragmented lands, and featured a remarkably complex ethno-religious and linguistic mosaic, therefore the intermixture of the population made it impossible to draw national borders without triggering any hostilities among the nationalities. For that matter, the civic idea of political union seemed to be the best solution for the problem induced by the competing national aspirations of the Southern Slavs (Jelavich 3; Rusinow 12; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 62).

It can be stated that the Yugoslav idea pursued to transform the problem into its own solution, forasmuch as the conception inferred the sacrifice of the various national programmes – respectively, the Pan-Croat (Greater Croatia) and Pan-Serb (Greater Serbia) ideas – for the common cause of unification (Rusinow 12–13). It was an artificial national identity promoting primarily the sameness of Serbs and Croats to prevent the dominance of one nation over the other (Motta 143). However, at the same time, Yugoslavism meant the realization of Croatian and Serbian national endeavours, as all lands inhabited by the Croats and Serbs would have been incorporated under the sceptre of a unified Yugoslav state. Furthermore, the idea did not specify which branch of the Southern Slavs had been entitled to unify the whole ‘Yugoslav nation.’ Conclusively, by the outbreak of the Great War, Yugoslavism had remained a not fully formed civic national idea. Albeit, it laid the foundation for a temporary political cooperation between the Serbs and Croats, its conceptual fuzziness enabled diverging interpretations on the constitutional and political outlook of a common state.

In reality, the Yugoslav idea had evolved as one of the Croatian national ideologies seeking ways for national renewal throughout the late Modern Period. Its first wave,\(^\text{26}\) known as Illyrism envisioned the cultural rather than the political unification of the Southern Slav ‘tribes,’ as a guarantee for national survival, cultural and economic prosperity against the fact or fictitious German and Hungarian national aspirations. It was conceived in the 1830’s by Ljudevit Gaj, a Croatian journalist and linguist, who regarded the Southern Slavs the

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\(^{26}\) Some scholars regard Illyrism as the precursor rather than the first wave of Yugoslavism.
descendants of ‘Illyrians.’ He advocated for the cultural and linguistic unification of the Yugoslavs, implying a degree of cultural self-sacrifice on behalf of Southern Slavs in order to establish a broader ethnic base which could claim a broader territory for themselves within the Habsburg Empire (Anzulović 77, Miller 26, Rusinow 20–21; Pavlowitch, Serbia 46).

The second wave of Yugoslavism commenced in the 1860’s, when the reorganization and the future of the Habsburg Empire was considered in the Viennese Court. Propagating the equality and the uniformity of Croats and Serbs, the Yugoslav idea then again became an instrument for the Croatian politics in crusade for an autonomous Croatian Kingdom. The second wave shaped the civic notion of Yugoslav equality, and called for political unification, while recognizing and respecting the cultural and religious differences among the Southern Slavs (Dragnich–Todorovich 81, Karaula 96–100, 105–106, Németh, Európa 124).

The third and ultimate wave of Yugoslavism emerged in fin-de-siècle Dalmatia. Reviving the civic notion of Yugoslav nationhood (Zlatar 389), the Croatian middle class replaced the traditionally loyalist pro-Habsburg stance (Austro-Slavism) with a temporary pro-Hungarian attitude (Hungaro-Slavism) in Croatian national politics. Their new political movement, known as the novi kurs (new direction), saw an opportunity in the political and economic disputes between the Austrian and Hungarian elite to expand the rights of Croatia and to bring Dalmatia under Hungarian, and thus under Croatian administration in lieu of the Austrian rule. Not only did the rise and success of the Hungarian opposition parties restructure the Hungarian political scene between 1903 and 1905, but it threatened the constitutional foundations of the Austro–Hungarian Compromise. Adjusting to the political

27 It was an artificial name conceived to describe a unified Yugoslav nation. Most probably the short-lived Illyrian Republic of the Napoleonic Era inspired the denomination.

28 The language of Yugoslav peoples is a polycentric one, nowadays comprising of a number of standardized variants with minor differences in pronunciation, spelling, grammar and vocabulary. However, in the 19th century, there were only two standardized versions of this language based on two diverse dialects. Gaj pursued to make the štokavian dialect, standardized by the Serbian language reformer, Vuk Karadžić, the common dialect for all Yugoslavs. For this reason, he put lots of efforts into popularizing the štokavian to establish it the main literary and vulgar language of Croats. It must be emphasized that while all Serbs, regardless of their location, spoke this dialect, Croats were divided among three different dialects: the Slavonian Croats spoke štokavian, people around the Zagreb region spoke the so-called kajkavian, while along the Dalmatian coastline the čakavian dialect was used.

29 The brainchild and major proponent of this programme was Josip Juraj Strossmayer, the Bishop of Đakovo (Diakovár), the founder of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and a devoted patron of arts and culture. He envisioned the establishment of a Yugoslav sub-state within a federalized Habsburg Empire which would have had embraced all lands inhabited by the Habsburg Yugoslav subjects. To foster Yugoslav solidarity and cooperation to a new level, Strossmayer even imagined the unification of the Croatian Catholic and the Serbian Orthodox Churches. Due to his increasing anti-Habsburg and pro-Russian stance after the Croato-Hungarian Sub-Compromise, he found himself in a politically isolated position. His rejection to accept the doctrine of Papal infallibility during the first Synod of Vatican (1867), moreover, solidified his marginalization in Catholic Croatia, and thus Yugoslavism had disappeared from the contemporary political discourse for decades (Dragnich–Todorovich 81; Karaula 96–100; Miller 28–29; Rohrbacher 102, 107, 365–365).
realities in Hungary, the novi kurs movement successfully mobilized most of the bourgeoning
Croatian and Serbian entrepreneur and professional classes, dissatisfied with the Croato-
Hungarian Sub-Compromise of 1868, and formed the so-called Croato-Serb Coalition. Being
promised the renegotiation of the Sub-Compromise, this new alliance firmly stood by the
Independence Party’s coalition throughout the Hungarian constitutional crisis (1905–1906).
Their political activism and electoral successes not solely marked the rejuvenation of the
Yugoslav idea, but it elevated the Southern Slavs Question to evolve into the most significant
issue in the Habsburg Empire, as the various national movements of the Habsburg Yugoslavs
became a visible threat to the integrity of the Empire (Okey 83).

1.2.1. The Constitutional Question and the Case of the Sub-Compromise

The so-called Compromise was a constitutional settlement which rearranged the
Habsburg Empire in 1867 into two equal federal units. This dualist constitutional-political
arrangement was a result of the reconciliation between Francis Joseph and the Hungarian
political elite, and marked the birth of Austria–Hungary (Tihany 114–115). The legal articles
constituting the Compromise, and rearranging the Danubian Empire into the new Dualist
structure were passed by both the Austrian and the Hungarian Parliaments. Nevertheless, the
absence of sufficient parliamentary and public debates concerning the settlement fostered
diverging interpretations on the new constitutional framework on which the Habsburg Empire
and its two equal entities were to be operated in the upcoming decades.

In effect, the settlement articles bore textual differences, as the Hungarian version
included vaguely defined clauses stating that Hungary had retained its right to have an
independent army and to conduct separate foreign policy. Besides the common sovereign and
the joint affairs, the Hungarian reading of the Compromise assumed that a constitutionally
separate Hungarian Kingdom had been created as an equal counterpart of Austria. In
comparison, the Austrian understanding claimed that regardless of the dualist arrangement,
both federal units had remained subordinated to the Habsburg dynasty, the embodiment of a
strong, untied, and moreover an ‘Austrian’ empire. In the course of the Dualist era, the
contradiction originating in the diverging reading of the settlement articles only exacerbated
conflict between Austria and Hungary if one of the sides intentionally pursued to widen the
gap between the textual interpretations. Overall, these political clashes posed no direct threat
to the Empire’s integrity unless it intended to challenge the dualist framework by upsetting the internal balance of power (Péter, Settlement 273–274; Sked 179).

In essence, the private settlement between Francis Joseph and Ferenc Deák’s circle preserved several traditional, out-dated, feudal political features which violated the concept of checks and balances, and ought to have been dismissed in a constitutional monarchy based on limited popular sovereignty. Undoubtedly, many of the royal prerogatives tracing back to the feudal traditions of Hungary survived into the Dualist period. As a result, the sovereign retained his absolute power over the army, and could declare war or peace without the consent of the respective parliaments in Vienna and Budapest. In practice, the Hungarian influence over military affairs resembled that of feudal, pre-Compromise Hungary's, when the Diet’s role had been limited to the matters of recruitment. Other archaic features can be discovered pertaining to the ministers of joint affairs, who, in reality, answered to the sovereign, and not to the parliamentary delegations. Additionally, the legally ill-defined boundaries of certain royal prerogatives – such as the extended veto right, the right to dissolve the parliament, and the right to propose bills – upset the balance of power-sharing in favour of the sovereign. With all these constitutional peculiarities, the outcome of legislative policies throughout the Dualist period depended on the relationship between the sovereign and the parliament. It should be also emphasized that irrespective of the Dualist structure, the imperial dynasty and the courtiers of the Austrian aristocracy retained their high ranking military positions, and still exercised a strong influence on royal decision-making (Sked 180). As the birth of Austria-Hungary was not the outcome of a broad political compromise among Francis Joseph and the representatives of Austria and Hungary, the new constitutional arrangement left many displeased, and substantiated the ground for challenging its validity with the aim of revision.

Subsequently, ever since the conclusion of the Compromise, anti-Dualist sentiments had been present among Austrian-Germans, Hungarians and Croats as well; nonetheless, the reasons of dissatisfaction traced back to different national, political and economic aspirations or grievances. In case of Austria, the Austrian-German elite gradually grew frustrated by the decennial renewal of the Economic Compromise, which bound the affairs on the custom union, trade and joint state expenditures to be renegotiated with the Hungarian half of the Empire every ten year. The source of their discontent originated from the fact that while Hungary enjoyed a coequal status with Austria, the Transleithanian kingdom solely covered the 30-35% of the common expenses. Moreover, as negotiations oftentimes led to collision over the tariff rates, the Economic Compromise became increasingly perceived in Austria as a symbol of Hungarian preponderance. As a consequence, voices calling for a centralized
administration for the whole Empire as a means to re-establish Austrian-German influence, gradually amplified by the turn of the 20th century (Sked 179–180; Tihany 123). The highest ranking and most influential challengers of dualism composed of Heir-Apparent Francis Ferdinand and his Belvedere circle, a personal brain trust convened to prepare the Archduke’s political reform programme by the time of his accession to the throne. The recommendations of this private advisory and planning board were concluded in complete alignment with the opinion of Ferdinand: they outlined the revision of the dualist structure by replacing it with a centralized, federal state, but at the same time granting regional political autonomies to the nationalities in the form of ethnic federal units (Tihany 123).

In Hungary, the validity of the Compromise was restlessly questioned, mostly on the ground whether the parliamentary majority won in 1865 legally empowered the Deák Party to enforce such a settlement in 1867, which would have significant impact on the future of Hungary. From Ferenc Deák’s point of view, the years 1865–1866 created an excellent opportunity to bargain with Emperor Francis Joseph, and moreover to realize the Hungarian vision in the reorganization of the Empire (Péter, Army 8; Sked 179). Despite the statesman’s arguments, many came to debate in Hungary whether the political and commercial settlements of 1867 had guaranteed sufficient rights and independence for the country to influence economic and imperial affairs at a degree which prevented Hungary from being either subordinated to Austria or subjected to the will of the Habsburg dynasty. As a result, the so-called constitutional question, a set of disbeliefs and doubts revolving around the arrangements of 1867, had remained a major topic in either the parliamentary debates or in public life in the five decades of Dualist Hungary (Péter, Army 83–84), and stimulated several other crucial issues – involving the army, the nationality question, the electoral and social reforms – to surface.

The Liberal Party (Szabadelvű Párt), the most tenacious guardian of the Compromise in the first three decades of Dualism, emerged in 1875 with the fusion of the Deák Party and the moderate opposition. The key to the Liberals’ 30-year long unchallenged domination in the Hungarian political scene to be found in the manipulation of the electoral law, which on the one hand, kept the franchise limited to the propertied classes, and on the other hand, gerrymandered the electoral continuances to meet the interest of the pro-Compromise Liberal Party. Additionally, elections were occasionally coupled with fraud and intimidation, while the judiciary system was abused likewise to preserve the central government’s power strong and stable. Partially these political practices were realized at the expense of nationalities, whose cultural and political rights were permanently restricted or violated under the rhetoric
which added an equality sign between the interests of the Hungarian state and of the Hungarian nation, but in reality, served to maintain the dualist structure at any costs (Jeszszynzky, *Crisis* 385; Péter, *Army* 83; Sked 183; Stone 165; Tihany 124).

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Hungarian opposition’s growing demand for the revision and the ‘improvement’ of the Compromise – calling for economic separation, electoral and army reforms – clashed with the persistent determination of the Liberal Party’s establishment figures to uphold and protect the dualist system (Péter, *Army* 83–84). The so-called army question, approached either from a pro-status quo or an anti-dualist point of view, evolved around the joint army stationed in Hungary. By royal prerogative, the army was under the control of the sovereign, thus its leaders could pursue to act as independent of the Hungarian Cabinet as possible. From the governing Liberal Party’s end, the primary source of dismay in this regard was the patronization of nationalities by the army. The Liberals perceived the practice which allowed the use of the mother tongue in regional regiments as an obstacle to Magyarization and a peril to Hungary. Besides the bitter memories of the Habsburg military being utilized against the country, the fact that by constitutional design Hungary depended on the Habsburg army and the dynasty exposed and fostered concerns on the vulnerable position of the Hungarian state. In this regard, the Hungarian opposition argued that the sovereign’s absolute power over the army violated the constitutional separation of Hungary. Furthermore, they emphasized that such a substantial power concentrated in the hands of the Habsburg dynasty had been the instrument of covert centralization and uniformity before (Sked 181; Stone 168). As a solution, the introduction of Hungarian as the command of language was envisioned as the first step in the creation of a separate national army, answering primarily to the Hungarian Cabinet. Nonetheless, such endeavours were all lost causes, as Francis Joseph did not tolerate any fragmentation in the Habsburg army, perceived as the guarantee of Empire’s integrity, as any disunity in the organization of military would have abated its effectiveness (Péter, *Balance* 663). To complicate matters, the modernization of the joint army was due as the Empire had been lagging behind in the European armament race. Bearing this in mind, the Hungarian opposition inclined to utilize the pressure of urgency to force Francis Joseph to renegotiate the Compromise along their lines, and persisted impeding the sessions of the Parliament by applying miscellaneous methods of obstruction. As a result, it was impossible to pass a new conscription bill, and what is more, they prevented the Parliament from passing the annual budget for the following year at the dawn of the 20th century (Jeszszynzky, *Crisis* 380–381; Steed, *Thirty I: 219, Stone 168–169).
Besides the army question, the demands for economic autonomy increased pressure on the Liberal Party. The national industrial and agricultural associations founded at the beginning of 20th century called for the termination of customs union with Austria to protect their market and interests in Hungary. Their demands were soon to be echoed by the opposition parties, especially by the Independence Party which eventually championed the idea of a separate tariff barrier and a separate national bank. Meanwhile, the aging Emperor’s heir, Francis Ferdinand posed an overt threat to the Hungarian elite, subsequently, in preparation for a post-Francis Joseph epoch, strengthening Hungary’s position in the Danubian Empire seemed to be a feasible argument. Under these circumstances, the status quo figures of the Liberal Party, notably István Tisza and Károly Khuen-Héderváry, had to confront not solely the anti-dualist, yet-fragmented opposition, but also the moderate members of their own party, who were willing to cooperate with the moderate members of the opposition (Stone 164, 166).

By 1905, the Independence Party, the dissidents of the Liberal Party and other opposition parties formed an electoral coalition to challenge the rule of the Liberal Party and the dualist structure. This grand alliance, commonly referred to as the Coalition, came to being with the political collaboration of radical nationalists, moderate conservatives, and political opportunists. Compared to the status quo conservatism of the Liberal Party, their increasingly nationalist rhetoric championed radical social and political reform ideas. Many of its members believed in the radical transformation of Hungary into an Eastern Switzerland, and supported the introduction of universal male suffrage as a means to strengthen Hungary’s position in the Empire (Péter, Army 83–84; Stone 165–166, 178). However, the Coalition’s eventual electoral victories in 1905, and in 1906, marked the beginning of an enduring deadlock, known as the constitutional crisis of 1905–1906, characterized by a long political-tactical power-play between the sovereign and the Coalition.

Despite the Coalition’s electoral victory, Francis Joseph refused to appoint Ferenc Kossuth, the leader of the Coalition as the new Prime Minister, and an extra-constitutional, interim Cabinet, headed by Géza Fejérváry, was formed. As a response, the parliamentary majority dominated by the Coalition declared the government to be unconstitutional (Péter, Army 100). To pressure the Coalition and to tame its demands, József Kristóffy, the Minister of Interior, – with the approval of the sovereign – embraced the idea of universal male franchise and pursued talks with the extra-governmental Hungarian Social Democratic Party. To even the odds, the Coalition tactically pursued partnership and temporary alliance with the
anti-Habsburg Croato–Serb Coalition by patronizing the Southern Slav case and championing to remedy Croatian national grievances (Stone 174, 177, 180, 182).

Using his royal prerogative, Francis Joseph chose to dissolve the parliament in February 1906, and new elections were being called to be hold within three months (Péter, *Army* 100; Sked 181). Meanwhile, most members of the Coalition withdrew their support of the universal suffrage as they realized that it would have empowered the lower classes, and the so-far underrepresented nationalities of Hungary as well. Besides a challenge from the working class, the prospect of agrarian parties’ endeavours for land reform in the country side, and the loss of Hungarian dominance in the political life – leading to the transformation of Hungary into a similar ‘nationality-state’ as Austria – convinced the Coalition that electoral reforms would have fostered uncontrollable social and national issues. For that matter, following their second electoral victory, the Coalition made an agreement with Francis Joseph in April 1906, and relinquished all its radical economic and military demands.

With the secret settlement concluded between the sovereign and the Coalition, the status quo remained intact, the Economic Compromise was renewed, and the Habsburg army received its new recruits. As a result, the abandoned principles and reform notions were soon replaced by vague patriotic tones then redirected from the Habsburg dynasty to the nationalities of Hungary. However, the delay of social and political reforms radicalized the society, while the rule of Coalition Cabinet – consisting of a group of nationalist magnates gradually becoming detached from reality, but prone to utilize chauvinist policies – triggered nationalist movements and irredentism in the Empire. Overall, the constitutional crisis shook the foundations of Dualism, and moreover exposed the many weakness and issues of the Habsburg Empire (Péter, *Army* 84; Stone 174, 178, 180–182), among which the Southern Slav question would receive the widest press coverage in Great Britain.

1.2.2. The Third Wave of Yugoslavism: The Birth of the Croato-Serb Coalition

To understand the evolution of the Yugoslav question in the Habsburg Empire, the inter-Yugoslav relations have to be examined in light of the Hungary’s Croatian policy. In effect, the Austro-Hungarian Compromise had a considerate impact on the constitutional relations between Croatia and Hungary as well, upsetting the centuries-old constitutional equality in favour of the latter (Tihany 114–115). Accommodating the new dualist structure, Hungary was reunited both with Transylvania and Croatia, while the Austrians let the
Hungarian Cabinet deal with the Southern Slavs. As a result, the Habsburg dynasty adhered to the Hungarian sub-dualist vision enacted in the form of the Croato-Hungarian Sub-Compromise or the Nagodba of 1868. The complement of the Austro–Hungarian Compromise eventually forced Croatia into a constitutionally subordinated position inside the Kingdom of Hungary. The Ban, the traditional administrator of Croatia, was nominated by and was responsible to the Hungarian Cabinet, while the Croatian Diet, the Sabor, exercised limited domestic power and self-governing rights pertaining to the affairs of the interior, judiciary and administration. Despite these rights, the crown province, in effect, was subdued to Hungary in both economic and political terms (Katus, *Horvátok* 173; Katus, *Történelem* 9; Péter, *Army* 83; Okey 83–84, 94; Pavlowitch, *Yugoslavia* 43).

Ever since the appointment of Károly Khuen-Héderváry in 1883, the Bans of Croatia\(^{30}\) governed according to the wishes and interests of the Hungarian Cabinet. The governing Liberal Party in Budapest expected Khuen-Héderváry to solidify Croatia’s position in the dualist constitutional design. Eventually, Héderváry established a solid power base, unchallenged for two decades, firstly, by applying a *divide and rule* policy to aggravate the Croat-Serb antagonism in Croatia; and secondly, by seizing control of the Croatian National Party, the largest party in the crown province, and transforming it into an ardent and pure *Magyaron* (pro-Hungarian) political stable. According to the Nagodba of 1868, the Sabor delegated forty Croatian representatives to the Hungarian Parliament, whose mandates had lasted until the conclusion of the following Croatian elections. Although, in theory, the representatives’ task would have been to represent Croatian interests in Budapest, the National Party – consisting mostly of the Croatian aristocracy – conformed to the wishes of the Ban and Budapest. Their obedient and adaptive nature is exemplified by the fact that prior to 1905, their delegates had raised for speech in the Hungarian Parliament only seventeen times, and despite their rights, they had expressed their views in Hungarian and not in Croatian. Their spectacular failure to represent Croatian national interests at the slightest degree was criticized even by the Hungarian opposition (Cieger 426–428, 435; Okey 89; Sokcsevits 751).

As for other measures utilized by Héderváry to control Croatia, he pursued an openly pro-Serbian policy which confirmed to the Dual Monarchy’s temporary patronizing policy towards Serbia. The exceptionally amicable relationship between Austria–Hungary and the

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\(^{30}\) The official name of the state used in Hungarian documents was ‘the Kingdom of Dalmatia–Croatia–Slavonia’ (Dalmát–Horvát–Szlavón Királyság), but the ‘Croatia–Slavonia’ (Horvát–Szlavónország) form was utilized likewise. In this dissertation, the kingdom would be referred to as either Croatia or Croatia–Slavonia.
Obrenović ruling dynasty of the small Balkan state had lasted until 1903, which alone had fostered loyalty towards the Habsburg Crown among the Serbs of Croatia and Hungary (Goldstein, *Croatia* 96). Abusing this atmosphere, the Ban secured the pro-Hungarian power in Croatia by winning over the Croatian Serbs with offices and symbolic acts, such as recognizing Serbian as an official language in 1887 along with the Cyrillic alphabet. Being disproportionately overrepresented in the administration, Croatian Serbs came to exercise an overwhelming influence on the political and administrative life of Croatia during the Khuen-Héderváry era (Miller 36–37; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 75). The electoral law, introduced by Héderváry in 1887, had remained for a long time the cornerstone and the safeguard of the constitutional-political arrangement between Croatia and Hungary. The new wealth-qualified suffrage increased the tax threshold for the right to vote, but automatically granted citizens employed in the Croatian administration with voting right. By numbers, this meant that until 1910, the percentage of voters shrunk to a narrow 2%, while a vast number of Croatian Serbs received the suffrage. As a consequence, the overrepresentation of Serbs in the administration and in the Sabor ingrained hostility between Serbs and Croats for decades, as the animosity towards the Héderváry regime was redirect towards the Croatian Serb (Goldstein, *Croatia* 96; Miller 52–54; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 75; Sokcsevits 758).

The enmity against Serbs peaked in 1902, when an inflammatory article, entitled ‘Srbi ili Hrvati’ (Serbs or Croats) by Nikola Stojanović, a young Bosnian Serb student of law, triggered pogroms in Zagreb. The infamous article originally had been published in the Belgrade-based, well-known *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald), and was republished a month later in the Zagreb-based *Srbobran* (Guardian of Serbian Culture). In the article, Stojanović expressed his opinion that the culturally divided Croats characterized by a less-developed, weaker national identity would inevitably assimilate in due time to the Serbian nation. He anticipated a cultural war between the two nations, which would have culminated in the cultural termination, absolute assimilation and disappearance of one.31 Furthermore, the young student untactfully added that a nation (referring to the Croats), whose greatest national hero (Josip Jelačić) had served another power (the Habsburgs), was destined to nothing else than to remain servants. His lines were met with unparalleled rage throughout Croatia, and provoked almost a week-long mass demonstration in Zagreb against the Serbs. In this course, rioters vandalized and pillaged bank offices, shops, printing presses

31 As referred to it in the article’s subtitle: ‘Do istrage Naše ili Vaše,’ that is ‘Until the Termination of One of Us.’
and firms owned by Serbs, until the Ban announced martial law, and the army occupied the city to restore order (Lampe, *Balkans* 28; Miller 17).

Besides the economic and political advantages, the cooperation of Croatian Serbs with the Héderváry regime was further motivated by their angst of Croatian nationalism. In 1881, the Croatian Military Frontier had been abolished, and its territory had been returned to the civil administration. Despite fulfilling a long-standing demand of the Croatian political elite, the reincorporation of Military Croatia into Civil Croatia significantly changed the ethnic outlook of the crown province. As in Military Croatia, the Serbs constituted the half of the population, the administrative unification meant that a considerable number of Orthodox Serbs came under the rule of Zagreb: indeed, based on the census of 1910, the quarter of Croatia–Slavonia was inhabited by Serbs (Goldstein, *Croatia* 93, 96; Miller 16–18). The new ethnic and political realities promoted the formation of the Party of Right, which remained the most significant Croatian opposition party until the dawn of the 20th century. Led by Ante Starčević, the party exploited the Croatian pride vested in history (Motta 143), and demanded the constitutional and administrative separation of Croatia from Hungary based on the historic rights of Croatian medieval statehood. Furthermore, Starčević propagated the concept of ‘Croatian political nation,’ which misused the civic notion of nationhood to meet the ends of ethnic nationalism.

The concept of ‘one political nation’ – resembling its contemporary Hungarian counterpart – regarded all citizens Croats in the national sense, irrespective of their ethnic, cultural and confessional backgrounds. This approach served as an argument on which the equal national status of Croatian Serbs could have been rejected, rendering any reconciliation or political cooperation between Croats and Serbs impossible. In essence, Starčević argued that regardless of spoken dialects or confessional affiliations, all Southern Slavs in the Habsburg Yugoslav regions of Croatia-Slavonia, Bosnia–Herzegovina and Dalmatia had been Croats. Those ‘Croats’ who did not realize that – namely the Serbs – could be ‘re-Croatized.’ Upon Starčević’s logic, the existence of the Serbian nation in Croatia was denied, perceiving the Serbs as being merely ‘Orthodox Croats.’ With its nationalist ideas, anti-Habsburg and anti-Hungarian attitude, the Party of Right isolated itself in the Habsburg Empire, while its rhetoric nurtured displeasure and fear among the Croatian Serbs, also fostering the latter’s

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32 At the outbreak of the Great War, Nikola Stojanović went to exile and upon the request of Nikola Pašić, the Serbian Prime Minister, he joined the Yugoslav Committee, an émigré organization championing the idea of a unified, independent Yugoslav state.
willingness to serve Hungarian interests in exchange for protection and granted livelihood (Miller 42; Pavlowitch, Serbia 74).

Undoubtedly, the Croatian Serbs were one of the major benefactors of the Hungarian regime. Their livelihood was guaranteed by the positions they filled in the state administration, while their communities fostered and protected their national identity. For that matter, their cultural and economic institutions were markedly separated and coexisted with the Croatian ones (Goldstein, Croatia 96; Miller 32–33, 42–43; Pavlowitch, Serbia 75). Their banks, economic societies, printing presses, newspapers, firms and enterprises along with the public use and display of Cyrillic alphabet made their presence not only visible, but a persistent reminder for the Croatian elite on their failures to escape the political deadlock of Sub-Dualism.

The Héderváry system, indeed, created a political standstill in Croatia, which could not have been altered by the Croatian opposition’s perseverance on the ‘neither Vienna nor Budapest’ approach. After the death of Starčević in 1896, the Party of Right split into two successor parties, while the public mood felt that it had been high time for the revision of Croatian national goals and strategies. As a consequence, a number of new parties emerged in the political scene around the turn of the 20th century. The majority of their young leaders represented a new political generation, who were educated either in the most acknowledged universities of the Empire or conducted their studies aboard. Their activates expanded also to the field of culture, education and journalism, and starting with 1895, their dissatisfaction was oftentimes voiced in the course of street demonstrations. Most of these new political formations took an Austro-Slav stance, and wished to revisit the national strategy along pro-Habsburg lines. Consequently, their political programmes envisioned either the overall federalization of the Habsburg Empire into ethic subunits or the introduction of Trialism as a

33 Throughout Croatia more than fifty Serbian-owned bank offices operated. Their major bank was the Serbian Bank, founded in Zagreb in 1882, which alone attracted more capital than the major bank of Belgrade (Goldstein, Croatia 96; Pavlowitch, Serbia 76).
34 The group following Mile Starčević firmly kept the party’s anti-Compromise and ‘neither Vienna nor Budapest’ political credo. Meanwhile the group of Josip Frank – known as the Party of Pure Right or Frankists – took an Austro-Slav stance, as they perceived Trialism as an acceptable solution for the Croatian question. Despite this they remained anti-Hungarian and anti-Serbian (Matković, Világháború 40).
35 Among these new political formations, we find the Social Democratic Party and Stjepan Radić’s Peasant Party. Although both developed into a mass party, the limited suffrage prevented them to exchange their mass support for mandates (Goldstein, Croatia 96–100).
36 Around 1890’s, the Southern Slavs were attracted by the Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague. Many future Yugoslav intellectual and political leaders conducted their studies there, and were inspired by the Young Bohemia movement. Notably, Professor Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the Professor of Philosophy, had a substantial influence on them by drawing their attention to the significance of resources as a key to socio-economic affluence. Additionally, the professor had a considerable role in educating his Croatian students and acquaintances on the threat of German economic expansionism, concluding that, in essence, the Southern Slavs had more reasons to fear German aspirations than Italian or Hungarian endeavours (Suppan 211–213).
means to secure a wide-ranging autonomy for Croatia as the third federal unit besides Hungary and Austria (Goldstein, *Croatia* 96–100; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 46–47, 87; Soksevivits 751). Furthermore, ever since the Nagodba had been implemented, the broadening of Croatian political and economic autonomy and the unification of Croatian lands (notably, the reincorporation of Dalmatia) had been among the goals of all Croatian opposition parties. Albeit the political transformation of Croatia into a civic state, and the industrialization benefited the crown province, the constitutional-political arrangements between Croatia and Hungary had been a source for perpetual discontent. In effect, the renegotiation of the Sub-Compromise transformed into a commonplace in Croatian political life (Matković, *Világháború* 36).

Based on the census of 1910, overall 6.8 million Southern Slavs inhabited Austria–Hungary (13.2% of the population), who lived in several crown provinces with diverging constitutional legitimacies and political rights. Besides Croatiao-Slavonia and Fiume (Rijeka) under the Hungarian Kingdom, Croats lived in the Austrian Adriatic coastline of Istria and Dalmatia, and also inhabited the Southwest regions of Bosnia–Herzegovina. Above the administrative, cultural, historical and religious divergence of these Habsburg Yugoslav lands, they displayed regional differences in economic development as well. The economic growth and industrialization of Yugoslav territories were protracted by the policies of Vienna and Budapest, as they were all forced to compete in the market under unequal terms, while financial resources were redistributed to meet the interests of the Austrian-German, Hungarian and Italian landowning and entrepreneur classes.\(^\text{37}\) As a consequence, the burgeoning and broadening of the Yugoslav middle classes were moderate, and their local economies achieved average or substandard growth (Calder 5‒6; Katus, *Történelem* 9, 11, 13‒14, 65).\(^\text{38}\) Among the Yugoslav crown provinces, the capitalist environment within the dualist arrangement mostly benefited the Slovenian territories and the Istrian coastline, although the Serbian and Croatian merchant layer managed to grab a significant share in the grains and flour export of Bácska and Bánát. As a result, the Croatian and Serbian middle classes experienced notable growth towards the end of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century. Eventually, the Croatian National Bank and the Serbian Bank were founded in Zagreb, which could then

\(^{37}\) For instance, the tariff policy of the Hungarian National Railways lowered the cost of long-distance transportation of goods arriving at Fiume (Rijeka) from Hungary, while the Croatian goods were denied of any reduced or preferential rates (Katus, *Történelem* 13‒14).

\(^{38}\) The neglect and the secondary position of Yugoslav provinces was apparent in case of Dalmatia and Bosnia–Hercegovina, where investment in the finance and transportation infrastructure considerably lagged behind the average. Unsurprisingly, these two territories were among the most backward provinces of the Empire (Katus, *Történelem* 13‒14, 65).
provide the local entrepreneurs with sufficient amount of credit to either modernize their agricultural production or to invest in industry. Despite all these achievements, due to the constitutional-political framework, their middle class could not escape their disadvantaged position in the Habsburg market. Fostered by the common economic interests, soon the idea of Serbian-Croatian political cooperation was conceived and gradually gained ground in the burgeoning Croatian and Serbian classes towards the turn of the 19th century. Both being exposed to the Austrian and Hungarian competition, the modification of the sub-dualist arrangement became the key for their long-term economic survival. Consequently, by broadening the rights of Croatia-Slavonia, they hoped that Zagreb would gain share in the redistribution of economic resources, and could pursue a protectionist policy in the Croatian market (Katus, Történelem 11–12, 42, 65–66).

However, in lieu of Croatia, the first joint political action was initiated in Dalmatia at the dawn of the 20th century by an initially Hungaro-Slav and Serbophile movement called the novi kurs (new political direction). The founders of the movement all came from the Dalmatian Party of Right, who abandoned the party’s traditionally anti-Serbian and anti-Hungarian standing. Facing the economic, political and ethnic realities, they reintroduced the Yugoslav idea into political thinking as an instrument to accomplish the long-standing Croatian national goals (Ganza-Aras 66–67). Eventually, the novi kurs was successful in mobilizing both the Croatian and Serbian entrepreneur classes in most of the Yugoslav Habsburg territories, formed the Croato-Serb Coalition, and was also effective in turning the Croatian public opinion temporarily pro-Hungarian (Miller 75).

The major role in the political genesis of novi kurs can be accredited to Frano Supilo, a Dalmatian Croat journalist, who moved to Fiume to become the Editor of the Riječki Novi List (Fiume New Paper) at the turn of the 20th century. With his optimistic approach and energetic youth spirit, in due time, he became a popular and respected figure of Croatian political life. Discovering the Hungarian opponents of the Compromise during his first visit to Budapest in 1901, Supilo conceived a future electoral victory of the Hungarian opposition could have been the key to the renegotiation of the Nagodba. Besides regularly reviewing the pivotal questions of Hungarian-Croatian relations in the 19th century, he waited for the right opportunity to eradicate influence and reshape the Croatian public opinion to take a pro-Hungarian turn (Ganza-Aras 279; Petrinović 62–64, 50; Sokcsevits 752–753, 757). Eventually, the year 1903, brought those significant changes in the domestic and international political scenes which made Supilo pursue his visions. In 1903, being appointed the Prime Minister of Hungary, the despised Khuen-Héderváry resigned from the banship; Benjámin von Kállay, the joint
Financial Minister, an expert on Yugoslavs and the chief architect of Habsburg Bosnia, passed away; tension between the ruling Liberal Party and its opposition intensified in Budapest; while, as the pro-Russian Karadordević dynasty ascended to the throne, the Danubian Monarchy lost Serbia as its subservient ally. From 1903 onward, the Novi List under Supilo employed correspondents in Vienna, Budapest and Zagreb, and intentionally devoted more space to give up-to-date reports on the political developments and crucial affairs of the Dual Monarchy (Sokcsevits 753; Tanner 111). Besides the Dalmatian journalist, the above developments mobilized other members of the young Dalmatian intelligentsia, such as the lawyers, Ante Trumbić and Josip Smodlaka, who all decided to join Supilo’s pro-Hungarian endeavours. Eventually, the Dalmatian initiation of novi kurs transgressed the frontiers of the province, and found its way to the Croatian and Serbian middle classes in Croatia–Slavonia as well (Ganza-Aras 286; Sokcsevits 752–753).

To convey idea of a Croatian-Hungarian cooperation, the novi kurs utilized the anti-German sentiments of the Dalmatian intelligentsia. The source of antipathy against Austria and Austrian-Germans originated in the backwardness of the Dalmatian coastline, whose peripheral position had been exclusively blamed on Vienna. In the absence of any economic programmes promoting entrepreneurship, the region lacked of sufficient investment capital throughout the 50 years of Dualism. Furthermore, the Austrian tariff policy unfavourable to Dalmatia, the lack of intensive railway constructions, and Vienna’s patronizing attitude towards the Dalmatian Italian minority all contributed to the Dalmatian discontent (Tanner 110). In preparation for the Hungarian national elections of 1905, the Novi List – by that time the official mouthpiece of the novi kurs – gradually became more anti-German and anti-Habsburg in nature, and took a critical standing towards Austria and the Zagreb regime.

Simultaneously, establishing an amicable tone, the articles made efforts to display the Hungarian opposition in a positive role, and, in effect, introduced the programme of Croatian-Hungarian reconciliation to the public (Dolmányos 176–178; Miller 75; Petrinović 48, 62–64; Sokcsevits 752–753; Tanner 111). ‘The greatest enemy is the Drang nach Osten and the system which serves it, thus the Croats have to seek the opportunity to cooperate with those who feel the same threat,’ Supilo explained to the Croatian readership (Supilo 132) the

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39 The grape phylloxera alone put an unsurmountable toll on Dalmatian grape growers, while the tariff policy of Vienna enabled cheap Italian wine to flood the Austrian market (Sokcsevits 752).
40 Owing to the Austrian policy, the tiny minority of Dalmatian Italians – making up only 2–4% of the population in the crown province – could culturally and politically dominate the Dalmatian Yugoslav majority. In many cases, the Dalmatian town counsels were operated by Italians (Okey 85).
41 Publishing in Fiume, Supilo took advantage of the Hungarian media law’s more liberal nature than the Croatian or Austrian.
necessity of establishing political alliance with those who were the opponents of the Compromise.

In regard to Hungary, the Independence Party and its electoral coalition were perceived to be a fare future partners in the renegotiate of the Sub-Compromise. ‘Austria has been and it is the source for all our problems, thus above all we want a compromise with the Hungarians along the mutual interests of the two nations,’ Trumbić exclaimed the approach of novi kurs (qtd. Ganza-Aras 319), whose political propaganda efforts virtually started portraying the dualist system as a pure Habsburg and German design. Pursued by the new political direction, a new settlement with the Hungarians assumed a sub-dualist solution, consequently, leaving the dualist arrangement intact, but awarding the crown province with financial independence and an extended self-government. Although the text of the Sub-Compromise described Dalmatia as being the part of the Triune Kingdom of Dalmatia–Croatia–Slavonia, in reality, the crown province remained under Austrian jurisdiction. As expressed by Ante Trumbić in the Narodni List (National Paper) on 11 March 1905, the novi kurs perceived the political alliance with the Hungarians as a key to accomplish the long-lasting national aim of unifying Dalmatia with Croatia–Slavonia: ‘The reincorporation of Dalmatia not only could be the key and the most efficient source of a reconciled and satisfied Croatia, but it could be a support for Hungary likewise in the struggle for political autonomy against Austria’ (Narodni List, 11 March 1905: 1). Overall, the novi kurs was aware that a new sub-dualist settlement not only had required a regime change in Hungary, but also demanded the extension of Hungary’s rights within the Dualist structure as well. In reality, their solution was conceived as a long-term plan, while the short-term necessities required a strong coalition in Croatia and Dalmatia to be forged to back the constitutional struggles of the Coalition in Budapest (Goldstein, Croatia 102; Miller 90; Petrinović 64–65).

The ground for seeking political allies among the Habsburg Yugoslavs was taunted by fact or fictitious fear of German economic expansion and Germanization, which the novi kurs viewed as the ultimate threats for the small nations of Eastern Europe. With a fine situational awareness in regard to the political mood in Hungary and Croatian lands, the novi kurs proposed an alliance for Yugoslav peoples to battle German intrusion into the region. Eventually, the movement managed to recruit the Serbian Independent Party as its political partner. The Serbian formation was the party of the Serbian entrepreneur class, non-incriminated in dealing of the Héderváry regime. Its leaders were involved in the organization of everyday cultural and community life, and therefore they could exert significant influence over the Croatian Serbs (Goldstein, Croatia 96; Petrinović 61, 64–65; Sokcsevits 753).
However, in view of the Héderváry era, the rapprochement of Serbs and Croats, and moreover the creation of a mutual platform presumed to be a difficult task. For that matter, the proponents of the new political course abandoned the concept of the ‘Croatian political nation,’ and in lieu of the Croatian historic state right, they propagated a new Croatian statehood based on the civil equality of Southern Slavs (Krestić 16). In essence, the 19th century Yugoslav idea was revived, and adjusted to meet the social-political realities of contemporary Croatian lands. The latest form of Yugoslavism championed the idea of *narodno jedinstvo* (national unity) between Serbs and Croats, and pursued an ethnically inclusive national programme (Lampe, *Balkans* 29) with the notion of *dvaimeni narod* (nation with two names) as a form civic nationhood. As summarized by Frano Supilo bellow, it regarded the Croats and the Serbs as a single nation based on their common language, and shared political values:

Serbs and Croats are one people with two names. They may have two names, two religions, two traditions, two cultures […] they may kill, they may kiss each other, but in spite of that, from the ethnic point of view, Serbs and Croats are the same peoples, because they are the children of the same Slavic race and because they have the same national language (qtd. Trgovčević 224–225).

In response to the political developments in Hungary, a multiparty meeting took place in October 1905 in Fiume with the participation of Dalmatian opposition parties.42 Marking the beginning of the so-called *resolution policy*, the Croatian Club was formed with the fusion of the National Party and the Party of Right of Dalmatia.43 The Club firmly expressed their support of the Coalition in their struggle for Hungarian state autonomy in a statement known as the Fiume (Rijeka) Resolution. In return for their support, the declaration called for the expansion of Croatian state rights in the framework the sub-dualist arrangements, the termination of the so-far oppressive policy of Budapest towards Croatia–Slavonia, the democratization of the political life and the unification of Croatian lands. Reported by the majority of the Croatian papers, the Fiume Resolution was utilized to attract the attention of the Serbian Independent Party and the Coalition in Budapest. Furthermore, it served to prepare the Croatian public for a pro-Hungarian and pro-Serbian shift by disseminating the

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42 Participating as private individuals, some members of the Zagreb Sabor attended the meeting likewise (Ganza-Aras 319).

43 Pero Čingrija was elected as the first President of the Croatian Club, while the future mayor of Split, Ante Trumbić became its Vice-President.
notion that the Croatian regime could have been only defeated provided political changes had prevailed in Budapest (Banac, *Relations* 45; Djokic 140; Ganza-Aras 319; Sokcsevits 757).

In liaison, the *novi kurs* was willing to the take confrontation with the authorities and the Habsburgs (Lampe, *Balkans* 28), and pursued to prevent any cooperation between the Croatian Serbs and the status quo circles of Zagreb, Budapest and Vienna. As the reincorporation would have demographically benefitted the Croats, it was clear that without a compromise with the Croatian Serbs, the unification of Dalmatia with Croatia would have faced a strong opposition. Nonetheless, the proclamation of the resolution policy received an unexpectedly warm welcome on behalf of the Serbian opposition parties in Dalmatia and Croatia, and two weeks later the delegates of the Serbian Independent Party, and the Serbian Radical Party joined the Croatian initiation in Zara. In the spirit of the Yugoslav idea, the Croatian and Serbian parties concluded the Zara (Zadar) Resolution, which acknowledged the Serbs as constituent political nation, and declared their civil equality with the Croats. In exchange, the Serbian delegates aligned with the points of the Fiume Resolution, and officially joined the common front advocating the unification of Dalmatia with Croatia. Undoubtedly, the Zara Resolution signified a new chapter in Serbian and Croatian relations, which soon witnessed the formation of the Croato-Serb Coalition (CSC), a party alliance inspired by the electoral success of the Hungarian opposition parties’ coalition strategy. Besides the points of the Fiume and Zara Resolutions, the electoral programme of CSC openly included the extension of civic rights. Moreover, it promised the democratization of the judicial system, a responsible government, electoral reforms, the protection of industrial workers and smallholders, and last, but not least, the renegotiation of the Sub-Compromise with special considerations given to economic and constitutional-political questions (Djokic, *Kingdom* 34–35; Goldstein, *Croatia* 102–103; Haslinger 76; Petrinović 76, 87; Sokcsevits 754, 757; Tanner 111).

The announcement of the overtly pro-Hungarian and anti-Habsburg policy astound the Croatian public opinion. Most of the Croatian opposition parties reaffirmed an Austro-Slav stance, and expected the Habsburg dynasty to solve the Croatian question, envisioning either the federalization or the Trialist rearrangement of the Empire as the sufficient guarantee of Croatian autonomy. For this reason, the opposition parties in Dalmatia, Croatia and Istria remained sceptical of a Hungarian-Croatian alliance, while the endeavours of the Croato-Serbian Coalition generated instigating articles in the press of the Hungarian Liberal Party,

44 Croats made up 80% of the Dalmatian population.
the ruling Croatian National Party, and the opposition Party of Pure Right (Frankists). Overall, the spirit and aims of the resolutions divided the Croatian public: some cursed and firmly opposed any Croatian-Serbian-Hungarian collaboration, while others, either in theory or in practice, supported the new direction (Djokic 35; Petrinović 64–68, 77, 80–81).

With the intensification of the Hungarian constitutional crisis in the autumn of 1905, the following months virtually witnessed a competition between the CSC and the Coalition in expressing mutual admiration to each other through eloquent and amicable statements. Meanwhile both coalitions blamed the past discord between Croatian and Hungary on the malevolent machinations of the Viennese Court. The press organs of the Coalition emphasized that all Croatian political aspirations could have been realized once and for all provided the CSC’s support had endured in the struggle against the Crown. Following suit, the CSC engaged in convincing the Croatian and Dalmatian public opinion concerning the advantages of a rapprochement with the Hungarians, envisioning the prospects of an electoral law reform, the introduction of Croatian as the language of command, and the unification of Dalmatia with Croatia-Slavonia (Banac, Relations 45; Cieger 430; Dolmányos 177, 179–183; Ganza-Aras 279; Petrinović 60–61, 73; Sokcsevits 753, 759).

The opportunistic approach of endorsing the Coalition in the course of the Hungarian constitutional crisis, eventually paid off. Within a short period of time, the CSC’s support increased so rapidly that the alliance managed to win first the Dalmatian provincial elections in December 1905, and then the Croatian elections in May 1906. As a result, the CSC emerged as the largest political bloc in the Sabor of both crown provinces, and Frano Supilo transformed into a renowned public figure across the Danubian Empire. Dissolving shortly after the elections had commenced, the defeated Croatian National Party suffered the same fate as its Hungarian sister party, the Liberals (Djokic, Kingdom 35; Goldstein, Croatia 102–103; Petrinović 76, 87; Sokcsevits 754; Tanner 111).

1.2.3. Towards the Concept of Yugoslav Piedmont: Misrule, Absolutism and Disillusions in Croatia

Adjusting to the secret compromise concluded with Francis Joseph, the Coalition Cabinet discontinued challenging the constitutional-political arrangement of the Habsburg Empire. Respectively, their long-advocated national aims – the demand for the Hungarian

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45 Residing in Fiume for many years, Supilo finally applied for a Hungarian citizenship, which he was awarded in the course of only eight days by the Governor of Fiume (Petrinović 81).
command of language, the separate and independent Hungarian tariff zone and central bank – were abandoned, and form one day to another these plans vanished from their political communication. Due to their political turnabout, the tactical alliance with the CSC became a reliability for the Coalition, and soon the persisting great expectations of the Yugoslavs transformed into a source of irritation for Budapest (Banac, Relations 46). With the appointment of Sándor Wekerle a Habsburg loyalist became the Prime Minister of Hungary, who himself was a great obstacle in the Croatian-Hungarian reconciliation. Sustaining its pro-Hungarian stance, the CSC avoided political clashes with the Coalition, the bill proposed on railway regulations in May 1907 proved to be an ultimate breaking point.

Albeit the language question per se had been the focal point of political and national animosities between Croatia and Hungary ever since the late 18th century, the Wekerle Cabinet was determined to pass the bill on the railway service language, expecting all railway employees ‘in the lands of the Hungarian Holy Crown’ to know Hungarian.46 Passing the bill regardless of Croatian objections was, indeed, an example how the Coalition Cabinet had narrowed down its policy to utilize nationalism in lieu of implementing any social and political reforms. In effect, the Hungarian Railway Regulation Bill violated the articles of the Sub-Compromise (Times, 31 December 1909: 3), and the renewal of the language question touched a raw nerve in Croatian society which immediately revoked the traditional anti-Hungarian rhetoric with the CSC assuming the leadership. Besides the mass demonstrations in Zagreb, the Croatian delegates in the Hungarian Parliament utilized their special rights47 to paralyse parliamentary work and the passing of the bill by overspeaking sessions in Croatian.48 With the nationalist turn in Budapest, the temporary alliance with the Yugoslavs collapsed, and Croato-Serb Coalition was soon declared to be the enemy of the Hungarian state for supporting ‘Pan-Slav ideas’ (Banac, Relations 46; Cieger 426–428; Goldstein, Croatia 103; Petrinović 93, 99–104).

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46 According to Law 1907, Art. 49. Par. 1: ‘In the lands of the Hungarian Holy Crown only that individual can be employed by the railway company operating engines for public use of transportation who holds Hungarian citizenship and speaks the Hungarian language. Those railway employees who work in the territory of Croatia–Slavonia, and thus need to communicate with the passengers and local authorities, are also expected to know Croatian as well.’ Translated from the Hungarian original text (Ezer év web).

47 According to Law 1868, Art. 30, Para. 59: ‘It is also declared that the representatives […] of Croatia–Slavonia may use the Croatian language in the common parliament [in Budapest].’ Translated from the Hungarian original text (Ezer év web).

48 The broadening tension can also be observed through the increasing number of parliamentary speeches delivered in Croatian: among the overall 124 Croatian speeches in the Dualist era, 95 speeches were delivered in the course of the Coalition Cabinet, while 39 speeches in June 1907, when the parliamentary debate was held on the bill (Cieger 426–428)
In preparation for the annexation of Bosnia–Herzegovina, the pacification of Croatia through the reestablishment of a pro-Hungarian and Habsburg loyalist leadership Zagreb turned into the major agenda for the Coalition Cabinet. To secure a pro-Hungarian majority, the period between 1906 and 1914 saw the repeated dissolution of the Sabor; however, among the five provincial elections, the CSC emerged clearly victorious four times, while under one occasion the Frankists triumphed. For this reason, the pro-Hungarian Bans in the late Dualist period utilized either lawful or unconstitutional means to purify Croatia from the proponents of the Yugoslav idea (Cieger 433; Cohen 253; Sokcsevits 760, 765).

Between 1908 and 1910, the Bans tried to abuse the temporary anti-Serbian sentiments triggered by the annexation crisis to break and dissolve the Croatian-Serbian party alliance. Upon the orders of Prime Minister Sándor Wekerle and Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal, the joint Foreign Minister, Ban Paul Rauch collected compromising materials against CSC members to mount a mass staged trial (Cohen 253). First, denunciatory articles were published, followed by the arrest of fifty-three members of the Serbian Independent Party – among them priests, entrepreneurs, merchants, intellectuals and farmers – in August 1908. The specific charges were only announced seven months later in March 1909, when the arrested Serbians were charged with high treason, committed in the form of anti-state conspiracy, support of Pan-Serb separatist movements, and association with the Belgrade-based, Pan-Yugoslav cultural organization, the Slovenski Jug. Although the treason trial had been primarily created to prepare the annexation, and to control the pro-Serbian sentiments, still, it was not suspended even after the Serbian Kingdom officially acknowledged the annexation of the two provinces. Eventually, the verdict was announced on the first anniversary of the annexation, 5 October 1909, sentencing thirty-two defendants for imprisonment (Dragnich 44–45; Suppan 215, 220). Not only did the masterminds behind the trial fail to break up the Croato-Serb Coalition, but the defence attorney, Hinko Hinković, an elderly member of the CSC, did an excellent job in making a public joke out of the evidence and of the illiterate anti-Serbian witnesses summoned to court. Overall, the mass trial did not increase anti-Serbian sentiments in Croatia,

49 Requested by his former students in the CSC, Professor Masaryk addressed the issues of the trial in the Reichsrat, and called for the review of the evidence by a parliamentary committee in vain (Suppan 210, 216–217).

50 The Slovenski Jug, established in 1904 in Belgrade, was the only Serbian organization, which stood by the Yugoslav idea (Zlatar 392).

51 Hinko Hinković was a lawyer by profession, and had a Jewish ancestry. For a brief period between 1884 and 1886, he was a member of the Party of Right, but opposed Starčević nationalist tone and withdrew from politics. Later he joined the CSC in Croatia, and became a target of political attacks due to his role in the Zagreb High Treason Trial and jailed in 1911. In 1913, he was chosen as one of the Sabor delegates to the Budapest Parliament. Because of his Serbian relations and acquaintances, he emigrated after the Sarajevo assassination (Janković 202).
but conversely brought the two nations closer, as the majority of the Habsburg Yugoslavs perceived the Zagreb high treason trial as a staged trial (Goldstein, Croatia 103–104; Miller 130; Seton-Watson, Croatia 227–228; Tanner 113). With the trial failing its primary objective, all verdicts were suddenly annulled in 1910 without any clarified reasons (Cohen 9), while Vienna and Budapest – growing even more determined to disrupt the CSC – changed political tactics, and set to destroy the image of the Yugoslav alliance.

Orchestrated by the Foreign Minister, Aehrenthal, the preparation for another anti-Yugoslav trial had been in motion while the treason trial commenced. Heinrich Friedjung, an internationally acclaimed historian published a series of articles in the Neue Freie Presse during the spring of 1909, making allegations on some unnamed members of CSC for accepting bribes and payments from Serbia (Suppan 221). His efforts in galvanizing public opinion were joined by Friederich Funder, a Christian-Socialist journalist and the Editor-in-Chief of the Reichspost, who published translated documents on payments which supposed to support Friedjung’s accusations. Additionally, Funder’s article accused Frano Supilo, Svetozar Pribićević, Franko Potočnjak and others by name for accepting financial support from the Slovenski Jug and the Serbian Cabinet on a regular basis. As a result of the denunciatory articles, fifty-two representatives of the Sabor eventually sued both the newspapers and the authors for libel (Miller 125).

In the course of the infamous Friedjung-Reichspost libel trial (ibid. 125, 131), anti-Yugoslav endeavours suffered an embarrassing defeat in court. Firstly, it was proven that Frano Supilo had been attending lectures in Berlin at the alleged time he had supposed to be in Belgrade attending secret meetings. Secondly, based on expert testimonies, the authenticity of the proof documents was questioned. It was soon uncovered that the cash orders and other payments had been fabricated by a false witness, Milan Vašić, an employee at the Habsburg Legation in Belgrade. With the wide domestic and international press coverage, the ill-conceived Friedjung-Reichspost libel trial abated Austrian-Hungarian prestige, and came to be an embarrassing political disaster for the Monarchy. Conclusively, the libel trial proved to be an unquestionable moral victory for the CSC, therefore, Aehrenthal and Heir-Apparent Francis Ferdinand interfered, and convinced the litigant parties to close the case with an out-of-court settlement (Cohen 253–254; Miller 125, 131–132; Petrinović 120, 124; Seton-Watson, Croatia 227–228; Steed, Hapsburg 102, 104; Suppan 217, 220–221; Tanner 113).

52 The Neue Freie Presse was a prestigious paper of the Austrian-German liberal middle-class. Acquired a large circulation, by 1914 had more than 114,000 subscribers (Okey 81).

53 Vašić was later interrogated in Belgrade in 1910 and received prison sentence (Antić, Pager 48–49)
Albeit the inter-Yugoslav party alliance managed to persist until the end of the Great War regardless of the trials orchestrated to destroy it, the unconstitutional and overtly absolutistic measures of Budapest made its practical and effective operation impossible (Sokcsevits 765).\textsuperscript{54}

The enduring political struggles – peaking with the two trials and introduction of absolutism – exhausted Frano Supilo, who decided to withdraw from politics, and left the CSC in 1912. After his departure, Svetozar Pribi\v{c}evi\v{c},\textsuperscript{55} the President of the Serbian Independent Party, took the leadership of the CSC. Despite being a supporter of the Yugoslav idea, Pribi\v{c}evi\v{c} realized that the civic national programme offered by Yugoslavism could not have protected the Serbian community in the Habsburg Empire (Cieger 433; Goldstein, \textit{Croatia} 105; Miller 167; Sokcsevits 756–766). For that matter, he covertly looked for Belgrade as the future unifier of all Southern Slavs, and maintained a close relationship with the Serbian Primer, Nikola Pa\u{\i}\v{s}i\v{c} and his political clique.\textsuperscript{56} Upon the request of Pa\u{\i}\v{s}i\v{c}, Pribi\v{c}evi\v{c} on the one hand had remained the President of CSC, and had sustained the coalition until the end of the Great War; and on the other hand, made a compromise with Budapest by turning himself into a moderate \textit{Magyaron}. In 1913, the table talks with István Tisza, the Prime Minister of Hungary, resulted in the restoration of the Croatian Constitution, and the end of absolutism, while additional concessions being accomplished by the creation of a separate National Economy Department in Zagreb. First of all, Pribi\v{c}evi\v{c}’s rapprochement with the Hungarian Cabinet was fostered by the fear of Budapest concluding an agreement with the anti-Serb Frankists; secondly, he wished to buy time for Serbia, which was both financially and militarily exhausted after the Balkan Wars (Jeszenszky, \textit{Közép-Európa} 41; Miller 166–167). Albeit emerging as a regional power, Serbia faced isolation in the post-Balkan War period, while the international situation in Europe pointed towards a future armed conflict. For these reasons, the Serbian Premier did not want to weaken the Hungarian Cabinet by any means, as he hoped Budapest could counter-balance the war-party in the Viennese Court. Conclusively, with his perplexing pro-Hungarian attitude, Pribi\v{c}evi\v{c} fulfilled the wishes of Pa\u{\i}\v{s}i\v{c} and persisted maintaining the coalition of the Croat and Serb parties (Goldstein, \textit{Croatia} 104–105; Krestić 429; Sokcsevits 766).

\textsuperscript{54} In 1911, the Hungarian Cabinet suspended the Croatian Constitution, and the crown province was subjected to absolutism marked by the autocratic rule of royal commissariat, the extreme violation of right to free speech and assemble.

\textsuperscript{55} Pribi\v{c}evi\v{c} became the Minister of Interior and then the Minister of Education in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Suppan 212).

\textsuperscript{56} Svetozar Pribi\v{c}evi\v{c} had a decisive role in that the Serbian vision of the Yugoslav union was realized after the Great War with the passing of the Vidovdan Constitution in 1921. Although, he did not abandon the coalition, but betrayed its founding principles (Miller 136)
In the course of the Balkan Wars, Serbia’s unexpected military performance – owned to the modernization financed by French loans – surprised even the Dual Monarchy’s leadership. With the conclusion of the war, the Balkan state doubled its territory and rose to the number one regional power in the Balkan Peninsula. In the midst of the new Croatian political standstill, these developments considerably enhanced Serbian prestige in the Habsburg Yugoslav world (Antić, Paget 65; Woodhouse 63), and the enlarged Balkan state transformed into a model for the rest of the Southern Slavs. With the Croato-Serb Coalition dominating the Sabor (Tanner 111), Serbian military victories were celebrated publicly in many cities (Trgovčević 229–230), but the public manifestation of joy provoked the authorities to intervene by introducing a state of emergency and suspending the work of local authorities (Ćirković 246).

After the spectacular failure of the resolution policy, the founders of the novi kurs concluded that a sub-dualist or a trialist solution could have not been expected either from Francis Joseph or the Hungarian political elite. The annexation crisis with the anti-Yugoslav trials, and the suspension of the Croatian Constitution forced them to abandon plans for Croatian self-government accomplished inside the Habsburg Empire. However, owing to the increasing Serbophile sentiments, unification with Serbia had become more desirable than ever, as the Serbian achievements promoted Yugoslav solidarity and hope that the Yugoslav national aspirations could have been accomplished through liberation. As it was unlikely that the Habsburg Yugoslav territories could have seceded from Austria–Hungary on their own, thus many leading Southern Slav intellectuals – drawing a parallel with the success of Italian unification – recognized Serbia as a possible Piedmont of Southern Slavs (Calder 5‒6; Goldstein, Croatia 103–104; Haslinger 76; Sokcsevits 760; Zlatar 392).

Nonetheless, the idea of a ‘Yugoslav Piedmont’ became popular primarily among the founders of the novi kurs and the Croatian intelligentsia. Albeit, in theory, the victories of Serbia made Yugoslavism more appealing, yet in practice, the Croatian society remained divided on the Pan-Yugoslav national programme, with the overwhelming majority preferring a trialist solution as the key to Croatian self-government. Irrespective of this, the idea of a common Yugoslav state to be realized outside the Habsburg Empire with Serbia being the liberator had evolved into the new national programme for the intellectual founders of the novi kurs (Cohen 8–9; Goldstein, Croatia 103–104; Zlatar 392). In liaison, Ante Trumbić and Josip Smolčić held talks with Bosnian Serb politicians, concluding that provided a future war between the Serbian Kingdom and the Habsburg Empire had broken out, the proponents of the Yugoslav Piedmont idea would have emigrated to launch an international campaign.
abroad for the unification Habsburg Yugoslav territories with Serbia (Djokic, Kingdom 35–36; Sokcsevits 766). Despite the speculative and prospective nature of the plan, the assassination of Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo proved to be the ‘sudden and unexpected future event’ (qtd. Banac, Relations 46), Frano Supilo and the other pro-Yugoslav Croatian intellectuals had awaited for. The entirely new international situation which the assassination had triggered offered an unexpected opportunity for Yugoslavism.

To sum up, the novi kurs movement successfully mobilized the Croatian and Serbian entrepreneur class in most of the Yugoslav Habsburg territories in the course of the Hungarian constitutional crisis, and formed the Croato-Serb Coalition based on the Yugoslav idea, promoting civic equality among Yugoslavs. As it turned out, the promising regime change in Hungary after the 30-year rule of the Liberal Party did not fulfil any long-awaited expectations. In lieu of solving social and national discontent, the Liberal Party’s successors, the Coalition used nationalist tones to win ‘cheap and easy patriotic victories’ by overexaggerating the peril the non-Magyars posed to the Hungarian Kingdom (Tihany 129). Disillusioned with Austria–Hungary, the intellectual fathers of the novi kurs then looked for the Serbian Kingdom as a possible Piedmont for the Yugoslavs, which could have liberated and unified all the Southern Slav territories. With the outbreak of the Great War, Frano Supilo, Ante Trumbić and Hinko Hinković left the Habsburg Empire, and pursued to convince the leaders of the Entente Powers on the creation of a united Yugoslav state on the debris of the Dual Monarchy. For this reason, their rhetoric and political communication extended to include the Slovenes under the Yugoslav idea, calling for the unification of the triimeni narod (nation with three names), that is the three tribes of the Southern Slavs. Ever since the outbreak of the war, their political mission had been seemingly whole-heartedly supported by the Serbian Kingdom, which contributed financial assistance to the creation of the Yugoslav Committee, a London-based Yugoslav émigré organization. In view of the considerable anti-Serbian sentiments in Great Britain, and the British belief in the Habsburg Empire’s pivotal position in the continental balance of power, the aspiring agenda of the Yugoslav Committee seemed to be a lost cause in the beginning of the Great War. However, the Pan-Yugoslav cause soon found significant allies and devout advocates in the person of Robert William Seton-Watson, a historian acclaimed for his expertise in Central Europe, and Henry Wickham Steed, a well-connected journalist of the Times, who would both utilize all their efforts to patronize the Yugoslav idea in front of the Allied Powers.
1.3. The Southern Slav Question and the Balance of Power

Traditionally, the Habsburg Empire was perceived as a Great Power in Great Britain, and moreover, the pivotal country in maintaining the continental balance of power. By the second half of the 19th century, the Empire’s diplomatic value for Britain increased even more owing to the Italian and German unifications, and Balkan small nations’ pursuit for independence (Beretzky, Plans 104; Sked 191). Besides, as all the Pan-Slav endeavours were regarded as a challenge to the balance of power, Great Britain was determined to oppose any Russian ambitions in the Balkans. In liaison, for a long time, the Foreign Office had protected the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, while reserved the Habsburg Empire the status of being the barrier against Saint Petersburg’s aspiration in the peninsula (Antić, Paget 32–33; Markovich, Identities 116; Schmitt 62–66; Wallach 12).

However, by the turn of the 19th century, the international order had to confront an even more significant challenge in the form of Germany. Ultimately, German unification proved to be a peril to the European status quo, as post-Bismarck Germany had not pursued to sustain, but to transform the power-relations in the continent in favour of Berlin. The German fleet-building law aiming at the construction of a strong and powerful fleet by the year 1920 (Schmitt 48–54; Wallach 12) fostered imperial patriotic sentiments in Britain, and moreover, it changed the diplomatic scene as well. By 1907, a number of ardent ‘Teutonophobes’ had emerged in the British press and among the younger officials of the Foreign Office, who were all alarmed by the German aspirations for European hegemony. With Germany overtly challenging British naval supremacy, patriotic voices embracing imperialist slogans intensified in the press – notably in the Times, the Daily Express, and the Daily Mail –, while the anti-German attitude gradually paved its way to political circles. Eyre Crowe, the Head of the Central and South-East European Department in the Foreign Office, and William Tyrrell, the Private Secretary of Edward Grey, were the most notable British official who had taken an early Germanophobe stance (Lees-Milne 109; Morris Morris 86, 90, 99, 218, 487). As Germany was reconceived to be the major threat to British imperial interests, Austria–Hungary’s role was then extended to counter-balance Berlin’s efforts as well. Before the annexation crisis of 1908, the Dual Alliance between Germany and the Habsburg Empire was

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57 These concerns were aggravated by the creation of the Alldeutscher Verband, an overtly Pan-German, ultranationalist and Anglophobe organization (Péter, Balance 662).

58 Their views were shared and supported by Harold Nicolson, and Alan Leeper, two junior executive officials under Crowe, who – along with their superiors – would play a significant role in devising settlement plans as the members of the British peace delegation.
deemed to be beneficial for Britain, as it was believed the Dual Monarchy would force the German Emperor and his Cabinet into self-moderation (Beretzky, *Scotos Viator* 16; Hay 59).

Constituting the non-German part of the Habsburg Empire, Hungary’s perceived ability to balance internal power-relations and to check the Habsburg foreign and military policy earned the Kingdom of Saint Stephen an enormous prestige in Great Britain. In effect, ever since the Hungarian War of Independence, a general admiration had prevailed in Britain towards Hungary among the liberal opinion-makers, journalists and historians (Tihany 121). The favourable Hungarian image was then further fostered by the belief that Hungary had been the stronghold of the Habsburg Empire within the dualist constitutional arrangement (Beretzky, *Scotos Viator* 16; Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 386; Péter, *Balance* 665–666).\textsuperscript{59} Despite this general sympathy and Austria–Hungary’s significant role in the continental balance of power, it should be emphasized that the protection of British imperial interest had remained the priority in policy-making. Consequently, pro-Hungarian and pro-Habsburg sentiments had never translated into unconditional support of either Hungary or the Empire, and the future of Central and Eastern Europe persisted to be of secondary importance. In practice, all ambitions were judged on the premise whether they had posed a threat to the stability of the Habsburg Empire, and thus to the balance of power (Beretzky, *Hirünk* 63; Hay 57–58; Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 396–397).

At the time of the Hungarian constitutional crisis, both Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson were employed as the correspondents of British newspapers. In the beginning, both gentlemen were Hungarophiles, and aligned themselves with the traditional pro-Hungarian sentiments of Britain. For either personal or professional reasons, they involved themselves in the contemporary political developments of the Empire, and gradually realized that the Habsburg Empire would not be able to fulfil its vital role in the European balance of power in the long run.

### 1.3.1. Hungary’s Role in Maintaining the European Order

The German aspirations forced Great Britain to abandon its traditional isolationist policy and to engage in an active diplomacy. Despite the resentment of officials and professional diplomats towards the local British newspaper correspondents in Europe, these

\textsuperscript{59} Additionally, British sympathy towards Hungary also rooted in historical similarities in development. Among these similarities, we find the bicameral legislatures and uncodified constitutions. The later means the absence of a single written supreme legal document (codified constitution), as a set of centuries-old rules, laws, principles and core statutes (such as the Magna Charta and the Aranybulla) shape the political outlook and the government.
journalists oftentimes played a considerable role in back-channel diplomacy. Furthermore, they could access and acquire information which proved to be valuable supplement to the official reports of the British legations (Robbins 86). Among these correspondents, we find Henry Wickham Steed, who began his life-long career as a journalist in Berlin as the correspondent of the New York World. Educated in Paris and Berlin, Steed was hired by the Times at age of twenty-five, and operated first as the influential paper’s correspondent in Rome between 1896–1903, and then in Vienna from 1902 until 1913 (Albrecht-Carrié 430; Liebich 183; Jeszenszky, Crisis 379; Jeszenszky, Steed 20; Seton-Watson, Introduction 25; Steed, Thirty I: 34, 74–75).

Steed was notable for his skill in building and sustaining an impressively wide network of connections (Jeszenszky, Crisis 379; Jeszenszky, Steed 18). Besides maintaining a diverse correspondence, his home in Vienna before 1913 and then in London virtually evolved into an informal meeting place for politicians, lower- and mid-level officials, and the members of diplomatic legations (Jeszenszky, Steed 22; Seton-Watson, Introduction 25). Replacing William Lavino, an unenergetic, passive figure, Steed approached his work in Vienna from an entirely new perspective: he set himself traveling in the Habsburg Empire, and acquired a number of acquaintances, who proved to be valuable sources of information for his work (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 16). Besides, he intentionally pursued the company of intellectuals and men of importance, and eventually the doors of influential imperial and royal figures opened for him as well (Jeszenszky, Presztízs 68; Jeszenszky, Steed 24).

Despite his exceptional flair for writing (Jeszenszky, Steed 20) and communication, Steed’s pretentious, over-confident and stubborn nature, coupled with his one-sided, fixed views and incline to believe in conspiracy theories, often made him a reliability for some members of his company. Unsurprisingly, in view of these character flaws, he had a tendency to overestimate the validity of his arguments, and importance of his unbalanced, impartial assessments. Moreover, he showed a narcissist contempt towards everyone – including many

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60 Masaryk described Steed’s social capital in the following way: ‘Round Steed gathered not only the English and neutral Europe — men of manifold interest and spheres of activity, soldiers, bankers, journalists, Member of the Parliament, diplomats, in short the active political world’ (Masaryk 96).

61 Owing to his reputation, Henry Wickham Steed’s character was included in the Fall of Eagles, a British television drama following history of the Habsburg Empire from the Spring of Nation until end of the Great War. In episode eight, Steed has a brief encounter with King Edward VII, Georges Clemenceau and Alexander Izvolsky in Marienbad in August 1908. Taunting Steed for his supposedly well-established connection, Clemenceau challenges the journalist to surprise him with a piece of information worth to consider. Accepting the bet, Steed reveals that the Habsburg Empire will unilaterally annex Bosnia–Herzegovina in autumn 1908.

62 George Riddell, one of Britain’s press magnates, and a friend of David Lloyd George, remembered Steed in one of his memoirs to be ‘a good talker and most amusing,’ ‘brilliant person,’ who spoke French and Italian fluently at a native level (Riddell, Peace 344).
British high-ranking officials – who diverged from his opinion. As a British liberal imperialist, he firmly believed in the primacy of the British Empire and its civilizational mission, and acted accordingly as a self-proclaimed guardian of imperial interests (Jeszczysz, Crisis 379–380). As he turned more radical in views, Steed regarded every criticism – in the course of his restless and perpetual quest for defending Britain – as an opportunity for self-validation by showcasing his excellence and accurate judgements through another piece of sophisticated, eloquent writing.

Due to his social capital, Steed remained well-informed, and soon found himself increasingly engaged in political activism exercised through his writings (Liebich 183). He was well-known for his Germanophobia and anti-Semitic views as well (ibid. 185), which he had developed in 1896 while being employed as a correspondent in Berlin. The young Steed had received a first-hand proof how Emperor Wilhelm II’s imperialistic endeavours had been transforming Germany from a cultural powerhouse of philosophy to a nest of pretentious nationalist militarism (Jeszczysz, Steed 29; Morris 24; Steed, Thirty I: 66). Ever since he had left Berlin, his suspicion on, and everything in regard to Germany intensified (Liebich 180–181), as he was convinced that the German Empire aspired to challenge British naval and economic supremacy likewise. As he perceived the Habsburg Empire could have been the first to fall for German expansion, maintaining the European balance of power became a question whether the Danubian Monarchy could survive into the following decades as an independent and integral Central European state. With that in mind, he concluded that the balance of power required the Hungarian half of the Empire to be empowered to counterbalance Pan-German stance in the Monarchy (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 16). His political perception, in effect, correlated with the new anti-German direction in the Foreign Office, which unsuccessfully pursued to deter both the Habsburg Empire and Italy from the Triple Alliance (Jeszczysz, Crisis 380).

As a correspondent, Steed vested interest in the Habsburg Monarchy. At first, he argued for the strengthening of the Dualist system as all other federal designs would have weakened the Monarchy and made it exposed to German influence. In the beginning, Steed’s approach towards Hungary and the patriotic and ‘chivalrous race’ of Hungarians (Times, 17 April 1905: 9), resembled the contemporary British attitude. He often visited Budapest, a liberal metropolis, free of the bigotry and snobbery of Vienna. He established regular Hungarian acquaintances, acquainted himself with the milestones of Hungarian history,

63 His denouncement of Jewish influence and Zionist aspirations could be traced back to his firm and deeply rooted Germanophobia. Until the rise of Hitler, he had identified Jews as Germans (Liebich 180–181).
started learning Hungarian, and eventually was able to read the language (Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 380, 396–397; Jeszenszky, *Steed* 24; Steed, *Thirty I*: 198). During 1905–1906, he observed and offered a critique on the developments of the constitutional crisis in detailed accounts written for the *Times*. He supported the Coalition’s demands for a wider political and economic separation upon the ground that a stronger Hungary had implied a stronger Habsburg Empire, and supposedly, a triumph over German aspirations (Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 386;). In this belief, he introduced the Coalition’s programme to the British public as a possible aid for the weakness of the Compromise, which – in lieu of ‘repair’ or ‘patch-work’ – could foster the organic reconstruction of the Empire by preserving the working features of Dualism in a new settlement between the sovereign and the Hungarian nation (Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 377, 385–386; Jeszenszky, *Steed* 26–27 *Times*, 1 February 1905: 4):

> There is no people on the Continent of Europe which has more constantly commanded the sympathy and respect of Englishmen than the people of Hungary. In their struggle to assert their hereditary right to constitutional freedom within the limits of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy and to develop institutions which should be at once the bulwark and the organs of ordered liberty amongst them, and have commanded our admiration and enjoyed our moral support. […] We hope that […] the Hungarians […] make a working compromise with their King which will at once leave their liberties intact and secure for them the solid advantage inseparable from their position as an integral element in one of the oldest and greatest of European States (*Times*, 17 April 1905: 9).

Similar to official Britain, Steed hoped that the crisis would not be prolonged (*Times*, 1 February 1905, 4), therefore, he expected moderation on both behalf of the sovereign and Coalition. However, as the disagreement between the two sides turned into an unnecessary ‘trial of strength’ (*Times*, 11 September 1905: 4), Steed grew frustrated with the unbending and stubborn approach of the Coalition, which extended ‘the immobilization of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy as a political force in Europe’ (*Times*, 8 September 1905: 4). He still believed that a Coalition Cabinet could have guaranteed the stability for the Dual Monarchy desired in Britain (Jeszenszky, *Steed* 26–27), provided its leaders had suspended some of their impractical demands (Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 393–394; Péter, *Balance* 448; *Times*, 8 July 1905: 5).
In the course of the constitutional crisis, Steed discovered both the nationality question and social anxiety as the crucial issues of contemporary Hungary (Jeszenszky, Steed 27), and maintained that the Coalition – corresponding with their propagated program – should have addressed these problems as soon as possible (Times, 6 October 1905: 13). Albeit being aware of the Magyarization policy, still, he had not challenged Hungarian domination until it served the interest of the balance of power (Jeszenszky, Crisis 386). For that matter, he did not reject the Hungarian demand for a national army on the ground that it would have served as a tool for the Magyarization of non-Hungarian regiments, but because it would have triggered disunity in the Dual Monarchy. Should the Hungarian aspirations have been fulfilled, a similar demand would have been raised in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire as well (Times, 27 March 1905: 3; Times, 24 May 1905: 5). Conclusively, the constitutional crisis made him disillusioned with the Hungarian elite, who had been unwilling to assume the task to guard the independent course of Habsburg foreign policy (Jeszenszky, Crisis 406–407), and moreover had endangered the Empire’s stability by engaging in utterly unnecessary quarrels with the Crown, overall accomplished no results in the end.

Alarmed by the international developments and the growing German influence over Austria–Hungary, his attention was fixed to Habsburg foreign policy (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 26; Jeszenszky, Crisis 404–405). Becoming one of the fierce critique of Aehrenthal from 1907 onwards, he cautiously scrutinized the diplomatic endeavours of the Habsburg Empire, and proved ready to expose Pan-German intrigues in Central Europe. However, his rapid discontent with the Dual Monarchy was not equally shared by all his fellow countryman, among whom Robert William Seton-Watson, an Oxford-educated historian and publicist – latter becoming an acknowledged expert in Central European and Yugoslav affairs – soon challenged the conclusions of the journalist.

In contrast to Steed’s pessimistic renouncement, Seton-Watson’s optimistic idealism inspired the historian to constantly seek answers ‘how’ and not ‘whether’ the Habsburg Empire could survive. He arrived at Vienna in November 1905 as the correspondent of the

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64 In the autumn 1905, Steed reported on the question universal male franchise and on the vast demonstrations of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party (Times, 8 September 1905, 4). He perceived the electoral reform as missed opportunity which would have repelled Pan-German orientations in the Habsburg Empire, arguing that ‘by letting the 12 000 000 Austrian Slavs exercise their rightfully predominant influence over the 9 000 000 Austrian Germans. […] I shall not cease to be sorry for my Magyar friends who after all have a certain sense of progress and liberalism as we understand it (qtd. Jeszenszky, Crisis 403).

65 Steed gave the following evaluation on the conclusion of the constitutional crisis: ’After fifteen months of resistance and challenging the authority of the Crown, the Coalition capitulated to the dynasty. Conclusively, as the handling of constitutional crisis proved it, the Habsburg dynasty was in effect a legislative and governing factor equal or moreover superior to the Hungarian Parliament. The affair was a trail of the Crown’s power, and drawn up the question how enduring and stable the Dualist structure was’ (Steed, Hapsburg 10–11).
Morning Post, and a devoted Hungarophile and a strong supporter of the Coalition’s political struggle against Francis Joseph. The affluence of his father, William Livingstone, an accomplished businessman, had acquired – and which eventually became his inheritance – financially enabled the young historian to travel around Europe with the intention to study and facilitate his knowledge in those aspects of European history, which had been so far neglected in Britain (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 11; Miller 60; Seton-Watson, Introduction 21).

In his pre-war works, the necessity of maintaining and reforming the Habsburg Monarchy were frequently recurring themes (Cornwall, Seton-Watson 330; Miller 60; Péter, Balance 444). Although, the prolonging constitutional crisis raised the first doubts in Great Britain concerning the future of the Habsburg Empire, and damaged the British image on Hungary, Seton’s admiration towards Hungary and its presumed liberal traditions were further strengthened by the course of events in Budapest (Seton-Watson, Introduction 21), which he described as another proof of ‘Magyar devotion to the sacred principles of freedom’ (Steed, Tributes 332). Subsequently, he perceived the internal situation as the rightful struggle of the Hungarians against absolutism (Cornwall, Seton-Watson 335–336; Jeszenszky, Presztízs 196, 201–202). With the intention to champion the Hungarian endeavours for extended self-government, he engaged himself in understanding the complex national relations of the Habsburg Empire. He spent three months in Hungary and approached several prominent members of the Coalition such as Ferenc Kossuth and Albert Apponyi. In the following years, he established and maintained contact with a number of leading intellectuals and politicians among the nationalities as well (Seton-Watson, Introduction 21; Steed, Tributes 332). Meanwhile, October 1905 witnessed his first public involvement in the questions of the Danubian Monarchy, when his letter submitted to the Times challenged Henry Wickham Steed’s criticism of the Coalition (Times, 5 October 1905: 5).

Irrespective of Steed’s final assessment of the constitutional crisis, Seton’s visits to the Hungarian country-side – by that time as the official correspondent of the Spectator – made him discover the suppression of nationalities in Hungary (Seton-Watson, Introduction 21). The Hungarian men of letters he encountered from the cultural and political sphere did not

66 Among the contemporary British dailies, only the Morning Post and the Daily Telegraph could rival and compete with the Times in regard to reports and news on foreign affairs (Jeszenszky, Crisis 378).
67 He had spent months in Paris and Berlin, before enrolling to the University of Vienna in 1905 with the aspiration to write the history of the Habsburg Empire since 1815 (Seton-Watson, Introduction 21).
68 Steed recalled their first encounter and Seton’s temporary devotion to Hungary as follows: ‘Yet I, for my part, shall always remember [Seton-Watson] as the seemingly timid and diffident young Scot who came to see me in Vienna during Spring of 1905 and, after saying how unjust he thought my views of Hungary, told me that he meant to attack me in the newspaper as soon as he should have collected enough positive evidence of my wrongheadedness’ (Steed, Tributes 331).
intend to conceal their support for forced assimilation policies (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 17, 19; Cornwall, *Seton-Watson* 336–337). Meanwhile, encounters with a number of Slovakian and Romanian artists, literary figures, intellectuals, priests and politicians made him realize that the rights of the nationalities – in theory, granted by Nationality Law of 1868 – had been being sorely violated for decades by the agenda of Magyarization (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 22). With a growing number of disappointing and embittering personal experience, his attitude towards Hungary changed swiftly by 1907, as he conceived that the chauvinistic policies of the Coalition could have alienated the non-Hungarians from the Habsburg Empire (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 18–19). Regarding himself still the friend of Hungary, but the opponent of Hungarian suppression, his discoveries stimulated him to release his first pamphlets and books in the upcoming years to draw attention to the ‘perilous’ and ‘short-sighted’ (Seton-Watson, *Future* 50) policy of Magyarization. He maintained the belief that the solution for the nationality question depended on Hungary, and namely on the Coalition Cabinet (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 20; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 23).

Engaged in press polemy with the Coalition, Seton-Watson started gathering statistical evidence to support his arguments, which led to the publication of his first book, entitled *The Future of Austria–Hungary and the Attitude of the Great Powers*, in late 1907 (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 21–22). In the book, he argued that ‘Austria–Hungary, despite its domestic quarrels, forms a pivot of European politics, and that its disappearance would deal a fatal blow to the balance of power,’ (Seton-Watson, *Future* 4) therefore its integrity was the utmost important for Britain. As he perceived it, both France and Great Britain had

an obvious interest in the maintenance of Austria–Hungary as a Great Power […] dictated solely by the considerations of the Balance of Power in Europe, which would be fatally disturbed by the partition of Austria–Hungary, or even a separation of the two sister States. […] the inevitable conclusion is […] that France and Great Britain must make every effort to preserve the Dual Monarchy (however modified internally) as a political and economic unit in the modern world (ibid. vii).

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69 In 1906, he believed that the nationality question could be solved without the revision of the dualist arrangement by the introduction of universal male suffrage. Nevertheless, his amicable recommendations for the Hungarian elite encountered offensive personal remarks in the Coalition’s press (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 18–19).

70 Notably, the education acts of Albert Apponyi and the Csernova incident.
For this reason, the Dual Monarchy had to find a lasting solution for the nationality question, which could have been realized by solely giving concessions to nationalities in regard to local government, while leaving the core of the Dualist political design intact (ibid. 22).

Additionally, the book revisited the relations of the Dual Monarchy with the Great Powers and its neighbours, and gave account on the trials, press offences, fines and imprisonments as instruments of Magyarization against Slovaks, Ruthenes and Romanians. A separate chapter was devoted to the internal problems of the Empire which – according to the historian – originated from the diverging interpretation of the Compromise. Resembling the attitude of contemporary British foreign policy, anti-German and anti-Russian themes also occurred in his work pertaining to the questions of the balance of power. Abandoning his initial Germanophile stance (Péter, Balance 440), he deemed that the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy into two independent successor states would have made Austria a victim of German expansion. An enlarged and compact Central European German state whose influence and trade power would have gone beyond the Adriatic and the Balkans, reaching till the Near East (Seton-Watson, Future 1–3), would have been an undesired development. In regard to the fatal policy of forced assimilation, he displayed concern over the revival of Pan-Slav sentiments in the Empire (ibid. 20–21). In view of Russian aspirations in the Balkans and Central Europe, such sentiments would have posed another challenge to the European order. In liaison, ‘the need for an effective barrier against Slav aggression afford[ed] the surest justification of Austria–Hungary’s continued existence’ (ibid. 24).

However, since the conclusions of The Future of Austria–Hungary, Seton-Watson realized the stability of the Danubian Monarchy was severely endangered by the suppression of nationalities. His growing distrust of the Hungarian elite, eventually led him to question the willingness of the Coalition Cabinet to resolve the disruptive internal situation. Soon, the Hungarian politicians were declared the greatest obstacles to the reformation of the Empire, as apparently, not only did the Coalition not intend to abandon the policy of forced assimilation, but attempted to introduce new oppressive measures to expedite it (Seton-Watson, Introduction 22; Steed, Tributes 334). Conclusively, as the Hungarian domination over their nationalities was a peril to the future of the Dual Monarchy so it was to the balance of power in Europe. Similar to his contemporaries in Britain, Seton was convinced of the grave importance of the Habsburg Monarchy among the Great Powers, henceforth he became a fierce advocate of the reformation of the Central European state. Although disillusioned with the Hungarian situation, he still believed in the ability of the Habsburg dynasty to rule their
national minorities fairly (Miller 60), he kept maintaining the idea that the future of the Monarchy as a great power depended upon the emancipation of nationalities.

In effect, prior to 1910, Seton-Watson’s primary – but not only – solution for the nationality question rested upon the introduction of universal male suffrage which alone could have triggered the democratization of Hungary by setting political self-correcting measures in motion. As he argued the increase of nationality representatives in the parliament would have eliminated Hungarian hegemony over politics and forced the Hungarians to accept and implement concessions towards the nationalities in regard to local cultural and political rights without altering the constitutional-political design of Dualism. As he regrettably observed, the Hungarians

have overthrown the old principle of their great King, Saint Stephen — unius linguae moris regnum imbecille et fragile est — and have substituted the ‘idea of the Magyar State’ (a Magyar állam eszme). One of the ablest exponent of this ‘idea’ once declared in Parliament that the Magyars had no choice between ‘dominance and slavery’! The sooner this monstrous doctrine is exploded the better and no surer corrective to such racial exclusiveness can be imagined than the introduction of Universal Suffrage (Seton-Watson, Political 18–19).

As a result, his works published between 1908 and 1910 – namely the Political Prosecutions in Hungary (1908), the Racial Problems in Hungary (1908), and the Corruption and Reform in Hungary (1910) – addressed the country’s gravest social and ethnic issues. In effect, these attempts called for the democratization of the Hungarian political system in the framework of Dualism. At that time, Seton ruled out all federalizing endeavours – with the exception of Croatia on theoretical basis – as solutions in the belief that the Empire’s territorial integrity could have been solely maintained and strengthened in the dualist constitutional arrangement. Besides the introduction of male franchise, he presumed that the democratization of local autonomies, expended language rights and cultural autonomy granted at the highest degree, and the revision of administrational units to correspond with the ethnic outlook of the country could have set Hungary, and hence the whole Habsburg Empire on the path of stability (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 24–25; Cornwall, Seton-Watson 338). However, these solutions and views were soon to be reconsidered in light of the maltreatment and persecution of the Habsburg Empire’s Yugoslav subjects, which would transform Seton-Watson to become one of the most devout proponents of Southern Slav national aspirations.
1.3.2. The Revelations of the Southern Slav Question

In comparison to the Slovaks and Romanians, Seton-Watson had neglected the questions of the Yugoslavs before 1908 (Steed, Tributes 334); nonetheless, the Zagreb high treason trial eventually drew his attention to the Southern Slav peoples. Being the witness of the staged trial in Zagreb, he received a first-hand proof of the intolerance and suppression of the Hungarian political elite and of Aehrenthal. Accusing more than fifty Serbs of treason in preparation for and consolidation of the Bosnian annexation, the trial *per se* was an attempt to blacken Serbia’s reputation to convince the Western European public that the Balkan country had been responsible for endangering peace and not Austria–Hungary (Seton-Watson, *Making* 68–69). Nevertheless, Seton-Watson realized that the trial was not merely an effort to abate the prestige of Serbia, but also it supposed to fester the relationship among the Croat and Serb parties of the Croato-Serb Coalition.\(^{71}\) In regard to this policy of Baron Rauch, then Ban of Croatia-Slavonia, he doubted whether the destruction of the Southern Slav coalition had been a viable and practical aim, especially when there had been other possible solutions that would have confronted Habsburg interests in no way (ibid. 75).

The trialist rearrangement of the Habsburg Empire was an alternative proposal already outlined in the *Future of Austria–Hungary* and the *Racial Problems in Hungary*, although before 1910, the conception of Trialism had been laid solely on hypothetical grounds unlikely to be realized. Since Zagreb had aspired to be the capital of a Southern Slav kingdom in the Habsburg Monarchy, Seton argued that it would have inevitably involved the substitution of the dualist system with a trialist political design (Seton-Watson, *Racial* 414). However, erecting a Yugoslav Kingdom within the Danubian Monarchy ‘[wa]s a question which [wa]s better left unanswered,’ Seton concluded in 1907, as he recognized that any Pan-Croat schemes, pursuing ‘the old dream of Magna Croatia,’ had been doomed to fail due to the obstinate resistance of the Hungarians to withdraw from the dualist structure (Seton-Watson, *Future* 58, 64). Albeit elevating Croatia to the same constitutional-political status which Austria and Hungary enjoyed ‘would deal a fatal blow to the Magyar hegemony in Hungary’ (Seton-Watson, *Racial* 414), notwithstanding, at that time, he was still convinced that a strong Habsburg Monarchy could have been maintained only on the premise of Dualism (Péter, *Balance* 676). For that matter, he dismissed both the idea of federalism and provincial autonomy as such integral changes ‘would weaken not merely the Magyar race, but also the

\(^{71}\) The trials were blunders for Budapest and Vienna, and drew the Croats and Serbs closer instead of splitting their coalition (Tanner 113).
Hungarian nation’ (Seton-Watson, *Racial* 409) and the Monarchy’s ability to fulfil its role in the international order.

Arguably, the scandals connected with the Zagreb high treason trial and later the Friedjung-Reichpost libel trial ‘revealed a sinister design on the part of Austria–Hungary’ (Seton-Watson, *Murder* 490) against the Southern Slav national movement (Seton-Watson, *Balkans* 152), and led Seton-Watson to discover the ‘Southern Slav question,’ a latent but significant problem hitherto escaping his observation.

[…]. The trial and the revelations which it has caused, are in my opinion of the greatest importance for all Europe [since] the Friedjung trial is not merely a turning point in the history of the Croato-Serbian race [but] so in the question which in the near future may affect the European balance of power and the strategic policy of the Mediterranean powers,

wrote Seton to his uncle on the first day of 1910 (*Correspondence I*: 66). Not only did these scandalous trials – the ‘travest[ies] of justice, inspired and controlled by what to English ideas is a despotic Government’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, *Making* 69) – accentuate the national movements of the Yugoslavs, but also made the historian realize the grave dangers of mistreating and ignoring the aspirations of eight million Southern Slavs (Seton-Watson, *Spirit* 116; Seton-Watson, *Southern Slav* 335).

In view of his latest discovery, Seton first released the pamphlet *Absolutismus in Kroatien* (1909) exposing the Austro–Hungarian misrule in Croatia, and then published the book *The Southern Slav Question and the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy* (1911), arguing that in the long run only Trialism could preserve the Habsburg Monarchy and the European balance of power (Péter, *Balance* 676). Besides a very profound exposition on the history of Yugoslav peoples, including the latest developments, he devoted a whole chapter to reveal the relevance of the Croato-Serb unity, that is to say of the Southern Slav question, as ‘the eventual key alike to external and to internal policy’ of Austria–Hungary (Seton-Watson, *German* 335). Since the frontiers of Austria–Hungary cut through the territories inhabited by the Yugoslavs (Mason 73), he deemed that the balance of power and Europe peace could have not been sustained unless the leaders of the Habsburg Empire had solved the problems triggered by the Southern Slav movement towards national unity (Seton-Watsons, *Making* 76). Perceiving Yugoslav unification inevitable, he argued that it could be either accomplished on a ‘Croat basis,’ inside the Habsburg Monarchy, or on a ‘Serb basis,’ outside the Empire (Seton-Watson, *German* 336). Confirming to the general British political belief
crediting a high importance to the Habsburg Monarchy, he emphasized that the European stability required the Southern Slav unity to be realized inside the Habsburg Monarchy (Péter, *Balance* 676), respectively, by substituting Dualism with Trialism. Since any endeavours towards the unification of the Yugoslavs within the Monarchy would have meant the end of the dualist government and the collapse of Austrian-German and Hungarian domination (Seton-Watson, *Melting-Pot* 1), it would have been ‘a far more practical policy’ (Seton-Watson, *Southern Slav* 338) than the Pan-Serb solution, meaning the union of all Serbs and Croats under the rule of the Karadorđević dynasty.

In liaison with this conclusion, his latest reform programme embraced the nationality principle – limited exclusively to the case of Southern Slavs at that time (Beretzky, *Seton-Watson* 78) – as the premise for the internal reorganization of the Danubian Monarchy, envisioning the political emancipation of Yugoslavs in a trialist constitutional arrangement as the key to the survival of Empire. His idea of Trialism ‘embodied many reform concepts, all including the reordering of the Monarchy’ (Miller 62), and in essence, blended centralism with limited federalism (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 26–27) by the erection of a Croatian kingdom as a third federal unit based on equal terms with Austria and Hungary. He conceived the Yugoslav federal unit would have composed of the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia and the crown provinces of Dalmatia, Istria, Bosnia–Herzegovina, and its capital would have been located in Zagreb (Seton-Watson, *German* 338).

Steed shaped his views primarily on practical political considerations and in the belief that they served the interest of the British Empire. In liaison, at first, he subordinated the nationality question to the interest of British foreign policy. Consequently, he was a less enthusiastic and dedicated observer of the nationality question, and respectively of the Yugoslav movement. He understood the problems originating from the multi-ethnic nature of the Habsburg Empire, and maintained that the nationalities could have been easily appeased with a little common sense and political practicality exercised on behalf of Vienna and Budapest. Still, until he did not perceive the Habsburg political elites as instruments of German endeavours, he had been willing to accept the undemocratic nature of Dualism, approving both Austrian and Hungarian domination over the nationalities (Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 380, 393, 403–404; Jeszenszky, *Steed* 24, 26, 32). In regard to the case of the Southern Slavs, he had established contacts with the Dalmatian Croat leaders of the *novi kurs* as early as 1904.

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72 As he wrote the Trialist form of “unity might be reconciled with a modified scheme of Centralist government such as would replace the effete Dual system” (*Contemporary Review*, no 562, October 1912: 804).

73 Seton-Watson’s support for the Irish Home Rule was echoed in his views on Trialism (*Correspondence I*: 86; Cornwall, *Seton-Watson* 334–335).
and reported on the emergence of the resolutional policy. He deemed that a ‘fair and honest revision [of the] Hungarian-Croatian relationship’ along sub-dualist lines had been desirable to marginalize the pro-German Christian Socialists and the Austrian clerical circles (Times, 4 October 1905: 5); nevertheless, before 1909, he had regarded any efforts towards federalization as a peril to the balance of power.

However, as the annexation crisis and the international developments made the Pan-German threat to British naval and economic supremacy more visible, Steed altered his views on Dualism and gradually redirected his sympathy towards the Habsburg nationalities, until he transformed into a well-known proponent of the oppressed subjects (Jeszenszky, Crisis 403–404; Jeszenszky, Presztízs 156–157, 185). Influenced by his Croatian acquaintances (Jeszenszky, Presztízs 69), notably by Trumbić and Supilo (Steed, Thirty I: 244), he became sceptical whether it had been possible to reform the Empire as long as the Habsburg leadership had not pursued a foreign policy independent of Germany. Meanwhile, realizing the Hungarians would and could not fulfil a balancing role within the Empire, Steed contemplated the reorganization of the Empire into federal units (Jeszenszky, Crisis 406–407, 410) to eliminate the dualist structure which had kept the Monarchy ‘in servitude to Germany’ (Steed, Thirty I: 372). For this reason, after 1909, his attention turned to the ethnical balance of the Monarchy, and as it was revealed the Southern Slav question had endangered the existence of the Habsburg Monarchy, in theory, he inclined to accept arguments for the Habsburg solution of the Pan-Yugoslav aspirations:

It had not been long in Vienna before I realized that the question of Serbia was regarded in Austria–Hungary in much the same way as the questions of German and Italian unity had been regarded in the middle of the 19th century. Fully two thirds of the Serbo-Croat, or Southern Slav, race were ruled by the Habsburg Crown. A movement towards unity existed among them, and it was indispensable that, if it could not be thwarted, it should […] be accomplished under Hapsburg auspices (ibid. 201–202).

Subsequently, he thought the creation of a third federal unit would have preserved the Habsburg Empire as a Great Power (Edinburg Review, no 459, January 1917: 14–15), until he entirely converted his views in 1912 to become the proponent of turning the Habsburg realm
into a Danubian Switzerland of peoples as the only means to save the Empire and Europe from a general war (Steed, *Thirty I*: 324–325).

In his memoir, Steed retrospectively declared the year 1908 to be the turning point in international order, arguing that the annexation crisis had been a prelude to the Great War (ibid. 255). Undoubtedly, before the war, Steed became an ardent critique of Aehrenthal and judged his ‘unscrupulousness, lack of mental chastity and […] belief in the superiority of his own cunning’ (ibid. 242) with growing discontent. The journalist closely scrutinized the Foreign Minister’s endeavours, and was ready to expose the schemes the politician utilized to create division between Britain and France. He warned British decision-makers in the *Times* that the Habsburg Foreign Minister – the ‘sorcerer [who] cast an evil spell over the region’ (*Times*, 31 December 1909: 3) – had been prone to conduct policy regarding the Balkans with the exclusion of Britain, and moreover, Aehrenthal had been subjecting his country to ‘complete subservience to Germany’ (Steed, *Thirty I*: 248–250, 317). Owing to his obsession with the Pan-German threat, Steed concluded that Aehrenthal’s attempts to secure the Novi Pazar Sanjak – an Ottoman administrative unit separating Serbia and Montenegro prior to the Balkan Wars – for a future railway connecting Bosnia with Salonika by surpassing pre-1913 Serbian territories, was indeed meant to be a section for the Bagdad-Berlin railway (ibid. 251–252). Additionally, he blamed the Foreign Minister for using the traditional Habsburg ploy to foster discord between Croatia and Hungary, and perceived the annexation policy and its supplementary trial campaigns, the Zagreb high treason trial and the Friedjung-Reichspost trial, considerate blows to the Austro-Hungarian prestige in Europe, also alienating the Yugoslav subjects from the Empire (Steed, *Hapsburg* 103; Steed, *Thirty I*: 268, 316; *Times*, 31 December 1909: 3).

In theory, Steed had no objections in formalizing Bosnia-Herzegovina’s position as Austro-Hungarian possessions as it solidified international order in the Balkans. He would have been thrilled to acknowledge the annexation of the two backward provinces – politically

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74 Extending his annual recreational visits to Marienbad to congratulate Emperor Francis Joseph for his jubilee, King Edward VII of Great Britain met the Habsburg sovereign, the German Emperor and the French Prime Minister Clemenceau in August 1908 (Steed, *Thirty I*: 267). In the course of his stay, Steed had the opportunity to meet the king, warning the sovereign of the Habsburg plans for the unilateral annexation of Bosnia–Herzegovina (*Forum*, no 526, September 1924: 315, 317).

75 Steed being well-known for his anti-German stance, William Tyrrell successfully interfered on behalf of the Foreign Office, when Steed’s transfer to Berlin had been decided in 1908. Undoubtedly, the officials feared that Steed would have further aggravated the British-German relations (Bridge 81, 170).

76 ‘Aehrenthal had been six months in office, a quarrel had suddenly arisen between Hungarian Coalition Government […] and the Serbo-Croat Coalition’ (Steed, *Thirty I*: 268).

77 ‘The result of the Friedjung trial has broken through the vicious circle of suspicion and resentment, calumny and bitterness, in which the Southern Slav interests of the Monarchy seemed hopelessly to revolve,’ Steed reported on the conclusion of the trial (*Times*, 31 December 1909: 3).
and culturally cultivated by Benjámin von Kállay, whom he had apprenticed before for being among the few visionary statesmen of the Empire – provided the act had not transpired behind the back of the Great Powers (Times, 4 October 1909: 5). The international crisis which Aehrenthal’s recklessness had caused was entirely unnecessary, and moreover dangerous as it almost had triggered a war with Serbia, while it had forced the Habsburgs to rely on the support of German diplomacy (Steed, Thirty I: 202). Reevaluating the contemporary Habsburg policies in his memoir, the annexation crisis culminating in the anti-Yugoslav trials retrospectively had been declared a pivotal moment in Steed’s assessment on the future of Central Europe. Although he maintained hopes for the survival of the Monarchy, notwithstanding, the following years marked the gradually growing disbelief of the journalist:

Upon my mind the effect of the Agram High Treason trial, the Friedjung trial, and the subsequent confessions of the actual forger, Vasitch, was cumulative. Until then I had believed in the possibility of regeneration of Austria–Hungary […] But the proof which those trials and revelations afforded that the dynasty had no conception of its own interest and […] if any regeneration of the Hapsburg Monarchy were ever to be feasible, it would have to be forced upon the dynasty […] by the Slav peoples working in conjunction with the more enlightened elements among Austrian Germans and the Magyars (Steed, Thirty I: 324).

Similar to Steed, Seton-Watson welcomed the annexation of Bosnia–Herzegovina as a means to improve the position of the Habsburg Empire among the Great Powers (Péter, Balance 676), and blamed the ‘haughty tactlessness’ of Aehrenthal (Contemporary Review, no 562, October 1912: 804) as a threat to European peace (Matković, Razmišljanja web; Seton-Watson, Making 64–65). The historian conceived that the incorporation of as many Yugoslavs in the Monarchy as possible had been, indeed, in the interest of the Southern Slavs (Seton-Watson, Making 64). Consequently, the annexation would have been culturally and financially beneficial for the backward provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina likewise. As the Dual Monarchy contained 7.200.000 Yugoslavs ‘occupying an unbroken territory exactly twice as large as Servia and Montenegro combined,’ he declared that the ‘annexation in 1908 confirmed [the Habsburg Empire’s] position as the leading Southern Slav power’ (Contemporary Review, no 562, October 1912: 803). These lines corresponded with his belief that the Yugoslav unification had to be accomplished inside the Monarchy; nevertheless, convinced that ‘it was Magyar influence that decided the Dual Monarchy’s anti-Slav policy’
(Contemporary Review, no 627, March 1918: 261), he turned then to the Austrian side of the Empire for the implementation of the trialist programme.

As written in its first page, Seton-Watson dedicated The Southern Slav Question to an Austrian statesman ‘who shall have the genius and courage to solve the Southern Slav Question’ (Seton-Watson, Southern Slav 2). This person was soon revealed to be Heir-Apparent Francis Ferdinand. The Archduke had been known for elaborating schemes on the conversion of the Empire, which the historian learnt through his encounters with the members of the Belvedere Circle (Jeszenszky, Presztízs 96). Borrowing Steed’s words, Seton perceived the Heir-Apparent to be ‘at once able and self-reliant, [...] who knows the full value of silence and of speech, and who is neither afraid to have convictions nor to act upon them’ (Steed, Tributes 335). As the elderly Emperor Francis Joseph – the personal embodiment and symbol of the dualist structure – could not be expected to champion any federal endeavours (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 27), Seton attached strong hopes to and anticipated the accession of Ferdinand as the Archduke was also notable for being a fierce opponent of the Hungarian elite (Seton-Watson, Introduction 24) and seemed determined to challenge their dominance:

[…] complete paralysis of the Dual System, upheld by the Magyar oligarchy [...] has made it difficult for Austria to remedy the growing chaos among the Southern Slavs of the Monarchy. [But] if statesmen in Budapest decline to face the facts and inaugurate a new policy, Austria will be forced to assume this task for them. For some years past her politicians have played with the catchword of Trialism—a word which is loosely employed to describe various schemes for uniting all Southern Slav provinces of the Monarchy as a single unit under Habsburg rule (Contemporary Review, no 562, October 1912: 804).

Undoubtedly, the historian deemed that the Archduke and his Belvedere Circle had desired to solve the Southern Slav question (Seton-Watson, Melting-Pot 1–2). In effect, Francis Ferdinand spent a vast amount of time devising plans for the reorganization of the Monarchy upon his accession to throne; nonetheless, the Heir Apparent embraced the idea of Trialism as a means to intimidate and pressure the Hungarian elite rather than being an advocate of the rights of nationalities. His Belvedere Circle believed that the Habsburg Monarchy could have not persisted in its contemporary form, and pursued to strengthen the

78 ‘I can never cease to regret the lost hopes which I had centred upon the late Archduke and his genuine determination to work for integral reform,’ Seton-Watson remembered in a letter to Evelyn Cromer – the future Chairman of the war-time Serbian Society of Great Britain – on 12 September 1915 (Correspondence I: 237).
role of the monarch and lessen the power of the two parliaments. For that matter, the group’s reform scheme conceived a strong, centralized state where the leadership would have been in the hands of the sovereign and the Austrian political elite (Haslinger 75; Mason 72, 77). Although Seton-Watson knew that Francis Ferdinand’s Trialism had been somewhat different from his own vision, still he supported the political programme of the ‘worthy self-reliant successor’ (Seton-Watson, Future v–vi) as it included the emancipation of nationalities in Hungary and the unification of the Croato-Serb nation as well (Seton-Watson et al. 154, 157):

The common definition of the programme as ‘Trialism’ is extremely misleading; for to make three states out of the existing two would have only added to the complication and confusion, and Francis Ferdinand never contemplated such a step. He definitely aimed at upsetting the Dual System, but the system which he proposed to substitute for it would have been a blend of centralism and federalism, intended to encourage local individuality, while unifying the executive forces of the Monarchy. Under it all the Southern Slavs would have formed a single unit with their own parliament at Zagreb—hence the application of the term ‘Trialism’ to the Archduke’s ideas—but there would have been one central parliament for the whole Monarchy (Seton-Watson, German 109–110).

1.3.3. The Balkan Wars and the Future of the Habsburg Empire

Strongly resonated among the Habsburg Yugoslavs, the Balkan Wars had a significant impact on Seton-Watson’s understanding of the Yugoslav idea, and, moreover, it improved the historian’s assessment on Serbia. As the Balkan Wars converted the Serbian state from a peasant community to the political leader of the Southern Slavs (Woodhouse 63), the drastic alteration of his Croatian acquaintances’ perception on Serbia caused a great deal of confusion for Seton-Watson. Consequently, ‘as a result of the repressive Austro–Magyar regime in the Southern Slav provinces and of the remarkable contrast presented by Serbia's Balkan victories’ (Seton-Watson, Murder 505), Serbia ‘became the incorporation of the idea of unity’ (New Europe, no 2, 26 October 1916: 3) for many disillusioned Croatian intellectuals such as Frano Supilo and Ante Trumbić. Undoubtedly, Seton was surprised to witness that some of his Croat acquaintances who had been virtually suspicious of the Serbian Kingdom before then welcomed the victories of Serbia in the most delightful ways.

Prior to the Great War, Seton-Watson altogether dismissed the Pan-Serb solution for the Southern Slav problem, since practical political reasons rendered such a solution
undesirable (Cornwall, Seton-Watson 344; Seton-Watson, German 337). It had ‘two
everseous drawbacks,’ Seton-Watson argued, ‘it could only be attained by means of a general
European war,’ and moreover, ‘unity outside the Monarchy would mean the triumph of
Eastern over Western culture’ (Correspondence I: 51–52), which ‘would be a fatal blow to
progress and modern development throughout the Balkans’ (Seton-Watson, German 336–
337). Undoubtedly, for a long time, the historian had shared the scornful British opinion on
Serbia which essentially questioned the place of the Serbian people among the civilized
nations. The historian’s perception on Serbia had been primarily determined by the murder of
King Aleksandar Obrenović and Queen Draga in 1903. Being a liberal-minded person, he was
sufficiently terrified by the coup d’état, and developed a distaste towards Serbian politics and
the Karadordević dynasty (Seton-Watson, Making 61): ‘I regard the present regime in Servia
as thoroughly corrupt and inefficient — worse even than the Hungarian — and the tragedy of
1903 [...] seem[s] to me only symptomatic of the depravity of governing classes’
(Correspondence I: 52). Correspondingly, in his early, pre-Balkan War works and
correspondences, Serbia was pictured as a place of turmoil, overruled by several untenable
conditions, where the sequential disagreement of rival parties hindered the internal
consolidation of the country. Seton argued that the contemporary internal and external
conditions prevented Serbia from losing its yoke of subordination to a Great Power. Albeit
Serbia de jure regained its independence in 1878, the small Balkan state had remained in a
vulnerable position, exposed to the competing and conflicting political, strategic, and
economic interests of the Great Powers. Furthermore, being at the mercy of the Austro–
Hungarian Monarchy, the country was reduced to a mere economic vassalage:

Dr. Pashitch’s government is between the devil and the deep sea […] to-day the
Radical leader has to avoid all appearance of friendliness towards Vienna, and yet to
find some remedy for the disturbance of trade which the present situation involves
[...] the closing of the northern frontier to Servian livestock and grain deprives the
country of its most important market, and the consequent losses to Servian producers
are causing very general discontent, On the other hand, a surrender to Austria–
Hungary’s demands in the tariff war would be most unwelcome to his own party, and

79 The first time Seton-Watson visited Belgrade was in 1908, but found the city unimpressive (Seton-Watson, Making 61).
80 The economy of the newly liberated Balkan states was extremely vulnerable, since their export was almost exclusively directed to a sole country, hence the loss of this market could lead to the collapse of their economy. In such an unpleasant situation Serbia survived the ‘pig war’ by redirecting its export from Austria–Hungary to France.
would alienate national sentiment from the present regime. The wild rumours which have been going the rounds of the European Press of late concerning Servia need not be taken seriously; but he would be an optimist indeed who would describe the position of King Peter and Dr. Pashitch as anything but precarious (Seton-Watson, Future 55–56).

Seton-Watson concluded that the uncertain position of King Petar and his dynasty, and their dependence on Russian alliance affected the country’s prestige negatively (Seton-Watson, Future 21; Seton-Watson, Racial 413), subsequently, neither could Serbia’s moral assessment nor its military power attract the fellow Yugoslav kinsmen in the Monarchy. He deemed that Trialism would have restored good relationship between Serbia and the Monarchy (Seton-Watson, Southern Slav 149, 151), but due to the corruption of the Serbian regime, he firmly disapproved ‘the union of the other South Slav states with Servia, as a step backwards instead of forwards’ (Correspondence I: 52). Firstly, Croato-Serb unity outside the Habsburg Monarchy could have only be attained through a universal war, undesirable for both the Habsburg Empire and Europe (ibid. 51); secondly, the Serbian army could have not measured forces with the Monarchy, thereby a war could lead to the loss of Serbian independence (Seton-Watson, Southern Slav 151). Interestingly, his trialist vision embraced the voluntary inclusion of the Serbian Kingdom in the Habsburg Monarchy (Seton-Watson, Racial 416), a suggestion his Croatian acquaintances regarded a clear nonsense. Professor Izidor Kršnjavi, a Frankist (Miller 99) and a regular correspondent of Seton-Watson in the pre-war years, expressed his disbelief in associating Serbia with the Monarchy in the following way:

Your idea that the Serbs, enticed by Trialism, would willingly attach themselves to the Habsburg Monarchy, giving up their independence, seems so improbable to me that I am inclined not to believe that you are serious […] Croat and Habsburg; Serb and anti-Habsburg; these are concepts that go together (Correspondence I: 62–63). 81

Arguably, in contrast to the Southern Slav lands of Austria–Hungary, Seton-Watson’s knowledge on Serbia was relatively slight in the pre-war epoch (Evans 8). His pre-war works dealt with Serbia only as a part of the problem, and no books were specifically dedicated to the small, independent Balkan country. His lack of knowledge on Serbia were filled by his

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81 ‘Ihre Idee, dass Serbien sich freiwillig, angelockt vom Trialismus, seine Unabhängigkeit aufgeben wird, erscheint mir so unwahrscheinlich, dass ich geneigt bin nicht zu glauben es sei Ihnen […] Kroatisch und habsburgisch; serbisch und antihabsburgisch, das sind zusammengehörige Begriffe.’
Southern Slav contacts in the Monarchy, who, indeed, played a considerate role in the fundamental change of Seton’s views in 1913 (Miller 59, 61).

Undoubtedly, Seton’s studies, articles and private correspondences prove the influence of his Southern Slav acquaintances on his interpretation on Yugoslavism. Especially Ivo Lupis-Vukić, Josip Smolčaka, Hinko Hinković, Frano Supilo and Ante Trumbić – whom Steed had already established contact with by the time Seton arrived in 1905 – had a considerable and lasting impression on his assessment concerning the relationship between Croats and Serbs (Evans 26–27; Steed, Tributes 333). The idea of national unity was borrowed from and attests the apparent influence of Frano Supilo – whom Seton had met in Vienna in 1908 (Petković 31) – over the historian, who would eventually accept that the Croats and Serbs constituted ‘one nation by blood and language’ (Seton-Watson, Southern Slav 149) irrespective of their differences. As a result, Seton-Watson overestimated the significance of the Croato-Serb Coalition, which he perceived as a major proof for the Yugoslav unitary idea’s overwhelming appeal to Habsburg Yugoslavs: ‘In Austria–Hungary […] over two million Serbs are reinforced by three million Croats, speaks identically the same language […] and inspired by similar cultural and political ideals’ (Contemporary Review, no 562, October 1912: 802–803).

After the First Balkan War, Seton travelled the Habsburg Yugoslav territories of Croatia and Dalmatia, and also crossed the border to visit Serbia and the newly conquered Macedonia in 1913. The entire journey gave Seton first-hand experience in the rise of Serbian national confidence and the growth of the pro-Yugoslav sentiments among Habsburg Yugoslavs (Seton-Watson, Introduction 24). In Spalato (Split), he witnessed the enthusiasm of Dalmatian Slavs for the successful military campaign of the Serbian army (Matković, Razmišljanja web), and furthermore, Josip Smolčaka, a leader of CSC, also confirmed the general Serbophile mood in his letter written to Seton, on 6 November 1912:

All the Croatian youth, even those of the Party of Right, are fervent ‘Yugoslavs.’ This war is for the whole Europe a matter of world-wide importance. For us it is national resurrection. Austria will be forced to change its policy. Serbia has given proof of not only great military valour but also of a surprising political maturity. Now we are sure

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82 He was a Croatian journalist, who also contributed articles to the Times owing to Steed’s assistance.
that we shall not be trampled down by the Magyars. The future of 17 million Yugoslavs is guaranteed (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 90).83

In his article, ‘Austria–Hungary as a Balkan Power,’ written for Contemporary Review in October 1912, Seton summarized his Croatian acquaintances’ accounts on Yugoslav solidarity for the British public as follows:

In the midst of suspended Croatian constitution ‘the victory of their Balkan kinsmen has roused the sentiments of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia to white heat. The scenes along the coast, one correspondent writes to me, are indescribable. The poorest villages are scraping together their savings for the wounded. […] Men who a few months ago placed anti-militarism in the forefront of their programme are to-day talking of a ‘holy war’ and ‘national resurrection.’ (Contemporary Review, no 562, October 1912: 803).

Besides the sentiments of Yugoslav solidarity, Seton failed to observe that the Serbian victories had also fostered fear among many Croats who had viewed Belgrade as another obstacle to realize Trialism (Pavlowitch, Serbia 68). The memory of the boundless enthusiasm displayed by the Croats and Serbs of Dalmatia after the First Balkan War’s splendid victories (Seton-Watson, Spirit 105) was often recalled by Seton during the war-time to support his arguments for the Yugoslav unitary movement. As Seton remembered in 1915 – in an introduction written for the exhibition of Ivan Meštrović, an internationally acclaimed Dalmatian Croat émigré sculptor –, the misrule in Croatia and the events of the two Balkan Wars ‘electrified the Southern Slav world,’ as ‘the achievements of the Balkan Allies carried the Serbo-Croat population of Bosnia, Dalmatia and Croatia completely off their feet in a wave of enthusiasm’ (SWP SEW/7/2/3). For this reason, the historian would never question the overwhelming support of the Yugoslav idea among the Habsburg Yugoslavs, and in the last years of peace, he maintained his opinion that the Heir-Apparent Francis Ferdinand would have been able to solve the issues generated by the Southern Slav national movement.

In contrast to Seton’s optimistic spirit, Steed vested less hopes in the Archdukes’ accession to the throne.84 In the same year when Seton’s The Southern Slav Question was

83 ‘Tutta la gioventu croatia (anche i prava ši) sono ferventi «jugoslavi». Queasta guerra e per tutta l’Europa un avvenimenzo mondiale. Per noi e la ressurezione nazionale. L’Austria sara costretta di cambiare politica. La Serbia ha dato prova non soltanto di grande valore militare, ma anche di una sorprendente maturita politica. Adesso siamo sicuri che non verremo calpestati dai Magiari. L’avvenire dei 17 milioni di Jugoslavi e garantito’ (Correspondance I: 116).
released in German translation, Steed published his first, and most notable book, *The Hapsburg Monarchy*.\(^8^5\) By the time it was published in 1913, Steed had already left Vienna for London to take the position of the Foreign Editor in the *Times* (Morris 281). His book *per se* was a comprehensive study on Central European affairs based on his ten-year experience in the Dual Monarchy. Being banned from circulation in April 1914 by the Habsburg authorities, increased both the notoriety of the work and the author (Liebich 184; Morris 458). As expressed in his book, albeit Steed still believed that there had been more sentiments and bonds to unite than to divide the Habsburg subjects in 1913 (Steed, *Hapsburg* 29, 209),\(^8^6\) he questioned whether it had been still possible to initiate reforms and to address the Southern Slav question:

> I have been unable to perceive during ten years of constant observation and experience—years, moreover, filled with struggle and crisis—any sufficient reason why, with moderate foresight on the part of the Dynasty, the Hapsburg Monarchy should not retain its rightful place in the European community. […] whatever criticism may be found in the following pages are to be taken as […] evidence of the writer’s desire, when pointing out blemishes, to indicate the expediency and the possibility of remedy (ibid. xiii).\(^8^7\)

He argued that the triumph of Serbia during the Balkan Wars and the ‘incompetence and insincerity’ of the Habsburg statesmen made the Yugoslav union inside the Monarchy less desirable. Consequently, as the Serbian victories, and the political and economic oppression embedded in Dualism stimulated Southern Slav solidarity, the likelihood of a Habsburg solution for the Southern Slav question frightfully reduced (ibid. 282–283, 287–288):

> The Southern Slav problem has two main aspects, of which the one is represented by the undeniable tendency of all branches of the Serbo-Croatian race towards political union, and

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\(^8^4\) On the Archduke’s trialist scheme, he expressed his disbelief to Valentine Chirol, then Foreign Editor of the *Times*, on 6 October 1905: ‘I am not all sure that F[rançois] F[erdinand] policy is not the best antidote to Pan-Germanism, though the application of the antidote may involve smashing the Magyars unless they come to their senses’ (qtd. Péter, *Balance* 665).  
\(^8^5\) The book was republished four times between 1914 and 1918, each edition receiving an additional forward update corresponding with the developments of the Great War.  
\(^8^6\) ‘The Hapsburg peoples are not very wise, not over-cultivated, not overburdened with political sense, but they have in them at their best moments […] a unitary instinct that seem to draw nourishment from their common past’ (Steed, *Hapsburg* xxi).  
\(^8^7\) These lines to be find in the preface of the first edition of *The Hapsburg Monarchy*.  

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the other by the formidable obstacle which the Dual System places in the way of any rational Austro–Hungarian Southern Slav policy (ibid. 283).

Overall, by 1913, Steed had become overly sceptic about the future of the Habsburg Empire, concluding that the Habsburg dynasty, and the Austrian and Hungarian elites had missed many opportunities to implement political and social reforms. Furthermore, he was convinced that the growth of the ‘war-party’ – the Jewish and the pro-German Christian Socialist Party whose influence had been resembled in the aggressive foreign policy and diplomatic clashes since 1908 – would lead the Monarchy to wage war against Serbia (Edinburg Review, no 462, October 1917: 366–367). The military accomplishments and territorial expansion of Serbia had weakened the Balkan positions of the Habsburg Empire (Steed, Thirty I: 362), which could eventually force the Habsburgs to rely on German military assistance to solve the Southern Slav question (Morris 458). However, a war with Serbia, marking the ultimate step in attaching the Monarchy to militarist Germany, would generate a European conflagration. The German alliance in the armed conflict would prove the Empire to be unfit to fulfil its role in the continental balance of power, and would lead to its disruption (Edinburg Review, no 462, October 1917: 366–367).

With the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Seton-Watson realized as well that the Balkans, and respectively Serbia entered into a new era. Upon his second visit to the Serbian Kingdom in 1913, the Serbian authorities made a positive impression on Seton, which proved to be of crucial importance in 1914, when the outbreak of the Great War forced him to revisit his views concerning the solutions of the Southern Slav question (Matković, Razmišljanja web). Undoubtedly, gradually revaluating the developments of the Serbian Kingdom in the last decade, Seton evolved into one of the few Western Europeans who went beyond an oversimplified black and white assessment, and could identify reasons and consequences in Serbian politics. With the conclusion of the Second Balkan War, he judged the regicide of 1903, and the struggles and achievements of the Karadordević era from an entirely new perspective, as his article, ‘New Phases of the Balkan Question’ attested it:

Servia has dispersed the heavy clouds which had obscured her military fame since the defeat of Slivnitz and the murder of Alexander. But the brilliant achievement of her army merely from part of that renaissance of Servia [...] for which the outside world

88 ‘When towards the middle of July, 1913, I left Vienna after a residence of more than ten and a half years, I felt that things in Austria–Hungary and in Europe were moving so swiftly toward a cataclysm that only a miracle could avert’ (Steed, Thirty I: 363).
was so little prepared. The foul circumstances under which King Peter acceded to the throne have shrouded the subsequent history in mist of prejudice [...] In reality King Peter’s accession was an almost unmixed blessing. The brutal removal of the Obrenovitch gave Servia for the first time a genuine constitutional Sovereign, and released her from the intolerable thrall of a dynasty whose private and political records was equally odious. [...] The old methods of political and military favouritism have steadily diminished; a new spirit has found its way into the Court and into the bureaucracy. The revival of the national feeling found expression in a resolve to shake off the economic suzerainty maintained by Austria–Hungary over Servian markets (Contemporary Review, no 563, July 1913: 325).

Although in the course of the Balkan Wars Seton-Watson’s assessment of Serbia changed for the better, still the ‘Serbian solution’ for the Southern Slav unity had remained dismissed by the historian. Most of his rising sympathy in regard to Serbia was directed to the Karadordević dynasty, and albeit he disapproved the injustice of the Zagreb high treason trial, his general distrust of Serbian politicians – who had been ‘at all times over-ready to indulge in political fantasy’ (Contemporary Review, no 562, October 1912: 802) and dangerous opportunism – had persevered (Seton-Watson, Making 69). In addition, he always had a preference for the Croats than for the Serbs (May, Anti-Hapsburg 46), the later whom he regarded less civilized than their westernized kinsmen in the Monarchy. Consequently, Seton realized the ‘dual nature’ of the Yugoslavs had been determined by the ‘two opposing systems of thought and culture’ (Seton-Watson, Southern Slav 2), still, he believed that all differences would resolve in due time. The release of The Southern Slav Question in the German in 1913 eventually proved to be Seton’s last attempt to promote the ‘Croat solution’ for the Southern Slav question, and to convince the Habsburg officials concerning the urgent nature of Yugoslav political emancipation (Seton-Watson, Making 69):

For Austria the central problem of the future is this: Is Servia to become the Southern Slav Piedmont? Such an eventuality can only be prevented by drastic reforms in Croatia and Hungary, and above all, by a reconstruction of the effete Dual System (Contemporary Review, no 563, July 1913: 328).

89 ‘I freely admit that there was a time when I was anti-Serb […]’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 182).
90 ‘Die englische Ausgabe dieses Buches wurde demjenigen österreichischen Staatsmann gewidmet, der das Genie und den Mut besitzen wird, die südslawische Frage zu lösen. In zwölfter Stunde wird diese Widmung wiederholt’ (Seton-Watson, Südslawische iii).
However, the outbreak of Great War triggered by the unfortunate assassination of the Heir-Apparent Francis Ferdinand forced the historian to reconsider his solution for the Southern Slav question.91

### 1.4. Overview

The enduring constitutional crisis uncovered the contemporary social and political realities, and the nationality issues of the Hungarian Kingdom, respectively revealing the vulnerability of the Dual Empire. Reports and publications exposing the repressive nature of Hungarian Chauvinist approach towards their nationalities disrupted the image of Hungary as a liberal and integral state in Western Europe (Péter, *Army* 109). In this matter, a pivotal role is attributed to Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson, who both commenced their involvement in contemporary political affairs of the Empire as Hungarophiles, consequently, confirming to the general British belief that a strong Hungary translated into a stable Habsburg Empire and the sustainment of the continental balance of power. Gradually they both grew disillusioned with the political conditions of Hungary, and soon of the Danubian Empire, while kept maintaining that the Habsburg realm played a crucial role in the cultural cultivation of the region, and *inter alia* was a key country in the international order. By the time Steed arrived at Vienna, he had transformed into a fierce anti-German, who shaped his views concerning Hungary and future of the Danubian Monarchy according to the Habsburg Empire’s ability to conduct its foreign policy independent of Germany (Jeszenszky, *Crisis* 386). Overruled by his Teutonophobia, the journalist was more interested in the ends than the means, and was inclined to accept the undemocratic nature of Dualism as long as it fit British imperial interests.

In contrast to the practical approach of Steed’s liberal imperialism, Seton-Watson not only had been a Hungarophile, but a Germanophile as well (Péter, *Balance* 657–658) upon his arrival to the Habsburg Empire. Seton’s liberal nationalist mind-set pursued a principle-based idealist approach triggering the historian to search the means for the reformation of the Habsburg Empire with the aim of sustaining European peace and British primacy respectively. Becoming increasingly involved in the political aspects of the Dual Monarchy

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91 ‘The murder was for me a really hideous blow, both because of the hopes which I rested upon [Francis Ferdinand], and because the crime seemed from the first to render any peaceful solution of the problems which I have at heart almost impossible’ (*Correspondence I*: 176), Seton summarized the disappointing turn of events on 27 July 1914.
(Beretzky, Seton-Watson 78; Seton-Watson, Racial Problems vii), he discovered that the intolerance of the Hungarian political elite towards the nationalities of Hungary posed a danger to European peace, forasmuch as the internal situation in Hungary prevented the Habsburg Empire to fulfil its role in the European balance of power. Among these internal problems, he regarded the problem raised by the national movement of Southern Slavs towards unification as the utmost danger to the integrity of the Danubian Empire. His belief in the Habsburg Monarchy’s necessity as a Great Power made him conclude that the unification of the Southern Slavs under the sceptre of the Monarchy transformed into a trialist federation could have stabilized the multi-ethnic Central European state. His pamphlets and books, increasingly anti-Hungarian and anti-German in nature, raised awareness of the prospective dangers of an unresolved nationality question, and, in effect, cultivated the ground for British sympathy towards the case of Habsburg nationalities. Despite their misjudgements and inadequacies,92 his publications received generally favourable reviews in Great Britain, cementing their author’s image as an outstanding professional and specialist in Central European affairs (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 20–22; Hay 61; Seton-Watson, Introduction 22).

Meanwhile the annexation policy’s two complementary anti-Yugoslav trials backfired, and turned into humiliating fiascos for the Habsburg Empire. Damaging the Empire’s image, the staged trial fashion and forgeries of the Zagreb mass treason trial and of the Friedjung-Reichspost libel trial received wide domestic and international press coverage. The Friedjung trial taking place in the less remote Vienna, involving an internationally well-known historian and two renowned Austrian newspapers attracted considerable press attention. Eventually the trial evolved into a media sensation with dozens of reporters and observers gathering in Vienna from all over Europe to witness the judicial developments. Attending the legal proceedings, Steed and Seton-Watson produced reports which degraded the trial to a ridiculous, circuslike event, also revealing more of the political ill-foundations and weaknesses of Dualism through the abuse of the judiciary power93 and the breach of laws (Cohen 253; Cornwall, Seton-Watson 341–342; Edinburg Review, no 459, January 1917: 9; Miller 130, 133, 135–136; Suppan 217).

By the outbreak of the Great War, Austria–Hungary had gradually embittered and lost two British friends of the Habsburg Empire, and earned two of its most persistent war-time

92 As Beretzky pointed out Seton-Watson had failed to recognize the phenomenon of natural assimilation in Hungary, and henceforth had merely associated the increase of Hungarian population with forced Magyarization. Furthermore, his statistical data and ethnic maps showed bias towards the nationalities with the exception of the Southern Slavs (Scotus Viator 23–24).

93 The distrust towards the Habsburg authorities made the British public question the proficiency and impartiality of the Sarajevo investigations in 1914 (Watt 237).
enemies. Binding together in a strong personal alliance, Steed and Seton-Watson overtly championed the cause of Yugoslavs, and proved determined to realize the ‘Serbian solution’ for Southern Slav question at the expense of destroying the Danubian Empire. In view of the contested Serbian image, and the importance accredited to Austria–Hungary in the European order, challenging the existence of the Habsburg Empire confirmed to be an exceptionally insurmountable task.

94 Steed recalled their eventual conceptual bonding in his tribute written for Seton-Watson in the following way: ‘Seton-Watson’s pellucid honesty and his solid knowledge of Habsburg history inclined him to believe that all these problems must be susceptible of solution without a catastrophe which might imperil the peace of Europe an endanger the welfare of the Habsburg peoples themselves […] We agreed to differ, until the gradual revelation of underlying realities convinced us both that the Habsburg Monarchy would bring disaster upon itself and upon Europe unless means could be found to replace the Dual (Austro–Hungarian) System by some form of federal unity, in which the Yugoslavs would find a place’ (Steed, Tributes 334).
CHAPTER TWO

Secret Diplomacy and the Case of Yugoslav Unification in the First Years of the Great War
The enduring constitutional and annexation crises exposed the political, social and nationality issues of the Habsburg Empire to the British public, while the chauvinistic measures of the Independence Party’s coalition cabinet, and the Empire’s strengthening bonds with Germany gradually alienated Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson to become the fierce opponents of the Dual Monarchy in a personal war-time fraternal and intellectual alliance. Based on their first-hand experience, after the outbreak of the Great War, the former British correspondents claimed that the multi-ethnic Danubian Monarchy had been authoritative and irremediable. Furthermore, the Habsburg Empire was unwilling to address the aspirations of their nationalities, which they perceived as the key to a lasting European peace, and to Allied victory likewise. In liaison, they argued, and obsessively emphasized throughout the war that the nationality question could have been only solved through the break-up of the Habsburg Empire into independent nation-states (Hay 61; Cornwall, Undermining 176).

Being the two most-widely travelled foreigners in the region, Seton-Watson and Steed possessed a wide network of acquaintances among the Habsburg subjects, and remained well-informed in the affairs of the Empire. As the war commenced, they proved to be more than ready to utilize either their connections, knowledge, expertise or financial capital to disrupt Austria–Hungary in the name of liberal ideals covertly serving British imperial interests. In their crusade for the radical reorganization of Europe, the unification of Yugoslav lands into a single and independent state was declared to be one of the fundamental perquisites of an enduring peace, and the ultimate defeat of Pan-German aspirations (Cornwall, Undermining 176). However, the war-time secret diplomacy reaching out for potential new allies significantly failed to prevent the invasion and conquest of Serbia, and moreover complicated the process of unification as Southern Slav lands had been offered as compensation for Italy’s, Bulgaria’s and Romania’s adherence to the war.

2.1. A Balkan Pilgrimage

It was a long-standing tradition of British foreign policy to fight a coalition war without involving considerable number of British land forces, by financially supporting and making the best possible use of continental allies. At the beginning of the Great War, it was a natural presumption in the British Cabinet that the combined forces of France and Russia could have secured the victory for the Entente. Therefore, Great Britain intended to play a
complementary role in the conflict by maintaining naval supremacy for the Allied Powers, while limiting its military contribution on land to an expeditionary force symbolic in numbers. In reality, none of the participants expected an enduring war, but since the conflict could not been settled by the end of 1914, Great Britain was forced to abandon its traditional policy (Dutton 4–5), and took a larger share in the burdens of warfare with the aim to impede German expansion towards the East by the restoration of the balance of power. However, as the illusion of a quick war was fading, the Foreign Office found itself in the need of active diplomacy pertaining to the Balkans (Hay 58; Ostojić-Fejić 493).

Summoned by Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith to review the military situation, the British War Council – consisting of Edward Grey, David Lloyd George, Arthur Balfour, Eyre Crewe, Charles Hardinge, Winston Churchill, Horatio Kitchener and John Fisher – assembled in January 1915, and eventually evolved into the primary decision-making body of war-time Britain. Early on the Council members were divided into ‘Easterner’ and ‘Westerner,’ depending on their outlook on the Balkan theatre of war. Being the sole Easterner, David Lloyd George – the Chancellor of the Exchequer, then the Minister of Munitions – opted for the Eastern solution of the war in 1915, proposing a Balkan offensive on the Habsburg Empire as the key to Allied triumph (Suttie 54). Albeit, it did not implicate by any means the abandonment of the Western front, the Westerners deemed that the majority of the British divisions had had to be deployed in France. This perception originated from their belief that only a German military defeat could have secured Allied victory. Furthermore, it was fostered by their fear that a continental defeat would have enabled the invasion of Great Britain. From this point of view, the worst-case scenario would have been if a French or Russian collapse had occurred, while large numbers of British divisions being utilized in the Balkans (Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 344, 338; Neilson 210; Suttie 51, 53–54; Waterhouse 356). Irrespective of the standpoints, as the Balkan Peninsula developed into a theatre of war, the War Council faced an increasingly urgent need for specialists who could have contributed valuable insight into the affairs of the Habsburg Empire and the so-far neglected Balkans (Evans 116).

With the Ottoman Empire’s adherence to the war, the idea of a Balkan alliance was conceived in October 1914 with the aim to put military pressure on Austria–Hungary on the Southern front, thus assisting Russian advancement on the Eastern front. Bulgaria and Italy being potential allies in mind, the primary concerns of Foreign Office evolved around the Adriatic and Macedonia. Eventually, ensuring Bulgarian neutrality had become an imperative until the Balkan state’s adherence to the war could be negotiated. It was clear from the
beginning that Sofia could have been only attached to the Triple Entente provided Serbia had ceded Macedonia. For this reason, the Foreign Office required information pertaining to the perquisites under which Serbia could have been convinced to relinquish the territory in question. Additionally, the high officials wished to learn the issues which could have emerged between Serbia and Italy in case the Eastern coast of the Adriatic region had become the object of bargaining for Rome’s entry to the war. However, as most British politicians, and senior government officials built their careers either in Britain or in the British colonies, they paid little attention to the affairs of Eastern Europe (Evans 115; Hay 58). Consequently, besides the Conference of Ambassadors in London – concluding the First Balkan War in 1913 – the experience of the Foreign Office concerning the region was few and far between to foster a Balkan bloc at their own (Calder 25–26; Ostojić-Fejić 493). Therefore, the importance of outsider experts – such as scholars, journalists and travellers – gradually increased. At the beginning of the Great War, Seton-Watson was among the few British scholars whose expert knowledge could have been utilized. Albeit the historian voluntarily offered his services for the Foreign Office – graciously proposing to remain unsalaried for the duration of the war – his offer was dismissed (Evans 116; Seton-Watson, Making 105). However, despite the initial rejection, soon he found himself engaged in back-channel diplomacy as a member of a British mission travelling to the Balkan Peninsula.

The idea of an unofficial British Balkan mission was conceived by a historian named George Macaulay Trevelyan, who happened to be a close friend of Edward Grey, and whom David Lloyd George remembered as ‘the great authority on Balkan politics’ (Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 346). In effect, Trevelyan developed an academic and personal interest in the Southern Slavs, knew Seton-Watson and his works, and moreover shared his sympathy towards the Yugoslavs (Evans 117). For some time, he had been planning to visit the

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95 In effect, Seton per se had not possessed any direct connections to the ministry (Jeszenszky, Presztízs 97) until September 1914, when Steed introduced him to George Clerk, the Head of the newly established War Department under the Foreign Office besides Eyre Crewe (Calder 25–26; Lees-Milne 79; Waterhouse 356).

96 Compared to Trevelyan, Seton-Watson remained distant from the high officials of the Foreign Office. Trevelyan’s brother, Charles was a senior official in the Liberal Party – who had resigned from the Asquith Cabinet as an opponent of Britain’s entry to the war. Correspondingly, Trevelyan could maintain contact with important policy-makers. In effect, he was regarded more as an insider than an academic outsider from the viewpoint of the Foreign Office.

97 Trevelyan became the member of the Executive Committee of the Serbian Relief Fund, a humanitarian organization established at the beginning of the war. When the question of a Balkan bloc was raised, he recommended Seton-Watson as a Habsburg and Yugoslav specialist to Harold Nicholson, a younger official in the Foreign Office. Seton was soon approached by the Foreign Office, George Clerk requesting him to summarize his views concerning Serbia (Calder 25–26; Seton-Watson, Making 112). Seton submitted his lengthy ‘Memorandum of Southern Slav Question,’ which instantly earned him the abiding professional admiration of Nicholson, who concluded that ‘Mr. Seton-Watson is one of the every few who comprehends the Southern Slav question, and his views should be treated with sound respect’ (qtd. Calder 26).
Balkans, and eventually proposed Seton to be his company. Seton-Watson proved more than willing to join Trevelyan as he could have made a report for the Serbian Relief Fund, a wartime relief organization, on the conditions and particular war-time needs of Serbia. With Trevelyan initiating the idea, they approached the Foreign Office, offering their services for the duration of their ‘Balkan pilgrimage’ (qtd. Curtright 96)\(^8\) by making inquiries on Macedonia at the Serbian Cabinet and the Royal family. Their suggestion for back-channel diplomacy was more than welcomed in the Foreign Office since the need for information concerning Serbia had become a pressing matter of urgency. However, as Grey forbade his officials to maintain contact with the press,\(^9\) the Foreign Office relinquished itself from the few who could have assisted diplomatic endeavours in the Balkans. In effect, by November, Seton remained one of the few outsider experts whom the officials could informally consult (Lloyd George, *War Memoirs I*: 346; Seton-Watson, *Making* 111–112).

For these matters, within a scope of five days, the proposal of the two historians was accepted.\(^10\) On 11 December, a day prior to their departure, Grey shared a lunch with the two professionals to clarify the details of their Balkan mission. The Foreign Secretary explained that although the Foreign Office could not have granted them with an official authorization for their journey, they would have been assisted by the British Legations in the Balkan countries should they had required it. Grey stressed out that as their visit had been unofficial, they should have acted accordingly without implying by any means that they had had represented official Great Britain. Besides reporting on the political mood in the Balkan states, and on the medical conditions in Serbia, they ought to have influenced the Balkan

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\(8\) Prime Minister Asquith used the term to describe the Balkan mission a letter written for Venetian Stanley.

\(9\) Grey was infuriated by the harsh criticism British diplomacy received for Turkey’s entry in the war (Seton-Watson, *Making* 112).

\(10\) On 7 December 1914, Francis Acland minuted the idea of the journey to the high officials: ‘Mr. Seton-Watson came to see me with George Macaulay Trevelyan this evening to talk over the position on Servia. He has kept very closely in touch with Servian questions and has some information which might be useful. He is willing to go out now or later and believes that he could be of use in helping to persuade the Servians that they must make sacrifices in Macedonia. I think it would be worth while for someone in [the] dept[artment] to see him, so as judge whether he should go’ (FO PRO 371/1906/81051). George Clerk proved to be the major supporter of proposal, and eventually managed to win the support of the Foreign Office concerning it. He professed his support on 8 December 1914: ‘Mr. Seton-Watson came to see me this evening. He is quite ready to go to Serbia, and would be accompanied by Mr. G. Trevelyan. He fully realizes the situation and, though he disclaims any great weight or influence among Serbs, I think the views he could express as an unofficial observer and a well-known Serbo-Croat sympathizer might not be without effect. […] his visit will be private and unofficial and less likely to disturb the Russian mind that of Messrs. Buxton to Sofia. It is desirable that if Mr. Seton-Watson goes at all, he should go without delay, and I promised to let him know as soon as possible whether the Foreign Office had any objections to his journey’ (ibid.). Edward Grey accepted Clerk’s position and added in his reply that ‘it will be useful if they go, and they should start whenever they like. We can explain to France and Russia that they go on their own initiative in connection with the [Serbian] Relief Fund (I understand that this is so) and that hearing that they wanted to go I have taken the opportunity of urging them to impress Servia with the need for making concessions to Bulgaria’ (ibid.).
states to exhort them into cooperation. Respectively, efforts should have been made to sell the Serbs the idea of a territorial cession compensated by territorial awards (Ostojić-Fejić 493–494, 502; Seton-Watson, Making 11).

During their two-week stay, the Balkan pilgrims, Seton and Trevelyan had multiple occasions in Serbia to engage in conversation with military leaders, representatives of the political elite, and the members of the royal dynasty, notably, Heir-Apparent Aleksandar, who had been appointed the Regent of Serbia due to the illness of his father, King Petar I, just a few days prior to the Sarajevo assassination (Seton-Watson, Murder 497). On 1 January 1915, Seton met Prime Minister Nikola Pašić, who proved willing to cooperate with the Yugoslav émigrés, also reminding the historian that the Serbian Cabinet had officially undertaken the agenda to liberate the Yugoslav kinsmen in the Habsburg Empire. Pašić anticipated that Romania would have soon joined the war, and spoke critically of Bulgaria, expressing his disbelief whether Bulgaria had dared to go into war against the Allies (Ostojić-Fejić 495; Seton-Watson, Making 112).

On 4 January, Trevelyan and Seton left for Kragujevac to meet Prince Regent Aleksandar, whom they regarded as a person of reason and intelligence. The three men had a lengthy and deep conservation on multiple topics ranging from the British war aims, and the unification of Southern Slavs to the question of frontiers. Notably, the Regent raised the question of British commitment to the case of Serbia, expressing that the best alternative to counterpoise Russian influence in the Balkans would have been for Britain to champion the cause of Yugoslav unification. He understood that any Serbian expansions would have been treated suspiciously in Great Britain due to Russia. To dispel British fears, Aleksandar emphasized that an enlarged Serbia would have not been by any means a subordinated vassal of the Russian Empire. Albeit, he and the Pašić Cabinet were grateful for the Russian efforts, they did not wish to transform Serbia into a Russian province (Ostojić-Fejić 497; Seton-Watson, Making 113).

Seton-Watson was pleased to learn Aleksandar’s position, and took the opportunity to connect the case of unification with the question of Serbian-Bulgarian relations, emphasizing that Great Britain had attached a great deal of importance to the latter. A strong and united Yugoslavia could have been realized under the premise the war had been won, implying that certain concessions should have been considered by the Serbian leadership. Therefore, in regard to Macedonia, Seton advised Aleksandar to sacrifice the territory, since such a

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101 Pašić referred to the Niš Declaration of December 1914. The details of the declaration are to be clarified in Chapter Four.
concession proved to be necessary to keep Bulgaria at least neutral in the conflict. Moreover, it would have enabled the transfer of Serbian troops to the Western regions (Correspondence I: 193). Although Aleksandar honestly and conspicuously expressed that Serbia would rather have relinquished Bosnia-Herzegovina than Macedonia, Seton-Watson deemed that by the end of their talks he had managed to persuade the Regent that Dalmatia and Bosnia could have been more than worthy concessions for Macedonia (and for Bánát). Moreover, pursuing a westward expansion would have fostered British dedication to Yugoslav unification. Trevelyan supported these arguments, and added that it had been an exceptional moment when the two countries could have cooperated together under mutual lines of interest. Additionally, he argued that the Dalmatian coast could have boosted British economic interest in a future Yugoslavia in regard to the export of agricultural and mined resources (Correspondence I: 193; Ostojić-Fejić 495, 497–498).

Pertaining to the political and military situation, Trevelyan had the impressions that Serbia would have yielded Macedonia provided either the Allies forced Serbia to do so or by offering the Balkan country considerable territorial awards stretching as westbound in the Adriatic as possible. However, the Regent had perceived the cession of Macedonia as a political gambling, unless an Allied victory in sight would have been guaranteed the proposed compensations to be realized (FO PRO 800/112/09010). In this regard, both Seton and Trevelyan maintained the opinion that Serbia should not have ceded Macedonia to Bulgaria until the Allies publicly included the unification of Southern Slavs in their war objectives (Correspondence I: 204). Correspondingly, Seton persisted urging the Allies in his pamphlet, The Balkans, Italy and the Adriatic, published in August 1915, to address the issue of rival claims over Macedonia by officially adapting Serbia’s war aims on Yugoslav liberation as an Allied war aim. The historian insisted on the recognition of the national programme of Yugoslav unity would have been a sufficient guarantee for Serbia, which could have had redirected and diverted its interests to Western territories (Seton-Watson, Italy 47–50), while yielding Macedonia.

In the belief that the Balkan theatre could have decided the Great War (Seton-Watson, Making 114), the historians also propagated the Eastern solution of the war, which on the first hand, would have saved Serbia, and on the other hand, anticipated the collapse of Austria–Hungary. Realizing the devastating effects and the grave dangers of a future German-Habsburg offensive, they concluded that Serbia had to receive military assistance. In liaison, Seton and Trevelyan pressed Grey in a joint telegram sent on 16 January 1915 to help Serbia,
‘the Balkan France.’ In effect, Trevelyan and Seton shared the views of Henry Bax-Ironside, the British Minister in Sofia that the adherence of Bulgaria, Romania or even Greece would have halted the Habsburgs from conquering Serbia. Firstly, they argued that Serbia ought to have received encouragement in the forms of material and financial assistance to foster the morale, and to aid the shortage of munition, and the devastating situation in the country. Secondly, they opted for British troops to be relocated from Egypt to the Balkans to assist the Serbian army through the valley of the Vardar. Despite the hardships and losses, the historians stressed out that the Serbian spirit remained intact and strong, and the Balkan country persevered and persisted on fighting. Thirdly, they believed that demonstrating active Allied solidarity and support towards Serbia would have attracted the Balkan neutrals. Additionally, since the Serbian nation proved its bravery and military accomplishments, it might have been worth to invest in those qualities. They felt that due to the successful Serbian counteroffensive, the morale of the Habsburg Army on the Southern front had been low. As it was an army composed of multiple nationalities, it could have been broken by spring provided the Western Allies had joined efforts with the Balkan states to put considerate pressure on the Habsburgs from the Balkans. Consequently, Allied presence and action in the region could have convinced Greece and Romania to join a Balkan campaign, which would have at least endured Bulgarian neutrality as well. However, the absence of any diplomatic effort or military assistance would have led to the defeat of Serbia, and a conclusion of a

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102 In a letter addressed to Sir Francis Acland, sent from Sofia on 15 January 1915, Trevelyan described his impressions in the following manner: ‘We came here from Nish yesterday […] and as everything we have seen and heard in Serbia leads us to suppose that Serbia cannot resist […] an attack (of a joint German and Austrian Armies) successfully if unaided, we have today telegraphed to Grey urging that every diplomatic and military effort should be made to save Serbia and prevent the annihilation of our influence in the Near East which will certainly result from a disaster to Serbia’ (qtd. Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 346).

103 At this point of the war, Seton-Watson contemplated Allied landing in the shores of Dalmatia or Montenegro (Ostojić-Fejić 500).

104 The formation of a Balkan coalition embracing Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Serbia to put a south-northwards pressure on the Dual Monarchy was considered to be desirable by the War Council. The combination of the Balkan armies and Entente expeditionary forces together would have made up circa 1.5 million soldiers. The offensive of such a combined army obviously would have had severe consequences on the Habsburg Empire: its encirclement would have been completed, and the lengthening of the Eastern front from the Balkans to Galicia could have been a turning-point of the Great War (Lloyd George, War Memoirs VI: 313; Suttie 47; Waterhouse 365). For this reason, David Lloyd George proposed for Asquith and Grey during a War Council session to summon a conference for the Foreign Ministers of France, Russia, Serbia, Greece, Romania and Bulgaria in Greece with the devout goal to resolve the hostilities and territorial disputes among the Balkan states. Grey objected the idea, arguing that a conference in the Aegean could have been enduring, and he could not leave London for such long time (Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 358–359).

105 Trevelyan described the interstate relations in the Balkans as being ‘uncertain and fluctuating from hour to hour with regard to the action or inaction of Roumania or Bulgaria — perhaps of Greece’ (qtd. Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 348). He argued that Romania’s adherence to a war would have sealed the fate of Austria-Hungary in 1915 (FO PRO 800/112/09010).
separate peace with the Central Powers (Correspondence I: 195; FO PRO 800, 112/09010; Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 346–347; Ostojić-Fejić 498–500).

Overall, it can be argued that the unofficial diplomatic mission of Seton-Watson and Trevelyan was a failure as it had not accomplished its objectives. They were expected to gather precise information in an unofficial capacity concerning the Serbian, Bulgarian and Romanian attitude towards a Balkan alliance. In this regard, their detailed reports – circulated among Cabinet members – could have been useful for the Foreign Office to understand the political, diplomatic and military situation in the Balkans. However, the historians, first of all, failed to emphasize that their views had not been identical of official Britain, and thus might have fostered the impression that they had been communicating on behalf of the Foreign Office. In the hope of overcoming Serbian distrust towards Great Britain, and to influence the Serbian leadership, the Balkan pilgrims found themselves arguing for the creation of a unified Yugoslav state, pressing Prince Regent Aleksandar to accept a rewarding westwards expansion at the favourable cost of losing Macedonia and Bánát (Ostojić-Fejić 497–498, 501–502). Nonetheless, their Balkan pilgrimage, in effect, had not altered Serbian position concerning the Macedonian question by any means, albeit the two historians were convinced of the opposite.

Undoubtedly, both Seton-Watson and Trevelyan were confident about the success of their mission, and returned to Britain in February with the general impression drawn ‘from the numerous conversations with Serbians from the Crown Prince downwards’ (qtd. Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 348) that Serbia might have been willing to sacrifice Macedonia in exchange for an Adriatic expansion (Lloyd George, War Memoirs I: 346; Ostojić-Fejić 497–498, 501–502). Additionally, Seton’s short memorandum entitled ‘Simultaneous demarche,’ sent to the Foreign Office after his return, confirmed his prematurely optimistic views concerning the cooperation of the Balkan states. The document urged the Allies to engage in an active and more effective diplomacy in the region to foster an agreement among the Balkan countries. In theory, his Balkan policy – outlined for the Allies in four points – seemed to rest on viable arguments, nevertheless, the historian oversimplified the solution for the complex inter- and intra-state relations in the Balkans without knowing or taking into consideration several domestic factors in these countries, which, in essence, worked against a Balkan alliance (Correspondence I: 196; Seton-Watson, Making 116–117).

Conclusively, the two historians optimistic, but false perception on the question of concessions mislead the War Council, and had a significant role in the underestimation of Serbian sentiments and devotion attached to Macedonia (Evans 161). In effect, their views
indirectly contributed to the fall of Serbia as the Foreign Office had persisted bargaining Macedonia until eventually Bulgaria joined the Central Powers without devising an alternative diplomatic plan concerning the Balkan region.\textsuperscript{106} Besides helping Serbian relief efforts and Allied diplomacy, Seton-Watson returned from the Balkans convinced of Serbia’s true intentions to realize the Yugoslav unification based on the national equality of Southern Slav peoples. Resembling his gradually improving impressions on Serbia since the Balkan Wars, the visit \textit{per se} confirmed the historian’s new, war-time views concerning the solution of the Southern Slav question, which attributed a paramount role for Serbia in the process of unification.

\textbf{2.2. Altering Views in the Course of the Great War}

The outbreak of the Great War witnessed the rapid evolution of Seton-Watson’s thinking on the Southern Slav question and the future of the Habsburg Empire. At the beginning of the war the historian deemed that the Dual Monarchy would have survived the war at the expense of losing its Romanian and Southern Slav territories. The reduction of frontiers corresponded with his aim to fulfil the national aspirations of the Southern and Eastern neighbours, and implicated that the Habsburg Monarchy would have lost its Great Power status as it had subdued itself to the agenda of German expansion (Beretzky, \textit{Scotus Viator} 28–29; Seton-Watson, \textit{Making} 110–111). However, meeting Professor Tomáš Masaryk in late October 1914 proved to be a turning point in Seton-Watson’s vision concerning the future of the region.

Besides a brief encounter in 1907, it was the infamous Friedjung-\textit{Reichspost} Trial of 1909 which established a connection between Seton-Watson and Masaryk. Although their diverging opinion on the questions of Trialism, Heir-Apparent Francis Ferdinand and the future of the Habsburg Empire had prevented them from becoming friends in the pre-war

\textsuperscript{106} Followed by the Balkan pilgrimage of the historians, the War Office sent General Arthur Paget on a diplomatic mission in February 1915 with a secret agenda of meeting Serbian and Bulgarian high officials to learn their positions on Macedonia (Antić, \textit{Paget} 96). His detailed report confirmed that despite its brilliant victories, Serbia alone would not have survived another offensive due the lack of the transport and equipment. Similar to the two historians, he urged the dispatch of a few division from Britain and France likewise. Albeit his report confirmed more to the diplomatic realities of the Balkans than the two historians’ accounts – describing the relationship between Serbia and Bulgaria as severely burdened by antagonism –, the seeds of hope for an agreement over Macedonia had been sown by the Balkan pilgrimage (Antić, \textit{Paget} 96; Antić, \textit{Saveznica} 109–113; Lloyd George, \textit{War Memoirs I}: 374; Seton-Watson, \textit{Making} 117).
epoch, still, they had maintained contact through correspondence. Eventually, they resumed their personal contact in September 1914, when the two met in Rotterdam, and engaged in lengthy conversations concerning the questions and possible outcomes of the Great War. The three-day encounter undoubtedly left a defining mark on Seton’s ideas. Persuaded by Masaryk’s arguments on an independent Bohemia, Seton-Watson converted his views pertaining to the Habsburg Empire: as the creation of Bohemia assumed the dismemberment of the Monarchy, Seton-Watson transformed into the advocate of the Habsburg nationalities, and championed the idea of a general reconstruction of Central European frontiers on the premise of the nationality principle (Cornwall, Seton-Watson 331–332; Cornwall, Undermining 176; Documents I: 209; Seton-Watson, Introduction 23–25; Seton-Watson, Making 110–111; Steed, Tributes 335).

Abandoning his belief in the Habsburg Empire as a pivot to the European balance of power (Péter, Balance 676), Seton conceived new assumptions regarding the solutions for the Southern Slav question. From the moment the Great War commenced, he realized that Serbia had to take the task of unification by becoming the nucleus for the future state as ‘a Slavonic Piedmont’ (Seton-Watson, Italy 32):

The solutions I have advocated for years – South Slav, Hungarian – died a natural, or rather a most unnatural death […]. From now onwards the Great Serbian State is inevitable; and we must create it. […] Dalmatia, Bosnia, Croatia, Istria must be united with Serbia […] (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 101).

[…] the national movement among the Southern Slavs […] and Austria–Hungary’s fatal policy of thwarting Southern Slav development, have been the real underlying causes of that Austro–Serbian dispute, upon which the murder of the Archduke acted as spark in a powder magazine. To-day we are witnessing the baptism of fire of a new nation in the commonwealth of Europe. Gallant Serbia has assumed the same task which Piedmont successfully accomplished over fifty years ago (Round Table, no 17, December 1914: 95).

107 Upon Seton’s request, Masaryk had made critical remarks, and recommendations on the German edition of the Southern Slav’s Questions (Seton-Watson, Introduction 23).
108 Seton-Watson summarized Professor Masaryk’s arguments concerning the future of the Danubian Empire in a memorandum. With the help of Steed, the copies of the memorandum were received by Théophile Delcassé, the Foreign Minister of France, Sergej Sazanov, the Foreign Minister of Russia. Additionally, Seton had the chance to hand the document over to George Clerk, the Head of the War Department of the Foreign Office, during his first visit to the Foreign Office in the late autumn 1914 (Masaryk 28; Seton-Watson, Introduction 25; Steed, Tributes 335).
109 ‘[…] the events of the war have driven me to abandon my belief in Trialism and to advocate the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy’ (Correspondence I: 237).
To prove Serbia’s suitability for the new role in front of the Allies, Seton devalued the Obrenović dynasty by associating their almost uninterrupted long reign with failures, scandals, corruption and coup d’État. Albeit the murder of the royal couple in 1903 had been committed ‘in a mood of truly oriental savagery,’ he claimed that the violent removal of the dynasty had been followed by the contrastingly successful reign of the Karađorđević dynasty. Aligning with this perception, he reconceived the Balkan Wars as significant events to the future of Europe, which also ‘set the seal upon a process to which Europe […] had been blind — the Renaissance of Serbia’ (Seton-Watson, *Italy* 19). Albeit Western Europe remained misinformed by news coming from Vienna and Budapest, in effect, the economic, political, intellectual, literary and military revival transformed Serbia into the leader of the region and of Southern Slav world likewise (ibid. 20–21).

Conclusively, the Pan-Serb solution had no longer been perceived as an impracticable method by Seton-Watson, nonetheless due to his persisting distaste towards Serbian politicians, he modified only slightly his pre-war programme for the Southern Slav question. In practice, his war-time alternatives had remained the same as only the frame of the unification, and not its content had changed. Subsequently, the historian envisioned the Yugoslav union to be accomplished by either the two independent Serbian states being absorbed into the Habsburg Empire, or by Serbia, ‘as the Southern Slav Piedmont’ (Seton-Watson et al. 157–158) liberating the Habsburg Yugoslavs with the assistance of the Allied Powers (*New Europe*, no 2, 26 October 1916: 34). Sacrificing the Habsburg Empire’s integrity, the historian became the advocate for the latter, calling for the Southern Slav unification outside the Monarchy on a ‘Yugoslav basis’:

The idea that the problem can be solved, in the event of a victory of the Allies, on a purely Serbian basis, is just as absurd as the idea of many serious persons in Austria-Hungary before the war, including even the late Archduke Francis Ferdinand himself, that it could be solved on a purely Croat basis. There is only one sure basis for its solution, namely, a ‘Southern Slav’ or ‘Yugoslav’ basis. Any […] other method is foredoomed to failure […] (Seton-Watson, *German, Slav* 50).

The ‘Yugoslav basis’ meant that the unification would have been the result of Yugoslav national self-termination, implying that the Yugoslav idea had been the prevailing national

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110 * Speaking for myself, I have to confess that it took me five years’ acquaintances with Austria to break through the enchantment, and even two years to shake off the potent effects’ (Seton-Watson, *Italy* 21).
ideology of the Southern Slavs. Correspondingly his ‘Memorandum on the Southern Slav Question,’ a nine-page document submitted to the Foreign Office on 1 October 1914, opted out any other alternatives for the issues raised by the Yugoslav national aspirations:

Is there […] any solution which would be received with acclamation by every Southern Slav? Most emphatically there is. The people of Bosnia–Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Croatia-Slavonia, Istria and Carniola await their liberation at the hands of their free kinsmen of Serbia and Montenegro. But when the time comes, their watchword will be not conquest from without by the Serbian army, but free and voluntary union from within […] (Correspondence I: 185).

Despite his arguments, with the outbreak of the Great War, three options emerged for the Croats and Slovenes regarding their future: they could have attained autonomy within the Habsburg Monarchy, could have pursued to form independent states or to unify with Serbia (Trgovčević 231). Albeit all three options had their proponents among the Habsburg Yugoslav political and intellectual circles, Seton-Watson categorically excluded the first two alternatives as inapplicable solutions for the exceptionally significant issue of Yugoslav national endeavours. Regardless, Emperor Charles’s accession to the throne in late 1916 provided an opportunity for the Habsburg Yugoslavs to renew their request for an autonomous Yugoslav federal unit (Pavlowitch, Unification 32). Corresponding with the words and whispers in the Empire that the new Emperor intended to proclaim the trialist rearrangement of the Habsburg Empire upon his coronation, the Yugoslav Club – a newly establish club party consisting of the Southern Slav representatives of Austrian Yugoslav territories – appealed to the sovereign in a manifesto, known as the May Declaration, calling for the ‘unification of all the lands in the Monarchy, inhabited by the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs’ (Dokumenti 94). Practically, the May Declaration – issued for the reopening of the Vienna Reichstag on 30 May 1917 – propagated Trialism based on the Croat state right, the nationality principle (Ćirković 250) and national equality, the latter guaranteeing recognition of Serbs as a separate constituent nation in Croatia–Slavonia (Banac, Nationality 125). Conclusively, at this stage of the Great War, the radical visions of the Yugoslav expatriates and their British patrons – entailing the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire, and the Yugoslav

111 Throughout the Great War, Seton would remain firm to this position, and would persist on disregarding the alternatives.
112 ‘[…] ujedinjenje svih zemalja u monarhiji, u kojima žive Slovenci, Hrvati i Srbi […].’
unification with then non-existing free Serbia – were not echoed among their Habsburg Yugoslav kinsmen (Mason 85), who still wished to preserve the Habsburg Empire in 1917.

Although Seton-Watson insisted on the potential failure of a trialist scheme, his correspondence revealed his concerns pertaining to the reorganization of the Habsburg Empire because ‘such a move […] would take the wind out from the sails of the Entente’ (Correspondence I: 285). Nevertheless, detrimental to the Yugoslav cause, these concerns had not been disclosed, henceforth, in his public commentary, Seton explained that most of the Southern Slav deputies had signed the May statement to escape any future charges of treason (Seton-Watson, Making 211). Notably, almost a year later, he recalled the developments of 30 May 1917 in an article written for the Contemporary Review as a day when a programme had been ‘put forward […] by the four Slav groups which [had] demand[ed], without a single dissentient voice, unity and independence for Poles, Czecho-Slovaks, Southern Slavs, and Ukrainians alike’ (Contemporary Review, no 627, March 1918: 263). Such an assertion was a deliberate misreading of events concluded by a then radicalized Seton-Watson in the climax of an intensified anti-Habsburg propaganda.

As for the second alternative, it must be marked that Seton-Watson had never considered the creation of an independent Croatian state as a possibility. In this regard, Frano Supilo’s influence on Seton-Watson proved to be apparently decisive. Once the Croatian expatriate arrived at London in late 1914, Steed managed to arrange two visits for him to the Foreign Office, where he was first received by George Clerk in November, then by Edward Grey in December (Calder 21, 26–27). Furthermore, a few days prior to Christmas, Supilo was invited to a luncheon by the Russian Minister in London, where he met Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith. Albeit these encounters did not move forward the case of a united Southern Slav state, they made the Dalmatian journalist visible for the British Cabinet, and moreover established him as the most recognized and acknowledged Habsburg Yugoslav exile.113 The potentials of his usefulness were soon utilized by the Foreign Office, when Clerk asked Supilo for a summary on situation of Yugoslavs (Correspondence I: 201; Seton-Watson, Making 108–109).

113 ‘Supilo is already in touch with the Foreign Office, the Russian and French embassies etc. Steed is doing all he can for him too, and he is in safe hands. We think however it would be good for him to meet some Cabinet ministers a little latter on, if it were possible, and I am thinking special of Lloyd George, to whom Supilo might appeal as 1) nationalist, 2) autodidact, peasant and yet politician of the first order, only awaiting his proper sphere,’ Seton-Watson wrote to Arthur Evans in the first autumn of the war (EVA/1/1/4).
Arguably, in the ‘Memorandum Respecting the Southern Slavs,’ submitted on 7 January 1915, Frano Supilo introduced the two major axioms of British pro-Yugoslav propaganda, namely, the unification of all Yugoslav territories in a single state, and the German barrier theory. Complementing each other, these two considerations firstly demanded the dismemberment of Austria–Hungary, and secondly rejected the idea of Southern Slav autonomy in the Habsburg Empire or independence translated into several sovereign Yugoslav states. Correspondingly, Supilo warned the Foreign Secretary on the dangers of disregarding the Southern Slavs’ overwhelming support for the Yugoslav idea, arguing that two rival Yugoslav states could have emerged by the Allied Powers allowing Serbia to seize Croatian territories (Seton-Watson, *Making* 155). In lieu, he proposed the creation of a united Southern Slav state as an effective barrier against future German expansion, while disapproving both the persistence of Habsburg rule and any Italian claims on Dalmatia (Calder 21, 26–27):

[…]

our very diversities may be fruitful of good if there are rightly dealt with. Since nearly one-half of the Southern Slavs are Western and the other half Eastern in civilization, they might prove a new and useful factor in the relationship between East and West, between Roman Catholicism and Greek Oriental Orthodoxy. […]

But in order to promote complete union, it is above necessary that the Allied Great Powers and Serbia should make effort to vindicate the principle […] that this is not a war of conquest but of redemption and liberation. [However,] the German race […] will ever weigh like a nightmare upon Europe and will not be cured of its pretensions, unless it is reduced to its true terms and limits by having wrested from its grasp these 35,000,000 Slavs who, against their will, have lent weight and strength to the unbridled militarism of Germany. The palliative of Slav ‘autonomies’ under German yoke, suggested by Austro–Hungary in agreement with Germany, cannot remedy the evil but can only prolong it and render it finally incurable […].

For all these reasons the complete liberation of Slavs in Austria–Hungary and Germany becomes indispensable to the peace of non-militarist Europe, and above all, the liberation and union of the Southern Slavs, and the creation of an understating would mean the definitive closing of the fate of the East to the great dream of world-conquest cherished by German Imperialism (SP SEW 5/1/10).

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114 The Seton-Watson Papers contain a type-written version of the document. The signatory name, typed-in as ‘Travodupito’ was crossed out along with few words in the text. It can be assumed that Seton-Watson proof-read the hand-written draft version, and trusted someone else with the task of typing the memorandum in, who could not read Frano Supilo’s signature (SP SEW 5/1/10). As the Foreign Office regarded the document significant, it was reprinted for the members of the War Cabinet (Calder 21, 27).
Undoubtedly, Seton-Watson shared Supilo’s vision in regard to the future of the Southern Slav territories, and believed that the mere aggrandizement of Serbia with Bosnia-Herzegovina would not have solved, but impeded the Southern Slav question (*Correspondence I*: 180–181), presumably, as it would have allowed the survival of the Habsburg Empire, leaving the Yugoslav unification incomplete: \(^{115}\)

It is often asked: ‘What will Serbia get out of this war?’ And there usually comes the superficial answer: ‘Oh, no doubt Bosnia and a port on the Adriatic.’ It cannot be emphasized too strongly that if Serbia gets Bosnia, that will settle nothing. Unless she can unite the race, it is better that she, and Montenegro too, should be overwhelmed and annexed to a reconstructed Austrian Empire. Deep down in the hearts of most thinking Serbs there lives a perception of this truth (Seton-Watson, *Spirit of the Serb* 30).

As the working of the alliance system transformed Serbia into the ally of Great Britain, the Balkan country was expected to be rewarded for its military efforts. Consequently, the survival of the Serbian state into the post-war period presupposed the fulfilment of a Great Serbian state. Seton-Watson had always disapproved such designs as he was convinced – ever since he had discovered the Southern Slav question – that the unification of all Southern Slavs in a common state had been the sole viable settlement for the issue. However, it was a rather naive assumption that the Serbs – possessing a strong national identity nurtured in their national independence movement – would voluntarily yield their leading role in a unified Yugoslav state. Although Seton regarded the Croats and Slovenes unready to form their own independent states, in a contradictory fashion, it was beyond any questions for him that these Westernized Yugoslav kinsmen would have assumed the leadership in a common Yugoslav state:

The Croats can boast of a culture which, if less ancient, it is distinctly superior to that of the Serbs; but despite their headlong bravery and tenacity of will, they have never shown signs of possessing those political talents which alone could justify their separate existence (Seton-Watson, *Future* 57–58).

\(^{115}\) Seton wrote that the idea he had presented in his memorandum ‘fully corresponds with the view of those few Croats who are in [Great Britain]’ (*Correspondence I*: 186).
‘[…] it is safe to forecast that the more civilised Croats and Slovenes will soon assume
a lead in the political life and thought of new state over their gallant but more
primitive kinsmen’ (Correspondence I: 185).

In effect, it is hard to retrace Seton-Watson’s overall conceptions on the internal
arrangements of a future Yugoslavia since besides the ‘Memorandum on the Southern Slav
Question’ there were hardly any written records regarding it. In addition, these visions had
been in an initial stage, therefore, far-reaching conclusions should not be drawn from them.
Nevertheless, it should be noted that besides a federal settlement, Seton-Watson envisioned
the future Yugoslav state adapting a dualist political arrangement. Besides the example of
Habsburg Dualism, the idea of this constitutional layout might have originated in Seton’s
admiration of the Scottish and English union (Cornwall, Seton-Watson 334), which he had
considered for a long time to be a fitting model for the political development of Serbs and
Croats, Bohemians and Slovaks respectively. Practically, in case of the Yugoslavs, this would
have assumed the merger of Dalmatia, Istria and Carniola (Krajna) into Croatia–Slavonia, and
the association of Bosnia–Herzegovina and Montenegro with Serbia. The two parallel sub-
parliaments would have been seated in Zagreb and Belgrade, while a central federal
parliament would have met either permanently in Sarajevo or alternately in miscellaneous
centres of the new state such as Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Ljubljana and Skoplje.
Conclusively, the union of Habsburg Yugoslavs and Serbia would have preserved the features
of their existing respective political institutions and administrations (Correspondence I: 180–
186; Seton-Watson, Introduction 21).116

In contrast to the question of the constitutional framework – which the historian
reserved for the future Constituent Assembly of the united Southern Slav state – Seton-
Watson’s ideas concerning the future frontiers of the Southern Slav state were clear. During
his visit to Serbia in the winter from 1914 to 1915, the historian had the opportunity to engage
in lengthy discussions on the frontiers with Prince Regent Aleksandar, and Professor Jovan
Cvijić, a notable geographer (FO PRO 800, 112/19011). Cvijić had revealed three alternative
maps for Seton pertaining to the future borders of a Yugoslav state. Among these variants,
Seton-Watson disapproved only the most extreme plan, claiming Nagykanizsa, Pécs and the

116 In regard to the federal structure of a future Yugoslavia, Supilo’s influence was apparent again. Supilo
envisioned that besides a central government and parliament – symbolizing the unity of the nation –, provincial
parliaments and governments granted with extended rights of self-government would have been created in
Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Serbia. Joint affairs on the federal level would have embraced
economy and finance, defence and army, communication, diplomacy, while the remaining policies would have
been reserved for the provincial governments (Janković 394).
whole Bácska for Serbia. The Prince Regent explained Seton that schemes on the frontier between Hungary and the Southern Slav state had been inspired by the strategic consideration to guarantee the peace in the Danube region. For this reason, the Serbian experts pushed the border northwards above Nagykanizsa and Pécs, and moved it just below Szeged. This argument, however, was not convincing for the historian, who insisted on applying the nationality principle in frontier-making, suggesting that claims on Bácska and Bánát to be either voided or reduced to moderation. As the Pécs region was primarily inhabited by Hungarian and German population, consequently it should have remained in Hungarian possession. Albeit Seton had the impression that the extravagant claims had not been serious, and the Regent had stood for the moderate frontiers drawn along or close to the line of the Danube, the Southern Slav delegation would eventually present the most aspiring territorial claims at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 30; Ostojić-Fejić 495–496; Seton-Watson, *Making* 112).  

However, corresponding with the developments of the enduring war, Seton-Watson would later revisit the question of frontiers. In his ‘Memorandum Respecting Austria–Hungary,’ sent to the Foreign Office on 25 November 1918, he elaborated his own proposal regarding the future Hungarian–Yugoslav frontier in the following way:

Starting from the Western frontier between Austria and Hungary, the new Yugoslav frontier against Hungary at first follows a clearly defined course – namely the river Mur to its junction with the Drave, then the river Drave to its junction with the Danube. The only districts to the North of this line which could be conceivably claimed by the Yugoslavs are […] the districts of Mura Szombat […] and, [a] portion of the county of Baranya […]. The Northern frontier between Serbia-Roumania and Hungary can only be the river Maros, from a point near the town of Arad westwards. […] Between the Banat and the Baranya lies the Bacska district, which must in any case be regarded as the principle ‘Grey Zone’ between Magyars and Jugoslavs [since it] contains a mixed Magyar-Serb-Slovak-German population (*Correspondence I*: 375–376).

117 The reason for this to be found in the uneasy war-time alliance of Premier Nikola Pašić and Ante Trumbić, the Croatian leader of the Yugoslav émigrés. Both politicians became the official representatives of the Serbian Kingdom at the Paris Peace Conference. As mutual distrust defined their relationship, neither of them wished to be perceived as bartering territories at the other’s – respectively of Croatia’s and of Serbia’s – expense. Subsequently, to prevent further hostilities, the best solution seemed to be to present the maximal claims.
The aforementioned suggestions on the northern boundary coincided with the frontiers presented on a map published in the *German, Slav and Magyar*, a war-time work of Seton-Watson, released in 1916. It should be noted that the frontier between Yugoslavia and Romania was left blank on the map, arguably intentionally (Arday, *Dokumentumok* 29). As at the time the *German, Slav and Magyar* was published, Romania was still considering joining the Allied Powers – after the poor Italian military performance had considerably reduced Bucharest’s willingness to enter the war –, hence Seton had no intention to burden the diplomatic relations among the Allied Powers, Romania and Serbia by any precise proposals on the Romanian-Yugoslav border (Hay 60; Seton-Watson, *Italy* 52).

Nevertheless, as early as 1915, Seton had already considered Romania’s adherence to the Triple Entente. Therefore, he devoted pages to discuss the question of the possible Romanian–Serbian frontier as well. As both Serbia and Romania laid claims over the whole or at least the two-thirds of Bánát, the historian deemed that the division of the region would have been challenging. For that matter, his considerations in 1915 were conceived as recommendations for a future agreement rather than explicit outlines:

A just settlement will divide the Banat between Serbia and Roumania apportioning the numerous German colonies of the centre almost equally between them, and leaving to independent Hungary the triangular piece of territory which lies between the Theiss, the Maros, and the Aranka; it is mainly inhabited by Magyars, and commands the important Magyar commercial centre of Szeged (Seton-Watson, *Italy* 52).

While rejecting both exaggerating rival claims, he was convinced that ‘an artificial frontier’ had to be drawn to secure Belgrade’s defence on the banks of the Danube, by assigning the Western portion of Bánát to Serbia. Overall, Seton-Watson reserved the division of Bánát for a future peace conference (*Correspondence I*: 192–193, 376; Ostojić-Fejić 496; Seton-Watson, *Italy* 51).

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118 Granted that the ‘Grey Zone’ Bácska was voided from Hungary, the map would also coincide with Arthur Evans’ diagrammatic map on the future Southern Slav state, published in 1916 in the *New Europe*, two years before Seton-Watson’s assumptions were concluded. The primary objective of Evans’ map had been to lay claims over Habsburg territories in the name of Yugoslavs by displaying the existing principal railway communications (with added lines as recommendations) as the vital foundations of Yugoslav economic liberation. Furthermore, he suggested Trieste, Fiume, Spalato (Split) and Ragusa (Dubrovnik) should be declared free ports (*New Europe*, no. 52, 11 October 1916: 415–416).

119 With Bulgaria entering the war on the side of the Central Powers, the Allies tried to win Romania over at the expense of Hungary, and the Bánát area became the premise of bargain.
Pertaining to the Italian frontier, as early as October 1914, Seton-Watson had already expressed his objections towards any Italian territorial claims on Dalmatia, stating that Italy ‘ha[d] as much, or as little, right to Dalmatia as England ha[d] to Bordeaux’ (Correspondence I: 181). Conclusively, on the premise of the nationality principle, Seton had excluded that more than Trieste and the western portion of Istria could have been assigned to Italy (ibid. 181–185). However, with the conclusion of the secret Treaty of London in the spring of 1915, Seton-Watson and the other pro-Yugoslav British patrons would soon be forced to publicly champion the Yugoslav case pertaining to the Dalmatian coast and Istria against the decisions of Allied secret diplomacy.

2.3. Secret Diplomacy and the Fall of Serbia

Great Britain entered the European conflict with the illusion of a short war, and with the conviction that the French and Russian armies together matched the military power of Germany. In terms of propaganda, mobilization, and diplomacy, Britain was unprepared for a prolonged European war, which, in effect, would require diplomatic and military efforts beyond the traditional British policy of war-time coalitions. Due to the stalemate on the Western front, and failure on the Eastern theatre of war, the Foreign Office\textsuperscript{120} came under considerate pressure to meet the multiple expectations and strategic considerations of the British General Staff by recruiting new allies without upsetting the principle of war-time Allied solidarity (Hay 59–60; Neilson 208; Suttie 45).\textsuperscript{121}

Due to Russian complaint on British military inactivity in the initial months of the Great War, the Dardanelles Campaign was outlined in early 1915. Originally, it solely intended to demonstrate British solidarity as a gesture made towards Petrograd\textsuperscript{122} by aiding Russian shortage of munitions through the Aegean and Black Seas. Consequently, the plan would not have involved the deployment of large contingents at the Dardanelles, and moreover, it was conceptualized to buy time for Britain to recruit and train its new land army.

\textsuperscript{120} Under the pressure of urgency, the Foreign Office could solely utilize back-channel diplomacy, while the War Office dispatched military attachés to the Balkans.

\textsuperscript{121} On 4 September 1914, the members of the Triple Entente signed an agreement on war-time policy and principles to foster cooperation and mutual trust among their leadership. The treaty declared that the war would commence until mutually satisfying peace terms were concluded, and it introduced the principle of Allied solidarity into tripartite diplomacy. This meant that negotiations with other neutral states had to be conducted on a cooperative basis, respectively by involving all members of the Triple Entente. Despite severe loses in the following war years, these premises prevented the Allied Powers’ coalition to collapse (Lowe 533), and during the Paris Peace Conference they complicated the case of Yugoslav recognition.

\textsuperscript{122} At the outbreak of the war, Saint Petersburg was renamed to Petrograd due to its German name.
Fearing of Russian collapse in the East would enable Germany to concentrate its forces to the West, and moreover due to French insistence on British land troops, the Dardanelles campaign was approved by the War Council – with the exception of David Lloyd George – as a naval operation against the Ottoman Empire. Subsequently the plan would have utilized the naval strength of Great Britain, making any land support and the occupation of the Gallipoli Peninsula or other Aegean shores unnecessary (Lloyd George, *War Memoirs I*: 339–340, 344; Neilson 213–216; Suttie 54). However, the naval bombardment launched in February 1915 proved to be a fiasco, eventually followed by a hastily executed and disorganized land expedition in Gallipoli in April (Waterhouse 356, 365). In sum, the land operation was another blow for the Triple Entente’s war effort, and as the sea route was not established to Russia Italia’s adherence to the war became an imperil.

The standstill in the West, the Russian losses in the first winter and the spring of 1915, and the British military blunder in Gallipoli considerably changed the Triple Entente’s position on the ambitious Italian claims in the Adriatic region. The British War Council was well-aware that satisfying Italian claims in Dalmatia would have violated the right of self-determination, nonetheless the developments of the war forced the Cabinet to confirm to Realpolitik. As a result, the nationality principle was subordinated to winning the war, and Italian-British bilateral negotiations commenced in late March 1915 (Evans 164; Lowe 543–546).

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123 In the first years of the Great War, Horatio Kitchener was responsible for shaping the British military strategy until his unfortunate demise. He regarded Russia as the most valuable ally, held a high opinion on its army, and believed that it could bear the most burdens in the war (Neilson 207). He did not believe that the German lines could have been broken in the Western front in the spring of 1915, and he wished to maintain the active defence in France by keeping large forces there in defensive position. Occupying German forces in the West would have prevented their transfer to the East, while Russia – aided by munitions and relieved of pressure – could have launched a new offensive in Eastern theatre of war. Additionally, to discourage the French High Command from an anti-German offensive in Flanders, Kitchener wanted to discontinue sending British troops to France for some time (ibid. 213–218).

124 Albeit, Lloyd George suggested the landing of British contingents in Salonika, it was believed that the British Fleet was capable of cutting the European and Asian halves of the Ottoman Empire, therefore, the occupation of the Gallipoli Peninsula or other Aegean shores were deemed unnecessary (Lloyd George, *War Memoirs I*: 339–340).

125 The major opponent of the Italian expansion was Sergei Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister, who had explicitly rejected the aspiring demands of Italy, proposed to the Allies as early as August 1914 (Lowe 533–534, 537; Milutinović, *Dalmačija* 15–16). Britain and France perceived Italy’s adherence as a possible turning point in the war, they reconsidered their position pertaining to the centuries-old Russian claim over Constantinople and the straits to remove Russian objections on an Italian treaty. With the prospect of concessions in the Aegean and a shortened war, the Russian Foreign Minister did not hesitate to align with Britain and France on the case of Italy. Furthermore, as Russian units captured the fortress of Przemysł on 22 March 1915, his willingness to make sacrifices at the expense of Catholic Yugoslav territories further enhanced (Lederer 11; Lowe 542, 544–545).

126 Italy justified its claims on the Dalmatian coast on the grounds of security, strategic, geopolitical and historic reasons. Sidney Sonnino, the half-English, Protestant Foreign Minister of Italy, argued that German and Russian aspirations in Adriatic could have been neutralized provided Rome had established its naval mastery over the Adriatic by building naval bases along the inlets and island of the Dalmatian coast, and by exercising protectorate over Albania (Lederer 5–7).
In effect, Edward Grey made efforts to minimize the extension of the Dalmatian territory to be ceded to Italy. Nevertheless, as by April the Gallipoli landing failed, and Russia was forced to withdraw from Galicia, Italian intervention could not have been postponed any longer. In liaison, considerable amount of Italian territorial demands was eventually agreed in the secret Treaty of London, promising Rome Southern Albania, Istria with Trieste, and Northern Dalmatia without Fiume (Lederer 7; Lowe 543, 545–546; Pavlowitch, Serbia 96; Waterhouse 368–369). Although the Italian treaty was prepared behind the scenes, the Serbian Cabinet, the Habsburg Yugoslav expatriates and their British patrons learnt rumours concerning the formal negotiations with Italy (Steed, Thirty II: 64). Eventually, due to Frano Supilo’s successful bluff in Petrograd, all parties learnt the exact details of the concessions promised to Italy.

Both Seton-Watson and Steed believed that better terms could have been obtained for the Yugoslavs in the Allied treaty with Italy provided the Southern Slav cause had received a wide publicity in Britain (Seton-Watson, Making 131). For that matter, they urged Ante Trumbić and the other representatives of the Yugoslav Committee residing in Rome and Paris to cross the Channel, and introduce their émigré organization and its aims to the British public

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127 To maintain the principle of tripartite diplomacy, the Foreign Office persisted on informing France and Russia about the proceedings (Lowe 545).

128 After Dardanelles fiasco, the first coalition government of Asquith was formed in May 1915 with the adherence of opposition party members such as Bonar Law and George Curzon into his War Council (Lloyd George, War Memoirs II: 164; Steed, Thirty II: 73; Waterhouse 356).

129 Expecting the survival of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Italian Cabinet did not wish to weaken the Hungarian half of the Empire partially owing to the fact and fictitious Hungarian-Italian friendship.

130 In February 1915, Supilo travelled to Petrograd to popularize the idea of Yugoslav, and to dissuade Sazonov from the conclusion of any retroactive agreement with the Italians. Although, Supilo had the impression that the Russian Foreign Minister had little knowledge of the Yugoslav lands, in light of Sazonov’s six-month long firm rejection of Italian demands, it can be assumed that conversations with Supilo could have been immensely inconvenient for Sazonov, who had averted to disclose the matters of diplomacy by pretending he had known little information. Nevertheless, on 4 April 1915, Supilo managed to learn the exact details of the future Treaty of London. Anxious to learn the specifics, Supilo bluffed and acted as if he had possessed the knowledge on the exact details of the future Italian treaty. Deceiving Sazonov, the Foreign Secretary spoke openly about the agreement and thus unintentionally revealed all the outlines to Supilo. In regard to the future of the Yugoslav lands, Supilo learnt that the Allies had been only considering the extension of Serbia. As these plans partially corresponded with the Pan-Serb endeavours, Supilo gradually developed distrust and suspicion towards the Serbian Cabinet (Lederer 11; Masaryk 146; Milutinović, Dalmacija 16). Meanwhile Prime Minister Pašić also heard rumours on the on-going Entente-Italian negotiations through Ljuba Mihajlović, the Serbian Minister in Rome in March 1915, but learnt about the particular details only from Supilo’s urgent telegram (Milutinović, Dalmacija 16). In the course of April, Supilo, Trumbić and Pašić tried to contact the Russian leadership and legations in various ways. Supilo did his utmost to receive an audience at the Allied legations in Petrograd and at Emperor Nikolas II, but due to Sazonov’s interference, all his attempts proved to be unsuccessful. As the Russian Foreign Minister discouraged Pašić from travelling to Russia, the Serbian Primer protested against the transfer of Yugoslavs territories through Spajlaković, the Serbian Minister in Petrograd. As communicated to Sazonov, Pašić’s concerns towards the treaty were founded in his fear that the Habsburg Yugoslavs would fight against the prospect of an Italian rule, arguably as they ‘would prefer to remain under Austro-Hungarian domination than to be annexed to Italy’ (qtd. Lederer 17). On 26 April 1915, Trumbić paid a visit to the Russian Minister in Rome, and reasoned that the promised concessions were laying the ground of hostilities and even a future war in the region (Lederer 10–12).
as soon as possible (EVA/1/1/4; Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 64–65). Seton-Watson was also convinced that a manifesto on the self-determination of Southern Slavs should have been published (*Correspondence I*: 225), as ‘it was necessary to peg out as publicly as possible the Jugoslav claim to Dalmatia before Italy entered the war, and therefore before the censorship imposed possible restrictions upon criticism of [the] new ally’ (Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 65). Outlining its major points, the historian’s draft served the basis for the Yugoslav Committee’s Southern Slav manifesto, and furthermore, it can be assumed that he had an enormous role in compiling its final version likewise. Although there was no official response to the manifesto, George Clerk, the Head of the War Department, regarded the Committee’s appeal for Britain’s official commitment to the unified Yugoslav state as absurd, maintaining that since the war had not been being fought for the sake of nationalities, it had been the peace settlement and not the war which had had to be subordinated to the nationality principle (Evans 163). Conclusively, the Foreign Office did not wish to venture the outcome of the war for the sake of this principle: ‘We cannot strain the principle of nationalities to the point of risking success in war,’ Clerk wrote (qtd. ibid. 163).

Meanwhile, Steed travelled to Paris, and arranged an appointment with Delcassé, the French Foreign Secretary for 1 May (Steed, *Thirty II*: 65–66, 69). As the Foreign Editor of the *Times* since 1913, Steed had managed to strengthen his ties in the Foreign Office, which he had felt entitled to visit anytime he had wished (*Edinburg Review*, no 462, October 1917: 366–367; Jeszenszky, *Steed* 22). He could have enjoyed this occupational privilege until the end of 1914, when he and the other *Times*’ employees had been banned from the ministry until May 1915 for delivering critical articles on British foreign policy (Masaryk 97). For this reason, Steed could have utilized his high level political connections in the spring of 1915 only in France. Upon meeting the French Foreign Secretary, Steed emphasized that ‘the folly which the Allies had committed’ with the Italian agreement would have neutralized the anti-

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131 Seton wrote to Arthur Evans: ‘We have wired urging Supilo and Trumbić and others to come here hot haste and prepare a S. Slav Manifesto in brief form. If they wire it in cipher, we will get it published and then expand it in leaflet form for general propaganda’ (EVA/1/1/4).

132 The correlation between the manifesto and Seton’s writings – his letter to the *Times*, ‘Italy and Serbia – Interests of Southern Slavs’ (23 April 1915: 9), and his memorandum on ‘The Secret Agreement with Italy’ sent to the Foreign Office, both written before the proclamation was released – is apparent since several of his lines were identical word by word with the manifesto.

133 The sudden outbreak of the Great War left the Foreign Office unprepared for an enduring conflict in matters of diplomatic relations, propaganda, and in handling the demands of the British press. The Foreign Office gradually grew frustrated with the press, which got accustomed to the liberal value of freedom speech, and persisted exercising its right to criticize, often harming diplomatic efforts in process. As in the early months of the war, the *Times*, spearheaded by Steed, was overly critical concerning certain aspects of foreign policy, thus by the end of the year, the Foreign Office severed relations with the paper until May 1915 (Hay 62; Masaryk 97; Taylor 878–879).
Habsburg sentiment among the Habsburg Yugoslavs, and would have provided ‘the Southern Slav regiments of Austria–Hungary with a strong incentive to fight desperately against Italy in defence of their own soil.’

To close the conversation, the journalist warned Delcassé that without a reasonable treaty with Italy no lasting peace could have been achieved in the region (Steed, Thirty II: 66).

Similar to Steed, Seton-Watson and Frano Supilo raised objections on the policy of secret diplomacy for Edward Grey in an appeal written by Supilo, countersigned by Pašić, and forwarded by Seton with his own lines enclosed in the letter (Correspondence I: 220; Milutinović, Dalmacija 18). In his reply, the Foreign Secretary maintained that the Yugoslav desires would have been fulfilled on the basis of self-determination. Furthermore, he emphasized that the Southern Slavs would have had more to lose provided Italy had not joined the war (Evans 163). Grey considered the rumours on the sacrifice of Southern Slavs territories to be exaggerative, perturbing and panicky. In regard to the intense protest of the Yugoslav expatriate politicians, he added:

It would […] be most ungenerous if the Serbs and other Slavs were […] to refuse what reasonable concessions were found necessary to enable the Great Powers to secure for them the vast gains and advantages that are assured in case of the victory of the Allies. […] The Serbs and other Slavs, who are really going to gain more than anyone else, must not deny to those who are fighting for them the means of securing victory (Correspondence I: 221).

His lines confirmed the general position of the War Council, which acknowledged and often appreciated the efforts of small nations, but regarded the principle of nationality secondary to winning the war as soon as possible. Despite all efforts, by the time Steed travelled to Paris, and the Yugoslav manifesto was issued in the major British papers (ibid. 223), the Treaty of London had been concluded between the Entente Powers and the Kingdom of Italy on 26 April 1915.

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134 In view that the Habsburg Yugoslavs accounted 17% of the Habsburg army (Pavlowitch, Serbia 102), Steed’s argument revealed to be a legitimate threat to the Allied cause.
135 Additionally, being pressured by all sides – the War Office, the Allies, and pressure groups – Grey could have been surfeited with the criticism he had to endure. For example, summarizing the Bohemian case in a memorandum for Grey in mid-April 1915, Masaryk also criticized ‘the allotment of a considerable part of Dalmatia to Italy.’ This insertion was the product of a discussion he had held before with Seton-Watson (Masaryk 68)
136 Re-evaluating the developments of spring, Steed and Seton eventually realized in early June that the conclusion of the treaty had been the reason why Steed’s leader had been prevented from being published, and why Annan Bryce’s articles had been returned for revision in late April (Correspondence I: 224).
Being the fierce opponents of secret treaties, Seton-Watson and Steed would do their utmost to convince the Allied decision-makers of the disastrous effects of the treaty – also known as the Pact of London – in the upcoming war years. A half year before the treaty was concluded, Seton-Watson had already displayed concerns in the relations of Italy and a future Yugoslavia in his ‘Memorandum on the Southern Slav Question.’ However, until the early March 1915, the historian had held the conviction that Italy would have placed moderate and reasonable demands in front of the Allies. His belief rested on his Italian correspondence, and his experience in Rome in late 1914 en route to the Balkans. Additionally, when the question of the Italian-Yugoslav frontier had been raised in the course of his Balkan mission, Prince Regent Aleksandar had explained him that in a united Yugoslav state Dalmatian Italian minority would not have been supressed, and the Italian language would have remained the language of trade (Correspondence I: 192–193; Ostojić-Fejić 496). Consequently, the Balkan pilgrimage also fostered his illusions that an Italian-Yugoslav cooperation, and cordial understanding could have been accomplished without any complications. However, as it was soon revealed, Italian endeavours in the Adriatic would facilitate tremendous issues among the Yugoslavs, would seriously complicate the process of Yugoslav recognition in 1918–1919, and moreover, it marked the beginning of the pro-Yugoslav British professionals’ enduring struggle for the revision of the secret treaty.137

Their efforts would find a significant ally in the person of Arthur Evans, a well-off scholar, historian, archaeologist and a ‘famous authority on Cretan culture’ (Masaryk 97). He was the eldest son of John Evans, a distinguished geologist, and a pioneer of prehistoric archaeology, also known for his interest in numismatics (Harden 8, 10; Myres 3). Arthur Evans spent seven years from 1875 to 1882 in Bosnia–Herzegovina, and in the Adriatic coast with archaeological research and travelling. During the Bosnian insurrection, his accounts were published in the Manchester Guardian, and were latter republished in the books Through Bosnia and Herzegovina on Foot During the Insurrection, August and September 1975 and The Illyrian Letters. By 1877, he became the official correspondent for the paper. Besides giving accounts on regional events, he set to explore the national movements, ethnic questions, religion and legends of the Southern Slavs. In course of his travel, he maintained correspondence in Italian with museums in the Adriatic, and drew sketch maps of the region (EVA/1/1/2). In the early 1880’s, he exchanged letters with William Gladstone and Čedomir

137 Retrospectively, in 1926, Seton confessed in an article, ‘Kako je postala Jugoslavija’ (‘How Yugoslavia was Created’), written in Serbo-Croatian for the Nova Evropa that the Adriatic Question had been one of the most demanding political struggles in his life (Milutinović, Dalmacija 15).
Mijatović (EVA/1/1/4), and participated in the Balkan relief efforts as a member of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Fugitives and Orphan Relief Fund (EVA/1/1/2). However, for his reports, he was imprisoned in Ragusa (Dubrovnik) in 1882 for six weeks, eventually to be released, and banished from the Habsburg Monarchy for a few years (Harden 10–11, 16–17; Myres 6).

Overall, Evans was fascinated by the Southern Slav lands, and paid attention to their political developments, archaeology and cultural anthropology likewise. Arguably, besides a strong sympathy, he developed a lifelong political and cultural interest in the Yugoslavs. In liaison, he participated in the work of the Balkan Committee, and later joined the war-time pro-Yugoslav British groups. Notably, prior to the war, he had already envisioned a Southern Slav monarchy to be erected outside the Habsburg Empire. As meanwhile his political ideal transformed into a proclaimed political project of Seton-Watson and Steed, the ennobled elderly archaeologist proved to be more than enthusiastic to revive his interest in the region, and to join the duo’s overtly pro-Yugoslav efforts and struggle for the revision of the Treaty of London (Harden 15; Myres 6–7).

In effect, the means of challenging the Treaty of London caused a great deal of concern for the pro-Yugoslav circles. As it was a secret inter-Allied treaty, it could have been disclosed only by committing an act of treason. Consequently, the Adriatic question had been handled with a special consideration until the Russian Bolshevik government revealed all the secret treaties in late 1917 (Nicolson 162). In liaison, Seton relied on his pre-war writing experience, and assumed the role of a specialist, whose expert opinion sought to address the issues and greatest questions of the war with the aim of securing victory for the Allies. As Serbia’s fate had depended upon Allied diplomacy, prior to 1916 Seton utilized the power of conviction in lieu of attacking the Asquith Cabinet. Correspondingly, his articles and pamphlets invited the reader for rational discussion along the lines of seemingly objective arguments and statistical data, and pursued to convince the general public that the creation of

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138 By September 1914, Evans established correspondence with Seton, who confirmed him his Rotterdam meeting with Masaryk, attesting the historian’s confidence in the retired archaeologist. The two Yugoslav-devotes, in effect, had contemplated Italian entry to the war long before official negotiations commenced. In December, Evans established contact with Supilo, and sent a letter to the Times, correcting the paper’s population statistics on Dalmatia (EVA/1/1/4). In the spring of 1915, he mobilized himself in agreement with Seton and Steed by sending a number of letters to the press concerning the Adriatic (Correspondence I: 224). Presumably his former association with the Manchester Guardian was also utilized as the paper published several of Seton-Watson’s articles (Milutinović, Dalmacija 15). Due to the Allied negotiations with Italy, Seton-Watson urged Evans in mid-March 1915 to finalize his memorandum on the Adriatic as soon as possible. ‘The National Union of the Southern Slavs and the Adriatic Question,’ a detailed memorandum over thirty-page, was eventually sent to the Foreign Office in April 1915 (EVA/1/1/4).
an ethnically compact Yugoslav state at the expense of the Habsburg Empire had been indeed a British interest (Milutinović, Dalmacija 15).

In this fashion, Seton-Watson devoted a separate pamphlet to address the Pact of London. In June 1915, Trevelyan – then serving in the British Red Cross on the Italian front – confirmed the prevailing jingoist sentiments in Italy, and advised Seton not to release the pamphlet as it might have seriously damaged Italian, British and Yugoslav relations. He suggested Seton wait until the suitable occasion arose: ‘I want the same things as you do. But I am sure that the best chance of attaining them is to be quiet at present and let things grow’ (Correspondence I: 228). Despite the fellow historian’s warning, Seton published The Balkans, Italy and the Adriatic in August 1915, hinting at that any settlements concluded without a cordial agreement among all Allied nations would have been dangerous for the peace of Europe. Overemphasizing his expert position, he persisted educating the public concerning the importance of the Southern Slav question for the Allied cause: ‘[…] it is essential that public opinion should obtain a clear idea of what Southern Slav unity means in practice, what are the difficulties in its way, and how such a solution fits into the scheme of the allies’ (Seton-Watson, Italy 40). Although he insisted on having ‘no desire to trespass the paths of secret diplomacy’ (ibid. 54), he raised the question of frontiers, and tactfully hinted at the bane consequences of the improper handling of the Adriatic question:

Italian claims on the Adriatic involve a question of some delicacy, but of quite cardinal importance, and though it could serve no good purpose to discuss publicly the secret negotiations of the Entente Governments, it is necessary that the true facts regarding the national claims of Italy and the Southern Slavs should be known as widely as possible. If a settlement should be attempted on the basis of misleading information, irretrievable harm might be done to the cause of future peace (ibid. 53–54).

Concerning Dalmatia, Seton overtly stated ‘that Italy ha[d] no ethnographic claim whatever to Dalmatia’ (ibid. 65), as only a tiny Italian minority lived in the area (ibid. 68). Nevertheless, awarding Italy with any portion of the territory would have resulted in a truncated, less effective Yugoslavia, which could not have fulfilled its role as a barrier to

139 The historian exercised no restraint when he aspiringly claimed that ‘before the outbreak of the great war, it was a commonplace of political theory that the Southern Slav Question could be solved in one of two ways — either inside the Habsburg Monarchy, or outside it — either with its help or under its aegis, or against it and despite its resistance’ (Seton-Watson, Italy 38).
German imperialism. Since German aspirations were menace to Italy likewise, he deemed that Italy would eventually recognize a sound settlement with the Yugoslavs – covertly implying the revision of the treaty – was in its own interest.\(^{140}\)

Any Adriatic settlement which does not rest upon real Italo-Jugoslav accord is not worth many years’ purchase. It will be overthrown by fresh upheavals; one or other of the two states will by force of circumstances become the tool of Germany; route to the East will be in German hands; a vital British interest will be affected. Nor would any secret agreements which ignored the vital interest of the Southern Slavs have any chance of being permanently enforced. It might galvanize Austria into fresh life, but it would never stem the irresistible national movement which has united Serb, Croat and Slovene in a single aspiration (ibid. 53‒54).

The fate of the Balkan small nations had always been determined by the political agendas, interests and secret treaties of Great Powers, which had failed to understand the Balkan peoples in the past decades. However, as the Yugoslav expatriates, the representatives of their kinsmen in the Habsburg Empire, appealed to London in a manifesto (ibid. 15–16, 39), Great Britain ought to have assumed the task to promote mutual understanding and reasonable agreement between Italy and the Yugoslavs along the lines of national self-determination: ‘Let it be the task of Britain to help them to their true place in Europe and to lay the foundations of an abiding friendship between the two nations’ (ibid. 76). Consequently, Seton expected the British Cabinet to play a major role in the revision of the treaty, and argued that Italian naval supremacy in the Adriatic could have been attained by demilitarizing Dalmatia, while Rome would have been compensated for Dalmatia in Asia Minor (Correspondence I: 266–267, 285).

Irrespective of Seton’s efforts to convince the British Cabinet on the revocation of the Italian agreement, Macedonia became another Yugoslav territory to be sacrificed for Allied victory. In reality, by the end of spring, the Allied Powers had lost the initiation in all theatres of the war. By the time Italy declared war on the Central Powers in the end of May, Austria–Hungary had been more than prepared for the assault. The unexpectedly subpar Italian military performance, and the Russian failure to defeat Austria–Hungary on the Eastern front questioned Allied victory, and consequently, postponed or prevented neutral Bulgaria and

\(^{140}\) In reality, it was not in the interest of Italy to revoke the treaty, and consequently, the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Rome was solely a strategic move on behalf of the Orlando Cabinet (Šepić 198) to demoralize the Monarchy’s Southern Slav forces on the Italian front.
Romania proclaiming an allegiance with the Triple Entente.\textsuperscript{141} For these reasons, during the summer of 1915, the Allies were desperately trying to secure Bulgarian entry to the war, and urged Serbia to yield Macedonia. Grey even summoned Frano Supilo on 30 August 1915 in the hope the émigré Croat could have influenced the Serbian Cabinet to take the Allies’ proposal assuring Serbia with Bosnia–Herzegovina, Szerémség, Bácska, and a part of the Southern Dalmatian coastline between Spalato (Split) and Ragusa (Dubrovnik).\textsuperscript{142} Regardless of all endeavours, the leadership and the general public in Serbia opposed the renunciation of Macedonia. Tempted by the prospect of gaining coastal territories, in theory the Serbian Cabinet agreed to the Allies’ terms in early September, but refused the immediate surrender of Macedonia, thereupon Bulgaria entered the war on the side of the Central Powers in October 1915 (Antić, \textit{Saveznica} 145–146; Evans 163; Hall 303–304; Lederer 15–18; Lowe 544, 546; Lloyd George, \textit{War Memoirs I}: 423–426; Neilson 224).

During the Balkan offensive of 1915 Serbia was attacked from two sides by the Central Powers. The British War Council was divided over dispatching British forces to the Balkans: while Asquith and Grey were against such a plan, Lloyd George and Edward Carson were strong proponents of saving Serbia by sending a large Allied expeditionary force to Salonika. Eventually, the French General Staff managed to convince London concerning the expedition, and a joint British and French expeditionary force – numbering as few as 13,000 soldiers – landed in non-belligerent Greece\textsuperscript{143} in October 1915. Their initial plan to move northwards in the valley of the Vardar to join the Serbian Army failed as the Bulgarian Army had cut the railway connection and blocked the path towards Skoplje. Due to the lack of transport and the rough terrain, the disorganized Allied troops were forced to withdraw to Salonika by December, where they would remain until the last year of the war (Antić, \textit{Paget} 98; Chappell 23; \textbf{Hall} 305; Lloyd George, \textit{War Memoirs I}: 42; Suttie 59). The failure to attract Bulgaria and to save Serbia were considerable fiascos for the Asquith Cabinet (Waterhouse

\textsuperscript{141} Moreover, Russian and Italian objections to the adherence of Greece into the war, and French suspicion on British imperial aspirations in the Mediterranean made the Balkan alliance unattainable. As a result, upon French insistence, almost all the British forces were deployed on the Western front, where Allied offensive transpired to be futile. Their losses were heavy, while considerable amount of munition was wasted (Hall 304; Lloyd George, \textit{War Memoirs I}: 414, 418, 421; Lowe 544, 546; Neilson 224).

\textsuperscript{142} The precarious position on the Eastern front changed Russia’s attitude towards the Yugoslav idea, making Petrograd eager to promise Belgrade Catholic Croat territories in compensation for Macedonia (Lloyd George, \textit{War Memoirs I}: 349; Evans, \textit{Yugoslavia} 163). British and Russian diplomatic endeavours to compensate Serbia were rejected by Italy, since Rome not solely opposed the Southern Slav unity, but also desired to restrict the enlargement of Serbian by offering Belgrade the minimum. In liaison, albeit the Treaty of London had not granted Italy with Fiume, Rome refused to award Serbia with the port city (Antić, \textit{Saveznica} 145–146; Evans, \textit{Yugoslavia} 163; Hall 303–304; Lederer 15–17).

\textsuperscript{143} King Constantine of Greece was the brother-in-law of Wilhelm II Emperor of Germany, and in October 1915, a neutral government came to power in Athens replacing the pro-Entente cabinet of Eleutherious Venizelos (Hall 305).
for a number of reasons.\textsuperscript{144} Firstly, the Balkan state would mobilize the largest army in the Balkan theatre of war, numbering almost 900,000 soldiers; secondly, Sofia’s adherence to the war established a land route connection between the Ottoman Empire and the Central European powers; thirdly, Sofia would assist the invasion of Romania, a future Entente ally; and lastly, Bulgarian troops would keep the Allied expeditionary force in bay until the last summer of the conflict (Chappell 23; Hall 303, 314–315).

Abandoned by its allies, and overpowered by its enemies, Serbia was defeated and occupied by early 1916, while its dynasty, government, the remainder of its army and thousands of civilians withdrew through the Albanian mountains in the midst of winter to seek refuge in Corfu.\textsuperscript{145} Albeit the Great Retreat was a devastation for Serbia, the sacrifices made for the common war cause not only did foster a new wave of pro-Yugoslav sympathy in Britain, but provided new themes for propaganda against the Central Powers (Motta 138), which Seton-Watson, Steed and a group of British pro-Yugoslavs would soon elevate on a higher level in the upcoming summer to convince the Allies on the necessity of a unified Southern Slav state.

\section*{2.4. Overview}

With the arrival of the Habsburg Yugoslav exiles at Great Britain, the idea of national self-determination along with the notion of a united Yugoslav state paved their ways both to the Foreign Office and the public opinion under the assistance and patronage of Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson. Albeit the question of a Yugoslav state had been briefly raised in the first years of the Great War, the British attitude towards the Great Power status and necessity of the Habsburg Monarchy had remained unchanged (Hay 59). A few officials\textsuperscript{146} in the Foreign Office sympathized with the nationality principle (Evans 161), nevertheless, official commitment to national self-determination would have considerably limited the possibility of war-time diplomacy (Calder 28–29), which aimed to defeat German aggression and not to reorganize Central Europe. As a result, the strategic

\textsuperscript{144} Robert Cecil, the Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs admitted to Trevelyan that ‘we failed to prevent Bulgaria from joining our enemies and it is possible to criticize some aspects of British diplomacy in this connection. But it is quite certain that the determining factor in Bulgarian action was the course of the war which was altogether outside of the sphere of the Foreign Office. Bulgaria waited to see what would happen at Gallipoli and when we were defeated there she joined the Central Powers’ (qtd. Waterhouse 366).

\textsuperscript{145} In contrast to Montenegro, Serbia neither capitulated nor signed a separate peace treaty. The Serbian Cabinet would operate as a government-in-exile in Corfu until November 1918.

\textsuperscript{146} For instance, Harold Nicolson (Seton-Watson, \textit{Making} 118) and Ralph Paget.
interests and necessities of the war endured to be a priority over the case of Yugoslav national unification.

Undoubtedly, attracting new allies at the cost of sacrificing the nationality principle was apparent in case of the Southern Slavs as the British Cabinet tried to compensate Allied military fiascos of 1915 by offering territorial concessions to Italy, Bulgaria and Romania at the expense of Yugoslav lands. The initial reluctance of the Foreign Office to fulfil the ambitious demands of Italy had been gradually removed owing to the military developments in the first spring, and resulted in the conclusion of the Treaty of London, which approved the transfer of 1.3 million Southern Slavs from the Habsburg Empire to Italy (Evans 161, 164).

As luring Bulgaria into the war became another matter of urgency, the unification of Yugoslav lands into a single, united state seemed in the autumn of 1915 more remote than ever before. Accepting the impressions of Seton-Watson and Trevelyan on Serbian politics, the Foreign Office underestimated the national value of Macedonia, and believed that the promise of westward expansion could have been a viable compensation for the Serbian Cabinet. Corresponding with the priorities of secret diplomacy, such an enlargement would not have been based on the nationality principle, as the aggrandizement of Serbia had been conceived in Britain as a reward for Belgrade’s war-time services (Evans 161–164), and moreover as a means to bribe the Serbian Cabinet into yielding Macedonia. Overall, the secret diplomacy of 1915 attested that the Allies had expected the survival of the Habsburg Empire, thus the prospect of a unified Southern Slav state had not been taken into consideration (Lederer 9, 71) when territorial awards had been negotiated.

However, for Seton-Watson and Steed, the Pact of London was a mere sacrifice of Yugoslav interests, which together with the ineffective British diplomacy – failing to secure a Balkan alliance and to save Serbia – endangered Allied victory, and proved to be an obstacle in breaking-up of Austria–Hungary. While the secret treaty would generate tremendous issues among the Italians, Serbs and Croats, it also mobilized British Slavophile intellectuals to join Seton-Watson and Steed in forming pro-Yugoslav pressure groups (Hay 60; Lederer 4; Masaryk 225). Besides forcing the British Cabinet to revise the Treaty of London, winning over the public opinion’s support for the creation of Yugoslavia was believed to be a viable way in making the Allies commit to the concept of general European reconstruction based on the nationality principle. In liaison, the pro-Yugoslav pressure groups – such as the Serbian Relief Fund and the Kossovo Day Committee – would soon engage in large-scale propaganda

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147 As Dalmatia had been one of the birth places of Yugoslav nationalism, the Habsburg propaganda mobilized Croatian national sentiments for the defence of the Empire against Italian imperialism (Lederer 9, 13).
campaigns with the aim to popularize the idea of a united Yugoslav state through the war-time performance of Belgrade, while also abusing the guilt felt for the fall of Serbia to fundamentally improve the Balkan country’s image in Britain.
CHAPTER THREE

The Guardians of the Gate: The Transformation of the Serbian Image
The reserved and moderate response to Great Britain’s adherence to Great War resembled the confusion of the British public and press over the rapid developments of the July Crisis and the sudden outbreak of the war. Albeit the German invasion of Belgium gradually convinced the citizens over the British participation in the conflict, in general, hardly anyone was over-enthusiastic concerning the war (Marquis 469). Due to the interplay of European alliance systems, Serbia became a war-time ally of Great Britain, while the Balkan Peninsula transformed into one of the strategic theatres of the Great War. Despite these developments, the case of Serbia and the Southern Slavs could not attract the support of British citizens owing to the Balkan country’s negative assessment, as the Nation’s article fittingly expressed it on the eve of the war: ‘We, in particular, are at war on behalf of France, the noblest of the European families, and for Servia, the basest’ (qtd. Hanak, World War 38).

For this reason, in the first years of the Great War, Robert William Seton-Watson and Henry Wickham Steed were primarily occupied with improving the image of Serbia, while concurrently organizing humanitarian relief for the war-stricken land through the Serbian Relief Fund. In both cases, they would rely on the Times, whose proprietor, Lord Northcliffe shared the views of Seton-Watson and Steed concerning the general reorganization of European frontiers. However, as the ‘humanitarian considerations melt gradually and inevitably into political’ (Correspondence I: 267), their efforts would soon attract a small but influential group of prominent pro-Yugoslav supporters in the likes of Ronald Burrows, the Principal of King’s College – who was a ‘keen Philhellene and also […] a friend of the Serbs’ (Seton–Watson, Masaryk 68) –, and Annan Bryce, a Member of the Parliament and the Balkan Committee (Hanak, World War 82; MacMillan 123).

The surprising military accomplishments of Serbia in the first war year provided the foundations for Seton-Watson and Steed to alter the Serbian image and to popularize the idea of Yugoslav unification as a British obligation towards Serbia (Cornwall, Undermining 176–177; Ostojić-Fejić 500–501; Tihany 123). Meanwhile, they would manage to establish valuable contacts with the members of the British medical mission in Serbia, whose memoirs, diaries and other war-time accounts would play a considerable role in transforming Serbia into a suitable and respected ally of Great Britain. Furthermore, the circumstances leading to the fall of the small Balkan country would enable the British pro-Yugoslavs to capitalize on the British guilt conscious by telling the ‘untold misery and wrong’ of ‘the brave-hearted people of Serbia’ (Times, 29 June 1916: 3) embedded in the myths of the Battle of Kosovo in a large-scale, nation-wide celebration.
Owing to these efforts, the Serbian image would experience a fundamental transformation, as by the summer of 1916, the British public was well-aware that the brave little country had done a valuable service by guarding and blocking the gate towards the Eastern possessions of Great Britain, and furthermore appreciated that in the course of history Serbia had indeed always made ‘the supreme sacrifice’ (Times, 29 June 1916: 3) to defend European civilization.

3.1. ‘Our Gallant Little Ally’: Relief and Propaganda

At the outbreak of the Great War, Serbia’s rapid defeat was expected, thereupon the victories of the Serbian Army in the first war year raised general astonishment in Europe. Despite these victories, the war found the Serbian medical institutions unprepared as resources had been almost entirely exhausted in the course of the two Balkan Wars (Correspondence I: 197). The removal or destruction of livestock in Northern Serbia during the Habsburg offensive and the Serbian counter-offensive fostered famine, while the undernourished locals became an easy target for epidemics (Seton-Watson, Making 113). The flood of refugees from the frontier regions along with the diseases created unbearable conditions in Serbia, as the lack of medical personnel and the shortages of medical supplies made it impossible to contain the spread of diseases or to provide immediate treatment for head and limb injuries (Krippner 72, 75; Ostojić-Fejić 500–501).

In the dire situation, the Serbian Cabinet appealed to Great Britain and the United States for medical supplies by utilizing back-channel diplomacy. In this regard, Mrs. Vesnić and Mrs. Grujić – two American women with medical degrees married to notable Serbian diplomats – proved to be valuable for Serbia in the first war years. Mrs Vesnić – the spouse of Milenko Vesnić, the Serbian Minister in Paris – was in good terms with the First Lady of the United States, while Mabel Grujić – the wife of the Slavko Grujić, who had drafted the

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148 The Serbs had 500,000 soldiers, battle-hardened in the Balkan Wars, and commanded by the skilful General Radomir Putnik. Among 500,000 Habsburg soldiers many were substandard militia units, which failed to invade Serbia (Morrow 50).
149 Serbia spent three the sum of annual budget in the two Balkan Wars (Antić, Paget 66).
150 On 20 September 1912, the Serbian War Minister summarized the conditions of the Serbian sanitary service in a letter to the Serbian Red Cross in the following way: ‘In the whole of Serbia there are 370 doctors only, out of which 296 selected for the war field, 74 doctors remaining in the rear lines. Since from that number we should take off doctors working in the central administration (six), doctors which because of the old age or poor health are incapable (eight) and doctors having abandoned their profession long ago (three) for sanitary service in rear lines, among the population and the army, only 57 doctors remain’ (qtd. Lazović-Sujić 72).
151 The use of modern weaponry – such as hand grandees, land mines, and shell shrapnel – increased head and limb injuries requiring immediate treatment (Krippner 72).
Serbian answer for the Habsburg ultimatum – had important British acquaintances such as Elodie Lanton Mijatović (Milanović 11, 14). For this reason, she was entrusted with the task to communicate the urgent need of Serbia in Great Britain. Soon, she managed to contact Seton-Watson, who would become one of the most committed British citizens towards the case of Serbian relief.

In essence, Seton-Watson\textsuperscript{152} was actively engaged in organizing practical help for war-stricken Serbia in the first two years of the war (Seton-Watson, \textit{Masaryk} 36). Together with a number of other British professionals who felt an obligation to espouse the case of Serbian relief on behalf of Britain, the historian formed the Serbian Relief Fund at the end of September 1914.\textsuperscript{153} The relief organization’s most considerable activities included establishing, financing and equipping British medical units in Serbia. To aid the devastating conditions, five fully equipped surgical hospital units had been dispatched to Serbia by the summer of 1915, employing more than three hundred British medical women (\textit{Times}, 7 December 1917: 5) who were desperately trying to prevent cholera (\textit{Times}, 29 April 1915: 6) and to overcome the typhus epidemic (\textit{Times}, 15 July 1915: 9) spreading gravely among the Serbian population (Krippner 72). After the fall of Serbia, the Serbian Relief Fund’s humanitarian endeavours were redirected to the Serbian refugee camps in Corsica and North Africa. Its Education Branch took over more than three hundred Serbian students from the French authorities in February 1916 (SWP SEW/7/2/1), and would cover the expense of their education in Great Britain in the upcoming years with the hope that those children would have become the intellectual core of a liberated Serbia (\textit{Times}, 10 November 1916: 12; \textit{Times}, 13

\textsuperscript{152} In the course of their unofficial visit to Serbia, Seton-Watson and Trevelyan assessed the conditions in Serbia, and measured the needs of the war-stricken country for the Committee of SRF. They summarized the Serbian situation in a letter to the British press in the following way: ‘[…\] the problem has complicated by a considerable amount of illness, both among the troops and […] among the civilian population, while at any moment a renewal of Austro German offensive may flood the hospitals with fresh crowds of wounded. The shortage of doctors is distinctly serious, as every civilian doctor is now required for military purposes. The dispatch of British doctors to the base hospitals […] would greatly relieve the pressure and leave some of the Serbian doctors free to attend to the needs of the civilian population. These needs have been further complicated by the presence of a host of refugees from the North West departments of Serbia, which were devastated by the invaders last autumn. […] There is a shortage of such elementary requirements as blankets, bedding, medicated cotton, plaster, surgical instruments, serums and disinfectants. […] A further problem for the Serbians is the presence of nearly 60 000 Austrian prisoners, for whom is difficult to find accommodation’ (\textit{Correspondence I}: 197).

\textsuperscript{153} Until July 1916, Bertram Christian, the former Chairman of the Macedonian Relief Fund, then Henry Bentinck was the Chairman of the Executive Committee, while Seton-Watson filled the post of the Honorary Secretary (Seton-Watson, \textit{Making} 106, 216), and Edward Boyle became the Treasurer. The organization managed to boast no less a figure than Queen Mary as its patroness, and the Bishop of London as its president (Hanak, \textit{World War} 65; Judah 90). Additionally, a number of vice-president positions were created and assigned to the most important contemporary public or ecclesiastical figures such as Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith, David Lloyd George, Bonar Law, Austen Chamberlain, Winston Churchill, the Bishop of Oxford, Cardinal Bourne, and the Bulgarophile Buxton brothers (\textit{Correspondence I}: 200; Seton-Watson, \textit{Spirit of the Serb} 33).
To accommodate the needs of Serbian prisoners of war, a separate sub-committee provided a loaf of bread on a weekly basis for each of the 50,000 prisoners in question (Correspondence I: 241; Times, 10 November 1916: 12), while the Children’s Branch under Carrington Wilde organized fund-raisers in the form of exhibitions, concerts, lectures and amateur theatrical performances. The collected funds were used to establish orphan homes in Corfu and occupied Serbia with the help of Prime Minister Pašić’s wife (Hanak, World War 68–69, 72; Mitrović, Great War 174–175; Seton-Watson, Making 164; Sorrow 10; Times, 20 August 1915: 1).

Albeit the British Commonwealth citizens responded ‘with even more than its habitual generosity to the [well-placed] appeals’ (For Serbia 2) for funds, the claims on the organization seemed limitless in regard to drugs, clothing, motor cars, camp kitchens, lorries, marquees, and complete hospital equipment (Markovich, Identities 124; Times, 7 Sept 1916: 8). However, all humanitarian efforts would have been ineffectual provided the Serbian Relief Fund had not found a newspaper with high daily circulation to promote the organization’s agenda. In this regard, the Fund managed to recruit one of the most notable British press lords, Lord Northcliffe, the proprietor of the Times for the Yugoslav relief cause.

In effect, the contemporary social and political ties between the political elite and the media world proved to be significant during the Great War. The introduction of compulsory primary education increased literacy, and fostered the proliferation of printed media. As a consequence, popular journalism evolved, and a number of media moguls emerged in Great Britain by the turn of the 19th century. Most of these press lords were self-made and often self-educated men, who owned mass circulation newspapers, which oftentimes exercised considerable influence on the public opinion. Owning to their remarkable financial accomplishments in printed mass media, the press moguls managed to climb the social ladder,

154 The majority of the refuge students were received in Oxford and Cambridge, while smaller groups were sent to Scotland and Wales as well. Upon the appeal of Jovan Cvijić, the SRF donated 25,000 Swiss Francs to the education of Serbian students in Switzerland twice in the course of 1916 (Mitrović, Great War 174–175; Seton-Watson, Making 164). Reverend Fynes-Clinton, one of the founding members of SRF, established a separate school in Oxford to train future clerics (Times, 28 February 1918: 7). Taking suit of the Reverend’s initiation, the Serbian Church Students’ Aid Council was formed by the archbishops and bishops of the Anglican Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury was the president. Their proclaimed goal was to assist a certain number of Serbian church students to complete their preparation for ordination at a British university. By July 1918, the Council had maintained eleven senior students in Oxford, and twenty-eight younger seminarists at Cuddesdon College, close to Oxford, providing the cost of tuition, lodging, clothes, books, travelling and medical attendance (SWP SEW/7/2/1).

155 As Marquis argued ‘the ties between politicians and the press were so multifarious and so intimate that it is difficult to sort out who influenced (or corrupted) whom’ (Marquis 479).
and eventually found themselves in the company of the political elite in exclusive clubs and dinner parties (Marquis 468, 478).

In the course of the Great War, the hinterland’s appetite for information concerning the developments of the war increased, while the enduring conflict forced the British Cabinet to mobilize the entire population for the war effort. Associating their high social standing with obligations towards the British Empire, the media lords and their editors perceived themselves as the partners of the British Cabinet in the struggle for winning the war. For that matter, the pressmen often accompanied the Prime Minister or his ministers for breakfast, lunch, dinner or tea to learn informal news on policy, and the direction of the war. In return for their voluntary cooperation and self-censorship, the press magnates were generously lavished with honours of knighthoods and lordships, received opportunities to advise policy, and – notably under the Lloyd George Cabinet – reputable government positions were created for them (ibid. 468, 477–479, 485, 492). 156

One of the most notable figures among the press barons was Alfred Harmsworth, son of an Irish bartender, who established, co-founded or acquired the ownership of many newspapers by the dawn of 20th century. Harmsworth, ennobled in 1905 to become Lord Northcliffe, 157 founded the Daily Mail and the Daily Mirror, and purchased the Times in 1908 (ibid. 468). 158 The ‘Napoleon of Fleet Street’ (Taylor 875) was one of the British pioneers of mass journalism, and an exceptionally successful self-made man, who prided himself on his achievements, which compensated him for his lack of education. As the proprietor of the Times, Northcliffe was converted to the fierce anti-German views of Henry Wickham

156 In liaison, the press barons often forced their papers to exercise self-censorship or to apply a moderate tone when commenting war-time policy. Consequently, if a piece of information was perceived as damaging for morale or could have bolstered ‘unnecessary anxiety,’ as Arthur Balfour phrased it (qtd. Marquis 478), the press lords and editors withheld the publication. As a result, in some cases crucial losses or war events remained unmentioned or unnoticed. Riddell, one of the secretaries and trusted men of Lloyd George, recalled the Prime Minister’s words concerning these war-time press practices in the following manner: ‘The public knows only half the story. They read of the victories; the cost is concealed’ (qtd. Riddell, War 118).

157 As a staunch British imperialist coupled with a narcissist behaviour, Northcliffe was prone to lead a press campaign against the British Cabinet, and never shied away from threatening its members whenever he felt that British supremacy had been in danger. In effect, his media had a crucial role in the formation of Asquith’s coalition government in May 1915, and its overthrow in favour of Lloyd George in late 1916 (Comstock 14; Steed, Thirty II: 73). After Northcliffe witnessed the shortages of shells on the Western front, he became determined to reduce Kitchener’s influence in the Cabinet. The Daily Mail delivered harsh attacks on 22 May, which led to the formation of a coalition Cabinet. As Steed remembered it: ‘I found Lord Northcliffe sitting in the editor’s room at The Times office with an expression more grim than I had ever seen on his face or ever saw again. I after years he often referred to this article and maintained that it had been necessary. “I did not care whether the circulation of The Times dropped to one copy and that of the Daily Mail to two,” he would say. “I consulted no one about it except my mother, and she agreed with it. I felt that the war was becoming too big for Kitchener, and that public belief in him, which was indispensable from the outset, was becoming an obstacle to military purpose. Therefore I did my best to shake things up” (Steed, Thirty II: 73).

158 His brother Harold, later becoming Lord Rothermere, was the proprietor of the Leeds Mercury, the Glasgow Daily Records (Marquis 468)
Steed, whom he promoted to the position of the Foreign Editor (1913), and eventually of the Editor-in-Chief (1919) of the influential daily (Liebich 201). Having Northcliffe’s full confidence, Steed was essentially almost given a free hand in operating the foreign policy column of the *Times*. Consequently, this allowed Steed – with the aid of Seton-Watson – to propagate the creation of a united Southern Slav and the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire as British imperatives between the lines of SRF appeals.

In view of the negative assessment of Serbia in the pre-war era, the fact that the Serbian Relief Fund managed to distribute £1.000.000 worth of food, clothing and medical supplies (Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 36) over the four years of the war, presumes a well-organized propaganda campaign. The nature of this propaganda was double, since while the SRF did the utmost to improve the image of Serbia by depicting the small Balkan state as the defender of civilization, it also pursued to blacken the image of the Central Powers. As a unified Yugoslav state could have been solely attained at the expense of the Habsburg Empire, thereby appeals for funds were frequently joined by anti-German and anti-Habsburg sentiments. Albeit Great Britain had been considerably involved in the conferences deciding over the fate of the Balkans, Germany and its allies were proclaimed responsible for all turmoil in the Balkan Peninsula. Over-exaggerating German ambitions in the Near East, the elimination of the Pan-German threat enabled the redefinition of Serbia’s role as the guardian of British interests (*Times*, 13 October 1915: 5). In liaison, the causes of the war were shaped to support claims on Serbia’s special role through German aspirations: ‘It should never be forgotten that Serbia was attacked because she barred the path to the position in the East which Germany and Austria–Hungary desired to conquer in order to strike at the most vulnerable spots in the British Empire’ (*Times*, 18 November 1915: 9). As the war commenced, the field of humanitarian relief widened, and eventually the SRF became the authorized special channel of the British Cabinet through which citizens of the British Commonwealth could have helped the people of Serbia (*Times*, 4 June 1915: 4). Arguably, not only did such an authorization legitimize the importance of helping war-worn Serbia, but also seemed to confirm the propaganda arguments of the Fund.

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159 He openly admitted in his memoir that Steed ‘assisted [him] in many enquiries’ (Northcliffe 166), arguably in understanding foreign policy.

160 Nevertheless, due to his informal war-time alliance with the Cabinet, Northcliffe did not allow the discussion of war aims in his papers, albeit had never raised any objections for Steed doing it in other papers (Jeszenszky, *Steed* 31).

161 Taking the rate of inflation into consideration, this amount would be worth of more than £63.000.000 in 2018.

162 ‘[…] the government will gladly allow the agents of SRF to make use […] of the organization set up for the distribution of relief. The splendid work already done by the Relief Fund and its energetic organisers deserved this recognition’ (*Times*, 15 December 1915: 8).
For Seton-Watson and the fellow British pro-Yugoslavs it was obvious that unless it had been reasonably explained why it had been a British obligation to help a country (Hanak, *World War 70*) which so far had been associated with corruption and barbarism, the appeals of the Serbian Relief Fund would have been ineffective. For this purpose, the organization deliberately mystified the role of Britain by emphasizing British moral obligation to defend the oppressed nations whose ‘hopes [had been] in God and Britain’ (*Times*, 27 July 1918: 3). Consequently, assisting the Southern Slavs became not only a test of benevolence, but also a test of civilization, as the SRF claimed that Serbia had sacrificed itself for Western Europe by driving ‘the enemy back just at the time the Allies [had] needed [it] the most’ (*Times*, 21 May 1915: 11). Additionally, the suffering of Serbian people – who were depicted as a ‘sorely stricken […] gallant’ (*Times*, 30 October 1918: 2) and ‘wonderful little nation’ (*Times*, 16 June 1915: 11) professing ‘indomitable courage’ (*Times*, 23 September 1918: 3) – was utilized to justify the creation of a united Southern Slav state, assuming that a nation which had suffered the most terribly\(^{163}\) for the common cause among all the Allied nations, deserved\(^{164}\) to be liberated and united with its kinsmen in the Habsburg Empire. Subsequently, Britain as ‘the traditional protector of small nations’ (*Times*, 27 October 1917: 8), had to take the burden of civilization by fulfilling the rightful wishes of more than eight million Southern Slavs.\(^{165}\)

The Serbian Relief Fund’s campaign also had a considerable role in aiding government propaganda in regard to the Habsburg Empire. Since Great Britain had been unprepared for a war, the public opinion had been virtually divided on the question whether Britain had been obligated to join the continental war at all. While the government propaganda tried to explain and justify the British Empire’s adherence to the war on the premise of German threat, the declaration of war on Austria–Hungary had remained unanswered (Marquis 487–488). As neither did the Habsburg Empire pose any direct menace to British possessions nor to any particular imperial interests, the British public had no concern over the Habsburg attack on Serbia (Hay 59–60).

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163 Seton-Watson claimed that the quarter of the Serbian population had perished, while the birth rate had decreased to zero (*For Serbia* 2).
164 ‘[…] nothing we can do today can adequately repay the services which Serbian heroism rendered to the Allied cause by holding Austria at bay for the first six supremely critical months of war,’ Seton wrote in the introduction of the SRF’s annual report (*For Serbia* 2).
165 Addressing the readers in the singular form of the second person, this responsibility was shared with the common citizen: ‘Have you answered the cry of The Little Nation Serbia which has helped us as much? […] Will you help to repay our debt of gratitude by sending a little money to relieve the suffering of this wonderful little nation devastated by war and disease? Money never had such power to do good as to-day in Serbia’ (*Times*, 16 June 1915: 11).
However, crediting Serbia with the same level of interest as Belgium proved to be an effective method for the Serbian Relief Fund to improve the Balkan country’s image. Subsequently, their propaganda stressed that similar to Belgium, Serbia had been a key country, whose existence had been vital for maintaining the political and economic balance of power in Europe (Times, 28 September 1916: 7). In liaison, Great Britain had a responsibility to restore its national independence:

Southern Slav unity is [...] a cardinal requirement of British policy, apart from our devotion to the principle of nationality and to the cause of freedom in Europe. In one sense Serbia and Belgium are our victims. Each lay on the path of our enemies’ advance (Seton-Watson, Italy 46–47).

Undoubtedly, applying the case of Belgium to Serbia enabled easier association for the everyday reader: ‘Unconquerable Serbia, like our other gallant ally Belgium, has suffered the penalty of withstanding the invaders, and widespread distress prevails [...] in Serbia [...]. She has fought and beaten back Austria: now she has to fight destitution, disease and starvation’ (Times, 4 June 1917: 4).

As a result of the SRF’s propaganda endeavours, official speeches also started emphasizing the rights and importance of small nations in order to fill the gap in government communication concerning the Habsburg Empire, as exemplified by one of Prime Minister Asquith’s public addresses:

First and foremost, the Allies are fighting for the liberty of small nations, to the end that they be left in the future free from the tyranny of their more powerful neighbours, to develop their own national life and institutions. [...] Above all, our sympathies are moved towards Serbia, whose undaunted courage wins day by day our unbounded sympathy and admiration (SWP SEW/S/3/1).166

Eventually, the liberation of Serbia evolved into a theme which the British Cabinet frequently exploited to affirm war on the Danubian Empire, and moreover to justify the endurance of the conflict. Concurrently, the officials ostensibly allied themselves with the right of national self-determination to satisfy the public opinion’s growing support of the nationality principle. Abusing public sentiments, Belgium and Serbia transformed into the

166 This was an excerpt of a letter read out loud during Masaryk’s lecture in the King’s College.
symbols of the Central Powers’ unbound aggression which had been proclaimed responsible for the war (Calder 10; Hay 59–60). Correspondingly, the SRF’s fund-raisers, meetings, educational lectures, flag-days, matinees, concerts and exhibitions – organized with the purpose to inform the British public on the sacrifices of the Serbian nation as abiding and invaluable services to the Allied cause – were frequently attended by the most notable figures of the government and the British aristocracy (Hanak, World War 72). Expressing gratitude towards the Serbs, their eloquent speeches assisted both the case of Serbian charity, and the agenda of pro-Yugoslav propaganda.

Among all the SRF events, the exhibition of Ivan Meštrović, the young Dalmatian Croatian sculptor, received the widest press coverage in Great Britain. Originally, the exhibition had been initiated by the Habsburg Croats to propagate the idea of Yugoslav national unification in Western Europe by presenting ‘the Southern Slav idea in stone’ (Correspondence I: 202), nevertheless, Steed and Seton-Watson – who in light of the Treaty of London accredited great political importance to the exhibition – had an enormous role in the realization of the event (Mladinić 142). By mid-March, Seton managed to secure the Victoria and Albert Museum as the venue (ibid. 198), and asked Edward Grey to take patronage over the exhibition, which the Foreign Secretary politely declined (SWP SEW/7/2/3). Meanwhile, Steed and the Times took their fare share not solely by advertising the grand opening of the ‘Yugoslav national sculptor[s]’ exhibition, but also by devoting several pages for Meštrović’s works, depicted as the embodiments of ‘the Yugoslav unity and resurrection’ (Times, 20 June 1915: 7).

The Meštrović exhibition provided the Serbian Relief Fund with a splendid opportunity to propagate the idea of Yugoslav unity (Correspondence I: 202), while the war-time enemies could have been demonized as well (Anzulović 147). For the occasion, the Victoria and Albert Museum released a small booklet, the Exhibition of the Works of Ivan Meštrović, containing photos and descriptions of the seventy-four exhibited sculptures

167 Meštrović – a fierce believer in the Yugoslav idea and a devout pro-Serbian – frequently chose themes form the medieval Serbian history (Mladinić 142). During the International Art Exhibition of Rome in 1911, Meštrović and a number of Croatian sculptors refused to exhibit their works under the pavilion of Austria–Hungary (Srholj 375; Tanner 112), hence their sculptures were moved to the Serbian pavilion (Times, 21 June 1915: 7).

168 Steed learnt the plans for a future Meštrović exhibition from his correspondent, Božo Banac, a Dalmatian ship-manufacturer, who asked the historian discretion in the matter. The transportation of the sculptures from the port of Spalato would have been prevented by the Austrian authorities provided they had learnt the plan of a London exhibition (Correspondence I: 189–190).

169 But for Seton’s intervention on behalf of Meštrović in the Foreign Office, the British Legation in Paris would have declined to grant the sculptor as the citizens of an enemy state with a passport qualifying him to enter Great Britain (Milutinović, Dalmacija 21).
‘inspired by a single fury of national memories and aspirations [...] and the noble and vivid folk-song’ of Serbia (SWP SEW/7/2/3). Seton-Watson’s introduction written for the booklet under the title ‘Meštrović and the Yugoslav Idea’ explained how the Habsburg misrule and the joy over the victories of the Serbian army in the Balkan Wars had transpired into literature and art in the Habsburg Yugoslav lands. His introduction portrayed Meštrović as the walking embodiment of the Yugoslav cultural unity who had carved the heroes of Serbian ballads and legends into stone to be the parts of a future Yugoslav Pantheon called the Vidovdan Shrine or the Temple of Kosovo (Srjoj 374–375). Additionally, Seton pursued to promote the case of the Yugoslav national movement by filling the void on cultural and historical knowledge required to comprehend the history-themed art of Meštrović.170 Besides his brief introduction, the Serbian Relief Fund’s organizing committee also issued its own resume to propagate the Yugoslav idea as the prevailing national ideology of the Southern Slavs, declaring that those who wish to understand the unconquerable spirit which inspires our Serbian allies, and the remarkable movement in favour of Southern Slav unity which pervades the entire Serb, Croat, and Slovene race (alike in the free kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro, and in the Southern Slav provinces of Austria–Hungary), cannot do better than study the heroic art of Ivan Mestrovic, in which the movement has found its prophet (qtd. Lady’s Pictorial, 3 July 1915).

The Meštrović exhibition was eventually opened on 24 June 1915 in the Victoria and Albert Museum by Robert Cecil, the Under-Secretary of the Foreign Affairs, in the presence of Prime Minister Nikola Pašić, the representatives of the Serbian Legation, the major figures of the Serbian Relief Fund – such as Leila Paget,171 Arthur Evans, Valentine Chirol, and Robert William Seton-Watson –, and the Yugoslav and Bohemian expatriates (Mladinić 142; Times, 21 June 1915: 7; Times, 25 June 1915: 11). Corresponding with the government propaganda, Cecil’s opening address underlined Berlin’s lust for destruction, and contrasted the shallowness of German culture to the idealism of Yugoslav art:

If the object of culture is to create works of destruction, then German culture must be given a high place in the culture of the world [...] we shall set up against the

170 ‘Some knowledge of Serbian history is essential to a true understanding of Mestrovic. “He combines to a remarkable degree an intimate sympathy with historic tradition and primitive feeling, and the keenest possible interest in the present-day fortunes of his race,” says Mr. R. W. Seton Watson’ (qtd. Leeds Observer, 2 October 1915).
171 At the time of the opening, Leila Paget was still in charge of a British hospital unit in Skoplje.
achievement of German materialism the poetry of the idealism of the Serbian race, and this war […] will set free for its natural development the Serbian nationality and the Serbian race, and to furnish to the whole world, and to Europe in particular, a splendid ideal, a conception of culture (qtd. *Times*, 25 June 1915: 11).

Both Ivan Meštrović and his exhibition received a wide press coverage in Great Britain. Nonetheless, the display of impressive pieces of fine art of a nation that had been neglected so far in Western Europe fostered journalists to uncover the different aspects of Serbian history. Undoubtedly, the non-art papers were the most perplexed by the fine art whose themes deeply rooted in the history and legends of a so far undervalued nation. In contrast, art papers mostly focused on describing the style and educational background of the artist; nevertheless, even they could not have entirely escaped brief elucidations on the Serbian past.

In essence, Meštrović’s national background caused confusion attesting how fuzzy the concept of Yugoslavism had been, and how little had been known on the region in Great Britain. While the *Observer* (27 June 1915) claimed the artist ‘happen[ed] to be of Serbian nationality,’ and had been a devout Serbian patriot, the *Dundee Advertiser* (25 June 1915) wrote that ‘Mestrovic [was] Serbian. He [was] a son of a Croat peasant,’ while the *Manchester Guardian* (24 August 1915) regarded him a ‘Croatian Serb;’ and the *Lady* (5 July 1915) expressed that ‘some people call[ed] him a Serbian, others a Croat, and others a Dalmatian.’ Occasionally, Meštrović – who adhered to pro-Yugoslav propaganda efforts of the Serbian Relief Fund172 – *per se* contributed to the confusion on the Yugoslavs as well.173 Although the invitation posters advertised him as ‘the national sculptor of the Southern Slavs’ (*Globe*, 26 June 1915), sometimes Meštrović publicly described himself as being Serbian. Most probably, the artist intended to simplify information for the British audience, and moreover, from his point of view ‘Serbian’ was an alternative name for ‘Yugoslav,’ and respectively for ‘Croatian.’

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172 Meštrović addressed the multitude during the opening ceremony by openly propagating the case of Yugoslav unification: ‘I want [the exhibition] to be accepted as a tribute of our country’s devotion to the noble hearted British people, who to-day are glorious companions-in-arms, and with whom we hope to become allies in the world of artistic and cultural creation. […] My highest ambition is that this exhibition will be taken as a symbol and an explanation of the great movement for the Union of the Southern Slavs—a movement of which our part in the present war is but the last desperate expression’ (qtd. SWP SEW/7/2/3).

173 ‘I was myself born in Dalmatia, the country, I consider, which of all civilisation possesses the most beautiful traditions and the cradle of the Jugoslav ideals of unity’ Meštrović told to a reporter (*Weekly Despatch*, 30 October 1915). In reality, he was born in Eastern Slavonia, and spent his childhood in Dalmatia.
As a result of the exhibition, the reputation of ‘the unknown and mysterious artist […] with a versatile talent’ (Nation, 8 July 1915) grew steadily, as the then thirty-two years old Meštrović (Pall Mall Gazette, 25 June 1915) ‘aroused the highest admiration and curiosity among European art lovers’ (Spectator, 10 July 1915). Acclaimed as a Christian, Pan-European, gifted artist-genius, his talent and original style was compared to Rodin. According to the art papers, his works were concurrently impressive and realistic, and indeed, displayed marvellous strength. Their artistic appeal and value were further elevated by the diverse styles and themes, and the apparent Greek, Egyptian and Assyrian influences. Undoubtedly, the mixture of the ancient styles with a yet unknown Eastern culture stimulated curiosity and fostered the British art critiques to proclaim Meštrović as one of the finest sculptures of his contemporaries, whose works bridged the gap between the Western and the Eastern culture. In this spirit, the art critique of the New Witness (1 April 1915) gave a high appraisal of ‘the violence, the crudity, and the honesty of his work’ rooted in the struggle for Yugoslav national unification:

Behind the question of the artist lies the fascinating case of Serbia and the Yugoslav idea. Beyond doubt this is a nation with not only an intense vitality, but with distinctive national idea in it. […] Projected into art, the Serbian idea has attacked, with something of the same ferocious élan that characterises its army, the central problems of modern European art and, what is more, has taken a step solving them (SWP SEW/7/2/3).

Attested by numerous articles, reports and critiques,174 show-casing Meštrović’s work for the British public became the first significant accomplishment of the Serbian Relief Fund, as the exhibition successfully placed the hitherto unknown case of Yugoslavs in the centre of attention in Britain. Seton-Watson personally received appraising feedback for his organizing

174 Meštrović even managed to earn the appraisal of the Nation, which at the outset of the Great War had been the loudest in condemning Serbia for the war. The paper expressed that Meštrović ‘produces Greek vases which have a grace of form, and in their figures a joy of movement and a delight in the human body, which seem triumphantly Hellenic. He turns to religious themes, and he handles them with a primitive stiffness, a monkish contempt for the flesh, and, with it all, an emotional power that suggest the triumphant struggle of a medieval craftsman to achieve expression with and undeveloped technique. In other pieces one seems to detect a momentary Assyrian or Egyptian influence. Again, he breaks out in a rough simplicity in colossal heads violent masks of passion and anger that seem to have left behind all conventions, and with them any effort after beauty, in a striving after strength and force’ (Nation, 8 July 1915).
efforts, which encouraged the historian to further explore Serbian culture and medieval history, and to promote himself as a credible expert in these matters. Moreover, as he expressed it, the exhibition had ‘done more to make our people understand the essentially Slav character of the Dalmatians than anything else’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, *Making* 146), implying that the event established the foundations of a future propaganda campaign aiming at the revision of the Pact of London.

Conclusively, although, the Serbian Relief Fund was established as a charity organization to help Serbia and the Serbian people, it had a fundamental role in reshaping the British perception on Serbia. Since its founders advocated the creation of a united Southern Slav state, the organization gradually became involved in the political aspects of the Great War (Hanak, *World War* 64–65, 70), as Seton foresaw it:

> Our 8 months’ agitation for Serbia (on humanitarian grounds for the Serbian Relief Fund) has been 100 times more successful than I should ever have dared to hope […] and I really do not think it would be difficult to start a political agitation on the behalf of the Southern Slav cause which would have been inconceivable 6 months ago (*Correspondence I*: 215).

The appeals and the Meštrović exhibition gave experience in propaganda for the group which would eventually transform into ‘one of the most powerful organisations working for the cause of the southern Slavs and for the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy’ (Hanak, *World War* 64–65). Due to their themes, Meštrović’s sculptures gave an exposure on the ill-fates of Serbians and the myths of the Battle of Kosovo, which the British friends of the Yugoslavs would capitalize in the form of a grand scale Serbophile celebration in the course of a British ‘Kossovo Day.’ Meanwhile, the case of Yugoslav unification would find valuable recruits among the British suffragettes, whose war-time recollections – gained as the members of the British medical mission in Serbia – would solidify the image of Serbians as the finest allies who sacrificed themselves for the common Allied cause, and respectively for the European civilization as well.

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175 Edward Boyle, the Treasurer of SRF wrote the following appraising lines to Seton after the opening ceremony: ‘I consider from first to last you showed all the qualities of a professed man of business, and at the same time that self-effacement which always characterises your public work’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, *Making* 146).
3.2. In the Country of Beauties and Heroes: The British Medical Mission and the Reassessment of the Serbian Image

In the course of the Great War, the memoirs and reports produced by women engaged in volunteer war-work in the Balkans became a major source of information for the British public. Flooding the book market with their recollections, they attracted a large and devoted readership eager to learn details about the dangers and ill-fate of the Serbian front. Not only were the extensions of British interest into the territory reflected in the war-time discourse of these medical women, but their accounts and commentaries had a significant role in shaping and altering the British ideas and perceptions on Serbia (Hammond, British Women 58, 62; Hammond, Lands 113).

As the genres of travel writing provided women an opportunity to enter contemporary social, political and cultural debates, travelling and travel writing arguably played a defining role in women’s emancipation. Indeed, travelling was a means to escape from the British society to a space where women could establish themselves as the main authority over perception and interpretation. However, as travelling could have been easily perceived as a transgression of contemporary female roles, henceforth the genres associated with the domestic sphere – such as diaries, memoirs and letters – evolved into the subgenres of female travel literature. Albeit these subgenres were more suitable for the public presentation of the female self, the departure from the domestic space needed to be justified, thus the aims of travelling were oftentimes promoted as a service for the British Empire (Blanton 48, 57; Hammond, Lands 77, 83; Hammond, Literature 147–148, 166; Korte 160).

In the 19th century, women’s demand for higher qualifications invoked heated political and social debates concerning the nature and social status of women. Fighting for equal opportunities in education and employment, female doctors became one of the symbols of the British women’s movement in the late-Victorian period. Indeed, women pursuing high qualifications in the medical domain encountered fierce animosity as acquiring professional status meant economic competition for men in the traditionally male-dominated field of medicine (Crowther 3; Offen 344; Poovey 138, 146; Russett 14). Being marginalized by

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176 Travelling provided women an opportunity to depart temporarily from the fixed female identity shaped in and confined to the domestic space by offering new models for self-exploration and the possibility to engage in public discourse through their travel accounts (Hammond, Literature 145).

177 As science and medicine were considered to be male priorities and privileges, middle class men did their utmost to monopolize and guard access to scientific knowledge. The medical profession was a highly competitive field, thus male practitioners often eliminated each other from the competition through accusations of unprofessionalism in front of the regulative authorities. On the very same basis medical men initially managed
the elite of medical profession, female practitioners were forced to seek alternative ways to secure their livelihood and professional acknowledgement by popularizing and justifying female medical work – primarily in the colonies – as a contribution to the imperial cause. Undoubtedly, the establishment of foreign charity and relief organizations – such as the British Red Cross – in the second half of the 19th century gave medical women the opportunity to escape the strict rules of Victorian Britain, while foreign missions also served as a strategy to negotiate emancipatory rights (Blanton 44–45; Burton, Question 153; Hammond, Literature 147).

The outbreak of the Great War marked a cornerstone in lives of medical women, as not only did the conflict enable them to be present in the battlefront, but also to enter the public and professional discourse through their war-time reports, war diaries and memoirs. Albeit, women’s medical mission and voluntary work peaked in the course of the war in the beginning, female volunteers were rejected by the British authorities due to the prevailing stereotypical presumption that women in general had been inappropriate for any forms of war-time service (Blanton 44–45; Hammond, British Women 59; Hammond, Literature 62, 152–153; Mayhall 1–2; Watson 486-488). For that matter, neither the British Red Cross nor the War Office approved the idea of women managing hospitals on the frontlines. However, in contrast to Great Britain, continental Europe would provide opportunity for female medical and relief work, since threatened by the prospect of invasion – the French and Serbian authorities were more than willing to accept the voluntary service of medical

to exclude medical women from the most prestigious and well-paying areas of professionalized medicine (Harrison 176; Davidoff-Hall 307, 339). As a consequence, not only were female doctors despised by their fellow male colleagues, but they remained marginalized and excluded from the miscellaneous medical societies embracing the elite of medical profession (Leneman 1592; Crowther 5).

Due to being marginalized, medical women could occupy lower positions in the hierarchy of the medical profession. They were primarily involved in preventative medicine and became the pioneers of sanitary reforms, which used to be an agenda embraced by the philanthropic work of women, who tried to improve the conditions of the poor. Consequently, following the female philanthropic tradition, medical women could easily engage in the issues of urban sanitation. Additionally, separate educational institutions were founded by female doctors in the late 19th century, and eventually women physicians became entrepreneurs by establishing their own hospitals and private practices. These practices operated exclusively in towns, and were usually attached to the residences of the doctor, where female and paediatric patients were treated. By the turn of the century, these private enterprises in medicine became profitable, which allowed medical women to combine a career with motherhood, and moreover, the acquired financial independence enabled female practitioners to hire a staff of servants to perform household duties (Crowther 3, 5–7; Williams 61, 63–65).

Due to the crises of the Eastern Question, British medical women’s presence became so marked by the Balkan Wars that the Graphic newspaper devoted a separate article entitled Why the Balkans Attract Women in 1912 to explore the phenomenon. The article tried to discuss why ‘those rough, wild, semi-civilised and more than half Orientalised little countries […] appeal[ed] so strongly to some of [Britain’s] astutes feminine intelligence’ (Allcock-Young, Black Lambs and Grey Falcons, xv).

St Claire Stobart recalled the contemporary situation of women in her autobiographical work, entitled Miracles and Adventures, in the following way: ‘[…] it is true when I was young it was not customary for girls to have ambitions or professions beyond […] marriage; in Victorian days they could faint at the sight of a mouse, and in these days they can cut up human bodies without a shudder’ (qtd. Hammond, Literature 169).
units composed partially or entirely of British women (*British Medical Journal*, 18 August 1917: 203; Krippner 73).

Among the British medical personnel leaving for the Serbian front were three well-known suffragettes, Dr. Elsie Inglis, a surgeon and the Honorary Secretary of the Scottish Federation of Women’s Suffrage Societies (Leneman, *Inglis* xi, xiii), Mary Annabelle St Claire Stobart, the founder of the Women’s Sick and Wounded Convoy Corps which had served in the First Balkan War, and Dr. Caroline Matthews, Olive Aldridge, a nurse volunteer in Stobart’s medical unit, and Leila Paget,\textsuperscript{181} the wife of Ralph Paget,\textsuperscript{182} the former British Minister in Belgrade. With the exception of Dr. Inglis and Lady Paget, the other three women published their memoirs upon returning from Serbia under the titles of *The Flaming Sword in Serbia and Elsewhere* (written by Stobart), *The Retreat from Serbia through Montenegro and Albania* (written by Aldridge), and the *Experiences of a Woman Doctor in Serbia* (written by Matthews). Albeit Inglis did not publish a book of her own – owing to her involvement in the Russian and Romanian relief work and her pre-mature demise in the autumn of 1917 –, her Serbian experience was published in a contemporary biographical work based on her personal recollections and private correspondences shared with the respective author (Finder 248). Meanwhile, Lady Paget utilized her and his husband’s local connections in Serbia for the benefit of the medical mission.\textsuperscript{183} She maintained connections with both the Foreign Office and the Serbian Relief Fund, and kept updating Seton-Watson and the British press concerning war-work and the developments of the front (*Antić, Paget* 95; *Daily Graphic*, 8 November 1915, SEW/5/1/11; SWP SEW/7/2/1).

Among the British medical women in Serbia, Dr. Elsie Inglis would become the major ally of the British Pan-Yugoslav lobby. As early as August 1914, Dr. Inglis established the Scottish Women’s Hospital (SWH) for Foreign Service, a fully equipped medical unit staffed with only female doctors, nurses, orderlies, cooks, administrators and drivers, nonetheless, her proposal for voluntary service was dismissed by the War Office (*British Medical Journal*, 18 August 1917: 203; Leneman, *Medical* 1592).\textsuperscript{184} Despite the rejection, following several\textsuperscript{181} She was among the first to be struck by typhoid fever among the members of the British medical mission (SWP SEW/5/1/11).
\textsuperscript{182} Ralph Paget would temporarily leave the Foreign Office for Serbia to rejoin his wife in the second half of 1915. In Serbia, he engaged in humanitarian action in the capacity of the British Commissioner of the Red Cross and Relief Work, while his old connections and acquaintances was useful for the Foreign Office, as he personally urged the Serbian dignitaries to relinquish Macedonia to Bulgaria (*Antić, Paget* 95–96).
\textsuperscript{183} Leila Paget would reopen her former war hospital in Skoplie, which she had established during the Balkan Wars (SEW/5/1/11; SWP SEW/7/2/1).
\textsuperscript{184} The British War Office’s attitude towards female volunteers could be exemplified through the case of Dr. Elsie Inglis, who upon offering her staffed and provisioned hospital unit was told by a War Office administrator that ‘My good lady, go home and sit still’ (qtd. Leneman, *Medical* 1592; Watson 489–490).
correspondences between Dr. Inglis and Seton-Watson, the newly established Serbian Relief Fund and the Scottish Women’s Hospital managed to find common voice in light of the shared objectives. As a result, five units were established and maintained by the SWH through the funds collected by the SRF. Numbering more than six hundred volunteers by the end of 1915, the British medical mission dispatched to the Balkans would remain in Serbian service (Krippner 72–73, 77) until the Great Retreat in the winter from 1915 to 1916.

The leaders of the Serbian medical relief mission – such as Dr. Elsie Inglis and St Claire Stobart – were women of high spirit who considered themselves highly emancipated, and felt free to exercise their influence in the strange little foreign country (Lawrence 132–133) as the agents of the superior British civilization. Establishing their own narrative authority (Guelke-Morin 313) over the Serbians in a territory almost unknown to Britain, their war accounts demonstrated their professional interests185 and intellectual curiosity in contemporary war affairs. They perceived medical relief work directed towards the culturally inferior Serbs as an obligation of the Western civilization, which pledged to improve and guide the rest of the world. Due to the Serbian war situation and the lack of medical personnel and equipment, the leaders of the mission received official authorization from the Serbian leadership to extend the British medical mission to philanthropic work of educating, enlightening and supervising Serbian nurses and the local population.186 Indeed, charity and acts of philanthropy had been used by women embarked in relief or religious missions to display themselves as the agents of civilization and progression. In liaison, British medical

185 En route to Serbia F. Scott, a woman volunteer, reminded her friends that ‘as you know I have always wanted Serbia much more than France.’ This was ‘firstly because the work is much better, they have no trained nurses and very few Drs’ (qtd. Watson, Medical 493).

186 Often highlighted in their accounts, the local rural population was unaware of the great inventions of Western medicine, neither possessing the relevant remedies nor the knowledge to treat their members properly or to organize the appropriate sanitary precautions. Fitting into the secular medical mission established by the pioneers of women’s medical studies, Dr. Inglis also had a desire to help Serbia in many different ways. Besides maintaining and reorganizing hospitals and wards, in the relatively peaceful summer of 1915, disturbed occasionally by air raids, Dr. Elsie Inglis already outlined her grand plan for post-war Serbia for a local: ‘You suffer in Serbia, and here often subject to epidemics, through nothing else but bad water. I have been thinking it over and would like to ameliorate as much as possible this deplorable state of affairs. [C]onstructing in each Serbian village a fountain of good drinking water […] will be, after the war, my unique and greatest desire to do this for Serbs’ (qtd. Lawrence 118, 120). To improve the standards at the Serbian Army, Inglis organized a training school providing courses for local medical orderlies (Lawrence 134). She was aware that it would not be easy to convince the locals of the effectiveness of Western medicine, therefore she engaged in local medicine and eventually designed a demonstration centre to educate Serbs how to use and improve their own traditional methods, while also highlighting that these were inadequate and ineffective in reality. Overall, she was concerned about the local’s careless attitude toward sanitation in Serbian hospitals, where the sewage passed through open holes in the floor to an open cesspool under each ward not being cleaned for years (ibid. 134–135). To address the issues of sanitation in Serbian hospitals, Dr. Elsie Inglis wanted to raise the level of women’s medical education in Serbia, devising her post-war plans regarding it in the following way: ‘When the war is over, I want to do something lasting for [Serbia]. I want to help the women and children; so little has been done for them and they need so much. I should like to see Serbian qualified nurses and up-to-date women’s children’s hospitals’ (qtd. ibid.128).
women established themselves as the British patrons of the suffering Serbs to promote the expanding female roles in their recollections and reports (Hammond, *Literature* 153, 157, 166; Smith, *Lives* 16–17, 21–22). However, due to its poor image, Serbia did not possess the traits of a suitable ally to validate female medical work as a service delivered for Great Britain. Therefore, the memoirs, diaries and reports of medical women revisited the portrayal of both the Serbian land and its people. Before the Central Powers’ offensive in October 1915, British medical units had been occupied with treating diseases, henceforth the tranquil war situation enabled medical women to travel and explore Serbia. As a result of their experience, they introduced an attractive, colourful, tamed and domesticated Serbian scene into the representation of the Balkans in lieu of the brutish, savage lands described in male travel literature. Additionally, in contrast to the male travel writers – who pursued to master the dangers of nature, and portrayed themselves as the heroes of their own journeys –, the female travel writer did not conceive nature as a source of danger, but as a place where harmony and the visual beauties could be attained. In effect, the sensual encounters with nature and the landscape offered the female traveller an escape from the emotional constraints of the British middle class, as travel literature transformed into a spiritual and sensual journey for the female self (Smith, *Lives* 7–8). In the course of this personal journey, medical women would discover Serbia as a place of rural harmony and natural beauties, which contrasted the uniformity and ugliness of industrial Britain, and whose idylls were disturbed by the ruthless invasion of the barbaric Central Powers (Hammond, *Lands* 84, 110–113).

In liaison, the travel experience of medical women would embrace accounts on the exotic, picturesque beauties of Serbia told in a redundant, lyric style, expressing the female author’s freedom and temporary escape from the British society (Blanton 49, 51). For instance, Stobart’s first encounter with Serbia – during a train ride via Skoplje and Niš to Kragujevac – left her with deep impressions concerning the beauties of the little Balkan country, full of magnificent ‘mountains, rivers, gorges, and picturesque houses-one-storied, of sun-dried brick-with clear air, warm sunshine, and blossoming fruit trees’ (Stobart, *Sword* 19). The beauties of the fertile lands, and the untouched and unexploited landscape – characterized by mountains which were ‘not ordinary dead hills, these were alive with picturesque villages, half-hidden amongst orchards of plum and apple trees’ (ibid. 23) – became a source of sensual pleasure where the Victorian values and the modern civilization were absent (Smith, *Lives* 7–8):
On the far side of the white, one-storied town of Kragujevatz, the hills to the east, and south, seemed to be in poetic partnership with the clouds, and all day long, with infinite variety, reflected rainbow colours and storm effects—an endless source of joy. At night, when the tents were lighted by small lanterns, and nothing else was visible but the stars, the camp looked like a fairy city. The cuckoo had evidently not been present during Babel building, for all say long, and sometimes at night, he cuckooed in broad English—a message from our English spring. But the climax of surprises came when we found ourselves kept awake by the singing of the nightingales. Was this the Serbia of which such grim accounts had reaches us? (Stobart, Sword 23).

Mountains girt with maple, beech, and oak forests; valleys fertile with ripening grain—wheat and oats, and endless field of the dignified kukurus (Indian corn or maize), its tall, green, large-leaved stalks hugging the half hidden yellow cobs. And orchards, and orchards, and always orchards of purple plums (ibid. 78).

Additionally, roaming Serbian villages unbound, the themes of tranquillity and timelessness entered medical women’s discourse on nature’s harmony:

Peasants [...] would wait quite patiently their turn to see the doctor and it appeared not to matter whether their turn came to-day or ‘sutra.’ Our staff—or rather its western element—were the only people in a hurry and who bustled round and fussed over things. Soon we began to feel that all this haste was not only undignified but almost indecent, and had we stayed a little longer, just as we had learned to say ‘sutra,’ we too might have learned fresh values for things and realised there was no need to hurry and bustle eternity was before us (Aldridge 18−19).

Due to the strengthening war-time companionship, Serbia was gradually reconceived from being a savage Oriental Other to a suitable European Ally, as the initial presumptions, ideas and biases on the Serbian difference and strangeness were overwritten by the presumed similarities between the Serbian and Britain lands (Blanton 4−5; Bracewell 20−21; Hammond, British Women 58; Hammond, Lands 114), as Dr. Elsie Inglis experienced it, while travelling to Kragujevac:

[...] the sun shone, spring cast its spell over the country. Primroses, cowslips and violets starred the fields, fruit blossom and liliacs frothed overhead. To a Scottish eye the hills and valleys, woods and streams recalled those of home, only with a
heightened colour, a larger scale, that transformed Serbia into a fairyland of childhood imagining (qtd. Lawrence 123).

The colourful, romantic and harmonious descriptions of the Serbian landmark would be eventually mirrored in the depiction of Serbian folk, as the new discourse minimized the inheritance of the Ottoman past, or relinquished Serbia from the Oriental flaws of turmoil, corruption and savagery. Correspondingly, first, the Serbian people were reconceived to be a kind, chivalrous and polite group of admirable folk people, until they were eventually transformed into the bravest and finest allies of the Great Britain. In reality, the contemporary qualities and cultural markers associated with the Balkans were revalued as or replaced with appealing characteristics, henceforth such qualities as savagery, violence and hostility were transformed into quest for security, acts of bravery and hospitality (Hammond, British Women 58; Hammond, Lands 110–112, 114–116; Schulz-Forberg 26–27). The image of the ‘extraordinarily courageous’ (Matthews 31) Serbs – who did ‘not know the meaning of physical fear’ (ibid. 63) – were also acquainted with ‘unselfish heroism’ (ibid. 32), implying that struggle had always dominated Serbian life (Stobart, Sword 83). As savagery and war-loving were relinquished from representation, while violence was justified as being the part of Serbian life, the ‘enthusiastically patriotic’ (ibid. 101) nature of average Serbians were discovered behind their alleged heroism and fighting qualities:

And at once I realised, that the impression which even now largely prevails in Western Europe as the bellicose character of the Serbian nation, is wrong. The average Serbian peasant-soldier is not the truculent, fierce, fighting-loving savage so often represented. He does not love fighting, but loves, with all the enthusiasm of a poetic nature, his family, his home, his hectares of land, and his country. He has fought much in the past, but in defence of these possessions which he prizes, No one can accuse the Serbian soldier of cowardice, yet his dislike of fighting, and his love of home, were so marked, that it was easy to distinguish, by his brisk walk, and cheerful countenance, or by his slow gait, and depressed attitude, whether a drab-dressed soldiers, with knapsack, walking along the road was Kod kutche (home) or-his ten days’ leave at an end-was going once more y commando (to the front) (Stobart, Sword 22–24).

In the course of their mission, the British medical women often formed a close bond with the Serbian authorities and military personal, which was resembled in their portrayal of the Serbian Army (Hammond, Lands 114). Subsequently, Serbian soldiers had been no longer
perceived as a group of war-mongering, undisciplined brutes, but as a company of brave and poetic fighters:

The Serbian soldier is brave. In courage no one can surpass him, he is absolutely fearless and holds death in contempt not that he wants to die more than anyone else does before his allotted time. He loves life and brightness and gaiety, but with duty before him and death in the way he will go straight on not only without flinching, but without even a change of expression. He knows how to die it is more than courage, it reaches sublimity (Aldrige 49).

Having similar impressions concerning the soldiers, Dr. Matthews recalled how ‘the uniformed lads looked at us, happy and proud, dreams of great deeds, heroic and unselfish, transfiguring their faces, their sweethearts’ kisses fresh upon their lips — we saw the Slav man thus’ (Matthews 35), who were ‘one of the finest races of fighters in the world [who fought] like lions, careless of death or the most terrible wounds, following their leaders with the most cheerful courage of heroes’ (qtd. Hammond, Lands 115). The natural depiction and detailed descriptions of dresses, footwear, decorations and habits transformed the Serbian soldiers into romantic heroes, described as tall and romantic-looking highlanders with clear-eyes distinguished by their uniform, shoulder rifle, and the habit of singing songs and ballads (Aldrige 19; Lawrence 132−133). These depictions portrayed the Serbian image as being close to nature:

A lover of flowers is the Serb, and music is a part of his nature; he takes life easily, and perhaps a little indolently. Often were we fascinated by his gay appearance as he sat on the grass in our camp. And yet this same man would, if danger threatened, rise to attention on the instant and be ready if need be to face death on the spot (Aldrige 20).

Another dominant feature of the medical women’s discourse on Serbia was the demonstration of locals’ courtesy and friendliness, which, in effect, functioned to establish a bond between Serbia and Great Britain. The hospitality and friendliness perfectly suited the image of a gallant and loyal ally, therefore accounts on social gatherings, invitations, food and drinking were often recalled in the memoirs of medical women. Descriptions of Serbian communities through customs, folklore were often accompanied by brief summaries of corresponding historic or cultural events. Enchanted by the primitive, the medical women
depicted the locals as ‘walking history books’ who preserved and passed the memories of battles and suffering through oral history:

[…]

our wounded were the most charming patients, imaginable, and it was always a joy to go into the wards and have a talk with them. they were alertly intelligent, with a delightful sense of humour, and a total absence of vulgarity or coarseness. They were all so chivalrous, courteous and delicate in their behaviour to the nurses, and to us women generally, and so full of affection and gratitude for the help given to them, that it was difficult to realise that these were not officers, but peasants, with little knowledge of the world outside their own national history. With this every Serbian peasant is familiar because it is handed down from generation to generation, in ballads and heroic legends, by the bards and guslars (Stobart, Sword 24).

The interesting and surprising anthropological observations on the Serbian social order, wedding, funeral and religious customs, codes of treating guests and their social regulatory functions conceived the Serbs as unenlightened folks with potentials for progression (Blanton 20, 47–48; Finder 240, 245–246; Hammond, Lands 81, 115, 117–119).

In effect, the romantic and idealized depiction of Serbs were associated primarily with their physical qualities (body) and nature (soul), and rarely with their mental capacities (mind). In reality, the positive traits described in the medical women’s travel accounts were at the same time the markers of inferiority as well. Albeit the ability to endure many forms of deprivations and hardship connected the Serbian folks with heroism and bravery, but British travel literature used these qualities to describe inferior forms in humankind.

187 Demonstrating the element of surprise, medical women could easily be lost in the jungle of traditions of a foreign culture due to language barriers, since customs were not clear and were often confusing. For instance, when being invited to the house of the priest in Natalinci, Stobart recalled her confusion in the following anecdotal piece: ‘there was water and jam, but no bread. Would bread follow, or must I now take a spoonful of jam? And what about the water? Must I dip my fingers in it or drink it? [...] All eyes were fixed on me. But what on earth was to be done with the spoon: Ought I to put it into the glass of water? [...] Dead silence all round the room; others were watching me [...] I was desperate, and the idea came that perhaps I was expected to put the spoon in my pocket; take it away as a souvenir’ (Stobart, Sword 81–82). Describing cuisine, for example, was a method to make the Serbian culture familiar with the British readership, simultaneously promoting sympathy towards this little Balkan nation and demarcating it as being different: ‘Though some folks find Serbian cooking too rich, the dishes have a distinctive and pleasing character of their own’ (ibid. 20). Detailed description of dresses and clothes (Matthews 40–41) was also common regardless of the social event the writer encountered it. For example, Stobart gave a detailed description of the requiem service in Lapovo, held for those fallen soldiers who had died in battle, and thus could not be buried in the cemetery: ‘The women wore tartan skirts, very full; short loose bodices, of different colour to the skirt, generally a plain colour, and kerchiefs which completely covered their hair, and were brilliantly coloured, or else were in black to denote mourning’ (ibid. 86–87).

188 ‘[…] just as the Serb can face death so can he also bear pain. He makes light of wounds and will not stay in bed if he can possibly get up. […] ‘the Serb is strong and, possibly because he has always lived much in the open air, his wounds are quick to heal’ (Aldridge 53–54).
Nonetheless, the ‘tragedies’ (Stobart, Sword 37), the backwardness and surviving Oriental features of Serbia were explained and blamed on the ‘dark centuries [under the] tyrannical’ (Matthews 25) Ottoman oppression (Stobart, Sword 31) which prevented or hindered modernization (Hammond, Lands 119). Claiming that the greatness of the Serbian nation did not depend on ‘material conditions of existence’ (Stobart, Sword 309–310), Serbia’s backwardness was compensated by awarding the small Balkan country with spiritual richness. Consequently, while the flaws were reconceived as signs of simplicity and the outcome of ‘so many centuries beneath the dominant Crescent’ (Matthews 39), the lacks in the Serbian qualities were filled through the overexaggeration of Serbian moral virtues (Hammond, Lands 118). Portraying the Serbians as pure-hearted fighters who had always struggled for the ‘ideal of freedom’ (Stobart, Sword 309–310), the shared value of liberty elevated Serbia to become an acceptable and appreciated ally of Western Europe in the war between civilizations:

Kipling’s ‘East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet’ does not apply to the east and west of Europe. The west of Europe must, and will, unite with the Slav portion of the east, as a safeguard against the Central Powers of darkness. […] The fate of humankind, whilst this war lasts, is in balance. The fight between the Allies and the Central Powers is not merely a struggle between one form of civilisation and another; […] The struggle is between militarism and human evolution (Stobart, Sword 192).

189 The departure from Great Britain, the arrival to Salonika (Hammond, Lands 114), the transportation and travel inside Serbia were experiences which also formed medical women’s assessment on the Balkan country. Due to the advancement of transportation introducing new modes of traveling, the technology of motion developed into an emblem of progression (Smith, Lives xi), henceforth, the means of travelling as a physical aspect of movement made a significant impact on the traveller’s perception (Schulz-Forberg 20–21) resembling the interrelations of modernity and mobility (Hammond, Lands 112–113). Upon their arrival to Serbia, it immediately became apparent for medical women that neither the Serbian railways nor the roads could be compared ‘favourably with those of larger, richer countries’ (Matthews 68). Stobart felt that the low quality and their maintenance originated from the common Balkan characteristic of the neglect: ‘A motor drive on a Serbian road is always an interesting adventure, owning chiefly to the mud, which, is literally, in places feet deep, and of a substance peculiar to the Balkans owing partially also to the neglect of road mending during many years of warfare’ (Stobart, Sword 78). Cars often sunk into deep mud holes of Serbian roads, therefore travel in Serbia ‘ended the usual way-ignominiously, with oxen’ (ibid. 80). A similar encounter with Serbian roads was remembered by Dr Inglis, describing her travel to Mladenovac as ‘the wildest drive I ever had in my life […] We skidded at least fifty times in the course of the day, but never upset. We bumped all the day and at one time charged a string of boulders, which had been used to mend the road […] but it was the most glorious run as regards scenery. For long way the road ran along the top of hills and valleys, and the lights and shadows were magnificent. I don’t know when I enjoyed anything so much (qtd. Lawrence 126). Inglis’s description also gives the impression that the gorgeous country of Serbs, decorated by magnificent hills, valleys and streams, was a more ancient and natural land, which mostly preserved the rural idylls of pre-modern times, implying that contemporary Serbia had limited access to the achievements of Western European modernity. Other medical women also realized the undeveloped aspects of Serbian society and economy, especially in regard to the lack of education among citizens, who were ‘chiefly […] agricultural people’ (Aldrige 16).
Additionally, fitting into the war-time discourse on the enemy, the qualities of barbarism and violence were shifted to the non-Christian Ottomans (Todorova, *Imagining* 109–110) and the Central Powers, accusing them for the corruption of the Balkans:

The railway journey was interesting, especially to those amongst us who had never before been away from England. We were amused to see real live storks nesting on the chimney-tops. So the German nursery tale, that babies are brought into the world by storks, down the bedroom chimney, must be true. German fables will probably in the future teach that babies are brought through the barrels of rifles (Stobart, *Sword* 19).

Overwhelmed by the autumn offense of the Central Powers, a large-scale military withdrawal and evacuation of the civil population – also known as the Great Retreat – was realized through the mountains of Albania or Montenegro to the island of Corfu (Hammond, *Lands* 113). In the course of the offensive, Dr. Inglis and Dr. Matthews were captured by the German and Austro-Hungarian forces, and were later repatriated to Great Britain, while Aldridge and Stobart reached the Albanian coast, marching through the high and demanding Dinaric Alps with the Serbians of whom almost 250,000 people died or disappeared (Bataković 245). In contrast, Leila Paget remained in Skoplje, and was placed in charge of the civil affairs as the Serbian administration and military were retreating. As the Bulgarian Queen happened to be an old acquaintance of hers (Antić, *Paget* 100), the safety of Lady Paget hospital unit was guaranteed, while she would be later held in Bulgaria as a ‘honorary captive’ until his repatriation in April 1916 (*Times*, 4 April 1916).

Witnessing the devastating evacuation of the small, overwhelmed country, the recollections and memoirs of Dr. Inglis, Stobart, Dr. Matthews and Aldridge overtly promoted the case of the exiled Serbian nation, whose spiritual richness and brave sacrifice for the ideals of freedom ought to have been appreciated and compensated by the Allies with restoration of their country’s independence:

In the Future for which we are fighting, the Future of Europe’s Freedom, the Serbian will become a new man, and all his greater self will radiate, and the shell which has become so hardened and hammered as to be at times impenetrable will be broken asunder. The true man will appear in the rebirth of the Nation (Matthews 55).
Highlighting the civilizational obligations of Western Europe, Aldridge felt that Great Britain had been bound to compensate the war-time deeds of Serbia:

In this short period of time I had thus seen Serbia under three different aspects: first, life in the village when the land was in a state of comparative peace; again, when the country was invaded on three sides and the Serbs were fighting for their lives; and yet again, when, after defeat, they were retreating before the on-coming foe. In the following pages I have tried to reflect as I saw it a picture from each of these three chapters of Serbia during those eventful months and have added a note on Serbian history. In the final adjustments of this terrible war may my country do all within its power to secure justice for the liberty-loving people of this Eastern land! (Aldrige 8).

Resembling the Serbian Relief Funds propaganda advertisement, Stobart also presented the Serbian war efforts as an important service delivered to the Ally cause, while believing that the excellent traits of the Serbian character would be rewarded in the upcoming future:

Serbia is ahead of other nations, in her power of sacrificing herself for ideals. […] The Serbian people sacrificed their country rather than bow the knee to militarism and foreign tyranny; they sacrificed their country […] both for themselves and for other Slave brethren […] A people with such ideals, and with such power of sacrifice, must be worthy of a great future (Stobart, Sword 310).

Stobart’s overtly pro-Serbian stance was also reflected in the opening page of her memoir dedicated to the Serbian Prince Regent Aleksandar

in admiration of courage with which he and the nation which he represents have, in spite of all temptations, upheld the Ideal of Spiritual Freedom, an in fervent hope that this Ideal will soon be realised in that Greater Serbia which will arise from the sepulchre of the Past (Stobart, Sword v).

Dr. Elsie Inglis also expressed her belief that Great Britain ought to have assisted Serbia in its struggle against the invading Central Powers:

The work to which our Scottish women have set themselves in relieving distress in Serbia is worthy of the highest traditions throughout the country. […] To the Scottish
people in particular Serbia makes a strong appeal. Its mountains and glens resemble our own Scottish Highlands, its people have made a similar fight for freedom against tyranny and oppression. It has been rightly termed the ‘Scotland of the East’ and the Scottish people will not fail this brave little nation in her hour of trial (qtd. McDermid 137).

Conclusively, the recollections of the British medical women reshaped the Serbian image to justify and show-case their war work as a devotion to the British interests and a contribution to the struggle against German domination. Close cooperation with the Serbian authorities along with day-to-day encounters with the locals fostered war-time companionship between the British and Serbian nations, while the medical units’ involvement in the events of the Balkan front and the Great Retreat became a source for Britain’s special emotional alliance with Serbia (Hammond, Lands 114; Hammond, Literature 156). Transforming Serbia into an inferior partner who required British patronage to achieve civilizational progression, the newly formed friendship would become a valuable complement to pro-Yugoslav propaganda. The products of the highly popular travel literature\textsuperscript{190} such as the war-time diaries and memoirs of medical women would reach a wide stratum of society, and eventually would prove to be a worthy medium to disseminate information concerning the national cause of Yugoslavs. The publications, interviews and lectures on the medical women’s experience in the Balkans not only did foster donations but would also contribute to the growing and unprecedented popularity of Serbia in Great Britain. The medical mission earned a few devoted allies and supporters for the British Yugoslav agenda. Among them, Dr. Elsie Inglis as ‘a sincere and understanding friend of the great cause of Serbia and her unification with the Croats, and Slovenes’ (\textit{Times}, 29 November 1917: 5) would become the chief initiator of the ‘Kosovo Day’ celebrations of 1916, which would mark the peak in the glorification of Serbia.

3.3. Kosovo, the Flodden of the Balkans

The uncertainty surrounding the destiny of British subjects in Serbia drew plenty of attention to the Balkans during the Central Powers’ offensive in late 1915. It was a

\textsuperscript{190} By the mid-19th century not only did travel literature turn into a fashionable genre, but it became the second most popular piece of publication behind novels, leading to an almost hundred-year long heyday for travel writing ending only in the inter-war period (Blanton 20; Todorova, \textit{Imagining} 89).
widespread belief that reasoned diplomatic and military measures could have saved Serbia, therefore the fall of the small Balkan country and the immense suffering of the retreating Serbs fostered a new wave of sympathy in Great Britain. In liaison, the Serbian Relief Fund received the most generous contributions during this period as the citizens of Britain tried to compensate their country’s betrayal of the small Balkan nation (Antić, Paget 103; Hanak, World War 91–92; Markovich, Identities 126). Capitalizing on the general guilt conscious of the British population, the British pro-Yugoslavs would seize the opportunity to propagate the case of Yugoslav unification through a nationwide, immense propaganda campaign centring around the memory and myths of the Battle of Kosovo.

In effect, a few weeks before Great Britain observed the collapse of Serbia, Serbophile sentiments had peaked in the course of the Serbian Flag-day of 22 September 1915, which had been the other notable event organized by the Serbian Relief Fund next to the Meštrović exhibition. Preceded by an intensive advertising campaign, the underpasses had been covered with posters, reminding the urban travellers and passers-by that ‘but for Serbia the Germans would be in Constantinople’ (qtd. Correspondence I: 241) as ‘Serbia was the outpost of the whole Allied, and particularly of British, position in the Near and Middle East’ (Times, 22 September 1915: 9). These advertisements implied the flag-day had offered an exceptional and fitting opportunity for everyone to pay their tributes to the ‘devotion and heroism’ (ibid.) of Serbia on behalf of Great Britain. Overall, the flag-day was a success both from the perspectives of propaganda and charity, and moreover, it marked an apprehensible turning point in the assessment of Serbia, as Reverend Dr. Nikolaj Velimirović, a foreign-educated, Anglophile monk (Kosovo Day 14) confirmed it to Seton-Watson:

The Serbian Flag Day was splendid. The Heaven and the Earth were dressed in a fine sunshine. I am told that the Day was a material success. But for me it was a great moral success. […] A hundred years ago nobody in [the] great town [of London] did know even that there is a nation with the name ‘Serbs.’ What a change! (qtd. Correspondence I: 243).

In the upcoming critical months of late 1915, Reverend Velimirović would have an outstanding role in establishing the foundations for a future, massive and well-themed pro-Yugoslav propaganda campaign by ‘carr[ying] out a skilful ecclesiastical propaganda’ (Masaryk 124) to address British guilt conscious. Being a sophisticated writer and a gifted orator, who spoke several foreign languages at a native level, the Serbian Cabinet decided to
utilize Velimirović in war-time diplomatic missions to the United States and Great Britain (Byford 21–23, 25). As the two-side offensive of the Central Powers foreshadowed Serbia’s inevitable defeat unless the Western Allies dispatched divisions to the Balkans, the aim of his diplomatic mission in Britain was to strengthen London’s dedication to the Balkan theatre of war. For this reason, his appeals implied that Great Britain ought to have compensated Serbian efforts by assisting the small war-stricken country on the Balkan front. Besides, his concerns for world peace being eventually always narrowed down to pinpointing the German Empire’s ambition on world domination, he persistently reminded the whole Christian world on their duty to pay tribute to Serbia’s exceptional war-time endeavours.

Corresponding with these notions, the Reverend published an article upon his return to Britain (Correspondence I: 241) in the Morning Post (26 October 1915), entitled ‘Serbia’s Plea to England,’ reminding British citizens in a dramatic tone on the unselfish sacrifice of Serbia, which once stopped the terrible Drang nach Osten. Serbia fought alone last winter; she was victorious, but the price of her victory was million losses in her population. Serbia was from the beginning of the world-war the most loyal and most unselfish ally. She asked nothing, she sacrificed everything. She did her sad duty and was silent. [...] In this moment all the evils of this world are fighting against Serbia [...]. She needs just now a real and quick support. [...] The moment is very short and absolutely decisive for the whole future of England: Will you help Serbia or not? Please say: Yes (Morning Post, 26 October 1915).

With all the British medical units repatriated by the spring of 1916, the recollections of medical women’s Serbian experience paved way to British public (Correspondence I: 267) in the form of lectures, interviews and books, fostering another wave of sympathy towards the

191 Albeit Velimirović had finished a doctoral program in theology, he had developed a keen interest in Western philosophy, and had been later employed as the Professor of Philosophy in Belgrade. Additionally, the monk had an affinity towards Protestantism, which he had acquired during his studies in Bern, Geneva and Oxford (Byford 21–23). Overall, he was a controversial figure of 20th century Serbian history, who survived the Dachau concentration camp, and was eventually canonized as an Orthodox saint in 2004.

192 One of the anecdotes associated with Velimirović accounted that Prime Minister Pašić had told King Petar that the monk’s diplomatic missions to the United States and Great Britain ‘were worth us as much as a whole division on the front line’ (qtd. Byford 25).

193 Such notions were expressed in his letter addressed to Seton-Watson on 29 October 1915: ‘Serbia is not fighting only for Serbia but at the same time for India and Egypt. She is not fighting in this moment for a Greater Serbia, but for a greater World, for a greater Humanity and Christianity. I speak out perhaps the last of the dying Serbia: come and help us, you, the most Christian people of the World. Remember your duty before God! We are your unique friend between Hamburg and Bagdad. Drang nach Osten is at its beginning. God’s and your cause is at stake’ (Correspondence I: 251).
small nation of brave heroes. In liaison, the visit of the Serbian Prince Regent Aleksandar to London in April 1916 generated excitement in London, and mobilized many of the ‘independent’ British Serbophiles, who had yet remained unchanneled into the pro-Yugoslav endeavours of Steed and Seton. In effect, the royal dignitary’s reception echoed the British public’s boundless appreciation towards the Serbian nation, also attesting the considerable transformation that the Serbia image had endured since the outbreak of the war due to the efforts of British pro-Yugoslavs.

For the occasion, Walter Crawfurd Price, a well-known influential journalist residing in Salonika, published a short resume on the Prince Regent in the Daily Mail, entitled ‘A Great Figure in the War: Prince Alexander’s Part in the Army’s Retreat.’ The author described Aleksandar as a standalone figure among the European monarchs, descending from the famous freedom fighter, Aleksandar Karadorde, whom had delivered the first blow to the Ottoman rule with the First Serbian Uprising. Price deliberately mitigated the infamous regicide of 1903, describing it as solely ‘a revolt against the caprice, morals, and pronounced Austrophilism of the last of the Obrenovich Kings [which] led to the election’ of King Petar Karadordević to the throne of Serbia. Additionally, he praised Aleksandar’s military skills, professed by the two Balkan Wars, nonetheless he over-exaggerated the Regent’s role and reputation in the Serbian army by claiming that his public manifesto at the outbreak of the war had inspired ‘the dramatic victory’ of 1914 (Daily Mail, 31 March 1916). Besides Crawfurd, the Serbophile couple, Alice and Claude Askew, devoted a special article to the honourable Serbian guest, entitled ‘Alexander of Serbia: Prince who Embodies a Stricken People’s Hope.’ The Askews described Aleksandar as ‘the apostle of progress,’ who had been ‘in himself the soul of his country,’ also adding that

[… ] there is about him as about his people, a curious blending of the mediaeval and the modern; round him, as round Serbia, there is a fine glamour, for both prince and

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194 Crawfurd moved to Salonika in 1909, and soon became a Balkan correspondent for the Daily Mail, later switching to the Times. His speaking tours, journalism and non-academic publications (published under his surnames ‘Crawfurd Price’) on the Balkans earned him a considerable reputation. Being well-informed, he established contacts with diplomats in the region, and his services proved to be valuable for the Allied governments as an intelligence and back-channel diplomat. He first met King Petar of Serbia in 1910, when he accompanied him to a dinner in Salonika. Crawfurd oftentimes had visited the Karadordević dynasty until the fall of Serbia (Comstock 9, 11, 13–14, 22).

195 They were prolific co-authors of several books, who embarked in relief work as members of the British medical units in Serbia, while also operated as the special correspondents for the Daily Express. They took part in the Great Retreat and published their experiences in 1916 in the book The Stricken Land: Serbia as We Saw It (Askew 17, 54). In the autumn of 1917, when they were travelling to Corfu their Italian transport steam boat was hit by a German torpedo, and they both drowned in the Ionian Sea (Daily Express, 16 October 1917, Times, 23 October 1917: 7).
nation have proved themselves to be cast in the true heroic mould. He comes among
us to-day with a heart that aches for his ravaged and bleeding country, aware that his
beloved land is in the hands of the Huns, the Austrians, and the Bulgars (SEW/5/1/11,
newspaper clipping, Daily Express).

In general, the British press appraised the Heir-Apparent of the brave little Balkan
country, which eventually had broken under the overpower of its enemies. As the Daily
Express reported it, ‘Serbia’s hero Prince’ had endured a hospitable welcome at the Charring
Cross Station, where the cheering multitude had demonstrated the general British admiration
towards the ‘heroic Serbians and their future King.’ Besides the crowd, the honourable guest
had been greeted by Prince Albert, Edward Grey, David Lloyd George, and those
representatives of the Scottish Women’s Hospital who had taken part in the Great Retreat
(Daily Express, 1 April 1916). The Globe addressed the royal visit in its night edition on 31
March 1916, expressing that albeit Serbia was the ‘innocent victim’ of the circumstances in
the Great War, the ‘unwavering courage’ and ‘glorious resistance’ of the Serbian people and
its dynasty against the ‘Teuton ambition’ displayed ‘a glow of splendid light’ in the dark
history of the Balkans. In effect, the paper whitewashed Serbia from all responsibilities for the
assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, hinting at it might have been deliberately
planned to cloak German aggression with seemingly justifiable punitive actions against
Serbia. The article additionally conformed to the guilt conscious of British citizens by
acknowledging the Allies’ failure to save their ‘gallant ally’:

To her, not less than to Belgium, we owe a debt of honour we cannot choose but pay
[...]. If the war goes as we hope and expect the end of it will see a greater Serbia than
the most ambitious of her patrons has ever dreamed, a powerful barrier against the
‘Drang nach Osten,’ a State rightly entitled by its strength to exercise a prepondering
influence in all the Nearer East. The recompense must be commensurate with the
suffering, and we venture to assure our guest that no object is closer to the heart of the
nation which welcomes him to-day. [...] We salute [Aleksandar] as a hero, we great
him as a friend, and shame we feel at our failure to save his land from desolation [...]
(The Globe, 31 March 1916).

In regard to British responsibility for the fall of Serbia, besides Velimirović, Pavle
Popović, a former Professor of Literature at the University of Belgrade, persisted addressing
the British public after the Great Retreat. His article published in the Morning Post (February
1916) under the title ‘The Future of Serbia: What England Owes to Her’ expressed that the creation of a strong Southern Slav state not solely had been a British interest, but a duty indeed. Ahistorical accounts on events, falsification of facts, misinformation and exaggeration\(^\text{196}\) all served Popović’s agenda to highlight the unselfish sacrifices of Serbia. He claimed that despite being aware of its demanding price, Serbia had expelled the aggressors in the first year of the war, and henceforth had saved the European civilization by protecting ‘the Gateway to the East’: ‘Serbia must […] drain the cup of poison to its dregs for this country to understand that it is she who holds the gate of Britain’s Eastern Empire. […] It has been said that the first German guns fired across the Danube were aimed not at Serbia but at Egypt’ (SEW/5/1/11, newspaper clipping, *Morning Post*, February 1916). Albeit Serbia’s geopolitical importance as the guardians of the route towards the Eastern possessions of Britain had been already utilized by Seton-Watson\(^\text{197}\) and the Serbian Relief Fund before, the new wave of Serbophile sentiments fostered by the Serbian defeat and the devastation of the Great Retreat created the opportunity to elevate the theme to a new level.

Exploiting the war guilt in Great Britain, the British patrons of Serbia decided to launch a massive propaganda campaign by arranging a nation-wide tribute to Serbia in 1916 to celebrate the anniversary of the famous medieval Battle of Kosovo (28 June 1389) in Great Britain (Lawrence 179−180; Seton-Watson, *Making* 171). The brain-children of the so-called ‘Kossovo Day’ were Dr. Elsie Inglis\(^\text{198}\) and Robert William Seton-Watson, who had been in regular contact with each other ever since the surgeon’s repatriation in the early spring of 1916. The idea of celebrating ‘Kossovo Day’ originated from local Serbians, who had mentioned it to the members of the British medical mission (Lawrence 179−180; Seton-Watson, *Making* 171). Subsequently, Dr. Inglis brought the idea home, and – inspired by the

\(^{196}\) Popović claimed that although Serbia was willing to cede Macedonia to Bulgaria in the eleventh hour, the Allies denied the option for Serbia to attack Bulgaria when the latter started mobilization. He also added that Serbia’s enemies ‘over and over again [had been] offered peace.’ He reminded the readers that albeit Serbia had been exhausted after the two Balkan Wars, the country entered the world war because it ‘trusted the support of the Great Power of the Entente.’ The pressure had been unbearable heavy on Serbia in the first war weeks, nevertheless, when the Serbian soldiers learnt that Great Britain had declared war on the Habsburg Empire and thus stood by Serbia’s side, all men ‘throw their caps high into the air, wild with delight’ (SEW/5/1/11, newspaper clipping, *Morning Post*, February 1916).

\(^{197}\) Similar arguments were introduced in Seton-Watson’s pamphlet, *The Balkans, Italy and the Adriatic*, claiming that Serbia had been the route to the East, and thus the main obstacle to the German *Drang nach Osten*. As the historian perceived it, Serbia’s ‘heroic resistance’ in the early months of the war had prevented the German army marching through the Ottoman territories towards Egypt and the Persian Gulf. Conclusively, if it had not been for Serbia, the British Army would have been forced to wage war in the Suez Canal and Persia in lieu of the Dardanelles (Seton-Watson, *Italy* 30−31).

\(^{198}\) On 3 April 1916, Prince Regent Aleksandar and Prime Minister Nikola Pašić awarded Dr. Elsie Inglis with the Order of the White Eagle, the highest honour in Serbia (*Times*, 4 April 1916), which strengthened Dr. Inglis’ devotion to the Yugoslav cause even more. By this time, she had become one of the closest allies of Seton-Watson and Steed (Seton-Watson, *Making* 171).
organizing experience of the Meštrović exhibition, and the success of the Jan Hus celebration, commemorating the five hundredth anniversary of the Bohemian monk in London (Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 64) – Seton-Watson embraced it.

As a result, the concept of a large-scale propaganda campaign had been conceived by the end of March. In a memorandum sent by the ‘British friends of Serbia’ to Aleksandar on 30 March 1916, Seton urged the Prince Regent to award official accreditation to the leaders of the Habsburg Yugoslav expatriates to showcase unity in front of the Allies, as ‘a complete and cordial understanding, even in matter of detail, [was] necessary if the friends of Serbia [were] to conduct a fruitful and effective propaganda’ in the future (*Correspondence I*: 267). On 5 April 1916, the Prince Regent received the Executive Committee of the Serbian Relief Fund at Claridge’s Hotel, which gave an opportunity to Seton-Watson to elaborate on his policy suggestions expressed in the memorandum, and also to convey the idea of a ‘Kossovo Day’ (SWP SEW/7/2/1). Arguably, the historian realized that the Battle of Kosovo – being one of the most significant events in Serbian national history – could have been utilized for political and propaganda purposes (Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 75).

In liaison, the Kossovo Day Committee was formed with the agenda to put ‘Kossovo Day’ together within the scope of five weeks by 28 June. Members of the Committee included well-known British Serbophiles (Mr. James Berry, Dr. Dickinson Berry,¹⁹⁹ Reverend Percy Dearmer, Mr. Lindo), associates of the Serbian Relief Fund (Seton-Watson, Mrs. Carrington Wilde, Reverend Fynes-Clinton, Viscountess Cowdray²⁰⁰), former members of the British medical units in Serbia (Leila Paget, Mrs. Haverfield, Dr. Elsie Inglis, Mrs. Kinnell, Mrs. St. Clair Stobart) and two Serbian intellectuals (Reverend Dr. Nikolaj Velimirović, Dr. Milan Ćurčin²⁰¹). Dr. Inglis was elected as the Chairman of the Committee, while Seton-Watson and Reverend Fynes-Clinton became the Joint Honorary Secretaries (*Kossovo Day* 12–13). Being touched by historical romanticism (Malcolm 253), the British patrons of the Southern Slavs adhered to the Serbian self-victimizing historical perception encoded in the Cult of Kosovo without any critical reservations, and pursued to exploit the Battle of Kosovo to popularize Serbia as ‘a country committed to freedom and morality’ (Anzulović 147). Propagating the

¹⁹⁹ Mr. and Dr. Berry were in charge of the medical unit of the British Red Cross dispatched to Serbia.
²⁰⁰ Agnes Beryl, was the daughter of Lord Edward Spencer-Churchill, and the wife of Harold Pearson, the 2nd Viscount Cowdray and a Liberal Member of the Parliament (*Kossovo Day* 22).
²⁰¹ Dr. Milan Ćurčin had received his doctorate in literature, and he used to be the Head of the Serbian High Medical Command in 1915. He and Dr. Elsie Inglis had a brief, but serious quarrel in Serbia concerning the method of patient management, making Ćurčin exclaim that ‘[…] the difference between the Serbian and the English point of view [is that] the Serbs take in every case that comes. The hospitals, it is true, will get dirty and overcrowded, but all the men will be in. But the English will only take in as many as they can properly manage and they will be beautifully nursed and cared for, and the rest will remain in the street (qtd. Lawrence 144).
European significance of the battle was a means to illustrate that Serbia had always been the defender of European civilization and of Christianity. Correspondingly, ‘the Flodden of the Balkans’ (Seton-Watson, *Italy* 34) transformed into ‘one of the moving dramas that ever happened in the world’s history’ (*Kossovo Day* 3), which was to be commemorated on British soil as ‘Our Allies [could not] celebrate their great national festival in their own country’, which had ‘kept alive the tradition of national unity and green the memory of heroic deeds’ (*Times*, 28 June 1916: 7) for centuries.

In effect, ‘Kossovo Day’ was meant to be a tribute to the bravery and heroism of the Serbian folk to tighten the bond between the British and Serbian nations (*Kossovo Day* 12). For that matter, the primary objective of the commemoration was not fund-raising,202 but to educate the British public about the history of Serbian people and their role in the war (*Times*, 29 June 1916: 11) by disseminating information and knowledge on Serbia in a number of ways. Since the day of the battle had concurred with the second anniversary of the Sarajevo assassination, most of the scheduled programmes were eventually postponed with one or two weeks due to the reservations of the Foreign Office (Seton-Watson, *Making* 174–175). In June, Dr. Inglis, Mrs. Haverfield, Dr. Čurčin, Seton-Watson and Reverend Fynes-Clinton devoted all their time to organize the commemoration, while volunteers of various women’s associations proved to be a valuable human resource during the execution (*Kossovo Day: Report* 13, 17). Eventually, the rapid increase of the organizing staff and the multiplication of tasks demanded the opening of a separate office with seven rooms (*Kossovo Day: Report* 13–14, 16; Vickers 96). To deal with a particular aspect of work, several sub-committees and regional committees203 were established. For instance, a separate press department was formed to cope with the media, while two sub-committee were established to involve theatres and cinemas in the celebration. As the part of the organizing scheme, a poster was designed for the festival with the reproduction of Bernard Partridge’s cartoon ‘Heroic Serbia’ from the *Punch*, to advertise the upcoming ‘Kossovo Day’ in the largest cities of Great Britain. Partridge’s original cartoon, displaying Serbia surrounded by its enemies, was modified by the following lines being pasted beneath the drawing:

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202 Although neither did the Kossovo Day Committee have any intentions to collect money nor did it appeal for it, donations came and were allocated to the Scottish Women’s Hospitals and the Serbian Relief Fund’s Education Branch (*Kossovo Day: Report* 12).

203 For instance, in Scotland, the Edinburgh-based Scottish Women’s Hospital was the backbone of preparation and execution. They managed to arrange almost all schools in Scotland to hold a lesson on Serbia, while they also contacted the Calvinist Church to remember Serbia during church services (*Kossovo Day: Report* 13–14)
At the battle of Kossovo in 1389, Christianity and freedom were overwhelmed in the Balkans, but the Serbs have each year since then kept the day in stern determination to be free once more. They drove back the Turks, then twice drove back the Austrians. To-day Serbia, exiled, but not disheartened, asks us to join in the celebration of her national day, as a pledge of Allies’ Victory and Anglo-Serbian friendship (qtd. *Kossovo Day: Report* 13).

Additionally, a temporary shop was opened on Parliament Street where large quantities of pamphlets, academic and educational literature on Serbia, Yugoslav folk tales, postcard reproductions of ‘Heroic Serbia,’ pictures of Tsar Lazar and other drawings illustrating life in Serbia were sold with great success. Serbian handicraft items – such as embroideries and carpets – were put on display likewise, while the war relics and photographs on Serbia also attracted all social classes. By the time of the commemoration, the shop virtually transformed into a club for those who had served or developed an interest in Serbia (*Kossovo Day: Report* 13, 23; Vickers 96).

The ‘Kossovo Day’ celebration included crowded public meetings, concerts, folk dancing and singing, art and photo exhibitions in notable galleries and institutions, school lectures, pro-Yugoslav demonstrations, church services, educational lectures and lessons on Serbian history both in London and in the countryside. For the occasion, Seton-Watson wrote a special school address, entitled *Serbia: Yesterday, To-day, and To-morrow*, which was circulated – along with other pamphlets and publications – to primary and secondary schools, to the Church of England, and to the most significant London-based or provincial press and educational associations (*Kossovo Day: Report* 13, 16, 20–21; SWP SEW/S/3/1). Besides explaining the political agenda of ‘Kossovo Day,’ Seton’s school address, in essence, enlightened the public concerning the British war aims:

> We are fighting this war for two main reasons. First, for the very existence of Britain and her Empire, which has been challenged by the hatred and envy of the Germans. Secondly, as all our leading Statesmen have told us, for the independence of the small

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204 The Serbian Cult of Kosovo elevated the Grand Prince Lazar, the leader of Serbia at the time of the Battle of Kosovo to level of Emperor. Albeit his predecessor, Dušan had been indeed crowned Emperor after successful expansion to Byzantine territory, the majority of his gains would be lost after his demise. Lazar’s title falsely implied that the Serbian Empire persisted, and eventually fell to the Ottoman invaders.

205 The invited speakers featured Leila Paget, Mrs. Haversfield, Dr. Inglis, St. Claire Stobart, Seton-Watson and native Serbs like Antonijević, the First Secretary of the Serbian Legation, and Professor Bogdàn Popović of the Belgrade University (*Kossovo Day: Report* 13, 16, 18, 22).

206 For instance, Seton-Watson had the opportunity to speak at the House of Commons on the ‘Serbian Problems’ (*Times*, 29 June 1916: 11).
nations of Europe, whom Germany wishes to conquer and crush. Of these small nations, the two which have suffered the most are Belgium and Serbia. The Belgians are our near neighbours and […] almost everyone […] knows a little of them […] But Serbia is far away at the other end of Europe, few Britons have travelled in Serbia [and] particularly nothing is known over here of them and their country’ (Seton-Watson, Serbia 3).

The enthusiasm for Serbia seemed boundless as the commemoration experienced a second revival of Serbian literature (Anzulović 147), while the public was moved by the romantic anecdotes, proverbs and mottos which captured the brave, gallant and fearless nature of the Serbian spirit (Hanak, World War 63). Eventually, more than 12,000 schools responded to the Committee’s appeal to dedicate a day to commemorate the Battle of Kosovo (Correspondence I: 271). Besides reading out loud Seton-Watson’s aforementioned school address, some schools offered prizes for essays written on Serbia, while others devoted a whole week to Serbian history and literature (Kossovo Day: Report 13, 16; Milutinović, Odbor 457). The demand for literature on Serbia had peaked just before the commemoration, therefore, new copies were ordered, and in sum, an enormous number of 200,000 different Kossovo Day-related publications were either sold or posted by the Committee (Correspondence I: 271; Vickers 96).

In general, the articles, books and pamphlets, published for the commemoration, judged Serbian history from the view of the contemporary political developments, concluding that the Central Powers had been responsible for all the past misfortunes of Serbia ever since the Middle Ages. Such perception was apparent in the Kossovo Day booklet published by the Committee specifically for the commemoration. Besides three Kosovo-themed ballads translated to English by Seton-Watson, the booklet contained several essays in history written by British, French, Serbian and Russian contributors, and arguably, was a textbook example of falsifying history.208 Associated with the Ottoman invaders of the Middle Ages, the Central Powers were portrayed as savage barbarians: ‘Now it is a question which is really the Christian nation: the Serbs, who unsupported fought and suffered horribly for Christianity during five hundred years, or the Germans, who made their glory, allied with Islam, in

207 Alone the Serbian National Anthem was released in 30,000 copies, Seton-Watson’s school address in 25,000 copies, while his pamphlet, Serbia’s War of Liberation in 50,000 copies. Further publications included Serbian Ballads – translated by Seton-Watson – circulated in 2,000 copies, Kossovo Day, a special pamphlet with a decorative design of Tsar Lazar in 3,000 copies, Notes on Serbian History educational material by Dr. Milan Čurčin, the former Head of the Serbian High Medical Command, in 8,000 copies (Kossovo Day: Report 23).

208 For instance, the crusade of Lajos I of Hungary against the Bosnian heretic Bogomil Christians in the 14th century was declared as a premeditated genocide against the Yugoslav population.
crushing the little Serbian nation?’ (Kossovo Day 4). The ‘Kossovo Day’ edition of the Times went even further by proclaiming that the Southern Slav unification was the mere solution for the whole Eastern Question, which, in effect, had originated in the Battle of Kosovo:

Why should a race thus celebrate, year by year, the memory of its greatest disaster? Because it contains, with its proofs of national heroism, the promise of redemption and reunion. [...] To us [...] the tragic festival is at once a reminder and an appeal. It reminds us that when Kossovo was lost we ‘all of us fell down.’ Its legacy was [...] the ‘Eastern Question’ [...] we must now solve if we are to attain lasting peace. [...] The main factor of the solution must be the redemption and the reunion of the Serbian race (Times, 28 June 1916: 9).

Besides the distribution of literature and leaflets, ‘Kossovo Day’ provided an opportunity for another Serbian Flag-day, that time expanding the range of flag-sellers to include restaurants, hotels, major railway stations and popular out-door places (Kossovo Day: Report 17–18). Additionally, the management of most London theatres gave permission to play the Serbian National Anthem, while cinemas played films on Serbia (Correspondence I: 271; Kossovo Day 17–18, 20; Vickers 96). The Serbian colony in London also took its respective share in the festivities by performing a Serbian-themed concert at the Aeolian Hall. The concert was attended by Prime Minister Asquith, the Japanese and the Italian Ministers in London, and meant to demonstrate Serbian gratefulness for Britain:

For months, we have been hearing praises of the Serbians as fighters; to-day we have seen Serbia’s Festival Day celebrated, have heard Serbia’s music and poetry, heard her men and women singing and reciting in their native tongue, playing Serbian composition, and have heard one Serbian man (Father Nikolai Velimirovic) speak in simple, touching, and yet strong words of Serbia’s thankfulness and pride in being Great Britain’s ally, of her gratitude to Britain in general, and to British women in particular (qtd. Kossovo Day: Report 20).

7 July 1916 witnessed the ‘Serbian Sunday,’ the climax of the commemoration when special services were dedicated for the Serbian nation in churches throughout Great Britain (Hanak, World War 76; Kossovo Day: Report 15; Times, 12 June 1916: 3). The central

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209 In contrast to the British public opinion, the Anglican Church never had been suspicious of Orthodox Christians as allies of Russian expansionism, and moreover favoured the Orthodox Church over the Catholic Church for its national, more democratic and less centralized character (Evans, Yugoslavia 60).
A memorial service held in St. Paul’s Cathedral was well-advertised throughout London on large posters with the heading ‘Think of Serbia, Pray for Serbia, Restore Serbia’ being printed in large, while the footing explained that ‘Serbia has fought and suffered for Freedom. Her cause and ours are one. Let us honour her dead and stand her living’ (Kossovo Day: Report 15). The service, dedicated to those Serbian soldiers and British medical workers who had ‘in this war together laid down their lives for the liberty of mankind’ (qtd. Times, 29 June 1916: 3), was attended by the representatives of the former British medical mission, the ambassadors and consuls of the Allied Powers, while Great Britain was represented at highest political level by Prime Minister Asquith and Foreign Secretary Edward Grey (Kossovo Day: Report 15; Milutinović, Odbor 457), whom Seton and Steed blamed for the fall of Serbia. In the course of the sermon, the Archbishop of Canterbury addressed the congregation and said two years ago, we had little knowledge of Serbia, and little or no enthusiasm for Serbia. Since then Serbia had by her courage taken a very high place in the minds of the English, and a very high place in European affairs, ‘Better,’ said a Serbian proverb, ‘a body in rags and a soul in silk than a body in silk and a soul in rags.’ Her hopes, like her Christian creed, were indestructible’ (qtd. Kossovo Day: Report 15).

One of the most moving feature of the service was the choir of Serbian school boys – whose education in Birmingham, Cambridge and Oxford was financed by the Serbian Relief Fund – singing the Serbian National Anthem (Correspondence I: 270; Kossovo Day: Report 15, 22). Following the service, Viscountess Cowdray arranged a special luncheon for the Serbian school boys, who were also presented with an illustrated volume of Shakespeare’s plays. Afterwards the boys were received by the Lord Mayor of London, whom they sang a short, one-stanza poem written for the occasion as a sign of gratitude for the hospitality they had received so far under the patronage of Great Britain (Correspondence I: 270; Kossovo Day: Report 22–23):

My Lord Mayor!
Descendants of the brave Kossovo Crusaders;
Now, one of the thousand poor
Orphans and homeless refuges

210 Besides being moved, Seton-Watson expressed his satisfaction to his wife regarding the memorial service’s propaganda aspects, describing that ‘the Archbishop played up and practically blessed Jugoslavia. The choir and the organ were of course quite perfect, and the Serbian anthem was played with great effect at the end, once over on the organ and then two versus sung by the 300 [Serbian] boys’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 175).
And one of those who have found
On this liberty-loving ground
Hospitality, kindness and motherly care,
My Lord Mayor!
(qtd. Kossovo Day: Report 23)

Overall, the ‘Kossovo Day’ celebration was an astonishing success, ‘a real triumph – quite a historic occasion’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 175) with four hundred and eight dailies, weeklies, religious or educational papers reporting on the commemoration (Kossovo Day: Report 23). Undoubtedly, it was the climax in the long crusade for the fundamental transformation of the Serbian image, which the British friends of the Yugoslav cause managed to reshape beyond any expectations, as Seton-Watson summarized it:

We have travelled far from the days when a popular London weekly could cry ‘To hell with Serbia.’ [...] There can be few in Great Britain who have not now learned that the twin causes of Serbian freedom and Southern Slav unity are British interests in the highest sense of the word (New Europe, no 44, 16 August 1917: 141).

To create the image that Serbia had been the protector of European civilization and Christianity ever since its foundation, the Battle of Kossovo was promoted as a day when Serbia had lost its medieval statehood, which was resembled in the Balkan country’s fall in late 1915. With its exceptional place in history, Serbia which could ‘draw strength from its defeats, no less than from its victories, [was] meant for great things’ (Times, 29 June 1916: 3) implying the liberation and unification of all Southern Slav lands. For this reason, the Kossovo Day Committee and the Serbians participating in the commemoration pursued to establish and solidify Great Britain as the patron of the small, gallant Balkan ally, whose ‘historic task as rampart and guardian of the liberties of the Near East against the menace of Germanism’ (Times, 22 September 1915: 9) was a valuable service to the British Empire. Similarly, the liberation on all Yugoslavs was portrayed as a mutual interest of both Serbia and Great Britain, as an enlarged and united Southern Slav state would have become a more powerful safeguard of the route to Britain’s possessions in the East.

As it intended to be, ‘Kossovo Day […] has been […] the sowing of seed, from which we hope to reap the fruits of better understanding between the two nations’ (qtd. Kossovo Day

211 To Seton-Watson’s satisfaction, even the Pester Lloyd devoted lines for the nation-wide celebration, reporting that the infamous Scottish historian had transformed Serbia from a murderer to a martyr in Great Britain (Seton-Watson, Making 175).
25), as the Kossovo Day Committee expressed it in one of its booklets. Attracting a number of influential public\textsuperscript{212} and ecclesiastical figures – who all attested their sympathy towards Serbia and the Serbian people in their high-spirited speeches and commentaries (\textit{Times}, 29 June 1916: 3) – in Great Britain to the cause of Serbia, the British proponents of the Yugoslavs would engage in putting pressure on the British political elite to accept the programme of Yugoslav union as an official war aim for the benefit of both nations.

### 3.4. Overview

With the fundamental transformation of the Serbian image, the Balkan state would emerge from the Great War with a great prestige. Undoubtedly, the Serbs became the heroes of the Balkan Peninsula, and as the ‘Guardians of the Gate’ towards the Middle East – as David Lloyd George phrased it (Laffan 3) – they were highly appreciated in Great Britain. Since the pro-Yugoslav campaign identified Serbia’s interests with that of the Southern Slavs, the name ‘Serbia’ became an alternative for ‘Yugoslavia’ (Hanak, \textit{World War} 63). As a result, the positive assessment of Serbians would transfer to the rest of the Yugoslavs, which would be maintained during the 1920’s until King Aleksandar\textsuperscript{213} introduced his personal rule in 1929 (Markovich, \textit{Identities} 135–136).

In the ambitious crusade to reshape the Serbian image, the Serbian Relief Fund managed to create a political role for Serbia to justify why Great Britain had been bound to help the Balkan country. In liaison, Serbia’s early military accomplishment and struggle against the Central Powers had been depicted as an indomitable service delivered for Great Britain by blocking the land route to the Middle East. Appeals placed for Serbia provided both Steed and Seton-Watson an opportunity to embark in mass propaganda, and propagate that a unified, large Southern Slav state would have been an even more effective barrier against German ambitions than Serbia was. As the Serbian Relief Fund gradually became visible for the British public, the relief organization eventually managed to attract the British high society,\textsuperscript{214} and by the autumn of 1915, a network of devoted Yugoslav sympathizers had emerged, who would actively practice philanthropy until the end of the war.

\textsuperscript{212} For instance, Lord Northcliffe exclaimed that ‘the celebration of [Serbia’s] greatest national disaster […] is the proof of [the Serbian people’s] tenacious faith in their national redemption. […] If the Allies were not to stand by Serbia, if they were not to assure her security and independence, they would forfeit their claim to be champions of human freedom’ (\textit{Times}, 29 June 1916: 3).

\textsuperscript{213} Prince Regent Aleksandar was crowned the King of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in 1920.

\textsuperscript{214} For instance, Mrs. Lloyd George was in charge of a depot during the second Serbian flag-day.
In the course of the British ‘Kossovo Day,’ Serbia’s political role was amended with a sacral role, claiming that Serbia had always chosen to sacrifice itself for the liberty and survival of the European civilization. In effect, the nation-wide celebration was stimulated by the favourable response to the Meštrović exhibition, as the major motifs of the pro-Yugoslav propaganda embedded in the large-scale commemoration had evolved from the themes of the Dalmatian sculptor’s Kosovo cycle. The ‘Kossovo Day’ commemoration was not solely the climax in the glorification of Serbia, but it proved to be a prelude to a well-organized pro-Yugoslav lobby embraced by the Serbian Society of Great Britain and the New Europe weekly a few months later. Having attracted considerable public support to the case of Yugoslav unification, the British proponents of Yugoslavism had then expected less words and more deeds on behalf of British decision-makers, and would do their utmost in the upcoming months to pressure the new British Cabinet under David Lloyd George to make an official dedication to the creation of Yugoslavia.
CHAPTER FOUR

Fragile Alliances
In the first years of the Great War, Robert William Seton-Watson and Henry Wickham Steed made no direct efforts to damage the image or challenge the existence of the Habsburg Empire, as they focused on patronizing and improving the image of the émigré politicians and their respective organizations. Echoing the exiles’ views and complaints concerning the mishandling of Habsburg nationalities, they also served as mediators by becoming the first channel of communication between the émigrés and the Britain Cabinet (Cornwall, *Undermining* 176–177, Tihany 123). Benefiting from Steed’s web of connections, the émigré nationalities managed to establish contact with the Foreign Office, and could pursue enlightening the high officials concerning the potential benefits of their national programmes for Great Britain. Although no official dedication had been made to these goals until the last year of the Great War, the British Cabinet realized the usefulness of the Habsburg expatriates for diplomacy and propaganda. As a consequence, the high officials maintained relations with the exiled nationality leaders, and oftentimes publicly encouraged or appraised their aspirations without having any true intentions to commit to their cause (Calder 28).

Among all the Habsburg nationalities, the most amount of patronage was direct to the Yugoslav Committee and the Yugoslav expatriates. In effect, Steed and Seton-Watson would become the close confidants of these émigrés (ibid. 21), and in the forthcoming war years, they would restlessly press the case of the Yugoslavs on the reluctant high officials (Tanner 116) through the *Times*, memoranda and pamphlets. As early as October 1914, Seton-Watson had already exposed the nature and the dangers of ignoring the Southern Slav question in the ‘Memorandum on the Southern Slav Question’ (Seton-Watson, *Making* 118), nonetheless, hardly any British decision-makers considered the future of Serbs and their Southern Slav brethren as a British interest.

Albeit the British pro-Yugoslavs’ propaganda campaigns had successfully altered the public assessment of Serbia, and by 1916 the majority of the British citizens were aware of ‘the twin causes of Serbian freedom and Yugoslav unity’ (Laffan 268), the British Cabinet had not yet included the creation of a united Southern Slav state in their war aims. Undoubtedly, Seton-Watson was right when he wrote Prince Regent Aleksandar in 1916 that ‘British opinion [had been] far ahead of the British government’ (*Correspondence I*: 265), still, he remained optimistic and was convinced that the British leaders would eventually

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215 Additionally, Steed vouched for the émigré politicians and their organizations, and indeed became the person whom the British authorities consulted to decide whether an Austro-Hungarian citizen could be exempted from internment enforced by the Aliens Restriction Order (Calder 19–21).
realize that the interests of Great Britain had demanded ‘the erection of a strong Yugoslav state [...] as an effective barrier to the *Drang nach Osten*’ (ibid.).

While the British pro-Yugoslavs were engaged in organizing relief and improving the Serbian image, Steed and Seton-Watson expected the Yugoslav exiles to voice their national aspirations and propagate their political organization in Great Britain. However, as two competing sides emerged to represent the interest of the Yugoslavs in front of the Allies in the form of the Serbian Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee, their time and efforts would be diverted to pacify the uneasy relationship among the Yugoslavs. Due to these frictions, the Yugoslav Committee would prove to be less effective in attracting Allied decision-makers, whose primary interest rested on the defeat of Germany, and had not yet expanded to the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire (Lederer 4).

In liaison, the British proponents of the Southern Slav unification and the nationality principle decided to take initiation by establishing a pro-Yugoslav British pressure group, the Serbian Society of Great Britain, and the *New Europe* political weekly to influence Allied diplomacy in regard to the future of Europe. In the last two years of the Great War, their political mission would include the promotion of an Italian-Yugoslav agreement, which they perceived as the vital precondition for both the defeat of Austria–Hungary and the creation of Yugoslavia. For these matters, Steed, Seton-Watson and Evans persistently emphasized the Southern Slav nature of the region in the *Times*, the *New Europe*, the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Manchester Guardian* to defend the Yugoslav interest in Dalmatia (Milutinović, *Rimski Kongres* 695, 702) until the developments of the war forced Italy, Serbia and the Yugoslav Committee to reconsider their position and seek compromise in the questions of frontiers or state structure. However, the rapprochement among the respective sides resulted in fragile tactical alliances forged under the pressure of international circumstances rather than true intentions to commit to either the nationality principle or the Yugoslav idea.

### 4.1. From Niš to Corfu: Patrons, Protégés and Pašić

The pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals attached high hopes to the Yugoslav Committee, the London-based Southern Slav émigré organization headed by Ante Trumbić as its president. The organization was established by a number of Habsburg Yugoslav expatriates with the assistance of the Serbian Cabinet. The majority of its members were

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216 The political organization was created in Paris, but immediately moved its headquarter to London (Sotirović 12).
Croats who imagined the future common Yugoslav state to be realized based on ‘an organic union and equal partnership’ (*Slav Programme* 4) among the Croats, Slovenes and Serbs. Under the patronage of Seton-Watson and Steed, the group lobbied for the recognition of its national programme in Great Britain, and tried to guard the ethno-historic rights of the Southern Slav for the Eastern Adriatic (Sotirović 12). For this reason, they used the financial contributions of the American Yugoslav diaspora and the Serbian Cabinet to issue manifestos and pamphlets to keep the case of Yugoslav unification afloat in the British public opinion (Albrecht-Carrié 44, Janković 184–185; Lederer 5; *Slav Programme* 4–5).

The formation and the first public appearance of the Yugoslav Committee was connected with the Allied-Italian secret negotiations, when the Yugoslav exiles hastily published a manifesto, the *Southern Slav Programme* on 12 May 1915 to protect the national interest of the Yugoslavs by attempting to influence the final terms of the war-time convention (Sotirović 11). The manifesto – composed under the guidance and revision of Seton-Watson – clarified that the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes had been ‘one and the same people, known under three different names’ (*Slav Programme* 3) who aspired for the national liberation and unification of Yugoslav lands. Simultaneously with the manifesto, the Committee summited a memorandum to the Foreign Ministers of the Allied Powers, and made a public appeal to the House of Commons and the citizens of Great Britain in regard to their case. As it was soon revealed, by the time the group went public, the Treaty of London had been concluded, forcing the Committee to battle its provisions on the Adriatic by launching a propaganda campaign (Lederer 12–13) ‘for the purpose of imparting information’ (*Bulletin* 1) on the Yugoslavs cause. In liaison, the organization published the *Southern Slav Bulletin*, a serialized pamphlet to educate the public and the decision-makers on the Southern Slavs. In essence, it provided thorough political, historical, geographic, economic and ethnographic background on the Southern Slav lands. Each pamphlet among the overall six was composed to expand knowledge along the lines a specific theme.\(^{217}\) Overall, both the *Southern Slav Programme* and the *Southern Slav Bulletin* pursued to convince the British officials that first of all, the Yugoslav Committee had a legitimacy to represent and speak on behalf of the Habsburg Yugoslavs, secondly, the Yugoslav idea had been the prevailing national idea of the Southern Slavs, and thirdly, only a unified and ethnically compact

\(^{217}\) The fifth pamphlet summarized these themes as follows: ‘In our […] pamphlets, all of which aim at giving information to the British public on the subject of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes […] it has been our endeavour to give the programme of Southern Slav people (1), a true and sufficient description of the land and people of the Southern Slavs (2), of their history in the past (3), and of their culture (4). In the present pamphlet we propose to give a brief sketch of the development of the idea of Southern Slav unity from its beginning up to the present day’ (*Unity* 3).
Yugoslav state – and not an enlarged Serbia and Italy – could have been an effective barrier to German expansion.

To validate the first claim, the Yugoslav Committee drew attention to the wrongful and vulnerable position of the Habsburg Yugoslavs. The group emphasized that at the outbreak of the Great War, the Southern Slav men had been conscripted to the army, while those who refused to enrol had either fled the country or been imprisoned (Slav Programme 3). Moreover, they exclaimed that the political abuse, threat and oppression of the Austrian and Hungarian authorities rendered it impossible for the Southern Slavs to represent themselves effectively: ‘[…] the political leaders of the nation and of public opinion are helpless in the clutches of martial law, and without any means of voicing their views’ (ibid. 9). For these matters, the exiles argued that their political organization should have been recognized as the legitimate representatives of the Habsburg Yugoslavs, who could not voice and represent their opinion without being prosecuted:

A small handful of the representatives of public opinion were also fortunate in being away from their own country at the time [of the escalation of the war]. These have now formed themselves into a body representing the interests of their countrymen abroad, and they have elected and appointed a Committee of Emigrant Yugoslavs, which is now sitting in London (ibid. 3).

Introducing the seventeen members of the Yugoslav Committee through their degrees, former titles and occupations – ranging from university professors, lawyers, paper editors to town council or Sabor delegates (ibid. 4–5) – was a method to increase the authenticity of the émigré organization in Yugoslav matters, while also hinting at the pre-war inter-Yugoslav cooperation.

In effect, the pre-war success of the Croato-Serb Coalition was used to validate the claim on the Yugoslav idea’s general popularity. Overexaggerating the significance of the Coalition, the Committee recounted how the ‘unparalleled suffering of the whole Southern Slav nation ha[d] done more than anything else to create […] moral unity’ (Unity 35), fostering the kindred nations of Serbs and Croats to establish a working political alliance along the lines national equality and unity (Slav Programme, 12), Additionally, the émigrés emphasized that in regard to language and ethnographic attributes, the Southern Slav nation had been homogeneous, albeit it had been ‘known by three different names’ (Land 2–3). However, their examples taken from the Yugoslav history to support the cultural unity were
either isolated cases or brief, superfluous218 and misleading claims.219 Nonetheless, they served the propaganda agenda to prove that the idea of Yugoslav unity had developed into a political project long before the dawn of the 20th century, and henceforth ‘not only [the Southern Slav] intellectuals, politicians, and the younger generation [were] in favour of national unity, but the entire Southern Slav nation desire[ed] it’ (Unity 34):

A close study of the history of our nation cannot fail to reveal the fact, that from its origin to the present day and throughout the centuries it presents a record of continuous efforts to realise the great idea of Southern Slav Unity […], which was] the leading idea in all our progress and development. […] To any Southern Slav it is perfectly obvious that our whole history is the record of a persistent tendency towards unification on the part of our nation, viz., the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (ibid. 3, 6).

Claims on Yugoslav ‘sameness’ was also utilized to justify the creation of a unified, independent Yugoslav nation-state, whose future territory was outlined on an unfoldable, large map – attached to the issues of the Bulletin –, displaying railway lines, administrative boundaries, ethnic composition, historical and cultural sites (e.g. battle places and monasteries). In essence, the Yugoslav Committee expressed that the Yugoslav national territory would have composed of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia–Hercegovina, Dalmatia and its archipelago, Croatia–Slavonia, Fiume, Medumurje, Baranya, Bácska, Bánát, Istria with Trieste, Carniola and Southern Carinthia. They rejected any partition of these territories, arguing that all these lands formed an ethничal unit, were geographically contiguous and economically interdependent (Slav Programme 13–16). Additionally, they persistently stressed that Serbia and Montenegro did not solely strive to expand their frontiers, but they were ‘the champions of liberation’ for all the Southern Slavs (ibid. 10). Reaching back as far

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218 The Yugoslav Committee portrayed the person of letters in the Early Modern Period, such as the poet Ivan Gundulić, as the intellectual founders Yugoslav national unity (Unity 15). In contrast to the organization’s claims, these individuals were mostly influenced by the struggle against the Ottoman rule, thus the unity they had embodied had anti-Ottoman and Pan-Christian roots. Superfluous examples drawn from the cooperation of Yugoslav literary and cultural societies in the late 19th century were also used to confirm the cultural unity of Yugoslavs, claiming that ‘broadly speaking, there is a union in everything pertaining to letters, science and arts. The shelves of the Zagreb bookseller shops contain numerous Serbian books, just as in Belgrade there are many Croatian and Slovene books’ (ibid. 22).

219 For instance, the Southern Slav branches formed a single nation as their folk tradition had remembered the same national heroes, and consequently to ‘have a national hero in common [had been] itself a great proof of racial unity of the Yugoslavs’ (Land, 5). Additionally, the claim that the Croatian Sabor had ‘always demanded Yugoslav unity, territorial integrity, and political independence’ (Slav Programme, 15) was misleading, as the exiles gave the impression that the struggle for the unification of Croatian lands had been a Pan-Yugoslav project.
the Early Middle Ages, the Committee tried to prove that the Germans had always aspired to conquer Southern Europe, and if it had not been for the Yugoslavs, they would have gained control of the Adriatic and established absolute German hegemony in the region long before. In light of these, the émigrés argued that only the complete unification of Yugoslav lands would have guaranteed stability for the region and Europe (Sketch 32).

Furthermore, the Yugoslav Committee tried to prove that not only would a united Yugoslav state constitute no menace to Italy, but on the contrary, it would become the pivot of its commercial expansion, while also ensuring its security through the ‘Alpine guard’ of the Slovenian territories, which would have blocked the ‘advance of Germanism toward the Mediterranean’ (Slav Programme 16, 21). However, due to the ‘disquieting rumours’ (ibid. 21) on the concessions made to Italy, the organization felt that the future of the Dalmatian coast had to be addressed. Besides, welcoming the Italian intervention as it could have fostered the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy, the Yugoslav Committee pursued to force Italy into the role of liberator: ‘[the] down-trodden people [of Yugoslav lands] hail Italy as a new helper in the work of liberating and unifying all [of the Yugoslavs]’ (ibid. 20). Albeit, the exiles acknowledged that Italy ought to have been compensated for its efforts, nonetheless ‘not at the expense of those who have suffered so much,’ the Yugoslavs clearly and ‘bitterly resent[ed] the thought that any part of their territory [would become] the colony of a foreign Power.’ Correspondingly, the organization exclaimed that the Southern Slavs were not fighting simply for ‘a change of masters,’ but desired the full rehabilitation of their national integrity (ibid. 20–21). Consequently, the disunity of the Yugoslav lands by either leaving many Southern Slavs under the auspices of Austria–Hungary or by transferring a proportion of them to another foreign rule would have provoked an ‘energetic and justifiable resistance’ (ibid. 31) in the Yugoslav world. Moreover, they claimed that while the Eastern Adriatic would have been vital to the Yugoslav economy, it would have been entirely valueless for Italy (ibid. 24). Additionally, they confirmed that the peace and stability of the region had required the complete union of all Yugoslav territories in a single state under the premise of national self-determination. In liaison, the Yugoslav Committee appealed to the Italian and the British Cabinets for support of their national aspirations, and thus indirectly asked for the revision of the Treaty of London:

Sure of goodwill of our Italian brothers, we appeal to the sympathies of their western Allies in our struggle for liberty. And in thus appealing […] to the British Nation and
Parliament, we look for such support as shall enable the Jugoslav nation, after centuries of martyrdom, to achieve at length its unity and independence (ibid. 31–32).

Despite the tactful tone, Yugoslav Committee’s aspiration to revise the secret agreement did not meet the goodwill of Rome, and moreover, fostered hostility and suspicion towards the Yugoslav expatriates and their British proponents for the rest of the Great War.

Besides the Yugoslav Committee, the Serbian Cabinet could have played a significant role in the renegotiation of the Pact of London. Among the pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals, Seton-Watson proved to be the most optimistic about Serbia’s dedication to the Yugoslav idea. For him, the Niš Declaration on Serbia’s war aims was the unquestionable proof of Belgrade’s intention to liberate and unite the Habsburg Yugoslav kinsmen with Serbia on the basis of national equality.\textsuperscript{220} Besides the declaration, the Concordat concluded with the Vatican on the rights of Catholics (Correspondence I: 204), and his deep and lasting impressions from his visit to Serbia in the winter from 1914 to 1915 further solidified his belief in the Serbian political leaders’ devotion to the Pan-Yugoslav cause:

I returned from Serbia entirely reassured as to the intentions of Serbia. Till I went, I always had a lurking fear lest some Chauvinist current might favour some exaggerated scheme of unification to the detriment of local Croat institutions. […] If words mean anything, my conversations with Pasic, Jovan and Ljubomir Jovanovic, Marinkovic, Draskovic, Novakovic, Cvijic,\textsuperscript{221} Slobodan Jovanovic,\textsuperscript{222} […] Markovic\textsuperscript{223} any many others, make it quite clear that Serbia is resolved to leave the Croats themselves the decision as to their future relations with Serbia. No attempt will be made to incorporate the various provinces, unless their representatives decide in favour of such a course (Correspondence I: 200–201).

Conversely to his belief, it was the prospect of an independent Croatia realized under the patronage of the Allied Powers which had triggered the Serbian Cabinet to declare its support for the Yugoslav idea in Serbia’s official war aims. Moreover, the majority of the Serbian elite envisioned the extension of Serbian statehood to the future Yugoslav territories, and rejected any solutions which would have renounced the sovereignty of the Serbian

\textsuperscript{220} In effect, the Niš Declaration would become a recurring motif in the campaign for Yugoslavia.

\textsuperscript{221} Jovan Cvijić was an internationally acclaimed anthropogeographer, who believed the Yugoslav unification ought to be realized under mutual lines among the Yugoslav kin-nations.

\textsuperscript{222} Slobodan Jovanović was a historian, who would become Prime Minister of the royalist Yugoslav government-in-exile during the Second World War.

\textsuperscript{223} Marković was the leader of the opposition Serbian Progressive Party.
Kingdom in any ways. Among them, Prime Minister Nikola Pašić and the members of the
governing Radical Party were Pan-Serb nationalists, who stood for the unification of all lands
inhabited by the Serbs. In theory, the Croats and Slovenes could have joined this enlarged
Serbian state but only under terms and leadership of Belgrade. In reality, before the outbreak
of the Great War, Pašić had not displayed any interests in a wider Pan-Yugoslav state,
nonetheless, the political realities of the war forced Serbia to assume the role of Yugoslav
Piedmont, and seemingly pursue the liberation of all Habsburg Yugoslav lands (Jelavich 31;
MacMillan 122; Pavlowitch, Serbia 99).

Incorporating the Southern Slav territories of the Habsburg Monarchy, the vision of a
Croatian state meant an obvious threat for the Pan-Serb endeavours. The concerns of the
Serbian Cabinet regarding a possible rival Southern Slav state were not entirely groundless
since the idea had been in fact discussed in French and Italian diplomatic circles in September
1914. Consequently, Pašić had no alternative, but to espouse the Yugoslav idea to satisfy the
Croats and deter the plan of a separate and sovereign Croatia before it had been officially
embraced by the Allied Powers. For this purpose, a group of Serbian scholars were assigned
with the task to define Serbia’s war aims emphasizing that the Habsburg Monarchy could not
have retained its Southern Slav possessions, and that these provinces could not have survived
unless associated with Serbia (Banac, Nationality 117).

The document known as the Niš Declaration was officially proclaimed by the Serbian
Parliament as the war aims of Serbia on 7 December 1914, and it clearly stated that Serbia
wanted to liberate and unite all the Yugoslavs in a single state. Conclusively, issuing a
declaration which overtly championed the Yugoslav idea was a means for Pašić to undermine
the Habsburg Yugoslavs loyalty to the Empire, and to assume the control over the process of
unification by securing exclusive right for Serbia to represent the Southern Slavs.
Concurrently, the document also enabled the Serbian Cabinet to claim
as many Habsburg Yugoslav lands as possible primarily to fulfil Pan-Serb aspirations (Bataković 237; Lederer
4–5; Pavlowitch, Serbia 99; Pavlowitch, Unification 27; Sotirović 13).224

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224 In the spirit of Serbia’s new role as the liberator and unifier of Yugoslavs, Pašić launched Pijemont, a
newspaper toned on nationalist agitation (Biagini 162), while the La Serbie, the Serbian Cabinet’s French
propaganda paper was published in Geneva to counter-balance the Yugoslav Committee’s Southern Slav
Bulletin. Established by Professor Bodžar Marković in the spring of 1916, the Serbian Press Bureau operated in
Geneva, entrusted with task to gather information from the Allied and enemy papers, while it also maintained
contact with the Yugoslav Committee. In the course of the war, the press office per se developed into a centre of
Serbian intellectuals, many who supported a wider a Yugoslav union based on equality. Approaching the end of
the war, they became critical of Pašić’s stubborn refusal to share power to implement the unification (Janković
109; Masaryk 66; Pavlowitch, Serbia 99).
Besides the Niš Declaration, the idea of a Yugoslav émigré organization was Pašić’s other scheme for the international demonstration of Southern Slav understanding and solidarity. In liaison, the Serbian Premier fostered the creation of the Yugoslav Committee and subsidized it until the conclusion of the war. However, the diverging opinion between the Yugoslav exiles and Pašić was revealed shortly after the Committee had been formed. In contrast to Pašić’s visions, both Frano Supilo and Ante Trumbić – the two most well-known Habsburg Yugoslav expatriates in Great Britain – believed in the Yugoslav idea, and maintained that ‘the principles of national right and self-determination, and not simply Serbia’s war-time performance, entitled the South Slavs to a state of their own’ (Banac, Nationality 118), as expressed in the Yugoslav Committee’s manifesto:

the Southern Slav people aspires to unite its territories in a single independent state.
The internal arrangements of the new state will be determined by the nation itself, in accordance with its own wishes and needs. The Southern Slav state will be an element of order and of peace. While devoting its whole energies to the cause of progress, it will also develop those well-known virtues of its seafaring population which the British nation will be the first to appreciate. [...] Our people, which professes several religions, and whose tolerant spirit is well known, will crown its national unity by guarantees of religious equality and complete freedom of worship (Slav Programme 31–32).

The two exiles suspected that the Serbian Cabinet had treated the unification as a matter of territorial aggrandizement, therefore, it would have meant the conquest rather than the liberation of the Habsburg Yugoslavs. While the Dalmatian émigrés envisioned an entirely new state to be formed by the union, Pašić would have preserved and expanded Serbia’s political and legal institutions to the enlarged Yugoslav state. As he regarded the Committee his own creation – which ought to have acted under the auspices of the Serbian Cabinet as an auxiliary in the internationalization of Yugoslav case by informing the Allies on the oppression and national aspirations of the Habsburg Yugoslav –, his resentment towards the growing independence of Trumbić and his associates increased as the war commenced (Banac, Nationality 118–119; Pavlowitch, Serbia 99; Sotirović 13).

Seton-Watson and Steed realized the usefulness of a Yugoslav émigré organization for the pro-Yugoslav campaign in Great Britain, but any frictions between the Southern Slavs exiles and the Serbian Cabinet would have been a disadvantage. In effect, they believed
displaying mutual understanding concerning the future on a Yugoslav state had been vital to gain Allied recognition for the Yugoslav national programme, as Seton expressed it: ‘We feel that a complete and cordial understanding, even in matters of detail, is necessary if the friends of Serbia are to conduct a fruitful and effective propaganda’ (Correspondence I: 267). Therefore, Seton and Steed urged and did their utmost to assist the reconciliation between the Yugoslav parties. However, Mateja Bošković, the Serbian Minister in London, proved to be a serious obstacle in these attempts.

Being a narrow Pan-Serb nationalist, not only was Bošković indifferent towards Yugoslavism, but detested the whole idea. He considered the ‘sacred conquests’ of the Balkan Wars as the proudest accomplishments of Serbia, thus relinquishing Macedonia to Bulgaria was unacceptable for him. The Serbian Minister regarded the Yugoslav Committee a reliability, was annoyed by Supilo’s and Trumbić’s diplomatic activity in London, and oftentimes refused to cooperate with the Yugoslav Committee. He grew frustrated that the Croats had spoken in the name of Serbia, meanwhile they also had claimed to represent the ‘Triune Kingdom.’ Since Serbia had already sacrificed enough in the war for the Southern Slav cause, replacing the name ‘Serbia’ with ‘Yugoslavia’ was not only an absolute nuisance for him, but an ungrateful demand on behalf of the Croats and Slovenes (May, Treaty of London 43; Milutinović, Dalmacija 22; Seton-Watson, Making 132–134). His bossy and nationalist attitude provoked a fallout with Ivan Meštrović, as the Minister insisted on Meštrović being advertised as a Serbian than a Yugoslav sculptor, which the artist firmly rejected. As a result, Bošković intentionally remained absent from the exhibition, and Antonijević, the First Secretary of the Serbian Legation in London (Kossovo Day: Report 22) delivered the appreciation speech on his behalf during the opening (Times, 21 June 1915).²²⁵ Albeit his absence was for the benefit of both parties (Mladinić 142; Seton-Watson, Making 146), the incident foreshadowed the uneasy war-time alliance and plagued relationship between the Yugoslav Committee and the Pašić clique.

In the first war years, Seton-Watson and Steed believed that the political tension between the Croatian exiles and the Serbian Cabinet could have been eased by the intervention of Prince Regent Aleksandar. In effect, the duo had resented Mateja Bošković²²⁶

²²⁵ In the autumn of 1915, the Serbian Government presented the Victoria and Albert Museum with one of artist’s sculptures²²⁶ in Belgrade’s possession as a proof of their appreciation towards the organizers and the citizens of Britain (Western Daily Press, 1 September 1915).
²²⁶ By September 1915, Seton had already terminated contact with the Serbian Minister: ‘Unhappily I am not speaking terms with him and decline to see him under any circumstances whatever’ (Correspondence I: 234). After the war, in 1927, Seton and Bošković would engage in a polemy in the Serbian paper Politika concerning the interpretation of war-time events (Milutinović, Dalmacija 22).
from the beginning, and as the Serbian Minister’s reluctance to cooperate with the exiles grew, they did their utmost to remove from his position the ‘completely incompetent diplomat’ (Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 67) who was ‘incapable of handling anything’ (*Correspondence I*: 234). Despite a sheaf of letters to Serbian friends, it was only after Steed and Seton had mentioned the case of Bošković to Prince Regent Aleksandar during the Royal Family’s visit to Great Britain in April 1916 that the diplomat was eventually dismissed and replaced by Jovan Jovanović (Seton-Watson, *Making* 157). Additionally, the royal visit provided an excellent opportunity to express their opinion how the Yugoslav Committee could have been utilized for the benefit of Serbia’s liberation agenda. Seton was convinced that the Serbian Cabinet could have demonstrated its allegiance to Yugoslavism by appointing a member of the Yugoslav Committee as minister without portfolio, while other members could have received advisory posts in the Serbian Legations across Europe (*Correspondence I*: 266–267). However, first the Croatian exiles, notably Supilo and his ‘ex-friend’ Trumbić (*Correspondence I*: 269) had to be reconciled before the visit, as explained by Seton in a letter written for his wife on 12 March 1916:

[…] we shall try to reach a concrete result with the Yugoslav Committee, whose courage needs to brought to the sticking point, so that when certain gentlemen arrive here, they can be met with precise demands of the most radical kind. This is in many ways for their cause the most critical moment of the whole war […]. But our friend of Fiume is showing his autocratic tendencies to an altogether excessive degree, and has succeeded in uniting practically the whole Committee against him simply by reason of his secrecy and personal manner. I spent hours to-day trying to persuade him of the dire necessity of avoiding a rupture […] (*Correspondence I*: 260).

Besides the uneasy alliance of the Serbian Cabinet and Yugoslav Committee, the political friction in the émigré organization intensified in 1916. In reality, the disintegration started with the departure of Frano Supilo, who wished to negotiate guarantees and a

227 See *Correspondence I*: Seton-Watson to Mabel Grujić (19 September 1915); Seton-Watson to Jovan Jovanović (20 September 1915); Seton-Watson to Bogdan Popović (25 September 1915).

228 As described in the previous Chapter, in the spring of 1916, Prince Regent Aleksandar and Pašić visited London after Rome and Paris. One of their major agenda was to convince the Allies to revitalize the Serbian Army, whose remaining soldiers sought refuge in Corfu, and let them join the Allies’ Salonika units. In 1916, the revitalized Serbian Army, numbering overall 100,000 soldiers and volunteers, equipped with arms joined the Allied Armies in Salonika. The Serbian request was founded on the belief that the Allies planned an offensive in the Balkans, thus this theatre of the war could have a significant impact on the outcome of the conflict. However, the British and Italian leadership wished either to evacuate the Salonika front or to remain in a defensive. In 1916–1917 the Serbian military leaders complained in their reports that the passivity in Salonika, demoralized Serbian soldiers (Janković 33–34; Lampe, *Balkans* 41; Lederer 20; Wilson, *Chaos* 15).
plebiscite for the unification at any costs, and insisted on suspending all cooperation with Pašić until these guarantees were granted (Banac, Nationality 118–119; Pavlowitch, Serbia 99; Sotirović 27–28). Additionally, Supilo often acted alone and independent of the other Yugoslav exiles, spending most of the war years either residing in London or travelling between the Allied capitals. In the British capital, he maintained a friendship with and could financially rely on Clémence Rose, Steed’s alleged long-time girlfriend with a Yugoslav heritage (Janković 184–185; Jeszenszky, Steed 25). Although his visits to Foreign Office cemented his image as the authority figure among the Yugoslavs on Habsburg matters, his inflexibility and suspicion on the Serbian Cabinet’s pro-Yugoslav endeavours, coupled with his occasional arrogance and megalomania (Janković 184, 190) estranged the Yugoslav Committee from the former journalist. Furthermore, Trumbić took Supilo’s departure as a personal offense, and had refused to resume contact with the ‘defector’ until Steed and Seton reminded him that the Foreign Office had hold a high view on Supilo, therefore, his person had been crucial for the Yugoslav agenda (ibid. 132). Owing to Seton-Watson’s efforts, Supilo and Trumbić finally agreed to reconcile, and they had been eventually received by Prince Regent Aleksandar and Prime Minister Pašić in Paris before the Serbian delegation crossed the Channel in late March 1916 (Correspondence I: 406).

Albeit both sides realized that it had been of vital importance to display a common and united front in the questions of Yugoslav unification, the discussions failed to gulf the diverging opinion between the Serbian Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee. Nonetheless, as the Yugoslav Committee was forced to rely on the support of Serbian Cabinet to battle the terms of the Treaty of London, the organization – with the exception of Frano Supilo – wanted to avoid any direct confrontation with Pašić for the time being. In reality, Italy’s claim over Dalmatia and Istria was the sole, but overwhelming reason why the Yugoslav Committee cooperated with Pašić (Zlatar 395). However, behind the scenes the Serbian Cabinet persisted pursuing the extension of Serbian administration to the new territories, while the exiles still envisioned the creation of a Yugoslav state as the organic union of several equal territorial units inhabited by the Southern Slavs. Overall, both sides kept postponing the factual terms of unification, and hoped that developments of the war would eventually make their differences decrease (Lederer 24–25). As the Prince Regent was believed to be in favour of the Yugoslav idea and a federal structure for the future state,229 at first Steed and Seton were confident that

229 Among the Serbian leadership, Aleksandar was the sole person who used the term ‘Yugoslav,’ in the course of his official encounters in the West, or under occasion when he addressed the Serbian Army in Salonika. During his visit to Rome, Paris and London, he used the word ‘Yugoslav nation,’ which implied that the three
Aleksandar was the person who could have successfully stimulated inter-Yugoslav rapprochement:

The Serbian Government, in exile at Corfu, and particularly the Prime Minister, Pashitch, were unwilling to accept the Southern Slav programme of national union on a federal basis with full political and civil equality for Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The Prince-Regent Alexander, with whom Seton-Watson and I had repeatedly discussed this question, was far keener of vision and broader of mind (Steed, Thirty II: 167).

However, soon they were forced to face the political reality that the Prince Regent had exercised limited power next to Pašić, henceforth hopes attached to Aleksandar faded by the winter of 1916 (ibid, 166):

[…] the Prince Regent, whose wisdom and gallantry in the war had won general admiration, did not prove equal to the thorny task of restraining the politicians. Indeed, after one period of acute friction—curiously enough, during their joint visit to the Western capitals [in 1916]—he appears to have resigned himself to the Pašić system as an inevitable feature of the war situation (New Europe, no 97, 22 August 1918: 122).

In the midst of inter-Yugoslav political deadlock, the Yugoslav Committee managed to recruit the Russian Provisional Government as an ally for the Yugoslav cause. In March 1917, Pavel Miljukov, a member of the liberal Kadet Party and the Foreign Minister of the Provisional Government, accounted the Russian war aims for a French correspondent, which included the creation of a strong and unified Yugoslav state as a barrier to German aspirations. Ante Mandić, a member of the Committee residing in Petrograd, contacted Miljukov, and received a written declaration on Provisional Government’s support of Yugoslav national aspirations, practically making Russia the first Allied state to acknowledge the Southern Slav unification as an official war objective.230 As a result, the Yugoslav Committee came under the illusion that they had scored an important victory over the Serbian branches of the Yugoslavs were the same nation with shared language, traditions and aspirations, on some occasions with the Army. In contrast to the Heir Apparent, the Serbian Cabinet adapted ‘brothers’ or ‘kinsmen’ for public declarations and official correspondence (Janković 222).

230 Prior to his resignation in May, Miljukov received Ante Mandić as a representative of the Yugoslav Committee, and Aleksandar Belić an emissary of the Serbian Government and a well-known linguist on 10 April and greeted them as Serbo-Croats. The Foreign Minister perceived the Habsburg Monarchy as tool of Germany, therefore endorsed its dismemberment of the Monarchy along with the creation of Yugoslavia (Janković 50).
Primer, and hoped they would be able to play the Russian trump card to utilize their vision of unification in the long run. In reality, both the Committee and Pašić overestimated the strength of the Russian Provisional Government, the former also believing that the Russian support legitimized the position of the Yugoslav Committee as the representatives of the Habsburg Yugoslavs, and moreover as the equal partner of the Serbian Cabinet (Janković 48–49, 51, 104; Sotirović 18). However, this perception soon proved to be entirely false as the demise of Francis Joseph in late 1916 had removed one of the major obstacles to the federalization of the Danubian Monarchy, and thus renewed Yugoslav hopes for Trialism.

With the outcome of the war hanging in the air, the Yugoslav deputies in the Vienna Reichsrat and the Zagreb Sabor played a two-sided game by letting their loyalty be bargained. To maximize the possible political gains and to put pressure on the Habsburgs, they maintained contacts with the Yugoslav Committee, while they were also eager to profess their loyalty to Charles, the new Emperor-King with the hope that the sovereign would proclaim a trialist rearrangement. For this reason, on 30 May 1917, thirty-three Yugoslav deputies in the Reichsrat formed the Yugoslav Club under the Slovene leadership of Anton Korošec, who read out the May Declaration, a brief but far-reaching manifesto, asking Charles for the unification of Habsburg Yugoslav territories in a third sub-state (Janković 124; Lederer 25).

Undoubtedly, the declaration movements’ agenda clashed with the aims of both the Serbian Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee, as the document requested a dynastic solution for the Southern Slav question. Moreover, the manifesto did not mention union with Serbia, but explicitly stated that the Habsburg Yugoslavs had wished to remain under the spectre of the Habsburg dynasty (Pavlowitch, Serbia 99, 106; Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 51; Tanner 117). In effect, the May Declaration was a result of a compromise between the Croatian Party of Right and the Yugoslav deputies in the Reichsrat, merging the Croatian aspirations with the civic nationalism of Slovenes and Dalmatian Yugoslavs to claim Trialism jointly on the basis of Croatian historic state right. The positive response to the May Declaration in the Habsburg Yugoslav public fostered the Yugoslav parties – with the exception the Croato–Serbian Coalition into a loose, but broad cooperation (Mitrović, Great War 299–300, 302–303), which would prove significant during the disintegration of the Habsburg Empire in the autumn of 1918.

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231 The Russian Provisional Governments revisionist stand on secret treaties was also reported in the New Europe. See ‘The Russian Invitation’ published on 21 June 1917.

232 Under the leadership of the Serbian Pribićević, the CSC still enjoyed patronage of Hungary as the new Magyars. At the same time, Pribićević did not wish to collide with Pašić, thus the CSC would remain uninvolved in the declaration movement until the collapse of the Monarchy (Mitrović, Great War 301).
Besides the May Declaration, the loss of the Russian ally, the United States’ entry to the war in April 1917, the Italian diplomatic efforts to claim Albania as a protectorate, and moreover the separate peace attempts of Emperor Charles left Pašić no alternative than to turn for support to the Western Allies. Undoubtedly, the February Revolution in Russia\textsuperscript{233} lost Serbia its most powerful and most valuable ally in the person of the Russian Tsar, who virtually had given a ‘carte blanche’ for Serbia to the annex Habsburg Yugoslav territories.\textsuperscript{234} Besides, the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson was known for his sympathy towards the case of small nations, and also seemed prone to support the idea of national self-determination as the principle of settlement for the Great War. Under the new international circumstances, the Serbian Premier was forced to change Serbian diplomacy’s course of action to please the Western liberal public opinion (Evans 279; Janković 104 198; Lederer 25, Sotirović 17, 19).

Realizing that it had been essential to work his disagreements with the Yugoslav Committee, in early May 1917 Pašić invited Ante Trumbić and other members of the organization\textsuperscript{235} to Corfu – where the Serbian government-in-exile had been operating ever since the occupation of Serbia – with the intention prepare and propagate a joint political programme for the Western Allied Powers. As the political activity of the Habsburg Yugoslavs implied that they could speak for themselves, and also proving the superfluous nature of the ineffective Yugoslav Committee, Trumbić was more than ready to accept the invitation as the conference provided an opportunity for the organization to become visible and active in Southern Slav matters again (Evans 279; Lederer 25). After consulting with Seton-Watson, Steed and Supilo concerning the crucial points of an agreement with the Serbian Cabinet (Masaryk 226; Steed, Thirty II: 166), he left for Corfu with the determination to conclude a working agreement among the Yugoslavs.

The profound disagreements on the internal structure of the future state considerably complicated the negotiations, nevertheless, the inter-Yugoslav conference eventually released the so-called Corfu Declaration on 20 June 1917 following a two-week long discussion. The

\textsuperscript{233} Pašić wanted to exploit the Romanian military fiasco to nullify the concessions on Bánát. Plan was outlined to send a military and diplomatic delegation to Petrograd to take advantage of the disappointment Romania caused and negotiate Banat out of the hand of them. With the outbreak of the February Revolution, the plan was never realized (Janković 31–32).

\textsuperscript{234} In this regard, the Russian Foreign Ministry opposed the unification of Catholic Yugoslavs with Serbia (Batakočić 247; Sotirović 14).

\textsuperscript{235}To neutralize the overrepresented Dalmatian Croats, Pašić requested the Committee’s delegation to be composed of a Croatian member from Dalmatia and Croatia–Slavonia, a Slovenian and a Bosnian Serb representative. The delegation which left for Corfu constituted of Ante Trumbić, Hinko Hinković, Bogumil Vošnjak and Dušan Vasiljević, while the Serbian opposition parties were also given the opportunity to represent themselves with a delegate during the conference (Janković 189, 192, 200, 202).
agreement answered most of the major questions of unification, and clarified in its preamble that the Serbs and the Habsburg Yugoslavs had constituted a single nation, which had proclaimed its determination to form a common state under the rule of the Karadžordević dynasty by exercising its right of national self-determination. Besides these two fundamental principles, the document emphasized that Yugoslavia would be realized through the unification of the Habsburg Yugoslavs territories with Serbia and not by their annexation (Janković 196–197, 228; Sotirović 31). As the name ‘Yugoslavia’ was regarded a Pan-Croat ‘contrivance’ aimed against the Serbian identity and statehood, the Serbian politicians advocated for ‘the nation with three names’ formula (Mitrović, Great War 280; Sotirović 25), insisting on using the term ‘Serb, Croat, and Slovene’ in the text as the acceptable alternative. As this terminology included the ‘Serbian’ name, yet indicated that the new state would be different from the mere extension of Serbia (Zlatar 396), the wording satisfied both Pašić and Trumbić.

The State of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, who are also known by the name of Southern Slavs or Yugoslavs, will be a free and independent kingdom, with an indivisible territory and unity of power. […]

1. The name of this State will be the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and the title of the sovereign will be King of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Advocate 144).

Among the crucial questions which had almost remained undecided was the voting qualification of the Constituent Assembly. While Trumbić pressed for a ‘tribal majority’ in voting, granting each of the three tribes of the Yugoslav nation with one collective vote, the rest of the representatives opted for a numerically qualified majority to pass the future constitution. 236

12. The Constitution to be established after the conclusion of peace by the Constituent Assembly elected by universal, direct, and secret suffrage will serve as a basis for the

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236 Trumbić argued that since the Serbian representatives would outnumber Croatians and Slovenes, a qualified majority would mean that the Serbian vision could prevail, Marković, the delegate of the Serbian Progressive Party, exclaimed that if the new state to be founded against the will of one-third of the nation, then it would have been better not to form a common state. He also added a tribal majority would be a barrier to utilize national unity and would pave the way for separatist aspirations, and moreover, there was no need for such guarantees as the Yugoslavs could create their own democratic state on term own terms and wishes. Pašić agreed that tribal voting would have complicated the creation of the state, and warned that competing provincial interest would have weakened the state considerably (Janković 246–247).
life of the State. [...] The Constitution must be adopted in its entirety by a numerical majority of the Constituent Assembly, and all other laws passed by the Constituent Assembly will not come into force until they have been sanctioned by the King (Advocate 145).

Although it deprived the Constituent Assembly from the right to determine the form and the appellation of the state, and provided the sovereign with veto right, this clause had been declared in unison without any dissension (Banac, Nationality 123–124; Evans 279; Janković 244–245, 247, 252–253; Lederer 25–26; Sotirović 35).

The State of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes [...] will be a constitutional, democratic, and Parliamentary monarchy, with the Karageorgevich dynasty, which has always shared the ideals and feelings of the nation in placing above everything else the national liberty and will at its head (Advocate 144).

As the Corfu Declaration ‘internationalized’ the Southern Slav question, both Steed and Seton-Watson were satisfied with the outcome of the conference. With its clear principles and aspirations in regard to the creation of the Yugoslavs state, they deemed the agreement – especially Article Eight – would have been a clear message for both the Allies and the Habsburg Yugoslavs:

8. The territory of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes will comprise all the territory where our nation lives in compact masses and without discontinuity, and where it could not be mutilated without injuring the vital interests of the community. Our nation does not ask for anything which belongs to others, and only claims that which belongs to it. It desires to free itself and establish its unity. That is why it conscientiously and firmly rejects every partial solution of the problem of its freedom from the Austro-Hungarian domination (Advocate 145).

In the belief the declaration had managed to piece facts together stronger than the claims Italy had placed to justify the annexation of Dalmatia, they expected it would bring the British Cabinet into action concerning the revision of the Italian secret treaty. Additionally, sharing Trumbić’s conviction (Zlatar 397), they supposed the centralist Serbian vision on the

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237 Additionally, Pašić wished to include a formula that all future sovereigns would follow the Orthodox faith to prevent the accession of a pro-Habsburg king on the Yugoslav throne, should the Empire survive the war. His proposal was dismissed (Janković 247).
government system had been defeated, as the passing of the Constitution would have required a numerical majority of votes in the future Constituent Assembly (Cipek 74; Janković 228, 247). Correspondingly, in his ‘Special Memorandum on the Pact of Corfu of July 20th,’ Seton-Watson set to explain that Pašić had agreed on the creation of a federal Yugoslav state:

In view of statements made by Mr. Pašić himself […], it is interesting to learn that during the Corfu discussions the Serbian Premier and other ministers accepted as an axiom the need for considerable local authorities to meet the varying requirements of the various provinces. They deprecated any extreme form of federalism, but were quite explicit in the assurance that if for the instance Croatia or other sections of Jugo-Slavs insisted on a federal solution they would be prepared to accept this. In other words, there was to be a settlement by amicable agreement, and Serbia repudiated any idea of focusing her will upon others. All at the Conference were unanimous in the view that a strong Central Parliament was desirable (Correspondence I: 307).

Similar to the historian, the outcome of the Corfu conference strengthened Steed in his conviction that the political and national union of Southern Slavs was a viable and practical way to address the Southern Slav question (Jeszzenszky, Steed 32). In this spirit, he made such exaggerative claims that ‘the Declaration of Corfu […] stimulat[ed] a movement among the Southern Slav troops of Austria–Hungary in favour of unity and, consequently, of defection from the Hapsburgs’ (Steed, Thirty II: 169–170), nonetheless, in light of the Caporetto disaster a few months later, the validity of his assessment was questionable (Cornwall, Undermining 177–178). Irrespective of the Italian military fiasco, the journalist would persist promoting the terms and aspirations of the Corfu agreement as the rightful aspiration of the Yugoslavs, and moreover as the legal foundations of a democratic and strong future Southern Slav state. Consequently, in Steed’s reading, with the agreement the Yugoslav nation declared its desire to free itself from every foreign yoke and to constitute itself a free, national and independent State, a desire based on the principle that every nation has the right to decide its own destiny, are agreed in judging that this State should be founded on the modern and democratic principles enshrined in the Pact of Corfu (Serbian Society 22).

Besides an interview with Prime Minister Pašić in the Times in early August 1917, the journalist devoted a separate article to welcome the developments of Corfu, informing the British public that
both the Serbian Government and the delegates [of The Yugoslav Provinces of Austria-Hungary] are highly pleased with the results of their joint deliberations, which have led to a complete agreement touching the main objects held in view and the means of attaining them (Times, 30 July 1917: 5). 

In effect, Steed’s commentaries avoided to address the legitimacy of the Yugoslav Committee to represent the Habsburg Slavs, and furthermore, along with Seton-Watson, he failed to see that leaving the structure of the future state undecided would complicate the process of Yugoslav unification and recognition in the future. Albeit he introduced Trumbić and the other Yugoslav émigrés as the ‘Delegates of the South-Slav provinces of Austria–Hungary’ (Serbian Society 5) or the ‘the authorized representative of the 8.000.000 Southern Slavs of Austria–Hungary’ (Times, 11 January 1918: 5), the exiles had not been authorized by the Habsburg Yugoslavs to conduct an agreement with the Serbian Cabinet. Bargaining its loyalty, the Yugoslav Club restrained from making any statements on the Corfu Declaration, but persisted requesting Trialism, and for the time being even pondered with the idea of joining Ernst Ritter Seidler’s Cabinet (Janković 399–400).

Overall, Seton-Watson and Steed show-cased the Corfu agreement as the legal framework of a democratic and strong future Yugoslavia, and moreover as a proof of complete unanimity and understanding among the Yugoslavs parties. Albeit, the Corfu Declaration was a compromise made between Pašić and Trumbić under the pressure of many circumstances, it did not eliminate the federalist-centralist dispute between the respective parties, but solely postponed the final decision for the future (Janković 256–257; Lederer 25–26). While the Yugoslavs exiles treated the declaration as an official agreement framing the constitutional foundations of the future state, the Serbian Cabinet regarded the documents as a mere declaration on Yugoslav solidarity by expressing the principles of cooperation.

238 In an interview given for the Times, Pašić conformed to the nationality principle, and covertly revealed his concern for the Italian aspiration in Albania, which had been the major reason for the convocation of the Conference (Sotirović 35): ‘The agreement recently concluded at Corfu […] also intended […] to form a basis for a thoroughly cordial agreement with Italy. […] We feel that only a frank and just agreement with the generous Italian people can our joint interests and aims and our common security be safeguarded. […] The principles on which we are determined to found the new united Serb, Croat, and Slovene State are the same principles on which the greatness of Italy has been built up’ (qtd. Times, 3 August 1917: 5).

239 Ante Trumbić argued that unity of the nation, did not translate into the unity of the state, he envisioned a federal framework for the new state in which centralism could be realized on sub-state level (Janković 232). Not all members of the Yugoslav Committee shared Trumbić’s vision concerning a federal state. Hinko Hinković, ‘representing’ Croatia–Slavonia, argued for a centralized state as he wished to eliminate provincial competition for power. He also believed that the creation a new state would require the sacrifice of old forms of political arrangements from all sides. Bogumil Vošnjak, ‘representing’ the Slovenes, also championed central, but a democratized state, and argued that a modern new state erected on democratic principles would eliminate the need for federal autonomy (Janković 236–239).
Subsequently, proclaiming that the Habsburg Yugoslavs would unite with Serbia under the Serbian Crown, the Corfu Declaration was Pašić’s answer for the May Declaration and any other concepts which envisioned that the Habsburg Slavs could have remained in the Habsburg Empire. As Pašić had officially never acknowledged the Yugoslav Committee as the representatives of the Habsburg Yugoslavs or as the equal partner of the Serbian Cabinet, therefore, in his reading, the declaration was by no means a legal agreement which bound Serbia to share the leadership in the creation of Yugoslavia (Bataković 247–248; Lederer 5; Sotirović 29).

In reality, the Corfu agreement was the only lasting achievement of the Yugoslav Committee, whose members had become more divided on political visions than ever before by 1917 due to the surfacing regional and ethnic differences (Janković 131). Residing in different cities of Europe and the United States, the members pursued to act independently, and as a result, the Committee became inactive in Great Britain, which Seton-Watson protested to Milenko Vesnić, the Serbian Minister in Paris in January 1917:

Absence of visibility increases the risk of the situation going by default, and though our friend Supilo is doing very valuable work as a freelance, that is after all not quite enough […]. It is very necessary that there should be always some member of the Committee ready and available (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 193).

The President of the political organization, Ante Trumbić had already received criticism in the early days of the Yugoslav Committee, as in the vital month of April 1915, in lieu of rushing to London to propagate the Yugoslav cause before a convention with Italy could have been concluded, first he had visited Niš via Athens, then had returned to Rome in late April. Due to his late arrival to London in May, the Yugoslav Committee released its manifesto only after the conclusion of the treaty, which both Seton, Steed and Supilo regarded as a serious mistake

240 Hinko Hinković, as the eldest member of the committee, passing the age of 60, was unsatisfied with his position compared to his age and experience. Meanwhile, he was perceived as impractical bureaucrat who had believed in hierarchical, centralized approach in operating the Committee. In 1916, he moved to Paris to spent his senior years there, but was mobilized as a delegate to represent Croatia–Slavonia at the Corfu conference (Janković 134–135, 186, 202). Bogumil Vošnjak, a Slovene member, spent 1915 in the United States, dealing with pro-Yugoslav propaganda, fundraising and conscripting volunteers for a Yugoslav army. In 1916, he became an emissary of the Committee in Petrograd, serving until January 1917. The three Bosnian Serb members, Dušan Vasiljević, Nikola Stojanović, Milan Šrškić, were puzzled about their loyalty when the relations between the Committee and the Serbian Government aggravated (ibid. 133–134).

241 Not only did Dalmatian Croats outnumber others, but, indeed, they proved to be the most active members of the organization. As Valjević, one of the Bosnian Serb members of the Committee complained to Jovanović, the Serbian Minister in London in February 1917: ‘The Dalmatians have their men in Paris, London, Geneva, and they gradually overtake all initiations’ (‘Dalmatinci imaju […] čovjeka u Parizu, Londonu, Ženevi i da polako preuzmu sve poslove,’ qtd. Janković 131–132).
(Milutinović, *Dalmacija* 16–17). Although Trumbić spent the months from 1916 to 1917 in the French Rivera the developments of 1917 – the Russian Revolutions in February and the Corfu agreement – eventually strengthened his position as the central actor of the Committee (Janković 137; Seton-Watson, *Making* 193).

However, overall the Yugoslav Committee could neither attract the Habsburg Yugoslavs nor the Allied governments, and indeed, it had no legal status or mandate to act on behalf of the Yugoslavs of the Dual Monarchy for which the May Declaration had been an apparent proof (Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 99). Besides the Habsburg Yugoslavs, the British Cabinet had been also reserved to comment on the Corfu Declaration until late 1917, when upon answering a parliamentary interpellation regarding the British Cabinet’s war aims, Robert Cecil explained that the Cabinet had observed the inter-Yugoslav agreement with ‘interest and sympathy’ (qtd. Janković 381), nevertheless he evaded to mention the case of the Yugoslav unification (Janković 379; Seton-Watson, *Making* 223). As the Yugoslav expatriates’ ineffectiveness was gradually revealed (Steed, *Thirty II*: 165), the British pro-Yugoslavs grew convinced that they had to take the initiation in lieu of the organization. Such an idea had been already contemplated by Seton-Watson in 1915, as attested by the letter sent to Ronald Burrows, the Principal of King’s College on 8 September:

> When you return, I shall have a parallel scheme to show you, for the creation of a British-Slavonic League – my idea being that it will cover the political field, your School of Slavonic Studies the academic, and a possible monthly review the literary – all absolutely distinct, yet working in sympathy with each other (*Correspondence I*: 235).

In the following year, all these plans of Seton-Watson would be realized with the creation of the School of Slavonic Studies, the Serbian Society of Great Britain, and the *New Europe* weekly. Succeeding the propaganda efforts of the Yugoslav exiles, these new initiations would overtly pursue to damage the image of the Habsburg Empire and to challenge the terms of the Pact of London until the conclusion of the Great War.

### 4.2. Parallel Schemes

The Yugoslav Committee did not fulfil the expectations of Seton-Watson and Steed, as the Yugoslav émigrés had not been able to persuade the Allied governments to accept the
programme of Yugoslav unification even by 1916. For this reason, Seton and Steed decided to utilize the unprecedented popularity of Serbia to force the Allied leaders to include the creation of a unified Yugoslav state among their war aims, as ‘the admirable speeches of [the] leaders w[ould] fade in memory unless they [were] translated into action’ (New Europe, no 44, 16 August 1917: 142). In the belief that British intellectuals could exercise more influence on the British political circles than the Yugoslav exiles, the duo decided to mobilize once again the British Serbophiles to establish their own pressure group (Steed, Thirty II: 129) with the intention to convince the Allies into the official commitment to the nationality principle.

In liaison, several preliminary talks were held between 10–21 July 1916 at Seton’s study in the Buckingham Street – in the presence of Dr. Elsie Inglis, Annan Bryce, A. J. Whyte, Steed, Seton, Lady Paget, Arthur Evans, Burrows, Dr. Berry – for the purpose of constituting an Anglo-Serbian society. During these summer meetings, they conceived the goals and method of operation, framed the constitution, created and filled positions by voting. It was decided that the group would bear the name the Serbian Society of Great Britain (SSGB), and would only accept British nationals among its members (SWP SEW/S/3/2). According to the Serbian Society’s constitution, the organization consisted of a President, a Vice-President, Members of Council, Executive Committee, Chairman of the Executive, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and ordinary members. The Executive Committee was established with twenty members, including Seton-Watson, Steed, Evans, Burrows, nine Members of the Parliament, and several key figures already involved in the pro-Yugoslav endeavours either through the Kossovo Day Committee or the Serbian Relief Fund (Seton-Watson, Making 184). Additionally, four subcommittees were formed to deal with the different aspects of work such as disseminating literature and propaganda, maintaining relations with the Parliament or with other pressure groups championing the cause of a small nation (Hanak, World War 192).

Upon the request of Henry Wickham Steed, Lord Evelyn Cromer, the former British consul in Egypt, accepted the position of the President. Cromer was a well-known and well-respected public figure in Great Britain, thus the British pro-Yugoslavs believed that his presidency could have enhanced the Society’s credibility by making its arguments seem more viable (Hanak, World War 194). In effect, Seton-Watson had already been in correspondence with Cromer since September 1915, when he had sent the former consul a copy of his pamphlet Britain, Italy and the Adriatic. Eventually, they had found a common voice in the follow-up correspondence and luncheons, especially as Cromer had shared Seton’s distaste towards Asquith and Grey, the ‘amateur politicians’ who had decided over foreign policy.
without taking the difficulties of practical application and short-term consequences into consideration (*Correspondence I*: 236). Furthermore, Cromer had been also known for rejecting the exaggerative Italian claims, which he overtly expressed to Seton in one of his letters:

I think I may say that I was one of the very few politicians in this country who did not regard the entry of Italy into the present contest with unmixed enthusiasm. […] on purely military grounds I was very glad that Italians should join the Allies. But, I presume that we all want to see a durable peace concluded at the end of this terrible war. Now, unless the Italians display great wisdom and moderation, they will […] lay the seeds of much future trouble (ibid. 236).

Cromer's positive response to the Serbian Society’s request, indeed, confirmed that the Serbian Relief Fund’s propaganda efforts and the ‘Kossovo Day’ celebration had been fruitful (Hanak, *World War* 195; Steed, *Thirty II*: 169), as his acceptance attested that the pro-Serbian sentiments paved their way to British high society (Markovich, *Identities* 130).

As proclaimed in its official goals consisting of seven points, the Serbian Society pursued to deepen the relationship between Great Britain and the Yugoslavs with the intention to make the British officials realize that a unified and independent Southern Slav state was the key to a lasting European peace (*Correspondence I*: 310). Moreover, the group was determined to foster a working compromise among the Yugoslavs, the Italians and the Romanians (*Times*, 28 September 1916: 7):

1. To promote close relations with Serbia and with the Southern Slave race as a whole.
2. To make clear the importance of a united Southern Slav State as a permanent safeguard of European freedom.
3. To work for a friendly agreement between the Southern Slavs, Italy, and Roumania.
4. To work for Southern Slave Union:
   (a) As an essential feature of the Allied policy of securing the rights and liberties of small peoples;
   (b) as a guarantee against future Germanic attempts to obtain political and economic mastery in Europe and the East; and
   (c) as the surest foundation of peace in the Adriatic and the Balkans.
To co-operate with all kindred societies within and without the British Commonwealth (Serbian Society 1).

The programme perceived Serbia and Belgium pivotal to the European peace, claiming that without them the political and economic balance of Europe could not be maintained (Times, 28 September 1916: 7). For that matter, the Serbian Society emphasized that if war-time Serbia with its four million citizens had withheld the offensive of the Habsburg Empire for a whole year, then a unified Yugoslav state with its overall twelve million citizens would have been an even more decisive impediment to German expansion, as this barrier would have been ‘cemented by ties of geographical continuity of race and of language’ (ibid.):

The Germans aimed at nothing less than World Domination, and especially a huge empire to reach the Persian Gulf to the Baltic. […] As regards to the future, we think that one of the best guarantees that the monstrous pretensions of the Germans will not in time be revived is to establish a solid block composed of people on non-Teutonic race, who will act as a formidable and insuperable barrier to Teutonic aggression in the future. The Southern Slavs are well adapted to form this barrier. […] The main object of the Serbian Society, then, is to encourage the creation of a Southern Slav State (qtd. New Europe, 26 October 1916: 37).

However, since Austria–Hungary had shown no willingness to solve the Southern Slav Question before, the outbreak of the war placed this burden on the Allied Powers (ibid. 34–35). Correspondingly, the group promoted the redrawing of European frontiers, and encouraged the Allied Powers to adjust to the ‘political realities’ by adapting the objectives of the Serbian Society.

The inaugural meeting of the Serbian Society was held on 20 October 1916 under the chairmanship of Lord Mayor Charles Wakefield, and in the presence of twenty-nine invitees, including Robert William Seton-Watson, Henry Wickham Steed, Arthur Evans, Evelyn Cromer, Edward Carson, and Jovan Jovanović, the new Serbian Minister in London (Serbian Society 5). Besides reverberating the well-established pro-Yugoslav propaganda clichés in his opening speech – praising the Serbian people’s devotion and self-sacrifice for the common Allied cause –, the Lord Mayor introduced the new dimensions of the pro-Yugoslav lobby. His speech marked the beginning of the Serbian Society’s quest for bridging the gulf between Italy and the Yugoslavs with the covert intention to revise the concessions of the Treaty of London along ethnic lines. Despite being overtly devoted supporters of the Yugoslav unity,
the members of the Serbian Society wished to evade conflict with Italy. Therefore, they proclaimed their efforts to be ‘primarily educational’ narrowed down to collecting and presenting facts for the public (New Europe, 26 October 1916: 35). In liaison, Cromer, the second speaker, specifically denied that the Society would have held any degree of hostility towards Italy, and maintained that the Italian and Yugoslav aspirations could have been realized only on common grounds (Serbian Society 6), as

it was the in the interest of the whole of Europe to create a solid block on non-Teutonic people as a formidable barrier to Teutonic aggression in future. The Southern Slavs were adapted to form that barrier. Italy, perhaps more than any country in Europe, was interested in its formation (ibid.).

Consequently, the pressure group wished to win over the political realm of the Allies for the Yugoslav cause by convincing them of the crucial importance a future unified Yugoslav state would play in post-war Europe, and looked for the British Cabinet to stimulate the revision of the Pact of London. In light of these aspirations, the members of the Serbian Society passed a resolution concerning Italian-Yugoslav rapprochement in the course of the inaugural meeting:

This Meeting declares its firm belief that the union of the Southern Slav race and a close agreement between the Southern Slav race and Italy are essential to the future peace of Europe, and are therefore pre-eminent interest of the peoples of the British Commonwealth (ibid. 2–3).

As a member of the Asquith coalition cabinet, the third speaker, Edward Carson conformed to the significance of Southern Slav unity, claiming that a buffer state ‘between Germany and the East’ of whose best manifestation ‘would be a great united Southern Slav State’ was necessary to achieve a real, lasting and fruitful peace. As ‘the real German Ambition lay towards the East,’ the restoration of Serbia alone would not be sufficient enough, since the British interests desired the creation of a strong and compact Yugoslav state as ‘an additional security [for Britain’s] Eastern possessions’ (ibid. 7). Additionally, Carson took the opportunity to pinpoint Edward Grey’s failure for attracting Bulgaria and protecting Serbia a year before, exclaiming that ‘there never had been anything pathetic than the Serbian nation waiting for the British Army which never came’ (ibid. 6–7). His lines foreshadowed
the cabinet crisis of late 1916 orchestrated by David Lloyd George, who grew gradually frustrated that indecisiveness prevailed over the War Cabinet and senior officials. Following its inauguration, the Serbian Society of Great Britain embarked in exercising educational influence by publishing annual reports, leaflets, explanatory memorandums and regular circulars, which had cca. two hundred and fifty subscribers. Press advertisements, publications, public meetings, leasing and furnishing of an office in Queen Anne’s Chambers in Westminster were financed through donations, appeals, membership and subscription fees (Serbian Society 5; Steed, Thirty II: 169). After the first twelve months, the pressure group’s Council accounted sixty-six members, including eighteen Members of the Parliament who publicly associated with the objectives of the organization. After the passing of Lord Cromer in January 1917 – who had been ill when he had accepted the position of the president –, Steed became the Acting Chairman of the pressure group (Serbian Society i, 5; Steed, Thirty II: 169; SWP SEW/S/3/2).

In unison with their goals, the Serbian Society devoted a pamphlet entitled ‘Why should there be a “Serbian Society of Great Britain”?’ to explain the correlation between the Yugoslav union and British interests by asking a number of guided questions. Consequently, the answers led the reader to the conclusions which represented the opinion of the British pro-Yugoslav circles. The titles of the key points such as the ‘Vital nature of Southern Slav problem,’ ‘A direct British interest,’ ‘Key countries,’ ‘Serbia as an obstacle to Pan-German designs,’ Southern Slav unity an Allied interest,’ ‘Serbia and the land route to the East,’ ‘Reconstruction of Europe’ were not only telling, but they attested that the document was a well-constructed pro-Yugoslav and anti-Habsburg propaganda material (SWP SEW/S/3/2). Overall, the claims made in the pamphlet were similar to the ones presented by the Southern Slav Bulletin, with the underlining difference that then these points were championed by a pressure group consisting of distinguished British intellectuals and professionals, and not by a group of merely known Yugoslav expatriates.

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242 In 1916, he found allies among Conservatives like Bonar Law and Edward Carson which fostered the resignation of Asquith, and led to an eventual split in the Liberal Party before the 1918 elections (Powell 48).
243 Members included Burrows, Dr. Berry, A. W. A. Leeper as well. Burrows was also the member of the Anglo-Hellenic Society as a Deputy Chairman. The Executive Committee constituted of eighteen members, including Dr. Elsie Inglis, Mrs. Carrington Wilde, Dr. James Berry, Sir Arthur Evans, Reverend H. J. Fynes-Clinton, and seven Members of the Parliament, the likes of Johan Annan Bryce, a member of the Balkan Committee and the Honorary Treasurer of the Society, Major David Davies, Hedworth Meux, the Admiral of the Fleet, A. F. Whyte, and E. Hilton Young, the former editor of the Morning Post (SWP SEW/S/3/2).
244 In 1919 Arthur Evans became the Acting Chairman, as Steed left for Paris to follow the developments of the peace conference (SWP SEW/S/3/2).
In effect, the British pro-Yugoslav circles did not limit their campaign to the Southern Slavs (Steed, *Thirty II*: 125–126), as concurrently with the Serbian Society of Great Britain, the *New Europe* political magazine was founded to propagate the dismemberment of the ‘a-national, artificial [Habsburg] Empire into the national units of which it [was] composed’ (*New Europe*, no 21, 8 March 1917: 233). The idea of a political paper dedicated exclusively to Eastern European affairs had not been entirely new-born, as in the spring of 1914, Seton had been planning to release the first issue of his *European Review* in the upcoming November. For that matter, the historian had made several travels in the course of May–June 1914 to find financial supporters and contributors in Central Europe for the quarterly devoted to study the political, economic and cultural aspects of the nationality question in the region (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 27–28; *Documents I*: 192, 195–196; Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 35). Nonetheless, the July Crisis and the outbreak of the war postponed his enterprise, as the urgent case of organizing and administering Serbian relief along with the promotion of the Yugoslav Committee took Seton’s time. However, with the fall of Serbia, the idea of the review re-emerged, partially owing to the determination of Tomás Masaryk, who reminded Seton that

I once told you that [we] should have a critical weekly: I think that something of the kind is absolutely necessary to lead the public opinion and above all to lead the Government and Staff. […] What I would wish would be the embodiment of English conscience and political and strategic thinking (Seton-Watson, *Masaryk* 76).

From May 1916, the Bohemian exile urged the historian to establish the weekly as soon as possible to criticize, influence and pressure the British political and military leaders, since he perceived that ‘the Government and the General Staff (and the Navy) have no plan at all’ regarding the continuation of the war. ‘[…] I don’t see any other plan than to gather a group of thinking men and speak publicly: the Press is unable, they only criticise *ex post facto*, negatively’ (ibid. 84–85).

Sharing Masaryk’s reservations concerning the limitations of daily papers, both Steed and Seton-Watson arrived at the same conclusion that it had been an necessity to create their own medium. First of all, it would have been more suitable to disseminate their visions regarding the reconstruction of European frontiers, and secondly, it would ‘help towards the formation of a sane and well-informed body of public opinion’ (*New Europe*, no 1, 19 October 1916: 1). In reality, the source of their discontent towards dailies originated from the
fact that editors had not been prone to publish all their pieces unconditionally. Even though Steed had been promoted to the Foreign Editor of the *Times*, his colleagues – before and during the war – remained critical of his claims concerning the need for a European reorganization, and were oftentimes reluctant to accept this position as the sole guarantees of peace and stability in Europe (Jeszenszky, *Presztízs* 69–70).\(^{245}\) Failing to find financial supporters in the publishing world, Seton-Watson was forced to rely on his inheritance to cover almost the entire cost of the media enterprise to be called the *New Europe* (Seton-Watson, *Making* 178–179; Steed, *Tributes* 336).

With the initial encouragement and financial assistance of Masaryk – who had transferred Seton £2000 from the donations of the American Bohemian diaspora (Seton-Watson, *Making* 178–179) – the first issue of the *New Europe* was published on 19 October 1916 in thirty-two pages, and circulated in five thousand copies (Jeszenszky, *Presztízs* 301). The very first editorial, entitled ‘The New Europe,’ revealed the founders’ intention to ‘unmask the great designs of German war policy.’\(^{246}\) In the article, Seton-Watson explained that their group believed it had been a necessity to create a common platform for the journalists of Allied countries to assist the Allied governments with their visions on the war whose aim could not be anything less than an integral victory (*New Europe*, no 1, 19 October 1916: 1). Besides Seton-Watson and Steed, the official co-founders of the *New Europe* were Ronald Burrows and Alexander Whyte, a Member of the Parliament.

Irrespective of the overlap between the contributors of the *New Europe* and the members of the Serbian Society of Great Britain, the former was not established to be the mouthpiece of the later: while the Serbian Society devoted its efforts to promote an agreement between the Yugoslavs and Italy, and to persuade the British Cabinet to review the policy of secret treaties, the *New Europe* group – as their cover motto ‘Pour la Victoire Intégrale’ implied it – committed themselves to a greater cause of convincing the Allied Powers to dismember the Habsburg Empire without any compromises and half-measures (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 26; Seton-Watson, *Making* 178–179). In liaison, the *New Europe* group

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\(^{245}\) Indeed, the idea of a separate paper devoted to foreign policy had been first pinched for the editors of the *Times*, nonetheless, all attempts of Steed were made in veins (Steed, *Thirty II*: 124).

\(^{246}\) Seton-Watson recalled the foundation and aims of the weekly in the following way: ‘[...] the small group to which I belonged realised with growing alarm the désorientation of public opinion and even the press on [Pan-German plan] that in the autumn of 1916 I decided to found a weekly review, which under the name *The New Europe* should champion the cause of “Integral Victory” [...] As confirmed Slavophiles [...], while avoiding party politics, we advocated diplomatic, consular, and Foreign Office reform, demanded the establishment of parliamentary control over foreign policy, and urged the invalidity of secret engagements or treaties concluded behind the back of Parliament. [...] we held that as the horse must precede the cart, so is satisfied nationalism the first essential preliminary to a new international order’ (Seton-Watson, *Melting* xi).
would aspire to influence and utilize public opinion to convince the Allied governments to accept their views on the reorganization of Europe (Hanak, *World War* 179–180). It was a well-edited and well-written paper, which skilfully capitalized on patriotic tones (Jeszenszky, *Steed* 31) when responding to the miscellaneous political and military developments of the war corresponding with their proclaimed programme. Unsurprisingly, coinciding with the Serbian Society’s argument, the weekly openly championed an Eastern solution for the war, and explicitly supported the concentration of Allied forces in Salonika (Hanak, *World War* 183).

The weekly operated on a voluntary basis, and – with the exception of a sub-editor – neither did it possess a staff nor any regular contributors (*Documents I*: 268). Overall, the majority of the articles were written by Seton Watson, with the other co-founders taking their respective share in publishing as well (Seton-Watson, *Making* 178–179). Steed had been among the earliest contributors of the paper (Steed, *Tributes* 336), but after becoming the Acting Chairman of the Serbian Society in January 1917, presumably, it was better to distinguish him from the *New Europe*, by establishing his separate voice outside the paper. Although, his articles would be absent from the paper, his ideas were apparently present in Seton’s pieces.

In effect, the major argument of the *New Europe* embraced Steed’s obsession with the Pan-German Plan, claiming that the German aspiration for world dominance could only be prevented by the absolute defeat of Berlin through the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire and the liberation of the oppressed nationalities (Hanak, *World War* 181; Steed, *Thirty II*: 125–126). Consequently, the foundations of the *New Europe*’s propaganda efforts rested on the ‘German-card;’ the Pan-German threat, the German plans for world domination, the Berlin-Bagdad railway and the Mitteleuropa plan were all recurring and persistently overemphasized themes in the articles. To convince or to neutralize the British conservative circles and the proponents of traditional diplomacy, the *New Europe* group portrayed the Habsburg Empire as incapable of renewal and the puppet of Kaiser Wilhelm II. Subsequently, a lasting peace in Europe could only be attained by breaking Austria–Hungary up (Jeszenszky, *Presztízs* 301; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 26).

Besides occasionally reporting on the Serbian Society’s proceedings, the *New Europe* weekly assisted the efforts of the pressure group by commenting the inter-Yugoslav relations and challenging the Pact of London. In effect, the question of the convention was another recurring topic for which the weekly devoted not only articles, but persisted publishing memoranda, declarations and speeches made in connection with the secret agreement. After
the Russian Bolshevik Cabinet had released all secret treaties, the issues of Italian-Yugoslav frontier could have been addresses directly. Correspondingly, the *New Europe* published the full text of the treaty to win over public support, and maintained that the agreement had triggered considerable anti-Italian sentiments among the Habsburg Yugoslavs as an Allied victory would have meant a mere change of sovereigns from their point of view (*New Europe*, no 66, 17 January 1918: 24–27). Overall, the revision of terms concerning Dalmatia would remain an aim of the weekly until its last issues published in late 1920, nonetheless the burdens of fostering Italian-Yugoslav rapprochement were placed on the Serbian Society.

Despite their firm rejections that the organization operated against the Italian interests, the Serbian Society had become the target of Italian and pro-Italian British press attacks ever since its inauguration (*New Europe*, 26 October 1916: 42; Seton-Watson, *Making* 181–182). Being aware that the misinformation and intrigues of the jingoist Italian press deliberately tried to discredit the Yugoslav movement by sowing ‘distrust between Croatia and Serbia’ (Seton-Watson, *Italy* 54–55), the organization undertook ‘the work of enlightenment and persuasion’ to convince the Italians that their interest could have been only secured through the unification of Yugoslav territories (*Cover Letter 1*). Irrespective of their efforts to arbitrate between the Italy and the Yugoslavs, the Italian political leaders would show a cold shoulder and remain hostile towards the Serbian Society (*New Europe*, 26 October 1916: 42). In effect, following the official inauguration, Edward Grey wrote a letter to Evelyn Cromer, asking him in the name of the Italian Minister in London to resign from his position held in the Serbian Society. In his reply, the former consul politely declined (SWP SEW/S/3/2), and would take every public opportunity in the future to reject the accusations that the Serbian Society had been governed by anti-Italian sentiments:

> I have heard it recently whispered that the Serbian Society is animated by some blatant hostility towards Italy and Italians. [...] I want, on the behalf of the Serbian Society, to give the most positive and emphatic denial to the idea we are animated in any degree by hostility towards Italy and Italians. The statement is absolutely false (qtd. *New Europe*, 26 October 1916: 37).

Although Cromer admitted that pertaining to the future of the Adriatic there had been diverging opinion between the Southern Slavs and Italy, he kept emphasizing that the interest

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247 The fact that Serbia had not been consulted on the Pact of London would evolve into one of the major arguments utilized in the propaganda endeavours of the British pro-Yugoslav circles to invalidate or nullify the agreement.
of Italians and Yugoslavs had been mutual in nature, as a future Yugoslav barrier would have protected Italy from German aggression likewise (Times, 4 October 1916: 6).

In this spirit, the Executive Committee addressed Sidney Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Secretary in a letter on 3 August 1917 during the Inter-Allied Conference in London to assure Italy of the Serbian Society’s ‘equal goodwill both to the Italian and Serbian cause’ (Serbian Society 4). Additionally, the group took the opportunity to deny the the Italian papers’ accusation that ‘the Serbian Society of Great Britain [had been] in some way animated by active or latent hostility towards the national aspirations of Italy and towards the completion of her unity’ (ibid. 10). Written in a friendly tone, the letter overemphasized the significance and cultural values of Italy – a country which had ‘entered the war in the name of her traditional Liberal principles’ – and appealed to Sonnino, asking the Foreign Secretary to utilize his influence to promote ‘a fair and cordial agreement between Italy, Serbia, and the Southern Slavs’ (ibid. 11). Yet again, the letter surpassed to address the Treaty of London, the major source of disagreement, and conformed to the Society’s strategy attempting to neutralize Rome through eloquent statements on the almost non-existent Italian-Yugoslav common interests, while doing the outmost to convince the British Cabinet behind the back of Italy to revise the terms of the Pact of London:

Close study experience of the Southern Slav question in all its aspects, and some knowledge of the Adriatic problem as a whole, have convinced us that not only is there no necessary or inevitable conflict between the aspirations of the Southern Slav peoples towards complete unity, and the postulates of Italian national security and the completion of Italian unity, but that, on the contrary, there exist strong grounds for Italo-Southern Slav co-operation and friendship (ibid.).

Irrespective of the Society’s endeavours to avoid conflict with Italy, the multiplication of anti-Serbian press attacks made confrontation with the British pro-Italians and the representatives of Italy in Great Britain inevitable. An early example of solid clashes was the Italian Flag-Day organized under the British-Italian Society in December 1916. As the posters

248 In their letter addressing Lloyd George concerning the Balkan withdrawal, the Society also emphasized that the conventions with Italy and Romania had infringed the principle of nationality and therefore were harmful to the Yugoslav cause: ‘The Society is in complete sympathy with the desire of our Italian and Roumanian Allies to recover from Austria-Hungary, unredeemed regions inhabited by majorities of their own race. It is also convinced that a close and just agreement between Italy, Serbia and the Southern Slavs generally in regard to the Adriatic would be to the interest of all parties. Therefore the Society urges the British Government to promote this Agreement’ (Serbian Society 9–10).
and flags prepared for the event displayed the coat of arms of Dalmatia among the Italian symbols, the Serbian Society contacted the rival pressure group to aid this ‘inimical act,’ reminding the organization that Italian claims on Dalmatia had infringed the nationality principle as the population of the crown province had been overwhelmingly Southern Slav in nature. Additionally, the Serbian Society stressed that they had intended to promote an Italian-Yugoslav agreement, wished a successful flag-day, and hoped that their letter would have not been interpreted as hostile in any ways towards Italy (SWP SEW/S/3/2). Conversely to the Serbian Society’s claims, Italy had no interest in renouncing any territorial concessions promised by the Pact of London, and in effect, the pro-Yugoslav pressure group posed a threat to Rome’s aspiration by pursuing to persuade the British leaders into amending the provisions of the secret convention. Moreover, besides a common enemy, the mutual interests of the Italy and the Yugoslavs were virtually non-existent. Unsurprisingly, the Italian irredentist press would oppose any agreements with the Yugoslav, and would keep claiming Dalmatia and Albania for Italy (Milutinović, Rimski Kongres 695–695).

Nevertheless, the formation of the Lloyd George Cabinet in late 1916 gave confidence to the British pro-Yugoslavs that the deadlock concerning the Adriatic could be superseded by a joint Italian-Yugoslav agreement under the stimulus of Great Britain. In effect, a new course of policy began with the appointment of the press magnates to supervise government propaganda. The new British government would operate through broad political alliances, characterized by the proliferation of honours and governments post received by press moguls. Lavishing the press lords with titles and positions served to neutralize them by occupying them with government policy (Marquis 478–479). In liaison, the Department of Information operating under the Foreign Office was formed by Colonel John Buchan in January 1917, with an advisory committee attached to it, composing of the press lords and the editors of the most influential papers of Great Britain such as Lord Northcliffe, Lord Beaverbrook, the owner of the Daily Express, Lord Burham, the proprietor of the Daily Telegraph, and Robert Donald, the Editor of the Daily Chronicle (Marquis 473, 476; Lloyd George, Lloyd George 134). Besides this change of approach, Prime Minister Lloyd George also encouraged the ministries to go beyond the diplomatic services and utilize outside experts and academics for the war effort. As a consequence, a number of professionals coming from the sphere of academics would emerge as influential government experts by the end of the Great War (Evans 116–117), among whom Robert William Seton-Watson and his vision on European

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249 The decision concerning the creation of the department was made December 1916 (Marquis 473).
reconstruction would have a considerable impact on the territorial arrangements of the peace treaties.

In effect, this new channel of influence became available for Seton-Watson in 1917. In March, first he was mobilized for military duty to Blackpool as a private of the Royal Army Medical Corps.\(^{250}\) However, owing to the endeavours of two Cabinet members, Bonar Law and Colonel John Buchan – who had been involved either in the Serbian Relief Fund or the Serbian Society of Great Britain – a month later the War Council decided to capitalize his expert knowledge in intelligence (Seton-Watson, *Making* 199, 205; Steed, *Tributes* 336).\(^{251}\) As a result, Seton-Watson was seconded to political duty in the Department of Information under the Intelligence Bureau, and was entrusted with the task of reporting on the proceedings of Central and Eastern Europe between May 1917 and March 1918. During his employment, the historian was not permitted to edit the *New Europe*, nonetheless, he was allowed to publish for the weekly (Hay 62; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 27).\(^{252}\)

The Department of Information was created to keep the Foreign Office and the War Council updated on the developments and situation in Central Europe and the Balkans. Correspondingly, the employees’ duty was to summarize incoming intelligence and military information classified neither as confidential nor secret. Most of these officials observed the future of Europe from an ideological and not from a practical point of view, and favoured the reorganization of European frontiers along ethnic lines (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 34; Evans 118). Regardless that the department had no power to influence decisions, Seton-Watson and his close colleagues – notably Harold Nicolson and Lewis Namier\(^{253}\) – perceived themselves as advisors, and were enthusiastic to produce recommendations and memoranda to assist policy-making until – much to their frustration – they were instructed by the Foreign Office to limit their work to reporting without adding any pieces of advice (Hay 62).\(^{254}\)

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\(^{250}\) His first calling-up notice in November 1916 had been cancelled (Seton-Watson, *Making* 204).

\(^{251}\) Almost four decades later, Steed recalled these events in the following way: ‘Seton was first mobilized as a private in the R.A.M.C., and sent to scrub hospital floors by rancorous idiots in the War Office and elsewhere who hoped thus to gag one of the few men who really knew Germany and Europe. […] It took two decisions of the War Cabinet to get him out of khaki and exempted from floor-scrubbing, though even then he was forbidden to write, and was seconded for political duty in the Foreign Office Department of Political Information’ (Steed, *Tributes* 336).

\(^{252}\) Since the spring of 1917, Alexander Whyte assumed the task of editing the *New Europe* until early 1919, when Seton-Watson and Ronald Burrows succeeded him (Nicolson 33; Steed, *Tributes* 336).

\(^{253}\) Lewis Namier was born in Russian Poland, but his family moved to Austrian Poland. He was awarded a degree in Modern History and became the champion of a united and independent Poland. Since the spring of 1917, he worked in one of the Intelligence Bureau. He married in 1917, and Allen Leeper, a close colleague was one of the witnesses (Namier xv 132).

\(^{254}\) Seton-Watson per se produced overall 27 reports and a few memoranda during his employment (Hay 62; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 27).
Altogether Seton-Watson and the other anti-Habsburg officials were unsuccessful in monopolizing the source of information for the ministry, and in effect, their amount of influence on decision-making had remained negligible until the last year of the Great War. Besides the diplomatic channels, their views were challenged by the British press, especially by the *Nation* and the *Manchester Guardian* which favoured the federalization of the Habsburg Empire into autonomous sub-regions in lieu of its dismemberment. Conclusively, Seton-Watson’s efforts to convert official foreign policy to his views pertaining to the future of Europe was in vain, as the senior officials had dismissed the nationality principle until there were more suitable means available to meet the primary interest of Great Britain (Hanak, *World War* 243–245; Hay 62; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 27).

Nonetheless, in the meantime, the *New Europe* managed to win over the support of an increasing portion of the general public (Jeszenszky, *Presztízs* 301). In liaison, the range of contributors extended to include the Members of the Parliament, government officials, eminent British intellectuals and the émigré leaders of the nationalities likewise.

Though we were few, we knew what we wanted, we had a definite programme for the reconstruction of Europe, we were well-informed and were ready to take risks. [...] We met every Saturday at my house, and elsewhere during the week. My room at The Times office became a point of pilgrimage for ‘alien friends’ in London. On entering it my colleagues would sometimes look under the table to see if no ‘Czechoslavs’ or ‘Yugoslovaks’ were hidden there. [...] We also maintained close relations with friends in Paris and in Italy who were working for the same objects as ourselves; and we did our utmost, little by little, to educate unprejudiced public men and Foreign Office officials to a sense of the true meaning of the Austrian question, Steed recalled the rising popularity of the *New Europe* in his memoir (Steed, *Thirty II*: 130–131). Being the only contemporary newspaper enterprise which dealt exclusively with foreign policy and Eastern Europe, the weekly became widely read in the other Allied countries as well (Hanak, *World War* 176, 188). As many younger officials aligned themselves with the weekly’s political programme (Arday, *British Plan* 464),255 approaching the end of the war, the *New Europe* would exercise a significant influence on policy-making in the Foreign

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255 One of them, Harold Nicolson avenged to become a member of the British Peace Delegation. Among the senior high officials, George Clerk seemed to be sympathetic towards the idea of the weekly, nonetheless, recognised the impossibility of the programme due to lack of support. Robert Cecil, and Arthur Balfour, the later becoming the Foreign Minister were less sympathetic to the programme (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 26).
Office (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 26). Nonetheless, the *New Europe* group did not have an immediate impact on the directions of British foreign policy.

As Emperor Charles championed the modernization of the Hapsburg Empire, and would prove willing to negotiate a separate peace, the chances for the Dual Monarchy to survive the war increased with his adherence to the throne (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 33). Throughout 1917, the Foreign Office calculated with the preservation of Austria–Hungary, and their intentions would be further reinforced by the Bolshevik’s seizure of power and the Italian defeat at Caporetto (Banac, *Nationality* 126). In liaison, the British high officials ignored the arguments of the *New Europe* group, and would pursue to detach the Habsburg Empire from the German alliance until the spring of 1918, concurrently seeking alternatives to reform and strengthen the Danubian Monarchy for the post-war epoch (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 26–27). As a consequence, by the end of 1917, the agenda of Southern Slav unification had still remained an unfeasible objective.

However, not only did the Russian withdrawal from war and the Italian military fiasco stimulate Great Britain to negotiate a separate peace with the Habsburg Empire, but would bring the Italians and the Yugoslavs together as well. Fostered by the assistance of Steed, Seton-Watson and Evans (Albrecht-Carrié 44), the future agreement between the respective parties would seem as the defeat of the Pact of London, and a considerable step towards the national unification of Yugoslavs and the destruction of Austria–Hungary.

### 4.3. Separate Peace and the Questions of Italian-Yugoslav Rapprochement

With the Yugoslavs being ready to negotiate ever since the war had broken out (Milutinović, *Rimski Kongres* 696), the question of Italian-Yugoslav agreement depended on Rome. Nonetheless, the Italian Cabinet had stubbornly abode to the aspiration to gain the Dalmatian coast, and had withdrawn from any attempts to open up the question of frontiers until the military and diplomatic developments of the war eventually forced Rome to reconsider its position, and to reach out for the Yugoslav party. Under the stimulus of Henry Wickham Steed, unofficial negotiations in late 1917 (Albrecht-Carrié 44) would transpire into a public agreement between the Italian Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee during the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities held in Rome in April 1918.
Since the late 1916, Henry Wickham Steed had taken an enormous share in the work of the Serbian Society of Great Britain, especially in light of Seton-Watson’s resignation from the Executive Committee due to his military duties (Steed, *Thirty II*: 169). In effect, in the last two years of the Great War the journalist would be pre-occupied with improving the Italian-Yugoslav relations, concurrently devoting considerable time and effort to battle the separate peace endeavours with his articles (Jeszenszky, *Steed* 32). In the matters of Italian-Yugoslav relations, his optimism was encouraged by the attitude of the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper and a small group of Italian statesmen who had recognized that the destruction of the Habsburg Empire would have had enhanced Italian influence in the region provided an Italian-Yugoslav agreement had been reached (Cornwall, *Undermining* 178).

In essence, the autumn of 1917 witnessed unfortunate developments in regard to the case of Yugoslavs as well. The passing of Frano Supilo and Dr. Elsie Inglis were valuable losses to the Pan-Yugoslav project. Soon after the Allies’ renewed offensive in Flanders had failed, the Austro-Hungarian Army managed to break through the Italian frontline at Isonzo, while the Bolshevik coup resulted in a Russian armistice by December. Upon learning the Italian military fiasco256 at Caporetto, Trumbić and several members of the Yugoslav Committee visited Henry Wickham Steed in his home in London, soon to be joined by a few Italian officials residing in Great Britain. The spontaneous gathering in which the Yugoslavs and Italians had ‘found in their common grief a bond of sympathy’ (Steed, *Thirty II*: 167–169) prompted the idea of unofficial negotiations between the most significant figures of those Yugoslavs and Italians who either resided or served in Britain. As Steed explained it, the purpose of such meeting was to make the two parties draft the key points of an Italian-Yugoslav agreement, which could have been utilized as the basis for future official discussions:

On the evening of Friday, October 26, 1917, when the first circumstantial accounts of the Caporetto disaster had reached London, Trumbitch came to see me in a state of consternation. ‘If Italy is smashed, we are smashed,’ he said and, literally with tears in his eyes, he deplored the Italian misfortune with the air of a man whose most cherished hopes had been shattered. Subsequently some members of the Southern Slav Committee in London and some Italians met by chance at my hothouse and […] From the contact thus established between reasonable Italians and Yugoslavs […] the idea

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256 The Dual Monarchy captured almost 240.000 Italians, 300.000 guns and 3.000 artilleries (Janković 315).
arose that an attempt should be made to draft an informal Italo-Yugoslav agreement which might serve as a basis for future official negotiations (ibid. 168).

In this spirit, Steed took the initiative (Cornwall, *Undermining* 178), and hosted two informal meetings under the umbrella of the Serbian Society on 14 and 18 December 1917. In reality, these meetings were the first – although unofficial – contacts made between any Italian or Habsburg Yugoslav politicians in course of the Great War (Sepić 195). Besides the journalist, Evans and Seton-Watson were present at the negotiations on behalf of the pressure group, Trumbić and Meštrović headed the delegation of the Yugoslav Committee, while the most important representative of Italy was General Mola, who developed a personal interest in the questions of Adriatic security. As it was soon revealed, the military attaché was a reasonable man, who neither did feel any hostility towards the Yugoslavs nor to their national aspirations. Steed, Seton-Watson and Evans were well-aware that a working basis for a future agreement presupposed the sacrifice of certain national demands on both sides. Moreover, as it was impossible to draw borders without leaving at least a small number of Italians or Yugoslavs outside of Italy or Yugoslavia, they insisted on including a clause on minority protection among the principles of settlement (Steed, *Thirty II*: 167–168, 170–171). Due to his personal knowledge, studies and repute, it was Evans who tried to reason with Mola concerning the Pact of London. The retired archaeologist claimed that Dalmatia would have been a liability for Italy, as holding the Eastern coast of the Adriatic had never guaranteed a strategic advantage to any powers unless the hinterland had been secured as well. Moreover, he tactfully hinted at the Treaty of London had lost its validity, as it had been concluded under the presumption that the Habsburg Empire would have survived the war (ibid. 170–171, 175, 178).

Overall, the talks concluded successfully as the parties present managed to outline the general principles for a future Italian-Yugoslav agreement. Their joint proposal declared the security of the Adriatic region to be the mutual interest of both sides, and recognized the right of national self-determination on a reciprocal basis. Correspondingly, they agreed that the future frontier between Italy and Yugoslavia should have formed a strong defence line against Germany. For this reason, Trieste and Fiume would have been declared free ports, the former assigned to Italy, the latter to the Yugoslavs, while Dalmatia would have remained in the

257 In this spirit, Genaré Mola attended the central memorial service during 'Kossovo Day' (*Times*, 29 June 1916: 3).
possession of the future Southern Slav state with special rights guaranteed for the local Italian minority (SWP SEW/S/3/1).

Concurrently with Italy’s gradually changing approach towards the Yugoslavs, the turning fortunes of the war strengthened the willingness of the British high officials to engage in secret negotiations with the Dual Monarchy (Hay 57). For this purpose, Emperor-King Charles had already established contacts with the Western Allies by utilizing Albert Mensdorff and Prince Sixte of Bourbon-Parma for back-channel diplomacy. As early as January 1917, Mensdorff, the former Habsburg Minister in London, had been sent to Switzerland to initiate contact with the French Minister in Bern (Janković 16), while Prince Sixte of Bourbon-Parma, – the Emperor’s brother-in-law, who served in the Belgian Army – had met Raymond Poincaré, the President of France, informing him that the Emperor inclined to negotiate a separate peace with the Entente. In the so-called Sixte Letter, Emperor Charles offered France the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, proposed the restoration of Belgium and Serbia, and agreed on the creation of a Yugoslav kingdom composed of Serbia, Montenegro and Northern Albania, the later securing Belgrade an outlet to the Adriatic (Albrecht-Carrié 44; Lloyd George, War Memoirs IV: 461; Weitsman, 95–96). The Emperor’s letter was written in the spirit of Ottokar Czernin’s memorandum, claiming that the Habsburg Empire had exceeded its economic and military limitations, therefore the conclusion of the war had been vital to maintain the stability of the Empire, and to avoid revolutions. Charles complied with the views of his Foreign Minister (Weitsman, 95), and as by the autumn of 1917, the Habsburg Empire had achieved most of its war aims by expelling or defeating its enemies, and by gaining more territories than planned, the Habsburg sovereign’s intention to engage in peace talks intensified, especially in view that the United States declared war on Austria–Hungary in December 1917 (Janković 335; Morrow 211–212).

Charles’s willingness for peace gained sympathy for the Emperor in both the French and the British Cabinets (Masaryk 250), and the prospect of a separate peace was undeniably tempting for the two Western powers in the spring of 1917. Due to their fear that the February Revolution in Russia could have seriously weaken the Allied military efforts, France and Britain contemplated negotiations with the Habsburgs. Nonetheless, the peace initiative was dismissed as the Emperor’s refusal to yield any territories (Weitsman 96) made it impossible

258 The civil population experienced fierce shortages of coal and food in the winter of 1916 to 1917. Dire economic situation, high inflation, crop requisitions, long work hours fostered social angst and strikes. Czernin believed that the Empire was on the brink of uprising, and would collapse by the next autumn while some Habsburg troops in the Eastern front were reported to be fraternizing with the Russian units (Morrow 210–212).

259 As the whole pre-bellum territory of the Dual Monarchy had returned to Habsburg rule, the precondition for peace negotiations was deemed fulfilled by the Habsburg leadership (Fried 219).
to realize Allied obligations towards Italy. Albeit the two Western Allies wanted neither to lose nor to drive Italy to the German alliance (Fried 219; Janković 17–18), the Allied military disasters in Flanders and in Italy forced the British and French Cabinets to revisit the question of a separate peace in late 1917.

Besides these developments, the wish for British-Habsburg peace talks were further fostered by the requests placed by France and Germany, asking the transfer of circa 300,000 soldiers to the Western front by 1918 from their respective allies (Morrow 223, 231). For that matter, Great Britain initiated secret peace negotiations with the Habsburg Empire (Lederer 28), authorizing General Jan Smuts, an advisor for to the War Cabinet, and Phillip Kerr, one of Lloyd George’s secretaries and confidants, to embark in discussions with Mensdorff, the emissary of Czernin, in the quiet outskirts of Geneva on 18 December 1917. The primary task of the Smuts-Kerr mission was to learn and report on the Habsburg position on a separate peace treaty without being ‘drawn into any conversation as to the terms of a general peace’ (Lloyd George, War Memoirs V: 19–21, 28, 36; Wallach 25; Watt 239).

Meanwhile, the prolonging war forced the British Cabinet to confront the growing resistance of trade unions as well, especially after the failure of the Flanders campaign in October 1917. In effect, the conflict had transformed into a total war by 1917, as the antagonizing states had mobilized most of their material and human resources for the war effort. Due to the rising costs of living and insufficient distribution of food supplies, Great Britain was struck by disruptive strikes and demonstrations, while perceiving the burdens of the war being shared unequally, the hostility of the working class toward the upper classes increased (Janković 317; Morrow 223, 231). As without the trade unions’ cooperation new conscriptions could not have been realized effectively, henceforth Prime Minister Lloyd George decided to reveal the British war aims and certain principles of peace-making at the Conference of Trade Unions on 5 January 1918 to satisfy and tame the representatives of the working class (Janković 317, 329; Lloyd George, War Memoirs V: 38–40). Besides explicitly stating that the dissolution of Austria–Hungary had not been among the war aims of the Great Britain, the Prime Minister’s speech on ‘The Peace Declaration’ made no reference to either the case of Yugoslav union or Serbian enlargement. In essence, the British Cabinet solely promised the restoration of Serbia along with Belgium, Romania and Montenegro in a future peace settlement:

[…] though we agree with President Wilson that the break-up of Austria–Hungary is no part of our war aims, we feel that, unless genuine self-government on true
democratic principles is granted to those Austro–Hungarian nationalities who have long desired it, it is impossible to hope for the removal of those causes of unrest in that part of Europe which have so long threatened its general peace. On the same grounds we regard as vital the satisfaction of the legitimate claims of the Italians for union with those of their own race and tongue. We also mean to press that justice be done to men of Roumanian blood and speech in their legitimate aspirations. If these conditions are fulfilled Austria–Hungary would become a Power whose strength would conduce to the permanent peace and freedom of Europe, instead of being merely an instrument for the pernicious military autocracy of Prussia that uses the resources of its allies for furtherance of its own sinister purpose (Lloyd George, War Memoirs V: 70).

Similar to the speech of Lloyd George, no remarks were made on the programme of Yugoslav unification in President Woodrow Wilson’s ‘Fourteen Points’ speech, delivered three days later, on 8 January 1918 in the Congress. Albeit, Wilson’s terms would have partially fulfilled the Serbian aspirations by granting Serbia with an access to the sea, for the nationalities the President only promised the democratization of political life, and the prospect of autonomous development in lieu of independence. With the secret peace talks being in progress, neither Great Britain nor the United States wished to curtail the chances of detaching the Habsburg Empire from the German alliance. Reflecting their desire for an agreement with the Habsburgs, the respective speeches of the two statesmen categorically emphasized that the Allies had accounted with the survival of Habsburg Empire at the cost of certain territorial and political concessions made towards either its neighbours, Italy and Serbia, or its nationality subjects (Lederer 27–28; Lloyd George, War Memoirs V: 66; Seton-Watson, Making 243).

Overall, the Yugoslav unification had remained unattainable even by early 1918, as the official war aims of Great Britain and the United States did not include the elimination of Austria–Hungary (Mitrović, Great War 279–280). In the belief that the national aspirations of Habsburg nationalities could have been satisfied within a federalized Habsburg Monarchy (Mason 81), the dissolution of the Empire had been altogether dismissed by the Foreign Office with the exception of the Tyrrell-Paget memorandum. Consequently, the Western Allies pursued to keep the integrity of the Empire almost intact, albeit in the course of secret peace talks a number of plans were outlined in connection with the conversion of the

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260 Wilson’s speech was in effect full of vague and idealistic statements which were not based on careful examinations of the situation. Moreover, the President did not have a precise vision how to realize some of the points (Lederer 28).
Danubian Monarchy into a federal state of five units, each being granted the same rights as Austria and Hungary had enjoyed so far. It was believed that such a federalized Empire with a system of government similar to the United Kingdom would follow an anti-German foreign policy, and could fulfil its role in the European balance of power. Conclusively, the secret peace talks with the Monarchy revealed the Allies’ willingness to accept the Empire as a great power in the post-bellum period as a counterpoise to German economic and military expansion (Arday, *British Plan* 466; Arday, *Térkép* 12, 15; Hanak, *Foreign Office* 184; Mitrović, *Peace Conference* 48–49).

However, David Lloyd George’s speech on the official war aims of the Great Britain and Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points would foster an Italian-Yugoslav compromise in the spring of 1918. In effect, these developments left all sides disappointed and perplexed concerning the degree their aspirations could be realized. Although President Wilson did not make any reference on the nullification of existing secret treaties, hinting at the readjustment of Italian frontiers along ethnic lines implied that the Treaty of London would not be implemented in its full measures. For Orlando, this clause was a covert attack on the Pact of London, therefore the Italian Prime Minister turned to London for clarification. Being informed on the unofficial British-Habsburg peace talks, Orlando also decided to meet Steed in the course of his official visit to London in January 1918 (Milutinović, *Rimski Kongres* 697):

> It was not surprising that Mr. Lloyd George’s and President Wilson’s pronouncements should cause anxiety in Italy. When the new Italian Prime Minister, Signor Orlando, came to London towards the end of January, I found him perplexed as to their meaning. He had heard of the debate between Italians and Yugoslavs at my house in December and wished to discuss the position (Steed, *Thirty II* 181).

> In the course of their two-hour long meeting, Steed did his utmost to convince the statesman that Italy would have had to become the mouthpiece for the oppressed nationalities of the Habsburg Empire provided Italy had aspired to fill the power vacuum in Central

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261 Ante Trumbić released a declaration expressing the dissatisfaction of the Yugoslav Committee with the speeches of the two statesmen: ‘[…] we must declare that the Yugo-Slav people […] cannot be satisfied with those parts of the speeches which refer to them. The causes of the discontent of the subject peoples of Austria–Hungary […] cannot be removed by the […] democratization of Austria–Hungary on the basis of autonomy alone’ (*Times*, 11 January 1918: 5). Meanwhile, replying to Jovanović’s letter on 9 January, Robert Cecil expressed that the British war aims had corresponded with the contemporary military realities, also assuring the Serbian Minister that an Allied military victory would have aided the Yugoslav cause (Janković 333).
Europe and in the Balkans following the dissolution of the Monarchy. The journalist argued that as the ‘network of shortsighted Austrophil intrigues’ in the months before had gained a new support in the diplomacy of the Western Allies, hence an Italian-Yugoslav agreement had become the fundamental interest of both sides. Orlando seemed receptive of these arguments, and even allowed the journalist to introduce him Ante Trumbić (Masaryk 227; Steed, Thirty II: 181–183). By this time the Croatian émigré262 had become so desperate owing to the latest diplomatic developments that he was contemplating leaving for Southern America to work as a taxi driver (Steed, Thirty II: 166). Equally filled with desperation and hope, Trumbić did his best to follow Steed’s steps in persuading Orlando of the benefits of an Italian-Yugoslav agreement, claiming that it could have provoked such an immense resistance among the Habsburg Slav nationalities that the Habsburg Empire would have been destroyed within the course of a few months (Cornwall, Undermining 180; Milutinović, Rimski Kongres 698).

Additionally, based on his experience gained as a correspondent in Rome, Steed also vested great hopes in Sidney Sonnino, the half-English Protestant Foreign Secretary of Italy, whom he regarded a skilful and experienced diplomat (Steed, Thirty I: 121–122) to become the catalyst of rapprochement. For this reason, the journalist wrote a friendly letter to the Foreign Secretary in late January 1918, informing him on the proceedings in London. Steed clearly reminded Sonnino that long before Italy entered the war, the Italian statesman had advocated for the liberation of the oppressed Habsburg nationalities. The journalist also expressed his belief that the Treaty of London had been unfortunate for Italy as the enemy could have utilized the agreement for propaganda purposes. He insisted on the Corfu Declaration had fostered anti-Habsburg sentiments among the Croatian regiments which could have been intensified by a Yugoslav-Italian agreement. The Austrophile tendencies in Great Britain – embodied by the Smuts-Kerr mission and Lloyd George’s speech – created an entirely new situation for both Italy and the Yugoslavs, which ought to have been addressed and had had to be capitalized by Rome. Correspondingly, Steed urged Sonnino to side with the Habsburg nationalities by overtly taking the moral leadership among the Allies in the agenda of liberation, which first required a sound compromise with the Yugoslavs (SWP SEW/S/3/1):

I beg you, my dear friend, to set your hand to this new and broader orientation of Italian policy, and thus to crown the great work you did when you please Italy

262 Steed tried to calm Trumbić down by insisting that the goals revealed in Lloyd George’s speech had have been mere tactical considerations rather the actual aims of Great Britain (Janković 351).
Irrespective of Steed’s assessment and expectations, in reality, Sidney Sonnino was the major opponent of any reconciliation with the Yugoslavs in the Italian Cabinet (Milutinović, Rimski Kongres 698). However, in light of the Caporetto disaster, Wilson’s speech and the future arrival of American troops, Orlando abandoned Sonnino’s stubborn anti-Yugoslav stance for the time being. Urged by the Italian intellectuals and the articles of the Corriera della Sera, the Italian Prime Minister decided to re-evaluate his country’s relations with the Yugoslavs to assume the role of the leader in the liberation movement of Habsburg nationalities without revoking the Treaty of London. Receiving criticism for the Caporetto disaster, the Prime Minister wished to soothe the public opinion and the irredentist press by taking the initiation to control the process of reconciliation (Cornwall, Undermining 179–180; Lederer 27–29; Milutinović, Rimski Kongres 696–697). As a result, a separate parliamentary committee was established in Italy under Andrea Torre, who arrived at London with Guiseppe Borgese in late February to conduct official negotiations with the representatives of the Yugoslav Committee (Milutinović, Rimski Kongres 699; Steed, Thirty II: 181–183).

Despite a promising beginning, the five-day long diplomatic session eventually took an unfortunate turn. Albeit Steed, Seton-Watson and Evans had been all along present during these talks as advisors – being called in whenever the two parties came to a standstill –, even they could not persuade Trumbić into a compromise in regard to the Adriatic question. As it was unacceptable for the Croatian expatriate that the proposed document relied on vague words of Italian promises without making any reference to either the Treaty of London or the Corfu Declaration. Moreover, he and Meštrović were unbending to accept the division of Istria or the cession or neutralization of any strategic Dalmatian islands or cities which Arthur Evans had outlined in his map. In effect, Torre and Borgese pursued to force the Yugoslavs into specifying the concessions which Italy would gain from the Eastern Adriatic in return for voiding the Pact of London. As the Yugoslav Committee persisted claiming the whole Istria and Dalmatia, discussions concluded without an agreement at the midnight of 6 March 1918. Steed, Seton and Evans were equally disappointed and frustrated with the turn of events, which they did not hesitate to hide from Trumbić. Partially owing to their private talk with the Dalmatian leader, an agreement was reached in the twelfth hour as when Seton and Steed were to say good-bye for Torre in the Savoy Hotel on the following day, Trumbić suddenly
appeared out of nowhere, holding in his hands five signed copies of the final version of the proposal, which would be the basis for an anti-Habsburg congress in Rome (Cornwall, *Undermining* 180–181; Masaryk 227; Milutinović, *Rimski Kongres* 700–702; Seton-Watson, *Making* 248–250; Steed, *Thirty II*: 183–185).263

Meanwhile, the spring of 1918 also experienced the reconstruction of information and propaganda bureaus in Great Britain, as the Intelligence Bureau was discontinued, and its employees were transferred to various newly created government agencies (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 27–28). These changes were answers for the military deadlock on the fronts, and the Bolshevik revolution in Russian, and moreover marked a departure from the defensive British propaganda in favour of an offensive one as reports on the growing war-weariness in Austria–Hungary opened up the possibility to exploit the situation by embarking in psychological warfare with a somewhat opportunistic but intensive propaganda campaign direct against the Empire (Taylor 890). In liaison, Lloyd George completely reorganized British propaganda by forming two new departments with the intention to establish a coordinated propaganda directed against the enemy countries. As a result, the Department of Information was abolished and substituted by the Ministry of Information under Lord Beaverbrook,264 while concurrently the Department of Propaganda in Enemy Countries was created under Lord Northcliffe (Cornwall, *Undermining* 175, 182; Namier xv).265

Appointing and dividing the responsibility of government propaganda between the two media moguls alone marked a new stage in the official British propaganda in regard to efficiency and coordination. As the Director of Propaganda for Enemy Countries, Lord Northcliffe answered only to the Prime Minister. Nevertheless, due to his illness, his bureau – located in the Crewe House – would operate under Steed and Seton-Watson,266 the two personal recruits of the press lord. Convincing Northcliffe that propaganda should be used to ‘smash Austria–Hungary as the weakest link in the chains of enemy States’ (Steed, *Thirty II*: 187), the government organization openly championed the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire. With the assistance of Northcliffe, the duo also tried to persuade Arthur Balfour, the

263 Among these, Steed forwarded two copies to the Foreign Office (Steed, *Thirty II*: 185).
264 Max Aitken, ennobled to become Lord Beaverbrook, was the proprietor of the *Daily Express*. He supported Lloyd George in his fight for the premiership, and first he was appointed first a Minister without portfolio, then in 1918, the Minister of Information (Lloyd George, *Lloyd George* 134–135, 167).
265 Lloyd George, Beaverbrook and Northcliffe were the members of the same dining club known as the ‘Other Club,’ formed in early 1911. Winston Churchill, Bonar Law and Horatio Kitchener were among its other prominent members (Riddell, *More Pages* 27–28).
266 Originally, Seton-Watson was to be transferred to the Ministry of Information, but due to his rejection and Steed’s intervention, he was recruited for the Department for Propaganda in Enemy Countries along with the journalist.
Foreign Secretary on the prospect of immediate success provided the Foreign Office had announced its support of the oppressed Habsburg nationalities’ self-determination (Marquis 473; Millman 119; Taylor 875–876, 892).

In reality, the journalist and the historian were given free hand to operate the department, and they could exercise a limited influence on the shaping of foreign policy by subsidising decision-making when required (Seton-Watson, Introduction 28–29; Steed, Thirty II: 187). In effect, they supervised the propaganda directed against the Habsburg Empire, while they persisted published the New Europe and were also active in the Serbian Society (Albrecht-Carrié 59–60). Their independent activites and meddling with foreign affairs hitherto reserved for the caste of traditional career diplomats even triggered Balfour to place a complaint to Prime Minister Lloyd George:

Had Crewe House been as willing as Wellington House to accept dictation from the Foreign Office on matters of foreign policy there would have been fewer problems...

[but] Northcliffe’s innovation was not that he made propaganda consistent with policy, but that he tried to alter foreign policy to make it consistent with propaganda formulated by Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed (qtd. Taylor 892).

Operating the government organization with considerable independence, elevated Steed’s prestige in Italy, who would take the opportunity to capitalize the influence he could exercise through the Crewe House on policy-making to foster a public agreement between Italy and the Yugoslavs (Cornwall, Undermining 175; Steed, Thirty II: 187).

Soon, in the spirit of the preliminary Italian-Yugoslav agreement of February, Italy hosted the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities under the chairmanship of Henry Wickham Steed267 between 8 and 10 April 1918 in Rome. Albeit the conference did not possess any official diplomatic status, it managed to bind together the Habsburg nationalities under the patronage of the Italian Cabinet in a joint struggle against the common oppressor to realize their liberation. In liaison, a joint resolution referred to as the Pact of Rome was passed, emphasizing that as the Habsburg Monarchy had transformed into ‘the instrument of Germanic domination’ (qtd. Albrecht-Carrié 347), the nationalities of the Empire joined

267 As Steed recalled it, there were minor issues in visiting Rome: ‘[…] the Italian representatives at the Inter-Allied Propaganda Conference of February 1918 had welcomed my mission and had approved of Seton-Watson’s membership of it, the Italian ambassador put an embargo on him at the last moment in the belief that this would prevent me from starting. The only effect of the embargo was to oblige me to start without him […] and to delay his arrival in Rome for the conference of the subject Habsburg peoples. In fact, the embargo was lifted as soon as it had filed to stop my mission’ (Steed, Tributes 337).
forces to achieve full political and economic independence with the creation of their own states (Lederer 30; Masaryk 226–227).

The wording and claims of the declaration undeniably echoed the persistently recurring arguments of Steed and Seton, who were more than satisfied with the turn of events in Rome as Italy had officially and overtly announced its support for the dismemberment of Austria–Hungary (Beretzky, _Scotus Viator_ 34–35; Seton-Watson, _Introduction_ 28). Additionally, the resolution managed to pacify the hostile relationship between Italy and the Yugoslavs since the Pact of Rome recognized the Yugoslav efforts for unification along ethnic lines as a legitimate national and territorial aspiration:

4. In regard to the relations between and the nation of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, also known as the Yugoslav nation, the representatives of the two peoples recognize that the unity and independence of the Yugoslav nation is of vital interest to Italy, just as the achievement of Italian national unity is of vital interest to the Yugoslav nation. […]

5. They declare that the liberation of the Adriatic Sea and its defence against any present or future enemy is of vital interest to both peoples.

6. They undertake to settle amicably […] the pending territorial questions, on the basis of the principle of nationality and of the right of peoples to determine their own fate […] at the time of peace (qtd. Albrecht-Carrié 347–348).

Albeit the agreement was not an official treaty, Steed was overconfident that the rest of the Allies would soon officially aligned with the principles of the Pact of Rome (Cornwall, _Undermining_ 197) by announcing their support of the dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire.

Overall, the declaration marked a resting point in the Italian-Yugoslav hostilities, and it awarded Italy with the moral obligation to patronize the Habsburg nationalities’ aspirations. In effect, the conference coincided with the shift in British policy concerning the fate of the Habsburg Empire, and would be instrumental in a five-month long anti-Habsburg propaganda campaign targeting the Habsburg army divisions on the Italian Front (Cornwall, _Undermining_ 178; Jeszenszky, _Steed_ 32; Seton-Watson, _Introduction_ 28). However, approaching the end of the Great War, it would be revealed that Italy was not only against any

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268 This shift was reflected in the fact that Steed and Seton-Watson participated in the conference with the knowledge and permission of the Foreign Office (Beretzky, _Scotus Viator_ 34).
forms of Yugoslav unification, but intended to extend its territorial gains beyond the lines of the Treaty of London.

4.4. Overview

The case of Yugoslav unification had not moved diplomatically forward until the last two years of the Great War. While pursuing to establish a favourable reputation for Serbia, the British pro-Yugoslav professionals expected their Yugoslav protégés to do their share in the Pan-Yugoslav propaganda effort by becoming and remaining visible with their national programme in front of the Allied Powers. However, due to their reluctance to renounce their respective visions on the unification, cooperation and coordination between the Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian Cabinet had been insignificant until the Corfu conference of 1917 (Lederer 24–25). Stimulated by the turning fortunes of the war, their reconciliation resulted in the release of the Corfu Declaration, which Seton-Watson and Steed perceived and promoted as the constitutional foundation of a future Yugoslavia. Besides believing that the agreement could be the basis to renegotiate the Pact of London, they were also convinced that the declaration eliminated the division between the Yugoslavs as the principles outlined in the document seemingly attested the Serbian Cabinet’s good faith and support of the Yugoslav idea. Moreover, they regarded the outcome of the Corfu conference as a victory of the federalist vision over the centralizing schemes pertaining to the form of the future Southern Slav state.

Nonetheless, owing to the unfavourable developments of the war and the ineffectiveness of the Yugoslav Committee, Seton-Watson and Steed decided to mobilize both the British pro-Yugoslavs and the proponents of the nationality principle by establishing the New Europe weekly and the Serbian Society of Great Britain. While utilizing the former to convince the Allies on the destruction of the Habsburg Empire by winning over gradually increasing numbers in the public opinion, the latter pursued bridging the gulf between the Italians and Yugoslavs to revoke the provisions of the Treaty of London. In this regard, Henry Wickham Steed played a major role by establishing the first contacts between Italy and the Yugoslav Committee (Cornwall, Undermining 181). Realizing that the defeat of Italy would have meant the defeat of Yugoslav aspirations as well (Masaryk 227), an informal and a preliminary meeting prepared the ground for a joint Italian-Yugoslav agreement known as the
Pact of Rome concluded at the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in April 1918 (Lederer 28–29).

The Rome agreement marked a temporary resting point in the Italian-Yugoslav hostilities; nonetheless, the developments would neither persuade Great Britain into revoking the Pact of London nor deter Italian aspirations to claim Istria and Dalmatia. Besides, the suppositions of Steed and Seton-Watson concerning the true intentions of the Italian and Serbian Cabinets were misleading, as approaching the end of the Great War, it would be revealed that Corfu Declaration and the Pact of Rome were mere tactical manoeuvres on behalf of both governments. Acting unbound by the declarations, Pašić and Orlando pursued to solidify their positions at the expense of the Habsburg Yugoslav expatriates, which would considerably complicate and hinder the process of Yugoslav unification and recognition in late 1918.
CHAPTER FIVE

Ambiguous Achievements
Although the gulf between the *New Europe* group and the British high officials seemed unbridgeable concerning the future of Central Europe throughout 1917 (Seton-Watson, *Making* 192–193), the eventual failure of the secret peace talks with the Habsburgs in the spring of 1918 altered the British Cabinet’s vision on the fate of the Danubian Empire. In lieu of preserving the Dual Monarchy, the new British war policy pursued the disintegration of the Empire by overtly championing the cause of the Habsburg nationalities. In liaison, accepting the arguments of the British pro-Yugoslav intellectuals that the Yugoslav idea had corresponded with the national self-determination of the Southern Slavs, the British Cabinet proved willing to approve the creation of a united Southern Slav state at the expense of the Habsburg Empire’s dismemberment (Stenton 122).

The failure of Emperor Charles and the Austro-Hungarian political elite to satisfy the aspirations of their nationalities by implementing the necessary political and constitutional reforms (Beretzky, *Plans* 105), along with the social unrest, economic hardship, strikes, desertions, military mutinies and the radicalization of the national movements (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 35) led to the organic disintegration and the eventual dissolution of the Danubian Empire without any direct involvement on behalf of the Allied Powers. The sudden collapse of Austria–Hungary stimulated a race among the Southern Slavs, Romania and Italy for the division of the Empire in autumn 1918. As all sides strived to realize their most excessive aspirations (Živojinović, *America* 150), the Paris Peace Conference – to be convened in January 1919 – would attest conflicting territorial claims placed on the lands inhabited by Southern Slavs (Lederer 71).

Undoubtedly, the case of the Southern Slavs was considerably complicated by the fact that Italy, as a major Allied Power, firmly opposed the creation of a unified and enlarged Yugoslav state at the expense of losing territories and influence in the Eastern Adriatic. Albeit due to the hasty proclamation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on 1 December 1918, the Italian Cabinet had not been able to prevent the merger of the Yugoslav territories. Nevertheless, Rome would do its utmost in the forthcoming months to disrupt and shake the Southern Slav union and to postpone the recognition of the new state (Djokić, *Kingdom* 59; Lederer 4; Živojinović, *America* 203–204). The conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany being a priority for Great Britain and France, the two Western Allies would not risk losing
Italy’s support in the question of German war reparations (Goldstein 161–163; Marston 139) by openly challenging Rome’s claims over Dalmatia. Consequently, regardless of their sympathy towards the Southern Slavs, Great Britain and France would repledge their dedication to the Treaty of London, while hoping that the United States with its power and prestige could minimize Italy’s appetite in the Adriatic region.

By the end of the Great War, the considerable prestige of Serbia – which the propaganda efforts of Robert William Seton-Watson, Henry Wickham Steed and their pressure groups had attained for the small Balkan state – had transferred to the rest of the Southern Slavs, and had also stimulated sympathy for the Yugoslav cause in the United States. Residing in Paris in the first months of the peace conference, Seton-Watson, Steed and Evans would have a significant role in mediating between the delegation of the Southern Slavs and the United States (Beretzký, Hírünk 65–66). Although the members of the New Europe group were neither recruited for the British peace delegation nor directly involved in the peace-making, some of their visions and proposals influenced the work of the British and American delegates (Seton-Watson, Making 192–193). Their expertise, repute and confident behaviour left a lasting impression on the American professionals who transpired to be valuable allies in battle against Italian demands and intrigues. Once President Woodrow Wilson decided to champion and amplify the Yugoslav cause to a new level of importance in the Council of Ten and the Council of Four (Motta 138), the New Europe group’s Adriatic settlement plan – based on Arthur Evans’ frontier maps – would become the standing-ground for these newly-attained American acquaintances when devising the United States’ official proposal striving to solve the Adriatic Question.

In fact, in the course Paris Peace Conference the United States would emerge as the guardian of Yugoslav interests and the most important ally of the Yugoslav delegation and their British patrons. The mistreatment of the Yugoslav population in the Italian occupation zone, and Italy’s stubborn refusal to cooperate with the Allies in regard to the settlement of Adriatic Question would anger President Woodrow Wilson, for whom the last straw would be Italy claiming the region of Fiume. Correspondingly, while persistently remanding the European Allies that the United States had not been bound by the Treaty of London, President

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269 These two councils replaced the Supreme War Council, which had grown out of the Inter-Allied conferences held in the course of the Great War. Its creation in November 1917 had been prompted by the disasters in Flanders and Caporetto, and had pursued to move coordinated war efforts of the Entente Powers to a higher level (Marston 1–3, 10). The Council of Ten consisted of the five major Allied States’ prime ministers, presidents and the foreign secretaries. The Council of Four or the ‘Big Four’ was the meeting among the Allied leaders, which owing to the Japanese indifference towards the European settlement reduced from five to four (Djokić, Kingdom 64).
Woodrow Wilson and State Secretary Robert Lansing insisted on applying the nationality principle to the future Italian-Yugoslav frontier. In essence, due to their predominantly Yugoslav ethnic character, Fiume and Dalmatia became the examples of how the new diplomacy embodied by the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination clashed with the old and traditional diplomacy’s policy of secret treaties in course of peace-making (Albrecht-Carrié 117; Hodgson 236; Lederer 34–35; Živojinović, America 293).

However, despite the attempts of the British pro-Yugoslav intellectuals, the Yugoslav factionalism and disputes on the process and manner of unification intensified in the last months of the Great War. Moreover, they became apparent to the Allied Powers. Besides complicating both the unification and the official recognition of the new state, their persisting division and discord transpired to the Yugoslav peace delegation, thus making the outcome of the war in regard to the Southern Slav territorial aspirations unclear (Lederer 5; Mitrović, Great War 322; Šepić, Union 29). Owing to the peculiarities and ambiguities of the Yugoslav unification, the crusade of Seton-Watson and Steed for a united Southern Slav state did not come to an end with the integral victory of the Allies and the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire, but would persist even after conclusion of the Paris Peace Conference.270

5.1. The Allied Powers and the Genesis of Yugoslavia

It took Seton-Watson and Steed more than a year since the Corfu conference to realize that the differences and antipathy between the Serbian Primer and the Yugoslav Committee had been as deep that it posed a direct threat to the agenda of unification when it became attainable with the prospect of Allied victory in 1918. In reality, the divergence in opinion between the Southern Slav factions about the future outlook of their unified country had not resolved with the Corfu Declaration. Under the pressure of circumstances, the two sides had seemingly come to terms in Corfu, and had displayed a common front until the summer of 1918, when their disagreements and division became apparent to the Allied Powers as well (Lederer 36–37).

The new wave of disintegration in the fragile Yugoslav block started with the Serbian diplomatic initiation in the United States.271 With the United States declaring war on the

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270 Formally, the peace conference in France concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres on 10 August 1920. The treaty with Turkey would be revised in Switzerland in the course of the Lausanne Conference in 1923.

271 Yugoslav factionalism and the fragile foundations of the Corfu agreement were also attested by Hinko Hinković’s private campaign conducted among the Yugoslav diaspora in the United States, when the expatriate claimed that the Corfu Declaration had not bound the Yugoslav Committee in any ways (Lederer 36).
Habsburg Empire in December 1917, Nikola Pašić turned his attention to Washington D.C., and dispatched a Serbian delegation to the United States, headed by Reverend Dr. Nikolaj Velimirović and Milenko Vesnić, the Serbian Minister in Paris. During the mission – lasting from late December 1917 to early February 1918 – the group had the opportunity to present the Southern Slav case for the American leadership, and was eventually received by both President Woodrow Wilson and Secretary of State Robert Lansing. To Trumbić’s dismay, Vesnić made no reference to the Corfu Declaration during his speech delivered in the Congress on 5 January 1918, and in the light of the disappointing ‘Fourteen Points’ speech of Wilson, the Yugoslav Committee would stigmatize the visit as a purely ‘Serbian mission,’ which pursued Pan-Serbian endeavours (Janković 339–340, 342). In effect, the British and American war aims speeches of January 1918 made Pašić promptly abandon the spirit of Corfu to secure at least the cession of Bosnia–Herzegovina, arguing that ‘our brothers stand by the demand of “all or nothing.” They do not work as one would expect from a good father, who, if he cannot liberate all of his children, liberates as many as he can, and for the rest he awaits the next opportunity’ (qtd. Banac, Nationality 126).

Meanwhile the secret peace talks between the Western Allies and the Habsburgs had persisted until General Erich Lundendorff launched the German spring offensive on 21 March 1918 (Wallach 27, 113). The seemingly improved military situation on the Western front convinced Ottokar Czernin, the Foreign Minister of Austria–Hungary of the potential success of the German campaign. With this prospect in mind, a separate and compromised peace agreement with the Entente had been no longer in the interest of the Dual Monarchy, therefore, the secret peace efforts with Great Britain were discontinued (Arday, Térkép 23–24; Hanak, Foreign Office 187; Lloyd George, War Memoirs V: 51‒53). In reality, until there was a modicum of hope for an agreement with the Habsburg Monarchy, France, Great Britain and the United States had remained reluctant to dismantle the Danubian Empire (Živojinović, America 141). However, realizing that it became impossible to detach Austria–Hungary from the Dual Alliance, the Allied Powers accepted the disintegration of the Dual Monarchy in the

272 David Lloyd George commented on the Monarchy’s decision in his war memoirs in the following way: ‘The proximity of the March offensive, and no doubt the confidence expressed by the German Staff in its success, had damped the Austrian ardour for peace. In this temper no business was possible, and when in a few days the great attack was made and prospered, all questions of the continuation of peace conversations was ruled out. All that come of these pour parlers was the hesitancy of Austria to throw her army into the deadly struggle in the west. It may be of some interest, not untinged with regret, to conjecture what might have been the effect on the settlement of Europe if peace had been concluded with Austria in the spring of 1918. The Austrian Empire would have remained; instead of breaking up into a number of independent State, not always friendly to the Central authority, there would have been perhaps half a dozen autonomous dominions all owing allegiance to the Austrian Crown and working harmoniously together for their common interests’ (Lloyd George, War Memoirs V: 53).
spring of 1918 as the sole alternative to defeat Germany and end the war victoriously (Mason 86; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 28).

In liaison, the British War Council agreed to the new approach proposed by Steed’s memorandum of 5 March 1918 calling for the destabilization of the Danubian Empire – by overtly encouraging pro-Ally and anti-Habsburg activities among the subject nationalities – under the condition that – for the time being – no official commitments would be made to the case of Habsburg nationalities (Cornwall, *Undermining* 184; Hay 57; Steed, *Thirty II*: 187). As the employees of the Department of Propaganda in Enemy Countries, Seton-Watson and Steed were allowed to access confidential information, and henceforth were aware of the ongoing secret peace initiatives. As a response, they utilized both the Crewe House and the *New Europe* to sabotage attempts for a separate settlement, concurrently promoting the right of national self-determination as the only acceptable principle in regard to the future of Central Europe (Cornwall, *Undermining* 182–183; Liebich 192).

Disclosing Emperor Charles’ Sixte letter of 1917 for the press, Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau strived to weaken Austria–Hungary by dividing the public opinion and the leadership over the Emperor’s willingness to betray Germany. However, the ‘Sixtus Affair’ eliminated the possibility of further negotiations between the Habsburgs and the Allies, as Charles chose to appease the angered Kaiser Wilhelm II by professing the Habsburg Empire loyalty to the Dual Alliance, and as a result, the Empire would remain the ally of Berlin until the conclusion of the Great War (Black 162; Németh, *Újrarendezés* 293–294; Weitsman, 96). Besides praising the French Premier’s hind-sight in ‘Habsburg-matters,’ the *New Europe* group capitalized on the ‘Sixtus Affair’ (Beretzky, *Tündérország* 324) by pointing out the British perception which had credited ‘Charles and his advisers with brains and a clear programme’ had been entirely false. As they claimed the affair had unmasked the true nature of Emperor Charles. Moreover, it had revealed Vienna’s inability to ‘break away from [its] masterful partner,’ Germany (*New Europe*, no 81, 2 May 1918: 49–51). Intentionally, the same issue of the *New Europe* reported on the resolutions concluded a month before in the course of the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities (Wallach 27, 113), implying that one of the Allies had already championed the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire, and they expected the British Cabinet to follow suit.

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273 On 21 May 1918, Robert Cecil informed the British Minister in Paris about the change of policy and its reasons in the following way: ‘We feel that the policy of trying to detach Austria from Germany must be abandoned as both inopportune and impracticable. Recent meeting of Emperors has obviously led to bonds between the two Empires being tightened. We think that the best plan is to give all possible support to oppressed nationalities in Austria in their struggle against German–Magyar domination’ (qtd. Hanak, *Foreign Office* 188).
In effect, the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities had a crucial role in the success of a five-month long anti-Habsburg propaganda campaign, targeting the Habsburg army divisions on the Italian Front. In February 1918, when the high officials’ attitude towards Habsburg Empire had been on the verge of change, the Allies decided to utilize psychological warfare as a supplement of their military campaign. The idea of an anti-Habsburg propaganda was conceived by Henry Wickham Steed, who had already outlined a scheme to undermine the Habsburg hinterland during the Mola-Trumbić meeting in December 1917. The journalist deemed that an official Italian-Yugoslav settlement had been perquisite to launch a well-orchestrated and concurrent military and propaganda campaign on the Italian front. Eventually, his vision was first endorsed by the Foreign Office, and later by the Rome conference. As a result an intensive, large-scale Allied propaganda campaign was launched centring on dropping leaflets and manifestos on the Habsburg side of the Italian front (Cornwall, *Undermining* 178, 182; Steed, *Thirty II*: 225; Živojinović, *America* 141).

Targeting the Slav regiments of the Habsburg army, the Entente propaganda materials promised freedom and liberation for their respective peoples. By the time the Allied counter-offensive in August 1918 began, more than 100,000 leaflets had been dropped each day beyond the enemy lines. Overall, the Crewe House issued almost four million leaflets in August and September, which they managed to increase to five million in October (Steed, *Thirty II*: 225, 227). Overall, the major credit for both the Italian–Yugoslav rapprochement and the coordinated British-Italian propaganda campaign striving to foster nationality movements in the Habsburg Empire belonged primarily to Henry Wickham Steed, while Lord Northcliffe, as the proud ‘Minister for the Destruction of German Confidence’ (qtd. Steed, *Thirty II*: 227) could lavish in the accomplishments of his department (Albrecht-Carrié 45; Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 34; Cornwall, *Undermining* 175; Jeszenszky, *Prezštízs* 306; Jeszenszky, *Steed* 32; Masaryk 226, 228; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 28).274

However, with the prospect of Allied victory, Italy was quick to betray the Pact of Rome, and would utilize all efforts to impede the official recognition of the Yugoslav Committee or the revision of the Treaty of London. Subsequently, upon Italian objections, the Inter-Allied meeting on 3 June 1918 in Versailles decided to apply different approaches on the national movements of the Habsburg nationalities. While the Polish National Council was acknowledged as the official representative of the Polish people, the Bohemians and

274 From July to October, Steed was mainly engaged in organizing the propaganda against the Habsburg Empire on the Italian and the Western front, working in the Crewe House by day, and doing his duties in the *Times* by night (Steed, *Thirty II*: 216–217, 221).
Yugoslavs were left in limbo with a vague official communique expressing solely the Allies’ sympathy towards their national endeavours (Cornwall, *Undermining* 224; Lederer 33): ‘The Allied Governments […] desire to associate themselves in an expression of earnest sympathy for the nationalistic aspirations towards freedom of Czechoslovak and Yugoslav peoples’ (qtd. Steed, *Thirty II* 214). The Habsburg propaganda tried to exploit the disappointment generated by the communique to persuade the nationalities that their national aspirations could have only been accomplished under the rule of the Habsburg dynasty (Milutinović, *Odbor* 115–116; Lederer 33–34; Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 28–29). However, by early June, hundreds of Bohemian and Yugoslav soldiers abandoned the Habsburg divisions owing to the propaganda leaflets of the Crewe House. ‘Holding the propaganda leaflets as passports,’ these soldiers sought refuge beyond the Italian lines, and most of them also proved willing to fight alongside the Allies in the rest of the war (Steed, *Thirty II* 215).

Unfortunately, for the Bohemians, at first the Allies associated their cause with the case of the Southern Slavs (Cornwall, *Undermining* 221). Throughout 1918, the Allied Powers feared that the Danubian Monarchy or its potential successor states would not have been able to deal with the effects of the Bolshevik coup, nonetheless – when the Empire seemed to be on the verge of collapse in the late summer of 1918 – the Entente eventually consented to the creation of Czechoslovakia by recognizing the Czechoslovak National Council in August 1918 (Milutinović, *Odbor* 116). Although the acknowledgment *per se* meant that the dismemberment of Austria–Hungary had become irreversible (Arday, *British Plans* 468), yet again no references were made on the case of the Southern Slavs owing to the perplexing inter-Yugoslav relations.

Besides the Italian intrigues, Pašić’s stubborn refusal to acknowledge the Yugoslav Committee as an equal partner of the Serbian Cabinet in representing the Southern Slavs fostered the Allies to postpone the official recognition of the Pan-Yugoslav aspirations (Banac, *National* 126–127, 132). As a response to the diplomatic achievements of the Yugoslav Committee in Rome, Pašić intentionally became diplomatically inactive to gain time until the joint Allied offensive would begin in the Balkans, enabling the occupation of Habsburg Yugoslav lands for the Serbian army. In the course of the Corfu conference, he prevented Serbia from losing ‘its identity’ by submerging in a federal Yugoslav state by averting the final decisions to be made on the internal organization of the united Southern

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275 Despite this, on the same day when the Versailles communique was released, Balfour recognized the Bohemian army in Italy in a private letter sent to Beneš (Cornwall, *Undermining* 221).

276 The Serbian Parliament also sent a delegation to the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities (*New Europe*, no 81, 2 May 1918: 54).
Slav country. Correspondingly, in 1918, the Primer tried to assure the unification of Southern Slav lands would have been realized under his terms by blocking – at first behind the scenes, then overtly – the acknowledgement of the Yugoslav Committee as the equal of the Serbian Cabinet (Lederer 36; MacMillan 124; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 108).

For his inactive foreign policy and refusal to cooperate with the Habsburg Yugoslav expatriates, the Serbian Premier came under a serious criticism on behalf of the Serbian opposition, which wished to exploit Pašić’s dispute with the Committee to force him into a coalition government. Although the opposition embraced the Yugoslav programme, they conformed to the Serbian Cabinet’s views on the internal arrangements of the future state (Evans 179–180). In liaison with their political goal, they launched a campaign in Western Europe to undermine the Premier’s position by publicly denouncing Pašić for betraying the Yugoslav idea in the pursuit of Pan-Serbian dreams. As a response, Pašić accused the opposition of conspiring with the Yugoslav Committee against his Cabinet, and terminated all communication with the Yugoslav émigré organization (Lederer 36–37; Mitrović, *Great War* 304–305).

As the conflict was out in the open and the frontlines were drawn among the Yugoslav factions, Pašić dismissed Ljuba Mihajlović, the Serbian Minister in Washington in August 1918, and Jovan Jovanović, the Serbian Minister in London in late December 1918 (*Correspondence II*: 13; Seton-Watson, *Making* 341),²⁷⁷ as he grew suspicious of the two diplomats maintaining friendly terms with the Yugoslav Committee. Mihajlović had been indeed always in favour of a wider and democratic Yugoslav union, opted for a Serbian coalition government and made critical observations concerning the perceived failures of the Vesnić mission in the United States. His activity played a crucial role in increasing State Secretary Lansing’s sympathy towards the Yugoslav cause, nonetheless under the pressure of urgency, oftentimes he acted independently without the knowledge or approval of Pašić. Despite the Serbian Premier’s reasonable grounds, the suddenness and manner of Mihajlović’s dismissal further severed the inter-Yugoslav relations (Janković 342; Lederer 38).

The absence of Yugoslav recognition provoked Seton-Watson to publish a series of outspokenly critical articles on Pašić and the governing Radical Party in the *New Europe* (Steed, *Thirty II*: 224). Blaming the elderly Serbian Primer for the perplexing situation in the

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²⁷⁷ Although Pašić had been forced out of his office in mid-December 1918, Stojan Protić, the new Serbian Premier was his faithful ally. Consequently, Pašić could have exerted influence on internal and diplomatic matters of the Yugoslav state. The dismissal of Jovanović on 28 December 1918 was an apparent example of this.
Yugoslav camp, the historian delivered fierce attacks on Pašić and his political associates (Milutinović, Odbor 116) in his article entitled ‘Serbia’s Choice,’ and published on 22 August 1918. Besides explaining the nature of discord between the Southern Slavs, Seton attempted to persuade the Foreign Office that the conflict had originated in the Pan-Serb aspirations of Pašić’s clique who had indeed constituted a relatively small minority in the Serbian political scene. In effect, the historian denied that there had been any fundamental disagreements or underlying divergence in opinion among the Yugoslavs, and implied that ‘the Beard & Co.’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 341) should have been treated as an isolated case, especially as Pašić had been rejected by his people, and had also been losing his ardent supporters even among the Habsburg Serbs:

The stubborn refusal of the Pašić-Protić combination to share political power with any rivals […] has assumed a dangerous aspect, to which the Entente Governments and the democratic opinion in the West cannot afford to shut their eyes. […] Mr. Pašić’s loyalty to the [Karađorđević] dynasty and to the cause of the Entente are above suspicion, […] but he belongs to the peculiar class of statesmen whose high ideals are too often obscured by devious methods. […] Only a knave or fool would call his patriotism in question [but] he is too old to shake off altogether the semi-Turkish traditions of his youth. The fierce conflict, of which he is the central figure, is […] one between past and present, between the conservative forces […] and the new generation which draws its inspiration from the West […] (New Europe, no. 97, 22 August 1918: 127).

Despite the claimed unpopularity of the Serbian Cabinet, the historian had no intention of either changing or forcing the Serbian government out of office owing to the Premier’s professed loyalty to the common Allied cause. Nevertheless, Seton insisted that the Yugoslav unification had demanded the joint action of Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian Cabinet as equal partners (Evans 172–173, 175, 180).

Additionally, Seton-Watson also maintained that all the Serbian parties – with the exception of the Radicals – had been in unequivocal favour of a wider, democratic Southern Slav unification (Milutinović, Odbor 116). Therefore, not only did Pašić’s Pan-Serb policy violate the spirit of the Corfu agreement, but also became the major obstacle for the creation of Yugoslavia. Advising the Serbian politician to reconsider his policy by forming a coalition cabinet with the opposition parties was indeed a covert policy-suggestion for the Allied Cabinets to put diplomatic pressure on the Premier in this matter:
In Serbia, as elsewhere, the true need of the hour is a Ministry of National Concentration [therefore] Serbian statesmen should […] present a united front, both among themselves and as between themselves and the representatives of their Yugoslav kinsmen. […] Allied recognition can only be accorded on the lines of the Declaration of Corfu, and to those in whose name it was concluded—to the Serbian Government […] and to the Yugoslav Committee as trustees of their kinsmen in the Dual Monarchy. These two must continue to act as equal factors and in perfect harmony. Any Serbian statesman who failed to perceive this truth would deserve to be regarded, not merely as an obstacle to the cause of the Allied unity, but as the traitor to the best interest of his race (New Europe, no. 97, 22 August 1918: 127–128).

Overall, Seton-Watson released his article anticipating that by exposing the Serbian Cabinet’s Pan-Serbian tendencies and the undemocratic methods they had utilized to remain in power, the Serbian Primer would have been forced to accept the terms of the Yugoslav Committee in fear of losing all territorial awards along with the Allies’ goodwill. Additionally, the historian asserted that the recognition of the Committee as the representatives of a belligerent Allied nation would have meant the realization of the Pact of Corfu, which – according to the historian’s unique perception – Great Britain had pledged to support. Due to his fierce accusations and offensive remarks on Pašić’s semi-civilized ‘Turkish’ nature and chequered past, Seton’s efforts proved to be considerably counterproductive as they would anger ‘the Beard,’ and strengthen his determination to exclude Trumbić from all Southern Slav political matters (Evans 174, 180; Lederer 37; New Europe, no. 97, 22 August 1918: 127).

Besides Seton-Watson’s article, Steed made one last attempt to settle the friction in the Yugoslav camp by meeting Nikola Pašić in London in October 1918. The journalist believed that all differences could and should have been resolved along rational lines, and urged the Premier to accept the Yugoslav Committee as the official and equal partner of the Serbian Cabinet. Arguably, such a move could have earned the émigré organization a similar belligerent status which the Bohemian and Polish national councils had been granted before, and would have stimulated the creation and recognition of the united Southern Slav state likewise. However, to his anger, Steed was forced to realize that Pašić had had no desire to share the power with the Yugoslav expatriates. Furthermore, the Premier had imagined the future Southern Slav state as an extension of Serbia. Pašić did not shy away to talk openly, revealing Steed that he had accepted the terms of the Corfu Declaration solely to make a favourable impression in front of the Western Allies. Additionally, he emphasized that the
The Yugoslav Committee had had no mandates to represent the Habsburg Yugoslavs, and therefore, he could have only received its members in the capacity of private individuals. Losing his temper, at this point Steed accused Pašić of acting like a stubborn sultan, and upon returning to the Crewe House, he composed a memorandum for Arthur Balfour informing the Foreign Minister on the unfortunate proceedings (MacMillan 114, 124–125; Steed, Thirty II: 235–239).

As the weeks passed without any progression in regard to the Yugoslav case, Seton-Watson decided to explain the inter-Yugoslav relationship for the Foreign Office in a separate memorandum, entitled ‘The Policy of Mr. Pashitch and the Jugoslav Problem,’ written on 4 October 1918. After Steed’s unsuccessful attempt, the historian did not hide his disappointment of the Serbian Cabinets’ betrayal of the Corfu agreement, and exposed those international developments and circumstances which had forced Pašić into temporary reconciliation with the Yugoslav Committee:

For the past year there has been a slow but steady process of estrangement between the Pashitch-Protitch Cabinet and the Jugoslav Committee, which has now reached an extremely acute stage. The Declaration of Corfu in July 1917, which seemed to set a seal on the friendship of the two, was in reality forced upon the Pashitch Cabinet by external events—on one hand the Russian Revolution, with its emphasis on ‘self-determination’ and the American influence, and on the other hand by Mr. Pashitch’s need of the Jugoslav Committee’s support or at least neutrality in internal politics. Since then, the Pashitch Government has publicly done lip service to the Corfu Declaration, but has steadily refused to apply the principles therein laid down (Correspondence I: 352–353).

Besides summarizing the nature of the inter-Yugoslav conflict, – in agreement with the views of Trumbić and of late Supilo – the historian underlined that the Southern Slav unification would have been realized on a ‘Yugoslav basis’ and with the consent of the Yugoslavs, and not through the conquest of the Serbian army:

The issues at stake are fundamental. It is a struggle between the Pan-Serb solution, as represented by Pashitch and Protich, and Jugoslav idea, as accepted by the great body of Serbian and Yugoslav intellectuals. [...] The Yugoslav Committee is unanimous in holding that only possible basis of Yugoslav union is one of complete equality between the various kingdoms and provinces—assuring free expression to the populations of the Yugoslav countries, to decide their own fate. In their opinion and in that of all their
friends, Serbia is not entitled to an inch of territory on a basis of annexation, compensation, or ‘access to the sea,’ but solely as the result of a free expression of will on the part of her kinsmen across frontier. Final union can, therefore, only be decided by constituent assemblies in Agram, Laibach, Sarajevo, etc (ibid. 353–354).

Additionally, the memorandum outlined a proposal on the Yugoslav policy which the Foreign Office ought to have pursued by then, and urged the British Cabinet to recognize the Habsburg Yugoslavs as an Allied nation, their units – primarily composed of Yugoslav defectors stationing on the Italian side of the front – as allied and belligerent troops, while the members of the Yugoslav Committee as the representatives of the Habsburg Yugoslavs. Furthermore, the historian advised the Foreign Office to demand the formation of a national government from the Serbian Cabinet – consisting of the Serbian parties and the representatives of the Yugoslav Committee – which could have ratified the Corfu Declaration as its official programme (Correspondence I: 355–356).

As a response to the accusations of Seton-Watson and Steed, when Pašić visited Paris in September 1918, he tried to undermine the Yugoslav Committee’s position as an authority over the Habsburg Yugoslav affairs once again. Subsequently, although in the last autumn of the war both Pašić and Trumbić resided in Paris, their efforts had remained uncoordinated even when Allied victory had been within reach. As the Habsburg Empire’s generic disintegration had been in the making, Trumbić tried to convey the idea of a joint all-Yugoslav conference in Paris with the aim to create the political organs of the future Southern Slav state (Albrecht-Carrié 49; Lederer 43). Staunchly guarding the means to control the process of unification, Pašić dismissed these attempts, and emphasized that by the Allies acknowledging Serbia’s right to liberate its kinsmen could have alone fostered the genesis of Yugoslavia.278 Albeit Arthur Balfour disapproved of the Serbian Premier’s position, the Foreign Secretary hesitated to recognize the émigré organization (Lederer 40–43) despite Seton’s and Steed’s instance that the Corfu agreement made the Committee and the Serbian Cabinet equal parties. By this time, the British Cabinet had accepted the terms of the Corfu Declaration as the framework for the future Yugoslav state, nevertheless, perceived the recognition of the Yugoslav Committee contra-productive as it could have overwritten the fundamental principles of unification outlined in the settlement, which had set to realize

278 To secure Serbia’s position as the liberator of Yugoslav lands, Pašić prevented the Yugoslav Volunteers – a group of ex-Habsburg soldiers numbering circa 80,000 and fighting on the Allies’ side – to be officially recognized as an occupation force (MacMillan 125–126), thus eliminating a potential competition for the Serbian army in the process of unification.
Yugoslavia as a unitary state under the rule of the Karadordević dynasty (Evans 174–176). In reality, the British Cabinet was inclined to accept Seton-Watson’s position on the necessity of a Serbian-Habsburg Yugoslav government, but from a legal-constitutional point of view, they expected the extension of Serbia into the Habsburg Yugoslav territories with the intention to simplify the recognition of a unified Southern Slav state, which ought to have been constitutionally reframed to meet the spirit of the Pact of Corfu later (Djokić, Kingdom 62; Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 52).

Despite the efforts of the pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals Great Britain would play a direct role neither in the dissolution of Austria–Hungary nor in the genesis of the united Southern Slav state. In the last year of the Great War, more than 400.000 soldiers – equipped with machine guns, artillery and aeroplanes – were concentrated in the Allied camp in Salonika under the command of General Franchet D’Espéry (Mitrović, Great War 313), and would prove to be valuable in preventing Habsburg forces to be transferred to the Western front. By the time the Allied counter-offensive began in the Balkans in June 1918, the Bulgarian and Ottoman alliance had been on the verge of collapse. In September 1918, the Allied units easily defeated the demoralized, demotivated, disillusioned and exhausted Bulgarian forces (Hall 310), and with Bulgaria’s removal from the war, Southern Hungary was subjected to the attack of the joint French-Serbian army (Hall 311; Morrow 255–256).

Soon the sudden collapse of the Habsburg military in late October 1918 triggered a chain of spontaneous events throughout the Danubian Empire, resulting in self-proclaimed revolutionary national governments’ seizure of power, which in effect exacerbated and completed the dissolution of the Habsburg realm within the scope of a few weeks (Becherelli 266; Beretzky, Scotus Viator 35; Lederer 43). Undoubtedly, the summer of 1918 attested that the Empire had no longer possessed the means and resources to take the social, economic and political burdens of the war. Concurrently with the uncontained economic situation and growing disorganization of the public authorities and the state, the Allied recognition of the Polish and Czechoslovak national councils mobilized the national movements in the Empire. The Yugoslav crown provinces and the Kingdom of Croatia–Slavonia were no exception to the social unrest. Besides the anticipation for the Yugoslav Committee’s recognition as a

279 Paget, Leeper and Nicolson all maintained that a federalized Yugoslavia would have fostered rivalry and factionalism among the component entities (Evans 175).
280 A quarter of the reorganized Allied army consisted of Serbian soldiers (Chappell 23).
281 Austria signed an armistice on 3 November, to be followed by Hungary on 13 November. Besides the general armistice, later a military convention was also signed with Hungary specifying the details of the armistice (Marston 201).
belligerent government, the home-grown declaration movement of the Southern Slavs\(^\text{282}\) set themselves in motion, held anti-Habsburg demonstrations and meetings all which prompted a joint Habsburg Yugoslav political action and the concentration of their parties (Cornwall, *Undermining* 212; Djokić, *Kingdom* 53; Mitrović, *Great War* 312–313; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 51; Šepić, *Union* 40; Živojinović, *America* 149, 151).

Albeit the last year of the Great War created the conditions for the formation of a united Southern Slav state (Rusinow 26; Šepić, *Union* 29), the Yugoslav endeavours for Allied recognition would be further complicated by the establishment of the National Council in Zagreb. The unbridgeable discord between Pašić and Trumbić, and the postponement of Allied acknowledgment triggered the Habsburg Yugoslavs to act independent of the Serbian Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee.\(^\text{283}\) As a result, the delegates of the Croat, Serb and Slovene parties in the disintegrating Habsburg Empire formed their own joint representative body, the National Council of the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs in Zagreb. The leaders of the Council – Anton Korošec, Ante Pavelić\(^\text{284}\) and Svetozar Pribičević\(^\text{285}\) – terminated all links with Budapest and Vienna, and declared the independence of the lands inhabited by the Habsburg Yugoslavs on 29 October 1918. Filling the gap of power, with this act the interim State of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs was created, whose national government was entrusted with the task to orchestrate the union with Montenegro and Serbia (Banac, *Nationality* 127–128; Becherelli 266; Djokić, *Kingdom* 53; Pleterski 99; Šepić, *Union* 37).

By the end of 1918, the majority of the Habsburg Yugoslavs favoured some sort of union with Serbia; nonetheless, the details and the form of unification remained an open question throughout November. It should be noted that although the Southern Slav solidarity increased in Croatia–Slavonia in 1918, the Yugoslav idea – the fundamental notion behind the unification propagated by the Yugoslav Committee and their British patrons – had not been deeply embedded in Croatian society, especially not among the disfranchised classes (Becherelli 267; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 51, 109). In effect, most Croats contemplated either a unified federal or an independent Yugoslav state to be formed on the ashes of the Habsburg

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\(^{282}\) The Yugoslav Club, led by Anton Korošec abandoned the goals and principles of the May Declaration and conformed to national programme of the Yugoslav Committee (Tanner 117).

\(^{283}\) In effect, this development had been in the making ever since the May Declaration of 1917. In the summer of 1918, a number of anti-Habsburg demonstrations took place, and the Croato-Serbian Coalition’s popularity increased steadily under the leadership of Pribičević. With the gradual disintegration of the Empire, the CSC started to propagated openly the idea of a common Yugoslav state which had a favourable reception in Dalmatia and among some of the urban intellectuals of Croatia–Slavonia (Lederer 43–44).

\(^{284}\) Not to be confused with the Croatian Fascist Ustaša leader of the same name.

\(^{285}\) The Croato-Serbian Coalition under Pribičević tactically joined the National Council, which fostered the illusion that the Council had a wide public support (Evans 181–182).
Empire, meanwhile the Habsburg Serbs unequivocally preferred union with Serbia (Lederer 43; MacMillan 125). It was evident for the leaders of the Council that joint efforts had to be made with the Serbian Cabinet to work the exact details and process of unification, therefore, Korošec, the President of the National Council called for an All-Yugoslav conference in Geneva at the beginning of November (Pavlowitch, Serbia 109).286

The Geneva Conference – held between 5 and 8 November 1918 – was an attempt to create and present a united Southern Slav front by convening the representatives of the National Council, the Yugoslav Committee, the Serbian Cabinet and the Serbian opposition to specify the particularities of the Southern Slav union for the Allied Powers in a joint public declaration. Accepting Seton-Watson’s argument that Pašić and the Pan-Serbs had been trouble-makers, the Foreign Office welcomed the initiation, and together with its French counterpart applied pressure on both the Serbian Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee to come to terms. In the course of the conference, Trumbić – whom Korošec had meanwhile officially entrusted with the task of representing the National Council in Paris (Albrecht-Carrié 49) – proposed the creation of a joint government which would have represented the Southern Slavs until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. Till then, the state would have assumed a dualistic arrangement, consisting of two equal sovereign entities, the Kingdom of Serbia with Montenegro attached to it, and the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, consisting of the former territories of the Habsburg Empire (Banac, National 133–134; Djokić, Kingdom 53–54; Mitrović, Great War 321–322; Stenton 115; Zlatar 398).

The question of power-sharing and the formation of joint political bodies representing the united Yugoslav state evoked an emotionally charged, heated debate filled with offensive remarks leaving the conference to end almost without an agreement being reached. Pašić – the sole representative of the Serbian Cabinet at the conference – had accepted the invitation to Geneva in the belief that only a joint declaration on Yugoslav solidarity would have been issued, nonetheless, he found himself confronted with the pivotal questions of the Pan-Yugoslav state’s political arrangements. Outnumbered by a united Yugoslav front and pressured by the Allies,287 the Serbian Premier eventually capitulated and agreed on the formation of an All-Yugoslav executive political body (Djokić, Kingdom 54; Lederer 46–48).

286 In November, the Serbian Cabinet was in the process of relocating its headquarters from Corfu to liberated Belgrade, while Pašić was still residing in Paris (Pavlowitch, Serbia 109).
287 By late October, the French and British high officials lost their patience towards Pašić who had been stubbornly insisting that the Serbia’s war-time endeavours instantly earned Belgrade the right to represent all the Yugoslavs (Evans 174).
The Times was quick to report on and propagate the details of the Geneva Declaration, claiming that with a unanimous agreement the representatives of the former Habsburg Yugoslav territories and the Serbian Kingdom had expressed their intention to create a common state on a number of shared principles. Until the general elections and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly aftermath, the National Council and the Serbian Cabinet would administer their own respective entities regarding internal affairs, while a joint government with twelve ministers would manage the common matters of foreign policy and national defence. Additionally, the Times underlined that the National Council had exclaimed its wish to obtain recognition from the Allies as a belligerent Allied government (Times, 15 November 1918: 5). Similar to the Corfu Declaration, the Geneva Declaration seemingly attested that Trumbić’s political vision had prevailed over Pašić’s designs as the temporary dualist outlook of the unified state supposedly confirmed a future federal arrangement for the common state (Lederer 47–49; MacMillan 125; Mitrović, Great War 322).

However, such a perception of Seton-Watson and Steed proved to be remarkably deceitful, as upon returning to the newly liberated Belgrade, Pašić and his Radical Cabinet resigned to void the agreement. Moreover, the politician decided to notify only Stephen Pichon, the Foreign Minister of France on the resignation, while leaving the Council and the Committee in dark for several days concerning his action. Later, Pašić attempted to deceive Korošec and Trumbić by falsely claiming that Prince Regent Aleksandar had refused to endorse the outlines of the Geneva proposal. In effect, his actions served the purpose of temporization while the self-proclaimed Serbian local national assemblies in Bánát, Bácska, Bosnia–Herzegovina and Montenegro – encouraged from Belgrade – would vote hastily to declare union with Serbia, thus, strengthening Pašić’s control over the process of unification. A week after his resignation, Pašić formed a coalition cabinet with the Serbian opposition parties, and generously proposed the National Council to enter the new Serbian Cabinet based on his own term (Djokić, Kingdom 54; MacMillan 126; Šepić, Union 41).

Both Seton-Watson and Steed were suspicious of the Serbian Premier – who ‘change[d] his mind every few hours and [could not] be trusted for five minutes with his word of honour or anything else’ (qtd. MacMillan 125) –, and doubted whether Aleksandar had refused to ratify the Geneva Declaration:

After their experience of Pashitch during the last few weeks and in view of his having refused to show them actual documents, the Yugoslav representatives (both those from Zagreb and those of the Committee) are sceptical as to the truth of his assertion that
the Crown Prince is not disposed to ratify the Geneva Agreement (Correspondence I: 364).

For this reason, they sent a joint telegram to Aleksandar stating that some representatives of the National Council ‘wish[ed] to make it clear that they d[id] not accept unreservedly the statements of Pashitch that the Prince Regent ha[d] declined to ratify the Geneva Agreement’ (Correspondence I: 365). In reality, Pašić had withheld the conclusion of the agreement from Aleksandar, notwithstanding, as the truth was revealed, Prince Regent forced the Premier to resign from his office (Zlatar 400). With the major obstacle being removed, Stojan Protić formed the first All-Yugoslav national government by mid-December, in which Korošec became the Deputy Prime Minister, Trumbić received the Foreign Ministry, Pribičević was given the Ministry of Interior, while Pašić was appointed the head of the Yugoslav peace delegation in order to deter him from the capital (Lederer 52–53; MacMillan 122).

Due to the sudden chain of events in autumn 1918, the Allied Powers possessed little, conflicting and perplexing pieces of information on the developments in Central Europe, nevertheless owing to Pašić’s intrigue, they once again postponed the recognition of a united Southern Slav state. When the Italian Cabinet learnt the formation of the National Council, Orlando and Sonnino decided to realize the terms of the Treaty of London by utilizing Italian occupation forces, which soon entered Slovene territories and landed on the shores of Dalmatia as well. Primarily, these actions were fostered by the fear that the National Council would seize control of the former Habsburg fleet and naval bases (Lederer 45–46, 50–52), which could have balanced a considerable power in the hands of the Southern Slavs.²⁸⁸

Despite the concerns of the Italian Cabinet, the National Council did not even possess the means to either contain or end the disorder which became rampant after the dissolution of the Austro–Hungarian state.²⁸⁹ In the course of autumn, the economy came to a halt in Croatia–Slavonia and Dalmatia, and due to shortages of food and the absence of law and order, peasants attacked landowners, the military mutinies multiplied while gangs were raiding the cities. As the Italian forces entered the Southern Slav lands – occupying first Trieste and Fiume, and moving towards Dalmatia – the National Council was overruled by panic. Facing the prospect of the former Habsburg Yugoslav lands being divided among

²⁸⁸ With the proportionate division of the former Habsburg fleet, the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs would have been awarded with merchant and war ship. However, eventually the proposal of Orlando and Sonnino prevailed in the Supreme War Council, forcing the entire Habsburg fleet to be surrendered to the Allies in Corfu (Lederer 54, 56; Živojinović, America 203–204).

²⁸⁹ The National Council exercised control mostly over the towns, while the Serbian inhabited areas formed local national councils. These local councils refused to accept the authority of the Zagreb interim government and called for the immediate unification with Serbia (Evans 181).
Austria, Hungary, Italy and Serbia, leaving the residue to constitute a small independent Croatian state (Becherelli 267; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 51, 108), the sole alternative for Zagreb was to proclaim the unification of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs with Serbia as soon as possible. While the Council pleaded for the Serbian army to enter Croatia–Slavonia and Dalmatia to save the Yugoslav territories (MacMillan 126; Pavlowitch, *Unification* 37–38), the Montenegrin National Assembly convened in Podgorica on 26 November, and passed a resolution overthrowing the Petrović dynasty and declaring Montenegro’s unconditional union with Serbia. In light of the Italian threat, the National Council’s delegation visited Belgrade at the end of November 1918, and formally expressed the wish of the former Habsburg Yugoslav territories to join Serbia in a union. Correspondingly, Prince Regent Aleksandar proclaimed the unification of the Kingdom of Serbia with the State of the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs into a single state, and announced the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on 1 December 1918 (Djokić, *Kingdom* 54–55, 86–87; Evans 118, 181; Lederer 52; Morrison 41).

Conclusively, although the Habsburg Empire’s sudden collapse stimulated the creation of a single and united Southern Slav state, nonetheless, the Yugoslav unification was accomplished in an unanticipated fashion without any Yugoslav fractions controlling the process (Lederer 45–46; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 62, 108; Zlatar 397), and, moreover, without the exact details of the interim period – which the common state would have operated on – being clarified (Djokić, *Kingdom* 62–63; Pavlowitch, *Serbia* 109). To save Istria and Dalmatia from Italy, neither the Croatian nor the Slovene political elite hesitated to declare the Act of Union with Serbia, while they perceived that the Wilsonian principles would have been sufficient guarantees against any Pan-Serb designs in the aftermath (MacMillan 126).

With the new war policy being adapted in the spring of 1918, the British Cabinet was inclined to accept the claims of the pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals that the Yugoslav idea had corresponded with the self-determination of the Southern Slavs (Stenton 122). However, the political division among the Southern Slavs raised a number of questions concerning the stability of the future unified Yugoslav state. Although the leaders of Great Britain and France decided to support the cause of Southern Slav unification, owing to Sidney Sonnino’s intrigues and persistent objections, the Western Allies temporized and kept postponing the Yugoslav recognition. In essence, in the second half of 1918, Arthur Balfour tried to find the

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290 Sonnino did his utmost to undermine the Yugoslav unification by any means. For instance, while Clemenceau strongly argued for strengthening the Allied troops in Salonika to prevent the transfer of Habsburg divisions to the Western front, the Italians Cabinet would refuse to let 18,000 Southern Slav prisoners of war join the Serbian army on the Balkan front (Lederer 40–41; Lloyd George, *War Memoirs V*: 220–221).
golden mean by withholding the recognition to satisfy Italy, while concurrently encouraging the Southern Slavs to stimulate resistance in the Habsburg Empire (Lederer 38–39; Walworth 56).

By the summer of 1918, the danger of an anti-Italian Habsburg offensive disappeared, and along with the rising enthusiasm of the Habsburg Yugoslavs for national self-determination, it altered Rome’s attitude towards the Yugoslav question (Živojinović, *America* 150, 203–204). As a result, Sidney Sonnino entrusted General Petro Badoglio—a man with solid knowledge on the Southern Slavs and the affairs of the Balkans—with the task to devise and implement a series of coordinated anti-Yugoslav actions to minimize arguments against the implementation of the Treaty of London by proving that the All-Yugoslav Cabinet failed to consolidate its control over the Southern Slavs. Since Badoglio was well-aware of the fact that the Yugoslav idea had been mostly supported by the Croatian intellectual and middle classes, his strategy targeted the weak spots and dividing lines of Yugoslav cooperation to solidify Italian positions in the Eastern Adriatic (Motta 141–142).

With the prospect of armistices with the Habsburg Empire in the early November 1918, the Allied Supreme War Council sketched demarcation lines to identify the territories to be evacuated by Austria and Hungary. Additionally, these Southern territories were divided into four zones, each being mandated to an Allied army for occupation. Unfortunately, for the Yugoslavs, the Italian zone coincided with the Treaty of London Line, and within the course of two weeks, the Italian army would manage to realize the terms of the armistice, while also occupying the strategic points of the Dalmatian coast including Istria and Zara. At first, the Italian troops acted as liberators, and distributed food for the Southern Slavs, who constituted the majority of the population. However, once the disarmament of the occupied regions was completed, they terminated all communication with the outside world to contain, curb and mitigate Yugoslav sentiments and opposition in occupied Dalmatia. The Governor of Dalmatia position was soon created, which foreshadowed that Rome would have had no intention to relinquish the Adriatic territories (Albrecht-Carrié 50; EVA/1/1/4; Živojinović, *America* 203–204, 216–217, 231–232, 262).

Eventually, the Italian contingents crossed the line of their demarcation zone, and moved into the Dalmatian hinterland, seized Fiume and Cattaro (Kotor)—both belonging to the French occupation zone—and pursued to take Ljubljana as well. Originally, owing to the

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291 General Petro Badoglio had been the chief initiator of the intensified Italian propaganda campaign directed against the Habsburg Empire in early 1918. The General conceived the idea of a propaganda campaign independent of Steed, nonetheless, unsurprisingly the two would be the major advocates of its execution during the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Rome (Cornwall, *Undermining* 190).
Italian pro-Hungarian sentiments and the belief that Austria–Hungary would have survived the war, Fiume had not been assigned to Italy in Pact of London. However, as the Dual Monarchy had disintegrated, Orlando and Sonnino unilaterally reopened the case of Fiume, and refused to relinquish the port city to the Yugoslavs (Živojinović, *America* 269). Correspondingly, the Italian peace delegation asserted the opinion that ‘the collapse of Austria–Hungary and the unexpected emergence of a compact and powerful Jugoslav State’ had produced an entirely new economic and military situation in the Adriatic region which forced Italy to request Fiume on the premise of the nationality principle (Nicolson 179–180).\(^{292}\)

Being the birthplace of the *novi kurs* movement, and possessing the second largest harbour in the Adriatic connected to a railway line, Fiume was both a symbolic and economically vital city for the commercial and maritime development of the unified Yugoslav state (Lederer 105–106), which the Southern Slavs would refuse to yield. Due to the Italian actions, the National Council in Zagreb ordered the conscription of irregular units to stall Italian movement in the Yugoslav hinterland until the Serbian army could have entered the region. Albeit the Serbian army was eagerly moving northwards into Southern Hungary and south-eastwards to Northern Albania and Montenegro, the infantry subunits deployed by Belgrade proved to be valuable in preventing the occupation of Ljubljana (Lederer 56–58; Živojinović, *America* 208–209, 270).

Concurrently, according to the Italian designs, an intensive propaganda campaign was initiated in the Yugoslav territories to aggravate the discord between the Serbs and the Croats by encouraging Croatian separatism and left-wing movements. The campaign lasted until early 1919, and presumably accomplished nothing else than intensifying the local population’s hostility towards the occupiers. The ill-treatment of locals and the confiscation of private merchant ship and fishing flotillas (Živojinović, *America* 243, 250–251) triggered anti-Italian violence in Dalmatia and Ljubljana, peaking in brawling and acts of vandalism. The Italian military excluded Allied participation in the investigations of these clashes, and consciously abused these incidents to produce one-sided reports implying that the sole means to keep the Yugoslav state together had been violence (Motta 142). Concurrently, the Southern Slav clergy, former mayors, civil servants and intellectuals were scrutinized with special attention, many of them being eventually interned to Sardinia. To complicate Yugoslav unification further, the Italian Cabinet supported the claims of the dethroned

\(^{292}\) The city *per se* was Italian in ethnic outlook, nonetheless, the surrounding region was overwhelmingly inhabited by Yugoslavs.
Nikola, the king-in-exile of Montenegro, allowed the Montenegrin government-in-exile to operate on Italian soil, and also assisted in the armament of royalist Montenegrin legions (Lederer 71–75; Morrison 43; Motta 155; Živojinović, *America* 224, 228, 244, 260, 263).

Undoubtedly, the Italian-Yugoslav controversy was further complicated by the Montenegrin Question. King Nikola – who was the father of the Queen of Italy as well – claimed his dethronement and the unification of Montenegro with Serbia to be illegitimate, enacted upon the threats of the Serbian army. Besides the question whether the Montenegrin ‘self-determination’ had been a result of Serbian pressure, the unification came into conflict with Wilson’s ‘Fourteenth Points’ speech which had promised restoration for Montenegro (Nicolson 149; Walworth 58). King Nikola was eager to point out these controversies in his memoranda and pleas submitted to the Allies, and pursued to maintain the illusion that a resorted and independent Montenegro had been a viable way (Djokić, *Kingdom* 84–85, 87; Lederer 113–114).

As the part of the agenda to delay the recognition and to weaken the unified Yugoslav state, Italian diplomacy readily supported King Nikola’s claims for the power (Marston 61), and did its utmost to keep the Montenegrin Question afloat until it suited Rome’s interests (Walworth 58). Correspondingly, Sidney Sonnino would apply a double approach on the case of Montenegro: albeit supporting the king’s argument that the Podgorica Assembly had acted upon Serbian pressure when the voting on the unification with Serbia (Lederer 114; Morrison 41), in reality, the Italian Foreign Secretary perceived the small Balkan state as a concession for Serbia in exchange for the annexation of Dalmatia (Biagini 161; MacMillan 127). In liaison with his scheme, Sonnino ordered the Italian legates to advocate the preservation of Montenegro as early as mid-October 1918 (Motta 140).293 Simultaneously Montenegrin royalist regiments were armed and a propaganda campaign was launched to fuel anti-Serbian sentiments in the small Balkan country (Biagini 161).

The overall situation in Montenegro was perplexing for the Allied Powers. Visiting Montenegro as a member of a small Italo-American contingent in November 1918, Major Scanland underlined in the *American Territorial Report* that only a small group had favoured the return of the king and the restoration of Montenegro, while the majority supported a federal union with Serbia with a certain degree of self-government retained for Montenegro (Albrecht-Carrié 106). Correspondingly, President Woodrow Wilson dismissed the claim that

293 Since late November 1917, the Italian Cabinet had been given financial assistance to the Montenegrin government-in-exile to weaken the positions of the unionist Montenegrin Committee (Pavlović, *Balkan Anschluss* 127).
King Nikola or his government-in-exile had represented the people of Montenegro. Nevertheless, he also voiced his concerns over the legal aspects of the proceedings in the Podgorica Assembly. Albeit Great Britain subsidized King Nikola’s residence in Paris (MacMillan 128), the British delegation shared little sympathy toward ‘the Peasant King’ (Nicolson 149), and regarded Montenegro’s union with the Yugoslavs as an economic necessity (Pavlović, *Balkan Anschluss* 139). Besides the United States, Britain also sent several envoys to Montenegro – including Ronald McNeill, Harold Temperley and Roland Bryce – to report on the local conditions and to confirm the validity of the allegations concerning the unification. In sum, these envoys perceived the Serbian pressure as a minor issue, and in general accepted the unification of the two states (Nicolson 150–151). Meanwhile – as Harold Nicolson, the member of the British peace delegation recalled it²⁹⁴ – two competing Montenegrin groups arrived at Paris, both trying to claim the right to represent Montenegro at the peace conference. Supported by King Nikola, the Montenegrin government-in-exile²⁹⁵ strived for the restoration of Montenegro’s sovereignty, while their opponents, the Montenegrin Committee²⁹⁶ – established under the stimulus of Pašić in 1917 – favoured the unification with Serbia and was backed by the National Assembly in Podgorica (Djokić, *Kingdom* 85–86; Lederer 26, 113; Marston 61; Pavlović, *Podgorica* 160; Živojinović, *Montenegro* 360).

Despite the presence of the two Montenegrin delegations, the Council of Ten decided to leave the question of Montenegrin representation open (Marston 61), and on 12 January 1919 adopted a formula explaining that although Montenegro should have been represented in

²⁹⁴ King Nikola and his aspirations were well-known, as the sovereign had sent a memorandum on his political programme to the Department of Information in September 1917 as a response to the Corfu Declaration and the creation of the Montenegrin Committee for National Unification (Živojinović, *Montenegro* 360–361).
²⁹⁵ The Smuts-Kerr mission’s separate peace attempt with the Habsburg Empire opted for an enlarged Serbia which would have included Montenegro as well. Despite General Smuts not having experience or knowledge concerning the Balkans, overall the Foreign Office and the Lloyd George Cabinet agreed that Great Britain had been bound to reward Serbia. Albeit the controversy of Montenegrin and the Yugoslav unification was acknowledged, no attempts were made to produce a solution for the Montenegrin Question (Živojinović, *Saveznik* 445–447).
²⁹⁶ The Montenegrin Committee for National Unification was formed in the spring of 1917 under the presidency of Andrija Radović. It was established under the stimulus of Nikola Pašić, who wished to ensure that Montenegro’s unification with Serbia by any means. Besides expressing solidarity with the aims of the Corfu Declaration in August 1917, they issued their own national programme in March 1918 which called for the union of Montenegro and the rest of the Yugoslav world. Albeit the group was not against unification, they wished to include Montenegro in all negotiations, arguing that the small Balkan state had been an independent and Allied state. They argued that signing a separate peace with the Central Powers and abounding his Kingdom relinquished King Nikola of the right to act on behalf of the country. Overall, the manifestos and declarations of the Montenegrin Committee garnered neither attention nor response among Yugoslavs and the Allies (Djokić, *Kingdom* 86; Janković 391–392; Masaryk 125; Pavlović, *Balkan Anschluss* 119–121; Pavlović, *Podgorica* 160; Živojinović, *Montenegro* 360).
the peace conference,\(^{297}\) the internal conditions of the country had rendered it impossible to fill the seat reserved for the small Balkan state (Lederer 116; Nicolson 150–151). Regardless of his initial support, in reality, Sonnino did not wish to award Montenegro a separate representation or to allocate its seat to Serbia as both scenarios would have strengthened the Yugoslav delegation by gaining an additional voice (Lederer 109–110; Walworth 59). Although on 5 March 1919, a Montenegrin General was allowed to read King Nikolas’ statement in front of the conference, the Counsel of Ten would neither recognize Montenegro as an independent state nor question its union with the other Yugoslav lands in the upcoming months (Albrecht-Carrié 107). As a result, Montenegro would be represented ‘by an empty gilt chair and a white card on the blotting pad’ (Nicolson 151) in the course of the peace conference, while its unification with Serbia had never been acknowledged formally by the Allies (Djokić, \textit{Kingdom} 64–65; Pavlović, \textit{Balkan Anschluss} 146).\(^{298}\)

For Seton-Watson, Serbia absorbing Montenegro was a natural presumption,\(^{299}\) and henceforth the historian had never bothered to enter any lengthy discussions concerning Montenegro.\(^{300}\) However, in 1920, Seton-Watson felt bound to answer the allegations of a systematic campaign questioning the validity of the Podgorica National Assembly’s decisions of 1918.\(^{301}\) In his article entitled ‘The Question of Montenegro’ Seton exclaimed that as the people of Montenegro had spoken the same language, had worn the same costumes, and had sung the same folk songs as the rest of the Yugoslavs, the notion of a culturally distinct and separate Montenegrin nation had been misleading and false. Claims on the opposite ‘rest[ed] upon gross misstatements of fact [and] a misreading of history’ (\textit{New Europe}, no 181, 1 April 1920: 265–266) according to Seton, since the misdemeanours of King Nikola and his Cabinet

\(^{297}\) In preparation for the peace conference, in November 1918, Montenegro was intended to be grouped with Serbia and Greece, but Serbia protested on the admission of a separate Montenegrin delegation arguing that the National Assembly of Podgorica had pronounced the country’s unification with the rest of the Yugoslavs (Marston 61).

\(^{298}\) Additionally, despite the appeals and memorandums of the Macedonian Societies in Switzerland, Noel Buxton and James David Bouchier, the Supreme War Council refused to deal with the Macedonian Question. Correspondingly, they refuse suggestions on referendum, autonomy or Macedonian representation at the peace conference (FO PRO 608/44/535; FO PRO 608/44/655).

\(^{299}\) In contrast with Seton-Watson’s views, Edward Carson mentioned the case and claims of Montenegro in his speech delivered at the inauguration of the Serbian Society of Great Britain, emphasizing that as Montenegro ‘had proved herself so brave and independent that no one would ever attempt so brave and independent that no one would ever attempt to coerce her into any form of government to which she objected’ (\textit{Serbian Society} 7).

\(^{300}\) As early as 1907, the historian had already dismissed Montenegro as the unifier of the Southern Slavs: ‘Of Montenegro and its possible future as a Slav Piedmont it is impossible to speak within the present limits’ (Seton-Watson, \textit{Future} 54). In the course of the Great War, Seton-Watson received news on the activities of the Montenegrin Committee, and its president, Andrija Radović sent a copy of his memorandum to him in September 1917 (Pavlović, \textit{Balkan Anschluss} 126; Živojinović, \textit{Saveznik} 137).

\(^{301}\) The Podgorica Assembly was organized by the Montenegrin Committee and with the financial assistance of the Serbian Cabinet. Disregarding the Montenegrin Constitution of 1905, the delegation was convened by either bribing or handpicking candidates in favour of unification or (Pavlović, \textit{Podgorica} 160–161).
– ranging from financial exploitation to show trials, scandals and abuse of power – alone questioned their entitlement to represent Montenegro at the peace conference. Additionally, he argued that King Nikola’s ‘final act[s] of treachery’ – signing a peace treaty with the Central Power and abandoning his country – had considerably abated the prestige of the royal dynasty (ibid. 266–267), and strengthened the desire for unification with Serbia (Morrison 36–37).

Meanwhile, the second course of Italian action enforced the Inter-Allied blockade in the Adriatic according to the strategic needs of Italian expansionist policy. In essence, this meant that the Italian Admiralty limited transportation and movement in the region, impeded the relief work and in many cases prevented the unloading of ship. Originally, the plan of food relief sent to Central Europe and the Balkans had been conceived by Woodrow Wilson to prevent the outbreak of revolutions by aiding the issue of starvation. However, the schemes of the President would be thwarted upon the objections of France and Great Britain, which both wished to allocate and reserve all available resources to their own respective armies. Correspondingly, the two Western Allies prohibited or strictly checked food movement in their occupied zones after the armistice (Živojinović, America 220–221, 229, 232). Owing to the British and French approach, the Italian actions in the Adriatic were only subdued to strong criticism when they interfered with the supplying of Allied regiments. In reality, the Western Allies had many opportunities to challenge the Italian treaty and course of actions, nevertheless, as the Cabinets in London and Paris were determined to conclude a peace treaty with Germany as soon as possible, and they did not wish to delay the signing of the armistices or the opening of the peace conference with Inter-Allied disputes. Therefore, they maintained Allied solidarity and allowed Italy to implement the terms of the Pact of London (Goldstein 161–163; Lederer 60–62; Marston 139). However, as reports on local resistance and minor clashes from Dalmatia were received, the Allies were soon forced to face the possibility of an Italian-Yugoslav armed conflict (Lederer 62, 64). Rome’s firm objection to coordinate the occupation policy with the rest of the Entente Powers (Živojinović, America 208–209, 210–211, 280) threatened the situation to become uncontrollable, and prompted the United States to take initiative in the Adriatic Question (Lederer 66, 76; Živojinović, America 216, 240–241).

As Italy pursued to realize and furthermore to go beyond the awards of the Treaty of London Line, the White House grew convinced that the Italians had been intentionally sabotaging the restoration of order by destabilizing Fiume and Spalato to justify their military occupation. In effect, the American navy closely scrutinized the Italian endeavours in the
Adriatic, and gave detailed accounts of the incidents and the intolerance of Italian policy. Owing to the exceptional humanitarian endeavours, military presence, political missions and diplomatic activity of the United States in the Adriatic region, direct confrontation with Italy became a matter of time. Nevertheless, President Woodrow Wilson – well-known for disregarding secret treaties – would reserve to debate the case of Dalmatia at the peace conference (Motta 140; Živojinović, America 226–227, 240).

Besides the Allied Powers, Seton-Watson and Steed were also the spectators in the hurried creation of the Pan-Yugoslav state (Pavlowitch, Serbia 115). In effect, a second Congress of Oppressed Nationalities had been in preparation in Paris, when the armistices with Austria–Hungary (3 November) and Germany (11 November) were concluded (Seton-Watson, Introduction 29). Due to their lack of information on the developments in the Southern Slav territories, the duo’s primary concern evolved around the possible intrigues of the Pašić clique, as Seton expressed it in late 1918: ‘As for Jugoslavia, information is scanty and we are very much in the dark regarding the Beard and his intrigues’ (Correspondence II: 12). However, the issues of the new state went beyond the Pan-Serb schemes, as besides organizing food supplies and relief, the interim government had to unify the Southern Slav lands economically, while concurrently protecting the Yugoslav territorial interests in Bánát, Carinthia and Dalmatia (Lederer 81). Moreover, with the exception of Greece, the frontiers of the unified Southern Slavs with the rest of its six neighbours were contested (MacMillan 129). Therefore, Seton-Watson’s summary of the peculiar Yugoslav position assessing that ‘of all the new states which the war ha[d] brought into being, none is confronted with so many delicate frontier problems as Jugoslavia’ (New Europe, no 122, 13 February 1919: 97) was undoubtedly fitting. With the proclamation of the State of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the crusade for a united Southern Slavs did not conclude, as the conditions and circumstances leading to the genesis of Yugoslavia would force the British champions of unification to closely scrutinize and intervene in the developments of the upcoming Paris Peace Conference.

5.2. The Southern Slav Question and the Paris Peace Conference

During the peace conference Henry Wickham Steed, Robert William Seton-Watson and Arthur Evans resided in Paris at their own expense (Myres 27; Seton-Watson, Introduction 29). After the German armistice, the Department of Propaganda for Enemy

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302 Seton-Watson and Steed shared a rented apartment (Beretzky, Seton-Watson 81).
Countries was disbanded (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 28–29), therefore, Seton-Watson could reassume his position as the editor of the *New Europe*. Meanwhile Steed was appointed the Editor of the *Times* in February 1919, henceforth Evans took his placed as the Acting Chairman of the Serbian Society of Great Britain.\(^{303}\) Albeit none of them held any official status nor were they directly involved in the peace-making process, with their articles, memoranda, frontier maps and unofficial diplomatic activities, they had been able to exert indirect influence on the settlement in regard to Central Europe. In the course of breakfasts and dinners, Steed and Seton frequently consulted the delegates and committee members of the Habsburg successor states. In effect, they persisted acting as the unofficial advisors and informal spokesmen for the Eastern European nation-builders, and their expert knowledge and expanded network of acquaintances among the members of the peace delegations would make them a valuable asset to back-channel and ‘pen’ diplomacy (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 38; Seton-Watson, *Making* 340–341, 343; Walworth 91).\(^{304}\)

‘I shall draw my horns, keep as much in the background as possible, keep myself informed and write, both for public and for private consumption’ (*Correspondence II*: 14), Seton-Watson summarized his future course of action for the duration of the peace conference. Correspondingly, the historian resumed his contacts with many of his old time Yugoslav acquaintances such as Jovan Jovanović, Pero Čingrija, Anton Korošec, Josip Smolčaka, Božo Banac and Ivo Lupis-Vukić (ibid. 21, 23). Owing to his intense correspondence, Seton would remain informed concerning Southern Slav matters, and would scrutinize the actions of the All-Yugoslav Cabinet and the Italians attentively and suspiciously.\(^{305}\) Regardless of Pašić being transferred to Paris, Seton distrusted the new Protić Cabinet, and was ‘concerned that due to Pašić’s Panserb cliques, Trumbić would resign as the Foreign Minister and eliminate him from the Yugoslav delegation, and thus the Croatian interests would not be appropriately represented’ (ibid. 34).\(^{306}\) Although Trumbić would remain in his position until late November of 1920, the controversial nature of the Yugoslav unification provoked debate concerning the representation of the new Southern Slav state at the peace conference.

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\(^{303}\) The replacement concurred in March 1918, when Steed joined the Department of Propaganda for Enemy Countries (Seton-Watson, *Making* 388).

\(^{304}\) Notably, Seton-Watson’s memorandum on the Hungarian frontier, submitted in December 1918, evolved into the official British proposal on frontiers with the modification that it awarded all the grey zones to the successor states (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 36).

\(^{305}\) The *New Europe* would persistently report and protest Italian actions in the Adriatic (*New Europe*, no 125, 6 March 1919: 185–186).

\(^{306}\) Prime Minister Protić discontinued the financing of Yugoslav Committee in January 1919 (Lederer 88).
Being recognized as belligerent Associated Powers, the delegates of the Polish and the Czechoslovak Republic were removed from the defeated enemy camp. However, due to the Italian reservations a similar conduct was denied from the Habsburg Yugoslavs (Marston 201–202), and as a result, only the Kingdom of Serbia received an invitation for the peace conference. In liaison, during the Plenary Session on 18 January 1919, the Yugoslav delegation was officially addressed as the representative of the Serbian Kingdom. Nonetheless, the Yugoslavs demonstratively chose to refer to themselves as the ‘Delegation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes’ throughout the whole conference (Albrecht-Carrié 106; Mitrović, Great War 325).

Originally, at the peace conference four representative seats would have been allocated to the Kingdom of Serbia to be filled by Nikola Pašić, Ante Trumbić, Milenko Vesnić and Ivan Žolger, while Josip Smođlaka, Otokar Ribarž and Mateja Bošković would have represented the Yugoslav Cabinet as committee delegates (Djokić, Kingdom 68).\(^{307}\) Attempting to satisfy all sides, the composure of the Yugoslav delegation was ‘an amazing mixture of good and bad’ (Correspondence II: 13) – as Seton observed it – and resembled the sudden and hasty genesis of Yugoslavia, forcing the Southern Slavs with different political traditions into an immediate cooperation (MacMillan 129). Being a long-time acquaintance and friend, Seton approved of the recruitment of Josip Smođlaka, deeming that the Dalmatian ‘ha[d] even more statesmanlike views than before, and a sweet reasonableness which carry[ed] weight even with the Beard and the most reactionary crowd’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 341). Smođlaka was indeed a reasonable and experienced politician, who had openly championed the Yugoslav national cause as a member of the Reichsrat. Despite the historian’s objections of ‘the Beard,’ it should be emphasized that Nikola Pašić had managed to govern Serbia through the Great War, and albeit he could not compete in international popularity with the likes of Eleftherios Venizelos or Edvard Beneš, who was a well-known and respected figure in the Allied camp, and who had remained firmly loyal to common cause throughout the Great War (Djokić, Kingdom 71; Lederer 91–93).

Additionally, neither Seton-Watson nor the Yugoslav Committee were fond of Pašić’s ‘hanger-on[, Milenko] Vesnić’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 350) owing to his enduring and dependable loyalty to the Serbian Cabinet. Irrespective of their assessment, the Serbian Minister in Paris was an intelligent and superb diplomat with excellent communication skills

\(^{307}\) Overall, among the seven major delegates – who made up the supreme body of the Yugoslav peace delegation – three were Serbian Radicals, two Dalmatian Croats and two Slovenes. The extended delegation of the Yugoslavs numbered ninety-three members, and included such scholars as Jovan Cvijić, Slobodan Jovanović, and Bogumil Vošnjak (Djokić, Kingdom 65–66; Lederer 89, 93–94).
and a network of well-established political connections. In the course of the Yugoslav delegation’s hearing in February 1919, the Serbian Minister would prove himself to be the best speaker among the Yugoslavs, who was able to argue for the Yugoslav territorial demands professionally. Besides, in the course of the peace conference Vesnić’s connections in the United States played a significant role in mobilizing Washington D.C.’s support for the Yugoslav cause (Djokić, *Kingdom* 73; Lederer 90–91; MacMillan 130; Seton-Watson, *Making* 415). In contrast with Vesnić, Seton-Watson’s concern over Ivan Žolger was well-founded in the sense that the Slovenian lawyer and university professor had been appointed a minister without a portfolio in the Austrian Cabinet (*Correspondence II*; 13; Djokić, *Kingdom* 73–74). Albeit he would not side with Pašić as the historian expected it, nominating Žolger as the Slovenian member of the peace delegation transpired to be a serious mistake on behalf of Anton Korošec, as the lawyer’s ‘Austrian past’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, *Making* 350) offered an excellent theme for propaganda which the Italians did not hesitate to capitalize on (Lederer 90).

Among the four peace delegates, Trumbić was the most natural and logical choice as not only was he an authority on the Dalmatian region, but the Foreign Office also regarded him as a reasonable and reliable person who seemed determined and willing to make the Yugoslav union work. As the leader of the Yugoslav Committee – similar to Pašić – he also enjoyed a limited international repute, was well-known in the British political circles owing to Steed and Seton, moreover, his inclusion in the delegation confirmed Croatian zeal for unification. Nonetheless, the advantage this person could have provided for the Southern Slavs disappeared as the Yugoslav peace delegation had no time to draft their territorial demands, in addition to arriving at Paris while still trying to settle their personal differences. As a consequence, in lieu of engaging in territorial bargaining, the Southern Slav representatives would support each other’s maximal claims in the beginning to maintain a fragile, somewhat artificial solidarity in the Yugoslav camp (Djokić, *Kingdom* 66, 70, 72; Lederer 82–85, 91, 111), which was poised by several intra-delegate quarrels.

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308 Vesnić served as the Serbian Minister in Paris between 1904 and 1920, when became the Prime Minister of the Yugoslav state for a year (Djokić, *Kingdom* 88; Seton-Watson, *Making* 415).

309 As the leader of the Serbian delegation during the Serbian diplomatic mission of early 1918, Vesnić had the chance to meet both Wilson and Lansing. It should also be noted that his wealthy American wife had been on friendly terms with Mrs. Wilson (Lederer 90–91; MacMillan 130).

310 Oftentimes Trumbić – who despite being appointed as the Foreign Secretary of the newly-formed Yugoslav state had not visited Belgrade once – irritated the Serbian delegates by using the term ‘former Serbian Kingdom,’ implying that that Serbia had ceased to exist (Lederer 88, 91, 111). Meanwhile Trumbić often complained that Vesnić had not shared up-to-date pieces of information with him concerning the Adriatic Question, and moreover, he received documents in Cyrillic, which he could only read slowly. The inter-Yugoslav relations
The Yugoslav peace delegation arrived at the peace conference representing the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, a country without definite borders, without a constitutional framework and without an official Allied recognition (Lederer 82–85; Steiner 88). Although by the time the conference convened, the Yugoslavs had already occupied the majority of the territories they had coveted (MacMillan 130), their delegates soon found themselves in border disputes with the representatives of Italy and Romania (Graebner-Bennett 51; Lederer 82–85). The territorial aspirations of the delegation combined the demands outlined in the Serbian war aims and in the Yugoslav Committee’s manifesto, and besides the right for national self-determination they relied on historic rights, economic and strategic considerations, which often came in conflict with the nationality principle (Lederer 94, 96). While the Croats maintained that the Southern Slav claims ought to be based solely on the nationality principle to save Dalmatia and Fiume, the Slovenian and Serbian delegates could have only justified the extent of their claims in Carinthia and Bánát at the expense of the nationality principle (Djokić, Kingdom 98). Striving to realize the most excessive claims temporarily evaded dispute among the Yugoslav delegates. Nonetheless, Italy would capitalize on the frontier questions in Bánát and the Adriatic to strike discord among the Southern Slavs.

Italy’s overtly anti-Yugoslav intrigues forced the New Europe group to abandon their reconciliatory approach towards Rome, and to take a direct confrontation with both Prime Minister Orlando, and Foreign Secretary Sonnino. More than ever before, the British friends of the Southern Slav would call for the repudiation of the Treaty of London, asserting that the agreement had lost its raison d’être since it had been conducted under the supposition that Austria–Hungary would have survived the war (Steed, Thirty II: 171). Not only did their unconcealed challenge of the treaty foster protest in the Italian press, but also alienated the Italian contributors of the New Europe, with overall seven of them asking for the removal of their names from the list of collaborators by early 1919 (Correspondence II: 10–12, 14, 16, 18–19, 22, 24; Seton-Watson, Making 327–328; 352).

Italy’s betrayal of the Pact of Rome was a personal offense for Steed, who – believing that Wilson could have eventually forced Italy into relinquishing its excessive claims – rejected Orlando requesting him in mid-January 1919 to become a mediator between the Yugoslavs and the Italians once again. Undoubtedly, Steed resuming his role as the well-known champion of the Italian-Yugoslav rapprochement would have lent credibility for the
discussions. However, assumingly, Orlando’s initiation served the purpose of preventing the creation of a separate expert committee dealing with the future of the Adriatic by forcing the Southern Slavs into endless sessions of unfruitful negotiations just to showcase Italy’s apparent intentions in front of its Allies to work a settlement on the Adriatic. Nonetheless, being addressed personally by Orlando in a letter, Steed did not miss the opportunity to remind the Italian Premier in his reply that he had broken his commitment to the Pact of Rome, which additionally he had personally pledged the journalist to keep in the spring of 1918 (Steed, *Thirty II*: 261–262, 278).

Simultaneously with Seton-Watson’s memorandum on the Hungarian frontiers, Arthur Evans utilized his intimate knowledge of the Adriatic region (Myres 27), and submitted a confidential and detailed memorandum entitled ‘The Possible Neutralization of Coastal Waters on the East Adriatic, and Its Bearing on the Rival Claims of Italy and Yugoslavia’ to the Foreign Office on 11 December 1918, revisiting the *New Europe* group’s key arguments on the Adriatic settlement. The document underlined that with the signing of the Pact of Rome, the Italian Cabinet had willingly abrogated the provisions laid in the Treaty of London. Along with the Russian Empire, the prospect of growing Russian influence in the Balkans had been removed as a treat to Italy, and consequently Rome did not need to secure any fortifications in Dalmatia. Based on his conversations with Croatian politicians, Evans confirmed that the Yugoslavs would have relinquished Western Istria with Trieste and Pola to Italy in the spirit of the Pact of Rome, and proposed the neutralization of the Adriatic coast under international surveillance to eliminate any source of contention (EVA/1/1/4).

Utilizing the latest articles of Italian experts, similar to Evans, Seton-Watson sought to challenge and disqualify the validity of Italian strategic considerations calling for the annexation of the Dalmatian coast. Acknowledging Italian fears, the historian maintained that as the Habsburg Empire and its fleet had disappeared, and the peace settlement could have prevented the emergence of another rival naval power in the Adriatic. Unsurprisingly, he suggested the neutralization of the Adriatic coast from Trieste to Corfu as a working solution under the guarantees and scrutiny of the League of Nations (*New Europe*, no 116, 2 January 311).

311 With the Habsburg armistice the pro-Habsburg and Slavophile British officials clashed over to what extent Austria–Hungary ought to be dismembered. Lloyd George and his personal secretary Phillip Kerr disregarded the nationality principle as the sole principle of frontier-making. Economic and historic concerns played a significant role when they opted for Hungary losing Croatia–Slavonia, but keeping its Southern and Northern parts and even Transylvania. Leo Amery, a confident of the British Premier, addressed Balfour in a memorandum on 20 October 1918, warning him not to deal with the frontiers purely on an anti-German basis, or else a new Balkan could have been created. The memorandum written on the Hungarian frontiers in December 1918 was Seton-Watson’s response to Amery’s memorandum (Beretzky, *Seton-Watson* 79–80; Jeszenszky, *Steed* 33–34).
1919, 272; New Europe, no 122, 13 February 1919: 101). Expressing his belief that the spirit of the Torre-Trumbić agreement ratified in the Pact of Rome could re-establish the accord between the two sides (New Europe, no 116, 2 January 1919: 273), Seton tried to escape the anti-Italian accusations while covertly assuming that the Pact of London had been overwritten by the Pact of Rome (Seton-Watson, Making 339).

Aiding the arguments of Evans’ memorandum of late 1918, Seton-Watson published a well-reasoned article (ibid. 327) in the New Europe under the title ‘The True Lines of Adriatic Settlement’ on 2 January 1919 with the intention to facilitate a sound agreement by carefully dissecting Italy’s historic, economic, cultural and strategic claims on the region (New Europe, no 116, 2 January 1919: 269). Providing detailed data concerning the Adriatic, the historian calculated that fulfilling the most extreme form of demands would have meant either the transfer of 700,000 Yugoslavs to Italy or 350,000 Italians to Yugoslavia. In contrast with Dalmatia – where the Italians had constituted a negligible minority of 3% – an exact ethnographic boundary had been unattainable in Istria. For that matter the question of Istria could have been only solved provided the respective sides had been willing to make concession along ethnographic and geographic lines, while also taking into consideration the strategic defence of the two major port cities, Trieste and Fiume (New Europe, no 116, 2 January 1919: 265–266, 268).

Arguing that subjecting Trieste and Fiume to any tariff systems would have had disastrous commercial effects on the surrounding Central European region, Seton proposed both cities to be proclaimed free international harbours to retain their multinational economic function from the Habsburg era (Sluga 31). Pertaining to the territorial belonging of the two cities, the historian maintained that ‘as a centre of Italian culture and sentiment’ Trieste had had to be assigned to Italy, while the acquisition of Fiume – as the other sea outlet which had had a broad railway connection to the mainland – had been an economic necessity for the Yugoslav state (New Europe, no 116, 2 January 1919: 269). Albeit in this regard, Seton would slightly modify his views corresponding with the future developments of the enduring Adriatic Question, his position that Italy solely deserved to be awarded with the Trieste area in the Istrian Peninsula would remain firm. In effect, his views concerning Fiume – as expressed in the January edition of the New Europe – were soon echoed in the memorandum of his former colleague, Harold Nicolson, who conveyed the historian’s suggestions to the Supreme War Council in late January (Seton-Watson, Making 339).

Being a well-known and well-connected figure in the world of political journalism, Steed utilized his personal acquaintance with George Clemenceau and Arthur Balfour,
soon established excessive contacts with the peace delegation of the United States as well. Upon Northcliffe’s personal request, Steed was obligated to compose the lead column for the press magnate’s other influential paper, the *Daily Mail*. In effect, the paper was the sole English morning daily circulated in Paris in the course of the peace conference, which additionally always found its way to the breakfast table of Lloyd George and Wilson (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 29–30; Seton-Watson, *Making* 339). Once Steed learnt that President Wilson and his delegation had been determined to solve the Adriatic Question along ethnic lines, and were also willing to take confrontation with the Italians in this regard, the journalist aided by Seton-Watson and Evans pursued to produce non-polemical articles on Fiume and Dalmatia filled with full of facts and figures with the intention to draw Wilson’s attention to the solutions the *New Europe* group had proposed. Correspondingly, between January and March 1919 the articles of the *Times*, the *New Europe* and the *Daily Mail* attested the highly coordinated attempts of the group to influence the outcome of the Dalmatian settlement. In the course of this period, Seton-Watson and Steed had encounters with the representatives and experts of the Allied Great Powers and the Associated Powers almost on a daily basis, and by February, their expertise and insights would leave a lasting impression on some of the delegates of the United States (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 37; Seton-Watson, *Making* 343, 338–339).

Among the delegates of the United States, Colonel Edward House would become the most significant ally of the pro-Yugoslav British agenda. House was one of President Wilson’s confidential advisors, who would often participate in the Allied meetings as an emissary, and furthermore would occasionally replace Wilson in the Council of Four (Hodgson 230–231, 239; Schuker 276; Wandycz 319). In Wilson’s absence from Paris, House supervised the work of the American peace delegation, and used the press to disseminate his own personal views on the peace-making. Sharing identical visions and goals concerning the principles of the peace settlement, he found Steed – known only as Lord Northcliffe’s favourite journalist for the American delegates (Hodgson 211) – to be a valuable accomplice.

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312 In November 1918, Northcliffe told Lloyd George that he had wished to be included among the British representatives of the peace conference, which the Premier politely declined. Despite this, the press baron ordered his papers – especially the *Times* and the *Daily Mail* – to scrutinize the developments of the peace conference and interfere whenever necessary. The clash of opinion with the Premier stemmed in Lloyd George’s initial fair and moderate approach towards the defeated enemy, while the Northcliffe wanted to bury them in the ground. In the course of the peace-making, Northcliffe had warned the Premier beforehand, one of his papers was about to challenge the views and standing of the Primer (Lees-Milne 115; Riddell, *Peace* 3, 47, 154). As Nicolson recalled the Northcliffe papers’ tone ‘was aimed […] not at the thoughts of their countrymen, but at their emotions. The figure of Lord Northcliffe brooded over the Conference as a miasma’ (Nicolson 60).

313 Similar to the *Daily Mail*, the *New Europe* became attainable in Paris from January 1919 onwards (Seton-Watson, *Making* 340).
In liaison, Colonel often disclosed confidential pieces of information with the journalist, and in return he was able to voice his opinion through Steed’s editorials in the continental edition of the *Daily Mail*. Moreover, by informing House concerning the opinion and wishes of the Associated Powers, Steed served as an informal mediator between the delegates of the respective sides (Walworth 91, 283).

Owing to his covert alliance with Colonel House, after the first territorial discussion of the Council of Ten, the delegates of the United States contacted Steed in early February, asking him to stimulate and urge the Yugoslav delegation to draft their final terms of territorial demands along with a memorandum supporting these claims. Provided these terms were justifiable, President Wilson – wishing to conclude the Adriatic question by mid-February – would champion and impose them on the Italians (Walworth 56; Živojinović, *America* 288). Cordially, Steed engaged in a conversation with Trumbić lasting long after midnight, nonetheless, the Croatian delegate could not commit to any ultimate territorial provisions in fear of upsetting the fragile inter-Yugoslav solidarity. At this point the journalist reminded Trumbić that as Great Britain and France had been bound by the Pact of London, the Yugoslav delegation was risking to lose President Wilson as its sole supporter with its uncompromising approach. The argument of journalist had been convincing enough for the Yugoslav Foreign Secretary, as the following day, Josip Smodlaka visited the apartment of Seton and Steed, bringing along a map outlining six different frontier plans, displaying the most aspiring and the most moderate claims of Italy and the Yugoslavs respectively (*Correspondence II*: 26–27; Steed, *Thirty II*: 278–279).

In the aftermath, Seton, Steed and Evans worked overnight with the Yugoslav representatives on ‘preparing maps and memoranda as a basis for the American proposal to the Italians’ (*Correspondence II*: 28). Their efforts aimed at sketching the Istrian frontier by placing a line in the middle of the most excessive Italian and Yugoslav demands, consequently awarding Italy Western Istria with Pola and Trieste (Steed, *Thirty II*: 279). Their frontier proposal – also known as the Evans Line in regard to Istria – was drawn in the belief that compensations in Asia Minor would facilitate Rome’s willingness to reach an agreement with the Yugoslavs (*Correspondence II*: 27).

In early February 1919, Seton-Watson submitted the map to the delegation of the United States on behalf of Steed (*Correspondence II*: 28; Walworth 56), which was soon forwarded to President Wilson who was about to meet Prime Minister Orlando in the upcoming days. In light of this, Steed addressed Wilson in a follow-up letter, enlightening the President concerning the general ideas behind the proposed frontiers, and notably of the
Evans Line (*Correspondence II*: 30). Eventually, Steed would be given the opportunity to meet President Wilson in person in February and March 1919. In effect, in a mutual agreement he was utilized by the American delegation to divert Wilson from his most idealistic or impractical ideas and opinions by Steed telling him the ‘truth’ in the outright fashion which had characterized the journalist (Hodgson 233, 240; Walworth 283). Nonetheless, these occasions also gave the journalist the chance to patronize the case of the Yugoslavs, and to propagate the *New Europe* group’s vision on the Adriatic settlement for the President. In the end, the map with the Evans Line designed by the pro-Yugoslav British intellectuals served as the American delegation’s official proposal for the Adriatic settlement – with slight modifications added to it (*Correspondence II*: 30; Steed, *Thirty II*: 280).

Due to his convincing professionality and growing reputation among the representatives of the United States, Steed was also asked to summarize his views on the Adriatic Question. The memorandum entitled ‘The Adriatic Settlement’ and submitted to the American delegation on 22 March 1919 told the story of a good-willed and experienced professional in the affairs of Central Europe, who worked restlessly with his fellow associates to bring peace to Europe with a sound settlement pertaining to the Adriatic as well:

> As the only Englishmen who had worked for a number of years both in Italy and in Austria–Hungary, I knew more of the political aspects of the subject than any of my fellow-countrymen. During my six years in Rome (1897–1902) and my ten years in Austria–Hungary (1903–1913) I studied closely and at first hand both the Italians and those of Yugoslavs. I have always kept in close touch with the leaders on both sides and have laboured to bring about an agreement between them. […] the map drawn by the distinguished geographer, Sir Arthur Evans, showing suggested Italo-Southern Slav frontier, was published in the *New Europe*, of October 11, 1917, as representing just settlement. I append this map. The line marked upon it in red has since been generally known as the ‘Evans Line.’ (qtd. Albrecht-Carrié 430–431).

Increasing his image, the journalist also recalled the long history of his endeavours and accomplishments in the Italian-Yugoslav rapprochement:

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314 For instance, on 30 March Steed was entrusted with the task to persuade Wilson into accepting French control over the Saar coal mines (Hodgson 233, 240).

315 Albeit the American proposal would be later referred to as the Wilson Line, in essence, originally it was the Evans Line with slight adjustments.
After the disaster of Caporetto in October, 1917 [...] I induced five of the most uncompromising Jugoslavs to meet an equal number of Italians at my house to discuss a basis of agreement. Two days’ discussion led to joint recognition of the principles that Dalmatia and Fiume should belong to Jugoslavia, and that Pola [...] and Trieste itself with an adequate Hinterland [...] should be assigned to Italy. [...] A further principle to Italo-Jugoslav land-frontiers was suggested by me and assented to both parties. It was that inasmuch as the joint defence of the Adriatic was a common interest of Italians and Jugoslavs alike, the northern frontier of Jugoslavia should be drawn as to give the strongest possible line of Italo-Jugoslav defence against an eventual German attack from the North and that the frontier between Italy and Jugoslavia should be drawn so as to give the strongest possible second line of defence north of Trieste and through Istria.

The results of these conversations having been communicated to the Italian Prime Minister, Signor Orlando, in January 1918, an Italian parliamentary committee was formed to promote agreement with Jugoslavs. Its delegate, Dr. Andrea Torre, was sent to London where, with my help and that of Dr. Seton-Watson and Sir Arthur Evans, he concluded with Dr. Trumbitch the agreement known as the Pact of Rome, which was ratified in April, 1918, at Rome by the Congress of Oppressed Austro-Hungarian Nationalities.

During the Congress of Rome, efforts were made to sketch a definite territorial settlement. Though Dr. Trumbitch had no mandate to make cessions of territory, he informed [...] prominent Italians [...] of his personal views on the subject. They were not essentially different from the ‘Evans Line’ and were regarded by the Italians as satisfactory. (qtd. ibid. 431)

To undermine the personal credibility and political position of Orlando, and to blacken the image of Sonnino, the memorandum recounted how unapologetically Italy had betrayed the spirit of the Pact of Rome, covertly expecting the American delegation to act decisively as the time of compromises with Italians had come to an end:

In conversation with me at Rome, Signor Orlando repeatedly accepted this line as a basis of agreement. When, towards the end of May, doubt arose as to his fidelity to this standpoint and I wrote him asking whether his views were unchanged, he replied by a telegram which the Italian Ambassador in London communicated officially to me. It ran: ‘Tell Steed that my views are unchanged and will not change whatever the consequences may be.’
At the beginning of last November, when the Armistice with Austria–Hungary was about to be signed, Signor Orlando sent for me in Paris [...] to ask my advice upon the situation. He said textually, 'If I could only return to Italy with the certainty that we shall get the Evans Line, I should be able to tranquillise the whole country and to bring about an agreement with the Jugoslavs.'

I assured him that Italy would certainly get something closely approximating to the Evans Line [...] but that way to get it would be for Italy to assist the Jugoslavs to consolidate their unity, and to organize their new State so that its Constituent Assembly [...] might make the necessary sacrifices of territory inhabited by the Jugoslavs in return for the achievement of Jugoslav national unity by the help of Italy. Signor Orlando gave me his word of honour that he would pursue this course immediately. Instead, under influence of Baron Sonnino, he pursued the opposite course (qtd. ibid. 431–432)

Furthermore, upon the journalist’s suggestion, the American delegation had arranged Trumbić to meet Wilson prior the President received Orlando (Steed, Thirty II: 279): ‘I suggested that the President should see to-morrow both Trumbitsch and Orlando, taking Trumbitch first. I promised to prepare Trumbitch so that any proposal the President might make would be certain not to be opposed by him’ (Correspondence II: 29). Correspondingly, Steed and Seton shared a lunch with Prince Regent Aleksandar and Trumbić, and together they conceived a plan to convince Wilson to assume the role of the arbitrator in the Italian-Yugoslavs frontier dispute (Seton-Watson, Making 346; Steed, Thirty II: 280).

The meeting between President Wilson and Foreign Secretary Trumbić had eventually transpired on 6 February just an hour before the President met Orlando (Steed, Thirty II: 278; Walworth 56). The Dalmatian politician confirmed the Yugoslavs demands for Wilson as outlined on the map submitted by Seton-Watson, and asked the President to decide over the question of Italian-Yugoslav frontiers. Although Wilson refused to adhere to the role of the arbitrator unless both parties had requested it, he suggested Trumbić approach Prime Minister Clemenceau, the President of the Peace Conference with a formal proposal asking for American mediation. As a result of the Trumbić-Wilson encounter, the following day, 7 February 1919, the United States recognized the Kingdom of Serb, Croats and Slovenes through Foreign Secretary Lansing’s declaration welcoming the Yugoslav union. Becoming the first Allied state to officially acknowledge the unified Yugoslav state, Wilson and Lansing wished to demonstrate their determination to solve the Adriatic Question along ethnic lines (Albrecht-Carrié 105, 114; Correspondence II: 30; Seton-Watson, Making 346; Steed, Thirty
II: 280; Walworth 56) by also warning Italy of a potential American veto provided their claims had failed to conform to the nationality principle.

Despite Wilson’s initial reservations and reluctance, House and Steed were determined to persuade the President into becoming the arbitrator between Italy and Yugoslavia as soon as possible. For that matter, they had helped the Yugoslav delegation to compose a skilfully-written letter for the Council of Ten in mid-February 1919, putting the question of arbitration out in the open just a few days prior the Southern Slav delegation was heard.\textsuperscript{316} Consequently, this able diplomatic maneuver placed the Italian delegation into an awkward position, as accepting Wilson’s arbitration would have meant the loss of Dalmatia and Italian popular support at home, while a refusal could have implied that Italy’s territorial claims had lacked valid justifications. Eventually, Foreign Minister Sonnino refused the idea of arbitration without any clarifications,\textsuperscript{317} and vetoed the creation of a separate expert territorial committee to deal with the Adriatic Question. Moreover, he would block all attempts to elevate the Yugoslavs to the position of an equal negotiating partner by reserving the case of Italy and the Yugoslavs to be exclusively discussed by either the Council of Four or the Council of Ten (Albrecht-Carrié 112, 117; MacMillan 13; Seton-Watson, \textit{Making} 327–328, 348; Walworth 56–57).

In the course of February, the Associated Allied states were given the opportunity to present their territorial demands in front of the Council of Ten (Marston 103). On 17 February, the Yugoslav peace delegation was heard\textsuperscript{318} in the absence of Italian delegation, which pursued the tactic to avoid any direct polemy with the Southern Slavs (Albrecht-Carrié 108–109). The first speaker in the Yugoslav delegation was Milenko Vesnić, who argued that due to the cultural suppression of the Southern Slavs, the Austro–Hungarian census had been an unreliable source (MacMillan 130), implying that the boundaries of the Yugoslav state ought not to be based on it. The official Yugoslav demands, which Vesnić communicated, strived to realize the broadest territorial project which the Serbian Cabinet had devised at the beginning of the war with a slight modification at the expense of Bulgaria, which the Serbian political elite was eager to punish (Djokić, \textit{Kingdom} 92–93; Mitrović, \textit{Great War} 306–307).

\textsuperscript{316} Specifically, the official request was received by both Clemenceau and Wilson, while being also communicated to the press with the approval of Balfour (Seton-Watson, \textit{Making} 348).

\textsuperscript{317} Additionally, Prime Minister Clemenceau had his own concerns pertaining to Wilson’s role, as the Adriatic settlement could have set a precedent for the application of the Wilsonian principles, which the French Cabinet did not desire to utilize in the settlement with Germany (Albrecht-Carrié 107–108).

\textsuperscript{318} The Allied Great Powers eventually decided to limit the representational quota of lesser Allied states to two seats, nonetheless, due to the Yugoslav protest, their delegation received three seats (Lederer 89, 108–109; Spector 88). Pašić and Žolger would share the third seat.
The Minister in Paris portrayed the excessive claims as earned rewards for Serbia’s loyalty throughout the Great War, but also utilized the German barrier theory, strategic security and the right for national self-determination to justify the proposed borders of the unified Southern Slav state. Correspondingly, the Southern Slav demand in Bánát had remained unchanged since 1914, sketching the border fifty kilometres East to Temesvár, while claims on Bácska were slightly reduced, excluding Baja, but including the Mecsek. Pertaining to the Italian-Yugoslav border, the proposed frontier displayed a small divergence from the former Italian-Habsburg boundary by ceding Trieste to Italy (Mitrović, Great War 306–307), but retaining the whole Dalmatian coast to the Southern Slav state. Trumbić – as the second speaker – avoided to mention the Treaty of London, but defended the Yugoslav claims in the Adriatic based on ethnic and historic consideration, emphasizing the fact that the united Yugoslav state had been established (Albrecht-Carrié 108–111). Additionally, the delegation presented documents concerning the Italian mistreatment of the local Southern Slavs in Rome’s occupation zone (Živojinović, America 262).

Wondering whether they had ‘lost proportion and good sense’ (qtd. MacMillan 130), Seton-Watson was surprised that both the Southern Slavs and the Romanians chose to claim the maximum in Bánát. The possible outcome of conflicting claims concerned the historian, who decided to comment the unfortunate developments in an article entitled ‘A Test Case before the Conference’ published on 27 February 1919. In this New Europe piece, Seton blamed the Southern Slav’s extreme claims on Italy’s reluctance to accept arbitration, yet he delivered criticism on the excessive Yugoslav demands towards Austria, Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria and in the Bánát region as well (Seton-Watson, Making 349–350).

A few days before the Romanian and the Yugoslav delegations was summoned for a separate hearing on Bánát, Seton-Watson had devoted a whole article to address the fate of the region. In ‘The Question of the Banat,’ the historian observed the possible frontier lines from many different points of view, and concluded that due to the ethnographic intermixture of the population, it had been challenging to apply the nationality principle on the territory. He categorically dismissed the exaggerated claims laid by the two parties, and regarded the Treaty of Bucharest a unilateral and invalid agreement concluded without Serbia having been consulted. To solve the issue of Bánát, Seton used thorough statistical data to establish five grey zone areas where the future frontier ought to be drawn. Additionally, to foster an amicable agreement, he even proposed the limited neutralization of Bánát (New Europe, no 122, 13 February 1919: 98–102), asserting that
‘never in all history have Roumanians and Jugoslavs been active enemies, and only an utterly lack of statesmanship and political foresight on both sides and among the greater Allies will allow the question of the Banat, which so obviously lends itself to friendly compromise, to become a source of enmity and discord in the future’ (New Europe, no 122, 13 February 1919: 103).

Irrespective of Seton calling for moderation, both delegations requested at least the two-thirds of Bánát during their mutual hearing (Mitrović, Great War 307). While the Romanians wished all the provisions of the Treaty of Bucharest to be realized, Milenko Vesnić argued that the agreement was invalidated by the facts that the Serbian Cabinet had not been consulted, and that meanwhile Romania had signed a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers (Djokić, Kingdom 88; Steed, Thirty II: 277).

As the treaty with Romania had been concluded in the same fashion as the Pact of Rome, unsurprisingly, Orlando and Sonnino, insisted upon the validity of the Treaty of Bucharest, and firmly supported claims of the Yugoslav state’s neighbours, as they wished to prevent a strong unified Southern Slav state to emerge in the Adriatic (Djokić, Kingdom 88; Albrecht-Carrié 112, 117). However, in the end, the British and American opinion prevailed over the Italian arguments, and a separate expert committee, the so-called Bánát Committee was formed to investigate the case of the region (Albrecht-Carrié 105; Lederer 99; Marston 115; Steed, Thirty II: 277). Despite being defeated in the Bánát Question, Sonnino managed to leave the Southern Slavs excluded from discussions on the Italian–Yugoslav frontier. As the settlement of the Adriatic Question had remained reserved for the Council of Four/ or the Council of Ten to decide, the arbitration proposal of the Southern Slavs was officially rejected on 3 March (Marston 68; Seton-Watson, Making 348–349).

Nevertheless, in the spring of 1919, Orlando created one of the biggest crises of the peace conference with the question of Fiume (Hodgson 178). Addressing the Italian claim on the already occupied Fiume, Steed expressed his belief in his memorandum on ‘The Adriatic Settlement’ that either had been the pursuit of Fiume added to the Italian goals to satisfy and disarm the jingoist pressure at home or as a compensation tactic for renouncing Dalmatia in the long run (Albrecht-Carrié 432–433).

In effect, since February, Italy had been temporizing the case of the Italian–Yugoslav frontier and persisted blocking all the attempts of

319 Foreign Minister Pichon confirmed that the Serbian Cabinet had literally no knowledge about the exact terms of the agreement (Djokić, Kingdom 88).

320 As Steed claimed it, Signor Barzilai, a Jewish Italian from Trieste had been the brainchild of Fiume’s annexation, who had unofficially confirmed Italy’s economic consideration in this regard to a prominent French politician (Albrecht-Carrié 432).
the Southern Slav delegation to move forward. However, as these tactics gradually angered both President Wilson and State Secretary Lansing, and the issues of the Adriatic settlement transformed into a focal point between the delegation of Italy and the United States (ibid. 123–124, 127). As a result, by April the fate of Fiume and Dalmatia had become a recurring topic among the Allied Great Powers (Živojinović, America 287) as reflected in Orlando’s letter sent to Wilson on 3 April 1919:

The quite unexpected way in which the Italian question came up for discussion to-day, made it impossible to examine more thoroughly the many difficult points, including even questions of procedure, which present themselves. [...] As for the very delicate matter of giving a further hearing to the representatives of the Slovenes and Croats,—against whom Italy has been at war for four years,—I would not insist against it, just as I would not exclude the advisability of giving a hearing to the representatives of any other enemy people on whom it is a question of imposing conditions. But, on the other hand, as no such debate has yet been granted, I insist in thinking it advisable to abstain from taking part in a meeting which, as things stand, must necessarily give rise to debate (qtd. Albrecht-Carrié 439).

In mid-April, Woodrow Wilson had become more determined than ever before to solve the Adriatic Question within the scope of a few weeks, and correspondingly asked the experts of the United States’ delegation to draft the official American proposal on Fiume and Dalmatia. Utilizing the map sketched by Steed, Seton and Evans, the American professionals slightly adjusted the Evans Line in regard to Istria – which would be later referred to as the Wilson Line –, nonetheless awarded the Southern Slavs with the whole Dalmatian coast. The question whether an independent Fiume or a free port could have served the Southern Slav interests better under the given circumstances caused tremendous pondering for the experts. In the end, they opted to empower the soon-to-be-convened League of Nations to appoint a commission to govern Fiume, while Dalmatia would have been administered by the Council of the League of Nations until 1929 when a plebiscite would have determined the fate of the region. The official proposal of the United States was handed over to Orlando by Wilson himself, who had outlined the major considerations of the American solution for the Italian Primer in a lengthy memorandum in the meantime (Albrecht-Carrié 123–124, 127, 449, 453–454; Walworth 53, 344).

For instance, in mid-April 1919, Pašić suggested a plebiscite to settle the disputes (Albrecht-Carrié 128).
To aid the efforts of President Wilson, Great Britain and France tactically replaced the Council of Ten with the Council of Four to isolate Orlando – who indeed lacked the knowledge of English— from Sonnino. The multiple discussion sessions of the ‘Big Four’ devoted to the Italian-Yugoslav question started with Orlando presenting the official Italian claims on 19 April. Demanding the annexation of Fiume, the Italian proposal deliberately went beyond the lines of the Pact of London with the aim to yield Dalmatia in exchange for Fiume in the course of negotiations – as Steed’s memorandum had foreshadowed it almost a month before. Albeit Wilson was willing to advert from his principle in case of Tirol, he insisted on assigning Fiume a free port status like the one Danzig had received. By accepting the New Europe group’s position, he deemed that the port would have been necessary for the commercial life of the Southern Slavs state. However, vetoing the Italian plan would lead to a deadlock in the Adriatic Question (Marston 165–166; Steiner 88–89).

As the discussion of the Council of Four on the Yugoslav situation concluded without a solution, Lloyd George made an attempt of his own by inviting the other two European Allied Prime Ministers, their Foreign Ministers, and four other delegates to his residence on 21 April 1919. In the absence of Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George tried to reason with the Italians, nonetheless Orlando insisted on first taking Fiume before entering discussions on relinquishing Dalmatia. Moreover, the Italian Premier categorically refused the Wilson Line as the frontier, as it was based on the proposal of an overtly biased ‘Yugoslav organ’, the New Europe. Joining Orlando’s effort, after belittling the Southern Slav state for its lawlessness, Sonnino reminded Clemenceau and Lloyd George that neither Paris nor London had championed the Croatian cause when Serbia was to be compensated with Croatian territories in exchange for yielding Macedonia to Bulgaria. Additionally, neither Britain nor France had been any reluctant to sign the Pact of London, therefore, the Foreign Minister could not understand the newly-found inflexibility of Rome and Paris. As the discussions commenced, the Italians took a formal confrontation by threatening the Allies with Italian withdrawal from the peace conference prior to signing the German treaty unless the Wilson Line had been abandoned and an agreement was reached in the forthcoming weeks (Albrecht-Carrié 135, 141, 476, 480; Graebner-Bennett 51; Walworth 57, 344–345).

322 Due to the growing interest of the American press, the English language had briskly gained significance in diplomacy competing with the French language the end of the Great War. In effect, to speed up interchange, the ‘Big Four’ mostly used English during their sessions, forcing Prime Minister Orlando to rely on the assistance of an interpreter (Marston 228)

323 On 4 April 1919, Wilson received the appeal of five American experts who argued that the port of Fiume had been ‘vitaly necessary to the economic life of Jugo-Slavia’ (qtd. Albrecht-Carrié 440).
As the conclusion of a German peace treaty was the primary concern of both Great Britain and France, the Prime Ministers and the Foreign Ministers of the respective countries remained on the side-lines during the dispute among the Yugoslavs, the Italians and the United States. Consequently, since they did not wish to risk the chance of a quick peace settlement by alienating Italy, they persisted on maintaining friendly relations with Orlando and Sonnino. Besides, despite the subpar Italian war-time performance, Great Britain and France felt pledged to realize the terms of the Pact of London (Riddell, *Peace* 53, 56; Steiner 88). Although explicitly rejecting Orlando’s claims on Fiume, neither Great Britain nor France would challenge Italian actions or national aspirations in Dalmatia within the refinements of the London provision. Behind the curtains, both countries pressed Rome to make compromises pertaining to the Adriatic region, while letting Wilson and Lansing confronting the Italians (Albrecht-Carrié 113, 150–151; Lederer 66, 76; Steiner 88).

The Italian attitude and exaggerative territorial appetite provoked Wilson to publish a public appeal for the Italian people on 23 April (Graebner-Bennett 51; Steiner 89) with the

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324 Foreign Minister Arthur Balfour would address the issue of Fiume in a memorandum sent to the Italian Prime Minister in late April 1919, reminding Orlando that the circumstances of 1918 had been fundamentally different with the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire. Although acknowledging that the Treaty of London bound Great Britain, he emphasized that as the majority of the population in question rejected the provisions of the Treaty of London Line, establishing frontiers had transformed into a complex issue requiring careful considerations from all sides. The Foreign Minister expressed that Fiume would have remained a Southern Slav city, and added that the solution had depended upon the Italian Cabinet, which ought to have reconsidered the long-term necessities of Italy in the Adriatic settlement (Albrecht-Carrié 149–150).

325 The British peace delegation was aware of the Italian actions in the region. In the early spring Harold Temperley, a historian employed by the War Office, spent six weeks in Dalmatia visiting areas under Italian and Yugoslav control as part of a mission. His investigations were reported to both the American and British delegations once he returned to Paris in the second half of April 1919. Based on his observations the Italians overestimated their support in Dalmatia and were surprised to encounter public animosity and anti-Italian sentiments. He argued that the Italian actions had not been premeditated in thorough details, but had evolved in the course of occupation aiming to repress pro-Yugoslav and unionist voices in Dalmatia. The news on spreading diseases had transpired to be fake and had utilized a method to cover the oppressive Italian measures by temporarily eliminating all communication lines with the outside world. Temperley believed that the Yugoslav Cabinet would have not used any armed forces until Dalmatia or Fiume to be officially awarded to the Italian Kingdom. Additionally, he confirmed that Slovenes— with the exception of the Klagenfurt area— were generally in favour of the Yugoslav union, while the majority of Croats agreed with the merger of Yugoslav territories, most of them wished Croatian autonomy not to be sacrificed for the sake of a centralized state (Albrecht-Carrié 456–457). In effect, Great British had no clash of interests in Italian domination over the Adriatic, while France solely opposed a strong Italy (ibid. 113). When Wilson enquired concerning the premises of the London Treaty in January 1918, Balfour replied him that while the British Government had its objections pertaining to the secret agreement, “a treaty is a treaty: and we—I mean England and France (of Russia I say nothing)—are bound to uphold it in letter and in spirit. the objections of it indeed are obvious enough: it assigns Italy territories on the Adriatic which are not Italian but Slav, and the arrangement is justified not on the grounds of nationality but on ground of strategy” (qtd. Lederer 61). From a diplomatic point of view, the Great War eliminated two of Great Britain’s greatest imperial rivals, Germany and Russia. Moreover, despite the burdens of the conflict, both the domestic and imperial unity managed to survive, nonetheless, the underlining question, that is, how the victory in the war could have been transpired into the peace settlement according to British interests still remained unanswered. With the end of the war, Great Britain strived to maintain the loyalty of the colonies and dominions, and to readjust its commercial relations to the new frontiers of Europe (Darwin 359–360).
aim to utilize the public opinion to pressure the Italian peace delegation to accept the provisions of the Wilson Line as a beneficial solution for Rome (Walworth 57). In the appeal, Wilson revisited the principles of his ‘Fourteen Points’ speech, and emphasized the contradictory nature of the Pact of London. Additionally, he pointed out that the war-time agreement had been concluded against Austria–Hungary, a state which had ceased to exist by the end of the war along with the threats it had imposed on Italy before. Furthermore, the President argued that besides strategic considerations, Italy had no valid arguments to claim Dalmatia and Fiume. Echoing one of Seton-Watson’s suggestions, he expressed that Italian security could have been guaranteed by the demilitarization of the Adriatic Sea supervised by the League of Nations (Albrecht-Carrié 141–142; Riddell, Peace 53, 56; Walworth 346).

Wilson’s idea of a public appeal originated from the warm reception he had endured in the course of his visit to Rome in January 1919. However, in reality, the President considerably misjudged the contemporary mood in Italy, where the manifesto struck the public by surprise. Albeit in principle they shared the views of the United States, the French and British Cabinets – whose leaders, Clemenceau and Lloyd George had been in the midst of persuading Orlando – were equally astounded by the President’s private initiation. In essence, the manifesto’s sole achievement was that it postponed the fall of Orlando until the early summer, who in response, ceremoniously and demonstratively left the conference to be greeted at home with ovation (Albrecht-Carrié 148, 198–199; Hodgson 236; Steiner 89; Walworth 57).

Approaching the finalization of the German peace treaty, Orlando’s walkout – seemingly triggered by the Wilson Manifesto – was a political bluff to force the British and French Cabinets to reconsider their position on the annexation of Fiume (Hodgson 236). In effect, the Italian Prime Minister’s plan backfired, as supreme discussion continued as the Council of Three (Marston 165–167), while Clemenceau and Lloyd were quick to warn Orlando and Sonnino that Italy was risking to lose all concessions outlined in the Pact of London provided they had not returned before the German treaty was finalized. As a result, the Italian delegation quietly returned to the conference on 6 May (Steiner 89), where the German delegation would be presented the terms of the peace treaty on the following day without the Adriatic crisis having been resolved (Hodgson 242).

The questions of the Austrian peace treaty – presented for their delegation on 2 June 1919 – indirectly assisted the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Referring to the state of the Southern Slavs in the preamble of the peace treaty as an Associate Power meant that Great Britain and France officially approved the unification of the Yugoslav
territories (Marston 201–202; Steiner 88). Besides welcoming the developments in this regard, Arthur Evans, as the new Acting Chairman of the Serbian Society voiced his concerns to Lloyd George in a memorandum written on 9 July 1919 on the deportations, arrests, and other ‘acts of violence and repressions to which Southern Slav nationals had been exposed to in the name of the Armistice Conditions’ by the occupying Italian forces. Owing to the reports of Josip Smolčika, the memorandum provided a detailed account on the atrocities the Southern Slav population had been forced to endure (Correspondence II: 37–38), nonetheless, as the Treaty of Versailles was signed with Germany on 28 June 1919, the British Prime Minister wished to minimize his direct involvement in the proceedings of the peace conference (Steiner 89). Although negotiations commenced between the delegation of the United States and Italy in May 1919, and a number of proposals were produced back and forth, they failed to bridge the gulf between the differing positions (Albrecht-Carrié 168, 181; Marston 243).

Meanwhile the strikes and the parliamentary crisis in Rome forced Orlando out of his office in mid-June, and Giovanni Giolotti became the new Prime Minister. Giolotti was aware that the circumstances had changed sufficiently since the conclusion of the Treaty of London and, therefore, Italy needed to adjust its position to the new international situation. His Foreign Minister Carlo Sforza had been known for advocating a compromise with the Southern Slavs ever since the outbreak of the Great War. The former Italian Minister in Corfu knew the most important figures in the Serbian politics, and was among the few Italians who had supported and urged cooperation with the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes which he had regarded as a new rival state in the Adriatic. In liaison, Giolotti and Sforza produced their own proposal for the Adriatic Question in late 1919, which would have assigned Istria to Italy, and would have transformed Fiume into a free state under the League of Nations. Furthermore, in return for voiding the Treaty of London in regard to Dalmatia, they pursued to secure a ‘costal strip’ in Dalmatia by keeping Zara as an adequate guarantee for the protection of Italian minorities in the region (Albrecht-Carrié 294–295, 297, 300–301; Correspondence II: 75; Marston 167; Steiner 89). Albeit the Giolotti Cabinet’s compromising approach seemed to be a promising beginning for the Adriatic settlement, the case of Italian-Yugoslav frontiers was, meanwhile, further complicated by the private military venture of

326 The fact that the Serbian government-in-exile in Corfu was forced to rely upon the support of the Allies gradually led to the improvement of Italian-Serbian relations, especially after Carlo Sforza was appointed as the Italian Minister in Corfu. The diplomat developed an amicable relationship with Pašić, and wanted to convince Sonnino that supporting the north-eastward and north-westward expansions of Serbia would not have endangered Italian aspirations in the Adriatic by any means (Lederer 23–24).
Gabriele D’Annunzio. Once it had been settled that other Allied forces would move in the region, D’Annunzio and his army unilaterally seized and annexed Fiume to Italy in September (Nicolson 182; Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 54).

The international crisis that the annexation of Fiume triggered also mobilized the members of the Serbian Society of Great Britain. By the time the pressure group’s meeting convened, Seton-Watson had already commented on ‘the Italian raid on Fiume’ in his article ‘Italy and Fiume,’ concluding that the prospect of a just settlement had never been as distant as after the annexation (New Europe, no 158, 23 October 1919: 31). Arguing that the annexation could not have been justified either along the provision of the Pact of London or along ethnic lines, Seton revisited his position concerning Fiume. While in essence the historian’s proposal on Fiume in August 1919 meant the transformation of the city into a free port – excluded from the Yugoslav custom area – and the creation of an autonomous unit within the Southern Slav state – retaining all the privileges it had enjoyed in the Dualist era –, after the annexation had commenced, Seton suggested the creation of the Free State of Fiume under the supervision of the League of Nations (Correspondence II: 53–53; New Europe, no 149, 21 August 1919: 123).

Unsurprisingly, the meeting of the Serbian Society in late 1919 strived to produce a settlement plan which the pressure group could have propagated to solve the deadlock in the Adriatic. In effect, their major points reflected the former American proposal of April in regard to Istria, henceforth it retained the Wilson Line and envisioned Fiume as a free state. Their resolution along with a map enclosed was communicate to the leading British newspapers (Correspondence II: 57–58), while the pressure group produced another resolution urging the League of Nation to enforce the provisions of the Wilson Line by expelling ‘Garibaldi’s pinchback imitator’ from Fiume as soon as possible (Seton-Watson, Making 382). Concurrently, the British pro-Yugoslavs also assisted the peace delegation of the Southern Slavs in late 1919 by translating and forwarding the Southern Slav proposals to the Foreign Office (Correspondence II: 64, 393).

In reality, with the conclusion of the German peace treaty in late June 1919, the Southern Slav question became a liability for the Western Allies. Soon afterwards the singing of the Treaty of Versailles, both Woodrow Wilson327 and David Lloyd George left the peace conference, while the hitherto close cooperation between the British and French diplomacy

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327 Owing to his old age, Wilson had a poor cardiovascular system, and in early April, he fell ill in Paris with influenza. During the Adriatic crisis, the President might have suffered a minor stroke on 28 April. The news was withheld from the Allies along with Wilson’s physical illness and its mental consequences (Hodgson 233–234).
had started to disintegrate (Correspondence II: 73; Marston 167). Pursuing to solve the Adriatic problem without the United States, the European Allied Powers opened the new plenary session of the peace conference in January 1920 in the absence of the American delegation. Besides the Hungarian peace treaty, the session evolved around the Giolotti-Sforza settlement plan, which in essence modified the Wilson Line to the disadvantage of the Southern Slavs, awarding Italy the whole Istrian Peninsula and making Fiume an independent city-state. Despite these adjustments, France and Great Britain decided to support the new Italian proposal, and threatened the Yugoslav delegation with the reconsideration of the Treaty of London Line in case they had refused to take the deal (Albrecht-Carrié 301–302; Seton-Watson, Making 395).

Once learning the latest developments of the peace conference from Ivo Lupis-Vukić, Seton-Watson exposed Allen Leeper to his initial anger in a private letter, warning the government official that the European Allies should not have dismissed the United States’ position pertaining to Istria (Correspondence II: 73–74). In reality, the alarming letters of his Southern Slav acquaintances on Italian actions had already evoked the historian’s criticism on the Western Allied Powers’ lack of intervention in early December 1919, when his article ‘The Danger of Fresh War’ had urged ‘naval units to be deployed in the area to enforce the [Wilson] line’ (qtd. Seton-Watson, Making 383). Albeit the Southern Slav Cabinet was inclined to accept the position proposed for Fiume by the Italians, they rejected the considerable Italian expansion into the Istrian Peninsula. With Wilson’s eventual intervention on behalf of the Yugoslavs in late January, the latest Italian settlement plan was struck from the agenda, and the stalemate in the Adriatic Question commenced (ibid. 395–396).

Expressing his dissatisfaction on the ‘dishonourable policy’ of the Entente ‘urging the Jugoslavs to give in to [a] cynical and disgraceful ultimatum’ (Correspondence II: 69), Seton-Watson devoted a separate article entitled ‘The Adriatic Blackmail’ to voice his ‘bitter disappointment’ concerning the latest session of the peace conference. As he perceived it, the European Allies had taken advantage of the fact that President Wilson’s term had been coming to an end to blackmail the Southern Slavs into an unfair agreement, and owing to their approach they had failed to solve the Yugoslav question once again (New Europe, no 172, 29 January 1920: 57). Presenting the Italian proposal in a form of ultimatum, the Allies in effect treated Serbia – a faithful ally of the common war cause – as an enemy. Interestingly, since October 1919, the historian had changed again his position on Fiume, and would have awarded the city to the Yugoslavs, as argued Fiume into a free state would have had
relinquished the Southern Slav of their only first-rate seaport connected to a railway, which could have been devastating for the economy of their young state (ibid. 59–60).

The enduring and unsolved nature of the Adriatic Question – especially since the annexation of Fiume – increased Seton-Watson’s concern over the prospect of an Italian-Yugoslav armed conflict, as attested by the title of his article, ‘The Danger of Fresh War’ in early December 1919 (Seton-Watson, Making 383). Between May and July 1920, he visited Dalmatia, Sarajevo, Belgrade and Niš in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and had conversation with the likes of Ivan Meštrović, and the newly appointed Prime Minister Milenko Vesnić (ibid. 404–406). Upon his return to Great Britain, the historian asked Leeper to forward his notes to George Curzon, suggesting the new British Foreign Minister tactfully pressure Trumbić to reach an agreement with Sforza to prevent clashes between the Italy and the Southern Slav kingdom (Correspondence II: 88).

Albeit the peace treaties of St. Germain, Neuilly and Trianon managed to solve the issues of the Yugoslav borders in the East and the North (Mitrović, Great War 325), the session of the peace conference in 1920 – regardless of the new efforts made in May – concluded without any solution concerning the Adriatic region (Nicolson 183; Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 54). Nonetheless, the plebiscite of October 1920 held in Klagenfurt proved to be a warning sign for the Southern Slav Cabinet, as the majority of the Slovene population voted in favour of a union with Austria instead of the Southern Slav kingdom. With the American presidential election in progress, the Yugoslavs were isolated without an active diplomatic support of a major Allied country (Albrecht-Carrié 302–303). However, the fear of the Habsburg restoration, and the economic and social issues which struck both Italy and the Yugoslav state, soon fostered the respective sides to come to terms concerning the fate of Istria and Fiume in a bilateral agreement (Graebner-Bennett 51; Mitrović, Great War, 325; Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 54).

Correspondingly, when the Italian and Southern Slav delegations met in Santa Margherita in November 1920, Yugoslavs renounced the Wilson Line, and accepted the outlines of the Giolotti-Sforza settlement plan. The bilateral agreement known as the Treaty of Rapallo temporarily solved the Adriatic Question without the assistance of a Great Power (Lederer 118). The treaty – signed while Woodrow Wilson was lying on his deathbed –

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328 Due to heat exhaustion, Seton-Watson eventually declined to meet Prince Regent Aleksandar (Seton-Watson, Making 406).
divided Istria in favour of Italy, proclaimed the Free State of Fiume, and awarded Zara and three islands to the Kingdom of Italy with additional provision being signed on minority protection and trade (Albrecht-Carrié 303–306; Becherelli 267; Lederer 118; Nicolson 183). Although the Southern Slav delegation managed to save Dalmatian coast and islands with the exception of Zara, Fiume becoming an independent city-state deprived the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes of a significant commercial outlet to sea, while leaving half a million Southern Slavs under Italian auspices (Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 54). Nonetheless, the borders of the unified Southern Slav state had been settled after which the Constituent Assembly of the Kingdom was ready to pass a constitution that – according to the anticipations of the New Europe group – would lay the foundations of national tolerance and prosperity for all the Southern Slavs.

5.3. Overview

The last year of the Great War created the conditions which eventually enabled the formation of a united Southern Slav state. Among these the collapse of the Habsburg Empire and the Allied victory were the most significant components which paved way for the Act of Union between the Habsburg Yugoslav territories and Serbia. The formation of the National Council in Zagreb had transpired in the midst of armistice negations, whose terms outlined the Allied occupation zones in the Southern territories of the dissolving Habsburg Empire. Accepting the Italian position, the Supreme War Council regarded the lands, which the National Council had claimed sovereignty over, as enemy territories to be occupied by one of the Entente Powers according to their mandates. Therefore, the State of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs could not have been acknowledged as a belligerent Allied state as Seton-Watson proposed it. However, accepting the historian’s vision on the method of unification, Great Britain and France expected a joint Serbian-Habsburg Yugoslav government to be formed. Contrary to their anticipation, 1 December 1918 witnessed the sudden and unexpected proclamation of the Yugoslav union, creating a state which lacked an established legal framework to operate, concurrently raising the question whether an entirely new state had emerged or the political-constitutional extension of Serbia had transpired (Djokić, Kingdom 62; Mitrović, Great War 322; Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 52; Šepić, Union 29, 37).

329 As D’Annunzio refused to conform to the provisions of the Treaty of Rapallo, his units were evicted from the Free State of Fiume by the Italian army (Albrecht-Carrié 308–309).
Despite these ambiguities, by the convocation of the Paris Peace Conference, the unified state of the Southern Slavs had already been treated as a *fait accompli*. Albeit the Southern Slav leadership was eager to fulfil the criteria of a sovereign state, owing to Italian protest the Allies did not officially acknowledge either the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes or the All-Yugoslav nature of their delegation, formally treating them as the representatives of the Serbian Kingdom. Nonetheless, the fact that the Allies tolerated the delegation to refer to themselves as the representatives of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, implied that the existence of the united Southern Slav state had been *de facto* acknowledged, also foreshadowing that in the long run the new state would receive its official recognition as well (Djokić, *Kingdom* 63–64; Mitrović, *Peace Conference* 54; Živojinović, *America* 204). In effect, by December 1918, the Historical Section of the Foreign Office compiled a hundred and thirty-page long confidential handbook, known as *Handbook on Serbia*, describing the geographic, ethnic, and economic features of the unified Yugoslav state in detail regardless of the newly-established country had lacked definite borders. Assumingly, the British Cabinet wished to examine whether and how the Southern Slav Kingdom could have been transformed to a strong and stable country in correspondence with the post-war interests and aspirations of Great Britain (FO PRO 373/2/7).\(^\text{330}\)

In course of the Paris Peace Conference, Great Britain strived to create economically and politically viable successor states on the ashes of the Habsburg Empire (Steel 25). Particularly, since the beginning of the Great War, Great Britain had been concerned with reinstating the balance of power in Europe by eliminating German militarism (Wandycz 318). In the belief that the creation of economically stable nation-states with reasonably extended territories would have been able to balance both German and French hegemonic aspirations in the future, by the end of the war the British Cabinet had accepted the *New Europe* group’s arguments and visions concerning the post-war settlement of Central Europe (Goldstein 159–160). Albeit in theory the principle of national self-determination seemed to be an appealing and democratic solution for the reorganization of the region, it soon became evident that redrawing the frontiers along purely ethnic lines had been impossible and moreover

\(^\text{330}\) The handbook concludes with the following observations: ‘Serbian history points to two lessons: (1) the desirability for Serbia to be united with the Jugo-Slavs in an independent State which would thus have the opportunity of a full independent development; (2) the desirability of allowing the Balkan peoples to manage, or even, it may be, mismanage, their own affairs. Serbia, in particular, has suffered bitterly from foreign interference, and she has not, at great sacrifice, eliminated Turkey in order to allow another Great Power to enter the Balkan peninsula. Nor has Western diplomacy been such a conspicuous success there, even when disinterested, as to make the Balkan States desire its paternal intervention. Finally, as Sir W. White long ago saw, it is a British interest to have strong and independent Balkan States as a bar to the Eastward march of Germany and Austria’ (*Handbook* 62–63).
impractical in light of the aspirations of the victorious European Allied Powers.\footnote{According to Colonel House the demand for national self-determination had become ‘a craze and in many instances ridiculous’ (Graebner-Bennett 50).} In liaison, the strategic and economic necessities, interests and aspirations eventually outbalanced the application of the nationality principle in the course of peace-making whenever it could have weakened a successor state in the Associated Allied camp (Beretzky, \textit{Plans} 105–106; Beretzky, \textit{Scotus Viator} 36; Darwin 360; Graebner-Bennett 49–50).

With the signing of the Treaty of Rapallo, the British pro-Yugoslav intellectuals’ struggle for a united Yugoslav state finally came to an end. Although in the last issue of the \textit{New Europe} Seton-Watson expressed his belief that the new frontiers of Europe would have been durable achievements (\textit{New Europe}, no 211, 28 October 1920: 52),\footnote{‘Those who talk of the Balkanisation of Central Europe have failed to see the wood of the trees; and have mistaken the passing effects of the war for permanent features of the landscape’ (\textit{New Europe}, no 211, 28 October 1920: 52).} the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and its borders were ambiguous accomplishments (Lederer 117). Despite the majority of the Yugoslav claims being fulfilled – mostly at the expense of the defeated countries –, it should be noted that the division of Bánát had been attained through sketching an artificial border, while the Italian-Yugoslav frontier had been a result of a compromise, which had violated the principle of nationality (Djokić, \textit{Kingdom} 91; Lederer 82, 118).

The imperfect territorial solutions resulted in the creation of a multi-ethnic state with twelve million inhabitants among whom circa 13\% did not belong to any Southern Slav ethnicities. In effect, no resolutions had been passed on the future of Fiume in the long run, while 700.000 Southern Slavs remained outside of the unified state, stimulating discontent among the Croatian and Slovene citizens that their kinsmen had come under Italian rule. Moreover, the manner and implementation of how Montenegro had been unified with Serbia resembled a ‘Balkan Anschluss’ or an involuntary surrender of statehood and independence. The annexation of the small Balkan state violated both the international law – paradoxically allowing a victorious Allied state to lose its independence – and the will of the Montenegrin people who strived for the unification with the Southern Slav world in a federal state. Not only would Montenegro’s political and ecclesiastical absorption into Serbia upset the balance in the Yugoslav Kingdom in favour of the Serbs, but it would also feed Montenegrin national pride and disillusion in the first common state of the Southern Slavs (Evans 121; Morrison 43, 46; Pavlović, \textit{Balkan Anschluss} 1, 23–24, 145).
Altogether, conversely to Seton-Watson’s optimistic assessment, the question of borders and the multi-ethnic nature of the new state would prove to be a considerable challenge for the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes during the interwar period in terms of foreign policy and security (Albrecht-Carrié 308; Lederer 117; Mitrović, Great War 325–326), which would undermine the integrity of the Yugoslav state. Although the ideals of Southern Slav unification pursued by the Yugoslav idea and championed by its devout British proponents had been eventually realized at the end of the Great War (Šepić, Union 43), the compromises and the constitutional foundations, which the first state of the Yugoslavs were based on, would set in motion ethnic rivalries transpiring into centrist, federalist and secessionist movements. The domestic and foreign policy issues of interwar Yugoslavia resembled the ambiguities and contradictions of the European peace settlement, which instead of establishing a lasting peace fostered enduring hostilities among the European nations, while the experience of the first Southern Slav state together with the legacy of the Second World War would survive into the post-Cold War era.
Conclusions
At the beginning of the Great War, the case of Yugoslav unification attracted a small but influential and well-connected group of supporters in Great Britain (MacMillan 123), who pursued to solve the Southern Slav Question at the expense of the Habsburg Empire’s dissolution. Among these British Slavophiles the most ardent champions of the Yugoslav idea were Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson, who introduced and propagated the notion of national self-determination and the Southern Slav Question for the British official circles and the public opinion. In effect, the creation of a united Southern Slav state became a significant piece in their grand design striving to reorganize Central Europe into independent nation-states as a means to reaffirm the balance of power and British primacy in Europe. Not only did they regard the national aspirations of the Southern Slavs as the major causes of the Great War, but they also argued that a sound and permanent settlement for the Southern Slav Question had been the key for a lasting peace in Europe. Correspondingly, Steed and Seton-Watson engaged in an enduring and extensive propaganda campaign to popularize the destruction of the Habsburg Empire as the only convincing solution to win the war (Beretzky, *Scotus Viator* 29; Calder 25–26; *Contemporary Review*, no 610, October 1916: 429; Cornwall, *Undermining* 176).

Humanitarian relief work and Serbia’s war-time performance provided an opportunity for the British pro-Yugoslav intellectuals to propagate the case of Yugoslav national union in Great Britain. Owing to the endeavours of the Serbian Relief Fund and the Kossovo Day Committee, the Serbian image changed considerably in the first years of the Great War. Besides the Serbian military victories being propagated as indomitable services delivered to the Allied war effort, the Serbophile pressure groups also capitalized on the British guilt felt for the fall of Serbia. As an outcome of the joint war-time experience, the accounts of the British medical units serving in Serbia further strengthened the pro-Serbian sentiments of the British public by demonstrating general sympathy towards the Serbs, their army, country and traditions (Hanak, *World War* 91–92; Markovich, *Identities* 124–126, 130). As a result of several massive campaigns, by the first half of 1916 Serbia’s assessment had changed so considerably that the Balkan country eventually became the most popular Eastern European...
country in Great Britain. Concurrently, ‘Serb’ became an alternative name for ‘Yugoslav,’ and the general public accepted the notion that the Allies had been bound to reward Serbia by fulfilling the desires of twelve million Southern Slavs with the creation of a united Yugoslav state.

Despite the favourable reputation of Serbia, the Yugoslav unification did not move diplomatically forward until the last year of the Great War. As it was revealed, winning over the public opinion proved to be easier than to persuade the British high officials that the creation of a united Southern Slav state corresponded with the primary interests of Great Britain. In reality, as the British Cabinet expected the survival of the Habsburg Empire, the prospect of a unified Yugoslavia and a reorganized Central Europe had not been taken into consideration. Moreover, in correspondence with the desire to win the war as soon as possible, the strategic interests and necessities prevailed over the principle of nationality when territorial awards were negotiated with a potential new ally (Cornwall, Seton-Watson 340; Evans 161–164; Lederer 9, 71).

Owing to the unfavourable developments of the Great War and the ineffectiveness of the Yugoslav Committee, Seton-Watson and Steed decided to mobilize both the British pro-Yugoslavs and the proponents of the nationality principle by establishing the New Europe weekly and the Serbian Society of Great Britain in summer 1916. Both acts marked the beginning of well-orchestrated and highly coordinated propaganda efforts, overtly striving to undermine the reputation of the Habsburg Empire and destroy it (Cornwall, Undermining 176–177). Correspondingly, the Serbian Society of Great Britain acted as mediators among the Yugoslav factions and the Italian Cabinet with the intention of using their reconciliation to convince British Cabinet to revoke the Pact of London and to accept the disruption of the Habsburg Monarchy (Beretzky, Scotus Viator 29; Jeszenszky, Steed 19). Concurrently, following a Eurocentric and Gladstonian liberal approach in foreign affairs, the New Europe group portrayed the Great War as a possible new beginning for the continent (Goldstein 150). Nevertheless, this new European order – as they argued – required the erection of a strong and united Southern Slav state as a counterpoise to German expansionism. Despite its one-sided and biased explanation – uncompromisingly aspiring to realize the reorganization of Central Europe –, the New Europe played a significant role in filling the void of knowledge on the nationality question and Eastern European affairs for the Western public. By the end of the war they had managed to attract supporters for their agenda in the Foreign Office, many of

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333 British admiration for the Yugoslavs was attested by the fact the future British monarch, George VI became the godfather of King Petar II of Yugoslavia, the son of Aleksandar.
whom would become the members of the British Peace Delegation (Goldstein 150; Hanak, World War 181; Jeszenszky, Presztízs 301).

Being a less theoretical than practical person, Steed conformed to Seton-Watson’s visions on the Yugoslav unification, and often acted as a self-proclaimed diplomat in the course of the Great War who had the right to point out and solve the mistakes of the Allied Powers with his suggestions. The journalist was convinced that the German Empire aspired for world domination, and perceived Great Britain to be a major impediment to these endeavours. Prior to the outbreak of the Great War, he had already been sceptic about the future of the Habsburg Empire, while during the July Crisis of 1914, he realized that a general European war would enable the elimination of the German threat. Deeming that the war could be won in the shortest possible time by undermining the weaker state in the Dual Alliance, he was quick to sacrifice the Habsburg Empire’s integrity for the sake of defeating Germany (Jeszenszky, Steed 21). Being aware of the multi-ethnic nature and the nationality issues Danubian Monarchy, Steed argued that championing the nationality principle would destabilize and destroy the Habsburg Empire. Therefore, he urged the Allied Powers to recognize the national aspirations of the Habsburg nationalities as soon as possible. Nonetheless, soon he was forced to realize that not only had the old, traditional diplomacy wished to preserve but they also impeded the destruction of the Habsburg Empire by the policy of secret treaties giving reason for many of the subject nationalities to fight for survival of the Monarchy.

By the end of the war, Steed had become the visible leader of the New Europe group, who managed to reconcile the Italians and Yugoslavs temporarily, and who made a major role in undermining the loyalty for the Habsburg Empire through an intensive propaganda campaign on the Italian front. Owing to his convincing professionalism and growing reputation in the Peace Delegation of the United States, Steed could indirectly involve Seton-Watson and Evans in the settlement of the Adriatic Question. In the interwar period, his attention was reserved primarily for the supposedly defeated Germany. Due to his suspicious nature and incline towards conspiracy theories, Steed was among the first British intellectuals who were alarmed by Hitler's rise to power, and moreover, who firmly rejected the British neutralism and the appeasement policy of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.334

However, failing to appreciate the underlying differences between the Croatian and Serbian traditions and political culture, Seton-Watson and Steed did not recognize the dangers

334 In 1934, Steed claimed in an article entitled ‘Aerial Warfare: Secret German Plans’ written for the periodical Nineteenth Century and After that Germany had been preparing for biological warfare (no 116: 1–15).
of leaving the internal structure of the future common state unspecified (Evans 179–180; Zlatar 394). By the end of the war they both developed an admiration for Pašić and his allies. Overestimating the importance of the Yugoslav sentiments both in the Habsburg Yugoslav territories and the Kingdom of Serbia, they deemed the provisions of the Corfu Declaration would prevent the Serbian Premier to enact a centralizing constitution as his circle would have constituted a minority in the future Yugoslav parliament. In this regard, the duo’s optimism primarily rested on Seton-Watson’s assumption that the Serbian political elite had a general attraction to the Yugoslav idea as attested by the Niš Declaration of 1914.335

Arguably, Seton-Watson, one of the major contemporary experts in the Southern Slavs,336 failed to take into consideration how Serbian nationalism had evolved and how Yugoslavism could have fit its expansionist endeavours. In reality, the historian did not understand the true essence of the Serbian national idea which strived for nation-building and aspired for the unification of all Serbs (Matković, Razmišljanja web). An apparent example for his misconception was Ilija Garašanin’s Načertanije (Outlines)—a work introducing the Pan-Serbian national programme with long-term plans and clear goals—which he regarded as a Pan-Yugoslav scheme (Clissold 157). Unintentionally, the historian also misinterpreted the Serbian national motto ‘Only unity saves the Serbs’338 as the sign of an overt and enduring devotion of the Serbian elite for the Yugoslav idea,339 and persisted on popularizing Serbia as a Yugoslav Piedmont, while using the denominations ‘Serbia’ and ‘Yugoslavia’

335 Pašić and the Serbian Cabinet did not understand the roots of the Yugoslav idea. In effect, the Habsburg Yugoslavs tended to exaggerate their grievances, thus, the Serbian officialdom came under the illusion that they would liberate their kinsmen from Habsburg yoke who eagerly wished to join Serbia (Pavlowitch, Serbia 109).
336 It should be noted that the contemporary British historians—such as George Macaulay Trevelyan and Harold Temperley—dealing with the Southern Slavs did not necessarily share the radical views of Seton-Watson in regard to the Yugoslavs. Their views were contrasted in James Evans’ Great Britain and the Creation of Yugoslavia: Negotiating Balkan Nationality and Identity.
337 Ilija Garašanin served as the Serbian Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior for two decades in the middle of the 19th century. With his moderation and hind-sight he proved to be the most important statesmen of the century in Serbia, who had a significant role in the creation of civic Serbia in regard to modern army, administration and education. Stimulated and assisted by the Polish exile Adam Czartoryski, he compiled the Serbian nation programme entitled Načertanije. The work examined Serbia’s situation from a geopolitical point of view, and concluded that Belgrade should not rely on the Great Powers, but had to build towards an independent and strong Serbian state gradually by its own. The long-term goal of the programme strived for the liberation and unification of all Serbs, and regarded a sea outlet to the Adriatic as an economic necessity of Serbia. The programme had been circulated for decades in the royal family and the political elite until the the Serbian Radical Party’s paper Delo disclosed it to the public in 1906, while changing the original title Serbia’s foreign and national policy in the end of 1844 to Outlines (Behschnitt 54; MacKenzie 1, 3, 44–45; Manetovic 139–140).
338 The national motto ‘Samo sloga Srbina spašava’ was made an acronym in the Serbian Coat of Arms. The four Cyrillic letters ‘C’ stand for the ‘S’ in the Latin alphabet.
339 Moreover, Pašić’s Serbian opposition strived to criticize the Premier to their own advantage, and not for the sake of Yugoslavism. Despite accepting a wider Southern Slav unification, they conformed to the Serbian Premier’s vision on the internal arrangements of the future state (Evans 179–180).
interchangeably whenever referring to the Pan-Yugoslav cause. The Serbian identity was a strong, distinct and inflexible identity with clear national aspirations, which evolved parallel with the creation of a modern, centralized and civic Serbian state in the 19th century. Therefore, it was a rather naive assumption that the Serbs would yield their leading role in a unified Yugoslav state for the sake of their Southern Slav brethren, the Croats and Slovenes, whom Seton paradoxically regarded as unready to form their own independent states, but fit to become the primary leaders of the common Yugoslav state.

In effect, owing to Frano Supilo, Seton-Watson had never considered the creation of an independent Croatian state in the course of the Great War. In liaison, the historian staunchly championed the unification of all Yugoslav territories in a single state as the barrier to German economic and military expansion, and one of the cornerstones for the balance of power in the post-bellum European order. His considerations demanded the dismemberment of Austria–Hungary, and rejected the idea of Southern Slav autonomy in the Habsburg Empire or independence transpired into several sovereign Yugoslav states. However, he did not comprehend that the pro-Yugoslav solidarity – growing among the Habsburg Yugoslavs following the Serbian army’s victories in the Balkan Wars (Seton-Watson, *Introduction* 24) – assisted the goals of Serbian expansion, which strived for the destruction of the Habsburg Monarchy and the creation of an enlarged Pan-Serbian state. The political cooperation of Serbs and Croats in the Croato-Serb Coalition suited these aspirations, and enabled Belgrade to influence the political life of Croatia–Slavonia through the Serbian Independent Party.

The Yugoslav idea was revived and merged into a political movement by the Croato-Serb Coalition at the dawn of the 20th century. Seton-Watson overestimated the significance of this political cooperation, which he perceived as a major proof for the Yugoslav idea’s overwhelming appeal to the Habsburg Yugoslavs. In essence, the Croato-Serb Coalition was an opportunist political union of the two subject nationalities against the machinations of the Austrian and the Hungarian Cabinets (Haslinger 76; Tanner 111). Conclusively, the common aims and enemies were the major reasons for the creation of the Croato-Serb platform. Their joint proclamation, the Zara Resolution expressed their desire for a Southern Slavs state within the dualist framework through the merger of the Kingdom of Croatia–Slavonia with the crown province of Dalmatia. The two-decade long distrust and animosity – originated in the political oppression of Croats and the privileged position of Serbs – was formally resolved by the declaration of brotherhood and civil equality, which was a decent and circumstantial point rather than a deed of substantial importance for the Habsburg Serbs.
Furthermore, Seton-Watson believed the English-Scottish union would have been a fitting political model for the common Southern Slav state, resting upon primarily the cooperation of Croats and Serbs. Both Frano Supilo and Ante Trumbić influenced the historian in this regard (Janković 189–190), whose political mission and rhetoric extended to include the Slovenes under the Yugoslav idea after the outbreak of the Great War without any preceding thoughts. Dominating the Yugoslav Committee, the Croatian expatriates often did not treat the Slovenes as equal partners, which would indirectly foster a temporary Serbian-Slovene political axis during the peace conference and later in the interwar period as well.\footnote{Among the Prime Ministers of the first Yugoslavia, Anton Korošec was the sole non-Serbian. As the Slovene territories were far from Belgrade, and had no significant number of Serbian population, the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav leadership would give free hand for the Slovene political elite in administering these units.}

Narrowing down the question of unification almost exclusively to the dynamics of Croatian-Serbian relations and cooperation, it was natural for Seton-Watson to assume that the Slovenes and the Montenegrins accepted the idea of unification, and that the Yugoslav Committee or the Serbian Cabinet had the right to represent them and to propagate ‘their’ national self-determination for the Allied Powers.

In effect, besides the Pan-Yugoslav sentiments of his Southern Slav acquaintances, Seton-Watson’s belief in the overwhelming support of the Yugoslav idea stemmed in the electoral successes of Croato-Serb Coalition. Bearing in mind that a narrow 2% of the population passed the threshold of voting qualification in Croatia–Slavonia, it is debatable whether the joint political platform had represented the majority opinion of the Habsburg Yugoslavs. When the first national elections were held based on universal male suffrage in the unified Southern Slav Kingdom in September 1920, the Croatian Republican Peasant Party – an anti-monarchist faction representing the so far disfranchised Croatian peasantry in a newly-erected kingdom supposedly resting on the national self-determination of Southern Slavs – won the overwhelming majority of Croatian votes. Besides professing the ambiguities of the Yugoslav unification and the Croatian discontent for the outcome of the peace settlement, the result also attested that – on the contrary, what the Yugoslav Committee and their British patrons claimed and propagated – the Yugoslav idea had not been deeply embedded in Croatian society, and the proponents of Yugoslavism indeed had little contact with the masses (Becherelli 267; Pavlowitch, Serbia 51, 59, 109).

Seton-Watson and Steed also promoted the Corfu Declaration as the legal framework of a democratic and strong future Yugoslavia, and were convinced that the agreement meant a victory of the federalist vision over the centralizing schemes concerning the form of the future.
Southern Slav state. Albeit the agreement was a compromise made between Nikola Pašić and Ante Trumbić, in reality, the Prime Minister abused the idealism and naivety of the Habsburg Yugoslavs expatriates to pave way to a centralist unitary vision of the common state. By abusing the idea of ‘national unity,’ Pašić was successful in deterring the participants of the conference from any federal schemes, while also forcing Trumbić into a minority opinion. In the course of the convention, the Croatian exile emphasized that the unity of the nation would not have necessarily transpired into the unity of the state. Therefore, he proposed a federal framework for the future Yugoslavia in which centralism could have been realized on a sub-state level. However, by allowing provincial competition among the various branches of the Yugoslavs, a federal state contradicted with the fundamental notion of Yugoslav equality and union, hence most members of the Yugoslav Committee dismissed Trumbić’s vision (Janković 228, 232, 236–239).

Marking another major victory for Pašić, similar arguments were used to defeat Trumbić’s conception concerning the voting qualification in the Constituent Assembly. In this regard, the Dalmatian politician argued that since the Serbian representatives would have numerically outnumbered the Croatian and Slovenian delegates, applying the principle of qualified majority in the Constituent Assembly’s voting procedure would have enabled the Serbian vision of the common state to be realized. Countering Trumbić’s arguments for ‘tribal’ voting, Marković, the delegate of the opposition Serbian Progressive Party exclaimed that should the Yugoslavs have had the chance to create their own democratic state according to their own desires and visions, the voting guarantee the Dalmatian expatriate had requested would have been unnecessary and impractical. In essence, a tribal majority would have hindered national unity, as it could have fostered separatist aspirations; and moreover, should the new state have been founded against the will of the one-third of the nation, it would have been better not to create a common state. Correspondingly, weakening the state considerably, Pašić warned that that tribal voting would have led to competing provincial interest, which the delegates of the conference recognized as a valid point (ibid. 246–247).

With the conclusion of the Treaty of Rapallo, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes received their final borders. Despite the majority of the Yugoslav claims being

341 In theory, Pašić would accept a federal state form provided it constituted of a Slovene, a Croat, and a Serb sub-unit, the latter including all Serbs living in the unified Yugoslav state (Sotirović 30).

342 For instance, Hinko Hinković, ‘representing’ Croatia–Slavonia in Corfu, argued for a centralized state as he wished to eliminate provincial competition for power. He also believed that the creation of a new state would require the sacrifice of old forms of political arrangements from all sides. Bogumil Vošnjak, ‘representing’ the Slovenes, also championed central, but a democratized state, and argued that a modern new state erected on democratic principles would eliminate the need for federal autonomy (Janković 236–239).
fulfilled, the first common state of Southern Slavs was an ambiguous achievement characterized by the uneasy union of peoples who had been divided from each other by state or administrative frontiers for centuries, and hardly had anything in common besides the shared language (MacMillan 126, 133). Besides the questionable manner of Montenegrin proclamation on the unification, the united Southern Slavs was the outcome of the voluntary union of the Yugoslav lands with miscellaneous cultural and political traditions. Combining diverging traditions, faiths and historical experience, Yugoslavia resembled the old multi-ethnic empires of Europe with the possibility of becoming a melting pot or the source of multiplying disagreements (Motta 142). In the long run it was revealed that the common language had not been sufficient enough to make Yugoslavia a well-functioning state based on popular democracy (MacMillan 133).

The outbreak and the developments of the Great War eventually created the conditions for the Yugoslav unification. Nonetheless, the Croatian proponents of Yugoslavism failed to secure any guarantees to prevent the centuries-old Croatian statehood from submerging and disappearing in the unified Southern Slav Kingdom dominated by the Serbian political elite. Bribing the Yugoslav Muslim, Albanian and Turkish deputies with the prospect of political concessions, Pašić managed to secure a majority in the Constituent Assembly to adopt a highly centralizing constitution, known as the Vidovdan Constitution on 28 June 1921. As a result, based on the dualist experience of federation, the Croatian leaders would persist practicing a ‘cunning of bargaining’ in the interwar period to establish an enlarged and strengthened Croatia to counter-balance Serbian political dominance. However, their political aspirations and exceptionalism relying on and overemphasizing the Croatian historic rights fostered disunity, nationalism and separatism among the rest of the Southern Slavs as well (Morrison 49; Pavlowitch, Yugoslavia 57–58, 109–110).

In the case of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, the Allied Powers allowed the unification of multiple entities in a single state, asserting that there would have been no considerable conflicts or ethnic rivalries among the constituent nations. Furthermore the peace-makers expected that these states would have assisted in maintaining the new international order in the post-war epoch (Steel 25–26). Similar to the other British intellectuals who supported the idea of a New Europe, Seton-Watson took credit and responsibility for the peace settlement. Albeit he recognized some of the shortcomings of the peace treaties, he never admitted that the new borders contributed to an unstable and fragile peace (Martel 631–632). In liaison, attempting to perfect the post-war European arrangements, the historian pursued to suggest polices and slight reforms for the leaders of the
In case of the Southern Slavs, he realized that the Vidovdan Constitution had paved way for Serbian domination in the political life of Yugoslavia, as he expressed to Dr. Milan Čurčin on 2 December 1921:

The situation in Jugoslavia reduces me to despair. Not that I am of course in the least degree nervous about the National Unity, but none the less from the standpoint both of internal politics and of relations with the West. I have no confidence in the new constitution, with its absurd centralism (Correspondence II: 97).

He regarded Stjepan Radić, the popular leader of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party as an equally similar trouble-maker as Pašić, whose untactful speeches could have undermined the national unity of the Southern Slavs (Correspondence II: 103–104, 109). For Seton-Watson the question was whether Radić possessed any political hindsight to make a compromise with the Serbian Radical Party to decentralize Yugoslavia and replace the Serbian domination with a balanced Croatian-Serbian leadership:

The political situation […] is utterly deplorable, for all the most honest and progressive politicians in the country are par terre, and all the scoundrels ‘oben,’ and there is the most complete disorientation and dissatisfaction everywhere. […] Serbia is trying to administer everything from Belgrade and is quite unfit to do so […]. The King is helpless, and Pašić tries as usual to govern by his creatures (Correspondence II: 102).

In 1925, Seton addressed King Aleksandar in a memorandum, summarizing his and his correspondences’ experience on the unsustainable political situations, for which he blamed the centralizing agenda of the Serbian Parties. He entered even into press polemy with Nikola Pašić and Mateja Bošković concerning the creation of Yugoslavia in a series of articles written for Dr. Milan Čurčin’s Nova Evropa. Nevertheless, the historian never admitted that the united Yugoslav Kingdom had been a mistake, and would maintain the opinion that the unification of the Southern Slavs had been inevitable for the peace of Europe (Correspondence II: 135, 145–146, 194; Beretzky, Scotus Viator 53–54; Milutinović, Dalmacija 15).

343 In 1923, Seton-Watson visited Zagreb, Ljubljana and Belgrade, where King Aleksandar received him for audience (Correspondence II: 103–104).
The controversies and instability of the political life (Correspondence II: 194) fostered King Aleksandar to proclaim his personal rule in 1929 to prevent the internal situation deteriorating. With the suspension of the constitution, and the banning of national political parties, the King made an attempt to create the Yugoslav identity by eliminating and repressing nationalist dissents. However, his agenda did not remove the oppressive political climate, and could not vanish the fundamental and sharp differences among the Yugoslavs, but instead triggered nationalist and separatist aspirations. In effect, Aleksandar became a victim of these endeavours during his visit to Marseilles in 1934 when he was assassinated by a member of the Macedonian revolutionary national liberation movement (Dragnich 12; Lederer 81; Morrison 48–49).

As a confirmed British liberal, Seton-Watson disapproved of Aleksandar’s absolutism, and criticized the dictatorship of the King in a lengthy memorandum in 1930. Albeit, the historian was terrified that Yugoslavia was evolving into a police state which suppressed free press and public opinion (Correspondence II: 195), his ‘faith in the Crown [wa]s not yet irrevocably shattered’ (ibid. 202). In effect, the opposite would have meant the partial failure of the New Europe agenda. Therefore, he reasoned that a new constitution could have rebalanced the Yugoslav political life. By that time Pašić had passed away, Radić had been assassinated, and Trumbić had been politically inactive, hence he assumed that the new generation of Serbian and Croatian politicians could have found a common ground to solve the political deadlock of their country. Correspondingly, Seton engaged in intensive correspondence with the Serbian and Croatian opposition of the regime in the 1930’s. Furthermore, he produced a memorandum for Prince Regent Pavle,344 sketching the major outlines of a possible Serbian-Croatian agreement in 1936 (ibid. 320). The Sporazum, an agreement concluded in 1939 between Prime Minister Mirko Cvetković and Vladko Maček, the moderate leader of the Croatian opposition, created an autonomous and enlarged Croatian province within Yugoslavia. Seton-Watson perceived both the Sporazum and the anti-Fascist demonstrations in Belgrade – resulting in a coup d’état in March 1941 – as the unquestionable proofs that his visions and policy concerning the Southern Slavs were viable solutions for the region (Correspondence II: 368; Morrison 49).

Despite Seton-Watson’s assessment, the common state of the Yugoslavs was a history of an enduring disintegration stimulated by regional and national differences and the internal

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344 Prince Pavle was the cousin of late Aleksandar I, who would govern the Yugoslav Kingdom after the Marseilles assassination as a Regent until King Petar II would pass the age of eighteen. The Regent was an Anglophile and would disclose confidential pieces of information to the British intelligence during the Second World War prior to the invasion of Yugoslavia commenced in 1941.
arrangements of state. Moreover, the borders of the Yugoslav state were challenged by six out seven of its neighbours, while the non-Yugoslav ethnicity proved to be a foreign policy and security challenge. In effect, the discord and disputes among the Yugoslav faction during the Great War transpired into political clashes in the interwar Yugoslavia, confirming how difficult it had been proved to reduce and surpass political disagreements originating in the diverging cultural experience and centuries-long political division of the Yugoslav peoples (Black 243; Mitrović, *Great War* 322, 326).\(^\text{345}\)

In the end, Josip Broz Tito’s socialist movement benefited from the disintegration of the Yugoslav Kingdom. Elderly, ill, and embittered by the Eastern European developments, Seton-Watson would soon retreat from both the world of academia and political journalism after the Second World War. Ironically, aiding the national grievance by realizing a federal arrangement for Yugoslavia, Tito’s rise to power symbolized both the failure of the New Europe agenda and the civic and democratic notion of Yugoslavism. Albeit the architects of New Europe, Henry Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson had never regretted the creation of a united Southern Slav state, the history of Yugoslavia proved to be a history of a long disintegration of peoples forced into a common state twice by overwhelmingly international developments and external circumstances. Conclusively, in lieu of solving the Southern Slav Question, Steed and Seton-Watson took their share of multiplying the issues of the Yugoslav case, which have not been entirely resolved even by the dawn of the 21\(^{\text{th}}\) century.\(^\text{346}\) In view of the political developments in Europe since the Paris Peace Conference up to the Yugoslav Civil War, it can be argued that the indirect legacy of their agenda transpired to be a lasting peace for neither Europe nor the Southern Slavs.

\(\text{345}\) Overall, the uncertainties of the Yugoslav cause, and the Allies’ willingness to preserve the Habsburg Empire and to sacrifice Southern Slav territories contributed to friction and factionalism among the Yugoslavs (Šepić, *Union* 33).

\(\text{346}\) The disintegration of Socialist Yugoslavia transpired to be a considerable challenge for the European Community and its successor, the European Union. The questions of international norms fostered discord between Germany and the tandem of Great Britain and France whether the subunits in the federal state of Yugoslavia possessed the right for national self-determination (Steel 33).
Documents
THE NIŠ DECLARATION

A Declaration of the Kingdom of Serbia.

The Cabinet is honoured to proclaim its determination to the representatives of the people to manifest and represent the unity, will, power, and aims of our country until the end of this great crisis. [...] until it serves the needs of the Serbian state and the Serbo-Croat and Slovene tribes, the Cabinet perceives it its obligation to honour the memory of those victims with eternal gratitude who voluntarily and bravely sacrificed themselves on the altar of the Homeland. [...] Assured of the devotion of the Serbian nation to protect its home and liberty in this sacred war, the Royal Cabinet declares its primary and sole goal in these decisive moments to conclude this great conflict victoriously, which from the beginning transpired into a crusade for unification through the liberation of the Serb, Croat and Slovene brothers. [...] Niš, 7 December 1914

Translated to English from the original (See Srpske Novine, 25 November/8 December 1914).
TREATY OF LONDON AND DECLARATIONS
(excerpt)

I. AGREEMENT BETWEEN FRANCE, RUSSIA, GREAT BRITAIN AND ITALY SIGNED AT LONDON, APRIL 26, 1915

[...] 

Article 4. Under the Treaty of Peace, Italy shall obtain the Trentino, Cisalpine Tyrol […], as well as Trieste, the counties of Gorizia and Gradisca, Istria as far as the Quarnero […].

Article 5. Italy shall be given the province of Dalmatia within its present administrative boundaries, including to the north Lisarica and Tribania; to the south as far as a lien starting from the Cape Planka on the coast and following eastwards the crests of the heights forming the watershed, in such a way as to leave within Italian territory all valleys and streams flowing towards Sebenico […].

Article 6. Italy shall receive full sovereignty over Valona, the island of Saseno and surrounding territory of sufficient extent to assure defence of these positions […].

DECLARATION OF THE YUGOSLAV CLUB

The elected representatives unified in the Yugoslav Club appeal for the unification of those lands in the Monarchy where the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs live based on their national self-determination and the Croatian state right. This new unified state unit shall be void of the influence of any alien nation and shall be founded on democratic principles under the rule of the Habsburg-Lorraine Dynasty. The members of the Yugoslav Club pledge to work with might and main to implement the aforementioned petition.

The representatives shall abide to this framework and participate accordingly in the parliamentary sessions.

Vienna, 30 May 1917

349 Translated to English from the original (See Dokumenti 94).
The State of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, who are also known by the name of Southern Slays or Yugoslavs, will be a free and independent kingdom, with an indivisible territory and unity of power. This State will be a constitutional, democratic, and Parliamentary monarchy, with the Karageorgevich dynasty, which has always shared the ideals and feelings of the nation in placing above everything else the national liberty and will at its head.

1. The name of this State will be the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and the title of the sovereign will be King of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.
2. This State will have one coat-of-arms, only one flag, and one crown.
3. The four different flags of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes will have equal rights, and may be hoisted freely on all occasions. The same will obtain for the four different coats-of-arms.
4. The three national denominations, the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, are equal before the law in all the territory of the kingdom, and each may freely use it on all occasions in public life and before all authorities.
5. The two Cyrillic and Latin alphabets also have the same rights and every one may freely use them in all the territory of the kingdom. The royal and local self-governing authorities have the rights and ought to employ the two alphabets according to the desire of the citizens.
6. All religions are recognized, and may be free and publicly practiced. The Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Mussulman religions, which are most professed in our country, will be equal, and will enjoy the same rights in relation to the State. In view of these principles, the Legislature will be careful to preserve the religious peace in conformity with the spirit and tradition of our entire nation.
7. The Gregorian calendar will be adopted as soon as possible.
8. The territory of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes will comprise all the territory where our nation lives in compact masses and without discontinuity, and where it could not be mutilated without injuring the vital interests of the community. Our nation does not ask for anything which belongs to others, and only claims that which belongs to it. It desires to free itself and establish its unity. That is why it conscientiously and firmly rejects every partial solution of the problem of its freedom from the Austro–Hungarian domination.

Advocate of Peace 144–145.
9. The Adriatic Sea, in the interests of liberty and equal rights of all nations, is to be free and open to all and each.

10. All citizens throughout the territory of the kingdom are equal, and enjoy the same rights in regard to the State and the law.

11. The election of Deputies to the national representation will take place under universal suffrage, which is to be equal, direct, and secret. The same will apply to the elections in the communes and other administrative institutions. A vote will be taken in each commune.

12. The Constitution to be established after the conclusion of peace by the Constituent Assembly elected by universal, direct, and secret suffrage will serve as a basis for the life of the State. It will be the origin and ultimate end of all the powers and all rights by which the whole national life will be regulated. The Constitution will give the people the opportunity of exercising its particular energies in local autonomies, regulated by natural, social, and economic conditions. The Constitution must be adopted in its entirety by a numerical majority of the Constituent Assembly, and all other laws passed by the Constituent Assembly will not come into force until they have been sanctioned by the King.

Thus the united nation of Serbs, Croatians, and Slovenes will form a State of twelve million inhabitants. This State will be a guarantee of their national independence and of their general national progress and civilization, and a powerful rampart against the pressure of the Germans, and an inseparable ally of all civilized peoples and States.

Having proclaimed the principle of right and liberty and of international justice, it will form a worthy part of the new society of nations.

Signed at Corfu, July 20, 1917, by the President of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Serbia, Nikola Pashitch, and the President of the Yugoslav Committee, Dr. Ante Trumbic.
THE PACT OF ROME,\textsuperscript{351}
10 April 1918

GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONG THE NATIONALITIES OF AUSTRIA–HUNGARY

The representatives of the nationalities subject, wholly or in part, to the domination of Austria–Hungary: Italians, Poles, Rumanians, Czechoslovaks, and Yugoslavs, have agreed, with a view to common action, to the following declarations:
1. Each of these peoples proclaims its right to constitute its unity as a national state or to complete that unity in order to attain its full political and economic independence,
2. Each of these peoples recognizes in the Austro–Hungarian monarchy the instrument of Germanic domination and the fundamental obstacle to the realization of its aspirations and of its rights.
3. The Congress therefore recognizes the necessity of a joint struggle against the common oppressors until each one of these peoples shall have secured its complete liberation, its complete national unity, and its political liberty.

BASES OF AN ITALO–YUGOSLAV AGREEMENT

The representatives of the Italian people and the Yugoslav people agree in particular on the following:
4. In regard to the relations between and the nation of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, also known as the Yugoslav nation, the representatives of the two peoples recognize that the unity and independence of the Yugoslav nation is of vital interest to Italy, just as the achievement of Italian national unity is of vital interest to the Yugoslav nation. The representatives of the two peoples therefore undertake to use all their efforts during the war and at the time of the conclusion of peace in order that this aim of the nations may be wholly realized.
5. They declare that the liberation of the Adriatic Sea and its defence against any present or future enemy is of vital interest to both peoples.
6. They undertake to settle amicably, also in the interest of amicable and sincere future relations between the two people, the pending territorial questions, on the basis of the principle of nationality and of the right of peoples to determine their own fate, and to do this in such a way as not to prejudice the vital interest of either nation, which shall be defined at the time of peace.
7. To the nuclei of either people which may have to be included within the frontiers of the other shall be recognized and guaranteed the right to have their language respected, as well as their culture and their moral and economic interests.

THE ADRIATIC QUESTION\textsuperscript{352}

\textsuperscript{351} Albrecht-Carrié 347–348.
CLEMANCEAU: There is one point I should like to clear up. Would Orlando accept a solution that would eliminate Fiume?

ORLANDO: Definitely the opposite. …

PICHON: Have you not examined any definite proposal for conciliation?

ORLANDO: No. It is up to you to state precisely what we must give in order to obtain Fiume. We must have Fiume.

LLOYD GEORGE: That puts an end to our discussion. You cannot ask for Fiume; that is impossible. The Serbs know that it has been assigned to them and I cannot betray them any more than I can betray the Italians.

CLEMANCEAU: Do you, then, or do you not, stand on the Pact? There can be no middle way. I have given Fiume to the Serbs and I cannot take it back.

ORLANDO: We stand on the Treaty.

LLOYD GEORGE: (presenting an English map attached to the Treaty, in which Fiume is marked yellow and Italy blue) We have agreed to one clause of the Treaty as much as to the other.

SONNINO: Let me explain what President Orlando means. What he is saying: if everything is to be put in balance in order to find the basis of compromise with you, then I do not insist upon the Treaty. Otherwise he stands on the Treaty. I recall when negotiations were taking place with Bulgaria, with a view to her going to war on the side of the Entente, the cession to Bulgaria of certain Macedonian territories was proposed to Serbia, who would then have been compensated with Croatian and Bosnian territory. No agreement was reached then. But that means that at that time you did not consider yourselves bound to Serbia by the Treaty of London. Moreover, the Treaty of London gives Fiume to Croatia and not to Serbia.

CLEMANCEAU: That is the same thing.

LLOYD GEORGE: I do not know that there is any point in prolonging this conversation. It would better perhaps if Clemenceau and I went to see Wilson to ask him whether and how far he can move from the position he has taken; if he would agree to concession of the islands for example.

ORLANDO: What about Fiume?

LLOYD GEORGE: Not Fiume.

352 Albrecht-Carrié 481–482.
ORLANDO: Then it is impossible.
SONNINO: Must we give up Dalmatia for nothing? In regard to Dalmatia I repeat that it constitutes for us a question of security in the Adriatic. But there is also the ethnic question for Dalmatia. It is true that the rural population is predominantly Slav, but cities are Italian. … the Italians represent all the civilization that is there.
LLOYD GEORGE: That is what the English say of Ireland.
Maps
Territories claimed by Italy during the negotiations with the Allied Powers
(Remak xix)
The frontier line according to the Treaty of London
(Lederer 8)
The line of Italian occupation in late 1918
(Lederer 55)
Territorial concession in the Balkans proposed by the Allied Powers in late July 1915
(Antić, Neizabrana 147)

To Serbia  To Montenegro  To Bulgaria
British political cartoon concerning the ineffective foreign policy in the Balkans
(Antić, Neizabrana 190)
The Yugoslav Committee’s map published in each number of the Southern Slav Bulletin
The legend for the Yugoslav Committee’s map
Mary St. Claire Stobart’s journeys in Serbia including the Great Retreat
(Stobart, Miracles 377)
The seven dispensaries established in Western Serbia by the British medical mission
(Stobart, Flaming 75)

Territorial awards of the Treaty of Bucharest, 1916
(Spector, additional map, no page number)
Proposal concerning the division of Istria, 1919
(Remak xvii)
Seton-Watson’s proposal for frontiers of New Europe in 1916
(Seton-Watson, German, Slav 146)

The frontiers and the Free State of Fiume according to the Treaty of Rapallo, 1920 (Albrecht-Carrié 27)
Images
Robert William Seton Watson
(Web: www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/historians/seton-watson_robert.html, retrieved: 11 October 2017)

Henry Wickham Steed
Henry Wickham Steed and Viscount Northcliffe in 1921
(Web: https://www.gettyimages.com, retrieved: 11 October 2017)

Frano Supilo
Ante Trumbić

Nikola Pašić
(Web: alamy.com, retrieved: 11 October 2017)
Heir Apparent Aleksandar Karadordević, the future King of Yugoslavia
Advertisement of the Serbian Relief Fund
Advertisements of the Serbian Relief Fund

Web:
Booklet for the Meštrović Exhibition in 1915
(SWP SEW/7/2/3)
Paper clipping from the Country Life introducing the works of Meštrović

(SWP SEW/7/2/3)
Exhibition
of the works of
IVAN MEŠTROVIĆ
(the Southern Slav Sculptor)
at the
Victoria and Albert Museum
(West and Central Halls)
Admit
on Thursday, June 24th, 11—6

[By invitation of the Honorary Committee]
Victoria and Albert Museum
Summer — 1915

THE
MESTROVIĆ EXHIBITION

Honorary Committee:

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The Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G.

VICE-PRESIDENTS—
His Eminence Cardinal Bourne
His Excellency The Serbian Minister
The Lord Bishop of Oxford
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Solomon J. Solomon
H. W. Steed
G. M. Trevelyan
John Tweed
A. F. Whyte

* From whom information may be obtained at 11 Smith Square, S.W.
‘Lady of the Black Horse’
A painting by George James Rankin of Mrs M. A. St Clair Stobart during the Great Retreat
Dr. Elsie Inglis
(McLaren 1)
Dr. Caroline Matthews
(Matthews i)
Heroic Serbia – Poster for the ‘Kossovo Day’ celebration
(Web: 3.bp.blogspot.com, retrieved: 12 September 2009)
Images of Serbian refugees from the Southampton and District Pictoral, 3 May 1916
(Web: ourmigrationstory.org.uk, retrieved: 30 December 1917)
Images of Serbian refugees from the Southampton and District Pictoral, 13 December 1916
(Web: ourmigrationstory.org.uk, retrieved: 30 December 1917)
Images from the Great Retreat
(SP SEW 2950)
Images from a Serbian hospital in Skoplje

(SP SEW 2959)
The patients of the British medical mission
(SP SEW 2963)
importance of the aims of the Society becomes clearer and its claims upon the support of those who are convinced that only a just European settlement can ensure a lasting peace, grow more pressing and definite. The Executive Committee therefore appeals earnestly to you not only to continue the support given in the past, but to strengthen its hands by extending the membership of the Society among your acquaintances.

In view of the urgent need of funds to carry on the work of the Society, the Executive Committee has decided to raise the minimum annual subscription to One Guinea.

Yours faithfully,

[Signatures]

The signatures of the member of the Executive Committee, Serbian Society of Great Britain
(SWP SEW/S/3/2)
Invitation for the luncheon hosted by the Serbian Society of Great Britain for Pašić
(SWP SEW/S/3/2)
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e. Contemporary Newspapers and Journals

*British Medical Journal*

*Athenaeum, The*

*Bystander, The*

*Colour*

*Contemporary Review, The*
Corriere della Sera
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Daily Chronicle, The
Daily Express, The
Daily Mail, The
Dundee Advertiser, The
Edinburgh Review, The
Evening Standard, The
Forum, The
Globe, The
Lady
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Leeds Observer
Loughboro Echo
Manchester Guardian, The
Nation
Near East, The
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Srpske Novine
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