



The Apple of Discord: Macedonia The Balkan League, and The Military Topography of The First Balkan War

**A Monograph
by
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Field Artillery**



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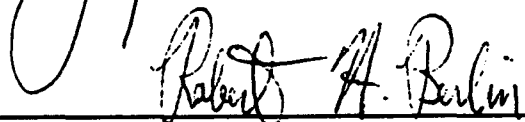
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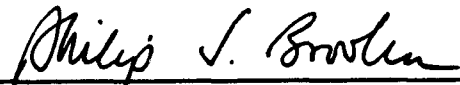
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ABSTRACT

THE APPLE OF DISCORD: MACEDONIA, THE BALKAN LEAGUE, AND THE MILITARY TOPOGRAPHY OF THE FIRST BALKAN WAR, 1912-1913, by Major David S. Anderson, USA, 65 pages.

This monograph investigates the history of the brief, bloody, confusing, and tragically influential First Balkan War of 1912-1913. It examines the military topography of the Balkan peninsula and the tactical operations of the belligerent nations, especially those of the Ottoman Empire and Serbia. It suggests a number of historical and tactical lessons for American heavy and light forces which may be deployed to the region, either as UN peacekeepers or in some more active role.

Events in the Balkans are best understood with a historical foundation. Macedonia is the European apple of discord, both disputed and claimed by many nations since antiquity. Control of Macedonia means control of lucrative trade routes to and from the central European interior. It is both the geographic heart of the Balkan peninsula and the historical centerpiece of political and military activity in southeastern Europe. This confluence of history, politics, and commerce makes Macedonia a flashpoint for ethnic tension and conflict. Soldiers placed between rival factions can understand and mediate disputes better if they have an appreciation for the region.

In 1912-1913, the large armies of the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan League fought a forgotten war that served as the prelude to World War I. This monograph examines the tactical defeat of the Ottoman Army by the Serbs in the Macedonian theater and the effect of regional topography on the two armies. American soldiers serving as UN peacekeepers in Macedonia will find the terrain just as challenging as the Ottoman and Serbian armies did eighty years ago. In addition, they will find that the people of the region take their history personally.

Commanders can gain an appreciation for the difficulty and the magnitude of the task of conducting military operations in the Balkans by understanding: 1.) the historical example of the First Balkan War; and 2.) the effect of Balkan topography on historical military operations. This monograph addresses both issues.

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Introduction

This monograph investigates the history of the brief, bloody, confusing, and tragically influential First Balkan War of 1912-1913. It examines the military topography of the Balkan peninsula and the tactical operations of the belligerent nations, especially those of the Ottoman Empire and Serbia. It suggests a number of tactical lessons learned for American troops who may be deployed to the region.

Recent events have sparked increased interest in the Balkans.¹ Tragic stories of unspeakable brutalities, including genocide, emerge from constant media coverage.

In December 1993, 558 American soldiers were serving in two United Nations' sponsored military peacekeeping operations on the Balkan peninsula: 1.) Operation Provide Promise (Croatia)² and, 2.) Operation Able Sentry (Macedonia).³ These Americans form part of a larger, multinational peacekeeping effort trying to prevent reoccurrence of historical mistakes. The Clinton Administration's willingness to deploy soldiers to keep peace is related to this concern.

The potential roles of American and other UN troops in the Balkans changes dynamically with each new peace initiative or atrocity by belligerents. The region is teetering on the brink of anarchy; the current conflict threatens to involve Albania, Turkey, Greece, and the remainder of Europe. A doubting American populace questions the existence of any US vital interest in the former Yugoslavia. Meanwhile, the UN administration of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali seeks ways to solve the growing

problem. Concerns for American lives and the subordination of American soldiers to a non-US commander, especially in a United Nations context, alternately fuel the debate of US involvement in the Balkans.⁴ The clash of cultures and spread of multiethnic strife in this volatile region remains a distinct possibility, especially considering the traditional and historical animosity felt between the Balkan nations and Turkey.⁵ The potential for expanded conflict, especially ethnic conflict, has greatly increased international anxiety and if allowed to remain unchecked, could threaten the future security of Europe.⁶

Events in the Balkans cannot be fully understood without a historical foundation. Macedonia is the European apple of discord, both disputed and claimed by many different nations since the time of Philip of Macedon. Control of Macedonia means control of lucrative trade routes to and from the central European interior. Thus, the choice of Macedonia as the place where soldiers serve as peacekeepers is historically sound. It is the very heart of the Balkan peninsula.

The "Macedonian Question," was the major component of the famous "Eastern Question," concerning the weakening of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the nineteenth century.⁷ The Great Powers' inability to determine a peaceful solution to the Macedonian issue and thus the larger "Eastern Question" contributed directly to the start of World War I.⁸ A repeated failure in 1994 could lead to a second Balkan tragedy with similar consequences.

With this in mind, the monograph assesses historical tactical operations in the region and the difficulties presented by terrain on these operations. The spatial and geographic challenges to the tactical commander that exist in the Balkans are not unique, but neither are they universal. The distinctive

terrain features will have an impact on military forces conducting operations in the Balkans.⁹

All military operations are determined by the existing battlefield geography and terrain, or the topography. Tactical commanders must turn available geographic features to their advantage. If that proves impossible, then they must neutralize any advantage to the enemy. Above all, the enemy must not be permitted to retain the advantage of terrain. If commanders are going to have success in the Balkans they should understand: 1.) the historical example of the First Balkan War; and, 2.) the effect of Balkan topography on their operations.

Military Geography and Military Topography

This section of the monograph briefly addresses the importance, relevance, and relationship between military geography and military topography and the levels of war. Success in war often depends on a superior appreciation of the terrain and its exploitation. The importance of geography, topography, and terrain should not be taken for granted; the difference between winning and losing often rests on the selection of the battlefield.¹⁰

In the broadest sense, military geography describes the enduring variations of war and all of its associated military institutions and activities.¹¹ Military geography is relevant at the strategic and operational levels, where generals and their staffs consider geopolitics, strategy, tactics, logistics, organization, and the history of military operations of their adversaries. At the tactical level, more precision is required. Soldiers who seek to understand how best to fight must be able to describe and analyze their battle position from the military

perspective. These soldiers place their emphasis on small unit tactics, essential supplies (ammunition, food, and fuel), and terrain.¹² Military topography, like military geography, is an analysis of existing data, but its emphasis is on the employment of space and terrain at the tactical level.

Military geography is mission-oriented at the strategic and operational levels of war. It is concerned with large regions and the attendant military planning and analysis problems. Its associated concepts, military topography and terrain analysis, pertain to the tactical level.

Influenced by both history and systemic sciences (biology, chemistry, etc.), military geography considers the militarily significant phenomena occurring within in a given space and has dynamic, predictive, and relative characteristics.¹³ It shares these aspects with the Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) process. However, where IPB focusses on the threat, military geography concentrates on friendly activity to defeat that threat.

The value of military geography is in its predictive and dynamic character. The influence of moving parts on the battlefield, e.g., weapons systems, tactics, techniques, and procedures, the method of warfare employed in the area of operations, and how the characteristics of the region will affect future operations. In addition, as military operations occur, they change the nature of the area. Military geography attempts to predict that change.

Military geography is relative in that it is only a portion of the mission analysis process:

"area analysis will have full significance only when it is related to other factors in the estimate. Part of the estimate means nothing; only the totality can make sense."¹⁴

According to the military theorist Carl von Clausewitz, "historical examples clarify everything and also provide the best kind of proof in the empirical sciences."¹⁵ However, the history of a battle is best understood if the soldier is thoroughly familiar with military topography of the region, the terrain of the battlefield, and understands the relationship of the terrain to the plan and execution of military operations. Soldiers charged with translating strategic political objectives into military ones at both operational and tactical levels perform their duties better when they have a clear understanding and appreciation for the impacts of topography and terrain.

In war, the subjective factors of chance and fog of war distort the view and interpretation of an enemy's actions. It is both possible and necessary to reduce this distortion by gaining thorough knowledge about the enemy, his tactics, and the terrain he occupies.

In pure form, military topography is the complete analysis of battles: 1.) the belligerents, 2.) their doctrine and tactics, culminating points of the battle, and, impact of natural terrain and artificial obstacles on engagement areas. The human features of the battlefield are thus grafted onto the natural base and studied as a complete system.¹⁶ Once the analysis is complete, commanders and their staffs use the data to estimate the enemy's intent and capabilities.

In The Art of War, Jomini defines strategy, tactics, and logistics in a geographic, physical context:

"Strategy is the art of making war upon the map, and comprehends the whole theater of operations. Grand Tactics is the art of posting troops upon the battlefield according to the accidents of the ground, in contradistinction to planning upon a map. Logistics comprises the means and

arrangements which comprises the plans of strategy and tactics. Strategy decides where to act; logistics brings the troops to this point; grand tactics decides the manner of execution and the employment of the troops."¹⁷

Strategy is thus concerned with the theater of war, tactics with the battlefield. Neither can be divorced completely from the other; the line dividing them will remain forever fuzzy. Just as tactics is a part of a larger strategy, topography is part of a larger military geography.

Common usage has narrowed the practice of military topography as military art. Once a study of all factors relating to the battlefield, its contemporary focus is on the influence of terrain on military operations, stressing the use of topographic maps and emphasizing physical factors, both natural and manmade.

Terrain analysis attempts to calculate the effect of topography on tactical operations. It is strictly oriented on terrain, including the inseparable effects of weather and climate.¹⁸ Terrain analysis and military geography share the important characteristic of mission-orientation. Tactical success depends on a successful blend of mission and terrain appreciation.¹⁹

Today, terrain analysis is part of the intelligence estimate. Routinely, commanders depend on a junior officer--often a professional military intelligence officer, not a member of the maneuver arms--to assess the terrain they and their soldiers are about to fight on. In short, the intelligence officer shares a large part of the responsibility for choosing the battlefield. Given the myriad of tasks the average unit must accomplish and the amount of manpower dispersion on the battlefield itself, the

commander needs help in sifting through and synthesizing the available information to make an informed decision.

Balkan Geopolitics and the Theaters of War²⁰

The general character of the Balkan peninsula is that of a series of mountainous plateaus running up from the sea, creased by valleys. Through the most important of these valleys flow the Morava, Vardar, Ibar, and Struma rivers. The rivers, generally aligned north-northwest to south-southeast, provide the Balkan interior with the shortest possible route to the Mediterranean. Macedonia, the heart of this region, is referred to as the "corridor land" because there the east-west and north-south trade routes intersected.²¹

Except in the coastal areas where the Mediterranean Sea exerts its influence, Balkan climate is similar to that of central Europe. The coastal fringe enjoys a warm, wet (over 180 inches of rain in places) climate. East of the Dinaric range, the climate changes, becoming hot and dry in the summer and Alpine-cold in the winter. The cold weather is influenced by both high altitude and persistently cold high pressure air masses that lie over Russia. Annual precipitation averages twenty to thirty inches, making the central region adequate for agriculture, especially wheat, tobacco, cotton, and hemp.²²

For nineteenth-century central Europe, the Balkan peninsula provided a link from Europe's interior to the Black Sea and Constantinople (Istanbul), the gateway to Asia.²³ East-west commerce moved predominantly along the Danube River. Eventually, the railroad became an important economic link when the Paris - Constantinople rail link (the "Orient Express") opened through the Morava-Maritza valleys. Constantinople was of strategic and

commercial value for both the East and West. Controlling Balkan trade routes and the waters around Constantinople was at the heart of geopolitics then and now.

The second most important city after Constantinople was Salonika (Thessaloniki), a large port located on the north Aegean seacoast. Salonika was (and is) the southern terminus of the Morava-Vardar trade route, a vital link to the sea for the central European interior. In particular, it serves as the largest and single most important sea-land transfer point for eastern trade headed into or out of central Europe. Austria-Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece coveted Salonika because of its importance to European trade. From Salonika, economic traffic traversed the relatively short distance (248 kilometers) north through the Vardar valley to Skopje and then either to Austria, Austrian-controlled territory, Serbia, or Russia.

In 1912, Serbia was a landlocked nation. This distinction, coupled with the absence of friendly neighbors, intensified Serbia's desires for access to the Mediterranean. Bulgaria possessed a coast on the Black Sea, but its maritime trade was forced to transit the Turkish Straits and was thus susceptible to Ottoman interception.

Except for southern Greek ports, the peninsula contained neither other harbors capable of supporting major commercial shipping nor transportation centers (road or rail lines) to move goods to the Balkan interior, because the Balkan coastline was either low and marshy or rocky and barren. Thus, the general lack of harbors greatly increased the importance of those that existed.

Geopolitics of the Western Theater

In the western theater, the territory of Macedonia was the prize of victory and predominant battlefield. Geographically,

Macedonia is an area roughly 25,000 miles square. It is usually considered to be bounded in the north by the Sar Mountains, on the east by the Rhodope Mountains, on the south by the Aegean Sea, Mount Olympus, and the Pindus Range, and in the west by Lake Ohrid.²⁴

Macedonia's ethnic divisions were very difficult to determine; at least eight different ethnic groups (ethnic Macedonians, Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks, Albanians, Serbs, Vlachs, Jews, and Gypsies) lived there.²⁵ During Ottoman rule, official ethnic relationship was determined by a census that divided the people into three groups based on religious affiliation (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Muslim).

Language separated the Greeks, Turks, and Albanians, but not the Slavic peoples. Inhabitants tended to adopt the customs, traditions, intermarry based on shared religion rather than along ethnic-racial lines, and speak dialects influenced by neighboring ethnic groups. Eventually, a Macedonian dialect emerged, which closely resembled the Bulgarian language. This supported the claim that Macedonia was traditionally Bulgarian.

Macedonia held considerable strategic significance at the end of the 19th century. First, it was the heart of the peninsula and included the Vardar river valley, the major commercial link to the Balkan interior. Second, a rail line connecting Belgrade and Salonica opened in 1888.²⁶ This railroad provided access to the sea and eased dependence on the long Danube-Black Sea-Turkish Straits-Mediterranean route. Thus, whoever controlled Macedonia controlled the economic life of the peninsula and the important trade routes to the west.

However, Macedonia had little to recommend it economically except its status as a transportation hub and conduit to the

Mediterranean. The peasant population survived largely through agriculture or animal husbandry.²⁷ The condition of the land was generally poor, barely producing enough crops to support the local population. In addition, during their 500 year reign, the Ottoman Turks succeeded in virtually deforesting the land, thus increasing poverty and aggravating political unrest.²⁸

By the end of the 19th century, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and Romania claimed all or portions of Macedonia. Their claims were based on historical background, ethnic composition of the population, and maintenance of the balance of power.²⁹

Geopolitics of the Eastern Theater

In 1877, nominally reacting to intense Ottoman atrocities in Bosnia and Bulgaria, Russia declared war on Turkey. In January 1879, after a short, bloody, war, the Russians forced the exhausted Ottoman representatives to the peace table.³⁰

The result of the Russian victory was the Treaty of San Stefano of 1878. The treaty upset the balance of power in the Balkans by creating a very large, independent Bulgarian state that included the territory within its modern borders, Macedonia and western Thrace. The other Great Powers, upset by thoughts of Russians threatening Far East trade routes, reacted swiftly and asked Prince Otto von Bismarck, the Prussian Minister-President, to broker a new agreement at the Congress of Berlin in June-July 1878.³¹

The Congress of Berlin was a watershed event in Balkan history. Romania, Montenegro, and Serbia gained their independence. Austria-Hungary occupied the Ottoman provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sultan Abdul Hamid suspended the Ottoman Constitution. Finally, the San Stefano treaty-created Bulgarian state was carved into three portions; the autonomous principality

of Bulgaria, which remained under Ottoman suzerainty (present-day northern Bulgaria), the semi-autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia (present-day southern Bulgaria), and Macedonia, which remained under Ottoman rule.³² Intra-Balkan competition to gain control of all remaining Ottoman lands in Europe began.

The treaty failed to solve the "Eastern Question." Seven years after the Congress of Berlin, Eastern Rumelia declared its union with Bulgaria--though neither declared formal independence. War broke out between the Serbs and the Bulgarians over the union in late 1885, but the Austrians intervened and restored the status quo in early 1886.³³

The Road to War

The First Balkan War was fought from October 1912 to May 1913 between the nations of the Balkan League (Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro) and the Ottoman Empire. These five states began their trek down the road to war during the previous century, when the major European powers simultaneously embraced both nationalism and imperialism. Germany and Italy fought their wars of confederation and consolidation while Great Britain, France, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Belgium ceased coveting one another's European territory and turned instead to Africa and Asia. After the Napoleonic Wars, conflict in Europe tended to be limited in ends, ways, means, and duration, often lasting less than one year. By 1880, only the decaying Ottoman Empire retained colonies on the European continent.

The nineteenth century had seen the decline of the Ottoman Empire. By the turn of the century, at least part of its vast empire was either in rebellion or under threat of attack from those eager to take advantage of its quickening disintegration. The instability throughout the empire kept millions under arms.³⁴

In 1908, the Young Turk movement forced Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid to restore the Ottoman Constitution, suspended in 1878. The Young Turks' goal was to establish a secular state under parliamentary rule. With the support of the Austrians, Prince Ferdinand formally declared himself Tsar of the Bulgars and proclaimed Bulgarian independence from the Ottoman Empire on 5 October 1908.³⁵ Aware of Turkish weakness, Austria-Hungary formally annexed the Ottoman territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina two days later.³⁶

This action angered Serbia and severely strained its relations with Austria; Serbs felt both Bosnia and Herzegovina should have been incorporated into the Serbian kingdom. Serbia appealed to Russia for both diplomatic and military assistance to counter what it felt were potential threats from three sides (Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria). Still reeling from the Russo-Japanese War, Russia could do little but reduce its cooperation with Austria-Hungary and offer moral encouragement.³⁷

Between 1908 and 1912, Russia actively pursued diplomatic solutions to the "Eastern Question" on behalf of Serbia. In March 1912, after months of active assistance by Russian agents, Bulgaria concluded a "Treaty of Friendship" with Serbia and established the Balkan League. Though nominally a mutual defense treaty, secret clauses in the treaty provided for most of the division of Macedonian territory after the forcible termination of Ottoman rule.

A large area of Macedonia (that very closely approximates the current boundaries of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia) remained unpartitioned. Serbia and Bulgaria agreed to allow the Russian Tsar to divide it between them.³⁸

The Treaty of Friendship between Serbia and Bulgaria meant war. Openly antagonistic, the two nations were anxious to force the Ottoman Empire to abandon its European provinces. They planned to present a series of demands, including one for complete withdrawal of Turkish soldiers from the region, timed to coincide with the harvest. Serbia and Bulgaria expected the Ottoman government to reject their demands, thus clearing the way for war.³⁹

Shortly after concluding its agreements with Serbia, Bulgaria concluded another treaty with the Greeks. Significantly, it included no territorial provisos and was strictly defensive in nature.⁴⁰ In October 1912, Montenegro concluded defense agreements with Serbia and Bulgaria, completing the Balkan League as it began mobilization for war.

Though history accurately portrays the Ottoman Empire, especially during these last days of its existence, as pathetically weak, the conventional wisdom of the time was quite different. The Turkish Army's reputation was better than it deserved, thanks to relative internal calm and incidents like the spirited and tenacious defense of Tripoli against Italian invaders in 1911.⁴¹

None of the Great Powers (except Russia) desired either a shift in the balance of power or a division of power among the Balkan nations. They felt that without a dominant state in the region, the possibility of war would remain a constant threat. On 8 October 1912, Austria-Hungary and Russia warned the Balkan League not to pursue an aggressive policy toward the Turks.⁴² Their warning came too late; on the same day, Montenegro attacked the Ottoman fortress of Scutari.⁴³ Briefly, the war remained localized in Montenegro. On 14 October 1912, the Balkan League allies delivered their ultimatum to the Sultan.⁴⁴ Faced with an

untenable situation, the Ottoman empire declared war on the Balkan League three days later.

The Bulgarians provided the League's strategic leadership and devised the strategic plan. Montenegro, Serbia, and Greece would defeat the Ottoman forces in Macedonia. Bulgaria would cut the east-west lines of supply and communication from Thrace to Macedonia. Simultaneously, Bulgaria would either bypass or storm the citadels of Adrianople (Edirne) and Kirk Kilisse (Kirkilisse) and push steadily southward to capture Constantinople.

Conduct of the First Balkan War

Though the Balkan League was a coalition, the Balkan allies fought independent of one another. Neither a combined operational plan nor an overall supreme commander existed. The Bulgarian devised strategic plan was clear that each League member would fight independently.

The Balkan nations' respective territorial goals overlapped, and though they fought a common enemy, the overall attitude was nationalistic. They fought their battles in different theaters and against an enemy that also fought without a coordinated strategy or campaign plan. Major tactical movement focussed on two month period beginning 12 October and concluded before 15 December, as a prelude to the siege of Yanina.

Space does not permit the examination of Greek or Bulgarian operations. An overview is included as an Appendix. The focus is on Serbian actors.

The Western Theater

Because of its history, location, and diverse population, all belligerents considered Macedonia the most important theater of the war.⁴⁵ The Ottoman forces potentially faced a campaign

against the combined armies of the five allied nations acting in concert. However, the members of the Balkan League saw their individual and nationalistic goals as independent of the common cause to remove Turkish domination of the peninsula. With one exception, Balkan League combat operations were independent and uncoordinated. The examination of their tactics and movements must be made in a similar fashion.

Serbia's natural battlefield lay in the Vardar River basin, amid the chaos of steep mountains formed by the Dinaric Alps, Carpathian Mountains, Albanian Mountains, and the Despoto Massif, the western end of the Rhodope Range.⁴⁶ In mid-October, the Serbian Army moved southeast from its assembly points near Vranja and through the Morava River valley, described by contemporary military topographers as:

"flowing through very deep and narrow gorges--so deep in places the sides are 3,000 feet high, and so narrow that both the road and the railway track are eventually hewn out of solid rock. And the country on each side is so rough, rising to nearly 4,000 feet in the Golyak Planina, that movement east and west is practically impossible. Indeed, this is practically true of the whole country, and practically forbids any formal military movements....These conditions are profoundly favorable to guerilla warfare, but almost insuperable difficulties in the way of wide commercial or military developments."

--Lionel W. Lyde and A.F. Mockler-Ferryman⁴⁷

After passing through Kossovo into Macedonia, the Serbs marched south to fight the Turks and gain their first great prize, the town of Skopje.

After Salonika, Skopje was the most important transportation hub in the central Balkan peninsula. The road and railway networks from Salonika run north-northwest through the Vardar valley to Skopje and then north through Serbia to Hungary. In the

west, the still-used Roman road (Via Egnatia) ran north-northeast from the Greek port of Prevesa and connected to the east-west road running to the Albanian port of Durres.⁴⁸

Just northwest of Skopje lies Kachanik Pass. The Turkish Army traveled through Kachanik in 1389 en route to defeat the Serbs at Kossovo Polje. Serbs considered Kossovo Polje the virtual equivalent of Jerusalem, something to controlled at all costs.⁴⁹

In anticipation of war, the Serbs created an army group, consisting of the 1st, 2d, and 3d Serbian Armies, the Army of the Ibar, and the independent Javor Brigade, all under the command of Crown Prince Alexander Karageorgevitch.⁵⁰ Totalling over 318,000 men and 450 cannon, the Serbs planned to send their three numbered armies southward against the Ottoman Army of the Vardar. The Army of the Ibar and the Javor Brigade (totalling 37,400 men, 44 cannon) were to penetrate east into the Turkish-controlled Novi Bazar province, securing the extreme right flank and rear from attack.

On 19 October 1912, the Serbs crossed the frontier. In the center was the 1st Army, commanded by the Minister of War, General Radomir Putnik. It consisted of 132,000 men and 154 cannon in five infantry and one cavalry divisions.⁵¹ On the Serb left was the 2d Army, commanded by General Stepa Stepanovic, and comprising 76,500 men and 156 cannon in one Serb infantry division and the 7th (Rila) Bulgarian Infantry Division. On the 1st Army's immediate right was the 3d Army, commanded by General Bodizar Jankovic, consisting of 72,800 men and 96 cannon in four infantry divisions.⁵²

The Serbs planned to advance 1st Army south through the mountain passes of Kossovo and 3d Army south-southwest along the

Morava-Vardar river system. The 2d Army would attack simultaneously in a westerly direction from Kuystendil, Bulgaria. General Putnik intended to squeeze the five divisions of the Ottoman Army of the Vardar into a decisive battle in the small valley of Ovce Polje, the center of a triangle formed by the Macedonian towns of Skopje, Tito Veles, and Stip (See Map # 3).

As the Serbs marched south through the Morava valley, they had the advantage of geographically-imposed interior lines. From the north, the roads--dictated by the deep gorges--converge on Skopje and Kumanovo. From the south, the roads diverge away from Skopje, except for the Vardar valley road. Armies traveling north either march in a long column or separate into columns incapable of mutual support. Either way, limited opportunities existed for decisive offensive maneuver.⁵³

At the onset of war, the Bulgarians reneged on their agreement to subordinate their 7th division to the 2d Serb Army.⁵⁴ This move greatly confused and upset the plans of the Serb commanders. With only one division consisting of 28,600 men and 48 cannon, the 2d Army was too weak to attack as planned. Had 2d Army retained the 7th Bulgarian division and thus enough strength to complete its intended mission, the Serbs would have discovered weak Ottoman positions. In a supporting effort, the 3d Army advanced to Pristina and the remaining division of the 2d Army moved toward Kratovo.

On 26 October, the Bulgarians asked the Serbs to furnish some additional troops for their offensive in Thrace. The Serbs complied, dispatching the 1st (Timok) division and the 2d (Dunav) division in a reconstituted 2d Army to Adrianople.⁵⁵

Serbian and Ottoman Operations

Unlike many previous and subsequent wars, no combat journals exist specifying troop movements and battlefield dispositions during the First Balkan War. Therefore, determining the specific tactics of Serb and Turkish forces during their battles must be extrapolated from the outcome of events. Records are available that indicate the training, tactics, and combat readiness of both Balkan allies and Ottoman forces, but none that delineate the specific actions fought in Macedonia.

The Serbian Army

The Serbian Army was not the best organized, trained, led, or equipped Army in the First Balkan War; that distinction belonged to the Bulgarians. However, the Serbians fought their way south through the tough Macedonian terrain and scored a series of victories against the Ottoman forces.

The Serbian Army depended on conscription to fill its ranks. Conscripts served for eighteen to twenty-four months on active duty, then entered a reserve force divided into several readiness levels. Duty with the reserves lasted until the soldier reached age 45. From age 18 to 21, and then again from age 45 to 55, the soldiers served in a territorially based militia. The Serbian Army maintained a peacetime readiness level of 32,000 soldiers.⁵⁶

With 2,050 officers on active duty, The Serbians maintained a military academy, from which their army drew the vast majority of its career officers. Reserve officers either received direct commissions or were promoted from the ranks. The result was an Army whose junior active officers and reservist officers served in troop assignments at low levels and experienced life in the ranks.⁵⁷

The Serbian Army trained its officers; after graduating from the military academy, many attended military training schools

abroad or went to a two-year General Staff course. After attending basic training, conscripts served on active duty for two years. After their period of active service, they drilled on weekends, before spring planting, and after the harvest. Many public schools gave students a basic military orientation as part of their instruction.⁵⁸ Infantrymen were trained to move toward the enemy through trench lines or behind cover in loose skirmish lines. When within range, they would open fire from one flank while another flank enveloped the enemy position and attack with the bayonet. Cavalry served predominantly as a commander's guard. Cavalry units received virtually no training in reconnaissance or close combat.

The Serbian Army mobilized with some difficulty. The Serbian authorities took the precaution of planning and using railroad timetables to move troops. The Serbian General Staff had conducted mobilization training drills to enhance readiness. Some individuals were so eager to fight against the Ottoman Army that they arrived at their mobilization stations several days before their official reporting date. Because of the strict timetable, no mobilization station could accept volunteers until after initial mobilization, slowing the mobilization rate.

Draft animals and wagons were subject to conscription as well. Many local communities ignored the regulations and gave low quality animals to the government. As a result, many six-horse teams only got four animals. Oxen and cattle made up some of the deficiencies.⁵⁹ The lack of draft animals proved especially troublesome after the Serbians defeated the Ottoman forces at Kumanovo. The slow speed of ammunition trains forced the Serbians into a vicious cycle of advancing, fighting, and waiting for the logistics wagons to catch up.⁶⁰

By contemporary standards, logistics in the Serbian Army were poor. Mobilization stations were equipped with some of the weapons, uniforms and supplies. However, not enough supplies existed for all, and some men went to war in their civilian clothes, marching barefoot to their assembly areas near the Ottoman-Serbian border. Many more conscripts had no tentage, blankets, or individual equipment (canteens, cartridge belts, rifle slings, etc.). The Army could not feed all of its soldiers because of inadequate supplies or transportation of those supplies. The men grew sick waiting for food, clothing, and shelter.

In addition, medical care barely existed. The first aid packet and field dressings were virtually unknown. Many leaders neglected the basic hygiene of their men, an oversight that caused serious non-battle losses.⁶¹

Tactically, the Serbians performed fairly well. They trained to advance calmly in loose skirmish lines, used what cover was available, and opened fire only when within effective range. The Serbians routinely used individual entrenching tools to dig small fighting positions. Though the fresh earth often betrayed their positions and offered no overhead cover, it kept the troops on the ground and out of the direct line of fire. On occasion, the Serbians resorted to volley fire, but without apparent result.⁶²

The Serbians used bayonet attacks mostly at night, and usually under a junior officer exercising some initiative. They preferred going into action with bayonets fixed and found that their short, knife-like tools provided better leverage and were more reliable than those of the Turks.⁶³

The Serbians used their artillery in an unsophisticated but effective fashion. By distributing their artillery down to brigade level, they gave up the opportunity to mass fires on any objective. Because many of the battles took place in valley bottomland, artillery had to locate in a place to support the infantry, which was often at the head of the valley and if possible at the limit of their range. Some batteries fired from defilade and received their calls for fire via a messenger. Often, the activities of the messenger drew the unwanted attention of the opposing Ottoman artillerymen.

Serbian cavalry was ineffective. The absence of good roads, the changing nature of the terrain, the swampy character of the valley floors and the lack of training combined to reduce any role the cavalry might have played. Cavalry slowed drastically during a rainstorm, when its speed could be reduced to less than 1500 meters per hour.⁶⁴

The Ottoman Army

By any standard, the Ottoman Army of 1912 was poorly organized, virtually untrained, badly led, undisciplined, and completely lacked logistical or medical support. Its basic unit was the infantry battalion. Like the other armies of the period, the Ottoman Army depended on conscription to fill out its ranks in wartime.⁶⁵ The authorized peacetime strength of an Ottoman infantry battalion was 320 officers and men. A total of 300,000 soldiers served on active duty in peacetime. Each Ottoman division included one artillery regiment of two battalions (12 guns each) armed predominantly with 75mm guns. Authorized strength of Ottoman cavalry squadrons was 90 mounts. However, few squadrons could muster more than 50 mounts.⁶⁶ When mobilized, all battalion-sized units doubled in size.

Officers received little or no formal training; promotions were a direct result of political connections, both under the Sultan and then under the Young Turks. Many younger officers felt compelled to engage in domestic politics, which affected their senses of military order and discipline. Senior officers refused to make decisions or give guidance because their skills had atrophied to the point that they were afraid to take responsibility for their actions.⁶⁷ In addition, the Ottoman Army had no cadre or educational system that provided the Army with reserve officers.⁶⁸ The result was a shortage of officers at all levels.

General Staff officers received some training abroad but stagnated because they were sequestered from troop duty. Few training maneuvers or large-scale exercises got beyond the conceptual stage. Consequently, commanders at all levels failed to gain any experience in battlefield leadership tasks nor understand the impacts on terrain or operations. Work and war games were generally not required of line officers, and staff officers seldom got tactical training.⁶⁹

At battalion and company level, unit strength precluded proper training. Older, more experienced soldiers often trained the new conscripts.⁷⁰ After the war with Tripoli ended in the Spring of 1912, the army discharged a large number of men serving their third year of enlistment. This deprived many units of their most valuable commodity, experienced men. Officers seldom supervised individual training; thus, march discipline and capacity (endurance and stamina) suffered, as did fire discipline. The artillery seldom fired live ordnance while cavalry units served more as a commander's guard than as a reconnaissance or shock force.

When the army mobilized, the major emphasis was on providing line units their wartime authorized strength. Ottoman forces won earlier wars either by gathering up the masses and sending them into battle or through the intervention of allies, as in the Crimean War. When the Balkan League mobilized against them, the Ottoman forces held to their old methods. At the mobilization station, neither reservists nor conscripts were assigned according to either level of training, service records, or aptitude. Thus, Ottoman units contained a mix of semi-trained regulars, reservists, and untrained conscripts.⁷¹

To help create a more modern force and a doctrine for its employment, the Turks had turned to the Germans, whom they regarded as near allies.⁷² From 1889 through World War I, Germany provided the Turkish Army with trainers, money, and moral support. However, the Germans could not compensate for the low quality of troops present in the Turkish armies in Anatolia, Thrace, and Macedonia.

Another detractor from readiness was the Young Turk Revolt. Six months after that revolution, in April 1909, many regular Turkish Army units (called Nizam) revolted and were promptly crushed by the government in power.⁷³ As a result of the revolution, the subsequent dispersal of suspect units, "normal" attrition in occupied lands, and an inconvenient war with Italy in 1911-1912, Turkish first line troop units in the Balkans were far below strength. Poorly trained reserve troops (called Redif) and virtually untrained militia (called Mustafuz) filled out Turkish ranks. When war began, Turkey fielded no fewer than 24 complete infantry divisions, along with numerous smaller garrisons manning outposts and checkpoints throughout Ottoman-controlled Macedonia and Thrace. However, most of the troops in these divisions were

Redif and Mustafuz. By the armistice, Turkey had mobilized an additional Mustafuz twelve divisions, but committed relatively few of them except as replacements for troops manning fortifications on the Chatalja Line.⁷⁴

In addition to problems of organization and training, the Ottoman Army had a significant problem with their logistics and medical support. Vast quantities of supplies existed, but they were stored in the rear or along the rail line. No plans had ever been made to move the storage dumps; they were placed throughout the countryside to facilitate action against internal revolts. No one anticipated an external threat in the Balkans. Supply trains were supposed to drive to the dumps, load supplies, and then return to the front. The untrained, undisciplined, hungry soldiers threw away their heavier equipment and began to forage. However, they tended to strip an area and leave little or nothing for an following forces. By the time they reached the battlefield, many Ottoman soldiers were exhausted and starving.

Medical services in the field were terrible. Battle dressings and first aid kits were scarce. Consequently, a large number of wounded and sick soldiers died. As many as thirty percent of all wounded died on the battlefield, while eighty percent of wounded who managed to arrive at a hospital survived.⁷⁵

Few examples in warfare illustrate better the value of organization, training, and caring for soldiers. The Turkish Army required years of attention and a complete reorganization. German advisors--hired and assigned to train the Ottoman Army--accomplished little actual reform. Though some Germans actually commanded Turkish units, the Turks placed no emphasis on leavening their force with these trained troops. As the first battles of this war proved, the Ottoman Army overestimated itself and

underestimated the enemy. The European provinces remained a part of the Ottoman Empire until 1912 because the Great Powers desired it, not because of the force of Turkish arms.⁷⁶

Despite the difficulties of terrain facing them in the Vardar-Morava valley system, the Turks, not the Serbs, chose the first Macedonian battlefield. Ottoman forces moved north and surprised Serb forces near the town of Kumanovo. In selecting Kumanovo, the Turks chose a place with proximity to Skopje with its large stores of supplies and provisions.⁷⁷

Ottoman forces advanced north from Stip to Kumanovo, twenty kilometers northeast of Skopje. On 24 October, the two armies met in a violent clash that lasted three days. Despite reports to contrary, General Putnik believed the Ottoman army encountered at Kumanovo was an advance guard or initial defensive line.

Though Ottoman forces had achieved tactical surprise and had chosen the battlefield, they were decisively defeated, retreating in disorder. The Serbs failed to realize the extent of their victory for several days and believed the main body of the Army of the Vardar still lay southwest at Ovce Polje.⁷⁸ The 1st Army then waited for its supplies to catch up and for 3d Army to advance south from Pristina.

The secret to the Serbs' success at Kumanovo is not too difficult to ascertain. Though the Ottoman Army achieved tactical surprise by engaging 1st Serb Army much farther north than anticipated and had the advantage of short supply lines, they were hopelessly unprepared for battle.

Reginald Rankin, a British Army lieutenant colonel and London newspaper correspondent, toured the battlefield several days after the battle. He reported seeing boxes of blank rifle cartridges intermixed with boxes of ball ammunition on the

battlefield. He surmised that the large number of ethnic Albanian soldiers in the Ottoman ranks, considered inferior and neither trained nor trusted, were armed with blanks. When the Serbian forces deployed into battle formation, the Albanian units' fire had no effect. Consequently they ran, causing a break in the line and spreading panic among the more dependable troops.⁷⁹

Though he controlled the Serb cavalry division, General Putnik failed to use its mobility to gather information. Had he done so, he could have discovered Turkish weaknesses, continued the southward advance and completed the destruction of the Army of the Vardar. However, the remainder of the Ottoman forces withdrew to the Macedonian town of Monastir (Bitolj). On 16-18 November, the 1st Serb Army won another victory and pushed remaining Ottoman forces into Albania. The 3d Army remained in Macedonia and Kossovo, eliminating stragglers.

The accidental victory at Kumanovo restored Serbian confidence and prestige after 524 years of waiting for a chance to avenge their defeat at Kossovo Polje.⁸⁰ However, the Serb failure to pursue and destroy the retreating Ottoman Army allowed it the opportunity to reorganize near the garrison town of Monastir.

The remainder of the Serbian campaign against Ottoman forces followed a similar pattern. After resting, the Serbs would attack, then rest again before again continuing their advance.

After the victory at Kumanovo, they attacked west along the Via Egnatia toward Tetovo and Gostivar, where the Turks resisted until their lines cracked and they fell back on Monastir. From 5-19 November, the 60,000 Ottoman defenders held off repeated attacks by the Serb 1st and 3d Armies. The 3d Army advanced over the Albanian Mountains to the Adriatic coast, where the Serbian

government announced it would annex a large portion of Albania, including the ports of Alessio and Durres.⁸¹

Finally, on 20 November, the Serbs succeeded in driving the Turks from their strongpoints around Monastir. Ottoman forces fled south to Koritza, eighty kilometers north of the Yanina fortress, where the 2d Greek Army had laid siege. Though the Serbs killed or captured nearly 20,000 Turks at Monastir, they again failed to pursue the main body.

During the peace negotiations, the Balkan League and the Great Power arbitrators failed to resolve the Macedonian issue to Bulgaria's satisfaction. In accordance with earlier treaties, Russian Tsar Nicholas II had the responsibility to draw the demarcation line. But Bulgaria decided it could not wait. In June 1913, after one month's formal peace, Bulgaria went to war against its former allies of Serbia and Greece. Not surprisingly, Turkey joined Serbia and Greece against Bulgaria.

At the conclusion of the Second Balkan War in August 1913, Bulgaria had lost most of what it had won from Turkey. Macedonia was divided between Greece and Serbia, and an independent Albania emerged. Turkey regained a small fragment of its European territory. During both World Wars, Bulgaria joined the losing side, twice seduced by the promise that it could annex Macedonia.

Tactical Analysis

An analysis of the tactical aspects of the First Balkan War follows using the contemporary methodology, Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) process. Analysis is subdivided into battlefield area evaluation, terrain analysis, weather analysis, threat evaluation, and threat integration. It is not suggested that the Balkan League used a methodology as

sophisticated as IPB when they decided on war. They did not perform formal threat integration by creating situation, event, or decision support templates. However, they were required to evaluate those things which make up the IPB process: battlefield area, terrain and weather analysis, and the threat. A study of the battles between Serbian and Ottoman forces suffers from a significant lack of primary source material. Thus, an assessment of the Balkan allies' ability to conduct tactical analysis is impossible without some conjecture and supposition.

Battlefield Area Evaluation⁸²

In the First Balkan War, each member of the Balkan League operated in its own Area of Operations (AO). Each nation devised its own campaign plan and thus determined its AO based on its own national objectives. The result was an uncoordinated yet virtually simultaneous attack on all major Turkish units.⁸³ The Turkish Army was forced to fight four different enemy nations, each with its own independent plan. As a result, Ottoman military actions were just as uncoordinated as those of the Balkan League--though with disastrous results. In essence, the Turks were surrounded by hostile nations and were not strong enough to defeat their combined, yet uncoordinated, efforts.

The sole unifying objective was the elimination of the Ottoman Empire from Europe. The "liberation" of Macedonia was a common objective, but not a unifying one--Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria all coveted the territory occupied by Turkey, and for very similar reasons--ethnographic, historic, economic, and religious being the most prevalent. Both Greece and Serbia managed to acquire a large portion of Macedonia; whether by accident or design, they squeezed Bulgaria out. Bulgaria's failure to gain any Macedonian territory was the proximate cause

for the Second Balkan War and continued to influence its foreign policy decisions during World Wars I and II.

The Balkan League nations' commanders' Area of Interest encompassed the whole Balkan peninsula, even though they rarely were able to influence their allies' actions. For example, General Putnik sent two divisions to help the Bulgarians storm Adrianople during the winter.

Because time-distance factors were much greater in 1912-13, the commanders' battle space scarcely reached beyond the immediate battlefield. In the Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian armies, the supreme commander deployed with his headquarters to a forward position where this time-distance factor could be reduced. Army commanders served at the head of their armies, personally observing the effects of maneuver and fires. The Balkan commanders understood the concept of space and sought to dominate the Turks when they entered it. What they did not do, despite numerous opportunities, was expand their area of operations to include pursuit.

The First Balkan War contributed to the physical expansion of battle space when the Turks, Bulgarians, and Serbians used aircraft in combat for the first time. Observation balloons had been used since the American Civil War, but in the Balkans, pilots flew planes for reconnaissance, attack, and bombing.⁸⁴

Terrain Analysis⁸⁵

Terrain analysis reduces "the uncertainties regarding the effects of natural and man-made terrain on military operations." During the First Balkan War, terrain analysis was the business of the military topographer, usually an officer trained as an engineer. Then as now, the importance of terrain depended on the ability to move and supply large formations of combat forces for

extended periods of time. The road and rail systems naturally followed the river valleys. Secondary roads branched off the main roads into the deep gorges and valleys. However, the steep terrain dictated that for military purposes, the main roads were lines of operation, communication, and lines of supply.

The Romans built their regional capital of Dardania where Skopje now stands. Control of the Vardar valley system ensured control of the economy of the southern Balkans. In addition, Macedonia controlled the only places feasible enough to permit both east-west and north-south traverse of the Balkan Mountain Ranges. The three most important railroads in the Balkans intersected in Skopje; to Salonika in the south, to Vrania, Nis, and ultimately to Sofia in the northeast, and to Pristina and Kossovo in the northwest. At the time, the railroad through the Morava and Vardar valleys was the only commercially remunerative rail line linking Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Salonica, and Constantinople.⁸⁶

Finally, the Vardar valley contained several heavy-duty railway bridges, easing the passage of large bodies of troops and heavy artillery. River crossings were common for the armies of the First Balkan War; the mountains are crisscrossed with numerous deep, fast-moving, unbridged streams. Much later, the German Army would characterize its operations in the Balkans as a series of river operations in mountainous terrain.

Between Thrace and Macedonia, the Struma Valley ran south from Sofia, Bulgaria, to the east end of the Chalkidiki peninsula, where it emptied into the Aegean Sea. However, the mouth of the river is far from the nearest port in Salonica. In 1905, the Struma itself was so torrential and cut through chasms so steep, no permanent road ran along its banks, unlike the Vardar. Between

then and 1912, the Turks did nothing to improve the Struma Valley system, for to do so would have benefitted only the Bulgarians.⁸⁷

In the east, the Maritza and Tundja River systems were considered to be the only routes capable of supporting an invading army, moving north or south. Therefore, it was a great shock to the Turks when the 3d Bulgarian Army crossed over the Istranja Dag and attacked Kirk Killisse.

Weather Analysis

The Balkan League's decision to go to war in late autumn reflected two important criteria. First, the League wanted to gather the harvest before beginning the campaign. Second, the accumulated stockpiles of ammunition and food would support a relatively short but intense war. Following the nineteenth century trend, the war was expected to be short, since it was limited in theater design. As an added incentive, the allies attacked before the heavy snows fell in the mountains, thus committing themselves to a shorter campaign. Winter in the Balkans did (and does) differ dramatically depending on elevation, winds, and distance from the Mediterranean Sea.

The coastline enjoys relatively warm daytime temperatures in the winter due to the sea's influence. However, the interior of the peninsula, laced with mountains, faces heavy influence from the continental air masses, especially at high elevation. Rainfall along the coast is relatively high, often three times that of towns located less than 35 kilometers away but located inland on the other side of a mountain range.⁸⁸

Threat Evaluation

The threat to the Balkan League at the beginning of the First Balkan War was nominally easy to identify: the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish domination of the peninsula had begun with

Serbian defeat at Kossovo Polje on 28 June 1389.⁸⁹ During that time, the Turks converted much of the population to Islam while adopting, importing, and exporting various regional cultural customs.⁹⁰ Despite their overwhelming collective desire to remove the Turks from Europe, the Balkan League recognized other threats, including one another and their incompatible religions.

The Ottoman Empire was the primary enemy. The Turks' long decline began in 1683, when they failed to conquer Vienna.⁹¹ By the early twentieth century, the Empire--still substantial geographically--was drowning in a sea of ethnic and cultural hostility in all sectors. On the Balkan peninsula, southern Greece earned its independence in 1829. It was followed in 1830 when Serbia gained autonomy as a separate Turkish principality. Bulgaria gained its freedom de facto in 1878, under the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano; Tsar Ferdinand officially proclaimed the Kingdom of Bulgaria in 1908.⁹² In July 1908, Turkish Army officers (the "Young Turks") revolted in Salonika and forced the Sultan to accept a liberal constitution.⁹³

Despite the perception of internal and external weakness, Turkey maintained a large standing army, much larger than the combined forces of the Balkan League. However, the empire's political and cultural problems required dispersal of the army throughout the Ottoman-controlled areas, preventing its quick concentration.

First, the Balkan allies' strategy of not coordinating their offensive efforts worked at the tactical level but was a primary contributing factor in the Second Balkan War. In Macedonia, the dispersed Turkish forces had no chance to maneuver themselves into a single large army capable of defeating the Balkan allies on

Turkish terms. Distance, difficult terrain, and overall lack of infrastructure contributed to their inability to consolidate.

Second, the members of the Balkan League considered themselves threats to one another. All desired territorial expansion at Turkish expense, especially with regard to Macedonia. Each belligerent knew that control of Macedonia meant control of a vast amount of economic power--power that had impact on the major capitals of Europe. As mentioned previously, all road and rail transport to the interior of the Balkans traversed Macedonia.

Third, the Balkan League recognized a religious schism. As recently as 1870, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church had not existed. Proclaimed on 22 February 1870, the national church, called the Exarchate, had seceded from the (Greek) Orthodox church over a secular disagreement.⁹⁴ Aggravating the schism in the Christian churches were the Moslem Slavic people. The ethnic origin of these people was questionable. The debate, raged then and now, whether they were originally Serbian, Bulgarian, or Anatolian Turks who had migrated and adopted the Serbo-Croatian language.⁹⁵ Regardless, the Moslem Slavs enjoyed a higher standard of living and tangible economic and social benefits.

Religious affiliation is as volatile in 1993 as it was in 1912. Though a Macedonian Orthodox Church has been established, Macedonia contains a large Albanian population, eighty percent of whom are Moslems. In the neighboring province of Kosovo, Albanians comprise eighty percent of the population.⁹⁶ The memory of what being a Moslem meant during the Turkish occupation of the land remains fresh. The east-west Turk-Albanian religious alliance and the north-south Orthodox religious alliance of the Balkans intersect in Macedonia; separating the religious from the secular is difficult.⁹⁷

Fourth, at some point during its history, each Balkan nation had exercised control over Macedonia. The Greeks claimed Macedonia as a legacy of Philip II of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great). The Bulgarians claimed it as theirs because the Bulgarian empire of the eleventh and twelfth centuries incorporated the region. During this interlude, many Bulgarians emigrated from their ancestral homes on the Danubian plain to Macedonia. For their part, the Serbs claimed Macedonia because it had been part of the Dushan Empire, which had once controlled Bulgaria, Macedonia and had threatened the Byzantine Empire. Thus, the Serbs had had control at the time of Kossovo Polje.⁹⁸

The preceding analysis outlines some of the intelligence considerations applicable to the Balkan League. They knew the general topography and weather conditions of the Balkan peninsula, and they considered and integrated the effects of the dispersed forces of the Ottoman threat.

Conclusions

"Ground zero for the coming century of culture clash is Macedonia. Macedonia is the strategic heart and trade crossroads of the southern Balkans, through which all ground transportation must go. Macedonia is itself divided between Orthodox Christian Slavs and Albanian Muslims. As in the Middle Ages, it might again become part of Greater Serbia. Likewise, it could be folded into Greater Bulgaria. It will likely require massive Western military intervention for Macedonia to stay independent; President Clinton's bluff on the 300 ground troops is likely to be called."

--Robert D. Kaplan⁹⁹

The history of the First Balkan War indicates that many of the issues which caused it remain unresolved eighty years later.

The cultural, ethnographic, geographic, political, and economic problems of today are more than simply issues to be dissected and dealt with one at a time. The history of the region is alive; it completely pervades the thoughts and actions of the peoples who inhabit it. For them, history isn't just yesterday, last year, or even in the last century. It is all of those things and more; what happened two hundred years ago is active and vivid in collective memory.

The evidence shows a rough physical environment existed in 1912, one which inhibited marching columns of men and equipment from supporting each other when attacked. The mountains, rivers, and streams remain as daunting as they were eighty years ago. The mountainous terrain contains large deposits of limestone, especially in the western regions, where underground rivers run beneath the karst. During the First Balkan War, cross-country traffic was limited by a combination of the steep grade and the karst topography.

Such terrain tends to keep all but light or mountain-trained infantry near or confined to the roads. As the Serbs and Turks discovered at Kumanovo, a single road may have to support the lines of communication, operations, and supply. The roads and rail systems have been improved since the First Balkan War. The main passenger rail connection (the "Orient Express") between Paris, Munich, Vienna, and Constantinople runs through Belgrade and Sofia. However, the commercial traffic, especially semi-trailer trucks, still follow the Vardar river valley north from Salonika into the interior of Europe. The man-made features have neither significantly altered the terrain nor increased cross-country mobility.¹⁰⁰

This analysis has highlighted the difficulty of conducting combat operations in the Balkans and specifically Macedonia during the First Balkan War. It was a tactical war, fought for strategic gains, not unlike the proposed peacekeeping operation for the region today. The region retains its strategic importance as a link between east and west. Territorial aspirations of many neighbor nations remain as intense as at the turn of the century. The terrain of the region is not significantly altered by manmade features. These internal and external conditions have an impact on military operations. They provide a set which a commander must understand that no leverage in planning operations. The impact of these conditions is best described using the battlefield operating systems.

1. Maneuver. Future maneuver forces in the Balkans will be forced to remain on or near the roads in order to guarantee their mobility and sustainment. Heavy forces, especially susceptible to ambushes, roadblocks, and blown bridges, will have to compensate and find improved methods to move through restrictive terrain. They will frequently operate on one-vehicle fronts. Light forces may be better equipped to move cross-country, but their response and speed is limited. Their tether to the LOC or base will be limited unless air resupply is possible.

Aviation assets are critical. Unavailable and unheard of in 1912, they are indispensable in 1993. Both heavy and light forces will depend on them to conduct the tactical maneuver of small and large units. The use of aviation is not without risk; assets conducting these operations in support of ground forces may find themselves vulnerable to attack from above, as well as from below.

2. Fire Support. The steep terrain will inhibit use of medium and heavy indirect fire systems, requiring more use on high

trajectory systems. Masking inhibits radio transmissions, affecting calls for fire. Large open areas for battery positioning are infrequent while ground slope may affect artillery position area selection.

3. Mobility, Countermobility, and Survivability. The difficulty of the terrain has been mentioned. Friendly force mobility will be hampered by poor roads, bridges, and tunnels, and by the simple lack of roads in general.

4. Intelligence. The passionate, volatile character of the population of the Balkan peninsula makes information retrieval and intelligence preparation difficult. The terrain and weather analyses are a problem, but no more so than other parts of the world. Identification of the threat, determining an enemy doctrine or method or employment for his forces, and integrating that into the IPB process magnifies when the threat could be a combination of guerilla and conventional warfare as well as multinational.

5. Air Defense. The air defense dilemma is less of a problem. Rather than occupy mountain peaks and engage larger areas because visibility is better or on the valley floor to provide close-in protection, the air defense umbrella should occupy semi-stable positions along LOCs and with important units. Though fixing them requires augmentation for security, the terrain demands air defense assets be placed where they can have the most impact.

6. Combat Support. As mentioned, the paucity of LOCs forces logistics planners to compete with maneuver forces for priority. Lines of communication, operations, and supply will tend to be the one in the same. In addition, they will be long and through rough terrain.

Seaports on the peninsula are limited, as are airstrips capable of handling a large volume of traffic. After Skopje, the closest large airports are in Sofia, Bulgaria, and Salonika, Greece, several hundred kilometers away on twisting, mountainous roads. Stockpiling supplies at sea- and airports and at intermediate sites will be difficult because of limited storage capacities and restricted terrain. Maintaining a sixty-day minimum for all classes of supply may not be possible.

7. Command and Control. The terrain will force commanders to disperse and move on several narrow fronts without mutual support or attack on a single narrow front that inhibits maneuver. Terrain will mask frequency modulating radios, forcing commanders to rely on satellite systems to conduct routine business, thus risking interference with high-level transmissions. Logistics will consume more attention because of the difficulties associated with operating in this environment.

These considerations outline some of the problems faced by Americans operating in Macedonia. If the U.S. military support for the region increases, the problems will grow. The tactical considerations and lessons for military operations in the Balkans can be better appreciated by understanding the historical nature and character of conflict there.

Appendix

Greece

Under the supreme command of Crown Prince Constantine, the Greek government mobilized two armies which eventually reached a total strength of 250,000 men.¹⁰¹ The 1st Army, commanded by Prince Constantine, comprised seven infantry and one cavalry divisions. The 2d Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Constantine Sapountzakis, was roughly equal to two infantry divisions. Nominally, its mission was wholly defensive. However, at the outbreak of war, 2d Army crossed the Aracnthos River into the Epirus region in an advance roughly coordinated with that of 1st Army.¹⁰² Thus, the Greek armies advanced on both sides of the Pindus Mountain Range.¹⁰³

Facing the 1st Greek Army in Thessaly was VIII Ottoman Corps, consisting of three infantry divisions, one infantry brigade, and one cavalry regiment. In Epirus, 2d Army faced two Ottoman infantry divisions in addition to the fortress troops defending Yanina.¹⁰⁴

The Army of Thessaly crossed the frontier on 18 October, routing the Ottoman border guards and occupying the town of Elasson. After a short (10-12 kilometers) advance on 19 October, the Greeks were stopped by 30,000 Ottoman defenders commanded by Hassan Taxim Pasha,¹⁰⁵ concentrated in the town of Sarandaporon. This town lies north of the Meluna Pass, the southern key to Macedonia and the only gap in the mountains separating Thessaly from Macedonia. The only other feasible route ran east through

the narrow Tembi Valley to the Aegean, then followed the coast northwards, skirting Mt. Olympus.

On 22 October, after four days of patrolling and waiting for the supply trains (all ox, mule, horse-drawn) to bring the necessary supplies, the Greeks attacked.¹⁰⁶ On the night of the 22d, the 4th division breached the Ottoman left flank and flooded through the gap, forcing them to withdraw north toward Monastir. Like the Serbs, the Greeks failed to capitalize on their success and pursue the Ottoman forces to destruction. On 29 October, the 5th division occupied Veria, the ancient capital of Philip II of Macedon. The same day, the 7th division moved through the Tembi Valley and north along the Aegean coast.¹⁰⁷

Prince Constantine dispatched a single division to follow Ottoman forces retreating toward Monastir while he turned to attack another Ottoman army located near Salonika.¹⁰⁸

Greek intelligence--like most of the intelligence of the war, was dependent on cavalry, Ottoman deserters, and local inhabitants for information. It was a less than perfect system. The Greeks thought the main body of VIII Ottoman Corps lay either south of Lake Yiannitsa or east of the Vardar River, blocking the approach to Salonika.¹⁰⁹

However, Ottoman forces--still numbering between 35,000 and 40,000 men--were northwest of the lake, where they anticipated an opportunity to strike the Greek army in the flank and rear as it moved east toward Salonika.¹¹⁰ On 30-31 October, the 7th division moved inland from the sea to conduct a reconnaissance in force south of Lake Yiannitsa, guarding the main body of the Army of Thessaly. After discovering the Ottoman forces, the Greek army deployed and attacked on 1 November. After two days, the Greeks dislodged Ottoman defenders from their positions on the northwest

Yiannitsa plain. However, the Greeks again declined the opportunity to pursue the enemy.

Prince Constantine advanced toward Salonika, surrounding the city on 7 November. The next day, the Ottoman commander, Hassan Taxim Pasha, met with the Great Powers' consuls.¹¹¹ They convinced him to surrender, pointing out that his army numbered only 26,000 men and 70 artillery pieces against a Greek force several times larger.¹¹²

Prince Constantine's military victory was significant. His campaign lasted only three weeks, but during that time the Greek 1st Army inflicted 60,000 Ottoman casualties and captured 57,000 prisoners and 180 cannon, while sustaining 3752 killed and 9452 wounded.¹¹³

The Greek military victory over Ottoman forces also served as a political victory over the Bulgarians. The 7th Bulgarian Infantry Division, initially a subordinate unit of the 2d Serb Army, appeared on the eastern outskirts of Salonika on 9 November, one day too late to either contribute to the capture of the city or to claim it for Bulgaria.

In the west, 2d Army crossed the Pindus mountain range into Epirus on 19 October and entered the Pendepegadia Pass. The pass provided the only road from Yanina to the town of Arta near the Ionian Sea.

After a series of small battles, 2d Army advanced north, cut the Ottoman supply lines and laid siege to Yanina. In all, between 38,000 and 40,000 Ottoman soldiers occupied crescent-shaped defenses, commanded by General Ali Riza Pasha until his death on 22 December.¹¹⁴ The centerpiece was Fort Bezanie, located on high ground overlooking a valley 300 meters wide through which passed the main road to the Gulf of Arta.¹¹⁵ Greek forces pressured from

the south, while a composite foreign force under the command of a mercenary Italian general, Riciotti Garibaldi, blocked the northern passes near Metsovo.¹¹⁶

Throughout November and early December, Ottoman forces retreating from earlier defeats at Kumanovo and Monastir took refuge near the town of Koritza, eighty kilometers north of Yanina.

On 19 December, Prince Constantine arrived with his army, forcing the Tsorgoni and Zangoni Passes in the central Pindus Mountains and capturing all Ottoman artillery.¹¹⁷ Prince Constantine's victory at Koritza came after his army fought up and through passes 5000 feet high, on very narrow, serpentine roads.

The terrain around Yanina and the forces available to the Greeks prevented a complete encirclement of Ottoman forces within the fortress complex. Therefore, General Ali Riza Pasha was able to sortie from his strongholds to attack the besieging Greek and composite forces.¹¹⁸ Despite Ali Pasha's death on 22 December and the utter hopelessness of their situation, Ottoman forces continued to hold Yanina. The siege continued, primarily as an artillery duel punctuated by occasional frontal attacks near Bezanie.

Finally, on 5 March, 1913, after a four month siege and 15,000 casualties, the Greeks silenced the Ottoman artillery and machine guns emplaced at Bezanie. Though some Ottoman soldiers fled into the mountains, the majority retreated to Yanina where they surrendered the next day.¹¹⁹

The Eastern Theater

In the eastern theater, the Bulgarian Army did most of the fighting. At the Bulgarian request, the 2d Serb Army participated in the siege of Adrianople. Beyond that, allied contribution in Thrace was minimal.

The Turks recognized the importance of Macedonia as the more important of the two theaters of war.¹²⁰ However, the proximity of the Bulgarian frontier to Constantinople and the Turkish Straits demanded they keep large numbers of troops stationed in Thrace.

Bulgaria and Turkey

In the First Balkan War, the initiative belonged to the Balkan League, particularly Bulgaria. After signing their alliances in the spring, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece began to prepare for war. Recognizing the virtual encirclement of its forces in Macedonia and fearing a Bulgarian attack, the Ottoman Army transferred forces from Anatolia to both the Army of Salonica and the Army of Thrace.¹²¹

Bulgaria knew it would have to move quickly, bypassing or capturing Adrianople and Kirk Kilisse before Ottoman leadership could reinforce their virtually impenetrable Chatalja defensive line, 40 kilometers west of Constantinople. The strength of the Chatalja Line allowed virtually unimpeded resupply of Constantinople, rendering a siege virtually useless.¹²² Bulgaria recognized the necessity for overwhelming combat power to overcome the Chatlja defenses.

Realistically, Bulgaria did not expect to capture Constantinople unless it could entice the Ottoman Army into a decisive battle. Therefore, to secure for itself at least one Aegean port, Bulgaria resolved to capture Salonika as well, even though it meant reneging on its commitment to augment 2d Serb Army.

The only feasible invasion routes from Bulgaria into Thrace run through the Maritza and Tundja valleys. However, both valleys converge at Adrianople. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, the Turks fortified both valleys and all the hillsides surrounding

Adrianople, making it very difficult to bypass.¹²³ The Ottoman Turks stationed their IV Corps in these forts. IV Corps consisted of 60,000 men organized in six divisions supported by 250 heavy guns and field cannon.¹²⁴

The Bulgarian General Staff knew that Adrianople would not fall without a siege. To preserve their combat power, they devised a plan that would allow the bulk of the army to attack the smaller fortress of Kirk Kilisse while conducting a siege of Adrianople. As planned, the attack surprised and confused the Turkish defenders, allowing the Bulgarian Army to continue its move south toward Constantinople.¹²⁵

In the autumn of 1911, the Turks conducted maneuvers in Thrace. They determined that a potential Bulgarian invasion could only proceed through the Martiza and Tundja valleys; the country between the Tundja and the Black Sea was impenetrable.¹²⁶

The Bulgarian commander in chief was General Mikhail Savov. In the west (right flank), the 2d Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Nikola Ivanov and consisting of the 8th and 9th Infantry Divisions, advanced east toward Adrianople through the Maritza valley. Ivanov and 2d Army would mask Adrianople and create a chance for 1st Army to move past the fortress without detection. In the center, 1st Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Vassil Kutchinev and consisting of the 1st, 3d, and 10th Infantry Divisions, advanced south through the Tundja valley. After clearing the pass, 1st Army was to march east, join 3d Army and overrun Kirk Kilisse. In the east (left flank), the 3d Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Radko Dimitriev, consisted of the 4th, 5th, and 6th Infantry Divisions. Though its mission was to cross over the Rhodope Mountains and take Kirk Kilisse, 3d Army

had been assigned a marshalling area near Yamboli, in central Bulgaria.¹²⁷

However, the Bulgarian commander lost his faith in this plan before the declaration of war. Rather than commit all three armies simultaneously, Savov wanted to ensure the Turks were sealed in Adrianople before any further action began, especially toward Kirk Kilisse. Therefore, he changed the mission of 1st Army to one of strategic reserve. It would either join the attack on Adrianople or attack east toward Kirk Kilisse; commitment in either direction depended on the general situation.¹²⁸ Savov shifted command of the 3d Infantry Division from 1st to 2d Army (whose reserve component 11th Infantry Division needed more time for outfitting) to increase its strength. In the general advance, 3d Infantry Division moved south along the Tundja and took up positions north of Adrianople.

On 17 October, Bulgaria crossed the Turkish frontier. Slowly, the 2d Army moved east and south toward Adrianople. It immediately captured the outpost town of Mustafa Pasha and its bridge across the Maritza, which was the only one capable of supporting heavy cannon--except for the Adrianople bridges.¹²⁹

The 3d Army also moved slowly, hampered by the lack of roads over the Istranja Dag in the Rhodope Mountains.¹³⁰ When the Turks learned of the approach of the 3d Army, they elected to leave their prepared defenses at Kirk Kilisse and strike the Bulgarians well forward. On 23 October, 3d Army struck the II, III, and IV Ottoman Corps deployed along a 25 kilometer front defined roughly by the towns of Kadikevi, Eski Polos, and Petra.¹³¹ Under heavy assault, the Turkish defenses collapsed. The Ottoman Army retreated in a disorderly fashion, abandoning

their transport, most of their artillery, and, inexplicably, the fortress of Kirk Kilisse.¹³²

After advancing 120 kilometers over hilly, rocky terrain and in cold, rainy weather, the Bulgarians had captured the town well ahead of schedule. In addition, they had routed the forces of three Turkish Corps. Savov, still insecure about the Turkish forces inside Adrianople, refused to reinforce the success of 3d Army.

Like the Serbs and the Greeks, the Bulgarians failed to pursue and destroy the fleeing Turks when presented with the chance. The Turks established a new defensive line along the Karagach River, which controlled both main roads to Constantinople running from Adrianople and Kirk Kilisse.¹³³

After resting for five days, the 3d Army resumed its advance. Savov had finally committed the 1st Army to advance on 3d Army's right flank. 3d Army was to attack in the north from Kirk Kilisse toward Bunar Hissar and fix the Turkish defenses along the Karagach river. 1st Army would attack in the south from Baba Eski toward Lule Burgas and conduct an envelopment.¹³⁴

The Turkish defenses were anchored on the Rhodope range in the north and on the Ergene river in the south, blocking both main east-west roads leading from the Thracian interior to Constantinople.¹³⁵ Aided by the Bulgarian decision not to pursue, the Turks created a series of trench lines along the ridge that stretched across the rolling countryside.¹³⁶

The Bulgarians resumed the offensive on 28 October. A general lack of reconnaissance assigned to 3d Army hindered its preparations for battle.¹³⁷ As the advance elements of 3d Army came into contact with the Turkish defenses, General Dimitriev directed his commanders to deploy both left right to find the

Turks' flank and turn it. The width of the Turkish defenses was so great that this command actually doubled the width of the Bulgarian advance, from twelve to twenty-five miles.¹³⁸

On 1 November, after defending for five days, the Turks withdrew to the relative safety of the Chatalja defenses west of Constantinople. Again, the Bulgarians failed to pursue and destroy their enemy. The next encounter between Bulgarian and Turkish forces took place on 14 November, two weeks after the collapse of the defensive line along the Karagach river.¹³⁹ The Chatalja line held until the signing of the armistice in May 1913.

With the establishment of the Chatalja Line, the Thracian theater of the First Balkan War settled into trench warfare. The Turks did conduct some inconsequential amphibious raids across the Sea of Marmara onto the Gallipoli Peninsula.¹⁴⁰

The only action of significance occurred in March 1913. Throughout the winter, the Bulgarians and Serbians stockpiled arms, supplies and reinforcements around Adrianople. After amassing a 3.6:1 advantage in men, a 1.5:1 advantage in artillery, and a 9.5:1 advantage in cavalry, the combined Bulgarian-Serbian Army attacked.¹⁴¹ In two days, 24-25 March 1913, they overwhelmed and captured over 30,000 Turkish defenders.¹⁴² With the fall of Scutari one month later, the First Balkan War ended. The Turks had been effectively driven out of Europe.

ENDNOTES

1. Bob Furlong, "Powder Keg of the Balkans," International Defense Review, (May 1993), p. 364-367. On 11 December 1992, at the request of Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 795, the first-ever UN deployment of troops prior to the outbreak of hostilities. The first reconnaissance party arrived in Skopje on 29 December and the first UN troops on 6 January 1993.
2. David M. Maddox, "USAREUR: 'A Highly Deployable Force,'" Army, (October 1993), p. 68. The soldiers of Operation Provide Promise are primarily medical personnel assigned to Task Force 502d MASH, a subordinate unit of 7th Medical Command.
3. LTG John H. Tilelli, Jr., "The Army: America's Force for the Future," Army (October 1993), p. 140.
4. Karl W. Eikenberry, "The Challenges of Peacekeeping," Army, (September, 1993), p. 15-16. See also Robert C. Johansen, "UN Peacekeeping: The Changing Utility of Military Force" Third World Quarterly, (April 1990) p. 64-68.
5. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," Foreign Affairs (Summer 1993), p. 22-49.
6. Jacob W. Kipp and Timothy L. Thomas, Ethnic Conflict: Scourge of the 1990s?, (European Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August, 1992), p. 13-20. See also William Pfaff, "Invitation to War," Foreign Affairs, (Summer, 1993), p. 105-107, and Furlong, p. 366.
7. Jacob G. Schurman, The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, (Princeton, 1916), p. 30. Schurman served as the US Ambassador to Greece during the Balkan Wars.
8. Robert Kaplan, Balkan Ghosts, (New York, 1992), p. 62. Kaplan traces the roots of World War I through the Balkan Wars to the struggle for national hegemony over Macedonia. On 28 June 1914, less than one year after the end of the Balkan Wars, Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian Serb living near Sarajevo, assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his consort, Sophie Chotek. Heir to the dual throne of Austria-Hungary, the archduke was the living symbol of Habsburg oppression and cruelty. His presence--for

military maneuvers--was personally thoughtless and diplomatically insulting. It was no coincidence the visit fell on the 525th anniversary of the battle of Kossovo Polje (the Field of Blackbirds), where the Ottoman Empire defeated the Serbs in 1389. It further reminded Serbs throughout the Balkans that many of their brethren remained governed by an oppressing foreign power. Princip was a Bosnian Serb, and though paid by the Bulgarian Secret Police, was a true believer in the cause of Balkan nationalism.

9. U.S. Army, Field Manual 90-6, Mountain Operations, (Washington, D.C., 1980), p. 1-1.

10. Patrick O'Sullivan, Terrain and Tactics, (New York, 1991), p. 24-25.

11. MAJ James W. DeLony, "Military Geography--Canvas of the Operational Planner?" (SAMS Monograph, Fort Leavenworth, 1989), p. 1.

12. Edmund R. Thompson, The Nature of Military Geography: A Preliminary Survey, (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 1962), p. 12.

13. John R. Brinkerhoff, "The Nature of Modern Military Geography," (MA Thesis, Columbia University, 1963), p. 118.

14. Ibid., p. 120.

15. Carl von Clausewitz, On War, trans. by Peter Paret and Michael Howard, (Princeton, 1976), p. 170.

16. Thompson, p. 12.

17. Antoine-Henri, Baron de Jomini, The Art of War, trans. by J.D. Hittle and reprinted in The Roots of Strategy, Book 2, (Harrisburg, 1987), p. 447. See also Thompson, p. 144, and DeLony, p. 9. Both Thompson and DeLony used this same example.

18. U.S. Army, Field Manual 34-3, Intelligence Analysis, (Washington, D.C., 1990), p. 4-21.

19. Brinkerhoff, p. 61.

20. Throughout the remainder of the monograph, the terms "Ottoman Empire," "Ottoman," and "Turkey" and their associated modifiers are used interchangeably to refer to the military forces of the Ottoman Empire.

21. Margaret Reid Shackleton, Europe, A Regional Geography, (New York, 1962), p. 403-405.

22. Ibid., p. 405.

23. Because names differ with the nationality and age of the sources used, I chose to use the older, Anglicized, versions of place names. To try and eliminate confusion, I included the current name in parentheses after the first mention of a new name.

24. Barbara Jelavich, History of the Balkans. Twentieth Century, (Cambridge, 1983), p. 89.

25. Ibid., p. 89. See also The Europa World Year Book 1993, (London, UK, 1993), p. 3250. The Europa World Year Book 1993 reports the following data as collected during the 1991 Yugoslav census:

<u>Ethnic Group</u>	<u>Population</u>
Macedonians	1,314,283
Albanians	427,313
Turks	97,416
Romanians	55,575
Serbs	44,159
Muslims	35,256
<u>Other</u>	<u>487,275</u>
Total	2,033,964

26. Ibid., p. 90.

27. Ibid., p. 3.

28. CPT Robert Burns, interview by author, US Army Center for Army Lessons Learned, Combined Arms Command, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 29 November 1993. CPT Burns served in Skopje with UN peacekeeping forces. He confirmed that conditions have changed little since the turn of the century. Most Macedonians still earn their living in connection with the soil. In addition, CPT Burns confirmed the virtual deforestation of the land, stating that he saw no tree with base diameter greater than eighteen inches.

29. Petar Opaciac, "Political Ramifications of Serbo-Bulgarian Military Cooperation in the First Balkan War," War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. XVIII: East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, (New York, 1987), p. 85-88. See also Jelavich, p. 90, and David Walker, "Battles of the Balkans," RUSI Journal (June 1993), p. 57-58.

30. Walker, p. 57. See also Miller, p. 5-10. Russia nominally reacted to intense Ottoman violence in Bosnia and Bulgaria, but did so with control of the Turkish Straits very much in mind. Since the reign of Tsar Peter the Great and the creation of a Russian navy, Russia had desired a European warm water port.

Control of the strategic Turkish Straits was paramount. additionally, but no less importantly, Russia felt obligated to serve as the champion of Slavic peoples everywhere. A great many lived in the Balkans under Turkish occupation. Russia and Turkey went to war against each other often throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including 1806-1812, 1828-1829, 1853-1856, and 1878-1879.

31. Jelavich, p. 7. See also Walker, p. 56-57.

32. Thomas Erskine Holland, The European Concert in the Eastern Question, (Oxford, 1885), p. 277-291, 335-348.

33. Momchil Yonov, "Bulgarian Military Operations in the Balkan Wars," War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. XVIII: East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, (New York, 1987), p. 64. See also Lyde and Mockler-Ferryman, p. 48, and Schurman, p. 29. In 1905, Bulgaria had a population in excess of 4,000,000 people. Ethnically, the vast majority of Bulgarians were Slavs. The only other ethnic group of significant size were the Turks, followed by a smattering of Greeks, Gypsies, Romanians, Serbs, and Jews. Other European ethnic groups were represented, but in extremely small numbers. Yonov stated the exact population was 4,432,427. Schurman says it was 4,329,000, though both failed to cite sources. Both figures are significant increases from Lyde's and Mockler-Ferryman's estimate of 3,000,000 in 1905.

34. Major Philip Howell, The Campaign in Thrace, 1912, (London, 1913), p. 5.

35. Clyde S. Ford, The Balkan Wars, (Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1915), p. 19. See also Jelavich, p. 40. After negotiations, Austria, Bulgaria and Russia agreed to compensate the Turks. Austria paid a \$5 million indemnity while Bulgaria paid \$16.75 million through Russia (Turkey had demanded \$25 million). Russia assumed the Bulgarian obligation and canceled forty of the remaining seventy-four annual installments Turkey owed Russia from the 1877-78 war.

36. Jelavich, p. 96. After the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, control of the Ottoman Balkan territories was in question. Russian and Austrian diplomats met secretly in September 1908 and agreed that Russia would support an Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in exchange for assistance in opening the Turkish Straits to Russian warships. The timing was critical; Russia was a vocal champion of their fellow Slavs in Serbia and needed time to soften what the Serb would consider a betrayal. Austria promised to wait and then reneged, announcing the annexation on 6 October 1908. The announcement came virtually simultaneously with the announcement of Bulgarian independence. Serbia now considered itself surrounded by real (Austria and the Ottoman Empire) and potential (Bulgaria) enemies. In addition, the credibility of its

greatest friend, Russia, was left seriously in doubt.

37. Ford, p. 22. In April 1909, the Young Turks deposed Sultan Abdul Hamid and placed his brother on the throne. After a particularly grisly massacre in Armenia, the Army of Salonika attacked and destroyed the Sultan's loyal forces in Constantinople. See also Jelavich, p. 96.

38. Opaciac, p. 86. See also Jelavich, p. 97, and Ford, p. 22. The Young Turks tried to assimilate the divergent ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire by forcing all ethnic and cultural groups to adopt the Turkish language and customs.

39. Kriegsgzschlichtliche Einzelschriften #50, The Balkan War, 1912-1913: Part I: Events in the Theater of War in Thrace up to the Armistice, 1912, translated by Harry Bell, Army Service Schools, (Berlin, Germany, 1914), p. 4. See also Ford, p. 24. The Balkan League formally presented its demands to Turkey in August, 1912. During the weeks that followed, a bomb exploded in the town of Kochina, killing some Moslems. The Turks responded, slaughtering Bulgarians in Kochina and Serbs and Greeks in the Macedonian towns of Berane and Stip.

40. Schurman, p. 35-36. See also M.S. Anderson, The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations, (New York, 1966), p. 292. Schurman makes the rather startling claim that Greece and Turkey were negotiating the terms of a defensive alliance during the autumn of 1912. Serbia and Bulgaria, upset by Turkish massacres in Kocani (Macedonia) and Berane (in Novi Bazar) decided to declare war and wanted Greece to occupy the Turks in southern Macedonia. According to Schurman, the Greeks were unhappy with the prospect of either Serbia or Bulgaria absorbing Macedonia from the Turks, and so went to war. Schurman's book is lavish in its praise of Greek Prime Minister Eleutherios Venizelos, the outstanding Greek politician of his day. M.S. Anderson disputes Schurman's claim of a proposed Greek-Turk defensive alliance, stating instead that Venizelos had tried since 1911 to form an anti-Ottoman alliance with Bulgaria.

41. Kriegsgzschlichtliche Einzelschriften #50, p. 4.

42. Though Russia coveted the Turkish Straits, neither the Tsar nor his advisers felt it would be wise to go to war to acquire them. Serious domestic problems and the still vivid memory of the 1905 loss to Japan dampened any desire for war, even on behalf of their ethnic cousins, the Serbs and Bulgarians.

43. William Miller, The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors, 1801-1927, (Cambridge, 1936), p. 501, p. 505-507. See also Anderson, p. 292. Ironically, the fortress of Scutari held out until 22 April 1913, when the food supply was exhausted. The two other major Turkish fortresses, Yanina and Adrianople, would fall to

offensive action on the part of the Greeks and Bulgarians in January and March, 1913.

44. Ford, p. 26. The Balkan League knew the Ottoman government would reject its demands, which included sweeping Macedonian reforms called for in the Treaty of Berlin but ignored by the Turks. The Ottoman empire responded by seizing 45 Creusot artillery pieces en route to Serbia from Russia through the Turkish Straits. Bulgaria mobilized and moved its armies to the border. The successful deployment allowed Bulgaria to cross the Turkish border the day after the declaration of war.

45. Schurman, p. 30. See also Nevill Forbes, et al, The Balkans: A History, (New York, 1970, originally published in Oxford, 1915), p. 75.

46. Lyde and Mockler-Ferryman, p. 89.

47. Ibid., p. 89.

48. Ibid., p. 111.

49. Furlong, p. 367.

50. Dame Rebecca West, Black Lamb and Grey Falcon, (New York, 1944), p. 12. See also Savo Skoko, "An Analysis of the Strategy of Vojvoda Putnik During the Balkan Wars," War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. XVIII: East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, (New York, 1987), p. 18.

51. Skoko, p. 17-18.

52. Ibid., p. 17-18.

53. Reginald Rankin, The Inner History of the Balkan War, (London, 1914), p. 242. Rankin was a British Army lieutenant colonel acting as a special correspondent for The Times of London.

54. Ronald L. Tarnstorm, Handbooks of Armed Forces: The Balkans, Part I. A Comprehensive Historical Outline of the Development of Three Nation's Defenses, (USA, privately printed, 1981), p. 74.

55. Skoko, p. 23.

56. Borislav Ratkovic, "Mobilization of the Serbian Army for the First Balkan War, October 1912," War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. XVIII: East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, (New York, 1987), p. 147. Most Serbian infantry carried 7.65mm Mauser rifles and 295 rounds of ammunition--a small number of reservists carried single shot Berdan rifles. Artillery units fired 75mm Schnieder-

Canet cannon, 75mm Krupp cannon, and 120mm Schnieder howitzers. Cavalry carried sabres and carbines.

57. Ford, p. 105.

58. Ratkovic, p. 146-148.

59. Ibid., p. 151-153.

60. Ibid., p. 152-153.

61. Kriegsgzschlichtliche Einzelschriften #50, p. 143.

62. Ibid., p. 144.

63. Ibid., p. 140-141. See also Ford, p. 122.

64. Ibid., p. 145. By the end of the first three weeks of war, sixty percent of cavalry mounts were dead, but only five percent of the total died of gunshot wounds. Many died from neglect, lack of forage and ulcerated skin caused by not removing the saddle.

65. Ford, p. 97. Until 1909, only Moslems could serve in the Ottoman Army. After that, all Ottoman subjects were eligible. Still, only twenty-five percent of all Christian soldiers were conscripted; they were dispatched to garrisons furthest from their homes.

66. Kriegsgzschlichtliche Einzelschriften #50, p. 7-9. The active infantry forces and some reservists carried Model 1890 and Model 1903 7.65mm Mauser rifles. The remainder of the reserves carried either Model 1897 9.65mm Mausers or Model 1877 11.43mm Martini-Henry rifles. The majority of cavalry carried sabers and the 7.65mm Mauser carbine. One regiment, the 1st Constantinople Lancers, carried lances. The Ottoman field artillery was armed with Model 1904 and Model 1910 75mm Krupp rapid firing guns. A few battalions were armed 120mm howitzers. At the start of the war, few soldiers were trained to use the new Model 1910 guns. For political reasons, soldiers received little practice firing live ammunition.

67. Ibid., p. 5.

68. Ford, p. 106. The Ottoman Army's military academy in Constantinople produced officers from the wealthy, governing class. Space at the academy was determined by social stature; the education was poor.

69. The Ottoman Army established infantry, artillery, and cavalry schools in 1909, but too little time elapsed for the Army to feel any benefit before or during 1912.

70. Ford, p. 102. In theory, Turkish soldiers served for three years. However, many were discharged when it was convenient for the government. Likewise, some were kept beyond their enlistments against their will. The principal duty was in garrison, protecting the authority of the empire.

71. Kriegszsglichteliche Einselschriften #50, p. 8, 141. See also Ford, p. 97-100. Most recruits had never seen a military rifle, could not handle or care for it, and had no idea how to use the rear, graduated sight. Many soldiers suffered facial injuries when they fired their rifles by holding the rifle-butt directly in front of their faces. A large number of Turks suffered wounds in the left arm and hand. The German General Staff Report surmised that it was because so few soldiers bothered to aim their weapons. They pre-ferred to stick their arms over their parapets and fire without aiming. Ford, a medical doctor on detached duty with the International Committee of the Red Cross, accompanied the Bulgarian forces throughout the Thracian campaign. He reported that the Turkish soldiers often had no shelter, were often half-starved. Some were clearly unfit for military service; Ford said he terminat-ed his wartime service in Constantinople by operating on patients with hernias the size of oranges and watermelons.

72. Forbes, et al., p. 70-71 and 371-375.

73. Ibid., p. 372. See also Kaplan, p. 62-63.

74. Tarnstorm, vol. I, p. 72.

75. Ibid., p. 139-142. Most of those who made to a hospital managed to drag themselves there under their own power.

76. Kriegszsglichteliche Einselschriften #50, p. 129-130. The German General Staff Report states that the Great Powers assured the Ottoman Empire that they would preserve the status quo in the event of war. Thus the Turkish military failed to perceive the war as the serious matter it was.

77. Rankin, p. 249.

78. Skoko, p. 20. Skoko quotes the memoirs of the Turkish commander at Kumanovo, Zeki Pasha, who claimed that his shattered army could only muster 10,000 effectives on 25 October. See also Rankin, p. 245.

79. Rankin, p. 248-251.

80. Ronald L. Tarnstorm, Handbooks of Armed Forces: The Balkans, Part II. A Comprehensive Historical Outline of the Development of Three Nation's Defenses, (USA, privately printed, 1983), p. 89.

81. Rankin, p. 252.

82. U.S. Army, Field Manual 34-130. Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield, (Washington, D.C., 1989), p. 4-1. See also U.S. Army, Field Manual 100-5. Operations, (June 1993). This version of FM 100-5 discards the term "Area of Interest" and introduces the term "Battle Space."

83. These attacks on Ottoman positions were simultaneous but not synchronized. Using the definition found in the 1993 edition of FM 100-5, combat operations must be synchronized to achieve mass at the decisive point. These operations may be separated by time and space, but the combined effect is overwhelming combat power. In addition, synchronization requires explicit coordination by the participating units.

84. Tarnstorm, The Balkans. Part II, p. 110. See also Howell, p. 80, and Petar Stoilov, "The Bulgarian Army in the Balkan Wars," War and Society in East Central Europe, vol. XVIII: East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, (Boulder, CO, 1987), p. 48. The use of planes for reconnaissance work is self-evident. However, in a rudimentary attempt to attack infantry, some Bulgarian and Turkish pilots carried sharpshooters armed with rifles. The marksmen then tried to shoot officers from the moving plane. Other pilots tried to bomb enemy positions by carrying mortar shells and tossing them overboard.

85. FM 34-130, p. 4-6.

86. Forbes, et al, p. 71-72.

87. Lionel W. Lyde and Lieutenant Colonel A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula, (London, 1905) p. 110-112.

88. DA Pam 550-99, p. 67.

89. Jelavich, p. 112.

90. For example, much of the architecture throughout the region is the same, though it is variously referred to as "Greek," "Bulgarian," "Turkish," "Serbian," etc. The same goes for modes of dress--except the fez, which is solely Turkish--food preparation, etc.

91. Bernard Newman, Balkan Background, (New York, 1945), p. 13.

92. Forbes, et al, p. 70-71.

93. Kaplan, p. 61-63.

94. Klimet Dzambazovski, "Macedonia on the Eve of the Balkan Wars," War and Society in Eastern Europe, vol. XVIII: East Central

European Society and the Balkan Wars, (New York, 1987), ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjevic, p. 212-214. The Orthodox Patriarch in Constantinople wanted the official language of the church to be Greek. The Bulgarians wanted Church Slavonic (a formal Bulgarian language) used in church and a more common vernacular language used in schools--which were controlled by the church. The creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate and linguistic emancipation reinforced national differentiation, especially among the Macedonian people who spoke the Slavic tongues.

95. DA Pam 550-99, p. 82-83.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 86-87.

97. Robert D. Kaplan, "Ground Zero," The New Republic, (2 August, 1993), p. 15-16.

98. Kaplan, Balkan Ghosts, p. 36-37.

99. Kaplan, "Ground Zero," p. 15.

100. Hugh Poulton, "The Republic of Macedonia After UN Recognition," RFE/RL Research Report, (4 June 1993), p. 27-30.

101. Schurman, p. 49.

102. Thomas S. Hutchison, An American Soldier Under the Greek Flag at Bezanie, (Nashville, 1913), p. .

103. Rankin, p. 374.

104. Hellenic Army Historic Directorate, p. 100-102.

105. Rankin, p. 331.

106. Schurman, p. 50.

107. Skoko, p. 101.

108. Tarnstorm, p. 74.

109. Skoko, p. 101. See also Margaret Reid Shackleton, Europe: A Regional Geography, (New York, 1963), p. 131. Lake Yiannitsa, Lake Akhinos, and other small lakes of the region were breeding grounds for malaria. In the 1920's, the Greek government drained most of them. It also dredged the mouth of the Vardar River to reduce its malarial threat.

110. Schurman, p. 50.

111. Rankin, p. 343.

112. Skoko, p. 102.
113. Rankin, p. 341.
114. Rankin, p. 378.
115. Hutchison, p. 140.
116. Hutchison, p. 85-87.
117. Rankin, p. 377.
118. Ibid., p. 378-379. See also Hutchison, p. 138-140.
119. Ibid., p. 380.
120. Nevill Forbes, et al, The Balkans: A History, (New York, 1970, originally published in Oxford, 1915), p. 75.
121. Howell, p. 3.
122. Ibid., p. 12-14.
123. Ibid., p. 19.
124. Ibid., p. 49.
125. Ibid., p. 52.
126. Rankin, p. 149. See also Howell, p. 31. During the 1911 maneuvers, the Turkish Army playing the "Blue" invading forces were on the verge of winning. Mahmud Shevket Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War, could not stand the thought of a Turkish Army losing to an invading force--even during training maneuvers. He directed Field Marshal Baron Colmar von der Goltz (the German officer sent by Kaiser Wilhelm II to train the Turks), to create plans for an imaginary Turkish Army to appear behind Abdullah Pasha's Blue forces. This imaginary army would attack as if they had crossed over the Rhodope Mountains twice--into and then out of Bulgaria! The Turks ignored the feasibility of an attack over the Rhodopes, rationalizing that because this second Army was imaginary, so were its tactics. Coincidentally, the Blue forces' commander was General Abdullah Pasha, who was in command of all Turkish forces in Thrace when Bulgaria invaded in 1912.
127. Bela K. Kiraly and Dimitrje Djordjevic, War and Society in Eastern Europe, vol. XVIII: East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars, (New York, 1987), p. 416-424 (Appendix). See also Howell, p. 49-53.
128. Howell, p. 54.

129. Ibid., p. 51.
130. Rankin, p. 152.
131. Ibid., p. 152. Rankin speculates--in a very disapproving tone--that the Turkish Army, having been trained by Imperial German forces, may have adopted the attitude that offensive war is morally superior to defensive war.
132. Lionel James, With The Conquered Turk, (Boston, 1913), p. 42-43 See also Howell, p. 66-69.
133. Howell, p. 139.
134. Ibid., p. 91-94. See also, Rankin, p. 274-275.
135. James, p. 112-114.
136. Howell, p. 99-105.
137. General Savov sent the Bulgarian cavalry division well south to scout the road from Baba Eski to Lule Burgas. The cavalry reported to Savov at Supreme Headquarters, not to any field army commander. Because of this impractical arrangement, neither the 3d nor the 1st Army commanders knew the disposition of the Turkish forces they faced. The advancing armies were forced to rely on their own weak, organic cavalry squadron.
138. Howell, p. 108-113.
139. James, p. 251.
140. Yonov. p. 76.
141. Ibid., p. 78.
142. Ibid., p. 79. See also Rankin, p. 449-450, and Miller, p. 507.

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