

Greece and the Central Powers, 1913–1914: the Origins of the National Schism

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The national crisis that erupted in 1915 as a result of a fundamental divergence between the Crown and the ruling Liberal party over the orientation of Greece's foreign policy, has obscured, because of the protracted cleavage that ensued, the development of the political conditions prior to the First World War which matured under the pressures of the world crisis. The dissent within the ruling elite on the formulation and execution of foreign policy that surfaced during the First World War made itself felt just as much in internal affairs, with which it was inextricably related, to the extent that one may convincingly argue that domestic sociopolitical factors emanating from the emergence of a new political elite following the military coup d'état of 1909, played a determinative role in the clash that occurred later in the field of foreign policy. The growing dissent on questions of foreign policy must be examined, therefore, within the context of the growing polarization of the political forces that loomed ominously after 1912, and it must be seen as one of the consequences of the events of 1909–1910. The purpose of this study is to trace the origins of this dissent especially as it developed following the outbreak of the First Balkan War.

Since the establishment of the Greek state the Crown had invariably played a determinative role in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. Royal interference, a common practice in all Balkan states, continued as late as the First World War, at a time when the influence of the Crown on the formulation of foreign policy in Western parliamentary systems had already been diminished considerably.¹⁾ It must be stressed, however, that within the Greek political context, the active role of the Crown in the formulation and execution of foreign policy constituted an abuse of the constitutionally prescribed royal prerogatives, according to which the King remained an irresponsible factor. Such extra-constitutional practice, however, though it transcended both the letter and the spirit of the constitution, was tolerated by the political leadership to the extent that it had become

¹⁾ Robert A. Kann, *Dynastic Relations and European Power Politics (1848—1919)*, *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (September 1973), pp. 387—410.

a customary function.²⁾ It must be pointed out, however, that while the Crown had attained a political function in Greek policy-making by default, e. g. through the toleration of the political leadership, it had never secured constitutional sanction. Nor could the royal prerogatives, properly interpreted through an examination of the internal relationship of all pertinent articles of the constitutions of 1864 and 1911, justify such an extension of their function. Some of the students of the period have erroneously recognized the Crown as a legitimate factor in policy-making, whereas royal intervention was simply a tolerated illegitimate practice regardless of its acceptance.³⁾

The Crown's extra-constitutional function in Greece's foreign policy had acquired customary acceptance through traditional practice. Tradition, however, in whatever form it is expressed, is not an immutable factor but an element immanent in the process of social practice. Tradition represents a dynamic variable mediated by and reflecting each generation's sociopolitical practice and conscious needs. In the absence of such a mediation tradition tends to become static and incongruous with the needs of a particular moment. At such a juncture the resultant clash between the requirements of a particular historical moment and the impossibility of their actualization within a static traditional practice, frequently assumes the form of a socio-political conflict.

It so happened that after the Balkan Wars the clash between the Crown and the responsible political factor over the orientation of Greek foreign policy occurred at the top of the political pyramid, involving a direct challenge of a traditional practice. As the dissent was multifaceted and grounded within the sociopolitical fabric of Greek society, transcending thus the field of foreign policy, the conflict was all the more profound and far-reaching. While during the prewar years a fundamental divergence within the ruling elite is clearly discernible, the requisite variables that could have precipitated a political crisis had not yet matured. The vast majority of the Greek political leaders, while at times critical of the abuse of royal prerogatives and of the Crown's interference in foreign policy, did not carry out their criticism to

²⁾ This does not mean that royal intervention in policy-making was received uncritically. In fact, the King's political behavior had often been criticized. For example, in a forceful statement made during an interview for the newspaper *Patris* of Bucharest in April 1896, *Demetrios Rallis*, one of the political leaders of the time, said *inter alia*: "It would be misleading to say that the King has not intervened in the operation of the political system as it has functioned to the present day. If he had remained entirely disinterested, the Crown would have had the right to appeal to constitutional irresponsibility. But not only has it not remained disinterested, it has, in fact, functioned prejudicially . . . the foreign policy of the past years is a policy of the Court. The foreign policy in the hands of the Crown has failed miserably. But unfortunately, he who is responsible for our external misfortunes is found today among the constitutionally irresponsible." See, *Patris* (Bucharest), 18 April 1896, as published in the Athenian newspaper *Asty*, 10 May 1896.

³⁾ For example, Svolopoulos mistakenly recognizes the King as a legitimate political factor in the process of policy-making. See, Constantine D. Svolopoulos, *Ho Eleftherios Venizelos kai he politike krisis eis ten aftonomon Kreten 1901—1906* [E. V. and the political crisis in autonomous Crete 1901—1906]. (Athens, Ikaros, 1974), p. 63.

its logical conclusion—that is, to an open challenge of the Crown's political practice. The traditional political structure and the pervasiveness of the patronage system at all levels of the political pyramid precluded an autonomous political leadership—hence the increased power of the Crown as a political factor⁴).

Before the appearance of *Eleftherios K. Venizelos* on the Greek political scene in 1910, Greek foreign policy had not shown any clear orientation insofar as the two major European alliance systems were concerned. Various tendencies in Greek foreign policy since the Greco-Turkish War of 1897, were determined by the general situation in the Near East as much as by the absence of a clear vision on the part of Greece's political leadership. No clear orientation is discernible before the Balkan Wars, notwithstanding particular moves between 1897 and 1909 which were determined by the exigencies of the moment or by personal predilections of particular personalities. This uncertainty in Greek foreign policy, especially at a moment when the Balkan question was about to become the focal point of European international relations, is amply illustrated by the policies pursued by *George Theotokis'* government between 1907 and 1908—a period during which Franco-German economic competition, involving mainly Greece's military orders, had become most intense⁵).

In an effort to escape their country's isolation, and prompted above all by Austria-Hungary's decision in 1907 to adopt a pro-Bulgarian policy at a moment when the Macedonian question had reached a critical stage for Greece, *George Theotokis* and King *George I*, unsuccessfully attempted to align Greece with the Western powers. Greece's refusal, however, to subject her naval development to the naval defense needs of the Entente powers in the eastern Mediterranean, and the determination of France and Great Britain to preserve the status quo in the Balkans and in the Near East condemned *Theotokis'* overtures to failure⁶). As *Douglas Dakin* has aptly observed with respect to Greece's international position at this juncture: "To all outward appearances Greece had friendly relations with other powers; in fact, however, she had potential enemies and only luke-warm friends; she was indeed in semi-isolation, and there was a constant danger that Greek interests would be ignored⁷)." In relation to her potential effectiveness as a factor in the eastern Mediterranean, Greece was regarded, because of her actual weakness, as a negligible quantity—hence her isolation.

Theotokis' overtures to the Western powers in the summer of 1907, were deter-

⁴) In the decade before the outbreak of the First World War we have only one example of an open clash between royal authority and a political factor, namely, *Venizelos'* challenge to Prince *George's* monopolization of foreign policy when the latter was High Commissioner of Crete. In this instance, too, the dissent within the ruling elite made itself felt in the sphere of foreign policy just as much as in internal affairs. It becomes quite clear from his policy in Crete that *Venizelos* was not prepared to allow the Crown an unchallenged primacy in the field of foreign policy.

⁵) Werner Zürrer, *Geschäft und Diplomatie: Der Fall Griechenland 1905—1908, Südost-Forschungen*, XXXIII (1974), pp. 249—290.

⁶) Douglas Dakin, *The Greek Proposals for an Alliance with France and Great Britain*, June—July 1907, *Balkan Studies*, III:1 (1962), pp. 43—60.

⁷) *Ibid.*, p. 45.

mined by the exigencies of the moment rather than by clearly defined considerations designed to serve best Greece's long term interests. It is highly unlikely that Theotokis himself was convinced that his country's alignment with the Western Powers was the best possible alternative course, for it would be difficult to explain otherwise his sudden decision in the spring of 1908 to orient Greece's policy toward the Central Powers. One of the fundamental determinants of his *volte face* was his Slavophobia which attained a generalized ideological content not dissimilar to that which was cultivated in Germany at that particular time. In other words, it was not simply the specific and real Bulgarian danger with regard to the Macedonian question, but a generalized spectre of Panslavism that loomed large in his thinking. It was the latter element, in addition to other considerations of a sociopolitical ideological nature that attracted him to Germany, which prompted him to recognize a community of interest between Greece and the Central Powers. His new orientation was also encouraged by Crown Prince *Constantine*, the Kaiser's brother-in-law and an ardent admirer of the German order of things. *Theotokis* had the opportunity to broach the subject of Greece's future orientation during the Kaiser's visit in Corfu in the spring of 1908. While the Kaiser carefully avoided any commitments and underlined Germany's desire to preserve the status quo, he was favorably inclined to the idea of drawing Greece into the fold of the Triple Alliance. In August 1908, Prince *Constantine* wrote his wife, Princess *Sophie*, who was at the time visiting Germany:

Theotokis asked me to give you a message from him to William when you see him for the review. He [Theotokis] is quite in the German ideas now, but says that, since his conversations with the Emperor in Corfu, he has heard nothing new, which he regrets because he had hoped that the Emperor would have the conversations continued by somebody.

As the Emperor did not give him permission, he thinks he can't speak to Arco [German minister in Athens], nor ask Rangabe [Greek minister in Berlin] to speak to Schoen [German Foreign Minister] because his Majesty might take it as a breach of confidence, so he wishes you to give William his profound respects and to let him know that he persists more than ever in the ideas he exposed to him in Corfu, and whether William would not designate somebody who might continue the conversation began then, so as to come to a definite understanding. Theotokis is perfectly enchanted with William and is ready to kick over everybody else, England who has gone mad, France and everything. There is no question of Fournier⁸⁾ or a French admiral for the present⁹⁾.

⁸⁾ Admiral *Fournier*, a French naval expert, had been invited by King *George* to formulate a plan for the development of the Greek navy. *Fournier* advocated that the Greek navy should be organized on the basis of flotillas of torpedoboats and submarines, supported by small cruisers and destroyers — an organization he found consonant with Greece's resources and strategic needs. Had *Fournier's* plan been adopted, the Greek navy would have been transformed into an auxiliary force to supplement the naval defense needs of the Entente Powers in the eastern Mediterranean. In the end nothing came of this because of strong opposition on the part of the Greek naval officers and of the government's decision to reject *Fournier's* project. The failure of *Fournier's* plan was not unrelated to the failure of *Theotokis's* overtures to the Western Powers. See, Dakin, op. cit., pp. 53ff.

⁹⁾ Auswärtiges Amt. Abteilung A. Geheime Akten. Der Anschluß Griechenlands an

Theotokis' overtures found no favor in Berlin at this juncture because Germany could hardly afford to offend Turkey, and thereby jeopardize her eastern policy for the sake of Greece's friendship; nor was Austria-Hungary willing to offend Bulgaria and push her into Russia's arms for a negligible quantity as Greece had proved to be.¹⁰⁾

Theotokis' *volte face* in 1908 marked the beginning of a pro-German orientation which he pursued steadily with the support of Crown Prince *Constantine* and his inner circle composed of conservative, mostly German-trained young officers who were to staff later the Greek General Staff. Following the coup d'état of 1909, and *Constantine's* forced departure from the command of the army, the leadership of the Military League and the majority of the officers corps adopted a pro-French attitude which coincided with *Venizelos'* pro-Western orientation. *Venizelos'* decision to invite a French military mission and a British naval mission for the reorganization and training of the Greek armed forces, only intensified the bitterness of Prince *Constantine's* pro-German action and the latent dissent within the armed forces. Although Greece's international exigencies prevented *Venizelos* from pursuing openly a pro-Western course, his military and economic policy drew him closer to the Western camp.

The emerging divergence in the orientation of Greek foreign policy is closely related to certain exogenous factors which indirectly influenced Greece's international position, namely the growing competition of French and German economic imperialism in the Balkans and in the Near East in general. At the time of the Balkan Wars Greece represented one of the areas where Franco-German competition was most intense—a development which was encouraged by and in turn aggravated the existing divergent orientations within Greece. This internal relationship between the exogenous and domestic elements in the determination of Greece's foreign policy at this juncture was to a great extent determined by the predominant factor in international relations, namely imperialism. Although Greece in itself may represent a miniscule example of this phenomenon and a case of minimal significance in comparison to the broader aspects of imperialist expansion, nevertheless it constitutes a part of a global process at the periphery of the European capitalist structure; it represents another case study of unequal development

den Dreibund. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, Princess *Sophie* to Kaiser *Wilhelm II*, 22 August 1908, No. B.S. 1366. University of California Microcopy I, Reel 12; hereinafter cited as A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3. With regard to *Constantine's* message from *Theotokis*, Princess *Sophie* commended, in a letter to her brother written in English: "Rather ein Umschwung [a sudden change] all this, don't you think so? I am sure you will be pleased." The principal theme of this study, i.e. Greece's alliance with the Central Powers, is based primarily on Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1 and Bd. 2, which deal exclusively with this subject. A few of these documents have been published in: Die Große Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871—1914. Sammlung der diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes. Vol. XXXV, pp. 89—111. Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Friedrich Thimme, eds. Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1922—1926, 40 volumes in 54 tomes; hereinafter cited as G.P.

¹⁰⁾ Zürrer, op. cit., p. 277.

of states which leads to the subordination of the undeveloped periphery of European capitalism to the advanced industrial states. In the case of Greece, as in most other cases, the economic and financial interests of the advanced industrial states complemented and supported political interests of the powers involved. Furthermore, the Greek example can be fully appreciated only when it is examined within the context of the Western penetration of the Balkans and of the Ottoman Empire.

At the turn of the century German capital was more heavily represented in Greece's foreign debt than was French capital.¹¹⁾ Soon, however, German investments in any form were overtaken by the rapid penetration of the Greek market by French finance capital. During the first decade of the twentieth century the export of capital represented the basic and most dynamic mode of France's penetration of the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire in the form of state loans. In comparison to the movement of French finance capital, French industrial investment was insignificant,¹²⁾ even though in the few years prior to the outbreak of the First World War one observes a gradual increase in entrepreneurial investment (i. e., railroads, mines, ports, public works, etc.) in contrast to the fundamentally parasitic nature of the expansion of finance capital.¹³⁾ To be sure, the latter phenomenon was more pronounced in the case of French investments in Russia¹⁴⁾ than in the Balkans or in the Near East, but such tendencies are observable, however, in the Ottoman Empire as well and to a lesser extent in Greece. By the end of the Balkan Wars French investment in Greece amounted to approximately three quarters of a billion francs in comparison to 250 million for Great Britain, 70 million for Russia and only 20 million for Germany. In other words, French investments in Greece were three times as large as those of all other powers combined. Only Serbia and Rumania were equally heavily penetrated by French capital. The total French investment in the Balkans, which amounted to approximately 2,800 million francs, may be apportioned as follows: Serbia, 800 millions; Rumania, 780 millions; Greece, 700 millions and Bulgaria 512 millions. The total French investment in the Balkans on the eve of the First World War, was, in fact, slightly greater than the French investment in the

¹¹⁾ Raymond Poidevin, *Les relations économiques et financières entre la France et l'Allemagne de 1898 à 1914*. Paris: Armand Colin, 1969, pp. 59—60. In 1897 Germany was the principal holder of Greece's foreign debt which at the time amounted to 553,245,310 francs. Germany held 250 millions, France 125 millions and Great Britain 75 millions. My treatment of the questions of finance and armaments is based primarily on Poidevin and Zürrer who provide ample information for my purpose. A more extensive treatment of the subject would require the examination of Griechenland 44 and 47 of the German archives as well as the relevant volumes of the French and British archives.

¹²⁾ Simeon Damianov, *Aspects économiques de la politique française dans les Balkans au débuts du XX^e siècle*, *Études Balkaniques*, No. 4 (1974), pp. 8—9.

¹³⁾ Jean Bouvier, *Les traits majeurs de l'imperialisme français avant 1914*, *Le Mouvement Social*, No. 86 (January—March 1974), p. 24. Jacques Thobie, *Intérêts économiques, financières et politiques dans l'Empire ottoman (1895—1914)*, *Le Mouvement Social*, No. 86 (January—March 1974), pp. 43—53.

¹⁴⁾ René Girault, *Emprunts russes et investissements français en Russie, 1887—1914*. Paris, 1973.

Ottoman Empire which has been estimated at 2,512 million francs, and it represented approximately 6 to 7% of the total French foreign investment.¹⁵⁾ On the other hand, while French finance capital, principally in the form of state loans and banking interests, secured an unrivaled position, in the commercial sector Germany's position remained unchallenged, notwithstanding the improvement of France's commercial position mainly because of the military orders which were invariably linked to state loans. Thus, while German exports to the Balkan states in 1911 amounted to 268.2 million francs, French exports amounted only to 76.4 million francs. To be sure, in Greece the contrast was not as sharp; in fact, Greece followed closely behind mainly because of the military orders.¹⁶⁾

¹⁵⁾ René Girault, *Les Balkans dans les relations franco-russes en 1912*, *Revue Historique*, CCLIII (1975), p. 162.

¹⁶⁾ It is of interest to note that France's exports to Greece, which trebled between 1905 and 1913, surpassed her exports to any of the other Balkan states. The increase between 1912 and 1914 was mainly due to military materiel. Actually, France's manufactured products could hardly compete with German industrial products which were much more competitive. France was able to capture the Balkan market for her heavy industry because such economic concessions as railroads, public works, port construction and armaments were linked to state loans. See, Girault, *Les Balkans . . .*, p. 158. It should be stressed that in the case of Greece, as well as of the other Balkan states and of the Ottoman Empire, the export of French capital did not correspond to the export of French industrial products to the debtor state. Recent studies on French economic imperialism in the Balkans and in the Ottoman Empire, indeed even in Russia, clearly show that capital export was not directly linked to industrial exports. In other words there is no clear interpenetration between banking and industrial capital. Finance capital invariably attempted to dissociate itself from industrial exports in the first years of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, during the last years before the outbreak of the First World War one observes a greater interpenetration between banking capital and industrial capital — a fusion which, as Bouvier points out, is more observable in the periphery than in the home market. See, Jean Bouvier, *Les traits majeurs de l'imperialisme français avant 1914*, pp. 3—24. This is clearly demonstrated in the works of René Poidevin, Jacques Thobie and René Girault. With respect to the Ottoman Empire, which represents a condition which to a certain degree holds true for Greece as well, Thobie wrote: "Beginning with the years 1906—1909, there was a veritable rush of financiers and industrialists, with the active support of French diplomacy, in quest of new concessions and new orders in all important sectors. Capital difficult to be invested, and the need of outlets for certain industrial sectors — notably heavy armaments and naval construction — responded to the projects of the Ottoman government which wanted to reinforce her national defense and to install in the country a minimum of equipment. The French success may be explained, in our opinion, by the improvement in the linkage between banking and industrial capital or, still, between the export of capital and the export of merchandise. See, Thobie, *Intérêts économiques . . .*, p. 50. Be that as it may, French economic predominance in the Ottoman Empire was in the sector of banking and credit. France controlled approximately 63 % of all foreign investments which amounted to approximately five billion francs. 80 % of the total French investments were concentrated in state bonds. *Ibid.*, pp. 49—50. According to Thobie's estimates, French investment in Turkey's public debt alone on the eve of the First World War amounted to 2,5 billion francs, while approximately 800 millions were invested in other sectors of the Ottoman economy. See, Damianov, *Aspects économiques . . .*, p. 10. See also, Poidevin, *op. cit.*, pp. 794—795.

While Greece alone did not constitute a significant economic factor for French economic imperialism, the picture changes considerably when Greece is placed in its appropriate context within the semi-colonial periphery of the Balkans and the Near East, which, in turn, is inextricably linked to the economic, political and strategic competition of the Great Powers in the Mediterranean world. When viewed, therefore, in its broader context the Franco-German competition in Greece attains a significance which may be underestimated when Greece, as an area of imperialist expansion, is examined isolated from its appropriate relationships. Indeed, Greece may be considered as one of the principal areas of Franco-German rivalry and a primary point of French penetration of the Balkan peninsula. Franco-German rivalry was intensified in 1907–1908 in their respective efforts to monopolize Greece's defense market. This contest was aggravated after the coup d'état of 1909, when the Greek government intensified its efforts for the reorganization of the Greek armed forces. Shortly after the 1909 revolt the Greek government appealed both to France and Germany for a loan which was to be devoted primarily to the modernization of the Greek navy. At this early stage the Wilhelmstrasse refused to approve the participation of the Nationalbank für Deutschland in order not to offend Turkey at a time when the Porte was disenchanted with Berlin's policy at the wake of the Bosnian crisis. Athens encountered similar difficulties in France primarily for the same reasons. In the end the Quai d'Orsay, anxious to promote its financial and industrial position in the Balkans, approved the requested loan, and so did, belatedly, the German government. Because of the political instability, however, which ensued the military coup d'état of 1909, France postponed its decision for the loan until the summer of 1910. At the same time the *Bleichröder* group, in agreement with the Nationalbank für Deutschland, refused the invitation of the Comptoir d'Escompte to participate in the Greek loan.¹⁷⁾ When a loan of 150 million francs was finally issued in Paris, France secured military orders in the amount of 47.5 million francs. It was also at this time that an agreement was concluded for the provision of a French military mission for the reorganization of the Greek army.¹⁸⁾

The presence of the French military mission and Greece's financial needs which could be satisfied only in the French capital market, secured for France a near

¹⁷⁾ Poidevin, *op. cit.*, p. 565.

¹⁸⁾ *Ibid.*, p. 565. It should be pointed out that at the initiative of the Royal Court Athens had broached Berlin for a military mission. Germany, however, refused because she did not want to offend Turkey. On the basis of Germany's decision to relegate her economic interests in Greece to a secondary position, Poidevin believes that: "Dans les affaires grecques, les mobiles politiques jouent un rôle plus important." *Ibid.*, p. 566. The distinction between political and economic considerations in this case is hardly satisfactory, for Germany's posture was determined by the primacy of her eastern policy which aimed at the political as well as the economic domination of the Near East. Economic and political considerations were, therefore, interpenetrated and fused, and one should not speak of the primacy of political determinants. For Germany it was simply a matter of priorities, since she could not promote her position in Greece at this juncture through political undertakings, as those entailed in a military mission, without offending Turkey, the focal point of German imperialism in the Near East.

monopoly of Greek military orders, in spite of the fact that in many instances the German firms offered better terms. Between March 1912 and May 1914, Greek military orders placed in France amounted to 58.2 million francs, in addition to the value of 68 batteries of artillery and shells. In contrast Greek orders in Germany between 1908 and 1914, with the exception of the naval orders of 1913, amounted only to 13.3 million francs.¹⁹⁾ As will be shown later, Germany's position in Greece improved materially because of the pro-German sympathies of the Greek royal court following *Constantine's* ascendance to the throne in March 1913, but France's predominance remained unchallenged. Germany, with its empty coffers, simply could not compete with the French capital market. In 1913 and 1914 Franco-German rivalry intensified and France was able to harden her position because of her financial predominance. This growing competition is also reflected in the growing divergence within Greece in the field of foreign policy.

The growth of French influence in Greece, the predominance of French capital and the concomitant growth of Greece's military,²⁰⁾ financial and political dependence on France, and by extension on the Entente Powers, did not reflect a consensus

¹⁹⁾ To be sure, France's predominance in Greece did not entirely exclude German competition. While *Creusot* secured the major orders, the German firm *Ehrhardt* managed to secure some orders for shells in 1911 and 1912. Also, France was not as successful as Germany in Greece's naval program. Despite French pressures, the German firm *Vulkan* secured in 1912, orders for two destroyers, six torpedo-boats and one cruiser in the amount of 35,5 million francs. Again in this instance Germany offered lower prices and speedier deliveries. See, Poidevin, op. cit., pp. 685—686.

²⁰⁾ The presence of the French military mission had already caused a bitter reaction on the part of Crown Prince *Constantine* and his entourage, and divisive tendencies developed within the army leadership. There was considerable resentment among those who opposed the mission, especially among the German trained officers of the General Staff, and persistent intrigues and distrust developed to the detriment of the *esprit de corps* of the armed forces. Apart from ideological differences which to an extent determined the attitude of the German trained officers, there was also considerable self-interest involved, for they feared that the growth of French influence in the Greek army would lead to the advancement of the pro-French elements within the officers corps to the detriment of their own professional career. See, Ioannes Metaxas, *To prosopiko tou hemerologio* [His personal diary] (Athens, 1951), I, pp. 19—20, 22—23, 39 ff., 50—64, 99. Theodoros Pangalos, *Ta apomnemonevmata mou 1897—1947* [My memoirs, 1897—1947] (Athens, 1950), I, p. 140. Nikolaos Zorbas, *Apomnemonevmata kai pleroforiai peri ton symvanton kata ten diarkeian tes epanastaseos tes 15es Avgoustou 1909* [Memoirs and informations on the events during the revolution of 15th august 1909] (Athens, 1925), pp. 133 ff. Genikon Epiteleion Stratou [Army General Staff], ed., *Historia tes organoseos tou Hellenikou stratou* [History of the organization of the Greek Army] (Athens, 1957), pp. 76 ff. A. Mazarakis-Ainian, *Apomnemonevmata* [Memoirs] (Athens, 1948), pp. 99. S. Victor Papacosma, *The Military in Greek politics: The 1909 Coup d'Etat* (Kent, Ohio, 1978), pp. 164—165. On King *George's* initial opposition to the invitation of the French military mission see, S. Markezines, *Politike Historia tes Hellados* [Political history of Greece] (Athens, 1968), III, pp. 130—131. The author cites a very interesting letter from King *George* to the director of his political office, D. *Stefanou*, which reflects clearly his function in the formulation of foreign policy. Unfortunately, the Greek translation of the French original contains several errors.

among Greece's principal political factors—a tendency which began to emerge even before the termination of the First Balkan War. Although *Venizelos* was ideologically attached to the Western powers and was convinced that Greece's aspirations would in the long run be realized only through an eventual alignment with these powers, he was careful to avoid any political commitments which might alienate completely the Central Powers, and most particularly Germany, whose cooperation was imperative for a favorable settlement of the Balkan crisis.

Following, however, the sudden disturbance of the status quo in the Near East, *Venizelos* was unexpectedly offered the opportunity to align Greece with Great Britain—an opportunity in which he saw his country's future security and consolidation in the eastern Mediterranean as a factor to be reckoned with in the balance of forces in that area. Following the outbreak of the First Balkan War and with all the uncertainties entailed therein as to the future balance in the eastern Mediterranean, Great Britain became concerned about her naval defenses in that area. *Winston Churchill*, as First Lord of the Admiralty, was anxious especially about Austria-Hungary's aims in the eastern Mediterranean. In order to maintain her unchallenged supremacy in that area and for the security of her communications, the Austro-Hungarian fleet had to be checked within the Adriatic—hence the strategic significance of the Ionian islands as naval bases, a consideration which rendered a naval understanding with Greece desirable. *Churchill* understood that Austro-Hungarian and Italian opposition to Greek territorial aspirations in the Balkans and in the Aegean rendered Greece a natural ally of the Entente Powers, and an important strategic asset in the event of war between the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente.²¹⁾

In view of these considerations, *Churchill* proposed to the British cabinet the establishment of a naval base in the Adriatic and the Aegean in the event Italy retained a base in the Dodecanese islands which she had recently occupied during the Italo-Turkish War of 1911. *Churchill* proposed the cession of Cyprus to Greece in compensation for the acquisition of such naval facilities²²⁾. In mid-November, the

²¹⁾ I wish to express my appreciation to Mrs. Helen Katsiadaki who kindly made available to me a xerographic copy of a segment of Sir *John Stavriddi's* diary which is deposited at St. Anthony's College, Oxford, as well as her own unpublished article: *Venizelos kai Churchill: oi vaseis tes anglo-hellenikes synennoeseos (1912—1913)* [V. and Ch.: the foundations of the anglo-hellenic understanding] which is to be published in the near future. As a result of Germany's new naval program in 1912, England decided to concentrate her major defenses in the North Sea, and to limit her forces in the Mediterranean to the extent of being stronger than those of any one power in the area with the exception of France. As a result of the Anglo-French understanding concluded in the Spring of 1913, France was to play a major role in the defense of the Mediterranean, while England was to limit her activities in the defense of the eastern Mediterranean and to the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian navy in the Adriatic in the event of war. This agreement made all the more desirable Greece's cooperation in the Aegean with a navy which could serve Britain's defensive needs in that area.

²²⁾ Katsiadaki, *op. cit.*, based on Foreign Office and Admiralty records as well on *Stavriddi's* diary. While my brief treatment of Anglo-Greek relations may appear to be incongruous with the principal theme of this study, I deemed its inclusion imperative in

subject was first broached by *David Lloyd George*, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a meeting with his personal friend Sir *John Stavriddi*, the Consul General of Greece in London. In a meeting arranged by *Lloyd George*, *Churchill* personally proposed to *Stavriddi* the establishment of a naval base at Cephalonia in return for the cession of Cyprus to Greece. While Greece would retain full sovereign rights over the island, Great Britain should be free to develop and freely use appropriate naval facilities. Apart from the cession of Cyprus *Stavriddi* also asked for Britain's help in the negotiations for the settlement of the Balkan crisis, especially with regard to Salonika²³), and he also proposed to *Lloyd George* the possibility of a broader Anglo-Greek understanding. *Stavriddi* wrote in his diary following his meeting with *Lloyd George* on November 22:

. . . I then suggested to him that when coming to an understanding with us in regard to Cephalonia it might be to the benefit of England to have a more general understanding with Greece so as to enable them, if necessary, to make use of some of the islands in the Aegean. He, however, did not think this was necessary as the enemies were Italy and Austria & Cephalonia would be enough to enable them to deal with those two. I pointed out that I thought that policy was somewhat short-sighted. A generation ago it was Russia who was the arch-enemy and what was there to prove that in another generation they would not have reverted to the same position. Moreover, a general understanding with Greece, with Great Greece as she would be in the future, would enable them to use all their ships for fighting the enemy having us to police the seas & protect their commerce. We would undertake to strengthen our navy & to build under the guidance of England & act in all matters in conjunction with England. He replied that the proposal was a good one & well worth consideration that he would discuss it with Winston Churchill & speak also to the *Prime Minister* & Grey about it²⁴).

On the insistence of *Lloyd George* *Venizelos* decided to go to London personally as head of the Greek delegation for the peace negotiations between the Balkan allies and Turkey. In the meantime, *Stavriddi* himself prepared the way for the Anglo-Greek pourparlers²⁵). Upon his arrival in London, *Venizelos* wanted to keep separate the question of Argostoli and the cession of Cyprus from the question of a general understanding to which he attached the condition of England's support at the

order to establish at the outset the contrast between *Venizelos'* orientation and the policy that was about to be inaugurated by King *Constantine*.

²³) The Diary of Sir *John Stavriddi*, 10 and 18 November 1912, pp. 1—18; hereinafter cited as *Diary*.

²⁴) *Ibid.*, 22 November 1912, pp. 18—21.

²⁵) *Ibid.*, 10 December 1912. Although both *Asquith* and *Grey* were in agreement with the arranged forthcoming Anglo-Greek talks, they would not participate in the discussions until the peace negotiations between Turkey and the Balkan allies were concluded. "As regards Grey", *Lloyd George* told *Stavriddi* according to the latter's account, "he said he would never appear before the Ambassadors at their Meetings if a convention had been signed with Greece, 'he would feel as if the word "Thief" were written in bold letters across his face.'" *Ibid.*, 10 December 1912, pp. 25—26.

peace negotiations²⁶). On December 15 and 16, *Venizelos* had his first meetings with *Lloyd George*, *Churchill* and Prince *Louis of Battenberg*. With regard to the Argostoli-Cyprus arrangement there was no problem; the British only insisted upon making the arrangement public a few months following the conclusion of peace with Turkey so as to be able to justify the cession of Cyprus to Greece to British public opinion²⁷). *Venizelos* saw no objection to this arrangement provided the principal aspects of an understanding with the British were agreed upon during his sojourn in London, “particularly if the larger question of an entente was settled in a satisfactory manner for both countries,” and kept separate from the Argostoli Cyprus arrangement. *Stavriddi* wrote in his diary with regard to the possibility of a broader understanding:

Lloyd George pointed out that England had no treaties with any country & that our understanding would have to be on the same lines as their entente with France; that is to say, the Foreign Offices of both countries would have to keep in constant & intimate touch with each other, & it would only be by an open & loyal understanding that either could call upon the other to assist in case of difficulties or war with other nations. M. *Venizelos* quite agreed & was prepared to discuss the subject on that basis.

I suggested that England might, if an Entente were come to, desire to see our navy strengthened, in which case it might be to her advantage to lend us a sum of money to be spend on building ships in England in accordance with plans to be drawn up in conjunction with the Admiralty. Lloyd George said this could be done but the President [*Venizelos*] thought the proposal perhaps premature but he would also willingly consider it, if necessary²⁸).

Notwithstanding *Venizelos*'s hesitations it was the naval question that constituted the focal point of the discussions. The plan the British had in mind was in fact similar to the ill-fated Fournier project of 1907 — in other words the contemplated understanding aimed at the transformation of the Greek navy into an auxiliary of the British naval defense needs in the eastern Mediterranean. At the end of January 1913, *Churchill* discussed with *Venizelos* the Admiralty's plans as to the role of the Greek navy in the eastern Mediterranean — a function which inevitably determined the nature of its future organization. Instead of being based on capital ships, the

²⁶) *Stavriddi* wrote in his *Diary*: “I told him that from what I understood from Lloyd George and Churchill, England would not make such a bargain, as they would only enter into the agreement with us after the peace treaty had been signed. I pointed out that it would be better not to negotiate on that basis, but simply to try and bring about a general understanding without asking for a quid pro quo, as if we came to terms at an early date this was bound to influence the British Ministers as they would naturally wish to see Greece as large and as powerful as possible if they were to act together in the future.” *Ibid.*, 13 December 1912, p. 29.

²⁷) As *Lloyd George* told *Churchill*, according to *Stavriddi*'s account: “If you are going to keep the Argostoli Treaty secret how can you justify the surrender of Cyprus to the public. You know that we in England never like to give something away for nothing.” *Ibid.*, 18 November 1912, p. 16.

²⁸) *Ibid.*, 16 December 1912, pp. 31—33.

Greek navy should be composed of small ships, such as destroyers, torpedo boats, submarines and small cruisers. In other words, Greece's navy had to be modeled according to the defense needs of the Entente²⁹). The Greek navy, according to Churchill, would be ". . . required to *police the eastern part of the Mediterranean, the Aegean and the Islands,*" while the British ". . . would bottle up Austria & the Italian fleet in the Adriatic using their new base at Argostoli, then even if they were too late the Greeks need have no fear because the Austrians would never dare go East, having the English at Malta in their rear³⁰)." *Churchill* had in the meantime secured France's approval of his proposed understanding with Greece during his naval discussions in Paris in mid-January. Thus the Argostoli-Cyprus agreement would constitute part of a more general understanding which would be public but would contain secret clauses. The projected Anglo-Greek arrangement would be of a similar nature as that which existed between Great Britain and France³¹). In other words it would be limited to direct communications and to an arrangement on the level of the general staffs for cooperation in the event of war, but each power would not be bound through a written political treaty. *Venizelos* was prepared to conform to the proposed project as much as he could, for he was convinced that he would thus serve his country's defense needs. As *Stavridi* wrote at the conclusion of the discussions: "He [Venizelos] felt happy at the thought that our negotiations would result in an entente with England, & probably with France, & that Greece's future would be very different to her past, when she had to stand absolutely alone, supported by no one, with not a single friend to care what happened to her. She would now build up a strong navy, develop her railways & commerce and with the friendship of England & France would become a power in the East which no one could ignore³²)." In the end, however, because of the resumed hostilities in the Balkans and the growing instability in the Near East, these discussions were not pursued to their conclusion, but in so far as *Venizelos* was concerned the foundation had been laid for Greece's future attachment to the Entente powers³³).

²⁹) When he learned that the construction of a dreadnought ordered in Germany had not yet started, *Churchill* "strongly advised to counterorder it and to order in its place a number of destroyers . . . Prince Louis [of Battenberg] then proposed his views as to [the] role of the Greek navy in a future war, when we should be acting in conjunction with France and England as allies." See, *Diary*, 7 January 1912, pp. 43—44.

³⁰) *Diary*, 7 January 1913, p. 45.

³¹) *Diary*, 29 January 1913.

³²) *Diary*, 31 January 1913.

³³) To what extent King *George* had been informed of *Venizelos'* discussions in London cannot be determined. *Venizelos* had requested permission to inform the King of his talks, but *Churchill* objected fearing that "it would endanger the whole of the negotiations, the matter would be certain to leak out and there would be an end to it". After *Venizelos'* assurances of the King's reliability, *Churchill* and *Lloyd George* agreed that King *George* could be told that "various non-committal conversations had taken place, that a basis of a possible entente in the future had been found and that after peace had been signed, the negotiations might be renewed. . ." Neither Crown Prince *Constantine* nor any of the Ministers were to be informed of the discussions. There is no evidence to indicate that *Constantine* had ever been informed of these discussions. See, *Diary*, 29 January 1913.

Venizelos' decisions concurrently bore the seed of a future conflict with King *Constantine* and his entourage, as well as with some of his principal political adversaries, who were either bent upon a pro-German orientation or were willing to accept the Crown as the arbiter of foreign policy — a practice which *Venizelos* did not accept on principle. This divergence surfaced immediately after King *Constantine's* succession to the throne in March 1913, following his father's assassination. The new King, less prudent, less politic, more susceptible to the influence of his entourage, less tolerant of parliamentary processes, less respectful of the constitution and more reactionary than his father, was determined to strike out a "new course" which was diametrically opposed to *Venizelos'* basic orientation and incongruous with the exigencies of Greece's international position at that particular juncture.

The developing divergence within Greece's ruling elite was further aggravated by her successes in the Balkan wars which improved her international position to the extent that Greece was transformed from a negligible quantity to a factor that had to be reckoned with in the struggle of the Great Powers for the domination of the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. By the same token, this very development complicated Greece's international position because she would now be confronted not only with the opposition of her neighbors in the Balkans but also with the enmity of Italy and Austria-Hungary who saw in Greece a threat to their respective interests in Albania and in Asia Minor. As will be shown later, this very development in the end frustrated the plans of those in Greece who advocated a pro-German orientation.

Great Britain was not the only power that was concerned about Greece's future orientation. Following the outbreak of the First Balkan War, and impressed by Greece's unexpected successes, Germany, in particular, began to reconsider her attitude toward Greece, reverting again to the Kaiser's view expressed as early as 1908. The question of Greece's future orientation was first broached by the German minister in Athens, Graf *Albert von Quadt*, as early as mid-December 1912. *Quadt* correctly observed that even though Greece and Bulgaria were able to compose their differences temporarily in order to fight a common enemy, their ultimate clash over the spoils of victory was inevitable. He further assumed, erroneously as future events proved, that Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro being Slavic countries and because of other historic considerations, would maintain their cohesion and would eventually align themselves with the Triple Entente. He did not exclude the possibility that even Rumania might pursue a similar course. Hence Greece would sooner or later detach herself from her present allies and since she could not afford to remain isolated, she would have to align herself with that particular *bloc* of which Bulgaria was not a member. Thus, Greece would gravitate of necessity toward the Central Powers. He did not disregard the possibility, of course, that Greece might align herself with France, and because of her fear of the British fleet she would not join that group of powers that was opposed to Great Britain. In view of these considerations, Germany should be prudent not to overestimate Greece's role in the future balance in the Balkans. On the other hand, in the event of a war between

Russia and the Balkan Slavic states and Austria-Hungary and Rumania, one should seriously consider the possible contribution of Greece's armed forces, and especially her navy. *Quadt* concluded, therefore, that it would be to Germany's interest to support Greece's claim on Salonika and the Aegean islands, having in view Germany's interest in the future balance in the Balkans³⁴).

It is of interest to note that the assessment of Greece's international position at this particular juncture by the Austro-Hungarian minister in Athens, *von Braun*, differs sharply from that of his German colleague — a divergence that reflects the different courses pursued by their respective governments. *Braun* clearly reflected his government's policy, for Vienna actively sought to disrupt the Balkan League and attach Bulgaria to the Triple Alliance. He therefore believed that the question of Greece's orientation toward one or the other alliance system was of secondary importance, for Greece's gravitation toward the Triple Alliance would receive greater attention if it were not of the priority of Bulgaria's attachment to the Triplice. *Braun* further observed that the pro-German tendencies that existed in 1908—1909 during *Theotokis'* premiership still existed, but one should never forget that Greece would join reluctantly a combination of powers that was against Great Britain. But apart from the dangers entailed in such an orientation for Greece's coasts and islands, it was also clear that Britain was already regaining her popularity in Greece which had been temporarily tarnished because of the Cretan question. In such an event Britain could represent the connecting link between Greece and the Entente Powers. *Braun* concluded that the closer Bulgaria moved toward the Triple Alliance the more certain would become the predominance of the pro-Western tendencies in Greece. According to *Braun* the irreconcilability of Greco-Bulgarian aims constituted the "alpha and the omega" of Greek policy. In practical terms, this meant that Greece should be written off for the Triple Alliance in view of Vienna's pro-Bulgarian policy³⁵). In the end, *Braun's* assessment proved to be the more accurate, but for the moment the situation was not as clearly defined.

The existing instability in the Balkans and the imminence of a Greco-Bulgarian clash, compelled *Venizelos* to pursue a policy designed to secure Greece's defensive position. As early as mid-March, at a time when the Greco-Serbian discussions for a defensive alliance had made no headway, *Venizelos*, in a conversation with *Quadt*, broached for the first time the question of Greco-Rumanian understanding for their common defense against Bulgaria. *Venizelos* requested Germany's mediation for the establishment of a new balance in the Balkans through a Greek-Rumanian-Turkish understanding. He specifically requested Berlin's mediation to inform Turkey confidentially and unofficially of Greece's desire to establish good relations

³⁴) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 15 December 1912, no. 156.

³⁵) Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (Wien), Politisches Archiv XVI Griechenland, 64, *Braun* to *Berchtold*, 21 December 1912, no. 59A; hereinafter cited as HHS, XVI/64. I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Eleftherios Prevelakis, Director of the Research Centre for the Study of Modern Greek History of the Academy of Athens, who kindly made available to me the archives of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry.

after the war on the condition that the Aegean islands remained Greek. He emphasized that Greece wanted Asia Minor to remain Turkish, for its occupation by another power, particularly by Russia, would be detrimental to Greece's interests. He concluded that in the event of a European war Greece would remain neutral³⁶). Encouraged by *Venizelos'* intimations, *Quadt* believed that in the event *Venizelos'* proposal for a Greco-Turkish rapprochement was realized, Greece's influence in Turkey, given the large Greek element there, would grow considerably. Hence Greece should no longer be looked upon as a negligible quantity; instead one should cultivate good relations with her. He thus endorsed *Venizelos'* proposals and he even suggested that some encouraging statement should appear in the German press which should help allay Greece's suspicions against Germany³⁷).

Apart from *Venizelos'* encouraging attitude at this juncture, what played a determinative role in Berlin's policy vis-à-vis Greece was King *Constantine's* succession to the throne. Immediately following his accession *Constantine* hastened to make known his intention to reorient Greece's policy toward the Triple Alliance. *Venizelos* then insisted that Greece, under the present circumstances, should avoid both of the European alliance systems; but if the King persisted he was prepared to resign. However, King *Constantine* did not pursue the subject at this time because of the mounting Balkan crisis³⁸).

Following these early encouraging signs in Athens, Berlin, notwithstanding the serious differences that existed between Greece and Germany's partners over Albania and the Dodecanese islands, did not hesitate to examine seriously the possibility of Greece's future gravitation toward the Triplice. Germany's partners, however, were negative on this issue and were critical of Berlin's ambivalent policy in the Balkans. Rome's immediate recation was negative³⁹). The Italian Foreign Minis-

³⁶) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to the Foreign Ministry (FO), 13 March 1913, no. 20 (A5242). It is of interest to note that *Quadt* speculated that it was not impossible that *Venizelos* might have been considering the King's abdication in favor of the "germanophile" Crown Prince in order to facilitate Greece's orientation toward the Triple Alliance — an entirely unfounded assumption.

³⁷) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to FO, 17 March 1913, no. 26 (A5534).

³⁸) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, Note, 10 April 1913, no. A7316; *Quadt* to FO 23 June 1913, no. 138 (A.S. 734).

³⁹) For a time there were certain tendencies even in Italy which did not preclude the possibility of a future rapprochement with Greece in spite of sharp differences in a number of sectors. Quite revealing is the position adopted by the Italian ambassador in Vienna, Duke of *Avarna*. At the time Rome was concerned about a Spanish-Italian understanding in the Mediterranean, and *San Giuliano* requested *Avarna's* views on the advantages of a Spanish-Italian agreement. *Avarna* was skeptical of the value of such an understanding, for he believed that Spain had long since been under strong English and French influence, and that little could change in the Western Mediterranean where English and French preponderance could hardly be challenged. Moreover, Spain's interests, according to *Avarna*, were directed basically toward the Atlantic rather than the Mediterranean, therefore, one could not expect much from that quarter. *Avarna* concluded that a closer relationship with Greece would be more advantageous for Italy's interests in the eastern Mediterranean, for Greece's ports could be of considerable value

ter, the Marchese *Antonino Paternò Castello di San Giuliano*, was inimically predisposed toward Greece. He believed that Greece's attachment to France was not only due to economic considerations, but to long standing cultural and social factors. He seriously doubted King *Constantine's* ability to redirect the course of things in Greece because (a) the influence of the dynasty in Greece was not as important as in other traditionally monarchical countries and also because (b) the King did not possess the requisite qualities to gain the confidence of the Greek people. On the other hand, he believed that Bulgaria was the strongest factor in the Balkans and it should be in that direction that the Triplice should turn her attention⁴⁰). The German ambassador in Rome, *Hans von Flotow*, did not share *San Giuliano's* view. He believed that it would be very difficult to detach Bulgaria from Russia. On the contrary, the growing military and economic strength of Russia and the mounting wave of Slavism should lead to the organization of the non-Slavic countries into an anti-Slavic *bloc*. This position coincided with *Quadt's* insistence upon the necessity of encouraging the formation of a Greco-Rumanian *bloc* as a counterweight to the Slavs⁴¹).

Berlin did not share *San Giuliano's* position. *Gottlieb von Jagow*, the German Secretary of State, was quite conscious of France's gains in Greece and he was fully aware of the fact that France would do all in her power to draw Greece into her orbit on a permanent basis. But he was not convinced, as was *San Giuliano*, that Greece was lost for ever, and he was encouraged by the fact that there were now discernible in Athens certain reactions against French tactics⁴²). It was for this reason that *Jagow* endeavored to mediate some kind of a compromise between Athens and Rome. *Jagow* did not question *Venizelos's* moderation and he felt that an understanding should be reached between Athens, Rome and Vienna on the basis of some kind of a compromise on the Albanian question so as to avoid pushing Greece into France's arms. But apart from Greece's orientation, a matter that concerned Berlin, *Jagow* was anxious to settle the Greek question in order to prevent further tensions in the Ambassadors' Conference in London, which had been entrusted with the task of recommending solutions for the settlement of the Balkan crisis, which might jeopardize the operation of the European Concert and above all the collaboration between Britain and Germany which Berlin considered indispensable at this juncture. Thus, *Jagow* was willing to adopt a more moderate posture vis-à-vis Greece's

to the Italian and Austrian navies. In a conversation with his German colleague in Vienna, *Heinrich von Tschirschky, Avarna* intimated that his government had recently been looking sympathetically towards some kind of an understanding with Athens, but that the idea had been abandoned because of Greece's expansionist aspirations in Asia Minor. See, A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Tschirschky* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 3 March 1913, no. A.S. 289.

⁴⁰) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Flotow* to FO, 14 April 1913, no. 73 (A7939).

⁴¹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Flotow* to FO, 14 April 1913, no. 73 (A7939); *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 18 April 1913, no. 138 (A8440).

⁴²) According to *Quadt*, political circles in Athens expressed their suspicions as to France's aims and complained that France "... veut faire la politique sur notre dos".

aspirations in southern Albania, and he pressed his allies to find a compromise both on the south Albanian question and on the Kutsovlach question of the Pindus region. He feared that in the absence of a compromise they would encounter the resistance of the Entente Powers at the Ambassadors' Conference which could lead to tensions among the Great Powers that were hardly justified by the issues involved — tensions that should be avoided having in view especially Greece's future relations with the Triple Alliance⁴³). Two basic factors emerge clearly from *Jagow's* attitude at this time: (a) he was quite concerned about the operation of the Concert of Europe on questions relating to the Near East and the Balkans, and most particularly he was anxious to maintain good relations with Great Britain; and (b) he continued to view favorably the idea of Greece's gravitation toward the Triple Alliance. For a better understanding of Germany's policy toward Greece in conjunction with the general Balkan question, a brief digression is imperative.

Berlin's policy toward Greece at this time was not determined by dynastic relations, albeit the dynastic factor cannot be completely discounted, but by broader considerations within the context of the general Near Eastern question. This is also indirectly related to Germany's policy of cooperation with Great Britain in the Balkans which aimed at securing European stability, detaching England from the Triple Entente, or at least securing her neutrality in the event of a European war, and concurrently improve her position in the Balkans and in the eastern Mediterranean. Berlin was convinced that a future balance in the Balkans based upon the isolation of Bulgaria and the cooperation of Greece, Rumania and Serbia with the Triple Alliance would be of greater advantage to the Triple Alliance than Vienna's policy which aimed at Serbia's isolation and subjection and Bulgaria's attachment to the Central Powers. As *Wilhelm II* wrote as early as May 1913:

I remain of the opinion . . . that the combination of Serbia, Rumania and Greece under Austria's leadership is the natural and the better one; also because it is the one which would be more attractive to Turkey than the one which includes Bulgaria. Austria would then have a dominant influence on no less than three Slav Balkan countries which under its aegis could be formed into an iron ring around Bulgaria. Such pressure Sofia could not withstand in the long run and it would gradually make advances of its own accord when Russia's patronising friendship became too much for it. At least the Alliance between Austria, Serbia, Greece and Rumania effectively divides the feared Pan-Slav wave. Whereas under Berchtold's schemes all Slavs would certainly be driven into Russia's arms⁴⁴).

The leading personalities of the Wilhelmstraße shared the Kaiser's views on the subject, and were determined to reduce tensions in the Balkans which could precipitate a European crisis. Austria, on the other hand, actively worked for the disruption of the Balkan League and encouraged Bulgaria to attack Serbia when

⁴³) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Jagow* to *Tschirschky*, 29 May 1913, no. 793.

⁴⁴) Cited in Fritz Fischer, *War of Illusions. German Politics from 1911 to 1914* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975), p. 213. *Wilhelm's* marginalia on *Tschirschky's* letter to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 5 May 1913, in G.P., XXXIV:2, p. 462.

the differences of the Balkan allies over the partition of Macedonia became irreconcilable. Nor was Germany prepared to support Austria in a war against Serbia. In brief, Berlin's and Vienna's Balkan policies in the spring and summer of 1913 were irreconcilable⁴⁵). It is not that Berlin did not welcome the disruption of the Balkan League; such an event was of course anticipated, but the Wilhelmstraße aimed at a different political configuration, and, unlike Vienna, was reluctant to precipitate matters which might disrupt Germany's aims in the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean.

Germany's approach to the Balkan and Near Eastern questions, her perception of the new Balkan balance and her collaboration with Great Britain were to minimize the danger of a European war and through the stabilization of her security in Europe to facilitate her expansion in the Middle East and her colonial aims in Central Africa and elsewhere⁴⁶). But apart from these more significant considerations, an improvement in Anglo-German relations would have facilitated considerably a closer relationship with Greece for it would have attenuated the fear, for those in Athens who preferred a pro-German orientation, of Britain's presence in the Mediterranean⁴⁷). Thus, Berlin's Greek policy though it may appear to be "... a kind

⁴⁵) This pronounced divergence over Balkan policy between Berlin and Vienna was not restricted only to foreign policy. Indeed, the conflict was as pronounced in the economic sector. Germany's economic penetration of the Balkans was achieved to a great extent at the expense of Austro-Hungarian trade at a time when Austro-German trade showed a negative balance for Vienna. See, Dörte Löding, *Deutschlands und Österreich-Ungarns Balkanpolitik von 1912—1914 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer Wirtschaftsinteressen* (Hamburg, 1969); Fischer, *War of Illusions*, pp. 291—292, 296—298.

⁴⁶) Fischer, *War of Illusions*, pp. 214—215. Hugo Hantsch, *Leopold Graf Berchtold, Grand Seigneur und Staatsmann*, 2 vols (Graz, Vienna and Cologne, 1963), II, p. 441; E. C. Helmreich, *The Conflict between Germany and Austria over Balkan Policy, 1913—1914*, in D. C. McKay, ed., *Essays in the History of Modern Europe, presented to William L. Langer* (New York and London, 1936); Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Domestic Factors in German Foreign Policy before 1914*, *Central European History*, VI, No. 1 (March 1973), pp. 22, 31.

⁴⁷) R. S. Crampton's attempt to minimize the significance of the British connection in Germany's Balkan policy at this time is not quite convincing. Crampton asserts that Germany had decided as early as February 1913 to "defer to the wishes of her allies", and that by March she was "already less willing than in December 1912 to co-operate with Britain in Balkan affairs and within the London ambassadors' conference". Elsewhere he writes, however, "that Germany had simply ceased to operate her part of the original co-operative contract was not yet realized either in London or in Berlin, and the Djakova settlement at the end of March maintained the illusion that Anglo-German collaboration was continuing unimpaired." Indeed, *Bethmann Hollweg*, the Imperial Chancellor, continued to believe that Anglo-German cooperation in the Balkans could bring about a change in British policy advantageous to the Triple Alliance. But even if such a perception of Anglo-German cooperation was illusory, the very presence of such an illusion, whose existence Crampton does not question, is important as a determinant in policy-making. In other words, it was this illusion which was the working assumption for the principal political factors — an assumption which determined for a time their perception of the exigencies of their international position. Even if we accept Crampton's

of private policy of Wilhelm II⁴⁸),” must in fact be placed in this broader context where it may attain its proper significance.

Berlin’s cautious Greek policy and their reluctance to write off Greece from its broader Near Eastern scheme as readily as Rome or Vienna, was certainly encouraged by recent developments in Athens. It was at this particular time that segments of the press broached rather cautiously but critically the question of Greece’s international position pointing to the dangers inherent in the uncritical attachment of Greece to her pro-Western tradition. Typical of this trend was the position adopted by the respected conservative newspaper *Nea Hemera* which reflected the views of the pro-German element in the Royal Court. Commenting on the dangers inherent in a possible Austro-Hungarian armed intervention in Albania because of the Skutari question, it was pointed out in an editorial of April 25/May 8 which made an impression on the German Legation in Athens, that it was not the policy of the Triple Entente, projected as the decisive factor by the majority of the Greek press, that prevented such an intervention, but Austria’s distrust of Italy who would have inevitably occupied Valona in the event of an Austrian move in the north. In other words, Vienna restrained itself not because she was forced to yield to Entente pressures, but because it so happened that the aims of the Triple Alliance at this juncture coincided with those of the Triple Entente. It would be a mistake, therefore, to view the recent turn of events in Albania as a victory of the Triple Entente. On the contrary, the discord that existed within the European concert, a discord which helped sustain the preponderance of the Triple Alliance, would in no way be affected by the alleged recent victory of the Triple Entente. Thus, Greece’s vital interests required that the government should turn as much to Vienna and to Rome as toward Paris and St. Petersburg. But one could hardly pursue such a course, it was pointed out, while “we complain on the one hand that Germany does not take us in her arms as within a protective wall against Slavism and on the other hand . . . we rejoice over the misfortunes of the Triple Alliance.” The author of the editorial recognized that the interests of the Balkan League in a general way coincided with those of the Triple Entente, but it was pointed out that the Entente was interested in the Balkan Alliance as such collectively rather than in the interests of each of the respective members of the Balkan League — an assumption which could be amply illustrated by the policy pursued by the Triple Entente toward specific problems

position that as early as February 1913 Anglo-German cooperation was no longer in operation, an argument which is debatable, it was the “illusion” of its existence which is of significance at this particular juncture. See, R. J. Crampton, *The Balkans as a Factor in German Foreign Policy, 1912—1914*, *The Slavonic and East European Review*, LV, No. 3 (July 1977), p. 373.

⁴⁸) Fischer’s characterization of Germany’s policy toward Greece as “a kind of private policy of Wilhelm II”, is rather unfortunate, for his own analysis proves that it transcended the Emperor’s personal proclivities or simple dynastic ties. See, Fischer, *War of Illusions*, p. 293. While the dynastic factor cannot be entirely discarded, in the final analysis there was a concatenation of political, economic, strategic and social considerations which played a determinative role in Greco-German relations.

emanating from the Balkan conflict⁴⁹). In a follow up editorial on the next day, *Nea Hemera* was openly critical of Greece's attachment to her traditional "protectors", England, Russia and France — a condition branded by the author as Greece's "Anglo-Russo-Franco attavism" — which tended to distort Greece's European vision leading inevitably to the neglect of the powers of the Triple Alliance which remained for Greece unknown quantities. In brief, *Nea Hemera* called for the abandonment of Greece's traditional approach to foreign policy, because the configuration of power politics in Europe had changed radically during the past generation and especially because the Balkan question remained unresolved. Clearly, *Nea Hemera* was cautiously pointing the way toward the Triple Alliance and expressed satisfaction that a certain change in Greek foreign policy was becoming discernible⁵⁰).

Apart from these limited stirrings in the Greek press which reflected the position of the Royal Court and its political allies, Berlin was also and more substantially encouraged in its Balkan policy by *Venizelos'* deliberately ambivalent and misleading posture at this particular juncture. Because of the imminence of a Greco-Bulgarian clash which necessitated the rapid conclusion of a Greco-Turkish peace treaty, *Venizelos* responded very warmly to Germany's mediation for the improvement of Greco-Turkish relations. Indeed, he went as far as to assure *Quadt* that Greece would not join the Triple Entente. *Quadt* telegraphed Berlin on June 7: "He [Venizelos] assured me that Greece would under no circumstances join the Triple Entente so long as King Constantine reigned and he was Prime Minister. Greece wanted to remain out of any great European combination; he hoped, however, through closer relations with Rumania and Turkey to be able to be helpful to the Triple Alliance as a counterweight against the Slavs." *Venizelos* concurrently informed *Quadt* of the conclusion of a Greco-Serbian alliance for their mutual defense against a Bulgarian attack. He assured both Berlin and Vienna that the Greco-Serbian alliance was of a purely Balkan nature designed to counter only the present situation⁵¹). He even expressed the hope that Austria-Hungary would favor the treaty, for Greece would have no objection if Serbia secured access to the Aegean east of the port of Kavalla through a strip of territory running along the Vardar and bordering with Greece so as to "distract her from Albania and the Adriatic"⁵²).

⁴⁹) *Nea Hemera*, 24 April/7 May 1913, 25 April/8 May 1913.

⁵⁰) *Nea Hemera*, 26 April/9 May 1913. A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 12 May 1913, no. 178. Also, *Nea Hemera*, 7/20 June 1913; *Akropolis*, 6/9 June 1913.

⁵¹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to FO, 7 June 1913, no. 109 (A11449). "Er bittet mich, versichert zu sein, daß Griechenland unter keinen Umständen, solange König Constantin regiere und er Minister sei, sich an die Triple Entente anschließen werde. Griechenland wolle sich aus jeder großeuropäischen Kombination fernhalten, hoffe aber durch enges Zusammengehen mit Rumänien und Türkei dem Dreibund als Gegengewicht gegen die Slaven nützlich sein zu können." See also, G.P. XXXV, no. 13371.

⁵²) Archives of the Greek Foreign Ministry, File 18, 1913, "Greco-Serbian Military Alliance", *Koromilas* to *Streit*, 10/23 June 1913, no. 17432A/5; hereinafter cited as

Venizelos very skillfully sought to steer a middle course that would enable him to secure Germany's support for the realization of a rapprochement with Rumania and Turkey in a general anti-Bulgarian orientation — a maneuver which would not necessarily affect his fundamentally pro-Western policy. But beyond this point it seems that the distinguishing lines were deliberately blurred by *Venizelos* so as to encourage Berlin's hope for a future Greek orientation toward the Triple Alliance by way of Rumania. *Venizelos*' present maneuverings, as perceived by Berlin, coincided also, on the surface at least, with King *Constantine*'s pro-German course. It was only natural for Berlin, and for King *Constantine* as well, to consider Greece's rapprochement with Rumania and Turkey as an indirect gravitation toward the Triple Alliance. Germany's position in Turkey was very prominent, and Rumania's old attachment to the Central Powers remained, at least in theory, in force. The Austro-Rumanian treaty of Alliance was renewed by King *Charles I* as recently as March 30, 1913. But in neither country was the situation as stable and clear cut as the Wilhelmstraße and Greece's pro-German elements hoped. While German imperialism had made astonishingly rapid advances in the Ottoman Empire, politically and economically Germany's position was not as stable and permanent as has often been assumed. France's economic position remained predominant. Britain, too, was gradually improving her own position, while the scarcity of capital rendered Germany's position in the Empire precarious. Furthermore, Berlin's military and political aims in the Near East caused some suspicion and anxiety in Constantinople. Moreover, Turkey's pro-Western elements were not without influence nor yet entirely displaced⁵³).

Much less certain was Rumania's future orientation, notwithstanding the recent renewal of the Austro-Rumanian treaty of alliance and King *Charles*' pro-German sympathies. The growing anti-Austrian feeling in Rumania mainly because of Hungary's internal policies in Transylvania, the gradual change in Rumanian public opinion in favor of Russia because of the latter's benevolent position vis-à-vis Rumanian interests, the predominance of French culture in Rumanian society and the strong presence of French economic interests precluded Rumania's future attachment to the Central Powers. With the exception of conservative and reactionary political personalities, such as *P. P. Carp* and *Titu Maiorescu*, who remained attached to the King's pro-German orientation, some of Rumania's principal politi-

AGFM. Unfortunately, I was not able to find in the archives of the Greek Foreign Ministry any correspondence related to the question of Greece's orientation toward the Triple Alliance.

⁵³) Fischer, *War of Illusions*, pp. 307—309, 336; also, Mommsen, *Domestic Factors in German Foreign Policy before 1914*, p. 14. Mommsen questions Fischer's thesis that German imperialism faced a precarious situation in the Near East. "Germany's economic position in the Ottoman Empire", writes Mommsen, "had been consolidated, although this had necessitated some concessions both to French and British interests in this sphere." In spite of Mommsen's arguments, however, the fact remains that Germany's economic and political position in the Ottoman Empire was not as stable as Berlin would have desired, and the Wilhelmstraße was concerned about Germany's future in that quarter.

cal leaders, such as *Take Ionescu*, leader of the Conservative Democratic party and *I. I. C. Brătianu*, leader of the National Liberal party, openly opposed their country's foreign policy. Their pro-Western tendencies became even more pronounced following the electoral victory of *Brătianu's* party in June 1913⁵⁴). These tendencies, however, were not yet fully comprehended by those who placed an exaggerated weight upon traditional and dynastic ties and disregarded the force of the rising national movements.

Thus, while the Balkan League was obviously breaking up, it was to be soon replaced by a Serbian-Greek-Rumanian coalition gravitating toward the Entente Powers. *Venizelos* was shrewd enough to recognize the ambiguity of his policy in his willingness to promote a rapprochement with Turkey and Rumania even with German help, an endeavor involving a long-term contradiction which, however, did not necessarily affect his immediate purpose, since it would not entail any political commitments on his part vis-à-vis the Central Powers. In other words, while his desire to arrive at some kind of an understanding with Turkey and Rumania, as a deterrent force against Bulgaria, through German mediation, encouraged Berlin to count on a future Greek attachment to the Central Powers, *Venizelos's* hands remained free to pursue his own course enjoying at the same time the advantage of neutralizing both Turkey and Bulgaria. This open-ended approach had a similar effect in his relations with Berlin as with King Constantine who, like Germany, looked upon Greece's rapprochement with Rumania and Turkey as an indirect attachment to Germany which would in time evolve into a fullfledged alliance.

To this extent even Vienna, while adamantly opposed to Greece's expansion toward Albania and very suspicious of the Greco-Serbian alliance, did not look unfavorably to Greece's overtures for a possible Greco-Turkish rapprochement. Being anxious about the precariousness of her position in the Balkans, Vienna was prepared to support, as the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count *Leopold von Berchtold*, told the German ambassador in Vienna, *Heinrich von Tschirschky*, "whatever would make impossible the renewal of the Balkan League; that is the guiding viewpoint of the Austro-Hungarian government"⁵⁵). The fact remained, however, that Greece did not represent a serious factor in Vienna's foreign policy, notwithstanding the importance of her geographic position in the eastern Mediterranean. Vienna was all the more suspicious of the Greco-Serbian alliance in spite of the repeated assurances given by the Greek government. This alone was sufficient to alienate Austria-Hungary completely, for insofar as Vienna was concerned Bulgaria continued to be the focal point for the future position of the Triple in the

⁵⁴) Vasile Maciu, *La Roumanie et la politique des Grandes Puissances à la veille de la première guerre mondiale (octobre 1912—août 1914)*, *Revue Romaine d'Histoire*, XV, No. 4 (October—December 1976), pp. 719—734.

⁵⁵) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Tschirschky to Bethmann Hollweg*, 10 June 1913, no. 195 (A1681). "Er wird alles unterstützen, was eine Erneuerung des Balkanbundes unmöglich macht; das sei leitender Gesichtspunkt österreichisch-ungarischer Regierung."

Balkans. It was precisely for this reason that Vienna supported a Turkish-Bulgarian rapprochement rather than a Greco-Turkish one⁵⁶),

In any event, such was the atmosphere in Athens when King *Constantine* decided to strike out a “new course” involving no less than Greece’s direct attachment to the Central Powers. To announce his accession to the Greek throne to the European Courts, King *Constantine* appointed *George Theotokis* a faithful servant of the dynasty and a convinced germanophile, to visit Berlin, Rome and Bucharest. *Theotokis* was authorized by the government to intimate in Berlin that Greece would not range itself on the side of the Triple Entente, but he was secretly instructed by the King and without *Venizelos*’ knowledge to offer Greece’s alliance to Germany⁵⁷).

Upon his arrival in Berlin *Theotokis*, in conversations he held with *Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg*, the German Chancellor, and with *Jagow*, on June 18 and 19, directly offered Greece’s alliance. During his first conversation with *Jagow*, *Theotokis* spoke only of Greece’s association with the Triple Alliance through a rapprochement with Rumania. In his meeting with *Bethmann Hollweg*, however, *Theotokis* made a direct offer of Greece’s alliance with the Triplice. The following communication from *Jagow* to his ambassadors in Rome, Vienna and Bucharest, fully captures the spirit and intentions of *Theotokis*’ overtures:

In various conversations I have had with the former Greek prime minister *Theotokis*, sent here to announce King *Constantine*’s accession to the throne, he repeatedly expressed the desire of Greece’s joining the Triple Alliance. King *Constantine* has the firm desire to orient Greece’s policy in this direction, and the Monarch acts in accord with Prime Minister *Venizelos* as *Theotokis* himself was able to ascertain in a recent conversation with him. Opinions have changed considerably in Greece in recent times, and in ever broader circles the conviction is gaining ground that the hitherto pursued francophile policy has not benefited the country, and that Greece’s association with the Triple Alliance would therefore be desirable. Hellenism was the natural enemy of Slavism in the Balkans and Greek interests dictate the conclusion of an understanding with Rumania and Turkey. Even before the war Greece had endeavored to reach an understanding with Turkey, but all attempts had failed because of Turkey’s refusal. An effort is being made again now to establish contact with Bucharest and Constantinople. Greece and Rumania in particular are natural allies in the Balkans.

In the second conversation Mr. *Theotokis* told me quite directly that Greece was at any time ready to join the Triple Alliance, and that he himself was authorized to explain this here. To my question: “Under what conditions?” he replied “that we should be supported against the superior forces of Bulgaria”; Greece should have

⁵⁶) In spite of Germany’s mediation and encouragement, Greece’s efforts to improve her relations with Turkey for the purpose of concluding a defensive alliance directed against Bulgaria were unsuccessful. Turkey was not willing to conclude a defensive alliance with Greece on the basis of terms unacceptable to her, such as her recognition of Greek sovereignty over the Aegean islands, in view of the anticipated clash among the Balkan allies. It was for the purpose of securing German pressure at Constantinople that *Venizelos* went out of his way at this juncture, encouraging the belief of Greece’s future gravitation toward the Triplice through an understanding with Rumania and Turkey.

⁵⁷) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to FO. 12 June 1913, no. 120.

Salonika as far as Kavalla and Seres. A preponderant Bulgaria could not be tolerated. Under Greek sovereignty Salonika would become a free port. Serbia, having common borders with Greece, would have in Salonika her natural outlet to the Aegean Sea, and therefore the much debated question of an Adriatic port would be of little or no consequence. If, however, Bulgaria drove a wedge between Serbia and Greece, the outlet to the Aegean for the Serbians would be precluded, the pressure toward the Adriatic would necessarily increase and it would be necessary for Greece and Serbia to conclude an *ad hoc* alliance against the common Bulgarian enemy. After the war which is now threatening, Greece would have no kind of obligation to Serbia and under no circumstances can Greece pursue a common course with Serbia, being a Slavic state. The antagonism against Slavism in the Balkans leads Greece toward the Triple Alliance.

To my observation that Greece had recently renewed her agreement with the French military mission, Mr. Theotokis replied that it would be impossible to offend France who presently supports Greek interests in London by refusing to renew the agreement. He himself, as well as Venizelos, had advised the King not to change anything at the present moment. But the King is through and through anti-French and in the operations against Jannina he had appointed only Prussian trained officers. The Queen perhaps expresses herself too openly against everything French. Things in Greece have changed considerably since King Constantine's accession to the throne, and the King has gained a considerable prestige because of the successful campaign at Jannina, and he can count now absolutely on the army.

I replied to Mr. Theotokis' proposals that for the present we could not, naturally, adopt any position without first consulting our allies. Moreover, it seems to me that since Mr. Venizelos had accepted the invitation to St. Petersburg⁵⁸), an intervention on our part in the relations between Greece and Bulgaria would be premature, since the differences between the two countries have not yet been clarified either through the discussions at St. Petersburg or through an eventual armed conflict. Mr. Theotokis had to recognize fully the justification of my objections. He stated, however, that Mr. Venizelos accepted the invitation to St. Petersburg — he could not have done otherwise for the moment — but he had not agreed to the Tsar's arbitration. Theotokis himself, however, would have wished that the war [with Bulgaria] should definitely take place were he not unsympathetic to the alliance with Serbia. In recognizing my objections, he begged only that for the present we should support the claims of a victorious Greece.

The Imperial Minister in Athens, whose views I have requested for a clarification of Mr. Theotokis' declarations, is inclined to believe that in offering a direct connection with the Triple Alliance, he must have exceeded his authority, a possibility which I myself had not entirely excluded from the outset. Thus, I told Mr. Theotokis that having examined recent information from Athens, I had formulated the impression that Mr. Venizelos desired to orient Greece's policy toward the Triple Alliance through Bucharest, but not a direct alliance relationship with any of the Great Powers, in order to avoid any involvement in the differences among the Great Powers, a policy which I could not help but find prudent. Mr. Theotokis, however, persisted in his declarations and he said that things in Greece had recently ripened. To the Italian ambassador to whom Mr. Theotokis had also expressed his plans for an alliance and who had expressed some doubts as to Greece's present intentions, Mr. Theotokis replied that he knew him well enough so as to have faith in his declarations. Also, to the Imperial Chancellor Mr. Theotokis proposed Greece's

⁵⁸) The Balkan allies had agreed to Russia's mediation, and discussions were to be held in St. Petersburg for the settlement of their differences over Macedonia. The meeting was never held however, because of the outbreak of the Second Balkan War.

association with the Triple Alliance. In any case, it will be necessary to ascertain as to whether the intentions of the Greek government coincide with the declarations of its special representative. I am in the position to know, from Count Quadt's communications from Athens, the desire of Athens to achieve a closer relationship with Rumania and through this indirect way to orient Greek policy toward the Triple Alliance . . .

It would be of interest to see what will be the result of Mr. Theotokis' mission in Bucharest. The creation of a closer union between Rumania and Greece would seem to be desirable in the general configuration of Balkan affairs, because, in view of her geographic position in the Mediterranean it would not be without importance if Greece is detached from the Triple Entente and brought politically closer to the Triplice⁵⁹).

Although King *Constantine* did not acknowledge having given such instructions, there is no doubt, as his own attitude will show, that *Theotokis* acted with his approval. In response to *Jagow's* inquiries as to what extent *Theotokis'* overtures represented his government's position, *Quadt* explained that *Theotokis'* declarations corresponded fully to *Venizelos'* intention to reorient Greece's policy toward the Triplice by way of Rumania, but his offer of a direct alliance contradicted the government's policy. *Venizelos* had left no doubt that he had no intention of becoming involved in the affairs of the Great Powers⁶⁰). *Quadt* ascertained that *Theotokis* did not have a *carte blanche*, and that he had exceeded his instructions⁶¹).

In an effort to explain *Theotokis'* activities in Berlin *Quadt* presented two hypotheses. He first considered the possibility that *Theotokis* acted as he did in an effort to present *Venizelos* with a *fait accompli* had he received a positive response from the Wilhelmstraße and thereby gain in prestige. Most probably, however, *Theotokis* had discovered some divergence between *Venizelos* and King *Constantine* in their respective instructions as to Greece's future orientation which he attempted to exploit in order to help the King's position in the event of a *fait accompli*, and thereby displace *Venizelos* from his dominant position. This would have been, according to *Quadt*, a typical intrigue in the tradition of Greek politics⁶²).

⁵⁹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Jagow* to the German Legations in Vienna (no. 925), Athens (no. 429), Rome (no. 849), Bucharest (no. 437), and London (no. 1139), 21 June 1913. *Jagow* to the German Legations in Vienna (no. 251) and Rome (no. 256), 18 June 1913. Note by Secretary of State *Gottlieb von Jagow*, 18 June 1913, no. A.S. 716; see also, G.P. XXXV, nos. 13450 and 13452. Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914* (London, 1957), III, pp. 624—625.

⁶⁰) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to FO, 20 June 1913, no. 130 (A.S. 720).

⁶¹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to FO 20 June 1913, no. 131 (A.S. 724). HHS, XVI/64, *Braun* to *Berchtold*, 26 July 1913, no. 34B.

⁶²) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 2 July 1913, no. 244 (A.S. 832); *Jagow* to *Quadt*, 7 July 1913, no. 473 (A.S. 832); see also G.P. XXXV, nos. 13466 and 13468. *Quadt* was encouraged in his hypothesis by the fact that *Theotokis'* telegrams to Athens were couched in such a way as to give the impression that the initiative had been taken by *Jagow* — an impression that would have made it difficult for Athens to reject the offer without alienating the Kaiser.

The discussions which *Quadt* had with *Venizelos* and King *Constantine* on June 23, clearly reflect the divergent course of the two men. *Quadt* wrote to *Jagow* on June 23:

Prime Minister *Venizelos* visited me this morning and spoke to me about the misunderstandings which arose out of *Theotokis*' mission. *Venizelos* said that in his conversations with *Theotokis* before the latter's departure, he had expressed the view that none of the Great Powers would be able to support us against Bulgaria. To this *Theotokis* replied: "Mais si l'Allemagne nous assurait contre la Bulgarie qu'est-ce que vous en diriez?" *Venizelos*, as he said, replied to this: "Cela serait tellement important qu'il faudrait le considerer." On the basis of this *Theotokis* maintained that he spoke in Berlin in the name of the government, but actually he had no such authorization. Only for an agreement with Rumania did *Theotokis* have a *carte blanche*.

Mr. *Venizelos* also told me that the King, immediately following his accession to the throne, declared that he wanted to join the Triple Alliance. To this *Venizelos* responded with the views already known to Your Excellency [i. e. that Greece would remain outside the great European alliance systems]. Mr. *Venizelos* expressed this view also to the representatives of the Triple Entente. The Prime Minister said that he could not now change his view suddenly without appearing disloyal. He had told the King, however, that in order to facilitate Greece's association with the Triplice he was prepared to resign. Then as party leader in the Chamber he could fully support the King's views for joining the Triple Alliance.

Immediately following my conversation with Mr. *Venizelos*, for which he was instructed by His Majesty to carry out, His Majesty invited me to go to Tatoi. His Majesty told me that I had already been acquainted by Mr. *Venizelos* as to what he wanted to talk to me about. He fervently desired to join the Triple Alliance. He understands that for the time being, having in view that Mr. *Venizelos* has taken a certain position vis-à-vis the Triple Entente and having stated that he does not wish to join any group of Great Powers, the realization of his idea is not possible with Mr. *Venizelos*. He told *Venizelos* that, having declared that he was prepared to resign and to support in the Chamber the King's policy, his esteem for him has risen. He is also convinced that he can bring *Venizelos* back to the premiership soon. The King intends to carry out his new policy either with *Theotokis* or with *Zaimis* as political leaders. Then the King asked me what I thought about it. I replied to His Majesty that I had not yet been informed about my government's plans, but that, in my opinion, it would be a great misfortune for Greece if Mr. *Venizelos* departed now. [Kaiser's marginalia: "Yes!"] Moreover, on such matters we must take into consideration the desires of our allies, and we should certainly ascertain their views. Furthermore, Germany desired to remain outside of all Balkan entanglements. The King replied that he understood this. According to a memorandum of the General Staff, within five or six years it would be possible to deploy 250,000 men. He wishes to have as military adviser a man such a Baron von der Goltz or his contemporary organiser of the Japanese army, *Mekel*. He shared my misgivings that the dispatch of a German mission to reorganize the army here in all details could cause an enmity here against Germany, and he said that a mission that causes a reaction in the army against Germany would be unnecessary. He has seen how hateful the French have become here.

When His Majesty finished, I told him that I could not believe that Greece would join the Triplice without something positive in return. I begged him then to tell me what he expected of Germany. The King replied that he desired that the Triplice assures Greece the frontiers which she now occupies, i. e. the boundaries east of the *Struma* up to the crossing of the *Orliak* bridge, thence toward the west south of

Gevgeli on the Vardar and from there Greece would regulate her boundaries with Serbia. As regards the boundaries of Epirus, he would like to see Korytsa to remain Greek, as well as the boundary up to south of Premeti. Argyrocastro could remain Albanian, and also one could cede to Albania a narrow strip up to Cape Stylos. The islands, with the exception of Tenedos and Imbros, as well as the Italian [occupied islands], must be ceded to Greece. As for Thassos and Samothrace the King seemed to me not to be intransigent.

Venizelos wishes to be sparing of Theotokis and he does not want to hold him accountable for having overstepped his instructions. I asked the King how could Theotokis have taken such an initiative by himself. The King replied that he was surprised, for he considered Theotokis a reserved and a politically gifted man. It is not impossible, however, at least in the opinion of the Foreign Minister, that Theotokis, through his initiative, wanted to trip up Venizelos. Moreover, the King was not certain whether Theotokis was prepared to take over the premiership. Perhaps he will have to work with Zaimis. It is very important for the King that Venizelos is willing to support him even out of office. It would be very serious for the King to part with Venizelos at the present.

The King has telegraphed Theotokis that he should avoid further actions in Berlin.

To my question as to how His Majesty believed the country would accept the new policy, His Majesty replied, he believes well; there is a strong current for joining the Triple Alliance.

His Majesty begged repeatedly that nothing of the foregoing should become known and nothing should reach the ears of the Triple Entente. He requests urgently that the eventual sounding of Vienna and Rome be done in such a way as to assure absolute secrecy⁶³).

In further conversations with *Venizelos*, *Quadt* endeavored to ascertain whether the King's new orientation would be well received by public opinion and as to whether he himself had detected any anti-dynastic current in the country. In other words, *Quadt* wanted to be certain of *Venizelos*' own reaction should the King decide to pursue his "new course" without *Venizelos*. *Venizelos* felt that the King's policy would be received well but that he had advised the King to postpone the implementation of his policy and that at a later date even he himself would do all he could to help him. *Venizelos* had also advised the King not to attach himself to old personalities such as *Theotokis* and *Zaimis*, but that he should appoint to the premiership a new personality such as the former minister of finance, *Nicholas Demet-rakopoulos* or the present Greek minister in Vienna, *George S. Streit*⁶⁴).

Quadt's telegrams leave no doubt as to the fundamental differences that existed between *Venizelos* and King *Constantine*, differences which would sooner or later precipitate a clash between the two men. The King was determined to pursue his "new course" at the risk of precipitating a domestic crisis. *Venizelos*' dismissal at a time when he was at the pick of his popularity and in control of the overwhelming majority of the Chamber of Deputies would hardly be received passively by the country's new political forces that had displaced the traditional political leadership

⁶³) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to FO, 23 June 1913, no. 138 (A.S. 734).

⁶⁴) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Quadt* to FO, 23 June 1913, no. 139.

since the coup d'état of 1909. Having in view *Venizelos'* long term policy and his recent conversations in London, it is unlikely that he would have accepted royal arbitrariness and the dictation of foreign policy by the Crown as passively as his moderate attitude seemed to indicate. No doubt, *Venizelos*, in the midst of an external crisis, wanted, through his extraordinarily conciliatory approach to the matter, to prevent an encounter with the King and persuade him to postpone any decision until such time in the future that he would be able to cope with the problem under more auspicious circumstances. For the moment, it was not to Greece's interest, as *Venizelos* correctly maintained, to side openly with any of the European alliances before her interests in the Balkans were assured; and they could be assured only through the support of the Concert of Europe as a whole — a condition which could not be achieved if Greece joined one of the two great alliance systems. The argument that Greece could, through her association with Germany, secure German support against Bulgaria and a certain assurance of her boundaries, was equally untenable, for it had already become clear at the Ambassadors' Conference that none of the Great Powers, save Austria-Hungary, was prepared at this juncture to take the initiative in the Balkans, stirring up entanglements which could precipitate a European conflict. Above all, the conflicting aims of the members of the Triple Alliance insofar as the Near East was concerned, aims which also conflicted with Greece's interests, made Greece's entrance into the Triplice quite improbable. It was the latter considerations, in addition to broader European questions, which foiled the King's plans, thereby postponing an internal crisis during a most critical period.

The Wilhelmstraße itself, while it viewed seriously and favorably Greece's eventual alignment with the Central Powers, was not willing to become involved in the Balkan imbroglio at a time that a clash between the Balkan allies seemed imminent. Both *Bethmann Hollweg* and *Jagow* were as reserved toward the King's policy as was *Quadt*. *Bethmann Hollweg* wrote to the Kaiser on June 23:

With regard to the question of Greece's direct association with the Triple Alliance I would like to repeat my views, as they were humbly expressed in my report of June 21, that the moment has not yet come for a step which will have such a far-reaching influence on our general policy.

First of all, one must not disregard the views of Your Majesty's Minister in Athens, that *Venizelos'* resignation at this critical moment could be fateful for Greece and the dynasty. Furthermore, Greece has already accepted the invitation for the discussions at St. Petersburg. A subsequent refusal would inevitably offend the Tsar personally and would attract for King Constantine Russia's direct enmity. If, on the other hand, the negotiations at St. Petersburg do not take place at all, then an armed conflict between the Balkan peoples seems inevitable. Bulgaria would hardly give up her claims without an armed struggle. By undertaking to guarantee Greece's territorial claims, the Triple Alliance would abandon the reserve she has hitherto observed in the interest of European peace and would become involved in the armed conflict in the Balkans which would not only contradict Your Majesty's outlined orientation for our general policy, but would also seem materially impossible for Germany.

The correct course of Greece's policy should be Mr. *Venizelos'* statesmanlike view for an orientation leading through Bucharest, and I humbly beg Your Majesty to

authorize me to provide King Constantine with appropriate counsel. [Kaiser Wilhelm's marginalia: "Yes!"]

Your Majesty's Minister could add that Your Majesty would gladly welcome an orientation of Greece's policy toward the Triple Alliance, but the question of a direct alliance could be practically approached only after the termination of the present crisis. [Kaiser Wilhelm's marginalia: "Important"]⁶⁵).

Thus, on the basis of the above formulation *Quadt* was instructed on June 25, to advise King *Constantine* that: (1) *Venizelos'* departure at this moment would be dangerous for Greece and for the dynasty; (2) Greece's refusal to attend the St. Petersburg discussions would attract Russia's hostility against Greece and the Tsar's personal enmity toward King *Constantine*; (3) Germany's entanglement in the Balkan crisis through a guarantee of Greece's boundaries would be materially impossible for Germany; (4) *Venizelos'* view that Greece should orient her policy toward Bucharest was correct; and (5) Germany would welcome to examine Greece's immediate orientation toward the Triple Alliance only after the termination of the Balkan crisis⁶⁶).

King *Constantine* accepted Berlin's response with satisfaction. He was especially pleased by point five and of the Kaiser's approval of Greece's general orientation toward Germany. He indicated that he did not expect Germany's active help against Bulgaria, and that he had proceeded with the offer of Greece's alliance at this moment because he felt bound by *Theotokis'* offer⁶⁷). *Venizelos*, too, to whom Berlin's reply had been communicated with the King's consent, was much satisfied by the position adopted by the German government. He explained that following the termination of the Balkan crisis he would feel free to move in any direction and he expressed his readiness to support the King's policy⁶⁸). Clearly, this turn of events was an important diplomatic success for *Venizelos*, for he was thereby able to prevent a domestic crisis at a very critical moment and concurrently secure Berlin's favor — a development which enabled him to pursue his own policy without serious opposition.

While Berlin's reservations were dictated by problems inherent in the Balkan crisis — problems which reflected concern over tactics rather than general strategy — the views and policies of Germany's partners reflected a fundamental divergence in their Balkan policy. The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count *Leopold von Berchtold*, reacted with reserve to *Theotokis'* overtures. He was above all suspicious of the Greco-Serbian alliance, and he was concerned as to whether the al-

⁶⁵) A.A. Deutschland No.128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Bethmann Hollweg* to Kaiser *Wilhelm II*, 23 June 1913, no. A.S. 734; see also, G.P. XXXV, no. 13455.

⁶⁶) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Jagow* to *Quadt*, 25 June 1913, no. 79; *Treutler* to FO, 26 June 1913, no. 30 (A.S. 2787); see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13456.

⁶⁷) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to FO, 26 June 1913, no. 153 (A.S. 758); see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13460.

⁶⁸) A.A. Deutschland, No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to FO, 27 June 1913, no. 154 (A.S. 760); *Jagow* to *Treutler*, 27 June 1913, nos. 41 and 42; see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13461.

liance involved a partition of Albania among the contracting parties⁶⁹). Neither Berlin's nor *Venizelos*' assurances to the contrary allayed these suspicions⁷⁰). However, Berlin's reservations and the attitude of the Greek government itself⁷¹), enhanced *Berchtold*'s equivocal position, for a decision on the matter was not pressing. *Berchtold* accepted Berlin's approach to the matter, thinking that one should await the outcome of Russia's mediation for the settlement of the outstanding issues among the Balkan allies. *Berchtold* pointed out that Greece's alliance with Serbia necessitated Vienna's opposition to a future understanding with Greece, notwithstanding Greece's repeated assurances as to the purely Balkan character of the Greco-Serbian alliance. Furthermore, *Berchtold* pointed out, Greece's claims on Kavalla and Seres could be satisfied only through a Greek victory against Bulgaria which in turn could be achieved only through a concurrent Serbian victory — a possibility abhorred by Vienna⁷²). Actually, *Berchtold*'s objections were more fundamental: he questioned Greece's future gravitation to the Triple Alliance by way of Bucharest, and this was precisely the approach Berlin wanted to cultivate at this juncture. Berlin feared that Austria-Hungary would not show much sympathy toward a Greco-Rumanian rapprochement because of the Greco-Serbian alliance which was directed against Bulgaria. Berlin was much concerned lest Vienna's pro-Bulgarian policy push Rumania into the enemy's arms. Thus, notwithstanding Vienna's reservations, *Jagow* instructed the German minister in Bucharest, *von Waldhausen*, to encourage cautiously a Greco-Rumanian rapprochement and at the same time to promote a compromise on the Kutsovlach question, which remained a stumbling block in Greco-Rumanian relations, on the

⁶⁹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Tschirschky* to FO, 20 June 1913, no. 148 (A.S. 721); see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13451.

⁷⁰) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Jagow* to *Tschirschky*, 21 June 1913, no. 253; *Jagow* to the German Legations in Vienna (no. 252) and Rome (no. 207), 20 June 1913. AGFM, *Koromilas* to *Streit*, 19 June/2 July 1913, no. 18098; *Streit* to FO, 15/28 June 1913, no. 18098A/5. During their negotiations leading to the Greco-Serbian treaty of alliance Greece and Serbia recognized the principle of Albanian autonomy, as established by the Great Powers, reserving the right to safeguard their interests in the event they were threatened either by aggressive action on the part of a third power or by internal disturbances. It was further agreed to divide Albania into Greek and Serbian spheres of interest along a line running between the courses of the rivers Skumbi and Semeni. AGFM, File 18/1913 on the Greco-Serbian alliance.

⁷¹) *Alexander Zaimis*, former Greek prime minister, appointed to announce in Vienna King *Constantine*'s accession to the throne presented his government's position more prudently than had *Theotokis* in Berlin. *Zaimis* told *Berchtold* that while Greece was always prepared to establish close relations with the Triple Alliance, she was determined to avoid becoming involved in the affairs of the Great Powers. "Ce que nous voulons", said *Zaimis*, "c'est de ne pas être poussé ni par un groupe ni par l'autre." A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Tschirschky* to FO, 23 June 1913, no. 150 (A.S. 742); see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13457.

⁷²) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 1, *Tschirschky* to FO, 23 June 1913, no. 150 (A.S. 742); *Jagow* to the German Legations in Vienna (no. 261) and Rome (no. 212), 23 June 1913.

basis of the guarantees already offered by Greece recognizing their cultural and religious autonomy⁷³).

Vienna's negative posture was further clarified on June 28. Berlin's decision to postpone further discussions for Greece's orientation toward the Triple Alliance until the termination of the Balkan crisis, suited *Berchtold* well since he was opposed to the idea on principle. In his conversations with *Tschirschky*, *Berchtold* emphasized three basic factors which determined his attitude: (1) Greece's alliance with Serbia which rendered difficult Austro-Greek relations, notwithstanding Greece's assurances that the alliance was designed only for the eventuality of a conflict with Bulgaria; (2) Greece's Albanian policy and particularly her claims on Korytsa; and (3) since Greece was prepared to participate in the St. Petersburg negotiations one should await their outcome since Vienna was not prepared to become involved in these discussions. Above all, *Berchtold* now insisted that it would be dangerous to encourage a Greco-Rumanian entente at this juncture, because such an event would almost certainly provoke a Serbo-Bulgarian rapprochement — an eventuality which Vienna wanted to prevent, for these two powers were considered as the most important military factors in the Balkans. Since it was impossible to do anything with Serbia and since Vienna's efforts to achieve some kind of a compromise between Rumania and Bulgaria had failed, Austro-Hungarian policy toward Bulgaria should be examined within this context. In conclusion, *Berchtold* stressed what might be considered as the essence of his policy, viz. that Austria-Hungary could not tolerate a Great Serbia, and in that sense a common boundary with Greece should be prevented⁷⁴). Thus, Berlin's and Vienna's positions on the question of Greece's orientation toward the Triple Alliance remained irreconcilable.

The third member of the Triple Alliance, Italy, was even less receptive to Germany's encouragement of a pro-Greek orientation than was Austria-Hungary. Italian foreign policy, as formulated by the Italian Foreign Minister, the Marchese *Antonino Paterno Castello di San Giuliano*, was founded upon certain basic principles which precluded an understanding with Greece. As early as the 1890's, *San Giuliano* had viewed Albania as a pivotal area for Italian imperialist expansion in the Balkans. In so far as *San Giuliano* was concerned, such areas as Lybia, Abyssinia, Asia Minor and the Balkan Peninsula could satisfy Italian expansionist ambitions. In terms of economic penetration in Albania, Italy was second only to Austria-Hungary. Moreover, Italy saw Albania as a base for economic penetration of the Balkans and, from a strategic point of view, for establishing hegemony over the Adriatic. Thus Austria's most important rival in Albania and the Adriatic was actually her ally Italy. To be sure, Albania was only one of the many issues which embittered Austro-Italian relations. There was perhaps not a single question involving the Adriatic and the Balkans where Italian and Austrian interests coin-

⁷³) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Jagow to Waldhausen*, 24 June 1913, no. 455 (A.S. 747).

⁷⁴) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Tschirschky to FO*, 23 June 1913, no. 153 (A.S. 747); *Tschirschky to FO*, 28 June 1913, no. 155 (A.S. 770); see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13459.

cided. Following the disintegration of Turkey in Europe as a result of the First Balkan War, the two nominal allies did cooperate on one issue, the establishment of an autonomous Albania, even though Austro-Italian friction over Albania was actually intensified. Beyond Albania, where Rome was determined to gain a position of preponderance, Italy was now determined to oppose Greece's claims on the Aegean islands, particularly those of the Dodecanese which were under Italian occupation, as well as Greece's aspirations in Asia Minor. Therefore, there was not a single question where Greco-Italian differences could be composed⁷⁵).

In view of these considerations, *San Giuliano's* negative posture on the Greek question is quite understandable. Following a long conversation with *San Giuliano*, the German ambassador in Rome, *Hans von Flotow*, wrote to *Bethmann Hollweg* on June 28:

A long conversation with the Marquis di San Giuliano gave me today once more the opportunity to examine thoroughly the recent Greek offers. The Marquis from the outset revealed his skepticism. He is certainly prepared to recognize that His Majesty King Constantine's intentions are most sincere; but it would be a mistake to believe that the position of the Dynasty in Greece would allow him to guide Greek policy from one day to the next in a direction which would be contrary as much to the Greek tradition as, one must admit, to Greek interests. Certainly on the basis of the recent victories, about the nature of which the Marquis has his objections, he has gained some popularity. But such impressions, for an unstable people such as the Greeks, can be lost in a moment if Greece does not emerge from the present discussion with some gains.

About Venizelos, among the Greek statesmen, he has for the most part the best opinion; for a Greek he is a relatively respectable and patriotic man, but exactly because he is motivated by this patriotism he would not shrink from any falsehood if it were for the interest of his country. It should be noted, in the reports made from the Greek side, that Venizelos refused to make in a moment this crossover to the Triple Alliance. There is no doubt, the Marquis believes, that the Greek government carries on discussions at the same time with the Triple Entente. The unconditional support by Russia and France of every Greek claim can be explained only in such a manner. The Greek government will get from the Triple Alliance whatever it can for the settlement of the Greek boundary question; and when the moment comes for repayment it would find excuses not to commit herself⁷⁶).

San Giuliano agreed with Berlin's decision to postpone further discussions, but, unlike Austria-Hungary, he did not object to Greece's orientation toward the Triple Alliance through Rumania. He was not willing, however, to give Greece any sign of friendly encouragement at this juncture. With respect to Albania, he insisted that

⁷⁵) George B. Leon, Greece and the Albanian Question at the Outbreak of the First World War, *Balkan Studies*, XI:1 (1970), pp. 61—80; Richard Bosworth, Britain and Italy's Acquisition of the Dodecanese, 1912—1915, *The Historical Journal*, XIII, No. 4 (1970), pp. 683—685; R. J. Crampton, The Decline of the Concert of Europe in the Balkans, 1913—1914, *The Slavonic and East European Review*, LII, No. 128 (July 1974), pp. 393—419; F. R. Bridge, From Sadowa to Sarajevo: The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1866—1914: A Diplomatic History (London, 1972), pp. 347—370.

⁷⁶) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Flotow to Bethmann Hollweg*, 28 June 1913, no. 170 (A.S. 766); see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13462.

Korytsa must remain Albanian if the new state were to become viable. As to the Aegean islands under Italian occupation, *San Giuliano* unequivocally stated that the islands would be returned to Turkey. "The Italians", he said, "do not want even a square meter." It is quite possible that *San Giuliano* did not intend to perpetuate Italian occupation of the islands, but they could constitute, however, a significant bargaining point in Italy's relations with Turkey as well as with those powers interested in Asia Minor. Certainly, *San Giuliano* was not as disinterested in Asia Minor as he purported to be on the question of the islands. As *Flotow* wrote to Bethmann Hollweg: "The Minister [*San Giuliano*] showed an extraordinary concern about Turkey, which must be strengthened and supported as much as possible. He told me at the same time, that Your Excellency presented the Italian Government with the prospect of a concession of a sphere of interest in Asia Minor, and this prospect has contributed to the Minister's interest in the consideration of Turkey's vitality⁷⁷)." Actually, the Dodecanese islands represented an important trump within the context of her broader Mediterranean policy. The occupation of the Dodecanese was not unrelated to Rome's concern about the balance of power in the eastern Mediterranean, which had by now become a fundamental element in Italian foreign policy, and to the acquisition of a sphere of influence in Asia Minor in the form of economic concessions; nor was it unrelated to Italy's proposal for a new naval agreement with Germany and Austria-Hungary which was concluded on June 23, 1913. Italy's Greek policy was, therefore, directly related to her broader Mediterranean policy and to her aims in Asia Minor, which precluded the kind of rapprochement encouraged by Berlin⁷⁸).

Following the outbreak of the Second Balkan War the position of the members of the Triple Alliance did not change materially. *Bethmann Hollweg* and *Jagow* had the opportunity to discuss with *San Giuliano* the question of Greece's future position in their meeting with the Kaiser at Kiel during the first week of July. It was generally agreed that one should await the outcome of the present conflict, and that if Greece emerged as a "factor of power", then, because of her geographic position, it would be advantageous to cultivate friendly relations with her⁷⁹). It seemed

⁷⁷) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Flotow* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 28 June 1913, no. 170 (A.S. 766); *Flotow* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 28 June 1913, no. 152 (A.S. 773). In a marginal note on *Flotow's* letter, *Jagow* denied that such a suggestion had ever been made to the Italians. He wrote: "This is not right; following the Italian attempt to secure concessions on the southern coast of Asia Minor, I had only told the Italians 'hands off', and I stated very confidentially the point up to which our interests in the Gulf of Adana went." See also, G.P. XXXV, no. 13464.

⁷⁸) Fischer, *War of Illusions*, pp. 146, 392—393. For Italian policy on the eve of the First World War, see, Gianluca André, *L'Italia e il Mediterraneo alla vigilia della prima guerra mondiale. I tentativi di intesa mediterranea (1911—1914)* (Milan, 1967). Brunelo Vigezzi, *L'Italia di fronte alla prima guerra mondiale* (Milan and Naples, 1966).

⁷⁹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Note* by *Jagow*, 7 July 1913, no. A. 13665. King *Constantine* had requested Berlin to use its influence in an effort to persuade *San Giuliano* during his visit to Kiel, to mitigate his enmity toward Greece. *Jagow* wrote *Quadt* that he had not detected any particular enmity toward Greece on *San Giuliano's*

momentarily, following his return from Kiel, that *San Giuliano* modified somewhat his position with regard to Greece. He seemed to abandon, for example, his hitherto support of Vienna's pro-Bulgarian policy, he criticized Vienna's policy toward Rumania and Bulgaria, and he was now in favor of keeping Rumania within the fold of the Triple. He even went a step farther, suggesting that Vienna should change her policy toward Serbia without, of course, underestimating the Bulgarian factor⁸⁰). Toward the end of July *Flotow* was even more encouraged about *San Giuliano's* attitude toward Greece. Under Berlin's constant pressure for the improvement of Greco-Italian relations, *San Giuliano* yielded to the extent of considering the possibility of ceding the occupied Aegean islands to Greece in an effort to bring her closer to the Triple. The Italian minister in Athens, Count *Alessandro di Bosdari*, was in favor of such an approach. *San Giuliano* still believed, however, that they should wait for a more auspicious situation for a direct approach to Greece⁸¹).

With the conclusion of the Ambassadors' Conference in mid-August and Italy's success in coming away with her occupation of the Dodecanese islands essentially uncontested, *San Giuliano* could afford to be more flexible toward Greece. That the islands question in general remained unresolved and the fact that the question of the Dodecanese remained essentially outside the Conference, hence outside the jurisdiction of the Great Powers, was considered by *San Giuliano* as an Italian diplomatic success, which in a way it was⁸²). With the Dodecanese under Italy's control, he now was willing to concede that the other islands, already under Greek occupation, could be ceded to Greece. He repeated his willingness to return the Dodecanese to Turkey, but he was now suspicious of a French press campaign favoring the cession of all the islands to Greece. He thus proposed a countermove whereby the islands could be used as a bargaining point to secure Greece's closer attachment to the Triple. *Flotow* wrote on August 17:

He himself [San Giuliano] is not entirely against their cession to Greece, but he is of the opinion that Athens must pay a price in some way to the Triple in return. It is therefore important that the press of the Triple should present immediately the matter in question as entirely uncertain, that Italy's engagements toward Turkey are binding, that Greece has already come out of the war with considerable gains,

part. *San Giuliano* himself had explained that he had treated *Theotokis* with some reserve during the latter's visit to Rome, because of Italy's commitment to support Vienna's position on the Albanian question. To be sure, these statement did not reflect *San Giuliano's* true feelings. See, A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 3, *Quadt* to FO, 1 July 1913, no. 165; *Jagow* to *Quadt*, 7 July 1913, no. 470 (A. 13212); see also, G.P., XXXV, no. 13467.

⁸⁰) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Flotow* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 12 July 1913, no. 159 (A.S. 864).

⁸¹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Flotow* to FO, 20 July 1913, no. 11; *Flotow* to FO, 31 July 1913, no. 13; *Flotow* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 31 July 1913, no. 10; see also G.P., XXXV, no. 13473.

⁸²) Crampton, *The Decline of the Concert of Europe . . .*, p. 401; Bosworth, *Britain and Italy's Acquisition of the Dodecanese 1912—1915*, p. 696.

etc., in short, we must make Greece understand that if she desires the support of the Triplice on this question she should make some definite promises. Furthermore, it would also be necessary to express our expectations in Athens diplomatically. Because of the confidential nature of this question it would be best if this is done by the Imperial Government which is in good relations with Athens. The Minister [San Giuliano] added that he is on principle skeptical of the Greeks and of Greek promises, but he recognizes that certain conditions now, more than before, dictate the possibility of closer relations with Greece. In addition to her present friendly attitude toward Germany, Greece will in any case have to face the threat of a Bulgarian revanchist war in which case she would be threatened on land, and she would find it necessary to seek the help of the Triple Alliance.

In comparison to the earlier, frankly Grecophobic, attitude of the Italian Minister we now have an extraordinary change. Having in view the frequent change of view of the Marquis di San Giuliano, it is all the more imperative to put his views immediately on record. Naturally, Austria's interests, even more than Italy's, point to closer relations with Greece. If, because of a hostile posture on Greece's part, her naval bases are given over to a power hostile to the Triple Alliance, Italy will always find an outlet through her coasts to the Mediterranean, whereas the Danubian Monarchy in such a case will depend entirely on Italy's good will and Italy's power, if she is not to be bottled up in the Adriatic. But in recent times the Austrian statesmen have so often disregarded their true interests that one is permitted to doubt, with regard to this question, their perspicacity⁸³).

Actually, *San Giuliano's* apparent flexibility toward Berlin's views on the Greek question was misleading. At this juncture, Greece represented the most immediate threat to Italy's imperialist designs, for *Grecia Irredenta* could certainly interfere with Rome's aims both in Albania and in Asia Minor. To be sure, *San Giuliano* was indeed prepared to use even the Dodecanese islands as a diplomatic bargaining point, but only if he could thereby secure a sphere of interest in Asia Minor. Under such circumstances, one could hardly expect Italian support of Berlin's Greek policy; and this is amply reflected in Rome's posture both on the Albanian and on the islands question which involved Greece's interests⁸⁴).

Germany's Greek policy caused even a greater bitterness and a more fundamental dissent in Vienna especially as a result of Germany's support of Greek and Rumanian interests during the negotiations at Bucharest. *Wilhelm II* persisted upon the formation of a new Balkan alliance composed of Greece and Rumania which might eventually draw in Serbia and Turkey. What concerned Germany was that in case of a European war Austria-Hungary be free in her southern frontier and concentrate all her forces against Russia. On the other hand, Austria-Hungary clung to its pro-

⁸³) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Flotow to Bethmann Hollweg*, 17 August 1913, no. 5 (A16937). Being incensed by the attacks of the French press on Italy, *San Giuliano* felt that this would have been the proper "psychological moment" for Greece to be attached to the Triple Alliance and turned against France. "Ce serait un joli tour à leur jouer", said *San Giuliano* with satisfaction. See, A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Flotow to Bethmann Hollweg*, 15 August 1913, no. A.16618.

⁸⁴) Bosworth, *Britain and Italy's Acquisition of the Dodecanese, 1912—1915*, pp. 698—699; Crampton, *The Decline of the Concert of Europe . . .*, pp. 393—419.

Bulgarian policy which had never materialized because of Berlin's opposition⁸⁵). Even though after September 1913, Germany, concerned over Austria's bitterness, became all the more anxious to demonstrate its readiness to support Vienna's position in the Balkans⁸⁶)—a tendency that was also reflected in Berlin's reluctance to offend Italy on the question of the islands⁸⁷), being concerned over the possibility of Italy's detachment from the Triplic Alliance. Thus, not only was it impossible for Austria-Hungary and Italy to follow Germany's lead in the Balkans, but Germany's policy itself suffered of such internal contradictions, especially her Turkish policy, that it rendered more and more unlikely the realization of Berlin's aims towards Greece. Nonetheless, Berlin clung to its Greco-Rumanian orientation until the eve of the First World War.

It is quite clear that the Austro-German divergence in their Balkan policies should not be attributed to the exaggerated role of dynastic relationships nor to Germany's failure to understand Vienna's special concern about her position in the Balkans which necessitated a pro-Bulgarian orientation. Beyond the local issues, the dissent was determined by their different perceptions of the problems involved and by the differences in their respective conceptualization of their international position. Austria's posture in the Balkans, and particularly her attitude toward Greece, was determined by her position in Southeastern Europe, the configuration of which would play a decisive role for the future of the Dual Monarchy, both internally and externally. Vienna's position is quite understandable. The existence of the Dual Monarchy could not be reconciled with Serbian nationalist aims; Greece's association with Serbia and Greece's own expansionist aims in Albania were equally inadmissible. Hence, Bulgaria remained the focal point of Austria's policy in southeastern Europe. Thus, the future configuration of the Balkan peninsula represented Austria's foremost concern and her Bulgarian policy constituted the pivotal element in the construction of a counterweight to an aggrandized Serbia. Austria's promotion of a Bulgarian-Turkish alliance was the logical alternative to the Greek-Rumanian-Serbian *bloc* that emerged from the settlement of the Second Balkan war through the Treaty of Bucharest. The Bucharest settlement was disastrous for Austria-Hungary. The balance of power had clearly shifted. At the time of the peace negotiations at Bucharest, Austria endeavored unsuccessfully to establish the basis for a future revision of the treaty in favor of Bulgaria by insisting

⁸⁵) Fischer, *War of Illusions*, pp. 216—217; Helmreich, *The Conflict between Germany and Austria over Balkan Policy, 1913—1914*, op. cit; O. H. Wedel, *Austro-German Diplomatic Relations, 1908—1914* (Stanford, California, 1932). Frank G. Weber, *Eagles on the Crescent. Germany, Austria, and the Turkish Alliance, 1914—1918* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1970), pp. 5—58.

⁸⁶) This does not mean that Berlin was prepared to satisfy Vienna's ambitions where Germany itself had a direct interest. This was especially true in the case of Austria's recently formulated imperialist aspirations in Asia Minor. See, F. R. Bridge, *Tarde venientibus ossa: Austro-Hungarian Colonial Aspirations in Asia Minor, 1913—1914*, *Middle Eastern Studies*, VI (1970), pp. 319—330.

⁸⁷) Crampton, *The Decline of the Concert of Europe in the Balkans, 1913—1914*, p. 407; Fischer, *War of Illusions*, pp. 164, 392—393.

upon the ratification of the treaty by the signatories of the Treaty of Berlin of 1878. None of the Great Powers, however, had any desire to become involved in the Balkan tangle. Indeed, even Berlin opposed a revision of the Bucharest settlement.

Unlike Austria-Hungary, Germany perceived the Balkan problem through a different perspective. Her policy was determined by broader considerations and it was not as ambivalent as it is sometimes believed. For Germany the Balkan peninsula was of a secondary significance in comparison to her interests in the Ottoman Empire as a whole, which in turn was only one link in her broader *Weltpolitik*. Germany was concerned about her position in the eastern Mediterranean as related to the Middle East, even though the Mediterranean in general was not a sphere of primary importance for Berlin. However, Germany was not only concerned about the stability of her position in Turkey, where her economic and political interests were of paramount importance, but she was also determined to extend her influence in the eastern Mediterranean — hence her concern about Greece's future orientation dictated by her geographic position. This concern is further reflected in Berlin's attempt to secure Greece's naval orders through which Germany hoped to counteract British and French influence, and in the organization of a German Mediterranean squadron⁸⁸). It is within this general context that we must interpret Germany's encouragement of a Greek-Turkish-Rumanian bloc and the consequent isolation of Bulgaria. The thinking of the German Foreign Office at this time, is clearly reflected in a discussion *Jagow* held with Graf *Johann von Forgách*, section chief of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry, on the question of Greece's orientation. *Forgách* argued that Greece was of a limited value to the Triple Alliance and that her long coast lines offered no protection for the Triplice. Moreover, Panhellenic aspirations in Asia Minor threatened to precipitate a clash with Turkey and jeopardize the status quo in Asia Minor. In *Jagow's* mind, it was precisely for this reason that a rapprochement between Greece and Turkey was desirable in order to forestall the Panhellenic agitation in that area. But above all, because of her geographic position, Greece should not be allowed to fall into France's orbit. France already controlled most of the north African coast, she had aspirations toward Syria, she maintained good relations with Spain, and now French diplomacy was working assiduously to bring Greece into the orbit of the Triple Entente and thereby secure an undisputed preponderance in the Mediterranean. It was therefore, necessary to support King *Constantine's* decision to strive for Greece's orientation toward the Triple Alliance through a military convention with Rumania⁸⁹). From the foregoing discussion it becomes clear that, notwithstanding their overall community of interest, Austro-German differences in their Balkan policy were dictated by their divergent interests over specific problems in the East as well as by the very nature of their respective strategies militated by their perception of their international position and by their long term goals.

⁸⁸) Crampton, *The Decline of the Concert of Europe . . .*, p. 406 and note 76.

⁸⁹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Note by Jagow*, 26 September 1913, no. AA. 1134 of a conversation with *Forgách* held on 25 September 1913.

Following the conclusion of the Treaty of Bucharest, the question of Greece's orientation became once again the subject of public debate in the Greek press. On August 7, *Nea Hemera*, which was favorably inclined toward the Triple Alliance and close to the Greek Royal Court, commented in an article that England's alleged "new attitude" toward Greece's claims was attributed by "diplomatic circles" to London's suspicions over Greece's inclination toward the constellation of the Triple Alliance⁹⁰). Possibly *Nea Hemera's* article was inspired by the circles of the Royal Court as a trial balloon. The press that was close to the government, however, swiftly denied the allegation of Greece's "new orientation". The newspaper *Hestia*, which reflected the government's position denied that Greece had undertaken any commitments toward either of the European alliances; nor was it expedient, it was pointed out, for Greece to change its policy at a time when the policies of both great alliances seemed to coincide on the outstanding Balkan problems. It was also pointed out that if the alleged British suspicions were correct, then Austria-Hungary and Italy would not be opposed to Greece's interests in southern Albania and the Dodecanese islands respectively⁹¹).

The question of the growth of German influence in Greece had become the subject of public debate ever since *Theotokis'* return from Berlin. *L'Echo d'Athènes*, the French daily in Athens, attacked *Theotokis* on July 22, disputing his statements to the effect that he had found a grecophile attitude in Berlin and that the French were more inclined toward Bulgaria, pointing out France's consistent grecophile policy at the Ambassadors' Conference in contrast to Germany's pro-Turkish policy⁹²). The dispute over *Theotokis'* statements continued unabated throughout the summer. As late as August 6, the German minister wrote Berlin: "Because of the truly clumsy statements of the former prime minister *Theotokis* over Germany's friendship for Greece, tempers are being kept stirred up here." *L'Echo d'Athènes* did not miss the opportunity to bring up the subject, at times even accusing Greece of ungratefulness. *Quadt* realized, of course, that Greece could not afford to alienate France and the French money market, but he was convinced that Greece's association with the Triplice would be received by the country enthusiastically⁹³).

The press debate over *Theotokis'* activities had hardly subsided when an incident in early September brought to the surface again the latent divergence within Greece. King *Constantine's* activities during his visit to Berlin in early September clearly indicate that *Theotokis'* overtures in June cannot be considered as a personal initiative without the King's knowledge and approval. That his overtures were officially disavowed by King *Constantine* following Germany's decision to put aside for the moment the Greek question, was mainly dictated by domestic considerations. It was a face-saving device to prevent a clash with *Venizelos* that would

⁹⁰) *Nea Hemera*, 25 July/7 August 1913.

⁹¹) *Hestia*, 26 July/8 August 1913.

⁹²) A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Quadt to Bethmann Hollweg*, 6 August 1913, no. 25 (A 15308).

⁹³) A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Quadt to Bethmann Hollweg*, 6 August 1913, no. 301 (A 16371); *Quadt to Bethmann Hollweg*, 15 August 1913, no. 319 (A 16993).

have led to his resignation, and to a possible political crisis, a policy which Berlin itself discouraged. Apparently, the King realized how imprudent it would have been to have provoked a ministerial crisis — something he was prepared to do — while Berlin was not prepared to accept Greece within the fold of the Triplice at that particular juncture. That King *Constantine* was determined to join the Triple Alliance was amply proved by his conversations in Berlin in early September.

In his conversations with the Kaiser and *Jagow* the King concentrated on the unsatisfactory relations between Greece, Austria-Hungary and Italy, because of their opposition to Greece's interests in Albania and the Aegean islands — a policy which complicated his domestic position and presented a stumbling block to his orientation toward the Triplice. The King insisted especially on the question of Korytsa, stressing the difficulties he would have to face in Greece if he yielded on that question. Both the Kaiser and *Jagow* were adamant on this issue, pointing out that because of Germany's pro-Greek policy on the questions of Kavalla and the islands it was no longer possible for Germany to abandon her allies on the Albanian question. The Kaiser pointed out to Constantine that in comparison to his great successes, such as the acquisition of Salonika, Kavalla, Jannina and Crete, the question of the Epirus boundary was a "worthless" issue. The Kaiser also stressed the necessity of the improvement of Greece's relations with Italy and Austria as well as with Turkey and Bucharest. He insisted upon the importance of securing Italy's collaboration, upon whom both Germany and Austria counted as a Mediterranean naval power, rather than alienating her because of such an insignificant boundary dispute. Alienating Italy could be costly, since there was always the possibility of coming to terms with her on the islands question⁹⁴). A similar position was adopted by *Jagow* in his conversations with *Constantine*. *Jagow* stressed that by resisting the decision of the Great Powers on the Epirus question, he would simply jeopardize his chances of orienting his policy toward the Triplice. Notwithstanding his complaints against Italy and Austria, King *Constantine* persisted upon his determination to join the Triple Alliance and Rumania. He pointed out that Greece's friendship could be useful, for in a few years Greece would be able to mobilize 500,000 men. *Constantine* explained that he would have to reorient his policy gradually, because under the present political circumstances, and because of economic reasons, he could not abruptly alienate France. The King also requested Germany's participation in a projected Greek loan of 500,000 francs which was then being negotiated in France, so that Greece would not have to depend entirely on France. Ironically, *Jagow* espoused *Venizelos'* position and he advised *Constantine* to accept *Venizelos'* policy, e. g. that Greece should not join at the present moment any of the great European alliance systems in contrast to *Constantine's* policy which sought Greece's immediate association with the Central Powers. Such an alternative also

⁹⁴) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, Kaiser *Wilhelm II* to *Jagow*, 6 September 1913, no. A.S. 1060.

suiting Germany who was at the time at loggerheads with her allies over that very issue⁹⁵).

Germany's partners were no more amenable to *Constantine's* overtures than they were earlier in the summer. On the contrary, the Albanian boundary dispute was to complicate further the question of Greece's reorientation. When *San Giuliano* was informed of King *Constantine's* position on Korytsa, he precluded the possibility of yielding on that issue, being convinced that Greece would yield under pressure. *San Giuliano* was still skeptical of King *Constantine's* capacity to bring Greece over to the Triplice. He felt that King *Constantine*, being a constitutional monarch, could not conduct a personal policy. He could not afford to alienate France, because of Greece's economic needs and that Greece would secure her money through whatever source she could — in which case Greece would have to fluctuate between the two alliance systems. *San Giuliano* concluded that even though he wanted to facilitate Greece's association with the Triplice, further difficulties were bound to emerge because of the pending delimitation of the Albanian boundaries⁹⁶). Thus, *San Giuliano* was still skeptical about Germany's Greek policy.

It was at this time that *Constantine's* eagerness to advance Greece's attachment to the Triplice and in an effort to ingratiate his German hosts and allay the persisting suspicions in Vienna and Rome, precipitated an unfortunate incident which was not, perhaps, altogether accidental. On September 7, in a toast following a ceremony at Potsdam during which the Kaiser conferred upon him the baton of a German fieldmarshal, *Constantine* said *inter alia*: "Our victories are due to the vigor of our troops and also to the principles which I and my officers have learned of the art of war at Berlin . . .⁹⁷)" Understandably, the French government and the press reacted sharply to the King's statement which was interpreted as an affront to France, since it had been through the work of the French military mission that the reorganization and training of the Greek army had been achieved. The Parisian newspapers *Le Temps*, *Le Matin*, *Gaulois* and *Gil Blas*, as well as the French daily in

⁹⁵) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Jagow* to the German Legations in Vienna (no. 1325) and Rome (no. 1158); *Note by Jagow to Bethmann Hollweg*, 7 September 1913, no. A.S. 1063.

⁹⁶) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Hindenburg* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 10 September 1913, no. A18516; *Hindenburg* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 13 September 1913, no. 190 (A.S. 100). Another issue that disturbed the Greek Government at this time were widespread rumors that Italy was conducting secret negotiations with Turkey for concessions in Asia Minor in return for Italy's support of Turkey's position on the question of the islands. Berlin had already taken a clear stand against such tactics, and *San Giuliano* had promised that there was no substance in the rumors. No one doubted, however, that Italy sought such concessions, being prepared to bargain both with Turkey and Great Britain. See A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Hindenburg* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 10 September 1913, no. A18514. Bosworth, *Britain and Italy's Acquisition of the Dodecanese, 1912—1913*, pp. 698—699.

⁹⁷) Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Documents diplomatiques français 1871—1814, 3rd Series, Vol. VII, 131; HHS, XVI/64, *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 11 September 1913, no. 687; *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 13 September 1913, no. 42A. *Kairoi*, 28 August/11 September 1913; *Ebros*, 25 August/7 September 1913.

Athens *L'Echo d'Athènes*, were very critical of the King's statements⁹⁸). The King, who had not considered the possible consequences of his statements, was now quite concerned about the reaction of the Greek Chamber to his diplomatic *faux pas*⁹⁹).

The King's statements and the reaction in France, compelled *Venizelos* to interrupt his vacation at Loutraki in order to take over the situation personally. He expressed his regrets to the French *Chargé d'affaires* about the misinterpretation of the King's statements at Potsdam. The Greek press, too, in an effort to minimize the significance of the King's statements, praised the work of the French military mission, and the King himself tried, not entirely successfully, to allay French suspicions during his visit to Paris¹⁰⁰). The Quai d'Orsay, too, endeavored to minimize the incident, and a distinction was made between the King's statements and the sentiments of the Greek people. On the other hand, *Bethmann Hollweg* capitalized on the King's statement to express satisfaction in the *Reichstag*, projecting *Constantine's* statements as a refutation to all those who had tried to ridicule German military tactics as a result of Turkey's defeats in the First Balkan War¹⁰¹). In Athens, the Greek press and especially the government newspapers such as *Hestia* and *Patris*, were careful to point out that the King's statements in no way reflected official policy and that there was no indication of a change in Greek foreign policy. It was emphasized that the King's trip was of a private nature and that on matters of policy the King's views coincided with those of the government. Concurrently, the press praised the work of the French mission, expressing Greece's gratitude, without at the same time disputing openly the King's statements, recognizing thereby the need of Germany's support on all outstanding issues¹⁰²).

Underneath this public debate in Athens over the question of the growth of German influence, one again finds an intense Franco-German economic competition which was expanded now to include Greece's naval program and Germany's interest to secure orders for her own naval yards — a question which was directly related, as has been shown, to Germany's naval position in the eastern Mediterranean. *Quadt's* insistence upon Greece's future value as a close associate of the Triple Alliance, and as a military and naval factor in the Balkans and in the eastern Mediterranean, was accompanied by an equally fervent insistence upon the partici-

⁹⁸) A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Radowitz* to FO, 10 September 1913, no. 309 (A8573). *Le Matin*, 10 September 1913; *L'Echo d'Athènes*, 7 September 1913. A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Bassewitz* to FO, 7 September 1913, no. 340 (A18493).

⁹⁹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Treutler* to FO, 11 September 1913, no. 107 (A.S. 1086).

¹⁰⁰) A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Radowitz* to FO, 12 September 1913, no. 100 (A18607); *Bassewitz* to FO, 11 September 1913, no. 289 (A18475); HHS, XVI/64, *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 12 September 1913, no. 688; *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 13 September 1913, no. 42A.

¹⁰¹) A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Radowitz* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 22 September 1913, no. 327 (A19185); Fritz Fischer, *Weltpolitik, Weltmachtstreben und deutsche Kriegsziele*, *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 199 (1964), pp. 297—298.

¹⁰²) See, *Patris*, *Hestia*, *Nea Hemera*, *Embros*, *Athenai*, *Kairoi*, *Akropolis* 25 August/7 September 1913—14/27 September 1913; A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 12 September 1913, no. 348.

pation of German capital in Greece's financial needs for the purpose of promoting Germany's political and economic influence. In April 1913, the Wilhelmstraße had vetoed *Quadt's* proposals because of the overextension of Germany's financial market and because of the risks entailed in dispersing Germany's financial strength. In the summer of 1913, however, the Kaiser himself intervened personally in favor of Germany's participation in the forthcoming Greek loan and he secured the consent of *Paul von Schwabach*, director and joint owner of the *Gerson Bleichröder* banking house. *Schwabach* envisaged a loan of 50 million francs, but he precluded the possibility of a much larger loan as that projected by the Greek government. He preferred international participation which would include German, French and English banking houses, even though he doubted whether the French government would favor such an arrangement, preferring to secure exclusive French participation. Until the end of 1913, both the Wilhelmstraße and *Schwabach* encouraged Athens to count on future German participation¹⁰³). King *Constantine*, too, during his Berlin visit, had stressed his desire for the participation of German capital in order to prevent the monopolization of the French financial market and the concomitant growth of French political influence. But the truth of the matter was that Greece's financial needs could be satisfied only in the French market. Her financial weakness compelled Germany to abandon the idea of participating in the Greek loan with the consequent loss of industrial advantages which were monopolized almost exclusively by France. As *Quadt* complained, the German banks could not liberate Greece from France's "iron grip"¹⁰⁴). Indeed, the Kaiser's concern over France's efforts to draw Bulgaria into her orbit through a "chain of gold", could be more appropriately applied to the Greek case¹⁰⁵). Two basic questions prevented Germany from gaining a stronger foothold in Greece: (1) her inability to give Greece unqualified support on the islands question and in North Epirus because of her broader political interests in Turkey as well as because of the exigencies and limitations imposed by her alliance system; and (2) because "family policy was no substitute for lack of financial strength"¹⁰⁶). Thus, by the end of the year Greece had already secured the commitment of the French government for a loan of 500 million francs, half of which was issued in the spring of 1914¹⁰⁷). There is no doubt, therefore, that neither the economic nor the general political commitments of Germany

¹⁰³) AGFM, *Theotokis* to FO, 20 July/2 August 1913, no. 23595A/7; *Theotokis* to *Panas*, 16/29 September 1913, no. 26781A/7; *Theotokis* to FO, 13/26 November 1913, no. 31733A/7; *Theotokis* to FO, 22 November/4 December 1913, no. 33773A/7; Poidevin, op. cit., pp. 562—566, 686.

¹⁰⁴) Poidevin, op. cit., p. 687.

¹⁰⁵) G.P., XXXIV, no. 12937 as cited in *Damianov*, *Aspects économiques de la politique française . . .*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁶) *Fischer*, *War of Illusions*, p. 293; *Fischer*, *Weltpolitik, Weltmachtstreben und deutsche Kriegsziele*, pp. 296—297.

¹⁰⁷) AGFM, *Sisilianos* to FO, 5/18 October 1913, no. 28200A/7; *Romanos* to FO, 30 November/12 December 1913 no. 33326A/7; *Romanos* to FO, 10/23 December 1913, no. 34246A/7; *Romanos* to FO, 11/24 December 1913, no. 34291A/7; *Romanos* to FO, 12/25 December 1913, no. 34341A/7; *Romanos* to FO, 12/25 December 1913, no. 34342A/7.

permitted her to give unqualified support to Greece's interests and thereby promote the King's orientation toward the Triple Alliance.

Although Germany's determination to support Austria's position in the Balkans, and her own eastern policy, prevented her from giving concrete evidence of her pro-Greek policy, in one direction Berlin had not yet abandoned all hope, i. e. the possibility of a Greco-Turkish rapprochement — an effort which in itself reflected Berlin's dilemma and the internal contradictions of its policy. While the Wilhelmstraße, concerned about their position in Turkey, were not prepared to support openly Greece's position on the islands question, at the same time they were reluctant to encourage Turkey to defy the decision of the Great Powers on that issue. Berlin was, in fact, concerned lest the recent passive posture of the Great Powers with respect to the reoccupation of Adrianople by Turkey during the Second Balkan War, encourage Turkey's leaders to believe that they could defy the will of the European Concert on all questions related to the Balkan settlement. *Jagow* was cognizant of the fact that a collective step against Turkey was prevented mainly because of Germany's refusal to participate; but he now feared that Turkey's refusal to accept the decision of the Great Powers on the islands question could cause a European crisis which would make it impossible for Germany to help Turkey. Moreover, since the Kaiser had advised King *Constantine* to yield on the Albanian question and accept the neutralization of the islands, the Porte should be pressured now to show understanding on the question of the islands. In a telegram to *Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim*, the German ambassador in Constantinople, *Jagow* spoke in this sense, and he concluded: "We have considerable interest in an understanding between Greece and Turkey. A failure on this question would in itself greatly jeopardize our hitherto successful eastern policy. Greece cannot yield on the islands question¹⁰⁸."

While the Wilhelmstraße was not prepared to join the Concert on any forcible measures against Turkey for the acceptance of their decision, at the same time they were not prepared to abandon Greece at a time that their Greek policy had reached a critical stage. In Athens King *Constantine* was very much concerned lest Austro-Hungarian policy on the questions of southern Albania and the Aegean islands alienate Greece completely and thereby frustrate his own projected gravitation toward the Central Powers. As he pointedly told *Quadt* in early November, "I must depend on one of the two combinations, otherwise I will go under"¹⁰⁹). One en-

¹⁰⁸) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Jagow* to *Wangenheim*, 8 September 1913, no. 309.

¹⁰⁹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to FO, 5 November 1913, no. 386 (A22445). A similar posture was adopted by the Greek minister in Vienna, *George S. Streit*, an ardent supporter of King *Constantine*'s pro-German orientation, who complained in his conversations with the German Chargé d'Affaires in Vienna, Prince zu *Stolberg*, that Vienna's policy could hardly facilitate the King's policy. *Streit* was convinced that France, with its "schoolmaster's" tactics and its "patronizing" attitude would soon alienate Greek public opinion and thereby facilitate the King's new course. See, A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Stolberg* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 30 September 1913, no. 303.

couraging element at this juncture for King *Constantine* was found in the recent development of Greco-Rumanian relations which could be looked upon as a guarantee of the Bucharest settlement and concurrently as a link toward the Triplice, at least by those who still considered Rumania as tied to the Central Powers.

In early November the Greek government's attention was concentrated on a more concrete relationship with Rumania, which was highlighted by *Take Ionescu's* visit to Athens in early November. It was quite obvious that the Treaty of Bucharest had contributed to the further alienation of Rumania from the Central Powers; and *Venizelos* now hoped to strengthen the commitment of the newly formed Greek-Rumanian-Serbian *bloc* to the maintenance of the Bucharest settlement and thereby deter the revanchist tendencies of Bulgaria which were encouraged by Austria-Hungary. However, both Rumania and Serbia were committed to the defense of the Bucharest settlement simply because it was to their interest to do so. They would defend the balance of power in the Balkans only to this extent, but neither would come to Greece's support in the event of a Greco-Turkish war provoked by purely Greco-Turkish differences over the Aegean islands. Greco-Serbian interests coincided only in so far as their defense against Bulgaria was concerned, and this is where their community of interests ended. With Turkey Serbia had no problems, and, by the same token Greece could hardly involve herself in a quarrel with Serbia's foe, Austria-Hungary. From Rumania Greece could expect very little if anything at this juncture, especially in her differences with Turkey. At the same time, however, Rumania had an interest to deter all revisionist tendencies, and for this reason Bucharest wanted to prevent a Turko-Bulgarian alliance and by the same token to encourage a Greco-Turkish rapprochement. Therefore, despite the substantive differences that existed between Greek and Rumanian long term goals, it was to Rumania's interest at this juncture to present a common front with Greece; and this was the significance of *Ionescu's* visit to Athens.

Ionescu's successful visit in Athens confirmed the existence of a new Balkan rapprochement, without, however, the conclusion of a formal alliance which *Venizelos* would have preferred. What is also significant is that *Ionescu* worked hard during his sojourn in Athens for the conclusion of the Greco-Turkish peace treaty as a basis for a further rapprochement¹¹⁰).

Ionescu's visit in Athens attained considerable significance. Because of his contribution to the conclusion of the Greco-Turkish peace treaty, *Ionescu* assumed now the role of "the arbiter of the Balkans"; but more significant was his assurance that an attempted violation of the Bucharest settlement would constitute a *casus belli*. For *Venizelos* the Bucharest settlement constituted "la charte fondamentale des

¹¹⁰) *Ionescu's* mediation was requested by *Talaat Bey*, the Turkish Minister of the Interior while *Ionescu* was passing through Constantinople on his way to Athens. *Ionescu* accepted this task willingly for he was convinced that the rapid conclusion of a Greco-Turkish settlement would facilitate a Greek-Rumanian-Turkish rapprochement. See, A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Bassewitz to Bethmann Hollweg*, 14 November 1913, no. 391 (A23086).

Balkans”, and for *Ionescu* it represented “la base du rapprochement entre la Roumanie et la Grèce entre lesquelles il est impossible de voir des causes de divergence”¹¹¹). It was now generally believed that Rumania was committed to intervene in the event of an attack by Bulgaria alone or by Bulgaria in collaboration with Turkey. Indeed, The Greco-Rumanian understanding was now viewed as a “de facto alliance”¹¹²). Unlike Austria-Hungary, Germany was satisfied with these developments, for, understandably, Berlin looked upon the improvement of Greco-Rumanian relations and the movement toward an improvement of Greco-Turkish relations, as the first important step toward the conclusion of a Greek-Rumanian-Turkish entente under Germany’s aegis, that is, the formation of a new *bloc* which would in time gravitate toward the Triplice. Now *Venizelos* looked hopefully toward the conclusion of a formal alliance with Rumania. As to the final balance of these developments for the Central Powers, more accurate was the assessment of the Austro-Hungarian minister in Bucharest, *Ottokar Czernin*, when he wrote that: “the alliance with Rumania under present conditions was nothing more than a scrap of paper without content¹¹³).”

By the end of the year the question of the delimitation of the south Albanian boundary and the anti-Greek posture adopted by Italy and Austria-Hungary complicated considerably the position of those in Greece who worked for a pro-German orientation. The King himself was very bitter against Vienna and Rome and complained about Germany’s failure to exert some pressure on her allies in favor of Greece. He was now even willing to concede Korytsa and Argyrocastro to Albania if he could secure a new line that would incorporate Delvino and its valley into Greece. The King complained that a policy as that pursued by Rome and Vienna could hardly facilitate Greece’s orientation toward the Triplice. He feared that under such circumstances “he would be driven into the arms of the Triple Entente. Whether he wanted it or not he would wake up one day and find himself allied with France”. *Venizelos*, too, spoke in a similar sense, stressing that he saw no more advantage in the combination of the Triplice and that he would have to lean on France¹¹⁴). *Quadt* was quite alarmed especially by the change he noticed in *Venizelos*’ attitude. He insisted that “if we wish to count upon Greece in the future as a factor in a possible European conflict and if we want to prevent her from joining

¹¹¹) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2 *Bassewitz* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 8 November 1913, no. 389 (A22768); *Bassewitz* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 14 November 1913, no. 391 (A23086); *Bassewitz* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 12 November 1913, no. 390 (A22914); *Bassesitz* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 27 November 1913, no. 403 (A23980).

¹¹²) HHS, XVI/64, *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 15 November 1913, no. 51E; see also, *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 28 October 1913, no. 48B; *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 11 November 1913, no. 809; *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 8 November 1913, no. 803; *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 9 November 1913, no. 50A; *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 15 November 1913, no. 51F.

¹¹³) *Ottokar Czernin*, *Im Weltkriege* (Berlin and Vienna, 1919), p. 107.

¹¹⁴) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to FO, 12 December 1913, no. 351 (A24568).

the opposite camp, we must now do something for Greece". He felt, therefore, that Germany, without assuming a leading role on the south Albanian boundary question, she should play a mediating role in favor of Greece. "I cannot understand", wrote *Quadt*, "how can one underestimate Greece's role, with her many ports and the channel of Corfu, in a European conflict; and I fear that if Greece is forced to join the enemy camp we would later regret that we did not take advantage of Greece's geographic position at the right moment¹¹⁵."

In spite of the difficulties he encountered with Germany's allies on the basic questions that concerned Greece, and in spite of the fact that Germany was now closer to Vienna's position than before, *Venizelos* was careful not to depart openly from the policy he had outlined earlier in the summer. During a visit of the major European capitals in January and early February, he was able to steer a middle course in an effort to secure the support of the Great Powers on the islands question. While in Paris a final agreement was concluded for a loan of 500 million francs which was to be issued in two installments of 250 million francs each, the first of which was to be issued in the spring of 1914¹¹⁶). As *Venizelos* admitted in a conversation with *Jagow* during his visit in Berlin, the terms of the loan were "hard", but he pointed out that "money at the moment is expensive", for "as things stand now France has the credit monopoly and therefore one has to come to terms"¹¹⁷). To be sure, France secured more than just the loan monopoly, for the final agreement was accompanied with a concession for the construction of the railway linking Larissa with Salonika, a concession for the development of the port of Salonika, as well as a near monopoly of Greek military orders¹¹⁸). In response to *Jagow's* question as to whether the loan negotiations in Paris had in any way affected Greece's political posture and especially her policy in the Mediterranean, *Venizelos* reiterated his old position, i. e., that Greece would pursue a purely Balkan policy, that he would remain outside the two major European *blocs* and that he would endeavor to conclude an alliance with Rumania and, if possible, an understanding with Turkey.

¹¹⁵) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 12 December 1913, no. 411 (A25052); *Quadt* to FO, 25 December 1913 no. 361 (A25322); *Wangenheim* to FO, 15 December 1913, no. A24852.

¹¹⁶) A. Andreades, Les finances de la Grèce, *Journal des Economistes*, Vol. 74 (15 April—15 May 1915), p. 32 (Offprint). Because of the war expenditures Greece needed this loan in order to liquidate the large floating debt incurred during the war and for the consolidation and administration of the new territories. More than half of the loan was successfully issued in the Spring of 1914 mainly in France. The outbreak of the First World War prevented the completion of the floatation. The second issue of 1915 was limited to 2 962 960 pounds. The French group controlled 70 % of the loan and the British group 30 %. The negotiations for the loan were concluded on 2 February 1914. See, Poidevin, op. cit., pp. 684—685. William H. Wynne, *State Insolvency and Foreign Bondholders* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), II, pp. 347—348.

¹¹⁷) A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Jagow* to German Legations in Rome (no. 97), Vienna (no. 117), Paris (no. 113) and London (no. 127), A. 1724.

¹¹⁸) Fischer, *Weltpolitik, Weltmachtstreben und deutsche Kriegsziele*, p. 296; Poidevin, op. cit., pp. 684—685.

“Through a union with Rumania”, he said, “Greece would also be drawn closer to the Triple Alliance¹¹⁹).”

In spite of this assurances in Berlin, the fact remains that *Venezelos*' policy at this time was taking Greece a step closer to the Entente Powers, a trend clearly reflected in his visit of St. Petersburg and Bucharest in early February together with the Serbian Prime Minister, *Nikola Pašić*. While in St. Petersburg both men secured the Tsar's assurances against all tendencies for the revision of the Bucharest settlement. In Bucharest both men were warmly received and while no written agreement was concluded, it was again demonstrated that the three powers were determined to maintain the new status quo. Actually, both *Venezelos* and *Pašić* had proposed in Bucharest the conclusion of a formal defensive alliance, a proposal Rumania turned down for they considered the existing understanding as an adequate arrangement. What concerned *Brătianu* was the possibility of a Bulgaro-Turkish alliance which could lead to a Greco-Turkish war over the islands—an event which would inevitably bring into the forefront the entire Bucharest settlement. It was for this reason that a united front was presented by the three Balkan powers on the question of the islands¹²⁰).

Although it was quite obvious by this time that Rumania and the new Balkan coalition were gravitating toward the West, Berlin, still more optimistic than Vienna about the future orientation of these three powers, was becoming more concerned about the cohesion and strengthening of the Triple Alliance, but did not substantially alter its Balkan policy. As late as the spring of 1914, the Wilhelmstraße as well as the Kaiser insisted upon the necessity of keeping Rumania within the Triplice and clung to the idea of the formation of a Rumanian-Greek-Serbian alliance to be joined by Austria-Hungary and also by Turkey. Thus, Berlin and Vienna remained irreconcilable on this issue. As the Austrian Minister of Trade put it, following a meeting with the principal personalities of the German government: “Here [in Berlin] they want to encircle Bulgaria, we want to encircle Serbia.” These differences were not reconciled until the outbreak of the First World War¹²¹).

With respect to Greece, Germany had no obvious reason to be discouraged. In spite of the predominance of French capital and the concomitant growth of French influence, and notwithstanding *Venezelos*' personal predelections, one could not speak of a clearly predetermined pro-Western orientation having in view the basic divergence that continued to persist and to grow within the Greek ruling elite. King *Constantine*, who was looked upon by Berlin as a decisive and stable factor in Greece, as well as the newly appointed Foreign Minister, *George S. Streit*, were working for Greece's future attachment to the Central Powers. One encouraging

¹¹⁹) A.A. Griechenland 63, Bd. 2, *Jagow* to *Waldhausen*, 29 January 1914, no. 31.

¹²⁰) A.A. Griechenland 50, Bd. 2, *Pourtales* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 6 February 1914, no. 38; Deutschland 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Waldhausen* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 3 February 1914 no. A2618; *Quadt* to FO, 19 February 1914, no. 40 (A3509); Maciu, *La Roumanie et la politique des Grandes Puissances . . .*, pp. 726—727.

¹²¹) Cited in *Fischer*, *War of Illusions*, p. 413; also, *Joseph M. Baernreither*, *Dem Weltbrand entgegen* (Berlin, 1928), pp. 305ff.

development, insofar as the Central Powers were concerned, was the fact that the Greco-Serbian alliance, which represented an element of fundamental significance for Vienna, was now being questioned by both King *Constantine* and *Streit* himself as well as by the royal entourage. There were many who believed that Serbia and Bulgaria would one day compose their differences — a likelihood which would jeopardize Greece's integrity in Macedonia. The Slavic danger was a fundamental determinant in their propensity to look upon the Central Powers as a natural ally, notwithstanding the profound and in some ways unreconcilable differences that separated Athens from Vienna and Berlin¹²²). Such views were also shared by the new Foreign Minister, *George S. Streit*, who was on principle opposed to the Greco-Serbian alliance and who openly told the Austro-Hungarian minister in Athens, Graf *von Szilassy*, that the Greco-Serbian alliance would soon expire, for he, too, was convinced that sooner or later Serbia and Bulgaria would solve their differences and act in common. Thus, *Streit* did not conceal his intention, which also reflected the King's position, to abandon the Greco-Serbian alliance as soon as an arrangement could be found which would bring Greece within the orbit of the Triplice¹²³). Both on the question of the Greco-Serbian alliance and on the projected loan which *Venizelos* wanted to contract entirely with Western capital, *Streit* and the King pursued a diametrically opposite policy. In fact, *Szilassy* was so encouraged by this atmosphere in Athens as to propose to his government to adopt a position favorable to Greece on the question of the islands in order to facilitate the already discernible gravitation toward the Central Powers¹²⁴).

During the Kaiser's spring vacation in Corfu, the King and his inner circle had the opportunity to discuss more openly their plans for Greece's future orientation toward the Triplice. *Streit* had the opportunity to discuss his plans for the future both with *Quadt* and with the Kaiser. *Quadt* wrote on April 13: "The Foreign Minister, Mr. Streit, to whom I repeatedly expressed my regrets that the offers of our industry were not taken adequately into consideration because of Greece's financial dependence on France, explained to me in a long conversation that he believes that for the realization of his plans for a closer relationship of Greece with

¹²²) HHS, XVI/64, *Fürstenberg* to *Berchtold*, 12 December 1913, no. 56A; *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 20 December 1913, no. 871.

¹²³) HHS, XVI/64, *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 26 December 1913 nos. 59A, 69E; XVI/65, *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 16 January 1914, nos. Z.4/P,B, and Z.4/P,D; *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 31 January 1914, no. Z.9/P,A; *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 20 February 1914, no. Z.18/P,A; *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 2 May 1914, no. Z.39/P,A.

¹²⁴) HHS, XVI/65, *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 16 January 1914, nos. Z.4/P,D and Z.4/P,E; *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 19 January 1914, no. Z.5/P,D; *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 30 January 1914, no. 52; *Szilassy* to *Berchtold*, 30 January 1914, no. 2.8/P,A. With the growing tension in Greco-Turkish relations over the question of the islands, and with the intensification of the domestic strain as a result of the North Epirus question and of the growing polarization of the body politic, the debate over Greece's future orientation was becoming more pronounced. Especially persistent was *Theotokis'* attacks on *Venizelos'* policy which, according to *Theotokis'* interpretation, had led to Greece's isolation. See, A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 12 March 1914, no. A5278.

the Triple Alliance, it was not now advantageous for Greece to break with France immediately. His entire past, and the tradition of his family which was long ago established in Germany, has certainly persuaded him, even though he was a good Greek, to find in Germany a protector of Greece. In any event, Greece would have to consider on which side England would range itself in a future conflict of the Great Powers. For this reason, Greece, with its many harbors and islands, is more exposed to an English attack than any other power, and therefore, he follows with suspense the improvement of Anglo-German relations." *Streit* had advised the King that Greece should detach itself gradually from France through the contract of short term loans which would render Greece less dependent on Western capital¹²⁵). The Kaiser, too, in his conversation with *Streit* stressed in particular the necessity of Greece's ranging herself on the side of Rumania and the Triple Alliance in case of a conflict with Slavism. "Greece", said the Kaiser, "must build in the Balkans a dam against the Slavs"¹²⁶).

A similar posture was adopted by *Theotokis*, during his conversation with the Kaiser on April 29, who stressed the necessity for the union of all non-Slavic Balkan states, including Turkey, under Germany's aegis, for he, too, was convinced that the Slavic Balkan states would sooner or later ally themselves under Russian influence. He criticised the present Greek government for being unable to understand Greece's true interests. *Theotokis* stressed that:

Without German help Greece would be unable to collaborate either with Rumania or with Turkey; and he fears that the present Greek government, unable to appreciate Greece's true interests, still sails in French waters . . . Theotokis believes that Germany should assume a mediating role for the conclusion of an alliance of the non-Slavic Balkan states, and he knows that she will not come away with empty hands; it would be for the Triple Alliance an enormous help, for in the event of a conflict with France, Rumania, Greece, Turkey and Albania could hold in check the Balkan Slavs and thereby free 400,000 Austrians. Certainly Germany must make certain that Austria should pursue a better policy and her Rumanian mistakes must be corrected.

In conclusion, *Quadt* commented that the Kaiser "avoided any commitments in as much as *Venizelos* was already working in the direction hinted by *Theotokis*"¹²⁷).

¹²⁵) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 13 April 1914, no. 11 (A7412). *Streit* attributed considerable importance to the relative improvement of Anglo-German relations as a factor for Greece's future attachment to the Triple Alliance. He perceived a certain tension in Anglo-Russian relations as early as mid-December 1913, and he erroneously assumed because of Russia's aims in Persia and Asia Minor which would involve England's communications with India, that England would gradually detach itself from the Triple Entente and revert to her splendid isolation. Such tendencies were, of course, welcome to *Streit*, who considered England's neutrality an important element for the realization of his own plans. See, *AGFM*, *Streit* to *Panas*, 1/14 December 1913, no. 34634A/5.

¹²⁶) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Quadt* to *Bethmann Hollweg*, 13 April 1913, no. 12 (A7413).

¹²⁷) A.A. Deutschland No. 128, No. 3, Bd. 2, *Treutler* to FO, 30 April 1914, no. A8416.

Quadt's last remark clearly indicates how little they had understood the implications of *Venizelos's* policy. In the end Berlin's mediation for the settlement of the islands question and for the improvement of Greco-Turkish relations failed because Turkey steadfastly refused to recognize Greek sovereignty over the Aegean islands. Germany's failure in this direction in a way reflected the existing and growing strain in German-Turkish relations — a strain which had been aggravated by Berlin's pro-Greek policy on the question of the islands. Such was the Kaiser's pessimism at that time that he threatened:

"I shall tolerate this no longer. If the Turks want to fight the Greeks over the Islands I shall withdraw the officers' mission. Turkey is simply past saving. And it is worth nothing. Let it come apart then in the arms of the Triple Entente. Wilhelm I. R.¹²⁸)."

In spite of the problems inherent in Germany's Balkan policy, no one could assume in Berlin that Greece was entirely lost for the Central Powers. Indeed, even the Ballhausplatz was not entirely pessimistic about Greece's future orientation. Assessing the position of the Central Powers following the Balkan crisis, the section chief of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry, Franz Baron *von Matscheko*, wrote in a secret memorandum written in the early summer 1914: "The relations of the Triple Alliance to the strengthened and enlarged Greek Kingdom have generally developed in such a way that Greece, despite her alliance with Serbia, is not necessarily to be regarded as an opponent¹²⁹." While he recognized that the balance sheet could not be viewed as generally favorable for the Central Powers, he discerned in the new Balkan political configuration a precarious balance which could not be easily exploited by the Entente Powers. He wrote:

... after the crisis ended there appeared a division of the Balkan States into two groups almost equal in strength — Turkey and Bulgaria on the one side, the two Serbian states, Greece and Roumania on the other. The result of this has been that the two groups tie each other down and cannot for the present be used by the Entente Powers to displace the European balance of power¹³⁰).

It was precisely this division that was crystallized with the approach of the July crisis — an event which forced Germany to abandon her hitherto pursued Balkan policy, reverting essentially to Vienna's policy which favored a Turkish-Bulgarian alliance, and brought to the surface the latent divergence within Greece's governing elite on the question of foreign policy.

One can hardly understand the determinants of the divergent courses pursued by Greece's policy makers following the Balkan Wars without relating them to domestic socio-political configurations. It is only within the framework of an intense interplay between domestic and international politics that we may attempt to explain the divergence that emerged immediately following King *Constantine's* ac-

¹²⁸) Cited in Fischer, *War of Illusions*, p. 308; A.A. Deutschland No. 128, no. 3, Bd. 2, *Wangenheim* to FO, 30 April 1914 no. 190 (A8457).

¹²⁹) Bridge, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo*, p. 443.

¹³⁰) *Ibid.*, p. 445.

cession to the throne. This interconnection of domestic and foreign policy becomes more intense under conditions of domestic socio-political tensions that are once more surfacing in the upper reaches of the traditional conservative forces which after a brief period of confusion and disorientation were now attempting to consolidate their position. It is not accidental that these forces rallied around King *Constantine*, whose autocratic tendencies were well known and who personally intervened in an effort to unify all the inchoate conservative and anti-Venizelist elements into a political force that could attempt to check the Venizelist tide.

Contrary to appearances, the traditional political and social structures had not been fundamentally affected by the rising new forces and by *Venizelos'* reformist movement, and a conscious attempt was now made by the traditional political elements to regain some of the lost ground. The polarization that came to be known as the national schism and was conveniently identified with the divergent courses pursued in foreign policy following the outbreak of the First World War, was slowly taking shape much earlier and was given an impetus with King *Constantine's* accession to the throne. This growing polarization gradually rendered the time-honored compromise and accommodation of the existing parliamentary system unworkable and was bound to explode under conditions of internal and international crisis. The King and the conservative elements around him saw in Germany's hegemony in the European continent a victory of the social status quo, and their pro-German orientation was clearly linked to their resolve to arrest or even reverse the consequences of the 1909 coup d'état. Thus, under the prevailing social tensions and the mounting political polarization the primacy of foreign policy which was at times in the past peculiar to Greek political life, was now inoperative. The growing divergence over foreign policy was accompanied by mounting internal socio-political tensions that exacerbated the existing polarization. These considerations lead to the conclusion that the concept of "national interest" as perceived by the various governing elites, was not a constant, immutable factor in policy-making. The formulation of foreign policy was affected not only by constant elements, but also by domestic socio-political configurations, and even by less tangible value systems. All statesmen were guided in their formulation of policy by what is vaguely referred to as the "national interest", but this does not mean that their perception of the national interest is of necessity identical with their perception of the means that will best secure the furtherance of national aims. Nor does it mean that their perception of both the national interest and the means to its realization are always governed by principles that transcend concrete socio-economic and political vested interests, that is, exigencies related to the preservation of the social status quo. Domestic socio-political considerations may often disfigure a ruling elite's perception of the "national interest". Thus, foreign policy and military requirements often interact with basic issues of domestic politics, a phenomenon which underlies political developments in Greece in the period under study.