International Boundary Study

No. 79 – April 30, 1968

Greece – Yugoslavia Boundary

(Country Codes: GR-YO)

The Geographer
Office of the Geographer
Bureau of Intelligence and Research

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I. BOUNDARY BRIEF

The Greece-Yugoslavia boundary is 153 miles (246 kms.) in length and is demarcated by pillars. Beginning in Lake Prespa at the tripoint with Albania, the boundary follows eastward primarily along the crest of the Pindar Mountains, a distance of about 113 miles, to the Vardar (Axios) River. The boundary then trends northeastward along irregular highlands about 17 miles, northward for 6 miles across Lake Doiran (Dojran), and again northeastward on generally mountainous terrain a distance of about 17 miles to pillar No. 1 at the Bulgarian tripoint on Tumba (Pole) Mountain in the Belasica Planina (mountains), or in Greek, Oros Kerkini.

II. GEOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

A. Physiography

The Greece-Yugoslavia boundary is aligned in an east-west direction near the œnter of the Balkan Peninsula. Like the Bulgaria-Greece and other Balkan boundary areas, the topography is rugged, irregular, and highly dissected. The outstanding physiographic feature of the entire Peninsula is part of the European Alpine mountain system, comprising the Carpathian and the Balkan Mountain chains. Rising in Romania, north of the Danube, the Carpathians curve southward like an inverted "S" through Yugoslavia west of the Vardar River valley. Trending toward the Adriatic Sea, the extensions of the Carpathians cross the boundary area into Greece and merge with the Pindar Mountains, which stretch in a generally north-south direction from Lake Prespa where the trijunction of the boundary with Albania is situated.

South of the Danube River, in Bulgaria, the Balkan Mountains (Stara Planina) curve eastward toward the Black Sea, forming a C-shaped arc. The Balkans stand out along the eastern boundary of Yugoslavia eastward of the Morava and Vardar valleys, which split the Carpathians from the Balkan Mountains. The southern arc of the Balkans forms the Rhodope Mountains, which extend from the Vardar valley eastward along the Bulgaria-Greece boundary. The wedge-shaped Rhodope range, which also follows along the Greece-Yugoslavia boundary, fans southward as several broken dissected ranges into the Aegean Sea.

The chief physiographical feature of the boundary area itself is the tangled arrangement of bold and often rugged mountain chains, interspersed with considerable areas of level, sunken plains. For example, Lake Prespa, on the western terminal of the boundary, and Lake Dojran about 15 miles from the opposite end, are notable examples of sunken plains. Lake Prespa, with an area of 112 square miles, lies at a height of 2,800 feet. Occupying a basin mostly developed by faulting, it is framed by very high mountains

whose crests tower from 7,000 to more than 8,000 feet above the broad lake surfaces. Among the most prominent of the heights are Mount Perister with an altitude of 8,400 feet, Galicia at 7,400 feet, and Mount Jablanica, also at about 7,400 feet. Similarly the slightly larger Lake Ohrid (134 square miles), which divides Albania from Yugoslavia, is located about 7 miles northwest of Lake Prespa. South of the boundary in Greece, a narrow plain separates Lake Prespa from the smaller Lake Mikri Prespa. Famed Mt. Olympus reaching an elevation of 9,794 feet stands about 70 miles south of the boundary.

Another key feature of the boundary area is the Vardar (Axios) River, whose valley combines with the Morava (flowing northward into the Danube) Basin and the Aegean Sea. The main line of traffic of the entire Balkan Peninsula follows this depression of the two rivers. Situated at the two extremities of this main artery are Belgrade to the north on the Danube and Thessalonika (Saloniki) to the south-the gateway to the Aegean Sea. On the upper Morava near the center of this north-south throughway is Nish, an intra-Balkan communications hub which opens eastward into the Sofia Basin in Bulgaria and beyond that to the Maritsa Valley and the Turkish Straits. About 70 miles north of the boundary, the route to the Upper Morava is commanded by Skopje (Uskub). The most important city in Yugoslavian Macedonia, Skopje controls traffic southward through the Vardar valley and shares topography similar to that south of the boundary in Greece.

About twenty-five miles north of the boundary, the Vardar leaves undulating hill-country, to cut again across more resistant rock formations. In times past, the physical obstacles in this sector prohibited the valley's use as a routeway, but today both rail and roadways follow the river as it passes from basin to basin through very narrow "gates." Below the village of Banja, the Vardar for a half mile has cut a short canyon through rock walls rising in many places almost sheer from the river's edge. Continuing, the defile is never more than a few hundred yards across for about 12 miles; thence, widening for 6 miles into a basin, and again narrowing through a short defile north of Gevgeliya (Djevdjelija, Gevyeli) on the boundary. The river valley crosses the frontier at another small plain which extends 6 miles into Greece, near the town of Evzonoi, where the rock-and-basin pattern is repeated.

B. <u>Climate</u>

Climate in the boundary area ranges between the Continental and Mediterranean types. In Yugoslavia, especially north of Skopje, the Continental prevails; humid with hot summers and cold winters. During the latter period, icy winds called vardarac descend from the snow covered mountains in the north. From Skopje, located in a typical Mediterranean high basin and southward through Greece, the climate at low and intermediate altitudes has hot, dry summers, mild rainy winters, and long periods of blue skies. Although Yugoslavia is noted for contrasts in rainfall influenced by the many mountains, the boundary area itself is generally dry, with a mean annual rainfall of 17-18 inches. North of the boundary, the mean monthly temperature ranges from 29°F. in January to 73°F. in July.

In Greece the temperature is higher and the rainfall less than to the north. For example, the maximum and minimum monthly mean temperatures range from 41°F. to 80°F. Rainfall at Athens is 20 inches. Throughout both countries considerable snow falls on the higher mountains.

C. <u>Land Use</u>

North of the boundary area, land use is determined by the tangle of mountain mass and plain, which tends to divide the land into "compartments" in an east-west arrangement, although the Vardar valley cuts across this mountain and basin area in a north-south direction. Agriculture comprises over 75% of all economic activity. On the slopes and in the valleys, fruit orchards and vine culture are important. Where the soil permits, as in the Vardar area, wheat, rye and oats and tobacco are cultivated. The hills are largely deforested, and serve as grazing lands for sheep and goats. Mineral wealth in the form of deposits of coal, lead, zinc, and chrome is considerable. In the boundary area, however, there is little exploitation of mineral resources.

South of the boundary, in Greece, wheat, barley, and corn are the leading crops. Vine culture, the mulberry tree, olive, fruit and nuts are common, and tobacco is a particularly important crop in the Vardar valley.

D. <u>Political Geography</u>

History, geography, and politics combine to make the Balkan boundary between Greece and Yugoslavia a highly complex one. The very word Macedonia, which in general encompasses the entire boundary area, connotes complexity or confusion. In the same vein, the word "Balkanize" has come to designate the cutting up of an area into a jumble of political entities.

1. <u>Early History</u>

In classical times the boundary area, although inhabited by Illyrians and Thracians, was basically Hellenic in character and culturally dominated by Greeks. In the third century B.C., the boundary regions became the focal center from which Philip of Macedon defeated and united the Greek city-States on the Aegean Peninsula. Later Philip's son, Alexander the Great, commenced the conquest of the entire Near East. Alexander's conquests led to a mingling and an interaction of varied Mediterranean cultures including the Syriac and Roman. This post-Alexandrian period in history is usually described as Hellenistic.

In the first century of the Christian era, the boundary area was part of the Roman Empire, and prospered as a major land thoroughfare between Rome and Byzantium. Later, the boundary area and the entire Balkans, as the fortified frontier outposts of the Roman Empire, became the battleground for both the western and eastern divisions of the Roman Empire. The Romans and their Byzantine successors in Constantinople,

however, were only temporarily successful in holding back the Slavic, Germanic, and Turkic invaders.

By the sixth century, the Great Slavic migration had crossed the Danube about the same time as had the Bulgars, who also followed Gothic and other Germanic tribes. The Slavs arrived in such numbers, however, that they soon gave a Slavic character to most of the Balkan Peninsula.

For the next ten centuries, the boundary area and parts of present day southern Yugoslavia, namely Serbia, were enmeshed in a power struggle between local Slavic and Bulgar forces on one hand and imperial Byzantine authority on the other; the latter headquartered at Constantinople. The division of the Roman Empire between west and east in the fourth century, together with the ascendancy of the Eastern or Byzantine half, led to increasing Greek (as opposed to Latin) political and cultural influence. In this respect, the very proximity of the boundary area to Constantinople favored Greek over Slavic, Roman, or other Balkan political and cultural interests. Thus in politics and society, and especially in upper echelons of civil and church authority, Greek influence predominated. However, beneath the surface of upper echelon authority, there existed intense political and ethnic rivalries as well as increasing conflict between western (Rome) and Eastern Christianity (Constantinople); all of which facilitated Turkish conquest of the Balkans in the fourteenth century.

2. Ottoman Period

The Ottoman Turks crossed the Dardenelles about the middle of the fourteenth century to commence the rapid conquest of the Balkans and defeat of the declining Byzantine Empire. Adrianople, a key city on the landbridge captured in 1361, became the Ottoman capital. Plovdiv (Philippopolis), on the Maritsa River in Bulgaria was taken in 1364, and Sofia in 1382. In 1389, the Serbians, aided by Romanian and Bulgarian allies were defeated in the great Battle of Kossovo in Serbia.

Only twenty-five years earlier, in 1364, Stephen Dushan was crowned at his capital of Skopje (Uskub) as "Emperor of the Serbs and Greeks." The Serbian state reached its zenith at this time with boundaries extending from the Danube to the Corinthian Gulf, and from the Adriatic to Thrace. This area included all of Macedonia with the exception of the Greek city of Thessalonika (Salonika). The defeat of the Serbs in the Plain of Kossovo also marks the complete conquest of the Balkans by the Ottomans, who by that time had also conquered most of northern and eastern Greece. The fall of Constantinople in 1453, therefore confirmed the Turkish conquest of the entire Balkan area.

3. Decline of Ottomanism and Rising Nationalism

Agitation for liberation erupted in the Balkans early in the 19th century, among the Serbs in 1804 and the Greeks in 1821. The Greek War of independence ended with the formal recognition by the Ottoman Sultan of the independence of Greece in the Treaty

of Adrianople in 1829. The London Convention of May 7, 1832, confirmed an independent Kingdom of Greece (under the protection of Great Britain, France, and Russia) and delimited its boundaries to include the entire Pelopennesus and a northern boundary extending from the Gulf of Volos on the Aegean Sea westward to the Gulf of Ambracia (Amvrakikos).

Similarly in the north, in Serbian and other Slavic areas, eruptions for national identity took place on an increasing scale. At the turn of the 1800s national agitation was directed not so much against the Ottoman Sultan, as against the oppression and exploitation of the corrupt military rule of the Janisarries. The rebellious Turkish Janisarries became progressively more hostile to the Balkan peoples while asserting themselves more and more independent of the Sultan. This situation manifested itself in relation to the distance from Constantinople, as well as from growing decay, maladministration and other political and military setbacks throughout Ottoman lands.

It is in this frame of reference that the Serbian rising of 1804, under Kara George (Black George), a heroic hog dealer, broke out. This revolt, precipitated by the massacre of Serbian leaders by Janissaries, directed itself at first, only toward the elimination of Janissary oppression. The Sultan actually favored the Serbian rebellion if only at this early stage. Having once tasted freedom, however, the Serbs could not be expected to lose their thirst for liberty. Local autonomy was now demanded, although nominal allegiance to the Sultan was conceded. The Serbs next sought allies. After having failed to enlist Austria, they then suggested to Russia that an autonomous Serbia with an Adriatic outlet, under the tutelage of a Russian Grand Duke, would give Russia a "warm water port."

The Turkish Sultan now regarded the rebellion as a direct challenge, and sent forces into Serbia in 1806 to stem the revolt. He was defeated, however, and further entangled by rebellions in Greece, other parts of the Balkans, and, especially, by Russian intervention in the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-12 and 1827-29. During subsequent years agitation continued, this time under a rival Serbian faction headed by Milosh Obrenovich.

By the Treaty of Adrianople of 1829-the same treaty granting independence to Greece-Serbia enlarged its area by one-third. The new boundaries, although not confirmed until 1833, extended to Aleksinats (Aleksinac) on the south, to the Drin (Crni Drim) on the west, and eastward as far as the Timok river; boundaries which remained unaltered until the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. While not completely independent until the Treaty of Berlin, Serbia acquired internal autonomy and freedom from Greek interference in church affairs.

During the later years of the 19th and early 20th centuries agitation increased. Not only in Greece and Serbia, but throughout the Balkans, nationalist forces of all persuasions, interested Europeans powers, and adventurers of all colors vied with one another in raising banners of liberation against the "decaying and corrupt Ottoman Empire." The fact that high moral purpose went hand in hand with territorial acquisition was fortunate,

but did not deter any of the parties from switching sides, "joining with the devil," assassinations or other atrocities in order that gain be had at the expense of ally or foe.

In 1875, a Serbian revolt in Bosnia spread through Herzegovina, and was supported by a declaration of war on Turkey by Serbia and Montenegro on July 1, 1876. Earlier in May, revolutionaries in Bulgaria attempted to throw off the Turkish yoke, but were suppressed with terrible cruelty. These events led to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, which saw Russian forces advancing to Chatalja, within grasp of Constantinople.[1] Britain then sent her fleet into the Straits, and Austria also prepared to check Russian influence in the Balkans. Under these circumstances the Treaty of San Stefano (March 3, 1878) was signed. It created a greatly enlarged Bulgaria extending from the Danube to the Aegean Sea, and proclaimed the complete independence of Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia, including an additional slice of territory around Nish (Nis). However, Serbia and Greece protested Bulgarian gains in the Macedonian and the Aegean regions where both had territorial aspirations.

The Great Powers, especially Great Britain, fearing the alarming growth of Russian influence in the Balkans, forced Russia to reconsider "San Stefano." The ensuing Congress of Berlin in 1878 restored Macedonia to Turkey; recognized Serbia as independent, and promised Greece an improvement of her boundaries. The promise was not realized until 1881 when Greece acquired most of Thessalia (Thessaly) and a part of Epirus, thereby extending the boundary from the southern slopes of Mt. Olympus in the East to the Arachtos (Arakhtos) river in the west. In 1882 Serbia became a kingdom.

4. The Balkan Wars

Political and territorial changes quickened in the years preceding World War I. Within Turkey there was increasing demand for government reform, much of which has been suppressed since the Sultan's foil of the "Midhat Pasha" Constitution of 1876.

In July 1908 the Young Turk Revolt, whose leadership centered in Thessaloniki (Saloniki) occurred. On October 5th Bulgarian Prince Ferdinand, proclaimed himself Tsar of independent Bulgaria. Two days later, Austria formally annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consequently, the intensity of Bulkan intrigue and Great Power competition heightened immediately.

During the summer of 1912, a secret treaty between Bulgaria and Serbia, followed by similar agreements with Greece and Montenegro, committed the Balkan Allies to drive Turkey out of the Balkans. These arrangements were made while Turkey was at war (1911-1912) with Italy (then a member of the Triple Alliance).

The territory which the Allies expected to conquer from Turkey was to be divided according to the secret arrangements contained in the Serbo-Bulgarian Treaty of Alliance of March 13, 1912, as follows: To Serbia was assigned "all the territory north

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[1] IBS-56, Bulgaria–Greece Boundary, October 1, 1965, p. 4.

of the Shar Range, to Bulgaria all the territory east of the Rhodope Mountains and the Struma River." Bulgaria desired that an autonomous Macedonia be created.

However, in the event that autonomy proved impracticable, a line was drawn from the point "where the Serbian, Bulgarian, and Turkish frontiers met north of Egri Palanka to the north-eastern shore of Lake Okhrida, leaving Kratova, Veles (Koprulu), Monastir, Okhrida to Bulgaria, and the districts of Kumonova Skopje (Uskub), Kirchevo, Dibra and Struga" ... on the Serbian side.

In October, while disorder and agitation increased in Macedonia, the Balkan Allies presented joint demands to the Sultan for reforms in Macedonia. These, as the Balkan Allies had anticipated were unacceptable to the Turks, who construed them as an ultimatum. Turkey then declared war on Serbia and Bulgaria on October 17, 1912. The next day Greece declared war on Turkey[2]; this marked the beginning of the First Balkan War.

Shortly thereafter the Serbians captured Pristina, Kumanovo, Skopje, Prizen, and Monastir, and reached the Adriatic coast occupying Alessio (Leah) and Durazzo (Durres), now in Albania. The Greek Army overran Thessaly and Epirus, captured Salonika, and Janina, not far from the Albanian border and also acquired Crete, Samos, and other islands. The Bulgarian Army was particularly successful. Mustapha Pasha (Svilengrad) and Kirk Kilisee (Kirklareli) in Eastern Thrace were captured. In March, Adrianople (Edirne), a major stronghold, was taken, and the Turkish Army was pushed back to the Chatalja line within twenty-five miles of Constantinople.[3]

The success of the Balkan League countries quickly exposed their separate and conflicting ambitions in the boundary area. For example, Salonika (Thessaloniki) was claimed by Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece. Bulgaria's desires in Macedonia were quickly frustrated by the Serbs and the Greeks who, alarmed by Bulgarian successes, turned against their former ally. In fact the very facility with which Greece and Serbia cooperated, including the delimitation of the boundary in June 1912, much as it is at the present day, is the direct result of their determination to thwart Bulgaria in the boundary region. As a result, Bulgaria attacked the Serbian and Greek armies along the Macedonian frontier in June 1913. Thereupon began the short but intense Second Balkan War, in which Greece and Serbia were joined by Turkey, Montenegro, and Romania against Bulgaria. With Bulgaria fighting on all fronts, Adrianople (Edirne) was easily recaptured. Bulgaria quickly accepted an armistice in July and signed a Treaty of Peace at Bucharest with her former allies of the earlier First Balkan War.

Territorial changes for Greece and Serbia as a result of the Treaty of Bucharest substantially enlarged both countries. From the standpoint of land acquisition, both countries were the winners among the Balkan Allies. The Greece-Serbia boundary of 1913, from Lake Prespa to the Bulgaria-Greece tripoint, is with few exceptions the present day Greece-Yugoslavia international boundary. The actual demarcation was

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[2] Montenegro declared war on Turkey on October 8, 1912.
[3] Op. cit., IBS-56, p. 5.

completed by La Commission de Delimitation Serbe-Hellenique in December 1913. Greece and Serbia appropriated practically all of central and southern Macedonia. Greece also extended her Aegean littoral eastward as far as the mouth of the Mesta River, thus acquiring Kavala in addition to the prize of Salonika. Bulgaria was thereby left with about seventy miles of coast to the Maritsa River.[4]

5. <u>World War I</u>

Driving Turkey out of the Balkans opened a Pandora's Box. One obvious outcome was the deep bitterness and the intense desire for vengeance manifest by the Balkan States. Serbia now had united about one third of the south Slavs. The plan to include the remaining south Slavs in a Serb-dominated Yugoslav state meant direct conflict with the interests of her neighbors. In addition to the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been challenged, as had the powerful German Empire with its interest in the Balkans as an avenue from "Berlin to Baghdad," and beyond. Consequently, the assassination on June 28, 1914 (the anniversary of the Battle of Kossovo, 1389) of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo served as the occasion, not the cause, of World War I.

Greece and the south Slavs chose the victorious Allied side in the Great War. Thus in October 1915, when Bulgaria retaliated against Greece and Serbia, by siding with Turkey and the other Central Powers, the circumstances which pulled the varied Slavic elements together, thus overriding many issues long considered irreconcilable, led to the formation of the Yugoslav state.

With respect to the Greece-Yugoslavia boundary itself, the boundary remained essentially as demarcated in 1913. However the Treaty of Neuilly, November 27, 1919, after World War I, transferred the Strumitsa area to Bulgaria to Serbia, thus improving and securing her access through the Vardar valley to Thessaloniki. In 1926 Greece enlarged the Yugoslav Free Zone at Saloniki, and at the same time, purchased from Yugoslavia the rail link from Gevgelija to Thessaloniki. Greece also guaranteed that the Directorship would include Yugoslav State Railways' representative to facilitate access to the Aegean Sea.

E. <u>Ethnography</u>

Like the physiography and the geopolitical aspects of the boundary area, its ethnographical description is also exceedingly complex. The entangled political rivalries, the jumbled topography, and the area's location astride ancient land routes have deeply influenced the human landscape. Any attempt, therefore, toward objectively describing the demographic pattern of the region requires careful qualification as to the time, the specific locale, and also the particular political interest.

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[4] <u>Op</u>. <u>cit</u>., IBS-56, p. 5.

1. In Ancient Times

In ancient times, the region was inhabited by Illyrians and Thracians. The Hellenes occupied much of the Aegean Peninsula to the south, especially the maritime locations. Other Indo-European and probably some Asiatic racial elements can also be identified. The varied ethnic elements converged in the general area of Macedonia, i.e., the boundary area itself, and the Vardar-Morava Valleys. Whether the Macedonians were Hellenes or not, the entire boundary area was Hellenic in character in the fourth century B.C., during the reign of Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander.

The great Slavic immigrations, the precursors of the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, etc., took place in increasing numbers from the third to the seventh centuries. The Slavs probably absorbed the Thraco-Illyrians, and gave a pronounced Slavic cultural imprint on the entire boundary area.

2. Ottoman Period

Following the Ottoman Turkish crossing of the Straits in the 14th century and the conquest of the Balkans, the Ottoman social and political pattern was embossed on the ethnographic map. During five centuries of Ottoman rule, the map included Serbs, Greeks, Albanians, Bulgars, Macedonians, Vlachs, Gypsies, Armenians, Russians, Jews, Circassians, and others. It is therefore not surprising that such words as Balkanized, or the culinary Macedoine, are vivid references to this ethnographic puzzle. Despite its complexity, however, society and politics, inseparable in Ottoman times, fitted an overall ethnic pattern known as the Millet (Turkish: people united by a common faith; fr. Arabic Millah, creed) system.

While the Turkish empire was in ascendancy, a steady migration of varied peoples from Asian lands moved into the Balkans and to the outer European frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. As the Empire declined the migrations reversed direction.

Population figures in Ottoman times vary considerably in validity and must be taken with a good measure of skepticism. The following population figures are based on the census estimate of 1910 for Macedonia, which generally encompassed Ottoman area lying between the Mesta River on the east and Lake Ohrid on the west, and between the Aegean Sea to the south and the Balkan Mountains in the north. This area, which today also includes parts of Bulgaria, then included the Turkish Vilayets of Salonika, Kosovo, and Monastir. The population of the area in 1910 was estimated at over two million made up approximately as follows:[5]

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[5] Op. cit., IBS-56, Bulgaria-Greece, pp. 6-8.

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Slavs......................1,100,000
Turks........................500,000
Greeks.......................250,000
Albanians....................120,000
Vlachs.......................100,000
Jews..........................75,000
Gypsies.......................10,000

Total......................2,155,000
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3. **The Present Scene**

Two Balkan Wars (1912-1913), World War I, and the Greek-Turkish War (1919-1922) caused severe upheavals of population in the boundary area. This shifting across Balkan boundaries of varied ethnic groups all but erased the demographic pattern of Ottoman times. The scope of the migrations due to years of almost continuous conflict can be seen by citing some estimates. Probably about 200,000 Slavs (includes Bulgars), Greeks, Turks, and others crossed international boundaries during the First Balkan War (1912-1913). With Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria as allies, thousands of Bulgars, Greeks, Slavs, and other Turkish subjects were forced out of Turkish-held Europe (Thrace) westward into Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian held territories. Conversely, Turkish Pomaks (Turkified Muslims of Bulgar extraction) and other Muslims were forced out of Serbian Macedonia, Greece, and Bulgaria into Turkey. In the Second Balkan War (1913), with Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro fighting against their former Balkan ally, Bulgaria, the movements again changed direction. This time Bulgars and Pomaks fled northward and eastward from Serbian and Greek Macedonia into Bulgaria; while Greeks, Serbs, and others migrated southward and westward into the Greek-Yugoslavia boundary area. During World War I, with Greece and Serbia on the winning Allied side, and Bulgaria and Turkey on the German side, the same pattern of migrations continued.

An even more striking change in ethnic complexion took place on the southern side of the boundary area as a result of the Greek-Turkish War (1919-1922), which followed Turkey's signing of the World War I armistice in 1918.[6] The defeat of the Greek armies in Anatolia and the consequent expulsion of thousands of Greeks from the Smyrna (Izmir) area led to an agreement to exchange population between Greece and the new Turkish Republic. Smyrna was said to have had a Greek population of 375,000; Athens then had a population of 168,000.

The population exchange, one of the most remarkable of its kind, was embodied as a Convention and included in the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. Upwards of one million Greek refugees left Turkey, about 400,000 Turkish refugees left Greece. Most of the Greeks were settled in the Macedonian and Thracian areas acquired as a result of the Balkan Wars. Thus in addition to the population "explosion," Greece homogenized its boundary area with Yugoslavia and Bulgaria which in effect "settled" the "Macedonian Question" for Greece by eliminating what was formerly a heterogeneous population.

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[6] IBS-41, Greece-Turkey Boundary, November 23, 1964.

On the Yugoslav side of the boundary, however, the ethnographic problem was not nearly as soluble. Neither could the Macedonian question, "the quintessence of Balkan problems," be resolved as easily. The census taken in June 1921, the first since the formation of the new Kingdom included the following among its main linguistic components:

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Serbo-Croats...............8,911,509
Slovenes...................1,019,997
Germans......................505,790
Magyar.......................467,658
Albanians....................439,657
Romanians....................231,068
Turks........................150,322
Czechs and Slovaks..........115,532
Ruthenes.....................25,615
Russians.....................20,568
Poles........................14,764
Italian......................12,553
Others.................... _ 69,878

Total....................11,984,911
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Adding to the complexity, the same census report gave an accounting of the different religious confessions as follows:

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Orthodox...................5,593,057
Roman Catholic.............4,708,657
Greek Catholic (Uniat)........40,338
Muslim.....................1,345,271
Protestant...................229,517
Jewish.......................64,746
Other religions...............1,944
Without religion and unknown.. 1,381

Total....................11,984,911
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The population of the present day Socialist People's Republic of Yugoslavia has risen to a 1966 estimate of 19,700,000, a two-third increase in population from the post-World War I period. Similarly, the religious groupings increased to upwards of 7,011,000 Serbian Orthodox, which include most Serbs, and virtually all Montenegrins, Macedonians, and Vlachs. There are 5,383,000 Roman Catholics including the great majority of Croats, Slovenes, and Hungarians. The Albanians, many Serbs and Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Turkish minority combine to total about 2,083,000 Muslims.

In a country which includes five major Slavic groups,[7] an additional seventeen minorities, three official languages, two alphabets, and three major religions, diversity and complexity are therefore the norm.

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[7] Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes.

The entire boundary on the Yugoslav side, lies within the Macedonian Peoples Republic which has a population, according to the 1961 census, of about 1,406,000 and an area of about 10,209 square miles.

An American journalist on a recent trip in the general area of the Greece-Yugoslavia boundary asked a young man to what nationality he belonged. The immediate response was, "My father is Serbian, my mother is Greek, I am a Macedonian." It is therefore an obvious relief, that among the perplexities, both north and south of the boundary, there are no disputes regarding the boundary line itself.

III. ANALYSIS OF BOUNDARY ALIGNMENT

The Greece-Yugoslavia Boundary was delimited in June 1912, shortly before the outbreak of the First Balkan War. The entire boundary is essentially as demarcated by the Greek-Serbian Boundary Demarcation Commission, August 10 to December 27, 1913, (Commission de delimitation Serbe-Hellenique). Left unsettled was the trijunction area with Albania, whose provisional boundaries were delimited by the Conference of Ambassadors in London on May 22 and August 11, 1913, pending demarcation and signing of the final instrument in Paris on July 30, 1926. Another sector, that part crossing the Vardar (Axios) River in the neighborhood of Gevgelija (Ghevgheli) was not settled until 1927.

The entire boundary of about 153 miles (246 Kms.) is comprised of 140 miles on land and 13 miles on water. There are 177 boundary pillars that are numbered and many other markers which are unnumbered.

Beginning in Lake Prespa at the tripoint with Albania at approximately 40°51' N. Latitude, 20°59' E. Longitude, the boundary follows eastward a distance of 6.7 miles to the shore. The text of the official Serbian-Greek Boundary Commission is as follows:

> "From the lake the boundary, continuing its easterly direction, climbs a hill called Markevana (1023) and, following the crest of the Bareve foothills, reaches point 1505 (Stele), after crossing the path which goes from German to Gerni-Dupeni. From point 1503 it continues in an easterly direction, climbs up to points 1683 and 1705 (Dameski Kamn) and, always following the crest, obliques in a northeasterly direction. It passes by point 1983 and reaches the peak called Cernavaska, marked at 2153 m. (2000 on the Austrian map). This part of the border is marked by four pillars, including the one on the lake shore. The land between the lake shore and the German-Gerni-Dupeni path is cultivated and has gentle slopes; but beyond the path it becomes more and more rocky with steep slopes, especially between points 1983 and 2153, where the slopes are almost perpendicular. The area is wooded on the northwest slopes and bare on the opposite ones.

From 2153 (Cernavaska) the boundary continues in a generally easterly direction, following the water divide of the foothills. It passes by points 2106 (Reussaveda) and 1976 (Stop) and reaches the Gareva peak (2350) of the principal mountain range, which is called Baba on the Austrian map. This part of the boundary is marked by three masonry pillars and two posts were set up at the point where the boundary crosses the German-Menastir mule path. The land becomes less rocky and fairly thick grass grows on the slopes.

From the Gareva peak (2350) the boundary turns south, following the crest of the Baba chain to point 2200; from there it goes to the southeast to reach the Koukov peak, marked at 2004 m. (1988 on the Austrian map); it is on this peak that the crest of the foothills which begin at the monastery of Dragos meets the principal Baba range. Two pillars mark the boundary along this part.

From the Koukov peak the boundary descends in an easterly direction, always following the crest of the foothills mentioned above and, passing successively by points 1874, 1533, 1223, 1380 (Ketzi-Kamen), 960 (Goli-rid), and 750, reaches the small plateau on which stands the Dragos monastery; the boundary touches the west wall enclosing the monastery buildings. From there it goes around this enclosure and extends to the eastern part of the water divide, which it follows in order to go down into the plain. Ten pillars were erected between the Koukov peak and the plain, and two posts were placed on the plateau where the monastery is located.

From the base of the foothill the boundary follows a straight line in the plain in a northeasterly direction and cuts across the old Menastir-Florina road, the Luzec-Svepetka path, and the Menastir-Florina highway. At this last point two posts were placed and the boundary between this point and the base of the foothills was marked by 9 permanent pillars. The land is flat and cultivated.

From the place mentioned above the boundary obliques to the east and, continuing in a straight line, crosses the Rakova river, passes between the villages of Mesdzidli and Negocani, at about an equal distance between them, and comes out at the intersection of the Kenali-Negocani-Mesdzidli roads. It is marked by three masonry pillars.

From the above-mentioned crossroads the boundary obliques toward the southeast, always in a straight line, until it meets the railroad line at a point situated 500 meters south of the switch at the Kenali railroad station; two posts were placed at this point and the border on the part in question was marked by five pillars. The land between the Menastir-Florina highway and the railroad tracks is flat and cultivated. It is slightly marshy east of the village of Negocani.

From the railroad tracks the border runs east in a straight line to a point half way between the villages of Kenali and Rahmanli, then obliques slightly toward the southeast and, after crossing the Sakouleva River, it climbs the small hill situated

between the villages of Rahmanli and Kremjan (point 600); following the crest of the hill, it passes by points 612 and 622 and reaches the beginning of a foothill situated south of the village of Kremjan. It follows this foothill until it reaches the heights called Starkov-Grob on the Austrian map. Between the railroad tracks and the point mentioned above, where the work of the second subcommission ended, eleven pillars were built to mark the boundary and two posts were installed near the Rahmanli-Kremjan road. The land along this part of the boundary is flat and cultivated, especially around the Sakouleva river.

The total length of the second part of the boundary is about 90 kilometers; it was marked by 86 masonry pillars and 12 double Greek and Serbian posts were installed along it.

The length of the boundary from the shore of Lake Prespa to the latter heights (Starkov-Grob) is approximately 38.2 miles. The boundary continuing along the crest of the mountains turns obliquely southward about eight miles, then continues its generally eastward direction a distance of about 36 miles to point 241 (boundary pillar #69) situated about one mile southwest of the village of Mejina. The location is approximately 6 miles west of the Athens Section of the Orient Express, and about seven miles west of the right bank of he Vardar River. It is also the place where a permanent pillar was fixed by the entire boundary commission on August 18, 1913, from which the Boundary Commission was to have proceeded eastward across the Vardar. However, work was promptly suspended on the first day because of a dispute over the meaning of "immediately" north of the village of Sechewo. The Serbian members maintained that the word "village" designates only the houses of the locality whereas the Greek members maintained that this word covers the lands belonging to the village (periphery). This dispute regarding the boundary in the vicinity of Gevgelija (Ghevgheli), involved a distance of about 9 miles to boundary pillar No. 53 about 2 miles east of the Vardar River, and as mentioned earlier, was not settled until 1927.

Continuing from pillar #69, the boundary follows eastward a distance of six miles to #59 at the western side of the railroad which it crosses to pillar #58 on the right bank of the river. The boundary crosses the Vardar a distance of 0.2 mile to pillar #57, and again eastward a distance of 0.3 mile to pillar #55, then following obliquely southward one mile to pillar #53, which is the site from which the Boundary Commission agreed in 1913 to continue its demarcation.

The Boundary Commission reported as follows:

Going from point 231 (pillar No. 53), situated on the ridge of the foothills between Bogorodica and Macukovo, the boundary runs in an easterly direction following the water divide of the above-mentioned foothills to the summit of a small hill marked at 236 m. (pillar No. 51). From there it runs in an oblique direction towards the northeast, following a straight line to pillar No. 48, erected near a tree located on a small plateau immediately above the right bank of the Selimli creek. Running again in a slightly oblique direction to the north, it crosses the

above-mentioned creek and reaches the vicinity of a group of three trees situated right next to the path going from Selimli to the confluence of the two creeks.

From this last point, which is marked by a pillar (No. 47), the boundary follows a straight line in a northeasterly direction up to a point midway between the two villages of Selimli and Dautli; this point was marked by a pillar (No. 45) and two posts were set up.

From this last pillar the boundary follows a straight line, always in a northeasterly direction, and reaches the end of the ridge of the foothills that separate the villages of Devedzili and Pobreg. This point was marked by a pillar (No. 41).

The area between pillars Nos. 53 and 41 is undulated, with gentle slopes; it is barren of trees and it is only near the villages of Selimli and Autli that the land is cultivated.

From the end of the above-mentioned ridge the boundary, always following the water divide of the foothills in a generally northeasterly direction, climbs to the summit marked by pillar No. 35, passes by point 321 (pillar No. 39), and crosses the two roads which go from Devedzili to Selimli and Pobreg. Two posts (Greek and Serbian) were established between these two roads. From pillar No. 35 the boundary turns east, crosses the Devedzili-Paljorca road and, passing by point 402 (pillar No. 34), arrives at point 735 (535 on the Austrian map), always following the ridge.

From this last point marked by a pillar (No. 32) the boundary turns sharply south and follows the water divide of the chain. It crosses the Krastali-Dojran road, where two posts were set up, passes by point 505 (pillar No. 28), after which it leaves the principal chain to follow along the ridge of the foothills that branch off to the southeast. It passes by point 412 (pillar No. 28) and the intersection of the Cidemli-Dojran and Doldzeli-Bigukli roads, where two posts were set up, and reaches the Turkish cemetery (pillar No. 24).

The area between pillars Nos. 41 and 40 is lightly wooded whereas from the latter pillar to point 321 (pillar No. 39) it is bare of any trees but is cultivated in certain areas. Around pillars Nos. 36 and 35 there are a few scattered small trees, but as one climbs to point 735 (535) the land becomes more and more rocky. The same thing is true between the latter point and pillar No. 27, at which point begins a sparsely cultivated area extending to the Turkish cemetery; there are a few small trees around the cemetery.

From pillar No. 24, the boundary turns, making almost a right angle, towards the northeast and, crossing the small creek of Doldzeli, climbs to the top of the first hill marked by a pillar (No. 22). From there it goes east, passes by point 381 (pillar No. 21) and reaches the hill that rises immediately to the west of the confluence of the two creeks; this point is marked by a pillar (No. 20).

From this last point the boundary runs in an oblique direction towards the northeast and, crossing the Vladaja creek, climbs up the hill marked by pillar No. 19. Then it crosses the Vladaja-Dojran road, where two posts were set up, and immediately thereafter a ravine, and reaches point 303 (pillar No. 17); it reaches the Dojran-Kilindir carriage road at the spot indicated on the Austrian map by point 227; this spot was marked by a pillar (No. 16).

From point 227 to the southern shore of the lake, the boundary follows a northern route in a straight line, crossing the road which leads from the town of Dojran to the railway station. Near pillar No. 15 two posts were set up in order to check, on either side, the traffic on the above-mentioned roads.

The land between the Turkish cemetery and pillar No. 22, as well as between pillar No. 19 and the shore of the lake, is cultivated; along the rest of the boundary it is barren or covered with a few shrubs.

The boundary crosses the lake in a straight line extending to point 208 (pillar No. 7) situated in front of the first mill and on the left bank of Nikelic creek. Between this point and the northern shore of the lake five pillars were erected; two posts were established at the intersection with the road between the villages of Nikelic and Durbali.

From point 208 the boundary follows the course of the Nikelic creek to point 543 (397 on the Austrian map), at the confluence of the Nikelic creek with the stream that runs immediately to the east of the ruins at Keles; this point was marked by pillar No. 6. From there it crosses, in a straight line, a small valley between the above-mentioned two creeks, cutting across the road between the villages of Kara Pazarli and Bajran, where two posts were set up. It then reaches the end of the ridge of the divide between the two above-mentioned creeks. This last spot was marked by a pillar (No. 5).

The border then climbs, always along the ridge, passes by point 1025 (pillar No. 4) and, making a large bend to the east, reaches the summit of Mount Beles[8] marked at 1444 (1494 on the Austrian map) where the three frontiers meet (Serbo-Bulgarian, Serbo-Greek, and Greco-Bulgarian). This point was marked with pillar No. 1 and two posts were set up next to the Bulgarian post, which was already there.

The area near the north shore of the lake is marshy over a certain distance; proceeding in a northerly direction one finds bushes and shrubs as well as cultivated fields between the villages of Durbali and Nikolic. On either side of Nikolic creek the slopes are steep and covered with small trees, up to the small plateau, with the ruins of Keles, which is almost bare. But from this plateau to

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[8] Also known as Tumba or Pole Mountain.

point 1444 (1494), the ridge is covered with thick woods strewn with large boulders.

The total length of this first part of the boundary is apparently 43 kilometers. It has been marked with 53 masonry pillars and nine double Greek and Serbian posts have been established.

IV.   <u>TREATIES AND OTHER ACTS</u>

The following treaties and other acts pertain to the present Greece-Yugoslavia boundary:

A.   **<u>Treaty of San Stefano</u>**, March 3, 1878.

Proclaimed independence of enlarged Serbia; gave Bulgaria much of Macedonia to the Aegean Sea.

B.   **<u>Treaty of Berlin</u>**, July 13, 1878.

Restored Macedonia to Turkey.

C.   **<u>Serbo-Bulgarian Treaty of Alliance</u>**, March 13, 1912.

Divided territory expected to be conquered from Ottoman Turkey in First Balkan War.

D.   **<u>Treaty of Alliance between Greece and Serbia</u>**, Salonika, June 1, 1912.

Guaranteed each other's territory; defined common boundary; established Serbian access to Aegean at Salonika.

E.   **<u>Treaty of Peace between Bulgaria, and Roumania, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia</u>**, Bucharest, July 28/August 10, 1913.

The Treaty of Bucharest ended the Second Balkan War between Bulgaria and her former Allies of the First Balkan War; confirmed an enlarged area of Greece and Serbia; excluded Macedonia from Bulgaria.

F.   **<u>La Commission de Delimitation Serbe-Hellenique</u>**, Tsaloniki, December 7, 1913.

The official boundary demarcation commission which, other than for a few exceptions, demarcated the entire boundary.

V. SUMMARY

The Greece-Yugoslavia boundary, 153 miles (246 Kms.) in length, is comprised of 140 miles on land and 13 miles on water. The entire boundary is demarcated by 177 numbered boundary pillars and many other unnumbered markers. There are no active disputes regarding the specific alignment of the boundary.

Following World War II, communist guerrilla warfare in Greece resulted in considerable boundary violations and other excesses, as occurred also at the Bulgarian frontier. Recently in Yugoslavian Macedonia, "familiar" tensions have reappeared. Reforms by the Yugoslavian Government allowing more power to local governments, have found expression in a revival of linguistic, religious, and other disputes. In Bulgaria, the historical "Macedonian Question" was vented again in connection with the commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of the Treaty of San Stefano (March 3, 1878), which for a few months included much of Macedonia on both sides of the Greece-Yugoslavia boundary as a part of Bulgaria. This increased friction, although manifest in a variety of forms, does not relate to the specific alignment of the boundary.

Locations of the boundary pillars are shown on Sheets 1-5, 1:50,000 scale, of the Boundary Commission, dated September 1927. Other large scale representations giving reliable details and locations of the boundary pillars may be found, if available, from Greek or Yugoslavian official sources. A reasonably accurate representation of the boundary on a medium scale is found on Army Map Service 1:250,000, (M-501) Sheets NK 34-8, NK 34-9, and NK 34-11. A small scale depiction of the boundary on a single sheet is found on Army Map Service 1:1,000,000 scale (Series 1301) Sheet NK 34.

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Government agencies may obtain additional information and copies of the study by calling the Geographer, Room 8744, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520. (Telephone: Code 182, Extension 4508).