

The First World War

and the End of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1914-1918

von
Manfried Rauchensteiner

1. Auflage

Böhlau Köln/Wien 2014

Verlag C.H. Beck im Internet:
www.beck.de

ISBN 978 3 205 79588 9

Zu [Inhaltsverzeichnis](#)

schnell und portofrei erhältlich bei beck-shop.de DIE FACHBUCHHANDLUNG



böhlau

THE FIRST **Manfried**
WORLD WAR **Rauchensteiner**
AND THE END
OF THE HABSBURG
MONARCHY

böhlau

Translated from the German
by Alex J. Kay and Anna Güttel-Bellert

Manfried Rauchensteiner

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

and the End of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1914–1918



2014

BÖHLAU VERLAG WIEN · KÖLN · WEIMAR

FWF Der Wissenschaftsfonds.

Published with the support from the Austrian Science Fund (FWF):
PUB 168-G16

ZukunftsFonds
der Republik Österreich

Published with the support from the Zukunftsfonds der Republik Österreich

Revised and expanded edition of *The First World War and the End of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1914–1918*, first published in 1993

First published in 2013 in the German language as “Der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Habsburgermonarchie 1914–1918” by Böhlau Verlag Ges.m.b.H. & Co.KG., Wien – Köln –Weimar

Deutsche Nationalbibliothek Cataloging-in-publication data:
<http://dnb.d-nb.de>

Cover:

Detail from: Albin Egger-Lienz, *The Nameless Ones*, 1914; tempera on canvas, 1916 © Vienna, Heeresgeschichtliches Museum

Other illustrations:

First-page illustrations for the chapters 1, 13, 19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27 and 29 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek/Bildarchiv und Grafiksammlung; all other photos Österreichisches Staatsarchiv/Kriegsarchiv.

© 2014 by Böhlau Verlag Ges.m.b.H & Co. KG, Wien Köln Weimar
Wiesingerstraße 1, A-1010 Wien, www.boehlau-verlag.com

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any other information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Cover design: www.fuergestaltung.at

Endpapers: Stefan Lechner, Vienna

Proofreading: Gregory Weeks, Vienna

Typesetting: Michael Rauscher, Vienna

Printing and binding: Balto Print, Vilnius

Printed on acid-free and chlorine-free bleached paper

Printed in the EU

ISBN 978-3-205-79588-9

Content

1 On the Eve	11
The Ballhausplatz and the Deficit of War (16) – The Powder Keg (21) – The Socialisation of Violence (33) – Poor State, Wealthy Businesses (43)	
2 Two Million Men for the War	49
The ‘entire armed force’ (51) – Dual Alliance and Triple Alliance (62) – The Military Accords (67) – Pre-emptive War: Yes or No? (77)	
3 Bloody Sundays	81
The Assassination (83) – The Shock (87) – The July Crisis (90)	
4 Unleashing the War	117
Franz Joseph I (120) – The Calm before the Storm (123) – The ‘Skir- mish’ near Temes-Kubin (127) – Salvation through War (136) – The First Shot (141) – An Empire Mobilises (144)	
5 ‘Thank God, this is the Great War!’	157
Deployment in Echelons and Packets (159) – Archduke ‘Fritzl’ Goes to the Front (175) – The Mounted Engagement at Jarosławice (180) – The Initial Campaigns (183)	
6 Adjusting to a Longer War	197
The War Economy Dominates Everyday Life (200) – Wounded, Sick and Dead (215) – The Home Front Becomes a Fortress (219) – Official An- nouncements (223) – The Death of General Wodniansky (226)	
7 The End of the Euphoria	239
The Fortress on the San (242) – Fleet in Being (260) – In the Shadow of the Gallows (264) – Belgrade and the Failure in the Balkans (272)	

8 The First Winter of the War	283
On the War's Objectives (286) – Death in the Carpathians (297) – Gorlice – Tarnów (311)	
9 Under Surveillance	317
Of Heroes and Cowards (320) – The Prague 'House Regiment' (344)	
10 'The King of Italy has declared war on Me'	355
'Sacro egoismo' (364) – The Treaty of London (370) – The Final Offer (375)	
11 The Third Front	383
The Pre-emption (388) – On the Isonzo and in the Sette Comuni (392) – The War of Attrition (405)	
12 Factory War and Domestic Front, 1915	413
Being a Soldier and the Burden of Work (422) – The Army High Command and Domestic Policy (426) – Soldier Games? (434) – The Attempt to Topple Stürgkh (437)	
13 Summer Battle and 'Autumn Swine'	441
On the Priority of the Theatres of War (443) – The 'Black-Yellow' Offensive (450) – The Fourth Offensive against Serbia (460)	
14 War Aims and Central Europe	469
The Salonika Problem (471) – Winter War in Russia and Montenegro (475) – The Central Powers and Central Europe (479) – The Vision of Peace with Victory (487)	
15 South Tyrol: The End of an Illusion (I)	497
The Easter Demands (500) – The 'Punitive Expedition' is Prepared (504) – The Attack (515)	
16 Lutsk: The End of an Illusion (II)	521
The Brusilov Offensive (523) – The Hindenburg Front (533) – Poison Gas (541) – The 'Joint Supreme War Command' (545)	
17 How is a War Financed?	555
The Search for the Nervus Rerum (557) – The War Bonds (565) – The Ragging of the Banknote Presses (578)	

18 The Nameless	583
The Peace Campaign of the Central Powers (590) – Hohenzollern against Habsburg (593) – On the Convention of the Austrian Parliament (599) – Count Karl Stürgkh (1859–1916) (603)	
19 The Death of the Old Emperor	607
Obituary for the Father Figure (615) – The Geriatric Circle (622) – The Military Chancellery of His Majesty (628) – The Heir to the Throne (633) – The Will (636)	
20 Emperor Karl	641
The Master’s New Servants (645) – The Hindenburg Programme (651) – From Koerber to Clam-Martinic (653) – Famine and Coronation (657)	
21 The Writing on the Wall	657
The Victory over Romania (667) – Steps towards Peace (669) – The Unrestricted Submarine War (675) – The Conrad Crisis (684)	
22 The Consequences of the Russian February Revolution	691
Strategic Harmony (693) – The Fall of the Tsar (695) – Peace without Annexations and Contributions (700) – Workers of the world, unite! (705) – The Reopening of the Reichsrat (709)	
23 Summer 1917	713
Clam-Martinic Faces Defeat (715) – The System Eats its Own Children (722) – The Military Administration in the Occupied Territories (729) – Tisza’s Fall (738)	
24 Kerensky Offensive and Peace Efforts	743
The Naval Victory in the Strait of Otranto (745) – The ‘Hand of the Child’ (749) – The Czech Legion (753) – A German General on the Danube Monarchy (760) – Peace Feelers (764)	
25 The Pyrrhic Victory: The Breakthrough Battle of Flitsch-Tolmein	769
The Fortress Syndrome (771) – Operation ‘Loyalty to Arms’ (777) – War against the USA (798)	

26 Camps	803
Strangers in the Homeland (806) –) – The Internees (819) – On Ivans, Serbs and Wops (822) – Siberian Clarity (833) – Italy (841)	
27 Peace Feelers in the Shadow of Brest-Litovsk	845
The Russian October Revolution (847) – New Discussions in Switzer- land (851) – Poland Again (854) – The Turn of the Year, 1918 (856) – The Negotiations in Brest (863) – Wilson's Fourteen Points (866)	
28 The Inner Front	869
The January Strikes (871) – Continuation in Brest (875) – The 'Bread Peace' (880) – Mutiny (885)	
29 The June Battle in Veneto	895
The 'Parma Conspiracy' (897) – The Collapse of the Armaments In- dustry (906) – The Idea for a Final Offensive (910) – The Alliance of Arms (913) – The Attack (917)	
30 An Empire Resigns	927
Brigadier von Bolzano is Missing (929) – Four Million Heroes (936) – The Army Disintegrates (944)	
31 The Twilight Empire	955
The Judgement of Austria-Hungary's Final Offensive (957) – The Pe- nultimate Cabinet of Habsburg Austria (961) – The Radicals Set the Agenda (964) – Austro-Hungarian Troops on the Western Front (968) – D'Annunzio over Vienna (971) – The Sinking of the Szent István (975) – Front and Hinterland (978)	
32 The War becomes History	983
The Emperor's Manifesto (987) – The Dissolution Begins (992) – The At- tack by the Allies (998) – The Armistice of Villa Giusti (1002) – The Last Army Supreme Commander (1006) – Te Deum Laudamus (1008)	
Epilogue	1011
Afterword	1013
Acknowledgements and Dedication	1019

Notes	1023
Selected Printed Sources and Literature	1115
Index of People and Places	1155



4 Unleashing the War

4. On 28 July 1914, the transportation of the mobilised Imperial and Royal troops to the Serbian border commenced. From the beginning of August, the trains rolled to Galicia. More than a million soldiers had to be transported. The deployment of the ordinary troops was carried out using freight trains. The wagons bore the inscription 'For 40 men or 6 horses'. Officers were transported with normal passenger coaches. The inscriptions were thoroughly auto-suggestive.

July 25, 1914 was a terribly hot day.' This is how Baron Wladimir von Giesl, the last Imperial and Royal envoy in Belgrade, began his portrayal of his departure from this city.²⁵⁸ Following the handover of the *démarche* containing the ultimatum he had arranged for two variations of his personal reaction to the Serbian response to be sketched out. One of them was for an unconditional acceptance and the other was for a conditional acceptance, in which case it was irrelevant whether the *démarche* was accepted only in parts or almost in its entirety. His unequivocal instructions stipulated an 'unconditional acceptance'.

During the day on 25 July, at Giesl's behest no member of the delegation was permitted to leave the building. Events then proceeded at a breakneck pace. Following the visit of the Serbian prime minister to the Imperial and Royal delegation and the handover of the response note, diplomatic relations were regarded as discontinued. A quarter of an hour later, Giesl was already on his way to the railway station with the members of the delegation. He heard calls of abuse in the streets. At the station, all accredited diplomatic representatives in Belgrade were gathered together; only the Russian representative was missing. A Serbian officer called: 'Au revoir à Budapest!' Then the scheduled train departed. Following the crossing of the Old Sava Bridge and, with it, the imperial border, Geisl was called to the telephone at Zemun station. It was Tisza, who asked him: 'Did this have to happen?' Giesl responded in the affirmative.

The soldiers of the Zemun garrison had taken up positions along the banks of the Sava River. Aside from this, however, there were of course no other visible developments, as the Austro-Hungarian mobilisation began only three days later. During the remainder of the journey, the train containing Giesl was greeted at every station by cheering people. At three in the morning, the envoy was led from the train in Subotica (Szabadka), in order for him to hear an excited address. In Budapest he met with Tisza. The journey continued via Győr (Raab) to Vienna. Everywhere there was cheering and relief. On the 26th Giesl reported to the foreign minister and on the 27th to the Emperor in Bad Ischl. As Giesl palliatively wrote, the Emperor supposedly then said: 'You could not have acted any differently [...] I must now accept the consequences.' Returning to Vienna, Giesl reported to Archduke Friedrich, designated Commander of the Balkan Armed Forces. Here he was given his new assignment: the Baron had been chosen as the representative of the Foreign Ministry attached to the High Command.

Giesl's portrayal of his journey through Hungary as far as Vienna on the night of 25/26 July and in the hours that followed reveals only a tiny segment of what really

happened during those days. It is understandable that nothing more was felt of the convulsion caused by the murders in Sarajevo. The excitement was of a different kind, and it now gained ground and eclipsed everything else. Austrian newspapers such as the *Reichspost* had written already hours before the severance of diplomatic ties with Serbia that the latter would not accept the ultimatum. The announcement from St. Petersburg that Russia was 'not able to remain indifferent in the Austro-Serbian conflict' was correctly understood to mean that Russia would support Serbia and that as a result it would be very unlikely that the war would remain limited to Serbia and, perhaps, Montenegro. But who cared about that? On the evening of 25 July celebrations took place in Vienna and the large cities of the Dual Monarchy and even in Berlin multitudes of people gathered at the Austro-Hungarian embassy and sang the Emperor's Hymn. The tune was well-known, as it was the same as that of the German patriotic song, the *Deutschlandlied*.

'We have started this war, not the Germans, and still less the Entente – that much I know', wrote Leopold von Andrian-Werburg. He had experienced the July Crisis at the Ballhausplatz.²⁵⁹ But years later he was still absolutely convinced that they had acted correctly in July 1914 and that it had not been possible to act differently. We can concur with Conrad von Hötzendorf: 'Besides, the World War was one of those catastrophes that are neither caused by an individual nor can be stopped by one.'²⁶⁰ The roots of the war stretched back a long way and it could have broken out much earlier. During all the crises since 1908, Austria-Hungary had played an important role. It was always the Balkans that threatened to explode and brought about interventions on the part of the great powers. Everyone felt called upon to intervene and make clear the interests of his own country. Austria also had interests, and it also certainly had cause for greater consternation than any of the other intervening powers. The experience of a considerably longer period of time was reflected in the actions of those responsible in Austria-Hungary than just the few weeks of July 1914. The conviction was reflected of being partially encircled by opponents, or, in fact, enemies and being vulnerable everywhere and only being able to waste away, awaiting decomposition. The Sarajevo murders had been a humiliation. Yet it was the state of an actual inability to act that then entered the picture and the hope of putting an end to it all that then resulted in the decision to go to war. Ultimately, the honour of the Empire repeatedly played a role and this resulted in the saying of Emperor Franz Joseph to the effect that if the country did have to go under, it should at least do so 'honourably'.

Franz Joseph I

One of the central questions in the context of the unleashing of the military conflict is of course the role played by the Emperor in the decision to wage war against Serbia.

Already during the journey from Ischl to Vienna he had been convinced of the incapability of war. During the first days after his return, however, matters of protocol had to be dealt with, as well as keeping foreign countries at bay. The determination to go to war hardened. The Chief of the Military Chancellery, Artur Bolfras, was received by the Monarch on an almost daily basis. On Sunday, 5 July, the Chief of the General Staff was summoned to give a lengthy presentation. The day after, the Foreign Minister and the War Minister, Berchtold and Krobatin, came and both of them were granted 20 minutes to confer with the Emperor and receive his opinion. This was without doubt too short to engage in a detailed evaluation of all aspects of the critical situation. The appointments were, in any case, no longer than the subsequent appointment with the aide-de-camp of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Colonel Bardolff, who reported to the Emperor on the last days and hours of his great-nephew. Everything else was lost in the usual daily business. The heads of the Austrian and the Hungarian Court Chancelleries, Cabinet Director Baron Schiessl and Section Chief Daruváry, arrived with files and documents to be issued, the Lord Chamberlain Alfred, Prince of Montenuovo and the Emperor's Adjutant General Count Egon Paar, also received a few minutes each. As usual, no minutes were taken; the assignments were issued verbally. Again, as usual, everything took place tête-à-tête.

During one of the appointments, probably during Count Berchtold's audience on 30 June or 2 July, the word was uttered that was understood as the monarch's consent: war! War was not to be waged at any cost, but the Monarch had resolved to put Serbia in her place. It was not until half a year had passed that Franz Joseph addressed this. Had it been the right decision? Retrospectively at least, he had his doubts.²⁶¹ Of course, the Emperor's vote counted and on 6 July at the latest everything necessary had been said. The next day Franz Joseph boarded his official train and travelled back to Ischl, as though Sarajevo and its consequences had been merely an irritating interruption of his annual summer vacation. This was all the more astounding, given that the session of the Joint Council of Ministers had been scheduled for the same day, 7 July. At this session the basic decision was due to be discussed regarding whether to go to war against Serbia, the consequences such a decision might have and which objectives the Austro-Hungarian monarchy should pursue in the event of war. Franz Joseph knew nothing in advance of the diverging opinion of the Hungarian Premier Minister Tisza, as the latter had only been with him for a few minutes on 30 June. Evidently, the Emperor relied on his foreign minister. And while the course was being set for war, the Emperor was sitting in his official train on his way to Ischl. If Austria-Hungary had been a constitutional monarchy, in which the monarch only had a representative function, the absence of the monarch during such a fateful consultation would perhaps not have been so important. But in the Habsburg Monarchy the Emperor had much more than just a representative function and specifically decisions over war and peace were dependent on a ruling by

the Emperor. After all, he had defended his own prerogatives tooth and nail, especially in the military realm. He regarded himself as ruler by the grace of God and considered it a matter of course that every civil servant and, above all, every soldier swore a personal oath of loyalty to him: 'I swear by God the Almighty [...].'

Could it be mentioned in defence of the Emperor's absence from the Council of Ministers on 7 July that he had not expected decisive resolutions? Did he assume that he would in any case be informed on time and asked for his consent? Perhaps he first had to reach a state of peace with himself. Ultimately, all these considerations can be discarded. The fact that a lot was at stake on 7 July 1914 was beyond dispute, and, as subsequent months would demonstrate, it was not Franz Joseph's consistent intention to remain absent from the sessions of the Joint Council of Ministers, for he indeed later – admittedly only occasionally – attended such sessions. Even the argument that matters were discussed that had already been decided on, for example the question of a swift end to the war, is redundant because such a thing was never mentioned during a session of the Joint Council of Ministers during the war years of Franz Joseph, and the Emperor and King attended sessions at which far less important things were discussed but still possessed the character of Privy Council meetings. It can thus only be concluded that the old Emperor assumed that everything that was important had already been said. The joint Finance Minister, Biliński, was also certain that the Emperor had made a definite decision to go to war on the day before his departure for Bad Ischl. But the dice had already been rolled earlier. And the consequences were clear. The Emperor had demonstrated his will and assumed that actions would be taken accordingly. So he was free to leave Vienna. His absence was also designed to signalise that the Monarch was ready to defer personal considerations and rely on the judgement and the decisions of the most important representatives of his Empire. The latter was very much in fitting with a long-established practice, for Franz Joseph had adopted it as his basic principle to trust people to whom he had given responsibility and to let them bear this responsibility. Furthermore, he had contented himself for a long time with simply being informed. Another idiosyncrasy had evolved: Franz Joseph evidently shied away from conferences or even consultations that were attended by several people. The Austrian and Hungarian prime ministers were never simultaneously called to see the Emperor, even where important questions relating to the Compromise were concerned or when the consonance of political, legislative, social or other measures in the two halves of the Empire had to be ensured. Even that might have been a vestige of an absolutist notion of government; modern and, above all, in keeping with the unprecedented situation in July 1914 it certainly was not.

In Bad Ischl, away from the daily routine and yet with an only temporary link to the actual power centre in Vienna, the Emperor received reports. There he learnt of the proceedings of the Joint Council of Ministers on 7 July and received the memorandum

drafted the following day by Count Tisza, in which the Hungarian Prime Minister argued in favour of not simply attacking Serbia but rather issuing ultimatums, on the fulfilment of which the further course of action should depend. The Foreign Minister had two opportunities to inform the Emperor of developments in his summer domicile. But when the Council of Ministers next met on 19 July, the Emperor was missing once again and apparently did not have any part in the decision regarding the actual issuing of the *démarche* containing the ultimatum. And when it was a question of finalising the declaration of war and thus the formal prerequisites for the war, which was regarded by Franz Joseph as inescapable, this took place without further consultations, without one last, dramatic conference and, naturally, without direct contact with the German Kaiser, as the monarchs never telephoned each other or used a Hughes microphone. The Kaiser simply signed the piece of paper presented to him. Thus, the declaration of war against Serbia was reduced to a simple administrative act.

The Calm before the Storm

In spite of Serbian mobilisation, the Austro-Hungarian military machinery still did not appear to bestir itself. This apparent inactivity and the sheer endless waiting led repeatedly to stinging comments: 'A war has never before been provoked with such amateurism, than the war against Serbia in July 1914', as Fritz Fellner wrote, and 'this harsh judgement should finally be explained by a military-historical investigation on the part of the Austrian authorities. It had been known since 7 July that war was desired [...] on 27 July Foreign Minister Berchtold requests the Emperor to sign the declaration of war, [...] the Chief of the General Staff, however, declares himself in fact unable to begin the war, which had been planned for three weeks, before 14 days had passed.'²⁶² Now we will examine how tenable this claim really is.

Aside from the campaign of occupation of 1878, which was truly an isolated and in military terms narrowly-defined event, the Habsburg Monarchy was preparing to wage a proper war for the first time since 1866. During the intervening period, most other states had waged bigger or smaller wars. All of them had attempted to plan ahead for a war and to prepare themselves for the demands of a major military conflict. Essentially, however, all of them were confronted within a short space of time with a very different reality. From practically the first day on, the World War burst the dimensions of anything that had come before and anything that had been planned for.

In respect of the approach to Serbia, the timing of the dispatch of the *démarche* containing the ultimatum and the expansion of the war to become one that included at least Russia, but which could potentially turn into a European and even a world war, military considerations naturally played an important role, yet they are only compre-

hensible within the overall strategic context. The Imperial and Royal Military Administration could only initiate mobilisation under certain very precise circumstances, for not only was it required that the mobilisation would result in certain developments, which would in turn trigger countermeasures from those affected or from those states tied to alliances, but also that the mobilisation had to take place on the basis of very specific war scenarios.

Conrad apparently refused to initiate preparatory mobilisation measures, as he, like many other soldiers, remembered only too well the consequences of the mobilisation of 1912. The Chief of the General Staff declared that 'the army is so bitter as a result of the abortive mobilisation of 1912 that a mobilisation can only now be ordered if war is certain'.²⁶³ Regardless of this fact – as will be shown – preparations were indeed made. But only on the afternoon of 23 July was the army corps designated for the war against Serbia ordered to cease all exercises and to gather the regiments by the evening of 25 July at the latest in their peacetime garrisons.²⁶⁴ And these were only the preparations for a partial mobilisation.

On the evening of 25 July there was a first certainty: Serbia had not conformed to Austria-Hungary's ultimatum. From this moment on, every effort was made to trigger war. But there can be no question of Austria-Hungary being unprepared. How consistently it pursued its objective and how quickly the certainty spread that there would be war can be seen with the aid of several key Austrian documents.²⁶⁵

Two documents, or rather two groups of documents, can be utilised here. The first document is the proclamation of the Emperor 'To My Peoples'. This manifesto was prepared parallel to the Serbian note of demands in the Foreign Ministry. It was completed prior to 20 July and was passed on in strict confidence for the information of both prime ministers, Stürgkh and Tisza, on 21 July. Stürgkh then sent Berchtold a draft of a proclamation, which had been prepared a long time in advance in the office of the Imperial-Royal prime minister. As a comparison of the two texts shows, the Foreign Ministry did not take Stürgkh's draft into consideration. This differed in the case of Tisza, who telegraphed his requests for alterations to Bad Ischl on 25 July, where Berchtold waited in order to implement all further steps with the Emperor once the 48-hour deadline granted to Serbia ran out. Tisza proposed two alterations that were then actually implemented. Finally, two further changes were made on the wishes of the Emperor. With that, the proclamation was ready. With the exception of these minor alterations, however, the proclamation of war had been prepared long before the dispatch of the ultimatum to Serbia. Even prior to 20 July 1914 the following words had been formulated: 'It was My most fervent wish to dedicate the years that might still be granted to Me by God's grace to works of peace and to preserve My peoples from the great sacrifices and burdens of war. The council of providence has decided otherwise. [...] With such forgetful ingratitude the Kingdom of Serbia, which from the first

beginnings of its official independence until the most recent times had been sustained and promoted by My predecessors and Myself, entered already years ago on the path of open hostility towards Austria-Hungary. [...] We must call a halt to this unbearable attitude, and put an end to Serbia's incessant provocations. [...] My government has in vain made one final attempt to achieve the objective by peaceful means of inducing Serbia to change its ways by issuing a solemn exhortation. [...] Thus, I must proceed to obtain the necessary guarantees by force of arms that will secure for My states inner quiet and lasting peace abroad.' In conclusion, without reference to the 'heritage of a glorious past' proposed by the Foreign Ministry, the Emperor formulated the words: 'I have faith in Austria-Hungary's brave armed forces, filled with devoted zeal. And I have faith in the Almighty, that He will grant our arms the victory.'²⁶⁶

Now, we can certainly view this proclamation as the desire to be prepared for the rejection of the ultimatum by Serbia. Even so, none of those who worked on the document thought the Emperor was wasting his time. The genesis of the proclamation in any case contradicts the common view that the severance of diplomatic relations did not necessarily have to mean war, and it was above all the Emperor who – according to one of the adjutants in the Emperor's entourage, Colonel Baron Albert von Margutti – had said that this did not have to be the result.²⁶⁷ This was one of many retrospective embellishments. The Emperor was absolutely aware of this. He wanted war.

A second indication pointed unmistakably to the certainty of an impending war: on the day of the dispatch of the note of demands, i.e. on 23 July 1914, the senior military commanders began to keep a war diary. This is of interest because with the help of these war diaries we can reconstruct the course of military events in detail already from 23 July. On 25 July, Archduke Friedrich, who had already been placed at the 'disposal of the Supreme Commander' several days earlier, was named Commander-in-Chief of the Balkan Armed Forces.²⁶⁸ The powers of the commander-in-chief and his jurisdiction had been likewise fixed several days earlier. They only had to wait for something that could result in a declaration of war.

Instead, on 26 July the German ambassador in London, Prince Lichnowsky passed on another British offer to mediate. It came from King George V and the British government.²⁶⁹ They promised to provide compensation for Austria-Hungary at an ambassadors' conference and added that it would not be possible to localise a war. It would become a general war. Serbia would most certainly not submit to Austrian pressure, but undoubtedly to the united will of the powers. Once Austro-Hungarian troops set foot on Serbian territory, however, 'the world war' would be 'unavoidable', according to Ambassador Lichnowsky. London thus distanced itself from the idea of a 'halt in Belgrade'. This option had been discussed between the British ambassador in Vienna, Sir Maurice Bunsen, and his Russian colleague, Nikolai Shebeko, whereby the Russian ambassador apparently said that the Imperial and Royal troops should feel free to advance some-

what further to the south.²⁷⁰ The German Empire immediately rejected an intervention in Vienna along the lines of British proposals for the reason that it could not prostitute itself 'to put Austria before a European court for bargaining over Serbia'.²⁷¹ In rejecting the British offer to mediate, it becomes clear that Berlin regarded the July Crisis just as much as a vehicle for its own policies as Vienna pursued its goals on the basis of German backing.

On the same day, 26 July, the Chief of the German General Staff, Count Helmuth von Moltke, drafted the 'warning' to Belgium, in which he demanded that German troops be allowed to march through that country in order to engage with France. Germany definitely expected a major war. Even London abandoned all hope and merely stated that it was down to Germany and Germany alone to deter Austria-Hungary from pursuing its 'great policies', as London called them.²⁷² London and Paris announced that if Berlin had a pacifying effect on Vienna, then the French and British governments would in turn exert influence on St. Petersburg. Days earlier, however, Russia had already initiated the first steps towards a mobilisation of its armies, and not only in several western military districts but, as it claimed, for 'unavoidable technical reasons' across the entire Empire.²⁷³ This was hard to believe. However, there was another indication that made the Russian stance clear: on 24 July, still before the deadline set by the Austrian ultimatum, the Russian embassy in Berlin received the instruction to dissolve its assets in Germany and to transfer the 100 million roubles parked in Berlin.²⁷⁴ Thus, it was yet again the financiers who were the harbingers of the approaching war. Russia also implemented the first mobilisation measures for its fleet, however, and this indicated even more unmistakably that Russia did not only anticipate facing Austria-Hungary. France also initiated mobilisation on 26 July and in Great Britain the concentration of the First and Second Fleets was ordered. To negotiate now was almost impossible; developments were too far advanced. Neither Vienna nor Berlin, St. Petersburg or Paris wanted to take a step back. Instead, Count Berchtold submitted on 26 July the declaration of war against Serbia for the signature of Emperor Franz Joseph. He justified this by claiming that as a result of the Serbian response an attempt at mediation might still be made.²⁷⁵ This should be avoided by creating a *fait accompli*. The ground should be cut out from underneath any attempt to intervene. In any case, the first shots had already been fired. Franz Joseph was satisfied with this explanation. He signed the draft submitted to him and ordered the mobilisation of the corps designated for 'war scenario Serbia'. It was only the fact that this happened on a Sunday and it was believed that it would not be possible to get the message through to everywhere due to the partially unstaffed regional post offices that prevented the alert from already being issued on this day. This was to be done on 27 July, a Monday.²⁷⁶

The 'Skirmish' near Temes-Kubin

The manner in which Austria-Hungary declared war can certainly serve as an object lesson in unleashing a war. On the front of the file containing the declaration of war, namely the 'Most humble presentation' by Count Bertchtold to the Emperor, is the following text: 'In consideration of the [...] note of reply from the Serbian government, which is in its contents entirely worthless, but in its form accommodating, I do not regard it as impossible that the Triple Entente could make another attempt to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict, if a clear situation is not created by means of the declaration of war. According to a report of the 4th Corps Command, Serbian troops yesterday fired at our troops from Danube steamers near Temes-Kubin and there occurred following our return of fire a substantial skirmish. Hostilities have thus indeed been opened and it appears all the more imperative to allow the army in terms of international law every freedom of action that they would have in a state of war ... I allow myself to mention that his Imperial and Royal Highness, the Commander-in-Chief of the Balkan Armed Forces, Archduke Friedrich, as well as the Chief of the General Staff, have no objection to dispatching the declaration of war tomorrow morning.'²⁷⁷

The reference to the skirmish near Temes-Kubin was also incorporated into the text of the declaration of war and, with these passages added, the document was approved by Emperor Franz Joseph.

But the report had been false. Near Temes-Kubin, today Kovin, a small town on the northern banks of the Danube opposite Smederevo, there had been no skirmish. Several nervous or undisciplined men had perhaps shot their rifles, but nothing more had happened. In the war diary and in the operational files of the Imperial and Royal 7th Infantry Division, the incident is described as follows: the 14th Infantry Brigade (Colonel Baumgartner) reports: 'At Kevevára [Temes-Kubin / Kovin] Serbian steamers stopped by fire from their own ranks; following investigation allowed to proceed. Our own steamers shot at from Semendria [Smederevo], though without damage.'²⁷⁸

That was all. The original report on this skirmish was apparently sent from the Command of the 4th Corps (Budapest) to the Imperial and Royal General Staff in Vienna. This report, however, told an entirely different story: 'Temes-Kubin: Serbian soldiers on a ship open fire on their own troops, major skirmish, unknown number of dead and injured.'²⁷⁹ The text of the report points to a telegram that must have arrived from Budapest. Even if exact losses were not cited, it was suggested that these had been not inconsiderable. The office of the Chief of the General Staff apparently then informed the Foreign Minister. Only after the report had been passed on to Berchtold did the General Staff attempt to confirm these events, initially in Budapest, then in Timișoara (Temesvár) with the Command of the 7th Corps, to which the 7th Infantry Division belonged.²⁸⁰ Timișoara knew nothing, however, of an engagement near Temes-

Kubin. Berchtold was then informed that such an engagement had never taken place. When this amendment took place is not entirely clear. At lunchtime on 27 July, the Austro-Hungarian Correspondence Office was also informed about the skirmish near Temes-Kubin. Yet the Emperor had already signed the declaration of war. Berchtold returned to Vienna. Was he only now informed about the bloodless shoot-out near Temes-Kubin? At the latest during the course of 27 July, he learnt that nothing had happened and expunged the passage on Temes-Kubin from the official declaration of war conveyed to Serbia.

In the meantime, however, with reference to the opening of hostilities by Serbia, politics had been pursued on a grand scale. On 27 July the Russian ambassador, Shebeko, who had called for great restraint, had received a response to the effect that this would be difficult, as a skirmish had already taken place on the Danube and Serbia had commenced hostilities. The Russian promised to immediately exert an influence on Serbia so that it refrained from all forms of violence. He furthermore stated that the Serbs would pull back in the event of an Austrian advance in order to avoid hostilities for as long as possible.²⁸¹ But these could no longer be avoided. Emperor Franz Joseph telegraphed King Carol of Romania on 28 July that he was forced to commence hostilities against the Serbian armed forces after Serbia had not only failed to fulfil Austro-Hungarian demands but also 'provoked a military engagement without a previous declaration of war'.²⁸² The British ambassador in Vienna was likewise informed about this, and on 28 July he called on Berchtold and was told, among other things, that Serbia did not count among the cultured nations. Aside from that, all attempts to prevent the war were too late, since, as Berchtold told the ambassador and then also dispatched to the Imperial and Royal representative in London, 'yesterday the Serbian side already opened fire on our border soldiers'.²⁸³ Here, Berchtold mixed up his dates, for the skirmish near Temes-Kubin had supposedly already taken place on 26 July. Berchtold no more mentioned Temes-Kubin by name, however, than the Emperor had done in his telegram to King Carol of Romania. The Minister in fact withheld all exact dates and merged events into each another very conspicuously.

Now the question must be asked as to what exactly had happened at the 'skirmish' near Temes-Kubin. It is clear that it did not take place. It was already established decades ago that the report was mysterious because the notification of the skirmish apparently came from a corps command that was not even located in the region. Rudolf Kiszling, who has written several articles on Temes-Kubin, has provided evidence for his portrayals merely by citing one document in the Austrian War Archives.²⁸⁴ An exact examination carried out years ago by archivists in the War Archives in Vienna came to the surprising conclusion, however, that this telegram could not be found. Neither in the files of the Emperor's Military Chancellery nor in the General Staff files, the operational files or in other record groups of the so-called New Field Files

could such a telegram be found. A corresponding entry in one of the registers does not exist either. Nothing! And this for an undoubtedly historical document from the early war period.

It is very likely that one must go a step further and cast doubt on whether this telegram ever existed. If it did exist, however, it must have been destroyed with good reason. Kiszling claims to have seen it, yet he cited neither a file nor a reference number. Gustav Hubka, one of the employees collaborating on the General Staff work on the First World War, said that the report had been passed on only by telephone.²⁸⁵ Yet the report must have existed at some point in written form, because otherwise it would not have been possible to quote its wording. If something of this nature was ever reported from the area of the 4th Corps to Vienna, then it was a bogus report. And it did not come by chance! Perhaps it had been commissioned and was then – after fulfilling its purpose – destroyed.

The reference to Serbian troops opening fire on 26 July without declaring war was ideal for presenting Serbia as the aggressor, which was important for the stance of Italy and Romania. If the two of them were at all to stand by the Triple Alliance, then they would do so only in the event of a war that had not been started by either Austria-Hungary or Germany. Others, for example the British, were also told upon receipt of the report about the skirmish that Serbia was the aggressor.

The non-existent skirmish served moreover to make the claim to the domestic audience that the Dual Monarchy had started a defensive war. This was not only a question of outward appearances, for that would not have required such a mystification. It was far more a measure that should ensure that everyone who had perhaps not been ready to wage an aggressive war now accepted the necessity of defence. This was important with regard to the Slavs in the Monarchy, but also in respect of the political groups who, like the Austrian Social Democrats, had made it clear when discussing the Law on War Contributions (*Kriegsleistungsgesetz*) that they would only accept the passing of drastic measures in the case of a defensive war.

Evidently, during the course of 48 hours no-one in Austria had given any thought to informing the Supreme Commander that the declaration of war he had signed had been manipulated retroactively. It was not until a day after the dispatch of the declaration of war, i.e. on 29 July, that Berchtold reported the situation to the Emperor. He did so, once again, in a 'Most humble presentation', which stated: 'After the news of the military engagement near Temes-Kubin could not be confirmed and, on the contrary, only a single report about a minor skirmish near Gradište had been received, which did not appear to be appropriate for use in justifying a grave act of state, I took it upon myself in the hope of the retroactive Supreme Approval of Your Majesty to eliminate the sentence about the attack by Serbian troops near Temes-Kubin from the declaration of war against Serbia.'²⁸⁶

According to a remark made by the Emperor's aide-de-camp, Baron von Catinelli, the Monarch was annoyed at not having been reported to immediately by Berchtold.²⁸⁷ Even if that is true, the Emperor was in no way so indignant to even reprimand Berchtold. He was only too aware of the necessity of unleashing the war that he had helped to prepare.

When everything already seemed to be under way, an objection came all of a sudden and from someone of whom one would never have expected it. When Kaiser Wilhelm returned from his trip to Nordland and read the text of the Serbian response, he apparently said: 'But with this any reason for war ceases to exist.' And on the edge of the report from Vienna he noted: 'Giesl could have remained in Belgrade after all.'²⁸⁸ Suddenly, the very man who had consistently worked towards war and indeed pressed for it, who had dismissed with derisive words any Austro-Hungarian impulse to minimise the war aims, was now inclined to concede. Why he did this is difficult to say. Had he suddenly realised the full extent of the risk? Did he for the first time have the impression that Great Britain might also count among the opponents of the Dual Alliance? Or was the whole thing only designed for the benefit of the outside world and to demonstrate the German Kaiser's desire for peace? These questions cannot really be answered conclusively. But Wilhelm now suddenly found the British proposal of a halt in Belgrade worth considering. For the German imperial leadership, a peculiar situation had thus emerged. The Imperial Chancellor and the permanent secretary in the Foreign Ministry had geared their policies towards the Kaiser and had made the realisation of a war the foundation of these policies. The British proposal for a conference had been rejected. And now suddenly the Kaiser hesitated and everything seemed to be called into question. Would there perhaps really only be a Third Balkan War?

Whoever claimed to have witnessed the final act of drama would have been mistaken. On 28 July the Italian Foreign Minister Sonnino informed the British ambassador in Rome, Sir Ronald Rodd, that the Serbian chargé d'affaires had just called and reported that the Serbian government had by no means spoken its final word in points 5 and 6 of the Austrian démarche. The demand for the participation of Imperial and Royal organs had, on the contrary, been 'wilfully wrongly interpreted' by presenting therein the cooperation of authorities and the elimination of the Serbian judiciary as a massive encroachment on the sovereignty of the country, whereas Austria-Hungary had in fact wanted no more than perhaps the cooperation of criminal organs.²⁸⁹ In any case, the chargé d'affaires stated that the negotiations could continue. But by now the declaration of war was already on its way.

On the afternoon of 28 July the declaration of war was communicated to Belgrade. As Austria-Hungary no longer had a diplomatic representative in Serbia, this was sent by telegraph and rerouted via Romania. The declaration of war was handed over, even though Russia had once more made it clear that it would not remain on the sidelines.

This resulted above all in a military problem. If there was really only to be a war with Serbia, then the bulk of the Imperial and Royal armed forces to be mobilised would have to deploy against Serbia. If Russia were likewise to enter the war, another war scenario would be triggered and the mass of the troops deployed in Galicia. Conrad had repeatedly made it clear that he would have to know by the fifth day of mobilisation whether there would only be war scenario 'B' (Balkans) or also war scenario 'R' (Russia). Until then, the transports could be stopped or rerouted without an appreciable loss of time.

The Austro-Hungarian declaration of war against Serbia was answered by Russia with the order for a partial mobilisation. Now the mechanics of the operational planning finally began to come to the fore. The alliance automatism and the deployment blueprints specified that one thing always brought about another, that actions were always automatic and that the manic compulsion of having to preempt others caused every military leader to urge for the next step to be taken at once. Berchtold, evidently influenced by Conrad, regarded it as imperative to respond to the partial Russian mobilisation, which initially seemed to be limited to the western military districts, with the complete mobilisation of Austria-Hungary and the German Empire. On 29 July, Moltke once more explained the alliance mechanisms to the German Imperial Chancellor. And he ended by saying that a German and Austro-Hungarian mobilisation would make France's involvement inevitable. If Russia adhered to its alliance with France, there would be a two-front war. Now they wanted clarity from Russia.²⁹⁰ Bethmann Hollweg approached St. Petersburg almost with an ultimatum and demanded information as to whether Russia had mobilised completely and would intervene in the war. The Russian Foreign Minister Sazonov acted as though he were indignant at the idea of the German ambassador using such harsh words during his appearance on the Neva River. The Austrians were to blame, this was the quintessence of Sazonov's response, for it was they who had mobilised eight army corps, i.e. around half of their army. The fact that Russia had itself commenced with the mobilisation of 13 army corps as well as the Baltic and the Black Sea Fleets, was not mentioned. Furthermore, only the representatives of the Entente were told that a general mobilisation had been initiated.²⁹¹ It was enough, however, to make the German ambassador telegraph Berlin from St. Petersburg with the message that Russia was not prepared to back down. As a result, the German mobilisation should also be initiated. Parallel to this, it was once again attempted to reassure the British. In the process, Bethmann Hollweg suffered a first shock: London let it be known that it could not remain on the sidelines if nothing came of the conference of the powers, if the conflict escalated into a war and if France were dragged into it.²⁹²

With this, the main assumption for a war of the Dual Alliance collapsed. All plans and, ultimately, the precipitation of the war had taken place under the assumption

that Austria would take on Serbia and keep part of the Russian forces in check, whilst the German Empire wished to defeat France before turning all its power against Russia. Now, however, Great Britain came into play. Suddenly, the German dispatches evinced real concern. Austria-Hungary should under all circumstances cultivate an exchange of views with St. Petersburg. 'We are admittedly ready', telegraphed Bethmann Hollweg to Vienna, 'to fulfil our alliance commitments, but must refuse to allow Vienna to pull us recklessly and without due consideration of our advice into a global conflagration'.²⁹³

Now it was again Kaiser Wilhelm who pulled the German imperial government back on to its old course. He was disappointed that Great Britain would not remain neutral and regarded this as a personal affront against him, especially since he had been actively involved in the British case and was at pains to exploit the kinship of the two ruling houses. This now seemed to have been in vain. Thus, fierce determination was now the order of the day. On the same day, 30 July, an alliance offer was submitted to Turkey, to whom a considerable expansion of its territorial possessions was offered at the expense of the British Colonial Empire. In this way, the territorial losses of the Ottoman Empire since 1878 could have been offset.

These were hours in which a great deal was promised and many territories were mentally shifted back and forth. Already on 25 July, Conrad von Hötzendorf had demanded of Count Berchtold that no effort should be spared to induce the King of Montenegro to keep his country out of a war, even if this meant making him promises or offering him large sums of money. Kaiser Wilhelm took pains over Romania and let it be known in Vienna that Romania should be promised Bessarabia in return for intervening on the side of the Central Powers. Bulgaria was also brought into play, or rather, it brought itself into play by declaring that it wanted to enter the war on the side of the Central Powers, as long as Romania did the same and did not obstruct Bulgarian wishes following the conquest of Macedonia.²⁹⁴ Bucharest, however, did not want to allow itself to be dragged into the war. Thus, the Bulgarian offer was also redundant. Great Britain adopted another view as its own and proposed that Austria take Belgrade and its environs from Serbia and occupy them until Serbia fulfilled all its demands. With this version of the 'halt in Belgrade', Great Britain even made the Serbian capital city available. This idea also failed to ignite. The roundabout of proposals and interventions continued. Since the Central Powers hoped to persuade Italy to enter the war without any discussion of territorial concessions, Kaiser Wilhelm sent his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Colonel von Kleist, to Rome in order to describe the tremendous impression it would make if an Italian army group were to surface in the French theatre of war in conjunction with German troops.²⁹⁵ Austria-Hungary took a different route. Instead of trying to impress the Italian press with only small sums of money, as it had until then, Berchtold now wanted to engage in bribery on a grand scale. Ten million kronen for

this purpose did not seem too great a sum to him.²⁹⁶ However, Italy also declared its neutrality and did not want to align itself with the Central Powers.

In the night from 29 to 30 July, Vienna was certain that there would also be a war with Russia. The Imperial and Royal War Ministry sent the supreme monetary authorities a notice to that effect.²⁹⁷ Early in the morning, the finance ministers of Austria and Hungary met with the governors of the central bank and the post office savings bank and discussed which financial measures would be necessary in order to maintain payment transactions. Consultations lasted until the afternoon, as Austria and Hungary favoured differing approaches. The discussion was then interrupted in order to await the decisions made during a session of the Joint Council of Ministers that afternoon. Even afterwards, however, the viewpoints of the financial experts continued to diverge. Agreement was only reached on the question of closing the stock exchanges for the next few days. It was still disputed, however, how they should react to the general mobilisation.

On the same day, 30 July, Moltke had Conrad urgently advised to mobilise immediately against Russia, though it was only a question of the necessary countermeasures to the partial Russian mobilisation. For it was necessary both due to the Triple Alliance as well as for the benefit of the global public for Russia to be regarded as the aggressor. This 'hanging on' through the European crisis was, according to Moltke, the last means to ensure the consolidation of Austria-Hungary.²⁹⁸ Simultaneously, Moltke pressed for the largest possible concessions to Italy, as the Chief of the German General Staff sought to activate the Triple Alliance in its entirety. Then perhaps even Great Britain could be kept in check. At the same time, the German Empire mobilised against France. Now it was merely a question of declaring war.

But was it really important who officially declared war on whom? Everyone was mobilising, no-one wanted to fall behind and everyone wanted, if possible, to have completed their deployment a few days before anyone else. When the Joint Council of Ministers discussed the British mediation proposal on 31 July, the mood was that the mediation would be politely but firmly rejected.²⁹⁹ Such an intervention was no longer possible. Above all, and Emperor Franz Joseph had said this explicitly to Berchtold, the deployment against Serbia and the war against this country should be carried out as arranged. The Emperor was once more absent from the session of the Joint Council of Ministers, although he had returned to Vienna from Bad Ischl on 30 July. However, on the same day he had summoned Berchtold and the next day he granted both Tisza and Stürgkh a long audience. On 1 August, it was the turn of the senior military men, Archduke Friedrich, General Conrad and finally once again Minister Berchtold. Here the question of expanding the war was at stake. And it was the Emperor who decided that an offensive should be undertaken both in the south and in the north.³⁰⁰ It was presumably Conrad who had suggested this to him.

On 1 August the German Empire declared war on Russia; two days later, on 3 August, the German declaration of war was issued to France. Great Britain informed the German Empire the next day that it regarded itself as being at war. Austria-Hungary waited until 6 August to declare war on Russia because Conrad wanted to advance as far as possible with his preparations for mobilisation and with deployment by the time the declaration of war was issued. On 5 August, Montenegro declared war on Austria-Hungary. King Nikola let Vienna know that he intended to lay siege to Kotor and would promptly ask the civilian population to leave the city.³⁰¹

At this point in time, it was no longer individual states that were at war but alliances. Whereas the Entente, however, was able to deploy its grouping in full, for the Triple Alliance both Italy and the de facto ally Romania were absent. Austria-Hungary admittedly saw no necessity to declare war on Great Britain and France, yet these two states, which were already at war with the German Empire, paid little heed to this. In spite of the almost daily assurances that the Habsburg Monarchy harboured no hostile intentions towards the Entente, indeed only demanded compensation from Serbia and, in the event that the war remained limited to Serbia, would not make any territorial demands against the Balkan state, it was above all France who was determined to expand the war to include the Danube Monarchy. On 8 August, the French Foreign Minister Gaston Doumergue accused Austria-Hungary of transporting troops along the French border. The entire XIVth Corps (Innsbruck) had allegedly taken up positions there.³⁰² Despite assurances to the contrary by the Imperial and Royal ambassador in Paris, Count Szécsen, Monsieur Doumergue declared on 10 August that diplomatic relations had been broken off. From 11 August, France and Austria-Hungary were also at war. This was logical, as alliances were after all brought into the war. The Danube Monarchy had in any case harboured little hope of avoiding war with the Entente powers, as Conrad von Hötzendorf had already promised the German Supreme Army Command on 6 August to send two batteries of 30.5 cm mortars to the western front, in order to overpower the French defensive forts. The pieces of artillery that came from Gorizia (Görz) arrived on wagons on 12 and 13 August and were first deployed on 20 August near Namur.³⁰³ Thus, with the best will in the world they could not serve as a justification for the steps taken by the French.

Since direct relations had already been severed, the French declaration of war was handed to the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in London by the British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey. Great Britain kept things brief: although the British ambassador in Vienna, Sir Maurice Bunsen, had cast doubt vis-à-vis the Foreign Office regarding the French version of the intervention of Austro-Hungarian troops in the west,³⁰⁴ the government in London informed Austria-Hungary on 12 August that Great Britain was also at war with Austria-Hungary, as the Danube Monarchy had declared war on Russia and sent troops against France. The diplomats on all sides found positive words

for their host countries, for example Sir Maurice, who expressed his hope that the 'regrettable state of war between England and the Monarchy' would not last long, as between the two countries 'there was no antagonism that could in the least justify the conflict'.³⁰⁵

On 28 August, after lengthy hesitation and several plots to persuade Belgium that Austria-Hungary would remain neutral towards that country, the Austro-Hungarian envoy in Brussels, Count Clary, had to notify the Belgian government of the state of war between the two states. At this point in time, parts of Belgium had not only already been overrun by German armies but the mortars made available by the Imperial and Royal Army High Command along with their operating crews had also been transported to Liege. Shortly thereafter, these pieces of artillery destroyed the forts of Antwerp.³⁰⁶

The inclusion of the British Empire as well as the Western European states in the war had a further consequence, which initially affected Austria-Hungary only indirectly, namely the expansion of the war to extra-European territories. Japan came forward with its demands and requested from the German Empire the evacuation of the leased territory of Jiaozhou in China as well as the withdrawal of all German warships from Japanese and Chinese waters. The German Foreign Ministry informed the Japanese chargé d'affaires in Berlin that it did not have the intention of responding to the note. Diplomatic relations were broken off.³⁰⁷ The same applied to those between Austria-Hungary and Japan. The Imperial and Royal War Ministry ordered the cruiser anchored near Tsingtao, *Kaiserin und Königin Elisabeth* (Empress and Queen Elisabeth), and its convoying ships to prepare for naval hostilities. Thereafter, however, it remained unclear for months whether Austria-Hungary and Japan were actually at war with one another. According to a British report from 8 November 1914, which stated that Tsingtao had surrendered to the Japanese, the Foreign Ministry in Vienna trenchantly concluded: as a result of the involvement of His Majesty's ship *Kaiserin Elisabeth* in the battle of Tsingtao, 'during which the Japanese were at all events the aggressors, there is now a state of war between us and Japan. On which day this happened, is not exactly known; By all accounts, it happened before 6 October.'³⁰⁸ The fact that the *Kaiserin und Königin Elisabeth* had been sunk in the meantime and the majority of its crew taken prisoner and transported to Japan only filtered through gradually.

In the end, only mechanisms and interests had exerted their influence. Rationale seemed to be as good as extinguished; and a humane approach all the more so. After the war had been precipitated over the course of a month, its unleashing took only three days.

Austria wanted to remove the problem of Serbia once and for all. The war with Russia was accepted as the price that had to be paid. The German Empire hoped to become a dominant Continental European power. For France, it was a question of

Alsace-Lorraine and of weakening Germany decisively. Russia wanted to expand at the expense of the Habsburg Monarchy and become the only dominant power in the Balkans. In addition, Constantinople seemed to be beckoning. Great Britain thought about the European balance of war, though in terms of its own interests, because a German Empire dominant on the Continent would doubtlessly become an elementary threat to Great Britain and also endanger her colonies. It was a question of power, the retention of power, influence and prestige, i.e. things that had an effect on world history like nothing else and that also continue to determine today's world.

None of the governments involved, however, could be at all certain in 1914 how the decision to go to war would be received by its own people.³⁰⁹ France was prepared for anything but the enthusiastic sending-off of its soldiers, and had made preparations to arrest left-wing politicians.³¹⁰ Great Britain was concerned that the seemingly almost inevitable shortages and even a brief blockade of the British Isles would lead to unemployment, food riots and revolution – they did not.³¹¹ Austria-Hungary was naturally concerned about the nationalities question and aware that a proportion of those called up would refuse to serve, yet practically everyone rallied to the flag. In the German Empire, the resistance of the political left was feared – instead, the left voted for war credits. In Russia there was some unrest, but it was of no consequence. Those who had started the war were convinced that they could conclude it victoriously. For the ordinary people it was not a matter of course that a war was being fought, but it did not appear to them to be something particularly terrifying; war was part of human existence and was tremendously exciting. This was the greatest adventure of the 20th century!

Salvation through War

If we follow the speeches given at the beginning of the war in 1914, the political and military events stand out and this has the effect of giving the entire thing the character of a decision borne by politicians and soldiers. Yet this image is doubtlessly incomplete. We can only do justice to the July Crisis and above all the unleashing of the war when we look beyond the groups already mentioned. In the process, the differences between the European states by and large balance each other out. It was essentially the same circles everywhere who thought of the war, feared it or longed for it. In fact, most of them did not care how the inevitable came about. Indeed, it was almost a relief when the war was finally triggered. Many people regarded it as a relief only because the tension was over. Simultaneously, anxiety spread. What would happen?

We can add countless almost identical remarks to that made by the Chief of the German General Staff von Moltke during the course of the aforementioned war council in December 1912 in Berlin, according to which he regarded the war as unavoidable and

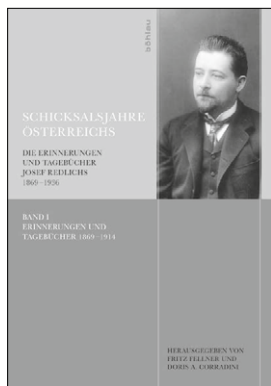


NORBERT CHRISTIAN WOLF
KAKANIEN ALS
GESELLSCHAFTSKONSTRUKTION
ROBERT MUSILS SOZIOANALYSE DES
20. JAHRHUNDERTS
LITERATURGESCHICHTE IN STUDIEN UND
QUELLEN, BAND 20

Das Buch ist eine Gesamtinterpretation von Musils Roman »Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften« mit dem Fokus auf dessen gesellschaftsanalytische Leistung. Es stützt sich auf Pierre Bourdieus Konzept einer Sozioanalyse literarischer Texte, das durch Anleihen aus der Diskurs-, Erzähl-, Gender- und Medientheorie ergänzt sowie durch Befunde der Sozial- und Kulturgeschichtsschreibung empirisch gesättigt wird.

Der feldsoziologische Ansatz wird erstmals konsequent auf einen deutschsprachigen Roman angewendet. Eine Besonderheit besteht in der kulturgeschichtlichen Kontextualisierung genauer Textanalysen, die sich nicht nur auf Musils Essays und Nachlass, sondern auch auf die zeitgenössische Literatur, Wissenschaft und Politik erstreckt. »Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften« wird als moderner Klassiker lesbar, der die Wurzeln der Katastrophengeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts offen legt.

2011. 1216 S. GB. 155 X 235 MM.
ISBN 978-3-205-78740-2



FRITZ FELLNER, DORIS A. CORRADINI (HG.)

SCHICKSALSJAHRE ÖSTERREICHS

DIE ERINNERUNGEN UND
TAGEBÜCHER JOSEF REDLICHS
1869–1936

(VERÖFFENTLICHUNGEN DER KOMMISSION
FÜR NEUERE GESCHICHTE ÖSTERREICHS,
BAND 105/1–3)

Die erweiterte Neuedition der Tagebücher des österreichischen Politikers und Gelehrten Josef Redlich lässt den Lebenskampf des habsburgischen Vielvölkerstaates aus der Perspektive des täglichen Lebens miterleben. Seine den Tagbüchern vorangestellten Lebenserinnerungen schildern den Aufstieg einer jüdischen Familie aus den einfachen Verhältnissen einer slowakischen Landstadt zu einer in Cisleithanien wirtschaftlich erfolgreichen Industriellenfamilie. Die bis zu seinem Tod 1936 reichenden Tagebucheinträge bieten Einblick in die gesellschaftlichen Verflechtungen, die das politische Geschehen der so dramatischen ersten Jahrzehnte des 20. Jahrhunderts bestimmt haben. In ihrer Gesamtheit sind diese durch Briefauszüge ergänzten Aufzeichnungen eine aus Quellen zusammengestellte »Autobiographie«.

2011. 1622 S. 15 S/W-ABB. GB. 170 X 240 MM. | ISBN 978-3-205-78617-7

UNLEASHING THE WAR | 'THANK GOD, THIS IS THE GREAT WAR!' |
ADJUSTING TO A LONGER WAR | THE END OF THE EUPHORIA | BEL-
GRADE AND THE FAILURE IN THE BALKANS | THE FIRST WINTER
OF THE WAR | UNDER SURVEILLANCE | 'THE KING OF ITALY HAS
DECLARED WAR ON ME' | THE THIRD FRONT | FACTORY WAR AND
DOMESTIC FRONT, 1915 | SUMMER BATTLE AND 'AUTUMN SWINE
| WAR AIMS AND CENTRAL EUROPE | SOUTH TYROL: THE END OF
AN ILLUSION (I) | LUTSK: THE END OF AN ILLUSION (II) | HOW IS A
WAR FINANCED? | THE NAMELESS | THE DEATH OF THE OLD EM-
PERO | EMPEROR KARL | THE WRITING ON THE WALL | THE CON-
SEQUENCES OF THE RUSSIAN FEBRUARY REVOLUTION | SUMMER
1917 | KERENSKY OFFENSIVE AND PEACE EFFORTS | THE PYRRHIC
VICTORY: THE BREAKTHROUGH BATTLE OF FLITSCH-TOLMEIN |
CAMPS | PEACE FEELERS IN THE SHADOW OF BREST-LITOVSK |
THE INNER FRONT | THE JUNE BATTLE IN VENETO | AN EMPIRE
RESIGNS | THE TWILIGHT EMPIRE | THE WAR BECOMES HISTORY

The history of how the First World War was unleashed, of the role played by Emperor Franz Joseph, of the way in which the different nationalities in the Habsburg Monarchy reacted, and of the disintegration of an empire that had lasted over 600 years has lost none of its drama even today. However, much of the story behind these events is only now becoming clear. Here, politics and war are discussed, as is the alliance with Germany and the war as a state of emergency and as part of everyday life. This book, by one of Austria's leading historians, is a Central European encyclopaedia of the First World War.

Manfried Rauchensteiner is Professor of Austrian History at the University of Vienna and, until 2005, was Director of the Museum of Military History.



ISBN 978-3-205-79588-9 | WWW.BOEHLAU-VERLAG.COM