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Austria-Hungary and the First World War

Alan Sked

In a lecture to the Royal Historical Society some years ago,¹ I² distinguished between two schools of thought regarding the role of the Habsburg Monarchy in the origins of the First World War. The first regarded the failure of the dynasty to implement domestic reforms, particularly some timely, well-designed scheme for federal reorganization, as having forced it in 1914 to go to war to prevent the ‘nationality question’ from destabilizing, indeed destroying it from within. This school of thought was particularly associated with American historians. The second school, associated mainly with British historians, argued that the ‘nationality question’ was irrelevant in 1914; war came about, instead, on account of questions of foreign policy and dynastic honour or prestige. I myself have always supported this second viewpoint which is clear from my *Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918* (2001).³ In it I argue that the decision to declare war on Serbia was explicable though hardly rational, given the Monarchy’s military unpreparedness and the likelihood of a world war ensuing, and given that Franz Joseph in the past had managed to co-exist with a united Germany and Italy after successful military challenges to Austria’s leadership in both these countries.

There is now, of course, a huge literature on the origins of the First World War, and a large one on a variety of aspects of the ‘nationality question’ inside the Monarchy in the period leading up to 1914. Before dealing with the latter, I shall look at some recent writing on Austria-Hungary’s role in 1914. There is no need – or indeed space – to survey all recent works on 1914. Readers are referred, instead, to an excellent article which does exactly that, namely Samuel Williamson Jr. and Ernest R. May, ‘An identity of Opinion: Historians and July 1914’.⁴ Williamson is the leading expert on Austria-Hungary and its role in 1914 and clearly believes that it was Vienna’s determination to exploit the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife at Sarajevo in order to subjugate Serbia and dominate the Balkans, that caused the First World War. In other words Austria-Hungary was to blame. He has most recently reinforced this view in an article entitled, ‘Leopold Count Berchtold: The Man Who Could Have Prevented the Great War.’⁵ While Williamson maintains

¹ Alan Sked, ‘Historians, the Nationality Question and the Downfall of the Habsburg Empire,’ *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, Vol. 31 (1981) p. 175-193.

² I would like to thank my friends and colleagues David Stevenson, Heather Jones, Christopher Brennan, Martin Fried, Ke-Chin Hsia and Robert Boyce for their help and advice while preparing this article.

³ Alan Sked, *Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*, London and New York, Longman, 2001.

⁴ Samuel Williamson Jr. and Ernest R. May, ‘An identity of Opinion: Historians and July 1914,’ *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 79 (2007), p. 335-387.

⁵ Samuel Williamson Jr., ‘Leopold Count Berchtold: The Man Who Could Have Prevented the Great War,’ in Günther Bischof, Fritz Plasser and Peter Berger (eds.), *From Empire to Republic: Post-World War I Austria, Contemporary Austrian Studies*, Vol. 19 (2010), p. 24-51.

that it was the Austrian foreign minister who was to blame, another key article places the blame on Berchtold's circle of junior advisers in the Austrian foreign ministry. This is by the Austrian historian, Fritz Fellner, although his key passages, as he freely admits, are based on the work of the British historian, John Leslie. In the article, Fellner quotes Leopold Baron von Andrian-Werburg as saying: "We started the war, not the Germans, and even less the Entente — that I know."⁶ He later adds :

"I have the distinct impression that the war was decided on by that circle of younger, talented diplomats who formed Berchtold's political council, who influenced him strongly and who, if they were — as they were in this case — in agreement, decided things. Musulin, the impetuous chatterbox, who, when the prospects were good in the war, used to call himself 'the man who caused the war', Alek Hoyos, Fritz Szápáry... they made the war. I myself was in lively agreement with the basic idea that only a war could save Austria. As the world situation was then, I am also quite sure that, two or three years later, war for Austria's existence would have been forced on us by Serbia, Romania and Russia, and under conditions which would make a successful defence far more difficult than at that time... When the existence of the Fatherland is at stake, every patriotic statesman, indeed, every patriot, must go to war." One should not, however, overlook the role of the Emperor Franz Joseph, whose approval was needed for any declaration of war and who was quite aware that the Russians would probably enter one in 1914.⁷

The recent history of the Balkans has shed a more critical light on Serbian nationalism so that previous willingness to look benignly at Serbia as an innocent victim of events in 1914 has now disappeared. This is evident from the most widely noted recent reinterpretation of 1914, namely Christopher Clark's *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914* (2012).⁸ Clark dismisses the older Fischer thesis on the origins of the war, which put the blame on Germany and its 'blank cheque' of military support to Austria-Hungary without which Austria-Hungary would never have declared war on Serbia. According to Clark, however, (p. 560) "a diluted version of the Fischer thesis still dominates in studies of Germany's road to war." And he himself defines the Fischer thesis as meaning: "the Germans did not stumble or slither into war. They *chose* it — worse, they planned it in advance, in the hope of breaking out of their European isolation and making a bid for world power." Faithful to a long tradition in British historiography, Clark makes it the main point of his interpretation of 1914, however, not to blame anyone. There was no 'smoking gun'. "The war was a tragedy not a crime." (p. 561) However, he has considerable sympathy for Vienna (p. 558): "Most important of all was the widely trafficked narrative of Austria-Hungary's historically necessary decline, which, having gradually replaced an older set of assumptions about Austria's role as a fulcrum of stability in Central and Eastern Europe, disinhibited Vienna's enemies, undermining the notion that Austria-Hungary, like every other great power, possessed interests that it had the right robustly to defend." Thus, for example, (p. 559) Sir Edward Grey's half-hearted four-power mediation proposal was "founded upon a partisan indifference to the power-

⁶ Fritz Fellner, 'Austria-Hungary' in Keith Wilson (ed.), *Decisions for War*, London: Cambridge University Press (1995), p. 9-25, on p. 14.

⁷ See Robert A. Kann, 'Franz Joseph und der Ausbruch des Weltkrieges,' in *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, Vol. XXVI (1973), p. 448-455; and Stephen Beller, *Franz Joseph*, London and New York: Longmans, 1996.

⁸ Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London, Penguin, 2012.

political realities of Austria-Hungary's situation... Serbia's friends did not concede to Vienna the right to incorporate in its demands on Belgrade a means of monitoring and enforcing compliance. They rejected such demands on the grounds that they were irreconcilable with Serbian sovereignty." This is all very true, although it obscures the fact that the Austrians also expected these demands to be rejected and were in fact counting on them to be rejected in order to start a war—the very point of von Andrian's notes.

Another recent analysis of 1914, however, says that all this is beside the point. Sean McMeekin, the author of a study of *The Russian Origins of the First World War* (2011),⁹ has now clarified his views in a work entitled *July 1914. The Countdown to War* (2013).¹⁰ Here, in an epilogue, entitled, 'The Question of Responsibility', he takes the opposite approach from Clark and firmly states that moral responsibility or blame for the war must be assigned. He is hard on Berchtold but argues that it was not him who began the 'countdown to war'. That responsibility lay with the Russian foreign minister, Sazonov, who on 24 July decided on a military response before the Serbs had even replied to Vienna's ultimatum and some time before Vienna had declared war. By then Russia's war preparations were already under way. Since the French had also given their support and knew exactly what was going on, both they and the Russians were guilty of deceiving the British into thinking that Germany had decided on war first. McMeekin, therefore, concludes (p. 404): "As indicated by their earlier mobilizations (especially Russia's) in 1914, France and Russia were far more eager to fight than was Germany — and far, far more than Austria-Hungary, if in her case we mean fighting Russia, not Serbia." It seems, therefore, that Clark has not persuaded everyone that the 'blame game' can be abandoned. And why should it? Wars do not occur by accident. Armies have to be ordered to mobilize and attack. Two recent books have mirrored the difference between Clark and McMeekin. Margaret MacMillan's *The War That Ended Peace. The Road to 1914* (2013),¹¹ also argues that no one was to blame for the outbreak of the war, although its tone is implicitly Fischerian. Stefan Schmidt's *Frankreichs Außenpolitik in der Julikrise 1914: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Ausbruchs der Ersten Weltkrieg* (2009),¹² reinforces McMeekin's explanation.

The situation regarding the 'nationality question' as a factor influencing Austria-Hungary's outlook in 1914 has also continued to produce a large literature.¹³ The

⁹ Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*, Cambridge MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011.

¹⁰ Sean McMeekin, *The Countdown to War*, London: Basic Books, 2013.

¹¹ Margaret MacMillan, *The War That Ended Peace. The Road to 1914*, London: Random House, 2013.

¹² Stefan Schmidt, *Frankreichs Außenpolitik in der Julikrise 1914: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Ausbruchs der Ersten Weltkrieg*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2009.

¹³ Among key works are Gary B. Cohen, 'Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914,' in *Central European History*, Vol. 40 (2007), p. 241-278; Jonathan Kwan, 'Review Article. Nationalism and all that: Reassessing the Habsburg Monarchy and its Legacy,' in *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2011), p. 88-108; Lawrence Cole and Daniel Unowsky (eds.), *The Limits of Loyalty. Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiance, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007; Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (eds.), *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*, New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005; Tara Zahra, *Kidnapping Souls. National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948*, Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2007; Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience and National Identity*

outcome of all these works is a new stress on the loyalty of the nationalities and the relative lack of crisis connected with the nationality question. All sorts of factors are now highlighted ranging from political apathy and compromise through ethnic cross-voting, imperial symbolism, military service, primary education and bilingualism to traditional loyalty to Franz Joseph. For the social background to the Austro-Hungarian army specifically, see Alan Sked, 'Social Life and Legal Constraints: the Habsburg Army, 1890-1918,'¹⁴ and Christa Hämmerle (ed.), *Des Kaisers Knechte. Erinnerungen an die Rekrutenzeit im k.(u)k. Heer, 1868-1914* (2012).¹⁵

Wartime Diplomacy

The standard account of Austria-Hungary's wartime diplomacy is to be found in chapters seven, eight and nine of Roy F. Bridge's *The Habsburg Monarchy Among The Great Powers, 1815-1918*¹⁶ (1990, pp. 288-380).¹⁷ In the concluding chapter, Bridge dismisses the nationality question as an issue of diplomacy — it was purely a matter for domestic policy — but sees the German alliance as the key to the Monarchy's defeat and disappearance. The Germans refused to listen to Austrian pleas for a compromise peace and overrode Austrian interests in the Balkans and Poland. Austria, indeed, was reduced almost to satellite status after the Spa agreements of May 1918, but in any case still backed Germany's desire to win the war. (Technically, her army had been placed under German command on all fronts in September 1916, but German lack of information on Austro-Hungarian military arrangements made all decisions in practice reciprocal.) Her backing of German war aims to the very last, however, alienated her from all the major powers, none of which contemplated her survival at the future peace conference (p. 372) : "The decision of the ruling élite of the Monarchy, led by Czernin rather than the emperor, and thinking in national rather than dynastic terms, to stake everything on a German victory that would preserve the Monarchy as a German-Magyar state was fatal. It drove the nationalities to seek outright independence rather than federal reform, and drove the allies to endorse their aims. In the event, the gamble failed. If the

in the Austrian Empire, Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan Press, 1996 ; *ibid.*, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2005 ; Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1898*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002 ; Maria Bucur and Nancy Wingfield (eds.), *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present*, West Lafayette IN: Purdue University Press, 2001 ; Daniel L. Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848-1916*, West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2005 ; Lothar Höbelt, 'Parliamentary Politics in a Multinational Setting: Late Imperial Austria', *Center for Austrian Studies Working Paper*, Minneapolis MN, Center for Austrian Studies, 1992 ; and Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists. The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy*, Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 2005.

¹⁴ Alan Sked, 'Social Life and Legal Constraints: the Habsburg Army, 1890-1918,' *The European Journal on Law and History*, Vol. 3, December 2012, p. 11-32.

¹⁵ Christa Hämmerle (ed.), *Des Kaisers Knechte. Erinnerungen an die Rekrutenzeit im k.(u)k. Heer, 1868-1914*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 2012.

¹⁶ Roy F. Bridge, *The Habsburg Monarchy Among The Great Powers, 1815-1918*, New York, Oxford and Munich, Berg: St. Martin's, 1990.

¹⁷ Bridge also wrote the relevant article in Adam Wandruschka and Peter Urbanitsch (eds.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie, 1848-1918*, Vol. VI, *Die Habsburgermonarchie im System der internationaler Beziehungen*, Vienna: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1989, p. 196-373.

consequent prolongation of the war to the point of defeat brought about the collapse of the Monarchy from within, its wartime diplomacy had left it without the support of any Power except defeated Germany.” (It should be pointed out that Austria-Hungary never sought a *separate* peace. That would have invited a German invasion, backed by German Austrians. Austria’s real problem was that Germany refused to give back Alsace-Lorraine, wanted vast swathes of the Baltic, not to mention control of the Balkans, Poland and *Mitteleuropa* and staked all on outright victory, even risking American entry into the war through unrestricted U-boat warfare. Clearly, therefore, the German alliance was all-important. Yet, as Gordon A. Craig pointed out in a brilliant article on ‘The Military Cohesion of the Austro-German Alliance, 1914-1918,’¹⁸ there was no military or diplomatic coordination between the two powers at all. Given that their 3.5 million fighting men would face at least 5 million from France, Russia and Serbia – not to mention the British Empire and later Italy and America – this was disastrous. In 1915, Conrad could even ask : “Well, what are our secret enemies the Germans up to, and what is that comedian the German Emperor doing?” Gerard E. Silberstein, *The Troubled Alliance. German-Austria Relations, 1914-1917* (1970)¹⁹ and Gary W. Shanafelt’s *The Secret Enemy. Austria-Hungary and the German Alliance, 1914-1918, East European Monographs* (1985)²⁰ show not merely how extensive the differences between the two powers were but how Austria-Hungary, despite continuous defeats and the need for German military aid, not to say rescue, stoutly refused to buckle under German diplomatic pressure, continuously coming up instead with plans for Austrian domination of various parts of Europe and consistently refusing to commit herself definitively to the German scheme for *Mitteleuropa*, even after signing up to it at Spa. Silberstein has also written an important article²¹ demonstrating how Conrad, as Austria-Hungary’s military chief-of-staff, failed to dominate Austrian diplomacy, namely ‘The High Command and Diplomacy in Austria-Hungary, 1914-1916’.²²

The most recent and significant foray into Austro-Hungarian wartime diplomacy is Marvin Benjamin Fried’s 2011 LSE doctoral thesis, *War Aims and Peace Conditions: Austro-Hungarian Foreign Policy in the Balkans, July 1914-May 1917*. This will be published in 2014 by Palgrave Macmillan, London, with the title *The Final Stab at Glory: Austro-Hungarian War Aims in the Balkans, 1914-1918*. Fried’s views are summarized in his forthcoming article, “A Life and Death Question”: Austro-

¹⁸ Gordon A. Craig, ‘The Military Cohesion of the Austro-German Alliance, 1914-1918,’ *Journal of Modern History*, XXXVII, No. 3, September 1965, p. 7–30.

¹⁹ Gerard E. Silberstein, *The Troubled Alliance. German-Austria Relations, 1914-1917*, Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1970.

²⁰ Gary W. Shanafelt, *The Secret Enemy. Austria-Hungary and the German Alliance, 1914-1918, East European Monographs* (CLXXXVII), New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

²¹ Gerard E. Silberstein, ‘The High Command and Diplomacy in Austria-Hungary, 1914-1916,’ *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 42 (1970), p. 586-605.

²² For Austrian civil-military relations before 1914, see : G. Kronenbitter, ‘*Krieg im Frieden*’: *die Führung der k.u.k. Armee und die Grossmachtpolitik Österreich-Ungarns, 1906-1914*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2003 ; Lawrence Sondhaus, *Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, Architect of the Apocalypse*, Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2000 ; Jean-Paul Bled, *Franz Ferdinand. Der eigensinnige Thronfolger*. Aus dem Französischen von Marie-Therese Pitner, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2013 ; and Graydon A. Tunstall, ‘The Habsburg Command Conspiracy: The Falsification of Historiography on the Outbreak of World War I,’ *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. 27 (1996), p. 181-198.

Hungarian War Aims in the First World War'.²³ Meanwhile he has published an article, 'The Cornerstone of Balkan Power Projection: Austro-Hungarian Foreign Policy and the Problem of Albanian Neutrality, 1914-1918'.²⁴ Background to his research is provided by John Paul Newman's review article, 'War in the Balkans',²⁵ while another perspective is offered by Alexander Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht. Geheime Dienste und Propaganda im deutsch-österreichisch-türkischen Bündnis 1914-1918* (2012).²⁶

Fried insists in his work on three basic points: first, that Austro-Hungarian war aims were more offensive, expansionist and annexationist in the Balkans and in Poland than previously thought; secondly, that the foreign ministry remained in overall control of the process of war aims formulation in opposition to the army's policies and contrary to the German example; and thirdly, that the war was prolonged due to Austria-Hungary's at times almost delusional insistence on its principal war aims. True, at the start of the war, Vienna had few specific war aims in mind apart from defeating Serbia militarily and making her a tributary or dependent state. Yet as the war continued and as it became clear that it would not be a short one, more extensive war aims developed. Serbia, Vienna soon agreed, due to the influence of Tisza, the Hungarian premier, was neither to be annexed nor destroyed. Instead, she was to cede territory to Bulgaria, Albania and Greece but pay reparations to Austria-Hungary which would also receive some territory as "strategically important border corrections". Specifically, these included the north-western corner of Serbia called the Mačva, the north-east of Serbia around Negotin, and Belgrade itself. It was also important that neither Bulgaria nor Germany should dominate the Western Balkans, which should be Austria-Hungary's exclusive sphere of influence. Tisza saw this as the most important war aim for the Monarchy. So, too, did Berchtold, who was willing to lose Galicia but not control of Serbia. Conrad, on the other hand, saw victory on the Eastern Front and the defeat of Russia as the key to any general peace, although he did realise the economic importance of the Balkans to the Monarchy. His plan, after Serbia's defeat, would become one of annexing the rump of Serbia, once Bulgaria had been paid off with Macedonia, annexing Montenegro and dismembering Albania. Yet continued military defeats always deprived him of any real influence. In any case, the ultimate commander in chief of the armed forces — Kaiser Franz Joseph²⁷ — tended only to discuss foreign policy with his foreign minister. Besides, Tisza had no intention of absorbing more Slavs into the Monarchy, an issue that Conrad simply dismissed or overlooked.

The problem of what to do with Poland would also become a difficult one to resolve. Certainly, it had to be detached from Russia but what then? Tisza rejected any trialist solution meaning that if the Germans indeed allowed Poland to go to Austria-

²³ Marvin Benjamin, "A Life and Death Question": Austro-Hungarian War Aims in the First World War,' in H. Afflerbach (ed.), *The Purpose of War—War Aims and Strategy during the Great War, 1914-1918*, Munich: Oldenburg, 2014.

²⁴ Marvin Benjamin, 'The Cornerstone of Balkan Power Projection: Austro-Hungarian Foreign Policy and the Problem of Albanian Neutrality, 1914-1918,' *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 23 (2012), p. 1-21.

²⁵ John Paul Newman, 'War in the Balkans,' *War in History* vol. 18, no. 3, 2011.

²⁶ Alexander Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht. Geheime Dienste und Propaganda im deutsch-österreichisch-türkischen Bündnis 1914-1918*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau-Verlag, 2012.

²⁷ See the article by Christoph Schmetterer, 'Der Kaiser von Österreich als Oberster Kriegsherr, 1867-1918,' *Journal on European History of Law*, Vol. 4, no. 1, 2013, p. 10-18.

Hungary, it would have to be part of Cisleithania in some sort of sub-dualist structure. Clearly, there were huge potential gains from acquiring a territory as large as Poland, but these were never apparent to Hungarians. One of these, Burián, on becoming foreign minister in 1915, displayed astonishing obduracy in face of military and civilian panic. He simply kept refusing any concessions to Italy, Romania or Bulgaria, despite the threat of Italian and Romanian intervention on the allied side. Once Serbia was defeated at the end of 1915 with German and Bulgarian help and the Russians had been defeated at Gorlice-Tarnów in the summer of 1915, however, Burián's position became close to Tisza's — rump Serbia would be dominated by Hungary which would populate it with Hungarian and German immigrant farmers but leave it nominally independent. The foreign ministry also wanted Albania to remain theoretically independent and neutral despite military occupation and Conrad's desire to annexe or dismember the country. Burián, however, agreed that Montenegro should lose its coast, the Lovćen plateau, which threatened the Austro-Hungarian naval base at Cattaro, plus some northern territory to Austria-Hungary; she should also lose territory to Albania.

With the need for German support against the Brusilov Offensive in 1916 and against Romania which now entered the war, Austria-Hungary's diplomatic room for manoeuvre became limited. She gained little from Romania's defeat while Bulgaria pressured her for concessions in occupied Serbia and the Germans set their sights on the Albanian port of Valona. Meanwhile, Congress Poland was given constitutional independence at the end of 1916 but with no agreement over who would control it. Burián kept pressing for Austrian parity with Germany in Poland; indeed, control of Poland, if possible, remained an Austrian war aim.

Despite hunger becoming the most pressing issue for the Monarchy by 1917, and despite the accession of a new Emperor — Karl I — who soon sacked Conrad, Burián and even Tisza, it proved impossible to change Habsburg foreign policy in any way. In March 1917, a minimum programme was agreed with Germany according to which the armies of the Central Powers would only retreat from Russia and the Balkans if the *statu quo* before 1914 was restored in east and west. A maximum programme gave Romania to Austria-Hungary and expanded territory for Germany in the East, territory whose extent would be defined according to later circumstances. Although the new foreign minister and emperor became identified with a desire for peace for various reasons, they never abandoned the established new order in the Balkans, assuming that 'minor' territorial adjustments in Serbia and Montenegro would be overlooked or allowed by the Allies at any peace conference. The Germans, on the other hand, not merely went on to plan huge annexations in the East, but came up with schemes for the wholesale economic reorganisation of Central Europe that would have subordinated the whole Habsburg Monarchy to Germany — in short, the plans for *Mitteleuropa*. By now, however, the question of food supplies to a starving Monarchy and the prospect of peace were the two issues most exercising the populations of Austria-Hungary. This meant that when Russia collapsed in revolution — which, it was feared would spread to the Monarchy — Czernin at Brest-Litovsk offered the whole of Poland — including Austrian Galicia — to Germany on condition that grain supplies from the Ukraine and Romania would reach starving Austria. (In fact, he had already offered the whole of Poland to Germany in discussions at the German army headquarters at Homburg on 3 April 1917, in order to encourage the

Germans to make concessions over Alsace-Lorraine.) Austria-Hungary, however, was to keep her Balkan possessions. As it turned out, no grain came from the Ukraine, but Austria's cession of Cholm to that country so infuriated her Poles that there could no longer be any thought of an Austro-Polish solution, if indeed any prospect of one still existed. On the other hand, by 1918 the Monarchy's war aims had been fulfilled: Serbia and Russia had been crushed, Romania had ceded some strategic territory (the Iron Gates) to Austria-Hungary and agreed to border rectifications, and Austria-Hungary still had a say in the future of Poland. Italy had been humiliated by the autumn of 1917 at Caporetto. Austria-Hungary had even fought off serious threats from Germany and Bulgaria to interfere in her occupation zones in Serbia, Montenegro and Albania. All enemy troops had been expelled from the lands of the Monarchy. All her own troops were fighting abroad. Hence the new army chief of staff, General Arz von Straußenburg, began making all sorts of plans for annexations in the Balkans, which the foreign ministry still opposed. In any case, the main problem was now hunger, the moral and physical collapse of the civilian and military populations, and strategic defeat. Karl attempted secret peace negotiations with the Entente through his brother-in-law Prince Sixtus of Bourbon-Parma, during which, without informing them, he had suggested that the Germans might surrender Alsace-Lorraine. After the collapse of the Sixtus mission, Karl's subsequent humiliation and apparent diplomatic surrender to the Germans at Spa, and Czernin's resignation and replacement by the apparently imperturbable Burián, defeat was not far off. Burián, predictably, kept trying to get the Germans to guarantee the Monarchy's Balkan gains almost to the end of the war and still made Vienna's agreement to *Mitteleuropa* conditional on a Polish settlement. However, by the autumn of 1918, with everything everywhere collapsing, the allies no longer cared to guarantee the Monarchy's own survival and far less that of its military conquests in the Balkans when the war eventually ended.

Fried makes an excellent case for the primacy of Balkan war aims in the wartime diplomacy of Austria-Hungary. It may be true that Conrad saw the eastern front and the struggle against Russia as being more important for military survival, something which objectively was true— a Russian army pouring through the Carpathians on to the Hungarian Great Plain represented a lethal threat to the Monarchy in a way that Serbian military strategy certainly never did nor could; it may be true, also, that Austria-Hungary saw the campaign against Italy as one against a traditional enemy and one, therefore, which united all populations of the Monarchy in enthusiasm for war; but diplomatically, it may be the case that the Balkans had been the cause of the war and thereafter remained at the heart of it for Austria-Hungary's leaders and policy-makers. The issue of Poland, however, should not be easily dismissed in the context of the war-aims of the Monarchy. Its control by, or even close association with, the Habsburgs would have added immeasurably to their prestige in a way that control of the Western Balkans could not have equalled. Still, Fried's contribution to the historiography of Austro-Hungarian wartime diplomacy is a fundamental one.

The War Itself

History has not been kind to the Habsburg army and its record in the First World War. The successor states of the Monarchy suppressed its memory and in any case

the concept of a multi-national army imbued with a dynastic, anti-national ethos became an anomaly if not an embarrassment after 1918. The Soviet army was also multi-national, of course, but remained Greater Russian in *ethos*.²⁸ Nor did other developments help. In Austria, the old Austro-Hungarian general staff took control of the War Archive and defended its own record when writing up the seven-volume, official history of the war – *Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg* – so that defeat was placed on ethnic disloyalty rather than bad leadership. In particular, reputations such as that of the former chief of staff, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf had to be protected.²⁹ The shifting of blame on to unreliable nationalities coincided, of course, with the efforts of radical nationalists to prove that battlefield desertions were the result of the fact that Austria-Hungary had been the “prison of the peoples”. The Czechs, Thomas Masaryk and Eduard Beneš were particularly adept in this regard, although Jaroslav Hašek’s *Good Soldier Švejk* helped enormously, despite the fact that Hašek in his novel described Czech loyalty to the Habsburgs.³⁰ Meanwhile, German memoirists sought to blame the Habsburg army for their own defeat, including the German liaison officer to the Austrian high command, General August Erdmann von Cramon.³¹ On the other hand, if most Slav and Romanian accounts after 1918 gave unsympathetic accounts of the Habsburg army and stressed desertions by ethnic minority troops, Hungarian ones tended to exaggerate the sacrifices to the Monarchy made by the ‘heroic Magyar race’.³² Finally, as Austria became more fascist after 1934, those of a *deutschnational* inclination also began to blame ethnic minorities for defeat in 1918 thus strengthening Austria’s own *Dolchstoß legende* which had grown up even before the war ended.³³

Western, especially English-language, accounts of the First World War tend to overlook Austria-Hungary, its provinces and the lesser countries of East and South-East Europe.³⁴ This tendency is equally evident in the purely military history of the First World War. The Balkan, Italian and Eastern Fronts are usually ignored, or else

²⁸ See Ludwig Jedlicka, ‘Die Traditionen der Wehrmacht Österreich-Ungarns und die Nachfolgestaaten,’ *Österreichische Militärische Zeitschrift* (1968); and István Deák, ‘Comparing Apples and Pears: Centralization, Decentralization and Ethnic Policy in the Habsburg and Soviet Armies,’ in Richard Rudolf and David Good (eds.), *Nationalism and Empire: The Habsburg Empire and the Soviet Union*, New York: St Martin’s Press, 1992, p. 225-241.

²⁹ See Kurt Peball, ‘Österreichische Militärhistorische Forschung zum Ersten Weltkrieg,’ in Gersdorff, Ursula von (Hg.): *Geschichte und Militärgeschichte: Wege der Forschung*, Frankfurt am Main: Bernard & Graefe Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1974.

³⁰ Jaroslav Hašek, *Good Soldier Švejk*, A. Synek Publishers, 1923.

³¹ See his *Unser österreichisch-ungarischer Bundesgenossen im Weltkriege: Erinnerungen aus meiner vierjährigen Tätigkeit als bevollmächtigter deutschen General beim k.u.k. Armeoberkommando*, Berlin, Mittler, 1922.

³² For interwar Hungarian historiographical trends, see Miklos Farkas, ‘Doberdo: The Habsburg Army on the Italian Front, 1915-1916,’ in Béla Király and Nándor Dreisziger and Albert A. Nofi (eds), *East Central European Society in World War I, War and Society in East Central Europe*, Vol. IX, New York: Columbia University Press, 1985, p. 315-317.

³³ See, for example, Wilhelm Czermak, *In deinem Lager war Österreich: Die österreichisch-ungarische Armee, wie man sie nicht kennt*, Breslau, 1938; Alfred Krauß, *Die Ursachen unserer Niederlage*, Munich: Korn, 1920; and Carl Freiherr von Bardolff, *Soldat im alten Österreich: Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1938.

³⁴ The 2005 *Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the First World War*, edited by Vincent Sherry even manages to omit Švejk, although the forthcoming three-volume *Cambridge History of the First World War*, edited by Jay Winter, which treats the war thematically, will indeed cover Austria-Hungary.

the Habsburg forces are treated as a minor satellite army of Germany.³⁵ Indeed, there is no good book in English on the Habsburg army in the First World War, although Graydon A. Tunstall is expected to publish one next year with Cambridge University Press. Meanwhile, there is Holger A. Herwig, *The First World War. Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1914-1918*,³⁶ which, peculiarly, is better on the Austrian home front than on her military record. Probably the best coverage of her war record is to be found in the works of Gunther E. Rothenberg, namely *The Army of Francis Joseph* (1976)³⁷ and his articles : *The Habsburg Army in the First World War, 1914-1918*³⁸ and 'The Austro-Hungarian Campaign against Serbia in 1914'.³⁹ More recently the literature has been enriched by the works of Graydon A. Tunstall whose books on *Planning for War against Russia and Serbia: Austro-Hungarian and German Military Strategies, 1871-1914* (1993),⁴⁰ and *Blood on the Snow. The Carpathian Winter War of 1915* (2010)⁴¹ and articles,⁴² namely 'The Carpathian Winter Campaign of 1915' and 'The Collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Army in 1918', give some indication of the quality to be expected from his forthcoming book on the Austro-Hungarian army, 1914-1918.⁴³ The standard German account by Manfred Rauchensteiner, *Der Tod der Doppeladler. Österreich-Ungarn und der Erste Weltkrieg* (1993),⁴⁴ has now been replaced or supplemented by his *Der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Habsburgermonarchie, 1914-1918* (2013).⁴⁵ Students

³⁵ Allen R. Millet and Williamson Murray, for example, edited a three-volume study of *Military Effectiveness*, Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1988, the first volume of which was on *The First World War* and excluded Austria-Hungary entirely, although it did deal with Italy and Japan.

³⁶ Holger A. Herwig, *The First World War. Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1914-1918*, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 1997.

³⁷ E. Rothenberg, *The Army of Francis Joseph*, West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1976.

³⁸ E. Rothenberg, "The Habsburg Army in the First World War, 1914-1918," in Király, Dreisziger and Nofi (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 289-300, also published in Robert A. Kann *et al.* (eds.), *The Habsburg Empire in World War I*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 73-86.

³⁹ E. Rothenberg, 'The Austro-Hungarian Campaign against Serbia in 1914,' *Journal of Military History*, Vol. 53, April, 1989.

⁴⁰ Graydon A. Tunstall, *Planning for War against Russia and Serbia: Austro-Hungarian and German Military Strategies, 1871-1914*, New York: Boulder: East European Monographs, 1993.

⁴¹ Graydon A. Tunstall, *Blood on the Snow. The Carpathian Winter War of 1915*, Lawrence KA: University Press of Kansas, 2010.

⁴² Graydon A. Tunstall, 'The Carpathian Winter Campaign of 1915'; 'The Collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Army in 1918'; in Peter Pastor and Graydon A. Tunstall (eds.), *Essays on World War I*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012, p. 1-23 and p. 161-178 respectively.

⁴³ Recently available, however, are : Mark Thompson, *The White War: Life and Death on the Italian Front, 1915-1919*, New York: Basic Books, 2009; Nicola Labanca and Oswald Überegger (eds.), *Krieg in den Alpen. Österreich-Ungarn und Italien im Ersten Weltkrieg (1914-1918)*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau-Verlag, 2013; Bernhard Bachinger and Wolfram Dornik (eds.), *Jenseits des Schützengrabens. Der Erste Weltkrieg im Osten: Erfahrung--Wahrnehmung--Kontext*, Innsbruck, Vienna and Bozen: StudienVerlag, 2013; Wolfram Dornik, Julia Walleczek-Fritz and Stefan Wedrac (eds.), *Frontwechsel. Österreich-Ungarns 'Großer Krieg' im Vergleich*. Unter Mitarbeit von Markus Wurzer, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 2013; as well as Richard L. DiNardo, *Breakthrough : The Gorlice-Tarnow Campaign, 1915*, Westport CT: Praeger, 2010; and Richard Bassett is due to publish a book entitled *For God and Kaiser. A History of the Imperial Austrian Army from 1619 to 1918* with Yale in 2015.

⁴⁴ Manfred Rauchensteiner, *Der Tod der Doppeladler. Österreich-Ungarn und der Erste Weltkrieg*, Graz, Wien, Köln: Styria, 1993.

⁴⁵ Manfred Rauchensteiner, *Der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Habsburgermonarchie, 1914-1918*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 2013.

should consult its bibliography as well as that in Herwig's book for the older and more detailed literature. Rauchensteiner should also be supplemented by József Galántai, *Hungary in the First World War* (1989).⁴⁶

There can be no doubt from all accounts of the war that Conrad's military record was deplorable and that the army's strategic leadership was appalling.⁴⁷ Much, much more than Britain's forces, those of Austria-Hungary were indeed 'lions led by donkeys' (although the British record is now defended). What then of the argument about the nationalities subverting the Austro-Hungarian war effort? There is an extremely peculiar article by Geoffrey Wawro, entitled 'Morale in the Austro-Hungarian Army: the Evidence of Habsburg Army Campaign Reports and Allied Intelligence Officers',⁴⁸ which has to be confronted in this context. Basing himself on the clearly undeniable and rather obvious fact that the Habsburg army had to be rescued by the Germans on all fronts as well as on the accounts of a handful of prisoners who surrendered to allied, mainly French captors, Wawro repeats all the charges made against the Habsburg army by its post-1918 detractors: "the First World War, it is argued here, revealed as never before Austria-Hungary's social, political and military weaknesses. I take issue not only with historians who suggest that the monarchy's survival through four years of total war was evidence of its essential durability and legitimacy, but also with those more temperate ones who assert that the army 'mixed' great successes and failures. Besides Austria's defensive victories on the Isonzo front, which consisted of some almost unassailable positions, the Habsburg army's record in the war was one of chronic failure." (p. 400) His conclusion (pp. 409-410) is :

"In short, the evidence both of Habsburg army campaign reports *and* of Allied intelligence officers strongly suggests that the Austro-Hungarian army was indeed a 'prison of the nations'. Each major army campaign of the Great War revealed major nationality problems which called into question the Monarchy's very reason for being. Did the Habsburg Monarchy in fact unite and protect the small nations of East Central Europe against foreign domination, or was the Monarchy itself a foreign oppressor and, in the end a mere front for Reich German domination? Austria-Hungary's record in the Great War, from its early defeats to its final acceptance of Ludendorff's supreme command, suggests that the latter cannot be lightly ignored. The fact that there was some variation in the degree of loyalty or indifference within the various non-German ethnic groups, and that many German-Austrian soldiers shared in the general decline in morale does not alter the fact that the ethnic divisions within the army exacerbated by irredentist agitation on the home front, were a fundamental cause of its ineffectiveness under the strain of a modern war."

Wawro argues that the Habsburg army would have disintegrated much sooner had the Germans not propped it up or had it been subject to more allied offensives in the West. On the Italian front, he argues, the men were divided into reliable German-Austrian and Hungarian troops and unreliable others, who were controlled by field

⁴⁶ József Galántai, *Hungary in the First World War*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989.

⁴⁷ See Lawrence Sondhaus, *Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf etc* and Wolfram Dornik, Hannes Leidinger and Verena Moritz (eds.), *Des Kaisers Falke. Wirken und Nach-Wirken von Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf*, Innsbruck, Vienna and Bozen: Studienverlag, 2013.

⁴⁸ Geoffrey Wawro, 'Morale in the Austro-Hungarian Army: the Evidence of Habsburg Army Campaign reports and Allied Intelligence Officers,' in Hugh Cecil and Peter H. Liddle (eds.), *Facing Armageddon. The First World War Experienced*, London: Leo Cooper Ltd, 1996, p. 399-412.

gendarmes and prevented from deserting. Meanwhile, the Germans had all sorts of nasty nick names for Slavs and Rumanian troops and generally called them ‘cus’ – “akin to nigger or wog”.

Perhaps, as an academic, Wawro is unacquainted with barrack-room language and behaviour. In any case, there are a host of objections to his arguments. First, the army was in contact with the Russians and did not go over to the enemy. In fact— see below — there is a great deal of mythology about the Czechs who supposedly did desert. Secondly, nothing at all took place in Habsburg ranks to compare with the French mutinies of 1917 or the Russian army’s revolt against its officers in the same year. Instead, despite the many hundreds of thousands lost in 1914 and again in 1915 and 1916, despite the freezing snow and shell shock and all the miseries of war on the Eastern Front, and despite the starvation among the troops on all fronts from 1917, the army fought on. Wawro should read Tunstall’s work on the Carpathian War or the disintegration of the army, or John Schindler’s excellent but unpublished 1994 McMaster’s thesis, *A Hopeless Struggle: The Austro-Hungarian Army and Total War, 1914-1918*, which concludes (p. 269):

“The overwhelming majority of Habsburg soldiers fought with determination and bravery. Certainly, they had persevered far longer than anyone in 1914 — including the generals — had considered they might. The multinational army, the least prepared for war of all Europe’s major armies, offered unprecedented sacrifices against a host of well armed enemies. Its experience of total war was among the worst in Europe; its 5,000,000 casualties were comparable to France’s terrible losses. The army’s high level leadership was often poor, the Dual Monarchy failed to supply its troops properly, and there was little hope of ultimate victory. Yet the common soldiers of the multinational army endured, fighting for their Emperor-King and the honour of their regiments.”

According to Schindler, these soldiers, in Austria-Hungary’s greatest war, lived up to the reputations of Eugene of Savoy, the Archduke Charles and *Vater* Radetzky. They fought and died all over Central and Eastern Europe from the Adriatic to the Carpathians (p. 270): “Their now-forgotten sacrifices in a lost cause— triumphs at Valjevo, Gorlice, Doberdo, the Strypa, Caporetto and on the Tagliamento, as well as the defeats at Čer, Sztropkó, the Dukla Pass, Łuck and on the Piave— were enormous. By their great sacrifices, the soldiers of the wartime army proved themselves to be the last true ‘Austrians’, the last remaining defenders of the ancient Habsburg monarchy.”

Wawro, however, is probably reacting against the views expressed in the penultimate chapter of my *Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*. There I relied on a famous article by István Deák to demonstrate how the army had fought on till the end. For when the Italians took the final surrender of Habsburg troops on 11 November 1918 — between 350,000 and 400,000 men — only about one third were Austrian Germans. The rest included 83,000 Czechs and Slovaks, 61,000 South Slavs, 40,000 Poles, 32,000 Ruthenes, 25,000 Romanians and even 7,000 Italians. In Deák’s words: “this was the final irony: the last fighting forces of the Habsburg

monarchy were to a great extent Slavs, Romanians and Italians, all theoretically the allies of the Entente armies.”⁴⁹

Most of the debate over national disloyalty among the troops has concerned the Czechs in 1915 and 1917. Fortunately, a recent work of meticulous research should put an end to the dispute by demonstrating that Austrian officers accused the Czechs of dishonourable conduct to save their own reputations. Richard Lein’s *Pflichterfüllung oder Hochverrat. Die tschechischen Soldaten Österreich-Ungarns im Ersten Weltkrieg* (2011, p. 418)⁵⁰ concludes:

“in the light of the available documentary material, it can be stated absolutely in both cases that neither treason nor desertion by Czech troops occurred in the fighting at Esztebnekhuta or in the battle of Zborów.” According to one recent estimate, “Czech ambivalence towards Austria was strong before 1914, but until the very end never became outright hostility and rejection of Habsburg rule. Had the war ended in a stalemate or a victory for the Central Powers, outright Czech independence would never have been proclaimed... [yet] few Czech soldiers ever switched sides or mutinied before the very end of the war. Instead, most remained loyal to the Habsburgs until the final weeks of the war.”⁵¹

Indeed, the American consul reported from Prague in January 1916 : “The Bohemian national spirit which was so rampant before the war has absolutely evaporated...whatever the cause may be, there is no questioning the fact that on the surface at least there is loyalty to the Government... It is not safe to say whether this attitude of the Czechs is due to official pressure, but the Czechs are certainly showing no spirit in defending what I had been led by the Germans to believe was the political creed of all of them, that is, the separation of Bohemia from Austria.”⁵² The Habsburg Empire crumbled because by 1918 its soldiers and civilians were starving and its bet on German military victory had failed. It was defeated neither by the subversion of the nationalities who fought bravely and loyally to the end nor on account of international diplomacy. Its own inability to reform or to make a compromise peace allowed the Allies to accept the new national governments already in place as the imperial government and family simply disappeared.⁵³

⁴⁹ István Deák, ‘The Habsburg Army in the First and Last Days of World War I : a Comparative Analysis’, in Király, Dreisziger and Nofi, *op. cit.*, p. 301-12, p. 310.

⁵⁰ Richard Lein, *Pflichterfüllung oder Hochverrat. Die tschechischen Soldaten Österreich-Ungarns im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Vienna and Berlin: LIT, 2011.

⁵¹ Kees Bloterbloem, ‘Hašek, Švejk and the Czechoslovak Legion’ in Pastor and Tunstall, *op. cit.*, p. 131-160, p. 137.

⁵² Quoted in Claire Nolte, ‘Ambivalent Patriots: Czech Culture in the Great War,’ in Aviel Roshwald and Richard Stites (eds.), *European Culture in the Great War. The Arts, Entertainment and Propaganda*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 176-192, p. 163.

⁵³ For some new literature on the attitude of the nationalities during the war, see Hans Mommsen *et al.* (eds.), *Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Beziehungen zwischen Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutschen*, Essen: Klartex, 2001; Jan Křen, *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft. Tschechen und Deutsche 1780-1918*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2000; Otto Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft 1848 bis 1918*, 2 Vols., Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 1994; Ivan Šedivý, ‘České loajální projevy 1914-1918,’ [Czech declarations of loyalty, 1914-1918] *Český časopis historický*, Vol. 97, no. 2 (1999), p. 293-309; *ibid.*, *Češi, české země a velká válka 1914-1918* [The Czechs, the Bohemian Lands and the Great War, 1914-1918], Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2001; Zdeněk Tobolka, *Můj deník z první světové války* [My Diary from the First World War], Prague: Karolinum, 2008; and Karl Bahm, ‘The Inconveniences of Nationality: German Bohemians, the Disintegration of the Habsburg Monarchy, and the Attempt to Create a “Sudeten German” Identity,’ *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 27, no. 3 (1999), p. 375-405. Also relevant are

Occupation policy

The initial campaigns against Serbia by Oskar Potiorek's army were accompanied by massacres of civilians and the taking of hostages, partly in retaliation for the murders of Austrian troops by Serbian partisans. The evidence is assembled briefly in chapter twenty of Rudolf Jeřábek's biography, *Potiorek. General im Schatten von Sarajevo* (1991).⁵⁴ The main book (so far) on the Austrian occupation of Serbia between 1915 and 1918, which also covers the events of 1914, is Jonathan E. Gumz, *The Resurrection and Collapse of Empire in Habsburg Serbia, 1914-1918* (2009),⁵⁵ which is exceptionally well-researched and well-balanced and is based on thorough archival research in Vienna and Belgrade. Gumz places the Austro-Hungarian army at the centre of his picture and shows that its behaviour cannot be compared with that of the Nazis in the Second World War. Its outlook was backward-looking, determined to keep wars typical of the nineteenth century by giving Serbia the type of denationalised, apolitical, bureaucratic-absolutist regime it would have liked to see in Austria-Hungary itself. Despite atrocities and war crimes, there was no intention of annihilating or exterminating a racial enemy. The army, in fact, operated a fairly mild occupation policy aimed at denationalising the country. Civilian ration quotas were higher than in starving Austria itself, and Serbia in military eyes was to become the breadbasket for the army and its friends, not for the home front. Russian and German occupation policies elsewhere were much harsher. In Serbia, when repression failed, military law was used to overcome national resistance. In the end, the army seemed to have secured its aims and Austrian historians are now preparing to investigate wartime collaboration. This view of events is challenged, however, by the themes underlying Alan Kramer's book, *Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (2007),⁵⁶ which deals with the Balkan Wars and the Armenian genocide and argues that the ethnic hatreds caused by national mobilizations of civilians in the First World War laid the roots of the mass killings of the Second.⁵⁷

H. Louis Rees, *The Czechs during World War I: the Path to Independence*, Boulder CO and New York: East European Monographs, 1992; Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914-1923*, London and New York: Routledge, 2001; Ivo Banac, "'Emperor Karl has become a Komitadji': the Croatian Disturbances of Autumn 1918," *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 70, no. 2 (1992), p. 284-305; C. E. Wargelin, 'A High Price for Bread: the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the Break-Up of Austria-Hungary, 1917-18,' *International History Review*, Vol. 19, no. 4 (1997), p. 757-788; Mark Cornwall, *The Undermining of Austria-Hungary. The Battle for Hearts and Minds*, Basingstoke Macmillan, 2000; and John Paul Newman, 'Serbian Integral Nationalism and Mass Violence in the Balkans, 1903-1945,' *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, vol. 124 (2011). Newman is about to publish a monograph entitled *Warriors' Caste. The South Slav Wartime Generation in Yugoslavia, 1914-1945*.

⁵⁴ Rudolf Jeřábek, *Potiorek. General im Schatten von Sarajevo*, Graz, Vienna and Cologne: Böhlau, 1991.

⁵⁵ E. Gumz, *The Resurrection and Collapse of Empire in Habsburg Serbia, 1914-1918*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

⁵⁶ Alan Kramer, *Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

⁵⁷ See also Jovana Lazic Knezevic, *The Austro-Hungarian Occupation of Belgrade during the First World War. Battles at the Home Front*, unpublished dissertation, New Haven CT, 2006; and Tamara Scheer, 'Besatzungsregime im Vergleich. Serbiens Wirtschaft unter österreichisch-ungarischer und bulgarischer Herrschaft (1915-1918), in Carola Sachse (ed.), 'Mitteleuropa' und 'Südosteuropa' als

The other part of the Empire that experienced occupation in the First World War was Galicia, which twice passed from Austrian to Russian occupation. Slav inhabitants later deemed to have collaborated with the enemy were treated harshly; many were hanged by the Austrians while thousands of locals were forcibly transferred to other areas. The Jews of Galicia and Russian Poland, however, treated Austrian and German troops as liberators, which led to the Russians mistreating them when they retreated. It was very different from the Second World War :

“As Austria and Europe began to mobilize for war in the summer of 1914, Galician Zionists prepared as well. Most Galician Zionists shared the loyalty and patriotism of the overwhelming majority of Galician Jews, indeed, of all Habsburg Jews, towards the empire generally and toward Franz Joseph in particular. Most Jews in the Habsburg Empire focused their attention squarely on Tsarist Russia and saw themselves and Austria-Hungary as liberators of Russian Jewry, thus uniting their Jewish and Habsburg loyalties.”⁵⁸

Prisoners of War

Austro-Hungarian prisoners in the First World War found themselves overwhelmingly in Russian hands. Russia, in fact, took 54,146 officers captive and 2,057,000 of other ranks. In respect of nationality, 31 per cent were Hungarians, 30 per cent German Austrians, 7 per cent Romanians, 5 per cent Poles, 3 per cent Czechoslovaks, 3 per cent South Slavs, 2.5 per cent Jewish, and 0.5 per cent Italian. Officers were treated reasonably well. They were not forced to work and actually received a monthly stipend as laid down by the Hague Conventions. They were allowed to pursue hobbies and put on theatrical works in which better-looking

Planungsraum, Wirtschafts- und kulturpolitische Expertisen im Zeitalter der Weltkriege, Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2010, p. 315-339.

⁵⁸ Joshua Shanes, *Diaspora Nationalism and Jewish Identity in Habsburg Galicia*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 283. On occupied Galicia, see Mark von Hagen, *War in a European Borderland: Occupations and Occupation Plans in Galicia and Ukraine, 1914-1918*, Seattle WA: University of Washington Press, 2007; Alexander von Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and anti-Jewish Violence in East Galicia, 1914-1920*, Tuscaloosa AL: University of Alabama Press, 2005; Peter Holquist, ‘The Role of Personality in the First (1914-1915) Russian Occupation of Galicia and Bukovina,’ in John Klier (ed.), *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in European History*, Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2012; Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia’s Continuum of Crisis, 1914-1921*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2002; and, last but not least, Hannes Leidinger, ‘“Der Einzug des Galgens und des Mordes”. Die parlamentarischen Stellungnahmen polnischer und rutheniischer Reichsratsabgeordneter zu den Massenhinrichtungen in Galizien 1914-1915,’ in *Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 33 (2006), p. 235-260. For the spill-over of attitudes from the Bosnian campaign into Slovenia, see Martin Moll, *Kein Burgfrieden. Der deutsch-slovenische Nationalitätenkonflikt in der Steiermark, 1900-1018*, Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2007; for those areas of northern Italy affected by occupation and nationality conflict, see Hermann J. W. Kuprian, ‘Flüchtlinge, und Vertriebene aus den österreichisch-italienischen Grenzgebieten während des Ersten Weltkrieges,’ in Brigitte Mazohl-Wallnig and Marco Meriggi (eds.), *Österreichisches Italien—italienisches Österreich? Interkulturellegemeinsamkeiten und nationale Differenzen vom 18 Jahrhundert bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkrieges*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999, p. 737-751. Finally, for Montenegro under Austrian rule, Heiko Brendel is about to complete his Mainz doctoral thesis, which is entitled: *Die österreichisch-ungarische Besatzungspolitik in Montenegro, 1915-1918*.

younger males took the place of females. Those who were not officers, in stark contrast, endured appalling conditions in camps and were forced to work. Turkish prisoners of war received the worst treatment of all—being shunted around in boarded-up cattle wagons and sometimes left to die in them. Austrian prisoner-of-war (POW) camps were often places of ill-treatment also. After the Russian revolution, POWs were allowed their freedom to fight for both sides in the Russian Civil War. 60,000 Czechs ended up backing the Whites and 100,000 Hungarians, the Reds.⁵⁹

Naval War

The role of the imperial and royal navy in the First World War is covered by several works. Volume Five of the Austrian Academy's distinguished and indeed invaluable series, *Die Habsurgermonarchie, 1848-1918* edited by Adam Wandruschka and Peter Urbanitsch (1987) entitled *Die Bewaffnete Macht*,⁶⁰ as previously noted, has nothing to say on the war itself, but it does include a useful article by Lothar Höbelt on *Die Marine* (pp. 687-763), which gives the nineteenth-century background. Another work which covers the immediate background is Milan N. Vego's *Austro-Hungarian Naval Policy, 1904-1914* (1996),⁶¹ which stresses that Austria-Hungary's naval policy was not the result of German pressure but was based on (p. 195) "the interplay of her needs to acquire the status of a great sea power in both the Adriatic and the Mediterranean." Curiously, however, he questions her need to build dreadnoughts (p. 194) : "Surely it would have been more sensible and valuable for Austria-Hungary to spend her limited funds on building smaller surface combatants and submarines than on dreadnoughts and semi-dreadnoughts?" Maybe, as shall be seen, this is due to his reading of the war at sea after 1914 backwards, but even then it is difficult to understand how Austria-Hungary could have become a "great sea power" without dreadnoughts or how she could have countered France and Italy in the Mediterranean and Adriatic during the war itself without them. As for the war itself,

⁵⁹ On the developing research into POWs, see : Ernst Gusenbauer, 'Auf den Spuren einer vergessener Zeit. Das Kriegsgefangenenlager Mauthausen, 1914 bis 1918,' in *Oberösterreichische Heimatblätter*, Vol. 51 (1997), p. 13-23; Peter Hansak, *Das Kriegsgefangenenwesen während des 1 Weltkrieges im Gebiet der heutigen Steiermark*, unpublished dissertation, Graz, 1991; Rudolf Koch, *Im Hinterhof des Krieges. Das Kriegsgefangenenlager Sigmundsherberg*, Klosterneuburg: R. Koch, 2002; Reinhard Nachtigal, *Russland und seine österreichisch-ungarischen Kriegsgefangenen (1914-1918)*, Remshalden: Verlag Bernhard Albert Greiner, 2003; and Alon Rachamimov (now Iris Rachanimov), *POWs and the Great War. Captivity on the Eastern Front*, New York: Berg, 2002. See also: Peter Pastor, 'Hungarian Prisoners of War in Siberia,' in Petermimov, "Female generals" and "Siberian Angels": Aristocratic Nurses and the Austro-Hungarian POW Relief,' in Nancy M. Wingfield and Maria Bucur (eds.), *Gender and War in Twentieth Century Eastern Europe*, Bloomington IL: Indiana University Press, 2006, p. 23-46; the same author's 'Das Theaterleben der k.u.k. Kriegsgefangenenoffiziere in Russland, 1914-1920,' in Lawrence Cole, Christa Hämmerle and Martin Scheutz (eds.), 'Glanz-Gewalt-Gehorsam. Militär und Gesellschaft in der Habsburgermonarchie, 1800-1918, *Frieden und Krieg, Beiträge zur Historischen Friedensforschung*, Vol. 18, Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 2011, p.101-126; Benedek Baja and others, *Hadifolgy magyarok története* (History of Hungarian Prisoners of War), Budapest: Athenaeum, 1930; and Antal Józsa, *Háború, hadfifogság, forradalom. Magyar internacionalista hadifoglyok az 1917-es oroszországi forradalmakban* (War, Military Captivity, Revolution. Hungarian Internationalist Prisoners of War in the Russian Revolutions of 1917), Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970.

⁶⁰ Adam Wandruschka and Peter Urbanitsch (eds.), *Die Habsurgermonarchie, 1848-1918*, Vienna, 1987.

⁶¹ N. Vego, *Austro-Hungarian Naval Policy, 1904-1914*, London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1996.

the reader is referred to works by Hans Hugo Sokol, Anthony F. Sokol and Lawrence Sondhaus.⁶² Sondhaus is the author of several fine books on Habsburg military history, and *The Naval Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1867-1918: Navalism, Industrial Development and the Politics of Dualism*, his second book on Austrian naval policy in the nineteenth century, will surely become the standard one for Austria-Hungary's naval record during the First World War.

The story itself is, following Sondhaus, quite straightforward. By 1912, Admiral Montecuccoli, backed by the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, had built up the Austro-Hungarian navy to be a force to be reckoned with in the Mediterranean even by Great Britain, which fearing for the safety of its fleet in Malta, not to mention the looming danger of Tirpitz's *Risikoflotte* in the North Sea, withdrew its ships to home waters and left the French to deal with the Austrians and Italians. By 1913, the fleet had some 871 officers, 18,000 active seamen and a 22,000 reserve. During the Balkan Wars 25,000 men had been on active duty. In 1913 the fleet also got a new Inspector, Rear Admiral Haus, who spoke seven languages, had circumnavigated the globe, had written a textbook on oceanography and was an expert on torpedoes. By now the fleet also had two dreadnoughts. In October 1913 the government approved a programme for four new dreadnoughts, three cruisers, six destroyers, two Danube monitors and a supply ship. Hungarian support was won by awarding building contracts to Fiume.

The strategy planned by the fleet had been laid out by the Triple Alliance Naval Convention of October 1913 which foresaw the Italians cooperating with Austria-Hungary, something that already looked unlikely given the secrecy of Italian naval exercises and the clashes taking place between Italians and Slovenes in Trieste. When war did break out, of course, the Italians were at first neutral and then hostile, leaving the Austrians to face first a superior French fleet and then a very superior combination of France and Italy. Haus's ambitions to win a second Trafalgar or Lissa had to be put aside. Even victory in battle over the French would have almost certainly left the Mediterranean open to Italian domination. Besides, the Austrians lacked coal supplies to fuel their fleet. These had traditionally been supplied by the British and Britain now, for the first time ever, was Austria's enemy. (Some ships, it was true, were oil-burning but problems of receiving oil from Austrian Galicia — when it remained Austrian of course — simply exacerbated Austria's fuel problem.⁶³) After the failure of the Dardanelles, there was pressure on Haus to come out of port to attack the allies, but such a move, he emphasised, made "absolutely not the least strategic sense" (p. 267). When Italy entered the war, she brought fifteen battleships including four dreadnoughts, with a fifth almost ready for service. Haus was absolutely correct.

The allies, however, were very wary of moving their own ships within range of the Austrians, so that the war at sea in the Mediterranean, just as in the North Sea, became a stand-off (Jutland in 1916 would only confirm this strategy). The Entente

⁶² Hans Hugo Sokol, *Österreich-Ungarns Seekrieg, 1914-1918*, 2 Vols., 1933, reprint, Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1967; Anthony F. Sokol, *The Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian Navy*, Annapolis MD: US Naval Institute, 1968; Lawrence Sondhaus, 'The Austro-Hungarian Naval Officer Corps, 1867-1918,' *Austrian History Yearbook*, 1995, and *idem*, *The Naval Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1867-1918 : Navalism, Industrial Development and the Politics of Dualism*, West Lafayette IN: Purdue University Press, 1994.

⁶³ See Alison Frank, *Oil Empire: Visions of Prosperity in Austrian Galicia*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.

drew a line at the mouth of the Adriatic and left the sea itself to Austria-Hungary. Only on two occasions did Haus break out. When Italy entered the war, the Austrians immediately attacked several points on the Italian coast, destroying a few bridges and railway tracks and killing a few military personnel and civilians. No ships were lost and Italian morale was depressed, even if the Italian coastal railway was little affected. Italy retaliated by using airships to bomb Sebenico and Pola, after which the Austrian naval air arm — 43 sea planes to Italy's 27— began regular raids on Venice. Meanwhile, Austria-Hungary's submarines counted for most of her successes at sea against the enemy. The second outing by Austrian ships came during the so-called Battle of the Otranto Straits of May 1917, when they attacked the anti-submarine nets there and had a difficult job eluding Entente ships on their return. For the most part, the strategy of staying in port at Pola was a good one. As Sondhaus points out (pp. 294-295), this deployment protected the largest and most populous cities of the Adriatic, Trieste and Fiume, which otherwise faced only ineffective attacks by Italian torpedo boats, submarines and airships. The Italian naval squadron in Venice was compelled to remain in port and Venice itself could not be reinforced. Finally, fear of Austro-Hungarian submarines, torpedo boats and her fleet air arm foiled any Italian plan to dominate the Southern Adriatic and kept the large warships of the allies south of the Straits of Otranto. The navy could therefore protect the southern border of the Empire despite being vastly outnumbered.

The role of Austro-Hungarian submarines and the fleet air arm should not therefore be neglected. In this respect, the reader should refer to the article by John Harbon, 'Franz Josef's Forgotten U-Boat Captains',⁶⁴ and to Peter Schupita, *Die k.u.k. Seeflieger: Chronik und Dokumentation der österreichisch-ungarischen Marineluftwaffe, 1911-1918* (1983).⁶⁵ Before leaving the subject, however, one should stress that in 1917 Haus was an enthusiast for Germany's policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, with which he "agreed unreservedly" (although he died just days after it started). When warned that it might provoke US entry into the war, he "declared that no great anxiety need be felt." Ministers therefore reluctantly gave their consent to Austria-Hungary taking part, although the Empress was opposed and Emperor Karl only agreed "under angry protest". (p. 293). Haus justified his position by citing the Entente's sinking of unarmed Austro-Hungarian vessels including the torpedoing of the 3,200 ton Habsburg hospital ship, the *Electra*, in March 1916 by a French submarine.

Finally, Sondhaus covers both the strike at Pola of January 1918 and the mutiny at Cattaro of February 1918. Both were easily dealt with and the causes attributed to them are less political ones (including the nationality question), than social, including poor leadership, different standards of living of, and lack of contact between, officers and men, and of course the lack of food available by this stage of the war.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ John Harbon, 'Franz Josef's Forgotten U-Boat Captains', *History Today*, Vol. 46 (6), June 1996, p. 51-56.

⁶⁵ Peter Schupita, *Die k.u.k. Seeflieger: Chronik und Dokumentation der österreichisch-ungarischen Marineluftwaffe, 1911-1918*, Koblenz: Bernard & Graefe, 1983.

⁶⁶ See also Richard Georg Plaschka's works, namely, *Cattaro-Prag. Revolte und Revolution. Kriegsmarine und Heer Österreich-Ungarns im Feuer der Aufstandsbewegungen vom 1 Februar und 28 Oktober 1918*, Vienna: Hermann Böhlau Nachf, 1963; and *Matrosen, Offiziere, Rebellen. Krisenkonfrontationen zur See, 1900-1918*, 2 Vols., Vienna, Cologne and Graz: Böhlau, 1984.

The War Economy

The only real sources for Austria's war economy until recently were the volumes produced in the 1920s by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.⁶⁷ Fortunately, there are now a number of more general surveys of the Austro-Hungarian war economy.⁶⁸ The most recent and most accessible account, however, is that of Max-Stephan Schulze, 'Austria-Hungary's economy in World War I'.⁶⁹ The concluding paragraph (p. 107) of Schulze's article deserves to be quoted :

“The main conclusions from the preceding discussion of Austria-Hungary's war economy can be summarised as follows. First, the war effort was sustained into 1918 on the basis of a rapidly decreasing resource base. Constrained by scarcity of input materials and cumulative labour shortages, aggregate output fell continuously over the course of the war. Moreover, the share of war expenditure in real GDP fell from an initial peak of 30 per cent (1914/15) to about 17 per cent in 1917/18. Hence the scale of mobilization, both in absolute terms and relative to the size of the economy, was small to that achieved in major belligerent economies such as the United Kingdom and Germany. Second, the Allied blockade worked and its impact was augmented by a serious lack of foreign exchange: Austria-Hungary's foreign trade was far too limited to reduce significantly the shortage of essential war materials and foodstuffs. Third, the Empire's complex macropolitical structure, a legacy of the 1867 constitutional compromise between Austria and Hungary, undermined the efficiency and effectiveness of intra-empire resource allocation and utilisation. Fourth, a small domestic capital market proved incapable of sustaining wartime borrowing at high levels. After a short-lived rise in the initial stages of the war, the debt/GDP ratio remained just above peacetime levels. To the extent that Austria-Hungary did fight the war on the cheap, that was not an outcome of choice, but of necessity in light of inadequate resources. Finally, the persistent and widespread food scarcity and resultant physical exhaustion of both civilian population and the armed forces was a key factor in bringing about the collapse of the Habsburg Empire.”

⁶⁷ These included E. L. Bogart, *Direct and Indirect Costs of the Great War*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1920; Gustáv Graz and R. Schüller, *The Economic Policy of Austria-Hungary During the War*, New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1928; Gusztáv Gratz and Richard Schüller, *Der wirtschaftliche Zusammenbruch Österreich-Ungarns. Die Tragödie der Erschöpfung*, Vienna: Holder-Pichler-Tempsky/Carnegie, 1930; Leo Grebler and Wilhelm Winkler, *The Cost of the World War to Germany and Austria-Hungary*, New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1940; Hans Löwenfeld-Russ, *Die Regelung der Volksnahrung im Kriege*, Vienna: Holder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1926; Alexander Popovics, *Das Geldwesen im Kriege*, Vienna: Holder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1925; Richard Riedl, *Die Industrie Österreichs während des Krieges*, Vienna: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1932; János Teleszky, *A Magyar Penzügyei A Háború Alatt*, Budapest: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1927; and Wilhelm Winkler, *Die Einkommensverschiebungen in Österreich während des Weltkrieges*, Vienna: Holder-Pichler-Tempsky- Carnegie Endowment, 1930. A more recent study is Heinrich Mezlik, *Die Eisenbewirtschaftung im Ersten Weltkrieg. Die Planwirtschaft der k.u.k. Kriegsministeriums*, Vienna: Verlag A. Schendl, 1977.

⁶⁸ These include Zdenek Jindra, 'Der wirtschaftliche Zerfall Österreich-Ungarns' in Alice Teichova and Herbert Matis (eds.), *Österreich und die Tschechoslowakei, 1918-1938*, Vienna: Bohlau, 1996 ; Robert J. Wegs, 'Transportation: The Achilles Heel of the Habsburg War Effort,' in Robert A. Kann, Béla Király and Paula S. Fichtner (eds.), *The Habsburg Empire in World War I*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1977, p. 121-134; and Robert J. Wegs, *Die österreichische Kriegswirtschaft, 1914-1918*, Vienna: A. Schendl, 1979.

⁶⁹ Max-Stephan Schulze, 'Austria-Hungary's Economy in World War I' in Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison (eds.), *The Economics of World War I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005 (also an [e-book](#)), p. 77-111

Schulze, perhaps, does not sufficiently stress the significance of transportation which is clearly set out in Wegs, *Transportation etc.* (p. 130) :

“The failure of the railways was very instrumental in the final economic and military collapse since there was often large amounts of fuel, raw material, and finished products that could not be delivered. The ammunition shortages experienced in the last major Austro-Hungarian offensive against Italy in June 1918 was second only to the failure in military tactics in contributing to the defeat of the Imperial Army... These shortages reduced the number of active artillery batteries in Conrad’s forces by fifty...the Army High Command calculated that the army needed an additional 4,500 railway cars to supply all the food needed on the eve of the offensive...Transportation must be considered the Monarchy’s Achilles Heel. Even more than material shortages, industrial firms cited insufficient transportation as the major reason for production shortages and work stoppages during the war.”

Nonetheless, he is certainly right in pointing to food shortages as a key factor in the defeat of the Empire, a factor exacerbated, as he rightly points out, by the actions of the Hungarian government. Apart from the relevant volumes of the Carnegie Endowment mentioned above, the classical work on the topic is Ottokar Landwehr’s *Hunger: Die Erschöpfungsjahre der Mittelmächte, 1917-1918* (1931)⁷⁰ (Major General Landwehr was head of the Joint Food Committee set up in February 1917). The effects of hunger on the Habsburg army and civilian populations are explored in Richard George Plaschka, Horst Haselsteiner and Arnold Suppan, *Innere Front : Miliärassisten, Widerstand, und Umsturz in der Donaumonarchie 1918* (1974).⁷¹ The key article is Horst Haselsteiner, ‘The Habsburg Empire in World War I: Mobilization of Food Supplies.’⁷² Haselsteiner rightly states : “Almost independent of the events of the war and the international situation, the feeding of the army and of the civilian population became a question of survival for Austria-Hungary (p. 87).” He points out that before 1914 Austria-Hungary was self-sufficient in grain, but on military advice that the war would be a short one, no plans had been made for the stockpiling of foodstuffs. This was a fatal error. As the war went on, key grain growing areas of the Empire were lost (Galicia), refugees had to be fed, harvests failed, Hungary refused Austrian requests for aid, expected supplies from defeated Romania and the Ukraine proved illusory, and requisitioning by the army alienated peasants everywhere. Haselsteiner recounts the various steps taken by the governments in the Monarchy to try to remedy the situation, yet by 1918 troops and civilians alike were starving and simply wanted the war to end. Mark Cornwall in one essay quotes a Polish soldier writing to his mother from the 10th Army in March 1918, describing how four men were sharing one loaf and some water. He added:

“I think we will all die of hunger before a bullet gets us...Ah dear mother, our dog is better fed than I am here. In the cabbage there are worms... we have to live and fight like this.”

⁷⁰ Ottokar Landwehr, *Hunger: Die Erschöpfungsjahre der Mittelmächte, 1917-1918*, Zurich, Leipzig and Vienna: Amalthea, 1931.

⁷¹ George Plaschka, Horst Haselsteiner and Arnold Suppan, *Innere Front : Miliärassisten, Widerstand, und Umsturz in der Donaumonarchie 1918*, Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1974.

⁷² Horst Haselsteiner, ‘The Habsburg Empire in World War I: Mobilization of Food Supplies,’ in Király, Dreisziger and Nofi (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 87-102.

In another essay Cornwall recounts how in Istria in 1918 people were dropping dead of hunger or trying to live off grass and nettles. By this time, 90 per cent of letters handled in Vienna and Feldkirch by the censors were complaining of food supply problems.⁷³ Almost all studies of the Empire during the war suggest that hunger and war-weariness rather than political ideologies or nationalisms were the true causes of Habsburg defeat. Peter Pastor in an essay⁷⁴ on ‘The Home Front in Hungary, 1914-1918’ records that in 1918 the Hungarian minister for food admitted that the government could no longer feed its troops or its civilian population. Amazingly, the army still fought on till the bitter end. Maureen Healy in her book (see the section on the home front) points out that it was basically lack of food that undermined the Monarchy in Vienna. Finally there is an article that specifically addresses the link between starvation and political radicalism in the Bohemian Lands, namely Peter Heumos, “Kartoffeln her oder es gibt eine Revolution”. *Hungerkrawalle, Streiks un Massenproteste in den böhmischen Ländern, 1914-1918.*⁷⁵ Holger Herwig, *The First World War, Germany and Austria-Hungary*,⁷⁶ remarks ironically on the aftermath of victory at Caporetto in 1917 from the perspective of food supplies (p. 344)

Before leaving the war economy, one article – on who ultimately repaid Austria’s war loans – which is worth mentioning, is Thomas Winkelbauer, ‘Wer bezahlte den Untergang der Habsburgermonarchie? Zur nationalen Streuung der österreichischen Kriegsanleihen im Ersten Weltkrieg.’⁷⁷ Finally, on the topic of the free trades unions during the war and their cooperation with the government, see Margarete Grandner, *Kooperative Gewerkschaften in der Kriegswirtschaft. Die freien Gewerkschaften Österreichs im Ersten Weltkrieg* (1992).⁷⁸

Government in Wartime

The basic study of the government of Austria-Hungary during wartime is Joseph Redlich’s volume, written under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment, namely *Österreichische Regierung und Verwaltung im Weltkrieg* (1925).⁷⁹ Also invaluable is Christoph Führ, *Die k.u.k. Armeeoberkommando und die Innenpolitik in Österreich*,

⁷³ See Mark Cornwall, ‘Morale and Patriotism in the Austro-Hungarian Army, 1914-1918,’ in John Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 173-191, p. 182-3 and ‘The Experience of Yugoslav Agitation in Austria-Hungary, 1917-1918,’ in Hugh Cecil and Peter H. Liddle (eds.), *Facing Armageddon. The First World War Experience*, London: Leo Cooper, 1996, p. 656-676, p. 661.

⁷⁴ Peter Pastor, ‘The Home Front in Hungary, 1914-1918,’ in Király and Dreisziger, *op. cit.*, p. 125-134.

⁷⁵ Peter Heumos, “Kartoffeln her oder es gibt eine Revolution”. *Hungerkrawalle, Streiks un Massenproteste in den böhmischen Ländern, 1914-1918,* in Hans Mommsen, Dušan Kovač and Jiří Malíř and others (eds.), *Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Beziehungen zwischen Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutschen*, Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2001

⁷⁶ Holger Herwig, *The First World War, Germany and Austria-Hungary*, London: Edward Arnold, 1997.

⁷⁷ Thomas Winkelbauer, ‘Wer bezahlte den Untergang der Habsburgermonarchie? Zur nationalen Streuung der österreichischen Kriegsanleihen im Ersten Weltkrieg,’ *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Geschichtsforschung*, Vol. 112 (2004), p. 368-398.

⁷⁸ Margarete Grandner, *Kooperative Gewerkschaften in der Kriegswirtschaft. Die freien Gewerkschaften Österreichs im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Vienna: Böhlau, 1992

⁷⁹ Joseph Redlich, *Österreichische Regierung und Verwaltung im Weltkrieg*, Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1925.

1914-1917 (1968).⁸⁰ More recently, there is Tamara Scheer's *Zwischen Front und Heimat: Österreich-Ungarns Militärverwaltungen im Ersten Weltkrieg* (2009).⁸¹ All volumes cover the army's role in wartime administration. Did this amount to what Mark Cornwall has called "bureaucratic-military dictatorship", the term he used in 'Disintegration and Defeat: The Austro-Hungarian Revolution' (1990)?⁸² Perhaps not. Recent research suggests that the army's relationship with local bureaucracies may have been more hostile than cooperative.⁸³

On the highest political level, the fact was, of course, that, since the Austrian Parliament had been closed before the outbreak of war, the Monarchy was run by the Emperor and his military and civilian advisers as usual, although in Hungary parliament remained in session and political affairs there were dominated by the Prime minister, István Tisza. Hungary stayed loyal to the end. The key question about Habsburg government at the highest level during the First World War concerns not the role of Franz Joseph or even the role of the army in occupied or militarily sensitive territories, but why there was no radical change after the death of Franz Joseph in November 1916 and the accession of the Emperor Karl I. Given that he is now a candidate for canonization (he was beatified in 2004), much of the recent literature on him is unreliable. See, for example, Elizabeth Kovács, *Untergang oder Rettung der Donaumonarchie? Die österreichische Frage, Kaiser und König Karl I (IV) und die Neuordnung Mitteleuropas 1916-1922*, (Vol. I, 2004), and *Untergang oder Rettung der Donaumonarchie? Politische Dokumente zu Kaiser und König Karl I (IV) aus Internationalen Archiven* (Vol. II, 2004).⁸⁴ The first volume is

⁸⁰ Christoph Führ, *Die k.u.k. Armeeoberkommando und die Innenpolitik in Österreich, 1914-1917*, Wien, Graz and Cologne: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1968.

⁸¹ Tamara Scheer, *Zwischen Front und Heimat: Österreich-Ungarns Militärverwaltungen im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt: Lang, 2009.

⁸² Mark Cornwall, 'Disintegration and Defeat: The Austro-Hungarian Revolution,' in M. Cornwall (ed.), *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary: A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth-Century Europe*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990.

⁸³ See, for example, Gerd Pircher, *Militär, Verwaltung, und Politik in Tyrol im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1995; Oswald Überegger, *Der andere Krieg: Die Tiroler Militärgerichtbarkeit im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 2002; and Anton Holzer, *Das Lächeln der Henker: Der unbekanntes Krieg gegen die Zivilbevölkerung, 1914-1918*, Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2008. Related research includes Hans Hautmann, 'Zum Sozialprofil der Militärriechter im Ersten Weltkrieg,' in Erika Weinzierl (ed.), *Richter und Gesellschaftspolitik*, Innsbruck/Wien: Studien Verlag, 1997, p. 21-30; Ted Peter Konakowitsch, *Im Namen Seiner Majestät des Kaisers. Die Tätigkeit der Grazer Militärgerichte, 1914-1918*, unpublished dissertation, Graz, 1999; Michael Pesendorfer, *Die Militärjustiz Österreich-Ungarns im I. Weltkrieg*, unpublished dissertation, Salzburg, 1994; Karl Platzer, *Standrechtliche Todesurteile im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Stuttgart: WiKu-Verlag, 2004; Matthias Preuschl, *Österreichische Militärstrafgerichtsbarkeit, 1914-bis 1918*, unpublished dissertation, Salzburg, 1994; and most recently, Irina Marin, 'World War I and Internal Repression: The Case of Major General Nikolaus Cena', in *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. XLIV (2013). Not to be ignored is an older, key article, namely Richard Georg Plaschka, 'The Army and Internal Conflict in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1918', in Király, Dreisziger and Nofi (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 338-353. On a related topic, see Alon Rachamimov, 'Arbiters of Allegiance: Austro-Hungarian censors during World War I,' in Judson and Rozenblit (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 157-177; and Mark Cornwall, 'News, Rumour and Control of Information in Austria-Hungary, 1914-1918', *History*, Vol. 77, no. 249 (1991), p. 50-64.

⁸⁴ Elizabeth Kovács, *Untergang oder Rettung der Donaumonarchie? Die österreichische Frage, Kaiser und König Karl I (IV) und die Neuordnung Mitteleuropas 1916-1922*, (Vol. I, Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2004); *Vol. II, Untergang oder Rettung der Donaumonarchie? Politische Dokumente zu Kaiser und König Karl I (IV) aus Internationalen Archiven* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 2004).

hagiographical, conspiratorial and Vatican-funded; the second is more useful in that it prints documents from the secret Habsburg family archive submitted to the Vatican for Karl's beatification. Some other works from the same perspective are Peter Broucek, *Karl I (IV): Der politische Weg des letzten Herrschers der Donaumonarchie* (1997);⁸⁵ Eva Demmerele, *Kaiser Karl I: "Selig, die Frieden stiften"* (2004);⁸⁶ and Jean Sévillia, *Le dernier empereur. Charles d'Autriche, 1887-1922* (2009).⁸⁷ More useful is a collection of essays of Andreas Gottsman (ed.), *Karl I (IV), der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Donaumonarchie* (2007),⁸⁸ and a biography by Jan Galandauer, *Karel I: poslední český král [Karl I: the last Bohemian King]* (2004).⁸⁹ The latter work, despite its author's excellent knowledge of the archives, suffers from a lack of footnotes. The fact remains that most of what has been written about Karl has been partisan, misleading or superficial. However, a doctoral thesis completed in 2012 at the London School of Economics sets the record straight and with any luck will shortly be published or turned into a biography. It has examined everything to be discovered about the Emperor in the Viennese and other archives and covers his key decisions in power in 1917 in 125,000 words. It is by Christopher Brennan and is entitled *Reforming Austria-Hungary: beyond his control or beyond his capacity? The domestic policies of Emperor Karl I, November 1916-May 1917*. In Brennan's words (pp. 10-11) :

"Quite unwittingly...Karl's road to holiness has provided the most significant boost to historical research. Indeed, numerous documents were submitted to the Vatican — and subsequently verified, and published extensively in 2004 — from the otherwise closed Habsburg archive. Previously only a handful of historians had been granted (very limited) access to some of the private papers of the imperial family, thanks to their close relationship with its members. Unfortunately this association, particularly with (the Empress) Zita, proved fatal to their impartiality. As a result, though useful articles have appeared, no works of academic quality exist on Karl's life and reign as a whole. In the classic accounts of the downfall of the Monarchy, Karl takes up little space. There, the conclusions are often penetrating but, ultimately, always damning."

So what does this latest research reveal? Though Karl has often been credited with a desire to reform the Empire along federal lines (and indeed to salvage it thereby), there is scant evidence that he took any action in this direction — at least not until it was far too late. His early political appointments certainly fail to corroborate this avowed desire. In December 1916, in the month after coming to power, he dismissed the experienced Koerber as Prime Minister and subsequently let the moderate Spitzmüller slip away, even though both men supported the return of parliamentary rule and opposed the abusive use of the autocratic paragraph 14 of the constitution. Instead, he appointed the pro-German Clam-Martinic, who immediately set about fulfilling long-standing German demands by decree as a necessary precondition to the recall of the *Reichsrat*. Influenced by his foreign minister, Czernin, and his lord

⁸⁵ Peter Broucek, *Karl I (IV) : Der politische Weg des letzten Herrschers der Donaumonarchie*, Vienna: Böhlau, 1997.

⁸⁶ Eva Demmerele, *Kaiser Karl I: "Selig, die Frieden stiften"*, Vienna: Amalthea, 2004.

⁸⁷ Jean Sévillia, *Le dernier empereur. Charles d'Autriche, 1887-1922*, Paris: Perrin, 2009.

⁸⁸ Andreas Gottsman (ed.), *Karl I (IV), der Erste Weltkrieg und das Ende der Donaumonarchie*, Vienna: VÖAW, 2007.

⁸⁹ Jan Galandauer, *Karel I: poslední český král [Karl I: the last Bohemian King]*, Prague/Litomyšl: Paseka, 2004.

chamberlain, Hohenlohe, and cowed by cocksure, clamorous German nationalists, Karl effectively acquiesced in the pursuit of a German course (the so-called *octroi*), despite his undoubted personal reservations on the subject.

The principal measures of the *octroi* policy were the introduction of German as the official internal language of state (i.e. within the bureaucracy), the partition of Bohemia along national lines (to reinforce German autonomy in the area), the granting of sub-dualistic autonomy to Galicia (to exclude Polish deputies from the *Reichsrat* and ensure a German majority) and the associated amendments of the parliamentary standing orders. This policy was pursued aggressively by the German nationalists, with tactical endorsements from the Christian Socials and the support of the Poles. It was, however, opposed by all other nationalities. Karl may have longed for the reconciliation of his peoples but he accepted the execution of an iniquitous and unilateral policy which could only entrench division and intensify the nationality conflict.

Fortunately for him, the inefficiency of his government (under the leadership of the listless, tormented Clam) and the insolubility of the Polish question delayed the implementation of the *octroi* until events ultimately made it impossible. In March 1917, the Russian Revolution put the first nail in the coffin of the policy by radicalizing the masses (particularly the Czechs in Bohemia), the political opponents of the policy and the Poles. The Social Democrats and the Czechs denounced it with increased vehemence, while many Poles — now filled with dreams of an independent Poland — considered it wholly insufficient. Moreover, worried by popular unrest and convinced of the need for an immediate recall of parliament, the Christian Socials effectively withdrew their support. Only the German nationalists, and then really only the die-hards, continued to insist on the full promulgation of their *octroi*.

Czernin, hitherto a staunch supporter of the plan, realised that this anti-Slav and undemocratic measure would endanger potential peace negotiations with the revolutionaries in Russia and began to question its wisdom. (He also hoped to enlist the Social Democrats in his quest to obtain peace with Russia and they had already demanded its abandonment as a prerequisite). He also worried about the impact of the *octroi* on the volatile masses in the Czech Lands. Karl, shocked by events in St. Petersburg and deeply concerned about the spread of revolution to Austria-Hungary, shared this apprehension. Moreover, he was in secret negotiations with the Entente through his brother-in-law Sixtus and understood the threat to any possible agreement posed by this repressive, pro-German policy. The *octroi* had therefore become a menace to peace prospects in the East and in the West, and to domestic harmony. Czernin — with Karl's blessing the most powerful political figure in both foreign and domestic matters — waited to see if Germany could be brought to reason over Alsace-Lorraine, if the peace party gained ground in Russia, and if his own peace feelers in Switzerland came to anything. Indeed, should peace be achieved, the *octroi* need not be cancelled. By early April, however, peace was no nearer on either front, while the domestic situation — plagued by lack of food, unrest and strikes — had continued to worsen. The American declaration of war on 6 April finally convinced Czernin that the *octroi* had to be cancelled. The foreign minister believed that the US had now decisively tipped the scales in favour of the enemy and understood that the *octroi* stood in complete contradiction to the calls for self-determination trumpeted by Wilson. Should Austria-Hungary stand any chance of surviving, she would have to

show tolerance and equality in the treatment of her nationalities. On 16 April, Czernin irrupted in a (domestic) ministerial council and put the *octroi* to the sword. Thereafter, the government sought desperately to appease the incensed nationalists (with moderate success), but did not attempt to reach out to other factions. Thus when the Slav-dominated *Reichsrat* reopened on 30 May, the government was almost without allies. The German nationalists still insisted on the fulfilment of their demands, but Clam was in no position to put these through parliament. Furthermore, the Slavs now had a platform to denounce imperial excesses and to stake their claims for greater rights and autonomy. Within a month, the cabinet had resigned. But instead of inaugurating a new direction through a bold prime ministerial appointment, Karl temporarily nominated Seidler, a dour Lower Austrian bureaucrat who pursued a non-committal, middle way which satisfied no one. (In Hungary, Karl finally did away with the domineering and intransigent Tisza, but replaced him with the insipid and inexperienced Esterházy, who achieved nothing and had to be relieved of his post after two months when he suffered a nervous breakdown and became suicidal.) Meanwhile, prospects for a rapid peace in the East and the West faded, and the domestic situation continued to deteriorate. And, thanks to the public forum provided by parliament, Austria-Hungary's disunity was visible to the world. In a desperate bid to win back the increasingly alienated Czechs (and undoubtedly out of a genuine sense of justice), Karl decreed an amnesty for political prisoners on 2 July. This measure, which concerned principally (but not exclusively) Czech detainees, was greeted with dismay and anger by the Germans who, for the first time, began to lose their trust and confidence in the emperor. However, the botched execution of the measure also removed much of the goodwill it had generated amongst the Czechs. And the amnesty backfired completely when many of the released men returned to their homelands to resume their agitation against the empire. And here they benefited from the relaxation in censorship and repression which Karl had also introduced. By the summer of 1917, the nations of Austria, though radicalized and less conciliatory and more ambitious in their demands, were still largely loyal to the empire. But this was already the eleventh hour and drastic action for peace abroad and reform at home was needed. However, Karl proved unable or unwilling to appoint the men to carry out these necessities. He considered moderates and reformists such as Lammasch, Redlich and Polzer-Hoditz but each time yielded to pressure from the Germans (and indeed from the all-powerful Czernin). By confirming Seidler in his post as Austrian Prime Minister and nominating Wekerle as his Hungarian counterpart, Karl unwittingly admitted defeat by maintaining the *statu quo*. The Czechs, the South Slavs and the Social Democrats never had a stake in government and waited in vain for conciliatory proposals. On the other hand, the Germans could not push through their own demands, as they remained a minority in parliament. And by then, the Poles were already lost. By the autumn, any serious prospect of internal reform and pacification had disappeared; the game was up. Karl was a fair, well-intentioned ruler, whose understanding of Austria-Hungary's predicament was often accurate. However, he was naïve and lacking in moral courage. As a result, he frequently submitted to stronger men (such as Czernin) and acquiesced in policies he distrusted. Ultimately he could not satisfy any national or political faction and his stalling, halting, middle-of-the road manner

was wholly inappropriate and insufficient in wartime. His Manifesto of October 1918 came at least a year too late.

Two other works on high government policy might be mentioned, namely Fritz Fellner and Doris A. Corradini (eds.), *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs, 1869-1936 : Die Erinnerungen und Tagebücher Josef Redlichs* (3 Vols., 2011).⁹⁰ A similar new edition of the Baernreither diaries is also planned to come out this year or very soon.

The Home Front

Much like the military role of Austria in the war, the home front in Austria-Hungary also fails to receive proper coverage. For example, of the 56 essays published in the first four volumes resulting from the conferences held by the International Society for First World War Studies, only two are largely devoted to Habsburg studies.⁹¹

Recently, however, there has been some positive interest in the home front in Austria. The most notable work in English has been Maureen Healy's, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire. Total War and Everyday Life in World War I* (2004).⁹² She writes in the concluding chapter (p. 300) :

“This study adds a new dimension to the long-standing historical thesis that the Habsburg state collapsed for ‘internal’ rather than ‘external’ reasons: the collapse was even more deeply internal than previously imagined. The state was discredited not only in the eyes of national minorities in other parts of Austria or in the minds of weary troops at the front, as other histories have shown, but also in the markets, apartment houses, schoolyards, streets and the pubs of its own imperial capital.” However, her emphasis is on the increasingly harsh conditions of life during the war, rather than the nationalities question. As she states (p. 300): “This study has found the roots of the collapse of the Habsburg state in the mundane and every day.”

Healy's first chapter describes the effect of the food crisis on Vienna and shows that the Viennese blamed it less on the allied blockade or the loss of Galicia than on the Hungarians, local Austrian farmers, Viennese merchants and fellow citizens. The army was also to blame for demanding priority of supply for its troops. Moreover,

⁹⁰ Fritz Fellner and Doris A. Corradini (eds.), *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs, 1869-1936 : Die Erinnerungen und Tagebücher Josef Redlichs*, 3 Vols., Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 2011.

⁹¹ The books in question are: Jenny Macleod and Pierre Purseigle (eds.), *Uncovered Fields: Perspectives in First World War Studies*, History of Warfare, Vol. 20, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005; Pierre Purseigle (ed.), *Warfare and Belligerence : Perspectives in First World War Studies*, History of Warfare, Vol. 30, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005; Heather Jones, Jennifer O'Brien and Christopher Schmidt-Supprian (eds.), *Untold War: New Perspectives in First World War Studies*, History of Warfare, Vol. 49, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2008; Jennifer D. Keane and Michael S. Neiberg (eds.), *Finding Common Ground : New Directions in First World War Studies*, History of Warfare, Vol. 62, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2011. — This information comes from footnote 27 of Ke-Chin Hsia's doctoral thesis — see below. It was originally pointed out to him by John Deak. It must be noted however that the International Society for First World War Studies has since sought to address this gap. Its next volume of essays edited by Joachim Bürgschwentner, Matthias Egger, and Gunda Barth-Scalmani and forthcoming later in the year, represents a conscious effort to bring the Austro-Hungarian experience of the war back to the centre of its collective scholarly enterprise.

⁹² Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire. Total War and Everyday Life in World War I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. This incorporates her 2002 article, ‘Becoming Austrian. Women, the State and Citizenship in World War I,’ *Central European History*, Vol. 35 (2002), p. 1-35.

despite the poverty of Jewish or Slav refugees, they, too, like established Jewish or Slav citizens, got the blame and were accused of being foreign parasites. The state, of course, tried to counter such disaffection through censorship and propaganda which included the 1916 Vienna War Exhibition. But to no effect. The Catholic Church, in fact, was left to do most of the proselytising for the war, encouraging the virtues of sacrifice (*Opferwilligkeit*) and endurance (*Durchhalten*), while the state invested more hope in censorship or negative information management. Alas, this only stimulated rumours, which the state found difficult to control. It clearly lacked the propaganda techniques of later totalitarian regimes. Meanwhile, its reliance on the family as the prime unit of social control did not work either. Women's voluntary service (*Frauenhilfsaktion*) could not discipline the unruly crowds of females fighting one another in bread queues or aid a generation of children, no longer subject to male authority at home or school, from slipping into delinquency. The women in the food queues also shouted their disgust at the local and (later) imperial political class while brawling in the streets. Even the Emperors came under attack. They might receive polite and loyal petitions, but since they could not provide food, their imperial aura soon lacked lustre: "The unravelling of Habsburg rule can be understood, in part, as the slow realization among the people that the Emperor could not in reality 'provide' for the state family (p. 305)." By 1918, when the weekly potato ration stood at only ½ kg per person and the Austrian Food Office was threatening further cuts in rations, local politicians blamed the government and said the people could take no more. The crunch came in mid-June 1918; at the same time as an undernourished and ill-equipped army lost 142,000 men in nine days on the Piave, tens of thousands of starving citizens took to the streets in Vienna and plundered the potato fields around the city. Nearly 47,000 male and female workers went on strike, so that, in Healy's words (p. 306): "we can see a 'convergence of collapse' in both realms of the total war." The Emperor in October made the gesture of his Manifesto, federalising Cisleithania, but no one, according to police reports, took any notice; they were "only interested in the food situation and they stand rather indifferent before political events (p. 306-307)." By this time the Spanish flu epidemic had hit the city; food supplies then dried up, with none at all coming from Hungary; and rationing continued into the 1920s. The war ended and the dynasty disappeared, "with a fizzle rather than an explosion" in Healy's words (p. 309). The government had lost all legitimacy; it had become incapable of feeding its people and had forfeited all respect. Several themes covered by Healy's account of the home front have been researched in different ways by other scholars. For a start, there is Edgar Haider, *Wien 1914. Alltag am Rande des Abgrunds* (2013).⁹³ A number of publications have also appeared on the role of the Catholic Church,⁹⁴ the role of women,⁹⁵ on Jewish women,⁹⁶ on children,⁹⁷ and on medicine.⁹⁸

⁹³ Edgar Haider, *Wien 1914. Alltag am Rande des Abgrunds*, Vienna, Cologne and Weimar: Böhlau, 2013.

⁹⁴ See, for example, Wilhelm Achleitner, *Gott im Krieg. Die Theologie der österreichischen Bischöfe in den Hirtenbriefen zum Ersten Weltkrieg*, Vienna: Böhlau, 1997; Gunda Barth-Scalmani, "Kriegsbriefe" oder Wie, warum und zu welchem Ende wandete sich die katholische Kirche mit Briefen zu Kriegsbeginn an das Volk? in Christina Antenhofer and Mario Müller (eds.), *Briefe in politischer Kommunikation von Alten Orient bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2008, p. 231-248; and Matthias Rettenwander, *Der Krieg als Seelsorge. Katholische Kirche und Volksfrömmigkeit in Tirol im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1997/2005. In a related context, see Patrick Joseph

Apart from the issues raised by Healy's book, a great deal of research is now underway on social care in Austria during the First World War. One older work that gives the background is L. Brügel, *Soziale Gesetzgebung in Österreich, 1848 bis 1918*

Houlihan, *Clergy in the Trenches: Catholic military chaplains of Germany and Austria-Hungary during the First World War*, Chicago IL: The University of Chicago, 2011.

⁹⁵ Christa Hämmerle, *Heimat/Front. Geschlechtergeschichte(n) des Ersten Weltkrieges*, Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2014; Ingrid Bauer, 'Frauen im Krieg. Patriotismus, Hunger, Protest—Weibliche Lebenszusammenhänge zwischen 1914 und 1918', in Brigitte Mazohl-Wahlnig and others (eds.), *Die Andere Geschichte. Eine Salzburger Frauengeschichte von den ersten Mädchenschule (1695) bis zum Frauenwahlrecht (1918)*, Salzburg: Anton Pustet, 1995, p. 283-310; the same author's "Im Dienste der Vaterlandes". Frauenarbeit im und für den Krieg' in Julia Neissl (ed.), *Geschlecht und Arbeitswelten. Beiträge der 4 Frauen-Ringvorlesungen an der Universität Salzburg*, Vienna: Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Gesundheit und Soziales, 1998, p. 49-62; Marion Breiter, *Hinter der Front. Zum Leben der Zivilbevölkerung im Wien des Ersten Weltkrieg*, unpublished dissertation, Vienna, 1991; David F. Good and others (eds.), *Austrian Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996; Christa Hämmerle, "You let a weeping woman call you home?" Private Correspondence during the First World War in Austria and Germany,' in Rebecca Earle (ed.), *Epistolary Selves. Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999, p. 152-182; and Irene Nierhaus, 'Die nationalisierte Heimat. Wehrmann und städtische Öffentlichkeit,' in Gisela Ecker (ed.), *Kein Land in Sicht. Heimat—weiblich ?*, Munich: Fink, 1997, p. 57-81. In a different context, though, see, Angelique Leszczawski-Schwerk, 'Amazonen, emanzipierte Frauen, "Töchter des Volkes". Polnische und ukrainische Legionärinnen in der österreichisch-ungarischen Armee im Ersten Weltkrieg,' in Lawrence Cole, Christa Hämmerle and Martin Scheutz (eds.), 'Glanz-Gewalt-Gehorsam. Militär und Gesellschaft in der Habsburgermonarchie, 1800-1918, *Frieden und Krieg, Beiträge zur Historischen Friedensforschung*, Vol. 18, Essen: Klartext, 2011, p. 55-76.

⁹⁶ On Jewish women, see Dieter Hecht, 'Bürgerlich-jüdische Frauen in Wien während des Ersten Weltkrieges,' in Andreas Lauritsch (ed.), *Zions Töchter. Jüdische Frauen in Literatur, Kunst und Politik*, Berlin: Münster, 2006, p. 315-329; Beatrix Hoffman-Holter, *Ostjüdische Kriegsflüchtlinge in Wien, 1914-1923*, unpublished dissertation, Salzburg, 1994; and by the same author, 'Jüdische Flüchtlinge in Wien,' in Gernot Heiss and Oliver Rathkolb (eds.), *Asylland wider Willen, Flüchtlinge in Österreich im europäischen Kontext seit 1914*, Vienna: Jugend & Volk Edition/Dachs Verlag, 1995, p. 45-59. See, too, the article in the same book by Walzer Menzel, 'Weltkriegsflüchtlinge in Cisleithanien, 1914-1918, p. 17-44; David Rechter, *The Jews in Vienna in the First World War*, London: Littman, 2001; Marsha L. Rosenblit, 'For the Fatherland and Jewish people; Jewish Women in Austria during World War I' in Franz Coetzee and Marilyn Coetzee (eds.), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War*, Providence RI: Berghahn, 1995, p. 199-220; and the same author's *Reconstructing a National Identity. The Jews of Habsburg Austria during the First World War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004.

⁹⁷ See Werner Auer, *Kriegskinder, Schule und Bildung im Tyrol im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 2008; Christa Hämmerle, "Diese Schatten über unserer Kindheit gelegen..." Historische Anmerkungen zu einem unerforschten Thema,' in Christa Hämmerle (ed.), *Kindheit im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Vienna: Bohlau, 1993, p. 265-335; Hans Ostler, "Soldatenspielererei"? Vormilitärische Ausbildung bei Jugendlichen in der österreichischen Reichshälfte der Donaumonarchie, 1914-1918, Vienna: BMLV/Militärhistorischer Diens, 1991; and Robert J. Wegs, *Growing Up Working Class: Continuity and Change Among Viennese Youth, 1890-1938*, University Park PA: Pennsylvania State University, 1989.

⁹⁸ See Hans-Georg Hofer, *Nervenschwäche und Krieg: Modernitätskritik und Krisenbewältigung in der österreichischen Psychiatrie, 1880-1920*, Vienna: Bohlau, 2004; Barbara Hoffman, *Kriegsblinde in Österreich*, Graz: Verein zur Förderung der Forschung von Folgen nach Konflikten und Kriegen, 2006; Helmut Konrad (ed.), *Krieg, Medizin und Politik. Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Österreichische Moderne*, Vienna: Passagen, 2000; and Elizabeth Malleier, 'Die Kriegsneurose in der Wiener Psychiatrie und Psychoanalyse,' in *Wiener Geschichtsblätter*, Vol. 49 (1998), p. 51-84. See also George L. Mosse, 'Shell-shock as a Social Disease,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 35 (2000), p. 101-108; and Thomas N. Dikel, Brian Engdahl and Raina Eberly, 'PTSD in Former Prisoners of War; Prewar, Wartime and Postwar Factors,' in *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, Vol. 18, No. 1, February, 2005, p. 69-77.

Eine geschichtliche Darstellung (1919).⁹⁹ More recently, several works have appeared.¹⁰⁰ Good coverage of all the wartime legislation affecting war victims, including missing and injured soldiers and their dependents, albeit from the viewpoint of the state, is provided in Verena Pawlowsky and Harald Wendeln, 'Die normative Konstruktion des Opfers. Die Versorgung der Invaliden des Ersten Weltkrieges'.¹⁰¹ A work that looks at the provision of social care from the viewpoint of the 'war victims' themselves, on the other hand, is the as yet unpublished doctoral dissertation of Ke-Chin Hsia (University of Chicago, 2013) entitled *The Politics of War Victim Welfare in Austria, 1914-1925*. The first chapter covers the period from 1868. Once published, this will be an important work. Hsia has also recently published an article on 'A Partnership of the Weak : War Victims and the State in the Early First Austrian Republic'.¹⁰² A central point of Hsia's work is that there was a 'partnership of the weak' between the war victims (5-8 per cent of the Austrian population in 1919) and the state. The latter had – *pace* Healy – recognised its wartime delegitimization by setting up new Ministries of Social Welfare and Public Health at the end of 1917. But pressure from war victims was partly responsible. They saw, and continued to see, their problems as directly resulting from the state's declarations of war in 1914 and its subsequent failure to protect its citizens. It was necessary, therefore, to force the state to live up to its responsibilities. In the words of one provincial widow:

“it is the same everywhere. We are defenceless and are the dregs of society [*Auswurf der Menschheit*]. And the father State [*sic*] is not conscious of its duty. It forgets us poor creatures who were ruined by it. But now our patience runs out – even widows have a right to live. We want to remind the state of its duties, because things cannot go on like this anymore.” ('A Partnership of the Weak etc.', p. 200).¹⁰³

⁹⁹ L. Brügel, *Soziale Gesetzgebung in Österreich, 1848 bis 1918. Eine geschichtliche Darstellung*, Vienna: Deuticke, 1919.

¹⁰⁰ For example, J. Weidenholzer, *Der Sorgende Staat. Zur Entwicklung der Sozialpolitik von Joseph II bis Ferdinand Hanusch*, Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1985 ; G. Stourzh and M. Grandner (eds.), *Historische Wurzeln der Sozialpartnerschaft*, Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1986 ; I. Ackerl, W. Hummelberger and H. Mommsen (eds.), *Politik und Gesellschaft im alten und neuen Österreich. Festschrift für Rudolph Neck zum 60 Geburtstag*, Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1981 ; and Margarete Gradner, 'Staatliche Sozialpolitik in Cisleithanien, 1867-1918', in Helmut Rumpler (ed.), *Innere Staatsbildung und gesellschaftliche Modernisierung in Österreich und Deutschland, 1867/1871-1918*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1991.

¹⁰¹ Verena Pawlowsky and Harald Wendeln, 'Die normative Konstruktion des Opfers. Die Versorgung der Invaliden des Ersten Weltkrieges', in Cole, Hämmerle and Scheutz (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 359-303.

¹⁰² Ke-Chin Hsia, 'A Partnership of the Weak : War Victims and the State in the Early First Austrian Republic', in Günther Bischof and Fritz Plassner (eds. with Peter Berger, guest editor), *From Empire to Republic : Post-World War I Austria, Contemporary Austrian Studies*, Vol. 19 (2010), p. 192-221.

¹⁰³ Other research into related themes include Daniela Claudia Angetter, *Den Tod geweit und doch gerettet. Die Sanitätsversorgung an Isonzo und in den Dolomiten, 1915-1918*, Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1995; Brigitte Briwald, Von Helden und Krüppeln. *Das österreichisch-ungarische Militär-Sanitätswesen im Ersten Weltkrieg*, 2 Vols., Vienna: Öbv & Hpt, 2002; Elizabeth Dietrich, 'Die Bilanz des Krieges. Der verlorener Krieg und die Familien der gefallenen, verwunderten, und arbeitslos gewordenen Soldaten in Tirol (1918-1921)', in *Innsbrucker Historischen Studien*, Vol. 12-13 (1997), p. 407-418; and Verena Pawlosky and Herald Wendelin, 'Die Verwaltung des Leides. Kriegsbeschädigtenversorgung in Niederösterreich', in Peter Melichar, Stefan Eminger and Ernst Langthaler (eds.), *Niederösterreich im 20 Jahrhundert*, Vol. 2, Wirtschaft, 2008, p. 507-536.

Also relevant in this section, of course, is the role of the workers in Austria during the war. In particular, they were affected by the *Kriegsdienstleistungsgesetz* or War Service Act of December 1912, which subordinated factories in wartime to state, indeed military, supervision and made workers liable to military penalties for infringing regulations. Factory owners were freed from the normal terms of labour contracts, while workers were expected to increase output by working longer under worse conditions for no more pay. The 1917 *Ermächtigungsgesetz* or Enabling Law subordinated practically the whole of private enterprise to state control. There seems to be room for more research here, but the key works are Ferdinand Haunisch and Emmanuel Adler (eds.), *Die Regelung der Arbeitsverhältnisse im Kriege. Wirtschafts-und-Sozialgeschichte des Weltkrieges* (1927);¹⁰⁴ Max Breitenstein and Demeter Koropatnicki, *Die Kriegsgesetzte Österreichs* (6 Vols, 1916-1921);¹⁰⁵ Rudolph Neck, *Arbeiterschaft und Staat im Ersten Weltkrieg, 1914-1918* (2 Vols., 1964-1968);¹⁰⁶ and Berthold Unfried, *Arbeiterprotest und Arbeiterbewegung in Österreich während des Ersten Weltkrieges* (unpublished dissertation, Vienna, 1990). There is a brief but useful chapter on the First World War in Hans Hautmann and Rudolf Kropf, *Die österreichische Arbeiterbewegung vom Vormärz bis 1945. Sozialökonomische Ursprünge ihrer Ideologie und Politik (Schriftenreihe des Ludwig- Boltzmann-Instituts für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung)*¹⁰⁷ (Vol. 4, p. 109-124, 1974), which stresses that whatever their wartime difficulties, Austria's Social Democrats remained united during the war and eschewed revolution in 1918. For reasons of length, this essay does not intend to cover party politics in wartime, although honourable mention might be given to John Boyer's *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897-1918* (1995).¹⁰⁸ Finally, one recent work on the otherwise neglected topic of public opinion during the war is P. Eherenpreis, *Kriegs-und Friedensziele im Diskurs, Regierung und deutschsprachige Öffentlichkeit Österreich-Ungarns während des Ersten Weltkriegs* (2005).¹⁰⁹ In a related context, see also Stephen Beller, 'The tragic carnival: Austrian culture in the Great War.'¹¹⁰

The War in Memory

¹⁰⁴ Ferdinand Haunisch and Emmanuel Adler (eds.), *Die Regelung der Arbeiterverhältnisse im Kriege. Wirtschafts-und-Sozialgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky/Carnegie, 1927.

¹⁰⁵ Max Breitenstein and Demeter Koropatnicki, *Die Kriegsgesetze Österreichs*, 6 Vols., Vienna: Verlag der Gerichtshalle und der Evidenzblätter, 1916-1921.

¹⁰⁶ Rudolph Neck, *Arbeiterschaft und Staat im Ersten Weltkrieg, 1914-1918*, 2 Vols., Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1964-1968.

¹⁰⁷ Hans Hautmann and Rudolf Kropf, *Die österreichische Arbeiterbewegung vom Vormärz bis 1945. Sozialökonomische Ursprünge ihrer Ideologie und Politik (Schriftenreihe des Ludwig- Boltzmann-Instituts für Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung)*, Vol. 4, Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1974, p. 109-124.

¹⁰⁸ John Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897-1918*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995.

¹⁰⁹ P. Eherenpreis, *Kriegs-und Friedensziele im Diskurs, Regierung und deutschsprachige Öffentlichkeit Österreich-Ungarns während des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2005.

¹¹⁰ Stephen Beller, 'The Tragic Carnival: Austrian Culture in the Great War,' in Aviel Roshwald and Richard Stites (eds.), *European Culture in the Great War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 127-161.

The recent interest in commemorating war has been led by Jay Winter whose work and influence can perhaps be best evaluated by reading his own essay on 'Commemorating War, 1914-1945'.¹¹¹ The key book on Austria seems to be Joachim Giller, Hubert Mader and Christina Seidl's *Wo sind sie geblieben...? Kriegerdenkmäler und Gefallenkult in Österreich* (1992).¹¹² So far as the First World War is concerned, however, one excellent recent essay has addressed the topic, namely Oswald Überegger's "Erinnerungsorte" oder nichtssagende Artefakte? Österreichische Kriegerdenkmäler und locale Kriegserinnerung in der Zwischenkriegszeit'.¹¹³ The essay is a very sceptical piece of work, which begins by pointing out that most writing on war memorials in Austria has concentrated on the Second World War, Nazism and the Holocaust and has been dominated by political and social scientists. Only a few historians have devoted themselves recently to the cultural aspects of the First World War. The author then presents his own contribution, based on memorials in North and East Tyrol, as one of preliminary conclusions. He sensibly states that war memorials can be over-valued as media of memory and can give rise to false interpretations. He even questions whether war memorials really reflect how the dead were remembered afterwards. Perhaps they represented political, economic or other motives and hence obscure rather than illuminate the process of memory. An analysis in several stages is therefore needed to avoid a reductionist view of them and to avoid running the risk of automatically placing these memorials at the centre of the field of memory. Überegger sees little value, for example, in the iconographic study of memorials, since they often arose from accidental local factors and over time became stereotyped and standardised. Often they became symbols for political use – to stabilise society, to promote patriotism or other values – all so that those whose blood had been shed would not have died in vain. Later on, there were attempts to sacralize them. Yet this kind of thing obscured the fact that at the end of the war, in Tyrol as in other parts of the Monarchy, there had been a huge reaction against the war and armies. Military associations had felt the need to dissolve themselves and it took years before villages and towns could bear thinking about war memorials. More relevant seemed the brutalization which the war had brought about. And as one person wrote to a newspaper on the cult of the dead in Tyrol in 1921: "You now praise all the poor dead, who would have been happy to remain in their Alps or in their workplaces, instead of today receiving a stone as dead heroes (p. 310)." This is an excellent piece of work, which, one must hope, will inspire others. Finally, a dissertation on war graves during and after the war should perhaps be mentioned in this context, namely, Thomas Riechl, *Das Kriegsgräberwesen Österreich-Ungarns im Weltkrieg 1914-1918 und die Obsorge in der Republik Österreich. Das Wirken des Österreichischen Schwarzen Kreuzes in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (unpublished dissertation, Graz, 1993).

¹¹¹ Jay Winter, 'Commemorating War, 1914-1945,' in Roger Chickering, Dennis Showalter and Hans Van De Ven (eds.), *War in the Modern World. The Cambridge History of War*, Vol. IV, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 310-326.

¹¹² Joachim Giller, Hubert Mader and Christina Seidl, *Wo sind sie geblieben? Kriegerdenkmäler und Gefallenenehrung in Österreich*. Wien: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1992.

¹¹³ Oswald Überegger, "Erinnerungsorte" oder nichtssagende Artefakte? Österreichische Kriegerdenkmäler und locale Kriegserinnerung in der Zwischenkriegszeit' in Cole, Hämmerle and Scheutz (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 293-310.

Conclusion

While much has been written on the Habsburg Monarchy and the First World War, clearly there remain many gaps and many opportunities for more research. We need to know more, for example, about relations between officers and men in the army and about other parts of the home front rather than just Vienna. Fortunately, young scholars have emerged from all over the world, many of them brilliant linguists, who – if they can all find jobs – can be relied upon to complete the picture of what actually happened to the Monarchy between 1914 and 1918. For example, one can see all the new postgraduate work presently being carried out in Austria itself in the schedule of the 2011 International Society for First World War Studies conference that took place at Innsbruck (http://www.firstworldwarstudies.org/?page_id=580)

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Abstract

The historiography of Austria-Hungary's involvement in the First World War, has grown rapidly in recent decades. The debate on the Habsburg monarchy's decision to enter the war, while continuing, lends steadily more support to the view that there was no crisis of nationalities driving its statesmen into war, and that its leaders must share responsibility for the war for backing German war aims as well as pursuing inflated war aims of their own and miscalculating the risks of conflict. Important contributions have also appeared on Austro-Hungarian and Austro-German relations, wartime statesmanship, the command and performance of the imperial armies (generally poor) and navy (surprisingly good), the army's occupation policies, and the experience of Austro-Hungarian prisoners in enemy hands. Equally notable is the increase in contributions to the economic, political, social and cultural aspects of the war and its aftermath. Although Austria-Hungary tends to be overlooked in western accounts, much of the recent literature on the empire is first-rate and adds enormously to our understanding of the war as a whole.

Key words : Habsburg monarchy; Nationalities; Austro-Hungarian relations; Austro-German relations; Balkans; Berchtold, Leopold Count.

Résumé

Depuis quelques décennies, l'historiographie sur l'Autriche-Hongrie dans la Première Guerre mondiale s'est enrichie. Les raisons du déclenchement de la guerre par la monarchie des Habsbourg continuent de faire débat, mais avec quelques révisions : ce n'est pas tant la crise des nationalités qui a conduit les responsables politiques à choisir la guerre que leur agenda propre, soutenant les buts de guerre allemands et poursuivant eux-mêmes des buts de guerre propres, tout en sous-estimant les risques de conflit. D'importantes contributions se sont penchées sur les relations austro-

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hongroises et austro-allemandes, sur la conduite de l'État en temps de guerre, sur le commandement et sur les performances des armées impériales terrestres (plutôt désastreuses) et navales (étonnement bonnes), sur les politiques d'occupation des territoires envahis par l'armée, sur l'expérience des prisonniers de guerre austro-hongrois détenus par l'ennemi. Les travaux sur les aspects économiques, politiques, sociaux et culturels de la guerre et sur ses conséquences se multiplient. Bien que le cas austro-hongrois soit plutôt négligé par l'historiographie occidentale, la littérature la plus récente sur l'Empire est de premier ordre et apporte énormément à notre compréhension du conflit en général.

Mots clés : monarchie des Habsbourg, nationalités, relations austro-hongroises, relations austro-allemandes, Balkans, Berchtold, Leopold Count.

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