

Graydon A. Tunstall, *Austro-Hungarian Army and the First World War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 466.

Cambridge University Press recently launched a new “Armies of the Great War” series dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. These series include the histories of American, Austro-Hungarian, British, French, German, Italian, and Russian armies. Not by chance, they turn to one of the most prominent historians and experts on the Austro-Hungarian Army, Professor Graydon A. Tunstall, to submit an account of the *Austro-Hungarian Army and the First World War*.

Tunstall was Professor of History at the University of South Florida (Tampa) as well as at the Military College at the time. His previous publications include *Planning for War Against Russia and Serbia: Austro-Hungarian and German Military Strategies, 1871–1914* (1993), *Blood on the Snow: The Carpathian Winter War of 1915* (2010), and *Written in Blood: The Battles for Fortress Przemyśl in WWI* (2016). He edited, together with Peter Pastor, *Essays on World War I*, published in the series “East European Monographs”, by Columbia University Press (2012).

Professor Tunstall was a member of the editorial boards of several prestigious academic journals, including *The Historian*. Graydon Tunstall, like Holger H. Herwing, Max Hastings, and many others, has remained firm in his previous academic path in the recent debates on the origins of the First World War provoked by Christopher Clark’s account, as well as comparable narratives that seek to discard the well-established legacy of Fritz Fischer.

*The Austro-Hungarian Army and the First World War* are divided into an introduction, ten chapters, a conclusion,

notes, a bibliography, and an index. It is worth mentioning that the bibliography encompasses 40 pages. Aside from the first chapter about the Austro-Hungarian Army in general (pp. 24–57), several additional chapters might be attractive to Serbian readers. Namely, on *July Crisis 1914* (pp. 58–82), *Serbian Campaigns 1914* (pp. 119–150), *1915* (pp. 185–242), *1918* (pp. 323–262), and *November 1918 and Results* (pp. 363–394).

Professor Tunstall portrays not only military, professional army, and reservist cadres but also top brass long before a war, their dilemmas, perceptions, traditions they embraced, sense of superiority, and many other aspects. The rivalry of the Great Powers is also at stake, as is how they perceived their national interests and how they drew “red lines” around them, which inevitably led to a major war. He is a specialist in the assessment of operational plans and combat operations. Since he has also had military education, he is very familiar with numerous aspects.

It is both military history and political and social history. Once again, the readers will be reminded of how Austria-Hungary enrolled in the war totally unprepared to conduct a prolonged economic and military conflict.

“The Entente naval blockade prevented the Dual Monarchy from receiving crucial raw materials and food supplies, producing starvation and misery and retarding industrial development... During 1914, 5,100 businesses closed with the mobilization, and the basic economy suffered from the unemployment caused by the call-up of millions of soldiers” (p. 1).

The greatest part of this account is dedicated to combat on the Eastern Front as well as on the Italian Front. However, all of the Serbian “staff” is presented too. For the monarchy, it was its southern front or the Balkan front. Tunstall put emphasis on the fact that “the major event that provided the initial step toward the world war resulted from the 1908–1909 Bosnian Crisis” (p. 11), where Serbs were the majority of the Bosnian population. The Austro-Hungarian government perceived Serbia as the arch enemy in its plans and waited for the chance to neutralize it. “The dramatic event (the assassination on June 28) appeared to offer an excellent excuse.”

Graydon Tunstall is very familiar with developing Austro-Hungarian war planning against Russia and Serbia from his previous research (1993). For the readers in Serbia, it is interesting how the Austro-Hungarian top brass perceived Serbia’s military capabilities: “During the 1880s and 1890s, the Habsburg General Staff did not consider Serbia a serious military threat to the Dual Monarchy. In 1891, General Oskar Potiorek planned a defensive strategy to be implemented along the Serbian frontiers and rivers, while a Habsburg offensive would conquer the capital, Belgrade, and then troops would advance into the strategic Morava Valley to encircle the Serbian armed forces from the north and west between the Drina river and that significant valley. This two-edged strategy entailed the defense of Habsburg territorial possessions and the rapid defeat of Serbia.” (p. 119)

At the time, Serbia could put on foot only seven divisions and one brigade, according to Austrian intelligence estimates. In the Austro-Hungarian view, the only thing that matters is the monarchy’s prestige and credibility as the Great Power. They also underestimated Russian capabil-

ities, as well as later on after 1905. Tunstall correctly indicates the year 1906 as a turning point when the Operations Bureau began to contemplate new plans against Serbia. Instead of a defensive plan along the Drina, they envisaged launching an offensive over the river with strong forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina. So they replaced the earlier two-edged plan with an offensive crossing of the Sava and Danube rivers. It was under the supervision of newly appointed Chief of General Staff Conrad von Hetzendorf (1906–1911), and from December 1912 onwards. Conrad’s military plans called for advancement through the Jadar valley to Valjevo. At the end of the Bosnian crisis (1908–1908), war planning anticipated a maximum war case of “Balkan”. It remained so until 1914. Only in the brief period 1911–12, when Chief of the General Staff was General Schemua, did the question of the principal attack on Belgrade and Morava Valley resurface (p. 121). When General Conrad was reinstated to the post, the previous option was confirmed. Tunstall emphasized that in 1913, Habsburg War School gave advantage to the idea of Morava direction advancement rather than over the Drina River in order to obtain rapid success. All in vain, thanks to Conrad’s firm stance and that of General Potiorek.

In regards to the Austro-Hungarian decision to wage a war against Serbia, Tunstall sticks to a well-established chronology, putting emphasis on July 7th and then on other significant dates. It caught our attention at the point when, on July 20, General Conrad informed the Army Railroad Bureau commander that the ultimatum would be delivered to Serbia on July 23 (p. 72). “When it was dispatched, Conrad ordered all railroad line commanders and traffic officers back to military duty. The Railroad Bureau received

instructions to prepare train cars for War Case 'Balkan' (Balkans) alarm transport, and preparations commenced for a Balkan campaign three days before the ultimatum was delivered to Belgrade.”

In light of the above data, as well as the instruction to the Austrian envoy to Serbia, Baron Giesel (July 7), to cut diplomatic relations regardless of the Serbian response, it is clear that certain revisionist claims that Serbia knew its own response was not satisfactory and thus ordered general mobilisation three hours before it delivered its response, are unfounded. Tunstall, as with many others, reminds readers that the nature of the Serbian response to the ultimatum was a conciliatory one, but the other side was eager to get into a war. Serbia rightfully doubted the good intentions of Austria-Hungary to settle the crisis in a peaceful way. The Serbian government opted in the middle of the day (July 25) to undertake safety precaution measures, including mobilization. Consequently, the Minister of Defense ordered mobilization for two divisional districts neighboring the Monarchy, the Drina and Danube divisions, at 2 PM. At 3 PM, the Serbian Railroad Bureau was put on war foot. The Ministry told other districts to expect future orders and be ready. In fact, other troops received orders at 6 PM or later, and the public proclamation of mobilization in Serbia took place at 9 PM.

We could not agree more with the author of the book when he claimed: “To the military advantage of the Serbians, they had learned from the early Balkan Wars mistakes, something Habsburg commanders did not initially consider with their own troops, resulting in many casualties” and “loss of significant amounts of ammunition and equipment” (p. 122).

Maybe it is interesting to mention how Tunstall described Serbian casualties

in 1914. He relies on *Osterreich-Ungarns Letzer Krieg 1914–1918*, vol. 2, when he lists 22,000 dead, 91,000 wounded, and 19,000 captured or missing (p. 146). Army officer Fedor Jivkovich (1936) displayed the same numbers in Yugoslavia. Both were based on a captured Serbian telegram (by Austrian intelligence) delivered from the High Command (Kragujevac) to the Minister of War (Niš) in December 1914. Yugoslav Army General Petar Tomac also used these numbers in his account for the First World War. Now an original has been discovered and published in 2014 (State Archives of Serbia).

In regards to the Serbian role in 1918, Graydon lined up with those who see the rupture of the Salonica front as a final blow to the Central Powers: “The September 1918 collapse of the Bulgarian front resulted in the ultimate defeat of the almost bloodless Austrian revolution as the various nationalities established their own sovereign states. The Bulgarian debacle opened the Balkan front for the eventual Serbian invasion of Hungary and accelerated the end of the war. It also persuaded German Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff that the end was approaching.” (p. 3)

At some points on Serbian wartime goals or programs, the role of the Serbian Army in pacifying the Slavic lands of the Monarchy, we must disagree. It was probably due to the selected literature he relied on. Obviously, he is not too familiar with this issue, so he put it as follows: “During the war, the Serbian government pursued a nationalistic program; its leaders opposed sharing power with other South Slaves. The Serbian army conquered Habsburg South Slavic territories and eradicated the green cadre scourge in the countryside, pressuring the other

South Slavic peoples to join a Serb-led Yugoslavia” (p. 402, see also pp. 7, 393).

We met such stereotypes at the beginning of our own academic career in the 1980s and responded with in-depth research that resulted in our monograph, *Vojska Kraljevine SHS 1918–1921 (The Army of SHS 1918–1921)*. We are also witnessing the reemerging of the same stereotypes after 1990. Our contributions to the International Encyclopaedia 1914–1918, edited by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson and published by Freie Universität Berlin since 2014 (*Serbia, War Aims, War Aims Discussions, South East Europe*), were our response to such inaccurate simplifications. Is it possible to omit evidence of Franchet D’Esperey’s instructions as commander in chief of the Eastern Allied Armies, and those from Marechal F. Foch and his quarrels with Italian General A. Diaz? What about the movement of the National Council and its request to the Serbian Army? What about the Yugoslav Committee and the Corfu Declaration of 1917? Concerning the “Green Cadre” and its alleged “eradication” by the Serbian army, there was only a communist-based narrative on the “antirevolutionary nature of unification”

adopted even by Frankists, exclusive Croat nationalists. In reality, after a few days of disorder, public unrest, and plundering of the stocks, all reports coming to the National Council in Zagreb indicated appeasement. It was well before Serbian Army even step in. There was no clash between the Serbian Army and former deserters from the K.U.K. army. But who will stop advancing Italians who wish to carry out promises listed in the secret London Treaty at the expense of Croats and Slovenes? Too many sources testify to how the Serbian army was met as a liberator.

And besides, it is not accurate to extend the average rate of national minorities within newly created states (30%; see page 377) in Yugoslavia (actually, according to the census, it was 16.55%).

Already proven as an expert in the matter by his previous books, Tunstall has offered a comprehensive and well-established account of the Austro-Hungarian Army. The book is not purely or strictly operational history; it is rather the opposite. It is kind of Austro-Hungarian history itself—its army and monarchy’s fatal demise.

Mile BJELAJAC

Vulf D. Hund. *Kako su Nemci postali beli: kratka (zavičajna) istorija rasizma*. Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek, 2022, 300.

Knjiga njemačkog sociologa Wulfa Hunda *Wie die Deutschen weiß wurden. Kleine (Heimat) Geschichte des Rassismus* ili u prijevodu – *Kako su Nemci postali beli: kratka (zavičajna) istorija rasizma*, objavljena 2017. godine, još je jedan važan prijevod u izdanju *Biblioteka XX vek*. Knjiga traga za korijenima rasizma, no to čini iz njemačke perspektive.

Rasizam nije nešto što se vezuje isključivo za nacizam: Hund pokazuje da nacistički rasizam nije bio aberacija u njemačkoj povijesti, već prije kulminacija duge tradicije rasističkog mišljenja koje je započelo u srednjem vijeku, a kasnije je, pod snažnim utjecajem kolonijalizma, prosvjetiteljstva, pseudoznanstvenih učenja 19. i ranog 20. stoljeća razvilo nove forme.