The Origins of the First World War

Great Power Rivalry and German
War Aims

The Origins of the First World War

Great Power Rivalry and German
War Aims

EDITED BY
H. W. KOCH
SECOND EDITION

Introduction, selection and editorial matter
© H. W. Koch 1972, 1984

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE.

Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

First edition 1972
Reprinted three times
Second edition 1984

Published by
MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-333-37298-2 ISBN 978-1-349-07437-2 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-07437-2

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library.

15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8
03 02 01 00 99 98 97

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>Introduction</i> H. W. KOCH	1
1 The 1914 Debate Continues: Fritz Fischer and his Critics JAMES JOLL	30
2 Origins of the First World War IMANUEL GEISS	46
3 1914 – The Third Balkan War: Origins Reconsidered JOACHIM REMAK	86
4 World War I as Galloping Gertie: A Reply to Joachim Remak PAUL W. SCHROEDER	101
5 World Policy, World Power and German War Aims FRITZ FISCHER	128
6 Cabinet versus Economic Warfare in Germany: Policy and Strategy during the Early Months of the First World War EGMONT ZECHLIN	189
7 Gerhard Ritter: A Patriotic Historian's Justification KARL-HEINZ JANSSEN	292
8 Social Darwinism as a Factor in the 'New Imperialism' H. W. KOCH	319

9	War Guilt 1914 Reconsidered: A Balance of New Research	343
	KARL DIETRICH ERDMANN	
10	July 1914. Reply to a Polemic	371
	EGMONT ZECHLIN	
	<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	386
	<i>Bibliography</i>	387
	<i>Index</i>	396

Preface

The purpose of this revised edition is, as was the case in the first edition, to introduce readers who cannot easily read German to some of the main strands of the renewed argument over the origins of the First World War and Germany's war aims. Instead of the editor selecting excerpts from articles or books, with one exception all articles have been reprinted in their entirety. The exception is the article by Fritz Fischer, the first part of which has been omitted since it discusses in great detail the objections of some of his German critics, a discussion so technical as well as polemical in nature that it would have required the complete reprinting of their articles as well.

Inevitably, a volume such as this can never take the place of reading Fritz Fischer's, Egmont Zechlin's, Erwin Hölzle's or Gerhard Ritter's work, or for that matter the diaries of Kurt Riezler edited by K. D. Erdmann. Fischer's two main works have been made available in a translated but unfortunately heavily abbreviated version. Gerhard Ritter's main work, *The Swords and the Sceptre*, has been available in an excellent translation since 1974, though it runs into four volumes. A translation of two of Egmont Zechlin's major articles is offered in this volume. Regrettably, footnotes had to be omitted for one major reason: in the case of both Fischer's and Zechlin's contributions the text of the notes amounts to more than the actual articles. Including the notes would in fact have meant doubling the number of pages of the present volume. Hence the harsh decision had to be made to omit footnotes from all the articles reprinted. However, personalities with which the reader may not be familiar are adequately identified in the index.

Apart from those articles which have previously been published in English, most of the German originals have been translated by the editor with considerable assistance from Dr Derek McKay of the London School of Economics, for whose help I am greatly indebted. The exception is Egmont Zechlin's

contributions, which were translated by the late Heinz Norden and Brian Follett respectively. However, any mistakes which occur are my responsibility, as is the selection of the articles, which like all selections represents an uneasy compromise between what is desirable and what can actually be done, especially in view of the length of the two major contributions. It is a pity that there has been no room to include some of the work of East European historians, but this shortcoming is partly counter-balanced by the fact that Fritz Fischer, for instance, appears to have drawn heavily on their research as well as sharing some of the lines of their argument.

H. W. KOCH

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Fritz Fischer, Imanuel Geiss, Egmont Zechlin, James Joll, Karl Dietrich Erdmann, Paul W. Schroeder and Joachim Remak for their permission to include their essays in this collection. I wish to thank the following for permitting the use here of material originally published by them: *Past and Present*; Batsford Ltd., London; *Historische Zeitschrift*; *Journal of Modern History*; and *Zeitschrift für Politik*, Munich.

H.W.K.