

SUMMARY

The presented monograph is an anthology of case-studies dealing with various aspects of military history of Slovakia starting with the antecedences of the 1848 revolution and continuing till the early beginnings of World War I. The texts are selected and arranged in chronological order. This mentioned period represents an era of crucial importance for the development of national consciousness of the Slovak nation. During that time, many revolutionary changes of social order took place in Hungarian Kingdom; decisive political struggles about the form of modernization were fought, the social structure and spiritual fundament changed radically, national contradictions among the nations living in the kingdom were more and more evident, the oppressive policy of Magyar elites towards other nations and nationalities strengthened. In consequence, the Slovak political representatives were pushed into a defensive position and they set as their primary goal the safeguarding of the Slovak national existence.

The publication is divided into four parts: introduction, two basic chapters ordered chronologically and conclusion. In the first chapter titled *Approaching the World War*, I pay attention to the year of revolution, 1848, which represented a major turning point in the transition from feudalism to the capitalism and which deeply influenced the process of bourgeois transformation of the majority of European states. Further, it was for the first time in modern history of the Slovak nation, that an independent armed action of the Slovaks took place – the so-called September Uprising in 1848. In this chapter, the issues connected with the armed action of the Slovak volunteers in September 1848 serve as a background for a complex military historical analysis of that time. The Austro-Prussian War fought in 1866 that culminated in the defeat of Austrian army in the Battle of Königgrätz (Hradec Králové), brought a correction of great power ambitions of the Habsburg Empire, it further led to a revision of its foreign policy and caused inner political turbulences, leading to the Austro-Hungarian (Magyar) constitutional settlement in 1867. Last but not least, a reform of Austro-Hungarian army was initiated. In the second chapter, I consider the course of the mentioned war and its consequences, paying attention to the participation of Slovaks in the military formations of the Monarchy. The next three studies in this chapter seek to illustrate the system of resurrection of the Austro-Hungarian army and the organizational development of the infantry and cavalry units specifically considering the effects of those issues on Slovakia and the role of Slovaks in the frames of the Habsburg army and the units referred to. It is worth a mention that this is the first comprehensive attempt in Slovak historiography to reflect the above-mentioned issues. The studies are supplemented by tables and schemes and they are followed

by an analysis of the nationality issue in the army – both the Habsburg and the Honvéd army – as well as the reactions of the Slovak policy to the mentioned questions in the last decades before World War I. Another chapter is dealing with the military and diplomatic background of events that followed after the Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in Sarajevo and which culminated in the World War I. The final study of this chapter is dealing with military plans of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in the eve of the outbreak of World War I, taking into account their connection with the military plans of the general staff of the German army.

The second part of this book is titled *Slovaks in the Great War* and is subdivided into three chapters, each of them monitoring the first stage of military actions in the north-eastern front, where numerous Slovak soldiers incorporated to the V. battalion of Bratislava and VI. battalion of Košice took part. In the first chapter I focus on the prelude of the Austro-Hungarian military formations operations in the north-eastern front during August 1914, which later resulted in most determined fights in the initial phase of World War I. In the following study, I consider the most extensive military operation of the Austro-Hungarian army in the north-eastern front – the Battle of Kraśnik. My last study is dealing with the Battle of Komarów, in the Russian literature better known as the Battle of Tomaszów. In both battles, many soldiers coming from Slovakia lost their lives. In addition to a detailed description of the course of these battles and the whole military situation, I pay attention to some controversial decisions taken by the high command of the Austro-Hungarian army, resulting from frictions and discrepancies between the German and Austro-Hungarian military command. These decisions caused setbacks of particular military operations.

World War I and its consequences changed the political map of Europe and brought a dramatic change in the balance of power. The multinational Habsburg monarchy, which long before the outbreak of the Great War wasn't able to respond and satisfy the demands (political, lingual, cultural etc.) of oppressed nations, ceased to exist. On its ruins, new state raised. By the establishment of the Czecho-Slovak state on democratic principles, Slovakia and the Slovaks entered a new historical era.