

## РАЗДЕЛ II

### МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ, ДИПЛОМАТИЯ И ГЕОПОЛИТИКА В НОВОЕ И НОВЕЙШЕЕ ВРЕМЯ

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#### HUNGARIAN RAIL TRANSPORT TO THE BALKAN AND THE EASTERN FRONT IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE GREAT WAR.

**Annotation.** After the outrage against Franz Ferdinand the Austrian–Hungarian Monarchy proclaimed war against Serbia. On the 29th of July 1914 the military forces were departing by railway towards Serbia (Balkan front). The first front was opened. In the meantime, another front was opened in addition to the Balkans. Behind the scenes, preparations for the Russian mobilization were largely in progress. The Tsar Nicholas II of Russia ordered the general mobilization of the entire Russian army on July 31st, after which their attention turned to Galicia (eastern front). The aim of this study is to reveal the directions, the operating, the operation and the social impacts of direct frontlines and trains leading and running through Hungary and inland as well in these 2 fronts in the first year of the Great War. These trains transported military troops and resupply to the fronts. The growing transportation to the fronts caused stoppages in the traffic, the civil timetable was inhibited. It produced unliveable traffic to the end of the first year.

**Key words:** *Great War, 1914, Railway, Balkan Front, Eastern Front, Mobilisation, Hungary.*

#### **Introduction**

A month later, after the murder of Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy on 28 June 1914, the dual state declared war on Serbia, which launched a chain of events in Europe and beyond the continent, and grew into the Great War. The population of the country was most affected by the change in rail transport and the suspension of the civilian timetable, as firstly the partial mobilization of the military units and the supply was started, followed by the general mobilization. After the proclamation of war had been handed over, the Hungarian military troop transport was launched first to the south, Serbia (Balkan front), and not much later to the north-east, towards the Russian Empire (eastern front). The purpose of this study is to explore the directions, operation, controlling and the social effects of direct front lines and trains leading to the south and the north-east through Hungary in the first year of the Great War, in 1914, which was otherwise unaffected by warfare.

#### The Outbreak of the Great War

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The murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife, Sophie Hohenberg marked the end of a more peaceful race of the major powers during the imperialist period on June 28, 1914.[1] A Serbian member of the Young Bosnia movement, Gavrilo Princip, committed an assassination against the crown prince of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and his spouse in Sarajevo.[2] This event, although not in itself, resulted in the confrontation between the two federal blocs (Entente and Central Powers), which triggered a chain reaction in Europe and all over the world. The Europe of happy peacetimes now came to an end, completely rearranging power relations.[3]

After the assassination, the Monarchy sent an ultimatum to Serbia and interrupted the diplomatic relationship with them.[2] As the Serbs unconditionally refused to meet the demands of the dualist state, the Monarchy declared a war on them on July 28, 1914, and initiated rail transport related to mobilization.[1] Prior to this, mobilization was ordered not only by the Monarchy but also by Germany starting from 25 July [4] and from 31 August and 1 August Russia and France also commanded mobilization. On the very same day, the Germans declared war on the Russians, invaded Luxembourg on the 2nd, declared war on France on the 3rd and crossed the Belgian border on the 4th. As a respond to this, Britain and Belgium announced the state of war with Berlin. This was not the end yet, since in August, the Monarchy declared war on Russia, Serbia on Germany, the Germans on Montenegro, the French, the British, the Serbs and Montenegro on the Monarchy, Japan on Germany and finally the Monarchy on Belgium.[2] This way the war grew quickly global. By that time, the main means of mobilizing and transporting supplies was the railway, which promised a short war with its speed and huge capacity, but it did not turned out to be so!

The Hungarian railway network on the eve of the First World War

The first steam-towed railway in Hungary between Pest and Vác was handed over on July 15, 1846. The expansion of the new means of transport began in Hungary with this line, which was expanded to be one of the busiest track systems in Europe until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.[5]

The construction of the main lines and their vertically connected local railways that linked them was practically completed by 1914. Before the First World War, the length of the public railway network was 22,869 km, 21,258 km of which was normal, 1611 km narrow track. The rail density of the country (7.1 km/100 km<sup>2</sup>) approximated the developed European countries and was ahead of the railway density in the countries of south and south-eastern Europe.[6]

The Hungarian Railway in the First Year of the Great War

After the Serbian rejection to the Monarchy's ultimatum on July 24, 1914, a decision was made in Vienna on 27 July to declare the war on July

28 launching the announced mobilization at the same time. On this day, the partial mobilization of the Austrian–Hungarian army to Serbia took place.[7] It marked the start of the war, the first front of which opened in the Balkans.

The mobilization was based on Law Article Nr 40 of the Defence Guard in 1912.[8] However, the Minister of Defence exempted workers on the railways, in their workshops, in the fields of maintenance, traction, workshops and ordnance services from the national uprising service for the smooth running of military traffic.[9] In addition to this, a number of military aged men did not have to take military service for the entire duration of the war and the other part of them until the 40th day of mobilization, which could be prolonged for the request of the railway administration by the Ministry of War.[10] Thus, on the day of the outbreak of World War I, 13,554 of the 163,247 people who worked on the railways entered military service. Those who did not belong to the circle of exempted – with the exception of the necessary or special railway staff – were obliged to join the forces on the first day of the war.[11]

On July 28, the Central Transport Administration (Zentraltransportleitung), that was coordinating the monarchy's railways during the war, began operating and prepared transport lines for the traffic to put in motion the next day. On July 29, 1914, trains to Serbia started off at 12 pm and military timetable came into force on the lines south of Budapest and on Marchegg–Budapest [12], while the postal trains kept operating side by side.[13] On 29 July, Belgrád (Belgrade) was bombed by the Danube fleet and the artillery stationed at Zimony (Zemun). The Serbian army, in fear of a direct attack, blasted the railway bridge that linked Zimony to Belgrade.[2] The mobilization towards the Balkans was minor in quantity in the first few days, reaching not even the level of the civil traffic. These transports were carried out on railway lines on the left bank of Budapest as well as in the centre and in railway managements of Szombathely, Zagreb, Szeged, Temesvár (Timisoara) and Szabadka (Subotica). Among the lines, Pécs, Szeged, Zimony and Zágráb (Zagreb) represented the main routes of mobilization with 30 trains per day on each, where civil traffic was restricted [11] and the freight traffic was provisionally closed down.[10]

In the meantime, another front was about to open beside the Balkan front. On July 31, general mobilization of the entire Russian army was also brought into action that drew the attention to Galicia as well.[1] Monarchy ruler Joseph Ferdinand ordered the partial mobilization on the same day at 12:35 [14] and the general mobilization from 4th August to 4th September. [10] The five-day delay was due to railroad technical reasons.[15] Since then, mass transportation of troops to Száva (Sava) and Bosnia and to the Russian front began, but trains to the west front also caused busy traffic on

## **Запад и Восток:**

*история и перспективы развития*

the affected lines.[10] However, the two-front war was a major challenge for the rail traffic management, as the timetables needed for the front change had not yet been completed. Without these, the Chief of Staff responsible for transportation refused to undertake the risk of improvisation. Thus, there was only one solution, trains southbound was to continue their journey and after the unloading process they headed to the Galician front in the right time. This unfortunate transport manoeuvre, the defects of railway planning, played a major role later in the great defeats of the Monarchy in 1914.[16] Directly to the Balkan Front, mainly the Budapest–Zágráb(–Sunja–Bród[Brod])–Fiume[Rijeka], Sopron–Szombathely–Nagykanizsa–Barcs–Bród, Budapest–Szabadka–Újvidék[Novi Sad]–Zimony, Budapest–Újszász–Szolnok–Békéscsaba–Arad–Temesvár–Báziás[Bazias] (–Pancsova), Budapest–Újdombóvár–Pécs–Eszék[Osijek]–Vinkovce–India[Indija], Križevci–Virovitica, Dugo Selo–Novska, Banova Jaruga–Pakrac, Károlyváros[Karlovac]–Caprag, Steinbrück–Siszek[Sisak] and when needed, several smaller side lines were used for the transports.



*Map 1.: Railway lines to the Balkan front*

*Source: Author's image*

Transports to Galicia were managed on the Budapest–Hatvan–Miskolc(–Mezőlaborc[Medzilaborce])–Kassa[Košice]–Orló[Orlov], Budapest–Cegléd–Szolnok–Püspökladány–Debrecen–Nyíregyháza–Csap[Csop](–Bátyú[Batyovo]–Lawoczne)–Sianki, Békéscsaba–Nagyvárad[Oradea]–Érmihályfalva[Valea lui Mihai]–Királyháza[Koroleve]–Körösmező[Jaszinya], Pozsony[Bratislava]–Lipótvár[Leopoldov]–Zsolna[Žilina], Zsolna–Csaca[Čadca], Legenye[Luhyňa–Alsómihályi[Michal’any]–Kassa tracks as well as on the related extension lines. [10] To the latter, 40 to 50 trains departed from the Miskolc and Debrecen rail management main lines on a daily basis, and the Mezőlaborc, Sianki, Lawoczne and Körösmező exiting stations from that time. [11]



Map 2.: Railway lines towards the eastern front

Source: Author's image

In the meantime, war was already being fought on both the battlefields. The population of the country could perceive the beginning of the war most of all by the fact that wounded and sickened as well as deceased soldiers – in closed coffins – were being repatriated by the authorities that month – mostly by the postal trains. For an injured person or an accompanying person, the price of a 3rd class military ticket, at least 4 corona 80 penny per train

and per kilometre had to be accounted for repatriation by rail. In addition, extra military trains were sent by the International Sleeping-Car Company (Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits) to the military zones that were composed from sleeping and dining cars, for which an extra military tariff was charged for the Ministry of War during deployment and delivery of supplies.[10] On the Balkan front, the Serbs beat the Austrian–Hungarian troops back to their starting point, behind the rivers by the 23rd of August. This way, the first military expedition of the Monarchy failed. The Potiorek offensives came to an end with it and the co-ordinating superintendent general was laid off-duty and sent into retirement.[1] This displacement had moral consequences first and foremost, as it greatly deteriorated the spirit of those fighting against Russia.[2]

Meanwhile, in Galicia fierce battle was raging havoc. The smooth running of the front trains was soon disrupted by the difficulties encountered at the destination stations during unloading. With this, the precise schedule of mobilization quickly turned into confusion and slowed down.[11] After the initial success, mainly due to the wrongly anticipated, faster-than-expected Russian mobilization, via the recently opened East–West railways, the Monarchy’s troops were forced to retreat here also. The railways barely transported the soldiers to the front, when the evacuation of Galicia had to be started due to the Russian advance on 14 September.[17] At that time, the first transfer was also made when the 35th uprising brigade had to be transported by 40–50 trains [18] from the Tatár pass to Kraków on the Kőrösmező–Királyháza–Érmihályfalva–Debrecen–Szolnok–Budapest–Galánta[Galanta]–Zsolna line via Oderberg (Bohumín).[13] At the same time, in areas affected by the fights, a migratory wave started up by – the poor – Hungarian and Austrian–Galician, predominantly Jewish civilian refugees, who were able to travel freely by train to the hinterland or even back to their homes at the expense of the Ministry of Home Affairs.[10] In addition, the turnover of these lines was increased by the fact that the – Austrian – staff, movables and inventory items of the railway operating in the region had to be taken to Hungary – then from here, through Marchegg and Bruck an der Leitha to Austria – which put a huge burden on Miskolc and Debrecen rail management as well as on the railway system of the north-east region.[14] The lines of this front, along with the Balkans, became so overladen that there was a shortage of staff, which the military leadership tried to remedy by depriving the railway staff of their military duties. Moreover, the population of the Hungarian territories, which had been battered by Serbs, had retreated with its movables by this time.[11]

By that time, a disease, the Asian cholera appeared which threatened the soldiers the most. The spread of the cholera epidemic also persisted



for military shipments. Soldiers on their way to the eastern front were the most vulnerable to infection. The disease came from Romania. They then ordered the separation and treatment of the sick or suspicious persons and the equipment coming back from the battlefield, as well as installation of water closets in the wagons and the strict sterilization of them, the use of soap and the cleaning of the barracks. The situation was so severe that some villages had to be quarantined, such as Vésztó, Békés, Kőrösladány and Arad as well. At the same time, railway traffic from Hungary to Romania was only enabled at Verciorova and Predeal stations, while it was not permitted to travel through the border between Gyimesbükk[Ghimeş-Făget]–Palánka[Palanca] and Cainen.[10] This was important because the supply (cereals, flour, peas, beans, etc.) [19] for Germany surrounded by hostile powers was managed from Romania [11] – obviously – through the Hungarian lines.[14] The Hungarian State Railways provided free vaccination to those working in the infected area in favour of smooth transport management.[10]

On October 29, 1914, the Ottoman Empire began bombing Russian harbours,[1] thus entering the war on the side of the central powers, forcing its opponent into a multi-front battle.[2] With this in mind, the load on the Hungarian lines shipping to the Russian front did not decrease in November and December. In one hand, the transportation of supplies to the joint army meant 50 trains a day from Austria through Marchegg and Bruck an der Leitha.[20] This was 85 trains a day with the ones coming backward, including the increasing number of POW shipment. On the other hand, the uprising brigade had to be transported.[10] The increasingly dangerous eastern front demanded additional concentration of new troops, so redundant units in the south and the 43rd Infantry Division were shipped from the Uzsoki Pass to the north as soon as possible. It could be arranged on the lines of Zimony–Szabadka–Szeged–Békéscsaba–Nagyvárad–Debrecen–Csap–Lawoczne, Debrecen–Királyháza–Körösmező, and Ungvár–Csap–Miskolc–Budapest–Galánta–Zsolna. The units had to settle down for long battles on this front that were supplied on the single-track Miskolc and Debrecen lines with low transmission. Then, during the Russian siege of Cracow, shifts of troops had to be taken as well. Without a preliminary schedule, 40-45 trains a day delivered a full corps from northern Hungary through the Marchegg–Rákos–Hatvan–Ruttka[Vrútky]–Zsolna as well as the Galánta–Zsolna lines to West Galicia.[11]

By this time, due to the large, sometimes unbearable traffic, especially to the front, civil shipments had to be limited again, especially the ones that were not given priority over the military trains carrying troops and equipment from the border land to the area of deployment.[19] In the first year of the Great War, the Hungarian railways had to face such difficulties, an increasing

traffic and the shortage of capacity.

### Summary

Summing it up, it can be stated that the year of the outbreak of the war put almost the entire Hungarian railway network to a huge trial. The multi front war and the steady increase in the supply of troops and supplies, including redeployments, had generated unbearable traffic by the end of the year on the Hungarian railways that did not really have a serious alternative at that time. The main tracks of the railway network from Vienna to Budapest transmitted tremendous traffic to Serbia and Galicia. Military transfers also placed a heavy burden on transversal railways. In addition to this, there was a lack of capacity at the Hungarian railway due to the enrolled railway staff, which could only be relieved by releasing railway personnel from the military service. As a result, traffic was slowed down until the beginning of winter and what is more, success on the battlefields was lagging behind. Due to poor rail logistics and constant overloading, the (Austrian–)Hungarian army was at a disadvantage on both fronts that led to its first defeats.

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## МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ НАКАНУНЕ ВТОРОЙ АНГЛО-АФГАНСКОЙ ВОЙНЫ (1878-1881 ГГ.)

**Аннотация:** Это исследование посвящено причинам второй англо-афганской войны, которая произошла в 1878–1881 гг. Автор подробно изучает эволюцию британо-афганских отношений с учетом их глобального контекста в течение XIX века, особенно так называемой Большой игры, которая стала результатом соперничества между Российской империей и Британской империей в Центральной Азии. Впоследствии автор представляет анализ основных причин конфликта и основных фактических описаний событий, которые привели к войне.

**Ключевые слова:** *Афганистан; Британская Индия; Северо-Западная граница; Лорд Литтон; Шер Али Хан; Вторая англо-афганская война.*

Центральная Азия всегда была очень важным регионом. Уже во времена Александра Македонского через этот регион проходят важнейшие торговые пути между Европой и Азией. Это исключительное значение продолжало укрепляться с развитием торговли, которая была особенно связана со знаменитым Шелковым путем. Города, через которые проходила эта торговая артерия, переживали настоящий бум в позднем средневековье и в период раннего Нового времени. За богатством деловых оазисов Хивы и Бухары возвышался Самарканд, столица империи последнего великого монгольского завоевателя Тимур Лен-