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Annika Mombauer

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HELMUTH VON MOLTKE AND THE ORIGINS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

This book explores the influence of Helmuth von Moltke, Germany's Chief of the General Staff between 1906 and 1914. Based largely on previously unknown primary sources, it analyses the General Staff's role in military decision-making and Moltke's relationship with Kaiser Wilhelm II, as well as the genesis of the Schlieffen Plan and Germany's military and political reactions to the many pre-war crises. Moltke's influence on Germany's political decision-making is shown to have been decisive, helping to foster an increasingly confrontational mood.

The book takes specific issue with the common perception of Moltke as an ineffectual and reluctant military leader, remembered primarily for the defeat at the Battle of the Marne and his alleged adulteration of the Schlieffen Plan. It concludes that, on the contrary, he was both bellicose and ambitious, hoping for war 'the sooner the better' and playing a crucial role in the outbreak and early months of the First World War.

ANNIKA MOMBAUER is Lecturer in European History, The Open University.

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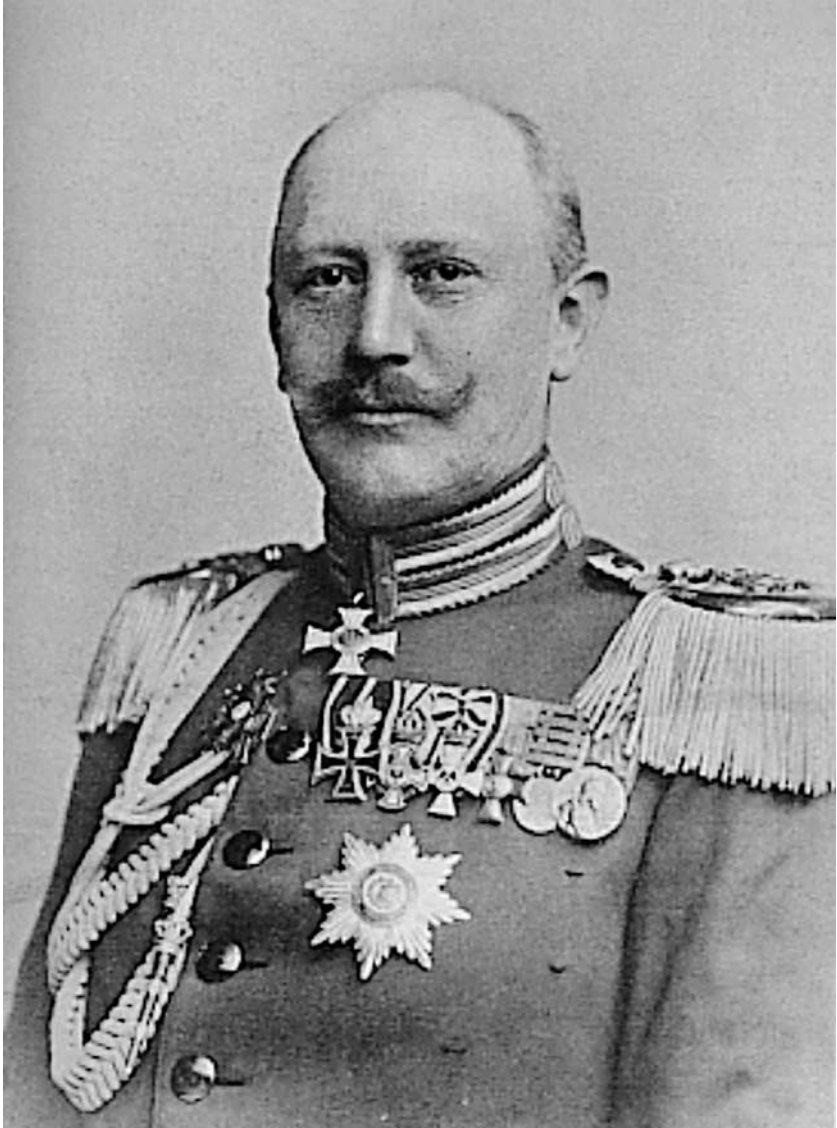
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Helmuth von Moltke at the time of his appointment as Chief of the
General Staff of the German Army, 1906

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For my Mother

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*Hierarchy of ranks for officers in the German army
before 1918*

Army ranks

Leutnant

Oberleutnant

Hauptmann

Major

Oberstleutnant

Oberst

Generalmajor

Generalleutnant

General

Generaloberst

Generalfeldmarschall

Approximate British equivalent

Second Lieutenant

Lieutenant

Captain

Major

Lieutenant Colonel

Colonel

Brigadier

Major General

Lieutenant General

General

Field Marshal

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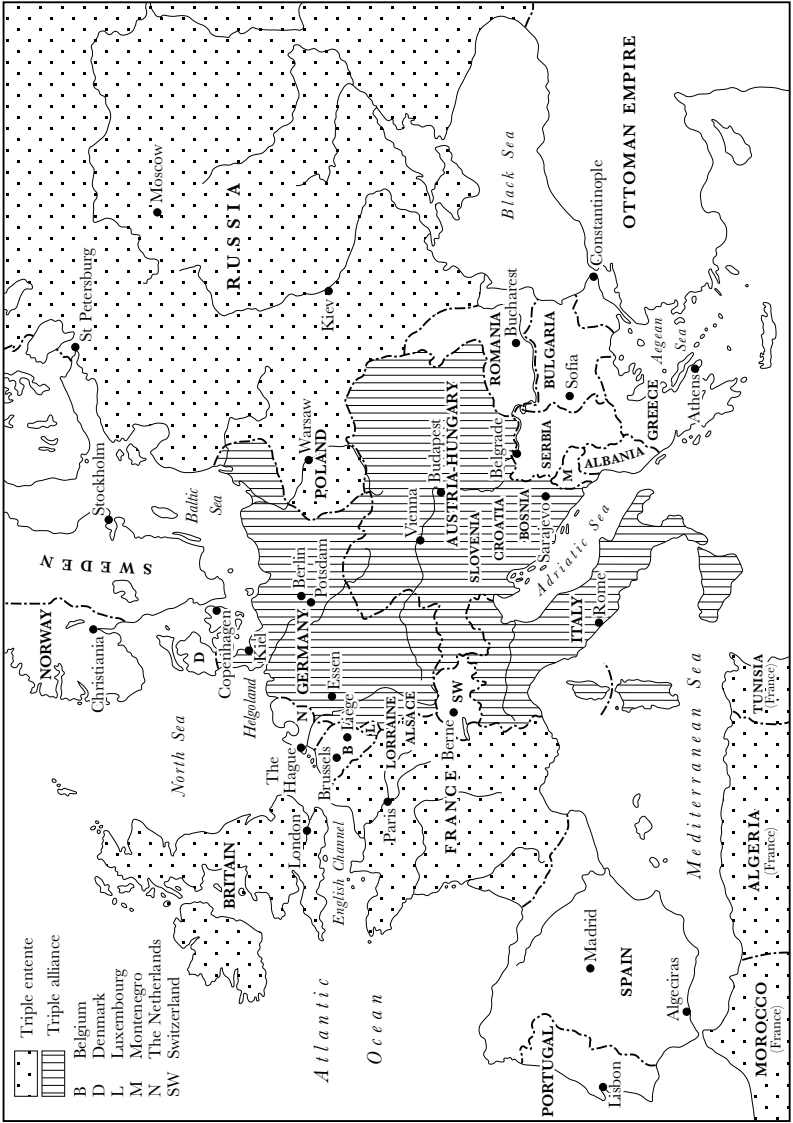
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AA	Auswärtiges Amt
AOK	Armee-Oberkommando (Army High Command)
BA-MA	Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg
BayHSTA-KA	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv-Kriegsarchiv, Munich
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
<i>DD</i>	<i>Die deutschen Dokumente zum Kriegsausbruch</i>
<i>GP</i>	<i>Die große Politik der Europäischen Kabinette</i>
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HQ	Hauptquartier (military headquarters)
<i>HZ</i>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
KA	Kriegsarchiv
KGFA	Kriegsgeschichtliches Forschungsamt des Heeres
NL	Nachlaß (papers)
<i>NDB</i>	<i>Neue Deutsche Biographie</i>
<i>MGM</i>	<i>Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen</i>
MS	Manuscript
NCOs	Non-Commissioned Officers
OHL	Oberste Heeresleitung
Oberost	Oberkommando Ost
o.D.	ohne Datum (no date)
PA Bonn	Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bonn
PRO	Public Record Office, London
Sächs. HSTA	Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Dresden
TB	Tagebuch (diary)



Map 1 General map of Europe