

# Rethinking History: Lessons of the Centenary of the First World War<sup>\*</sup>

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The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 was epochal in every sense. Reviews and discussions provoked by it have never stopped. When its centenary arrives, it seems that people focus more on one of its implications — the competition and possible conflict between a rising power and an established power. The mixing of historical interpretations and present-day concerns has complicated the already very controversial topic of the First World War, thus making it necessary for people to be more cautious in drawing lessons from it.

## I. ORIGIN OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND GERMANY'S RESPONSIBILITY

The origin of the First World War, which has been much discussed in numerous articles marking the centenary of the First World War, is a most critical point where realistic power relations and historical interpretations cross each other, and a most sensitive topic as well. Thus, it is necessary to look at this basic topic in detail before going on to discuss the lessons of the First World War.

Looking at the First World War from the perspective of competition between great powers, particularly competition

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between a rising power and an established power, the origin of the First World War was, to a large extent, related to the contradiction between Britain and Germany, and Germany should be responsible for starting the war accordingly. In China, it was accepted that the First World War had been caused by the conflicts between the imperialist countries when they tried to re-divide the world. In fact, following this general statement, Vladimir Lenin also clarified who should take the main responsibility for the war. For example, in the article "The Russian Brand of Südekum," Lenin pointed out, "Is there anything surprising that two robbers began the attack before the third one got the new knives they had ordered?"<sup>1</sup> He named Germany and Austria-Hungary as the initiators of the war. Such an explanation met the interest and practical need of China then, which was facing the difficult anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism task at that time, and was not much challenged for a long time.

In the Western world, however, especially in European countries, the origin of the First World War mattered a great deal for a rather long time because of its close link with the unforgettable memories and critical realistic interests. In reviewing studies on the origin of the First World War and the responsibility of Germany, we may find that they have gone through four stages of development. The first stage extended from the end of the First World War and lasted until the early 1920s. At this stage, the responsibility of war was directly linked to the punishment laid on the defeated nations and war reparations. The consideration of practical politics turned overwhelming. Thus, the research on this topic (the origin of Great War) had not really started. It was only Britain, France and other victorious nations who made the conclusion and wrote it into the Treaty of Versailles. Article 231 of the Treaty on the responsibility of the war pointed out that Germany imposed the war on the Allied and Associated countries out of the purpose of aggression, thus it must be made responsible for "causing all the loss and damage."<sup>2</sup> Lenin's judgment could also be ascribed to this school to some extent.

The second stage is from the mid-1920s to 1950s. At this stage, the various belligerents of the First World War released quite an amount of diplomatic archival materials to "clarify" the "fact." In

Russia, soon after the Bolsheviks came to power, Leon Trotsky released part of the diplomatic archives of the Tsarist Russian government in order to disclose that the imperialists had fought the war for carving up the world. The new German government after the German Revolution in 1918 authorized Karl Kautsky to organize German diplomatic documents about the origin of the First World War and published 39 volumes of collected diplomatic archives during 1922-1927. From 1926 to 1938, the British government published 11 volumes of *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914*. France also started to publish her diplomatic documents on the outbreak of the First World War. These documents provided important materials for studies on the origins of the First World War and prewar German foreign policies, thus enabling related studies to start. Studies at this stage were much influenced by the principles proposed by Woodrow Wilson's, known as "Fourteen Points," and focused on the pre-war alliance system and "old-style diplomacy" conducted secretly only by the cabinets of relative countries. In fact, most people then had already refuted the viewpoint that Germany intentionally waged the war in order to become the world hegemon. Instead, it was generally held that major belligerent countries were all responsible for the outbreak of the war and the only question was which country should take more responsibility.<sup>3</sup> Even Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister who participated in the negotiations for the Treaty of Versailles and signed it, pointed out in his memoir that no country wanted a war in 1914, and that the great powers' brinkmanship finally went out of control caused the war to a large degree.<sup>4</sup> After WWII, the focus of studies shifted to the link between the origins of the First World War and those of WWII. The shift was reflected in Germany-related studies, such as the causal relations between articles on the war crime in the Treaty of Versailles and the downfall of Weimar Republic and Hitler's getting into power; the relations of Hitler's foreign policies and those of Kaiser Wilhelm II, etc. As for the reason why Germany went for the First World War, although many voiced that Nazism should and must be traced back to the German militaristic tradition, the mainstream viewpoint was still that the origins of the First World

War were complicated and arguments insisting that German waged the war for hegemonic reasons were not popular. In October 1951, a joint statement made by German and French historians stated, "These documents wouldn't allow the responsibility of starting a European war in 1914 to be passed to any government or nation... German's policy in 1914 did not intend for initiating a European war, but was mostly constraint by the alliance obligation towards Austria-Hungary."<sup>5</sup>

The third stage is from early 1960s to 1970s, during which the "Fischer Revolution" sprouted and bloomed. In the 1960s, Fritz Fischer published two works: *Germany's Aims in the First World War* in 1961 and *War of Illusions* in 1969. Using rich historical materials, especially some recently published materials, Fischer pointed out that Germany initiated the First World War on purpose in order to meet her ambition for territory, and that the social pressure in Germany enhanced the incentive of German political elites to initiate a war which diverted domestic attention.<sup>6</sup> Such a viewpoint started a "Fischer Revolution" in studies about the origins of the First World War and Germany's responsibility for the war, and was vigorously disputed by conservative scholars in Germany, including Gerhard Ritter Erwin Hölzle.<sup>7</sup> However, it did not take long before a powerful school emerged around Fischer, whose main viewpoint gradually became another orthodox.<sup>8</sup> First, Fischer's research approach, which emphasized social structures and pressure, was echoed across the Atlantic Ocean by some American scholars who tried to explain the American drift into the Vietnam War by social structure and pressure groups. Secondly, his viewpoints were broadly welcomed because they met the need of some people. The opponents of Prussian militaristic traditions in Germany, liberal democrats, victims of German aggression, pacifists, and foreign politicians who were concerned about Germany's resurrection, all tended to accept such an explanation of history. In a sense, such an academic viewpoint coincided with the political need at that time. Loathe to Nazi crimes catalyzed criticisms and reflections from the traditional sources of German politics and culture so that Germany's tragedy could be avoided fundamentally. The dissolution of Prussia in 1947 underscored the

consideration. Labeling Germany as “consistently aggressive,” or emphasizing the continuity between the policy of pre-the First World War Germany and the conquering policy of Nazi Germany, doubtlessly was very helpful for unbraiding German militaristic traditions. It could be said that it had been rather rare in academic researches that a conclusion enhanced the criticism of German political traditions and the supervision of Germany’s following peace road by public opinion, like Fischer’s did. However, in the end, academic achievements are not equal to political effects. Along with the passage of time, many far-fetched and assumed arguments in the works of “Fischer School” were noticed and persuasively challenged by some scholars.

The fourth stage started around late 1980s and lasts up to now. More or less, studies in this stage modified or criticized the viewpoints of “the Fischer School.” For example, James Joll argued that Germany in 1914 didn’t want to initiate a war, but just hoped to take advantage of a few chances. The German plans of conquering drawn after the outbreak of the war could not prove that Germany started the war for these purposes.<sup>9</sup> Many historians who oppose the arguments of the “Fischer School” emphasized interpreting new materials appropriately and rationally.<sup>10</sup> The fourth generation of the First World War historians, e.g., David Stevenson, proposed that the preemptive strategic principles led Germany to a highly risky policy during the crisis and drove the crisis out of control in the end, thus brought Germany into the war. Generally speaking, the mainstream viewpoint at this stage can be seen as the reaction towards the “Fischer Revolution.” Germany going to war should be explained by the mistakes in policies and handlings towards the crisis. With a defensive purpose of self-protection as a great power, instead of an intention of expanding her territory and economy by military force in advance, Germany conducted a total war that was against her original intention.<sup>11</sup> In short, the First World War was not initiated by Germany on purpose, nor a war totally out of expectation, but a result of the joint force of contingency and necessity.

## 2. THE ANALOGY BETWEEN HISTORY AND REALITY

On the basis of above analysis, we may have a look at the analogy between history and reality.

In fact, at least from Dr. Henry Kissinger's *On China* in 2011, the analogy between the history a century ago and current situation of international politics, especially the ascent of China, started to be discussed. Dr. Kissinger entitled his epilogue as "Does History Repeat Itself? *The Crowe Memorandum*", and compared the Sino-US relations with the relationship between a rising power and a hegemony (Germany and Britain) a century ago. However, the historical analogy made by Dr. Kissinger is overall rather cautious: he warned people to pay attention to the lessons from history, and also tried to avoid misleading readers by using simple similarity.<sup>12</sup> At the end of 2013, the commemoration of the centenary of the First World War went into full swing, some memorial articles were more suggestive and the analogy to reality was more direct. For example, a memorial article of the First World War in *The Economist* paralleled the roles of current major countries to that of pre-Great War: the United States as Britain, China as Germany, and Japan as France. Although the author remained precautions to such inaccurate analogy in this article, the emphasized theme was still very distinctive.<sup>13</sup> In her new book *The War that Ended Peace*, Canadian scholar Margaret MacMillan clearly paralleled today's Sino-US relationship to the Anglo-German relations a century ago. Such a historical analogy was also highlighted in her memorial article written for the Brookings Institution.<sup>14</sup> These opinions or comments, which emphasized the resemblance of history, implied a conclusion for the reality: that the conflict between China and the United States is unavoidable, or in the words of John J. Mearsheimer, that "China's rise will not be peaceful." Some politicians also joined in such a simple historical comparison. For example, the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in his unique way paralleled current Sino-Japanese relations to Anglo-German relations before 1914, which was a really stunning comment.<sup>15</sup>

It might be such kind of judgments for reality, instead of the conclusions drawn from the history itself, inspired other scholars

to express their opinions on the First World War. For example, in January 2014, Joseph Nye published an article entitled “1914 Revisited?” Like Dr. Kissinger, Joseph Nye also emphasized the necessity to be cautious with historical analogy; moreover, he stressed the great differences between the world today and 1914, between current Sino-US relations and then Anglo-German relations. Simply put, he tried to conclude that the conflict between China and the United States is not unavoidable through rather neutralizing the similarities in history than emphasizing the differences.<sup>16</sup> In Hong Kong, an article in the *South China Morning Post* was more vocal in stressing differences and concluded that China is not “Germany in 1914,” providing a clear standing to dispute the previous arguments.<sup>17</sup>

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Actually, some truth is presented, to some extent, by either stressing the historical likeness or emphasizing the differences in history. The complexity of historical process, however, is largely omitted or simplified in most of the cases. As discussed before, understandings of the origin of the First World War and the responsibility of Germany changed over time, and are still in dispute today. To some degree, the interpretation of the First World War is more related to the philosophical worldviews of the observer rather than the reality itself.

In such circumstances, we could not be too cautious when discussing historical analogies. Neither way is appropriate: using some differences to deny the historical similarity plainly, or just emphasizing the resemblance. In fact, both ways are reflecting an intellectual indolence. If the purpose of emphasizing the similarity is only to lead to a conclusion that “the conflict is unavoidable”, then that is no more than a kind of ignorance for the pre-Great War European history. Thus, many historians, including David Stevenson, a scholar of authority in the First World War

studies, were very cautious in depicting any historical analogies in their memorial articles.<sup>18</sup>

At least, it is necessary to pay equal attention to the historical similarities and differences at the same if an analogous argumentation must be done. The world before the First World War was one in which the hegemony of Britain was declining. Although the British Empire still led in critical fields, such as navy, finance and international trade, and held the “institutional hegemony” of the world, her industrial production, or the basis of her fortune and power, was falling in the international competition. In 1870, Britain brought out 32% of the world industrial production, but her share fell to 14.7% in 1910, when Germany kept 15.9% and the United States took 35.3%.<sup>19</sup> Such proportions illustrates that even if the strategic competition between a rising power and a power with hegemony was the main cause of the First World War, then such a competition was a “staggered” one. Instead of picking up the US, the strongest rival, Britain firmly tried to contain Germany, the weaker rival, whom she felt more assured to defeat. The Anglo-American War in 1812 had proved to Britain that a victory in war would not restrain the rising of the United States. Moreover, Britain had no odds of winning a war against the United States who was gaining mightiness in early 1900s. In a private letter, Lord Selborne, the British First Lord of Admiralty at that time, confessed, “I would never quarrel with the U.S. if I could possibly avoid it. It has not dawned on our countrymen yet... that if the Americans choose to pay for what they can easily afford, they can gradually build up a navy, fully as large and then larger than ours and I am not sure they will not do it.”<sup>20</sup> Facing Germany, in another development, Britain resolutely maintained her role as the arbitrator of the balance of power in Europe, and expressed the resolution that she would not back away from a war in her foreign policy in Europe and naval policy. Moreover, Britain “allied de facto” with France and Russia using ententes thus interwove the Anglo-German relations with the alliances of European powers and complicated the handling of rivalry.

From this perspective, the world today is differentiated from the world before the First World War in some essential ways. The relative decline of American hegemony is not comparable with the situation



of Britain a hundred years ago. For now, it is impossible for China or any emerging economy to challenge the United States like German did to Britain, and there is no need for the United States to consider a policy of “beat him or join him” with the strongest competitor. However, some similarities should not be denied, especially in the cognitive area. Though the hegemony of the United States has not actually declined, she shares the psychological anxiety of old British Empire. In the foreseeable future, there will be no strategic competition souring the overall bilateral relations between China and the United States, like the naval arms race between Germany

and Britain before the First World War. Of course, the risk that China and the United States take each other as a rival in certain areas will keep to exist, and the changes of comparative national strength between them will continue to be as a sensitive topic. More important, the Sino-US strategic relations would interfere with the alliance system of the United States, especially the US-Japan alliance, and further complicate existing problems. To deal with such a situation, it is necessary for major countries to draw and learn lessons from the past. Nevertheless, it would be ridiculous, even dangerous, to deliberately make tensions or preach about certain “historical destiny.”

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### 3. LESSONS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

It is necessary to learn lessons from the historical catastrophes; yet, it seems not very easy to draw the correct lessons. During the period between the First World War and WWII, major powers like Britain and France saw that confronting tough standing might upgrade the international crisis, but such a lesson led to the appeasement policy that accelerated the outbreak of WWII. After WWII, many Western countries became determined to avoid the mistake of appeasement and their subsequent hard reactions to

the Soviet Union only intensified the Cold War. Today, rethinking the First World War in a globalized and multi-polar international circumstance, it is imperative that we remain prudent cautious not to draw absolute conclusions.

First, the question of war or peace is always an essential issue of international politics. The theory of “impossible great war” and the theory of “inevitable great war” often interact as mutual complementary, and eventually turn into a self-fulfilled prophecy.

A twisted understanding of the question of war or peace might be the most distinct feature of pre-the First World War European international politics. On one hand, governments of European were seemingly convinced that “a great war was inevitable” and, therefore, engaged in arms expansion to produce an appearance of being ready for war at any time. On the other, perhaps because of the long years of peace, these countries were short of a proper understanding of war and underestimated the actual possibility of such a war. One view widespread at the time was that a large-scaled war was increasingly impossible because the economic links among the various countries had become ever the tighter. Take the major rivals of Britain and Germany as an example. The economic connection between them was apparently closer than those between each of them and their allies. Britain had been the largest trading partner of Germany, and Germany had been the second largest trading partner of Britain since 1904. More importantly, the capital of the two countries complemented each other every well and the capital of Britain in surplus well satisfied the need of German companies for expansion. British-German joint ventures consisted of 22 out of the 40 international cartels of manufacturing.<sup>21</sup> Main industrialists and financiers in both countries did not believe that there would be a real war. On the other side of the political spectrum, the Left-wing parties were holding similar opinions. For example, in 1913 some theorists of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, noticing the obvious détente between Germany and France, declared that the international capitalistic system had evolved into a new stage in which military conflicts had become out of date.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, it was believed that the confrontation between two military groups formed by European powers, and the unpredictable destructiveness

of industrialized warfare would deter any such conflict from taking place. Four months before the outbreak of the war, *The Times* published a long article that eloquently denied the possibility of a great war: "The division of the Great Powers into two well-balanced groups with intimate relations between the members of each... is a twofold check upon inordinate ambitions or sudden outbreaks of race hatred. All Sovereigns and statesmen-aye, and all nations know that a war of group against group would be a measureless calamity. That knowledge brings with it a sense of responsibility which chastens and restrains the boldest and most reckless."<sup>23</sup> The more people that believed there would be no real war, the more daring were decision-makers and domestic societies to boast about war and conducted reckless brink-of-war policies. The statement that "a war is inevitable" was thus made more popular. The two theories of "inevitable war" and "impossible war," though contradictory in appearance, backed each other in practice. The sprawling of these two theories deprived countries of proper sense on the question of war or peace, weakened their control of the situation, and eventually led to strategic bandwagon and passivism.

Second, the security dilemma is an essential quagmire in the relations between rising powers and established powers. Incumbent powers are at least equally responsible like rising powers for coping with the security problem.

In the theories of international politics, "security dilemma" refers to a process in which tension and hostility spiral up due to some countries, driven by the feelings of insecurity, pursue more power, and consequently incite similar sense of insecurity and power-chasing actions by other countries.<sup>24</sup> Such a dilemma was pervasive among pre-the First World War major European countries and was especially distinctive between Britain, who was an established power, and Germany, who was a rising power. Many scholars argued that such mutual misgivings and following tensions were critical to the outbreak of the First World War. However, studies in the English world mostly took the security dilemmas between the rising and established powers on their merits, or blamed post-Bismark Germany for causing the upgrading of the British-German security dilemma with her volatile policies and insistence

on naval expansion. In fact, Britain was also responsible for such a situation. Take the example of the naval arms race between the two countries. High reliance on maritime communication lines was a critical reason for Germany to build a large navy. Britain, who was holding the maritime hegemony then, didn't take any measure to ease Germany's concern about the security of her maritime communication lines, and on the contrary, she used this advantage as a lever to irritate Germany. For example, in 1897, *The Saturday Review* in Britain published a famous anti-Germany article, stating, "England is the only great power that could fight Germany 'without tremendous risk and without doubt of the issue'... The growth of Germany's fleet has done no more than to make the blow of England fall on her more heavily. The ships would soon be at the bottom of the sea or in convoy to English ports."<sup>25</sup> The British Royal Navy was also aggressive in its actions. Several incidents occurred where they detained German civil vessels, which caused strong protests in Germany. These frictions undoubtedly stimulated Germany's naval build-up and enhanced mutual misgivings. After 1904, the diplomatic activities of Britain to isolate Germany aroused the latter's fear of "enclosure," and pushed Germany's policy become more risky and tougher. It should be pointed out that such a case is of universal significance. Since the security dilemmas between rising powers and established powers are rooted deeply in reality and have a large historical inertial force, it is extremely tricky to properly handle the dilemmas. Thus, to escape this security dilemma, it is far from

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appropriate for established powers to just take a fault-finding and one-side-demanding attitude towards rising powers. Established powers should take at least equal responsibility in safeguarding world peace. The key point here is to establish an interacting mode of mutual restraint by joint efforts among major countries.

Third, alliances are often critical inducement to cause great powers to make a showdown by force. The peaceful relations between rising powers and established powers depend on the proper handling of their relationship with the third parties, especially their allied partners.

To some degree, the First World War was caused by the alliance systems. The rivalry between Germany and Britain — the crux of great power contradictions — had a *détente* after 1912, when the main uncertainty in the naval arms race had been settled. In fact, Germany had accepted the proportion of dreadnoughts building required by Britain.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile, Britain and Germany cooperated to deal with the Balkan Wars and compromised on the prolonged disputes regarding the Baghdad Railway. Even on the eve of the First World War, Britain sent several capital ships to visit a Germany port to show the amelioration of British-German relationship. Yet, once impacted by a third party, especially an ally, the British-German relations became immediately difficult. Historians have found that the two countries were broadly connected in non-European affairs. These overseas affairs often made positive effect on the bilateral ties when they were related to Germany and Britain only. However, as soon as a British ally was involved, these affairs would bring uncertainty to the British-German relations.<sup>27</sup> Such a situation was particularly true for Britain, who cherished maintaining and enhancing “*alliance de facto*” with France and Russia far more than her bilateral relations with Germany. In other words, the latter could be sacrificed as the price of the former. Sir Edward Grey, then the British Foreign Secretary, later admitted that maintaining the Entente might be a cause of the war, but he also argued that it was worthwhile for Britain to take this risk.<sup>28</sup> After the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria took place at Sarajevo, the confronters soon expanded from Austria-Hungary vs. Serbia to Austria-Hungary vs. Russia, and Germany

was involved into the war for her alliance Austria-Hungary, while Britain involved for Russia and France.

Thus, from the point of conflict prevention, it is necessary for people to realize that the contradictions between rising powers and established powers may not necessarily be concentrated within the domain of bilateral relationship. The factor of third party, especially allies, could play a key role in the relations of major countries. Established powers tend to worry that defeat of their allies would encourage rising powers to further challenge them, and that passive acquiescence of such a defeat may indicate the collapse of their own hegemony. Of course, it is extremely important to maintain rational policy options and unhampered communication mechanisms under those circumstances. Yet, what the most fundamental is to keep such factors under control. For this purpose, rising powers and established powers need to coordinate and cooperate with each other, in particular, whenever one of their allies is also a major player.

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1 V. I. Lenin, "The Russian Brand of Südekum ("Eguo de Xiutegumu Pai" in Chinese)," *Liening Quanji* (Collected Works of Liening), Volume 21, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1955, p.101.

2 *Guoji Tiaoyue Ji, 1917-1923* (A Collection of International Treaties, 1917-1923), Beijing: World Affairs Press, 1961, p.158.

3 In addition arguments that Germany should take the major responsibility, Sidney B. Fay attributed the major responsibility to Austria-Hungary in his *The Origins of the World War*, and it is broadly agreed among German scholars that Germany was compelled into the war by external hostile pressure, and some argued that the root of WWI is that Germany had fallen into the trap of Britain, thus Britain and Russia should take the major responsibility.

4 David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, Vol. 1, London: Odhams Press Ltd, 1938, p.32.

5 Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Deyizhi Shi* (A Deutsch History), Vol. 4A, Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1986, p.51.

6 Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht: die Kriegszielpolitik des Kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914-1918*, Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1961; *Krieg der Illusionen: die deutsche Politik von 1911-1914*, Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1969.

7 For example, Hölzle disagreed with Fischer's using Germany's goals of war as evidence that Germany intended to start a war, and held that it was difficult to regard the plans proposed after the war broke out as the motive to start a war. He argued that, once the war broke out, belligerent countries would consider their bargains after victory. For example, France would want to retrieve Alsace-Lorraine and seize the coal and iron ore producing areas in German, and Russia would want Constantinople. Thus, the purpose of countries initiating wars should be differentiated from the goals proposed by countries in war and with victory in vision. See Erwin Hölzle, *Die Selbstentmachtung Europas: Das Experiment des Friedens vor und im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt: Musterschmidt Göttingen, 1975, pp.38-41.

8 Representatives of this group, except for Fischer himself, included famous historians like Imanuel Geiss, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, etc. By the 1970s, most of the critics of Fischer had already accepted his argument that Germany initiated WWI on purpose. See John. A. Moses, *The Politics of Illusion: The Fischer Controversy in German Historiography*, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1975.

9 James Joll, *The Origins of the First World War*, London and New York: Longman Ltd., 1984, p.144. Joll's argument changed over time, see James Joll, "The 1914 Debate Continues," *Past and Present*, No. 34, July 1966, pp. 100-113; P. H. S. Hatton, "Britain and Germany in 1914: The July Crisis and War Aims," *Past and Present*, No. 36, April 1967, pp.138-143.

10 In 1972, the diary of Kurt Riezler, who was the closest adviser of the pre-war German Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, was published and became critical material studied by both "the Fischer School" and its opponents. The diary just reconfirmed that in 1914, Germany was prepared for a dangerous and highly risky policy, but didn't clarify whether such policy was a deliberate aggression with long ferment, or just out of defensive motive. Though the "Fischer School" interpreted Riezler's diary from their perspectives, but overall, the diary gave more advantage to the opponents of the "Fischer School".

11 See Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I*, New York: Basic Books, 1999; David Stevenson, *Armaments and the Coming of War: Europe, 1904-1914*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

12 Henry Kissinger, *On China*, New York: The Penguin Press, 2011, pp.514-530.

13 "Look back with angst," *The Economist*, December 21, 2013-January 3, 2014, p.13.

14 Margaret MacMillan, "The Rhyme of History: Lessons of the Great War," available at: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/essays/2013/rhyme-of-history>, December 8, 2014.

15 "Zhongfang Huiji Anbei Zai Davos De Guibian (China Refuted Abe's Sophistry in Davos)," Xinhua News Agency, January 24, 2014, *Xinhua Meiri Dianxun (Xinhua Daily Telegraph)*, February 24, 2014, p.8.

16 Joseph. S. Nye, "1914 Revisited?" available at: <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/joseph-s-nye-asks-whether-war-between-china-and-the-us-is-as-inevitable-as-many-believe-world-war-i-to-have-been>, February 6, 2014.

17 Paul Letters, "No echo of 1914 in China's rise," *South China Morning Post* website, January 20, 2014, available at: <http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1409698/no-echo-1914-chinas-rise?page=all>, February 12, 2014.

18 David Stevenson, "Learning from the past: the relevance of international history," January 2014, available at:

<http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/ia/archive/view/196606>, March 2, 2014.

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20 George Monger, *The End of Isolation: British Foreign Policy 1900-1907*, London: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1963, p.72.

21 Zara Steiner and Kaith Neilson, *Britain and the Origins of the First World War*, New York: The Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp. 60-64.

22 David Stevenson, *The First World War and International Politics*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988, p.39.

23 James Joll, *The Origins of the First World War*, London and New York: Longman Ltd, 1984, p.37.

24 John H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1950, p.157.

25 William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism 1890-1902*, Vol. 1, New York & London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1935, p. 438.

26 Michael Epkenhans, *Die Wilhelminische Flottenruestung 1908-1914: Weltmachtstreben, Industrieller Fortschritt, Soziale Integration*, Muenchen: Oldenburg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1991, p.396.

27 Hew Strachan, *The First World War*, Vol. 1, *To Arms*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p.24.

28 *Ibid.*, p.19.



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