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The Foreign Administration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867–1918)[2]

Abstract

The Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established in 1848, during the heated months of the revolutions of the time and "the Spring of Nations." Starting 1869, the ministry was called the Imperial and Royal Ministry of the Empire and Foreign Affairs. In line with the conservative character of the monarchy, most of its workforce was still drawn from the environment of aristocracy and gentry, and the system was organised in a way to ensure that the staff was suitably trained. The main institution responsible for the education of professionals was the Oriental Academy established in 1754. In 1898 the Oriental Academy was transformed into the Imperial and Royal Consular Academy. Despite regular reorganisations, the Vienna Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintained a relatively stable internal structure, whose individual components were later implemented by a number of successor states. The central administration was divided into four sections, or departments. At the ambassador level, the Habsburg Empire had representations in the German Empire, France, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, Turkey, and at the Holy See that year (1883). The other diplomatic missions were headed by legates and appointed ministers. Two bodies had a significant impact on the monarchy's foreign policy decision-making: the Joint Council of Ministers and the Military-Political Conference.

Keywords: Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, consular service, diplomacy, Habsburgs, ministry

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IVAN HALÁSZ

Służba zagraniczna w monarchii austro-węgierskiej (1867–1918)

Streszczenie

Austriackie ministerstwo spraw zagranicznych powstało w 1848 r., w okresie ówczesnych masowych rewolucji i tzw. Wiosny Ludów. Od roku 1869 ministerstwo funkcjonowało pod nazwą Cesarsko-Królewskie Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych. W myśl konserwatywnego charakteru monarchii, większość pracowników ministerstwa wywodziła się ze środowisk arystokracji i szlachty. Główną instytucją odpowiedzialną za kształcenie ówczesnej kadry dyplomatycznej była Akademia Orientalna powołana w 1754 r. W 1898 r. szkoła ta została przemianowana na Akademię Konsularną. Mimo dość regularnych reorganizacji kadrowych, struktura wewnętrzna wiedeńskiego ministerstwa spraw zagranicznych pozostawała stosunkowo niezmienna, a poszczególne rozwiązania przyjęte tam jako standard bywały później wdrażane przez kolejne kraje sukcesyjne. Na administrację centralną składały się cztery departamenty. Monarchia Habsburgów miała swoje przedstawicielstwa dyplomatyczne na poziomie ambasadorskim w Cesarstwie Niemiecki, we Francji, w Wielkiej Brytanii, we Włoszech, w Rosji, w Turcji, a także w Stolicy Apostolskiej. Pozostałymi misjami dyplomatycznymi kierowali legaci oraz wyznaczeni ministrowie. Na kształt polityki zagranicznej prowadzonej przez monarchię miały znaczący wpływ dwa organy: wspólna rada ministrów oraz kongres militarno-polityczny.

Słowa kluczowe: monarchia austro-węgierska, służba konsularna, dyplomacja, Habsburgowie, ministerstwo

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A brief history of the Austrian foreign service

Between 1720 and 1742, the foreign affairs of the Habsburg Monarchy were managed by the Court Council (*Hofkanzlei*). Between 1742 and 1848, the professional preparation and execution of foreign policy decisions was the job of the Secret House, Court and State Council (*Geheime Haus-*, *Hof- und Staatskanzlei*). During the terms of first Wenzel Anton Eusebius von Kaunitz (1753–1792) and then Klemens Wenzel Lothar von Metternich (1809–1848) as chancellors, that latter body developed into a real office of foreign affairs. Over the years, the name of the *Ballhausplatz*, the building used by the foreign affairs apparatus, became a metonym for the Austro-Hungarian foreign policy.[3] However, the real ministry of foreign affairs was only established in 1848, during the heated months of the revolutions of the time. In Vienna, the decision to create a responsible government was made as early as in March, and it included a minister of foreign affairs. The organisation previously known as the State Council (*Staatskanzlei*) was renamed to the Ministry of the Empire and Foreign Affairs (*Ministerium des Kaiserlichen Hauses und des Äusseren*). Naturally, the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 also had an impact on the management of foreign affairs – since 1869, the ministry had been called the Imperial and Royal Ministry of the Empire and Foreign Affairs.

The Austrian – and later Austro-Hungarian – Ministry of Foreign Affairs was a well-organised authority with a long-standing tradition. In line with the conservative character of the monarchy, most of its workforce was still drawn from the environment of aristocracy and gentry, and the system was designed in a way to ensure that the staff was suitably trained. Senior officials generally expected applicants to have qualifications in political science and law along with good language skills and an in-depth knowledge of history and international law.[4] In the case of consuls, economic knowledge also became increasingly important.

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3 I. Diószegi, *A külpolitikai ügyintézés struktúrája és a döntéshozatal mechanizmusa az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchiában*, www.grotius.hu/doc/pub/MHHLZG/dioszegi_omm_kulpol.pdf

4 Ibidem, p. 6.

Education of professionals: from the Oriental Academy to the K. und K. Consular Academy

It was a great virtue of the Viennese diplomacy that it also had a well-organised system for training diplomats – 'fresh' professionals were trained at the Oriental Academy and later at the *K. und K.* Consular Academy, which, later still, became the Diplomatic Academy, today a venerable institution. The Habsburg Empire's age-honoured training institution for diplomats was established by Maria Theresa back in 1754. It was primarily initiated by the then state chancellor Wenzel Anton, Prince of Kaunitz-Rietberg, whose inspiration was the *École des Langues Orientales* in Paris. The new Vienna institution was also named the *Oriental Academy*.[5]

The 18th-century Austria was a major power in European politics. It formed various alliances with some states, and came into conflicts with varied outcomes with others. But the foreign policy activities of the Vienna court focused constantly one area of interest of such importance that many other issues and problems were regularly made subordinate to it. That area was the oriental (Eastern) matter, which included the relationship between Austria and the Ottoman Empire, and the problems associated with the Balkans. A great many well-prepared specialists were needed to tend to those issues. Therefore, the primary objective of the Oriental Academy was to educate specialists who spoke oriental languages – primarily Turkish, Arabic, and perhaps Persian. Initially, the Academy was integrated into the Vienna University, which was managed by the Jesuits. Up until the 1830s, the institution was run by clergymen who spoke oriental languages well. We should not consider the Oriental Academy a typical institution of higher education: one of its first students was eight years old, and education had to be organised accordingly. Noble birth was not an important consideration for entry, as attested by the fact that of the first 8 students, 5 were not nobility. Linguistic talent was of paramount importance, and the dominant part of the curriculum involved learning the Turkish language. The number of students increased later on, reaching 20 or 30. During the reform of 1833, the curriculum was broadened significantly by the addition of philosophical subjects, and an entrance examination was also required, with the result that the Oriental Academy increasingly furnished a complete university-level educational package for those wishing to make a career in diplomacy or other areas of government.[6] In the decades that followed, it was proposed repeatedly that the Academy should be integrated into university education for economic

5 For the history of this institution see H. Pfusterschmid-Hardtenstein, *A Short History of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna (Training for International Careers Since 1754)*, Wien 2008.

6 Ibidem, pp. 10–13.

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reasons, yet the institution, with the support of senior foreign policy officials who also insisted on this, managed to retain its independence throughout the years.[7]

A qualification from the Oriental Academy had an important advantage that the graduates of the institution were not required to take the postgraduate examination in the diplomatic service that applicants from elsewhere had to pass, as the former were already qualified consuls. Graduates of the Academy usually served the Habsburg Monarchy in eastern countries, but many of them also worked in the public administration of the occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina. As a result, by the end of the 19th century, its instruction covered the following areas: constitutional law and legal studies (in particular commercial law and maritime law), political science, and many foreign languages. French, first and foremost, and, due to Mediterranean trading, Italian and Turkish. The latter was mainly expected of those who were preparing to serve in the Levant. But Arabic, Persian, and Modern Greek could also be studied. Although the primary language of the institution was German, starting 1880, all students had to speak also Hungarian. This was related to the dualistic character of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was a requirement of parity that all Imperial and Royal consulates were to be accessible in Hungarian, too. Starting from 1883, Serbian, Croatian, Russian, and English could also be studied as optional subjects.[8]

As of 1883, the Oriental Academy consisted of a director, 12 teachers, a physician, and a dentist. Three of the professors specialised in law, one in financial studies, one in diplomacy, one in the Turkish language, one in Arabic writing, and one taught English. Three of them provided personal instruction in oriental languages. Two of those were themselves from the Orient, and presumably their first languages were oriental languages as well. The director at the time (Heinrich Barb) was a professor of the Persian language and literature.[9]

Along with its education-related activity, the Academy was also a centre of research of oriental languages and cultures. The Oriental Academy's success as the central institution for the training of diplomats in Austria was also accompanied by the fact that despite the Academy's students' multi-ethnic backgrounds, as they came from all the regions of the empire, spending usually 5 years there, those students developed a certain team spirit, learnt to handle their differences, and developed

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7 É. Somogyi, *Magyarok a bécsi világban. A közös külügyminisztérium magyar tisztviselői 1867–1914* [*Hungarians in Vienna Circles. The Hungarian officials of the joint foreign ministry, 1867–1914*], Budapest 2017, p. 135.

8 Ibidem, p. 134.

9 Personal-Status des k. und k. Ministeriums des kaiserlichen Hauses and des Aeussern und seiner Dependenzen (Jänner 1883), Wien, 1883. Haus, Hof- and Staatsarchiv, (HHStA) Wien, PA Administr. Registratur, Fach 4, Karton 460.

a rather strong loyalty to the House of Habsburg. In addition, the Academy's classes were meeting places for aristocrats and commoners, and the children of officials who were not of noble birth, which, in the longer term, facilitated the entry of commoners into the initially rather aristocratic Imperial foreign service.

An important change took place in the history of the institution at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The reason was that Count Agenor Gołuchowski, who was in charge of the foreign relations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire between 1895 and 1906, realised that in the ominously approaching 20th century, international trade would become a major existential issue, and that it was therefore important to develop a highly professional consular service and train competent officials.[10] The curriculum of the Oriental Academy, with its emphasis on oriental languages, was not entirely suited to meeting that challenge. The objective of the reform was to increase the weight of economics and legal, historical, and political studies within the syllabus. This was intended to educate suitably prepared public servants with an innovative spirit. The development of analytical skills also came to play an important role in the new courses offered.[11] And so in 1898, the Oriental Academy was transformed into the *Imperial and Royal*[12] *Consular Academy*. This was more than a simple change of name, the education structure of the institution was also reformed. From that point on, the institution was divided into a general (that is to say occidental) and an oriental section. The main objective was to release students preparing for service in the West from the obligation to study a number of oriental languages. They were exempt from that duty. Courses in economy, on the other hand, went into even greater detail. In other particulars, the accustomed rigour and class of the institution was maintained.[13]

The institution moved to a new building in the academic year 1904/05. One third of its students came from Hungary. The curriculum was highly diverse. The new institution did, in fact, continue training the foreign service elite of the grand old monarchy all the way until the empire itself was dissolved. A number of diplomats who had graduated from there continued to serve the successor states – but that is a whole different story.[14]

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10 During that period, consuls still had important trade policy and economic tasks.

11 H. Pfusterschmid-Hartenstein, op. cit., pp. 18–19.

12 In German language: Kaiserliche und Königliche, shortly K. und K.

13 É. Somogyi, *Magyarok*..., p. 135.

14 E.g. Ferdinand Veverka, who helped with organising the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November 1918. See. J. Dejmek, *Diplomacie Československa. Díl I.*, Praha 2012, p. 25 and 27.

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The organizational structure and the social character of foreign service

The corps was open as regards nationality and territories, but due to geographical proximity and the empire's focus on the capital, most of the people who made careers there were Germans from Vienna, Upper Austria, Bohemia, and Moravia.[15] Nevertheless, there were no obstacles to a Polish count (Agenor Gołuchowski) or a Hungarian nobleman (István Burián) rising to the position of minister of foreign affairs. Anyway, the titular and land-owning Hungarian aristocracy (counts, barons) had a significant representation in the joint ministry of foreign affairs, as evidenced, for instance, by Gyula Andrássy senior and junior.[16] The real significance of aristocracy is evidenced by the following numbers: between 1720 and 1918, only about 10% of those in charge of foreign representations were not aristocrats, but even among them, most had the prefix *von* in their names – indicating noble birth. Among the ambassadors of the period 1867–1918, there were only three diplomats who were not princes, counts or barons.[17]

Within the joint Austro-Hungarian foreign service there were three rather distinct classes of officials: officials belonging to the central apparatus, those in the diplomatic service, and persons holding various consular positions. Transition between the three groups, however, was always possible.[18] The numbers related to the matter are interesting: in 1914, the Vienna Ministry of Foreign Affairs had 850 employees, of which 232 were employed at its headquarters, 155 in the diplomatic service, and 463 at consulates.[19]

Despite regular reorganisations, the Vienna Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintained a relatively stable internal structure, whose individual components were later implemented by a number of successor states. The central administration was divided into four sections, or departments. The first dealt with political affairs, the second was responsible for administrative tasks, the third operated as the cabinet for the minister in charge, while the fourth was a sort of support office. It was responsible for encryption, translation, and registration services. The political section, which

15 I. Diószegi, op. cit., p. 6.

16 In order to make the description even more specific, we should add that in exceptional circumstances, even a person who was not a born aristocrat could become a minister: Heinrich Karl von Haymerle, an excellent official who spoke a total of eight languages, was such a man. Ibidem, p. 7.

17 Ibidem, p. 9.

18 E. Márffy, *Magyar közigazgatási és pénzügyi jog, I. kötet* [*Hungarian Administrative and Financial Law*], Budapest 1925, p. 710.

19 É. Somogyi, *Hagyomány és átalakulás. Állam és bürokrácia a dualista Habsburg Birodalomban* [*Tradition and transformation. State and bureaucracy in the dual Habsburg Monarchy*], Budapest 2006, p. 164.

was considered the largest one, was subdivided into units, which always reflected the preferences of the era and the major powers involved as well. Accordingly, Unit 1 handled eastern affairs, Unit 2 maintained relations with the Vatican, and Unit 3 was in charge of the relationships with Germany and Scandinavian countries, while Unit 4 worked on Southwest European and overseas relations. The leaders of the units had significant influence on the administration of foreign affairs and the shaping of foreign policy. The heads of department (*Sektionschef*) above them were considered rather high-ranking state officials. The first among them was in control of the entire apparatus of the ministry when the minister was absent.[20] The diplomats who were later employed by the governments of the new states gained their initial experiences of foreign affairs within that organisation.

In reality, both were needed for a truly successful career in diplomacy: ability as well as breeding, particularly when it came to serving abroad. And we should not leave financial situation out of the equation either. To begin with, the initial experience at the Vienna ministry involved serving as an unpaid intern, something the sons of less well-off families could certainly not afford. On the other hand, until the very end of the Habsburg Monarchy, there remained striking differences between the members of the foreign relations apparatus working at the headquarters and the diplomats on foreign missions. Although those applying to work at the ministry and at foreign missions had to take essentially the same exam, there still remained an important difference between the conditions related to the two types of service: those wishing to work abroad also had to offer documentary evidence of having annual private income or annuities of 4,000 forints (guldens).[21] That was a significant obstacle for officials and applicants for the diplomatic service from more modest family circumstances. At the time, many people, both inside the ministry and in the press, expressed the feeling that this was a problem and an unfair situation.

Marriage-related problems of diplomats

In many respects, the marriage-related problems of the diplomats of the time was a related issue. Prior to World War I, women were not employed in foreign service as diplomats or as consulate officials. Yet the payrolls from the period of World War I do show the names of female employees as well. Most of them were office clerks,

20 Ibidem, pp. 2–3.

21 Ibidem, pp. 150–151.

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telephone exchange operators or did other types of manual work. Some of those ladies were actually of noble descent.[22]

A diplomat's wife was another issue. As early as the 18th century, the Austrian public service and officer class offered a state guarantee of the maintenance of widows and orphans while also regulating the conditions of marriage strictly. The situation continued into the early 20th century, as the first parliamentary interpellation objecting to officials in the foreign ministry still having to request permission for marriage was only heard in the Austrian delegation in 1910.[23] Although marriage was not prohibited as such, novice diplomats were still expected not to be burdened by family obligations. Such ambitions were also thwarted by the fact that, as mentioned above, young diplomats were, for a long time, attached to the ambassador's household, boarding and living their daily lives there. Naturally, those who did not join foreign service under the age of 30 (as was customary) but at a more mature age were in a different position, as most of them already had "tried and tested" and "certified" wives, and investigating those spouses was unusual later on. The marriage permit procedure therefore primarily impacted the young, who wished to marry while on service.

On the other hand, looking through the distrustful 20th-century eyes, it is surprising to see how many people applied to join the Austro-Hungarian foreign service with foreign-born wives, even holding fairly senior positions. It was true that if someone married where they were stationed, it sometimes led to them being moved to a different country sooner or later, but the authorities did not simply review the issue from a security angle, social prestige and assets were also considered. So during the era of the Habsburg Monarchy it was not primarily the nationality of the bride that was important but rather her family and social background. Actually, in that respect, the venerated Habsburg Empire was partly more conservative, but on the other hand, more permissive than a number of other – somewhat more modern – European states. In Bismarck's Germany, marrying foreign nationals was virtually prohibited for German diplomats. That was – and perhaps also had to be – out of the question in aristocratic Vienna, with its many cross-border ties. In its own way, the extremely complex and multi-ethnic Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was a completely different world. After all, how could foreign minister Agenor Gołuchowski, himself of Polish extraction, instruct his underlings not to marry foreigners when he himself was related to the Napoleonic aristocracy through his French wife? Friedrich Ferdinand von Beust, a minister at the time of the Austro-

22 Haus, Hof- and Staatsarchiv, (HHStA) Wien, PA Administr. Registratur, Fach 4, Karton 460. (Telephonmanipulantinnen, Kanzleihilfsbeamte...)

23 É. Somogyi, *Hagyomány...*, p. 164.

-Hungarian Compromise (1866–1871), was a citizen of Saxony when he joined Franz Joseph's service. The emperor, with a somewhat feudal mind-set, actually felt it was quite natural that anyone entering his service would primarily owe loyalty to him, a loyalty that trumped all other loyalties.[24] Finally, we should also not forget that one of the foreign ministers of the dualist monarchy was a count (Gyula Andrássy senior) who had once been sentenced to death in his youth in the name of his later employer, Franz Joseph, for his activities in 1848–1849.

Aristocracy and diplomacy

Diplomatic service abroad involved the greatest prestige, and that is probably why that part of service attracted the highest proportion of aristocrats. In addition, the available also prove the significance of the consulate service in the Austro-Hungarian foreign policy, which could be interpreted as a sign of modernity. The situation was similar in the case of other European great powers too. Foreign diplomatic missions were also considered more illustrious because classical 19th century diplomats still represented their own monarchs at foreign courts, so they were mostly based in capital cities.[25] For many young diplomats, the social aspects of those circumstances were an important consideration. During that era, representing the Austro-Hungarian Empire with its venerable traditions was still certainly an elegant occupation. Consuls, on the other hand, were usually not posted to represent their countries in capital cities but in various regional centres, which was often very important for the economic growth and the power plays of their homelands. Therefore, the professional apparatus of consulates was highly respected at that time.

In the Austrian – later Austro-Hungarian – foreign service, serving the emperor and bureaucratic loyalty were always prime considerations. Luckily, ethnic strife largely failed to take root at the heart of the ministry. In addition to staff policy, the body of civil servants themselves also took care to ensure that this remained the case. At the same time, after the Austro-Hungarian compromise, a certain endeavour to maintain parity also appeared in foreign service. Initially, the most important factor was not the ethnic affiliation of individuals, but rather their nationalities within the dualist Habsburg Monarchy. It should be added that as early as the 17th and 18th centuries, Hungarians had already served the emperor as loyal diplomats. They were mostly from the Trans-Danubian and Western Hungarian conservative and loyal (largely Catholic) aristocratic families (e.g. the Esterházy, Pálffy, Pallavicini,

24 Ibidem, pp. 164–169.

25 Ibidem, p. 150.

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Zichy, and other houses). After 1867, increasing numbers of lesser nobility from various districts as well as sons of families in the military and civil service also pursued employment in foreign service. Actually, Count Gyula Andrássy, and later Béni Kállay supported that trend.

Although in principle the ethnicity and nationality of diplomats were not taken into account, at some stations, these characteristics did have an impact on appointments. Diplomats of Hungarian extraction became almost permanent features at certain stations – for instance, the mission to Berlin was almost always headed by a diplomat with a Hungarian background during the era of the Austro-Hungarian Dualism, from 1871 until 1914. Somewhat surprisingly, that staffing policy was related to the fact that the traditional conservative Austrian aristocracy, who played a major role at Ballhausplatz, were not all that fond of Prussia and found it difficult to make peace with the monarchy's new, German-friendly policies, although culturally and linguistically they were Austrian Germans.[26] On the other hand, in Bucharest, Hungarians were rarely appointed to senior positions. Polish aristocrats, on the other hand, were hardly ever posted to Russia, on the assumption that the Russian party would not be all that happy to see them there.[27] From the Hungarian perspective, however, a more important aspect was that thanks to the policy of parity (and the decisions of individual Hungarian foreign ministers) the number of diplomats with Hungarian citizenship kept increasing in the central apparatus and among the heads and staff of important foreign missions. In 1892, the officials domiciled in Hungary made for 11.75% of the central corps, 27% of the diplomatic corps, and 36% of the staff of consulates. By 1914, those proportions changed to 26%, 34%, and 32.25%, respectively. The influx of Hungarians was even more spectacular among the heads of foreign missions. While in 1868, only 2 of the 23 missions were headed by Hungarian nationals, by 1914, 15 of the 32 missions at that time were headed by diplomats who were Hungarians or at least Hungarian nationals.[28]

Diplomatic and consular missions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1883)

Although the dualistic Austro-Hungarian Empire was not a colonising world power, it was certainly one of the major powers of the 19th century. This is attested by the sheer number and the locations of its foreign representations. According to 1883

26 Ibidem, p. 184.

27 Ibidem, p. 187.

28 Ibidem, pp. 205–207.

data, the Habsburg Monarchy had the following types of foreign missions: embassies and legations as well as effective chief consulates, effective consulates, honorary chief consulates and consulates, honorary subconsulates, and – finally – honorary consular agencies. At the ambassador level, the Habsburg Empire had representations in the German Empire, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, Turkey, and at the Holy See that year. In theory, France should also have had an ambassador, but in 1883, the position was vacant, while the diplomat of the highest rank was Agenor Gołuchowski of Polish descent, the later foreign minister. In medium and smaller European states, such as Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, and Serbia, Austria-Hungary's diplomatic missions were headed by legates and appointed ministers. The situation was similar in the states outside Europe with Austro-Hungarian diplomatic missions, namely Brazil, Persia, and the USA. However, in the small but important Montenegro, the foreign mission was only headed by an official at the rank of resident minister. Actually, during that period, the Habsburgs still had diplomatic representations at the German royal courts that formed the second German Empire. In Bavaria, which was important on account of dynastic relations, the mission had four staff members, just like the one in Belgium. What is more, the Württemberg mission was even larger – a total of five persons of diplomat rank worked there.[29]

The numbers related to staff of foreign representations are quite interesting as well. The largest diplomatic mission, with a total of 14 diplomats, operated in Great Britain. In Rome – 9, in Paris and Istanbul – 8 each, and in Saint Petersburg there were 7 diplomats serving the Habsburg monarch. Other missions had much more modest apparatuses, usually with 3 or 4 diplomats. In Brazil, however, the Austro-Hungarian Empire had only one diplomat, like in Baden and Brauschweig. The Copenhagen, Lisbon, Teheran and Washington legations had more staff (i.e. 2 diplomats each). The situation was the same in Montenegro.[30]

But diplomatic missions were only one – smaller – part of the Imperial and Royal Foreign Service. There were Austro-Hungarian chief consulates in Alexandria, Barcelona, Beirut, Buenos-Aires, Genoa, Ioannina, Leipzig, Liverpool, Marseille, Moscow, Odessa, Philippopolis, Scutari, Shanghai, Smyrna, Sofia, Thessaloniki, Trebizond, Tunis, Warsaw, and Venice. Interestingly enough, London and Paris also had their effective chief consulates. Alexandria and Smyrna had surprisingly many staff members – 9 diplomats at each post. There were 8 posted to Sofia. Although

[29] Personal-Status des k. und k. Ministeriums des kaiserlichen Hauses and des Aeussern und seiner Dependenzen (Jänner 1883), Wien 1883, pp. 11–17. (Haus, Hof- and Staatsarchiv, (HHStA) Wien, PA Administr. Registratur, Fach 4, Karton 460).

[30] Ibidem.

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it was not ranked as a chief consulate, an even larger number of people worked at the Istanbul consulate of the Monarchy: 14 in total. The Belgrade and Bucharest consulates also had quite a lot of personnel: 8 and 9 people, respectively. A few consulates had 4 or 5 people, but the majority only operated with 2 or 3 (e.g. Amsterdam, Cairo, Kiev, Corfu, Port Said, etc.). In Jerusalem, Vienna had a consul. At the great many honorary chief consulates, consulates, subconsulates, and consular agencies, usually only 1 or 2 people represented Austria-Hungary. The only exceptions were Saint Petersburg, Hamburg, New York, and Breslau (today known as Wrocław), where there were usually 3 or 4 people in residence. The Habsburg Monarchy had such foreign missions in a very large number of surprising locations. They included Ajaccio in Corsica, Belize in the Caribbean, Cape Town in South Africa or Zanzibar, at that time an important commercial port. But there was also one in Zurich, and another one in Frankfurt, where the chief consul was none other than Wilhelm Carl Rothschild, a member of the famous family of bankers.[31]

The main forums of decision-making

Two bodies had a significant impact on foreign policy decision-making: the Joint Council of Ministers and the Military-Political Conference. The latter was not solidly established in constitutional law, but nobody thought it to be much of a problem, and neither was the fact that its personal composition was also somewhat unclear. The Conference was chaired by the emperor, and it was also attended by the chief commissioner of the army, the joint foreign minister, and the chief of staff. On some occasions, the joint minister of defence and the head of the military chancellery also attended.[32] The Joint Council of Ministers had a more stable composition on account of its constitutional legal status. The emperor only attended its meetings on occasion, but the three joint ministers (defence, foreign affairs, finance) and the prime ministers of the two countries were always there, along with the army chief commissioner and the chief of staff as required by the agenda. On some occasions, the remaining ministers of the two constituent countries also attended. So the Hungarian prime minister did have some say in matters regarding foreign policy under the Compromise Act through that institution. Under the rule of the Habsburg Monarchy, foreign affairs was considered a common task both formally and in practice. According to older legal literature, it had already been a consequence of the *Pragmatica Sanctio*, but specific matters for the modern age were regulated in the

31 Ibidem, pp. 18–31.

32 I. Diószegi, op. cit., p. 15.

abovementioned Act no. XII of 1867. In that statute, the legislators endeavoured to clearly separate the matters under joint jurisdiction from those allocated to the Hungarian or the Austrian government. Consulate matters, for instance – due to their trade policy aspects – were seen as being the responsibility of the foreign minister, but not as joint matters. That also meant that the trade ministers of the two states were entitled to maintain direct contact and correspondence with the consulates, and to obtain reports directly from them. When establishing and terminating consular missions, the joint foreign minister also had to obtain the agreement of the two trade ministers – at least according to the law.[33] It is a very interesting fact that the Austrian prime ministers were much less active in influencing decisions concerning foreign policy than their Budapest counterparts. That was partly caused by the fact that the Vienna milieu was more aware of the fact that foreign policy was actually set within the scope of competence of the emperor himself. And that conviction only began to change in the early 20th century.

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[33] Ibidem, pp. 15–16.

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