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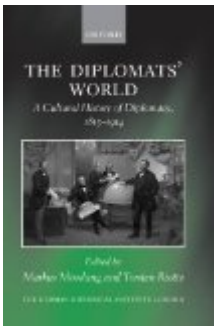

Markus Mosslang, Torstan Riotte, eds.. *The Diplomats' World: The Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815-1914.* Studies of the German Historical Institute London Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 480 pp. $140.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-19-954867-5.

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Commissioned by Christopher L. Ball (DePaul University)

European diplomatic historians, an increasingly extinct species, especially in the United States, will welcome this volume.[1] Although reviewing books is often a thankless task, this book, studded with gems, was not. Based on a conference held at the German Historical Institute London in September 2005, *The Diplomats' World* consists of an excellent introduction and fifteen papers, which revolve around a common theme: diplomatic culture and its impact on interstate relations in the long nineteenth century when the diplomatic network both contracted with the unification of Italy and Germany and expanded with the addition of non-European states.

In part 1, "The Diplomatic Establishment," T. G. Otto ("'Outdoor Relief for the Aristocracy?' European Nobility and Diplomacy, 1850-1914") provides a useful recapitulation of current knowledge on the aristocratic dominance of and bias in the diplomatic corps prior to World War I. He compares the diplomatic corps in the major European states and underscores their extensive family ties and the recourse to nobilitation to tap into the talented middle class. William D. Godsey Jr. carries on this theme and examines two reform efforts by Adolf von Plason, a section councillor and later court and ministerial councillor, and Baron, later Count, Alois Aehrenthal, foreign minister ("The Culture of Diplomacy and Reform in the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office, 1867-1914"). Their respective backgrounds, Plason in the administration and Aehrenthal in the diplomatic corps, predictably influenced their stances. Plason criticized what he saw as the declining intellectual rigor and the absence of a culture of merit, while Aehrenthal focused on requiring administrative experience and reforming the admissions tests. Nonetheless, admission requirements were often waived with the notable exception of the insistence on a substantial income, as diplomatic pay was poor and did not cover necessary expenses. The Austro-Hungarian diplomatic corps, like others in Europe, was dominated by the aristocracy, but unlike its counterpart in Germany was not militarized. For the foreign office, birth and breeding remained the prime determinants for

appointment. In contrast, Saho Matsumoto-Best concentrates on a little-known area, the relationship between art and diplomacy ("The Art of Diplomacy: British Diplomats and the Collection of Italian Renaissance Paintings, 1851-1917"). He analyzes how British diplomats often endeavored to collect art and the tactics they employed, not only for their own collections but also for the National Gallery; they often violated the law and relied on bribes to get desired art work back to Britain. The wrangling over disposition of the art collection of Sir Henry Austin Layard, who brought his collection to his home in Venice and unfortunately died there, highlighted the legal issues and the importance of personal contacts. Layard had stipulated in his will that his collection be given to the National Gallery, but Italian laws prohibiting the export of works of art and their increasingly rigorous application after the unification posed numerous difficulties for his executors. Although Layard died in 1894, the collection was not exported to Britain until 1919. Matsumoto-Best's sources are predominantly British. Had he consulted more Italian ones his essay perhaps would have had a different perspective.

William Mulligan ("Mobs and Diplomats: The Alabama Affair and British Diplomacy, 1865-1872") and Dominik Geppert ("The Public Challenge to Diplomacy: German and British Ways of Dealing with the Press, 1890-1914") examine the question of "Diplomacy and the Public Sphere," the title of part 2. Mulligan bases his essay exclusively on British sources at the Public Record Office and the British Library; he never examines the extensive material available at the National Archives in Washington DC. Confusingly, he begins with the third parliamentary Select Committee on the diplomatic service and its emphasis on cutting costs and improving efficiency. To derail these reforms, British diplomats used the American diplomatic service as a telling example of the disastrous consequences of such reforms. In part, this attack stemmed from the British experience in negotiating the Alabama affair. The author is not concerned with the legalities of the claims but rather the tactics, increasingly creative, that were employed to resolve it. For him, it represented a "clash of political and diplomatic cultures" (p. 114). The British commissioners were critically aware of the necessity of crafting a treaty that would pass the U.S. Senate. To achieve that goal, they tried to restrict public knowledge about the treaty as it was an inflammatory issue. Whereas Mulligan analyzes ways to limit public opinion, Geppert underscores the expansion of the public sphere in the nineteenth century, driven in part by the growth of mass circulation newspapers. Unsurprisingly, he notes that press management became a more important task of governments, especially the foreign office. A few colloquial expressions pepper the text, such as "stuck to their guns" and "rang alarm bells" (pp. 143, 157). He dubs the German type of press management bureaucratic because it tended to rely on offices and officials. The Germans also resorted to repression, such indirect means as funding certain papers or granting certain honors, and selectively releasing information. The British, in contrast, relied on personal contacts to influence coverage as the social worlds of diplomats and newspaper men were often, but not always, closely interlocked. The British also employed more subtle tactics, such as insistence on a dress code for admittance to certain events. Although Geppert stresses the basic differences between German and British approaches, similarities emerged, including limiting or privileging access to information and rewarding certain individuals. Geppert also briefly alludes to the first official visit by a German press delegation to Britain and the return visit by British journalists. Sadly, he underscores that these visits did not fundamentally alter the attitude of Teutophobes and Anglophobes, but rather reflected the dismal state of Anglo-German relations.

In part 3, "Public Politics and Diplomatic Protocol," Susan Schattenberg ("The Diplomat as 'an actor on a great stage before all the people'? A

Cultural History of Diplomacy and the Portsmouth Peace Negotiations of 1905") and Verna Steller ("The Power of Protocol: On the Mechanisms of Symbolic Action in Diplomacy in Franco-German Relations, 1871-1914") address the cultural aspects of diplomacy. Schattenberg begins her essay with an amusing but embarrassing defeat by an American envoy in St. Petersburg (1892-94), who lost a diplomatic skirmish with his British counterpart in an arbitration settlement. Although the American had the stronger legal position, he lost to his British counterpart because the Russians were swayed by other considerations: "influence, prestige and reputation" (p. 167). The British ambassador had a lavish house and entertained frequently, whereas the American minister had poor quarters and was unable to do so. Schattenberg uses this example to underscore the importance of cultural considerations in diplomacy. Just as the British ambassador won in this case so too in the Portsmouth peace negotiations, the Russian representative, again in the theoretically weaker position, also prevailed against the Japanese. Although Schattenberg underscores that many considerations influenced the final victory, she emphasizes the ability of Sergei Witte, the Russian representative, to win over the Americans, who found him appealing. He had mastered in short the art of bridging the cultural divide and making himself liked while his Japanese counterpart had not. In contrast, Steller focuses on the importance of ceremonial in Franco-German relations on the eve of World War I. She begins with the highly ritualized, but nonetheless tense, ceremonial that characterized the accreditation of the new French ambassador in Berlin after the Franco-Prussian War. This ceremonial, replete with critical symbolism, set the precedent for the reception of future ambassadors to Germany. The choice of Viscount de Gontaut-Biron was, on the surface, a strange choice as he was not a professional diplomat and did not speak German. He was, however, an aristocrat. After the Franco- Prussian War, although the new French Republic was tempted to abolish the old ceremonial because they regarded it as both "monarchical and aristocratic," they did not because they thought it would lower their status in the international order (p. 199). Equally important, the French continued to send members of the old aristocracy as ambassadors because they understood fully the folly of not doing so. Thus, as Steller underscores, "the face of republican France continued to be shaped by aristocrats, both at home and abroad" (p. 200). Perhaps they learned from the mistakes of the French revolutionaries in 1789. She then segues into an analysis of Franco-Russian attempts to form an alliance and the inauguration of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal before returning clearly to the topic of the essay and analyzing the French ambassador's atypical and, in the view of some, humiliating departure from Berlin on the eve of World War I.

Part 4 carries on this cultural theme with "Diplomatic Encounters." Anthony Best analyzes the confrontation between Britain and Japan ("The Role of Diplomatic Practice and Court Protocol in Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1867-1900") and Sabine Mangold that between Germany and Morocco ("Oriental Slowness: Friedrich Rosen's Expedition to the Sultan of Morocco's Court in 1906"). For Best, diplomatic protocol reflects not only Britain's goal of forcing non-European states, specifically Japan, into their mold but also Japan's commitment to demonstrating that it was a "civilized power" (p. 235). Indeed, the Japanese developed what many diplomats regarded as an "exhausting fastidiousness" over such matters (p. 235). Diplomatic practice and ceremonial became "a symbolic battleground" between two very different cultures (p. 239). Two very different cultures collide as well in Mangold's essay on the encounter between Friedrich Rosen, Germany's envoy to Morocco, and the sultan. As evidence of the cultural divide, in his memoirs Rosen underscored the necessity of following court practice and traveling slowly to reach the sultan. Although a fast rider could reach Fez from Tangier in four days, diplomats typically had to take eleven or

more days, an "established and unchanging part of diplomatic practice" (p. 260). Just as in the Europe of the old regime, aristocrats traveled slowly, so too in Morocco. In Europe, time was seen as increasingly valuable especially after the technological changes brought by the Industrial Revolution, whereas in Morocco every dignitary traveled slowly. Traveling slowly was clearly a political privilege. The sovereign was "master of his own time" (p. 278). Other foreign diplomats were not as sensitive to such etiquette and referred to them as "the bagatelles of protocol" (p. 276). Rosen, however, unlike many of his contemporaries, was a well-known scholar of the area and understood well the importance of adhering to local customs.

Part 5, "Representing the Republic," carries on this theme of a cultural divide--but between republics, the United States and others (David Paull Nickles, "US Diplomatic Etiquette during the Nineteenth Century"), and the Swiss and others (Claude Altermatt, "On Special Mission: Switzerland and Its Diplomatic System"). Nickles points out the "tension between American domestic ideals and foreign diplomatic practice" as Altermatt does for the Swiss (p. 287). In both cases, the ideals of a republic seemed to militate against having a diplomatic corps. In the Swiss case, fiscal considerations weighed more heavily than in the United States. The United States' attitude can be divided into three eras. In the first (from the Revolution until 1829), Americans attempted to reconcile existing protocol with the "needs and values of the republic" (p. 288). From 1829 until 1890, they attacked a diplomatic culture they saw as "effete, aristocratic, and immoral," and in the last, although Americans challenged existing practice, increasingly they made accommodations (p. 288). Controversies centered on diplomatic rank, dress, and the theoretical equality of states. Many in the United States, most notably Thomas Jefferson, associated ambassadors with wasteful spending and monarchical governments. Early presidents did not send anyone with a rank higher than minister, even though such representatives often found themselves at a disadvantage at protocol conscious courts. Jefferson was willing to send ministers to France and Britain but only chargés to Spain, Portugal, and the United Provinces.

He refused outright to send an ambassador to Morocco and instructed the United States' consul there to inform the ruler that we never send "an ambassador to any nation" (p. 290). By the time Grover Cleveland became president, the American attitude had changed and he sent the first ambassador to Britain. Its growing status in the international community convinced the United States to send individuals of higher rank as differences in rank and precedence had obstructed access and ultimately American policy. The question of costume for American diplomats proved more problematic. The conflict centered on the question of republican simplicity versus prevailing standards. Benjamin Franklin's stance reflects this dichotomy. When Franklin first went to France to secure aid he dressed in the court style, but later when he returned in 1776 he consciously ignored French fashion and dressed in unfashionable spectacles, a fur cap, and plain dress. While other American diplomats wore court dress, he eschewed traditional apparel and wore his hair unpowdered and undressed. As Nickles points out so astutely, Franklin's appearance appeared to be "simple and unaffected but was actually nuanced and calculated" (pp. 296-297). A number of presidents later mandated certain diplomatic dress, not wholly successfully. The goal was to appear simply dressed, but all too often American representatives were mistaken for waiters or undertakers or lower servants. On one occasion, another envoy asked the American representative to call him a cab and the American wittily riposted: "All right, if you wish it, 'you're a cab'" (p. 306). Such rejoinders were not always appreciated. Some courts refused to receive diplomats who were not appropriately garbed. Queen Victoria, for one, was relieved when the United States abandoned totally black garb: "I am thankful we shall have no more American funerals" (p. 304). Last, Nickles

deals with the issue of how the expansion of the international order affected diplomatic practice and led to repeated clashes, especially the Americans' celebrated refusal to perform the kowtow. In the Swiss lands, too, the republican ideology, such as an aversion to the office of diplomat, clashed with monarchical diplomatic practice. While the Swiss often empowered honorary consuls (who cost nothing), they were niggardly about sending permanent paid representatives abroad. They preferred that other nations send representatives to them. Nor did the Swiss respect the rule of reciprocity that mandated the reciprocal exchange of representatives. Only international crises, such as over Neuchâtel and Savoy, impelled the Swiss to change their attitude. In 1857, the Swiss appointed Johann Conrad Kern as minister plenipotentiary to Germany, and, in 1864, they sent a permanent envoy to Turin. As late as 1882, the Swiss had only four legations abroad and by 1892, seven. In some cases only threats worked. In 1906, Brazil threatened to suspend relations if the Swiss did not send at least a chargé. By 1914, the Swiss had 11 legations abroad and 112 honorary consulates. Ultimately, strategic interests as well as the mandates of international courtesy convinced the Swiss to conform to international usage.

In part 6, "Outsiders in the Diplomats' World," C. R. Pennell ("The Social History of British Diplomats in North Africa and How It Affected Policy") and Martin Ott ("Crossing the Atlantic: Bavarian Diplomacy and the Formation of Consular Services Overseas, 1820-1871") examine the role of consuls. Pennell analyzes the role of British consuls in North Africa, specifically in Tangier, Tunis, and Tripoli, and stresses, unsurprisingly, that often policy was made locally because of slow communication and significant expertise on the part of the consuls who often remained in place for life. Local consuls were a closed elite; they had few social contacts and often felt isolated because religion and class separated them from the larger society. They developed not only working relations but also close social ties with other consuls. Not until the 1840s when communication improved dramatically did their power become more circumscribed. After the Napoleonic War, the consuls appointed were all former army officers. Until 1823, the Levant Company appointed British consuls who were for the most part merchants mainly because the pay was so poor. Later (1825) the Colonial Office and still later (1836) the Foreign Office supervised them. Although their primary duty was to protect British nationals and oversee trade, their job always had political overtones. For the most part, they relied on custom and precedent and, of course, local exigencies to set policy.

Ott piques our interest when he begins his essay on the Bavarian consular services in New Orleans with the tale of Benjamin Butler, a Union general in the Civil War, who, after capturing New Orleans, created an international furor when his soldiers stormed the house of the Dutch consul, confiscated a large sum of money (which Butler thought were misappropriated public funds), and "laid hands on" the Dutch consul (p. 382). When all eighteen consuls took the part of the Dutch consul and protested, he labeled the pretensions "too absurd" to be entertained (p. 381). Yet Ott never tells us the outcome of this incident nor does he ever spell out exactly what legal rights consuls had in the nineteenth century according to international law. Although Bavaria had no legation in the United States, they did have consulates--eleven of them--by 1870. These consuls were not established according to any master plan. In some cases, direct appeals to the king for a favor for a relative or requests from German merchants resulted in the establishment of consulates. Consuls were strictly honorary and received no salary but were reimbursed for expenses and could charge administrative fees. Many sought this honor because of its social prestige. Consuls who represented Bavaria had to be German (not necessarily Bavarian) citizens, live in the area, have an established professional reputation, and be socially prominent. For Ott, the Ger-

man consul in New Orleans, Jakob Eimer, crossed the line between consular and diplomatic functions in, for example, reporting on political events, such as the siege of New Orleans, but surely such tragedies had an impact on economic activity. Ott relies, for the most part, on Bavarian sources and a very few American ones, but he might have acquired new insights had he looked at more of the latter.

G. R. Berridge examines the shrinking dragomanate of the British embassy in Constantinople on the eve of World War I and queries why it was so poorly staffed and the strategic implications for Anglo-Turkish relations on the eve of World War I. The dragomans (members of European trading families long established in Constantinople) served not only as translators but also as intelligence gatherers. Although the British and other Westerners as well periodically questioned their loyalty, officials often did nothing about the situation because of their respect, if not affection, for these individuals and because they saw no realistic alternative to what one ambassador referred to as "a detestable system" (p. 413). In 1810, the Levant Company, which paid them until its dissolution in 1825, forced through certain reforms, including the establishment of a language school and the awarding of various titles. Throughout the nineteenth century, attempts to infuse the corps completely with natural-born Englishmen did not succeed until 1903 when even then an unacknowledged Armenian dragoman still worked in the embassy. The denial of diplomatic status, the poor pay and low prestige, the drudgery of the work, and the few opportunities for promotion and honors meant that the service was poorly regarded and led one dragoman to complain bitterly of the "Byzantine dung heap" (p. 427). By the end of the nineteenth century, the dragomanate, "shorn almost entirely of its local expertise" and shrunk in size, had become a more dispirited, indeed sullen establishment (p. 429). Although the author acknowledges that even a far different dragomanate would have had difficulty in exerting influence, undoubtedly such an institution would have made more impact than the one that existed at the outbreak of war. The essay is well argued and the theses easy to follow, except for a puzzling reference to the Chabert affair, which he mentions but never explains.

Matthew S. Seligmann ("'While I am in it I am not of it': A Naval Attaché's Reflections on the Conduct of British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, 1906-1908") takes an even more personal, yet outsider's, view of the diplomatic and consular establishment through the lens of the personal diary of Commander (later Captain) Philip Wylie Dumas who served as naval attaché in Berlin (1906-08). Seligmann tells us a great deal about Dumas: his background, his shrewdness, his extensive travels, and his suggestions for reforms, especially the integration of foreign and security policy. Because few others in his position left behind such extensive diaries, we do not know how representative his views were. The author underscores the widely known homogeneity of British diplomats overseas: a narrow, exclusive, self-selecting elite dominated by aristocrats. In contrast, attachés, although also members of the British establishment, were not "an identical caste" (p. 436). Educationally and socially they differed from the diplomatic corps. In addition, a diplomat had to have a substantive personal fortune as the Foreign Office recognized. The importance of social contacts and the critical role of both formal and informal social occasions is underscored. Nonetheless, for Dumas, his service in the embassy was "delightful" but akin to living "on the edge of a volcano" (p. 460). The book ends hauntingly with the inexorable approach of Armageddon.

Note

[1]. This review was written with Marsha Frey, Kansas State University.

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