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Die Protokolle des gemeinsamen Ministerrates der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie, 1883-1895 by István Diószegi; Éva Somogyi

Review by: Pieter M. Judson

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Not all chapters are equally useful. The introduction, a breathless gallop through the history of the city to the sixteenth century, is so telescoped that only readers already acquainted with medieval Austrian history could understand it. The scholarship is also somewhat insecure, especially when compared with later chapters. George of Podiebrady, the fifteenth-century Hussite king, was hardly a “competitor” (p. 15) of the Habsburg Emperor Frederick III for the Crown of Saint Stephen, which eventually fell to Matthias Corvinus. Some Hungarians explored a candidacy with George, but he turned them down rather quickly. Spielman also underestimates the significance of the so-called *Privilegium maius*, a forgery promoted by Duke Rudolf IV (1339–65), which considerably enhanced his powers and those of his successors. Eventually confirmed by Frederick III, it freed Austrian territorial rulers to impose supplementary border charges on imports without asking the estates. Always on the brink of insolvency, later Habsburgs made good use of the privilege. There are slips in subsequent chapters as well: Maximilian II died in 1576, not 1587 (p. 80), and certainly was interested in sectarian disputes, the author’s assertion to the contrary (p. 24) notwithstanding. There never was a Habsburg Matthias “II” (p. 81). One was quite enough.

Such lapses, insignificant in the overall context of the book, should have been caught during editorial readings. These clearly could have been more alert. While the work is laudably free of typographical errors, the principles of italicization are not apparent—why, for example, should *Illuminationsaufschlag* (p. 43) be italicized but “Waghaus” (p. 43) not, since a speaker of English would probably understand neither? The illustrations are imaginatively chosen, but they have been reproduced so microscopically that their visual impact is often lost. Perhaps most serious of all for those who would like to explore further this fascinating topic, the book is at times underdocumented. Chapter 4, for example, abounds in new or unusual information which calls for attribution that is regrettably not given. Such scholarly leanness pleases cost-conscious publishers, but it does not do much for the cause of learning.

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Die Protokolle des gemeinsamen Ministerrates der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie, 1883–1895. Edited by *István Diószegi*. Die Protokolle des gemeinsamen Ministerrates der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie, 1867–1918, volume 4. Edited by *Éva Somogyi*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993. Pp. 810. \$100.00.

The Common Council of Ministers was a unique institution, even by the standards of the Dual Monarchy. Its membership was not specified in either the Austrian or Hungarian constitution. The emperor-king, and in his absence, the foreign minister, presided over the council. Normally the common ministers for foreign affairs, finance, and defense participated in its deliberations. Ministers of the separate Austrian and Hungarian cabinets frequently joined the common ministers in their deliberations. Others, like the chief of the general staff or the general inspector of the army, also appeared before the council as expert witnesses when it debated military matters, as was frequently the case. Although the emperor appointed each of these individuals, their constitutional loyalties and obligations lay in quite different places. For example, the common ministers of foreign affairs, finance, and defense had no constitutional relationship to either the Austrian or the Hungarian parliament. They only communicated with those bodies

indirectly through periodic reports they made when joint parliamentary delegations negotiated issues of common concern to both halves of the monarchy. Members of the Austrian and Hungarian cabinets, however, were legally responsible both to the monarch *and* to their respective parliaments. This difference in constitutional responsibilities meant that participants in the council could not actually engage in joint policy-making. Rather, they offered expert advice, registered foreign policy moves, and discussed ways to implement decisions already taken. This seems to have been increasingly the case in the years following the system's implementation in 1868. The information in this volume supports the conclusion that the first two foreign ministers took far greater initiative in making policy than did their successors.

This volume is the fourth in the series of published minutes of the Common Council of Ministers for the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, edited by a joint consortium of Austrian and Hungarian scholars. It covers the period from November 1883 to June 1895, that is, most of the tenure of Count Gustav Kálnoky as foreign minister (1881–98). Like the volumes in this series which have already appeared, this one is superbly annotated. István Diószegi provides the reader with a masterful contextualization of the issues and events raised in the individual protocols. Looking beyond the particular details of the foreign policy issues which usually preoccupied the Common Council, he offers the reader a nuanced analysis of their domestic implications. This is especially valuable since, as reviewers of other volumes in this series have noted, participants in the Common Council themselves almost never referred openly to the thorny political issues which dominated domestic politics in both Austria and Hungary.

The period under consideration here contains several moments of high drama, particularly in the early years when Kálnoky became convinced of the inevitability of a war with Russia. While the war scare of 1887 (over Bulgaria) appears to have been genuine, it is also clear that the military continued to raise the specter of imminent war long after Kálnoky had decided that Russia no longer posed an immediate threat to Austrian interests. The reader who follows the complex budget discussions soon understands why the military repeatedly adopted such apocalyptic rhetoric. Costly attempts to modernize the monarchy's defenses, particularly by building railroads and modernizing defense systems in Galicia, were not greeted with enthusiasm by either the Austrian or Hungarian parliament.

Historians who, like me, are more concerned with the internal politics of either Austria or Hungary than with its foreign policy will, paradoxically, find these protocols of extreme interest. If the council rarely mentioned domestic policy directly, it constantly discussed the constraints which the two parliamentary systems placed on the needs and desires of the military. In particular, the documents make clear just how inadequate historians' traditional notions of feudalized bureaucracies or failed bourgeois revolutions actually are to studies of the monarchy in the years leading up to 1900. These protocols suggest that constitutional checks effectively and consistently limited the foreign political initiatives of both the emperor-king and the military. The constitutional authority to make foreign policy may have resided solely with the emperor-king; nevertheless, the two parliamentary governments had adequate means at their disposal to shape or, at least, limit the directions of that policy.

Over the years, the Austrian and Hungarian governments exercised an increasingly direct influence over the council's deliberations, particularly since the common ministers had very little leverage with the individual parliaments. To a surprising extent, joint policy had to be made agreeable to both Austrian and Hungarian governments. Kálnoky may have shared the concerns of the generals, but he carefully employed a public rhetoric which separated his budgetary demands and his foreign

policy initiatives from their desires. At critical moments, for example, Kálnoky warned against taking military steps which might be viewed as provocative by Austrian and Hungarian politicians alike. "Even when war seemed unavoidable," writes Diószegi Kálnoky, "he opposed giving the military view precedence over political considerations" (p. 31).

With the exception of some minor editorial mistakes and the editor's overestimation of Austro-German popular sentiment for a politics of separatism, this volume is well conceived and executed. It offers the reader a series of technically valuable resources: an exhaustive bibliography of relevant published and archival sources, a list of the protocols cataloged by date and topics covered, and a glossary of nineteenth-century terms encountered in the protocols. The edition also includes a useful series of notes which cross-reference the topics discussed in each protocol. These allow the reader to locate later or earlier discussions of the same point with ease. In addition, the notes direct the reader both to relevant archival documents and to published works on the same subject.

This edition offers important structural insights about politics in the monarchy even to those who do not concern themselves primarily with issues of foreign policy. The careful reader of this volume gains substantial ammunition which can be usefully deployed in interpretational debates over the survival of bureaucratic, military absolutism in the monarchy or the degree to which the liberal political classes managed to achieve a functional constitutionalism by 1900.

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Utopian Feminism: Women's Movements in *Fin-de-Siècle* Vienna. By
Harriet Anderson.

New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. xiii + 322. \$35.00.

Despite an intense scholarly and popular interest in the history of fin de siècle Vienna, this period has many topics that have been virtually ignored by researchers. The fascination with "Vienna 1900" has focused largely on Carl Schorske's dualism of "politics and culture" to the neglect of what in other fields would be considered almost compulsory areas for the specialist's attention, such as social history and the history of women. Even in German the work on these subjects is very far from exhaustive, and in English it just barely exists. In *Utopian Feminism*, Harriet Anderson has gone some way toward correcting this situation. Although much of what she has written could still be described as cultural or intellectual history, it is concerned with the role of women of a specific class in the development of Austrian feminism, and this in itself adds a new dimension to our understanding of the Viennese fin-de-siècle.

In her preface, Anderson states that she is trying to avoid both the "hagiographic or raised forefinger approach" (p. ix) and the tendency to look at feminist movements in terms of how radical they were. Instead, she is anxious that "fin-de-siècle Viennese feminism" (p. xi) be understood on its own terms. This means critically examining the activities and ideas of both the leading middle-class feminists who described themselves as "progressive" and the organizations to which they belonged. On the basis of her analysis of these women and their movement, she defines "progressive" in terms of "the belief that women suffer systematic disadvantage on grounds of their sex and that it is necessary to rectify this, for that is progress" (p. x). Accompanying