THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NAVY

The history of the Kriegsmarine to the end of World War I

By John Beech

Introduction.

This article sets out to give a broad overview of Austria-Hungary's Navy, the Kriegsmarine. The aim is to provide a collector contemplating this fascinating but complex area with a historical outline, leading to a greater depth of detail as 1914 is approached. The navy was composed of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual personnel, a navy the likes of which will never be seen again, and a navy that ceased abruptly to exist in 1918. A Fleet List and a list of persons likely to be encountered are given.

Whereas Austria had a significant Empire, she had no colonies. Perhaps this was the reason she was slow to build a navy despite having a coastline to protect. The Austrian Navy always played second string to the Army, of which it was a part until 1862. In 1867, on the establishment of the Dual Monarchy, it became the Imperial-Royal Austro-Hungarian Navy - the K.K. Kriegsmarine. It was not until 1889 that it became the Imperial and Royal - the K.u.K. Kriegsmarine. The Hungarians were reluctant to grant funding for the navy, so it grew slowly and never reached the size of the navies of other European imperial powers.

The earliest Habsburg interest in the Adriatic arose in 1382 when the port of Triest placed itself under the protection of Duke Leopold II. Protection did not, however, extend to the provision of a navy. Acquisition of the Spanish Netherlands (roughly today's Belgium) following the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1715) brought a second seaboard under Austrian influence. Still, however, Austria failed to found a navy, other than the creation of a Danube flotilla. It must be remembered that, unusually for a large country with a capital on a river (the conurbation, though not the city, of Vienna had by then expanded on to both sides of the Danube) and a coastline (the Adriatic), there was no connection by water between the capital and the coast - the Danube flows through other countries into the Black Sea.

The building of a road between Vienna and Triest over the Semmering Pass under Kaiser Karl VI early in the eighteenth century focussed attention on Austria's coastline and signalled a revived Austrian interest in matters maritime and the founding of Austria's first navy. By 1738, however, the interest had waned and the navy was disbanded, the crews being transferred to the Danube Flotilla.

Under Kaiser Joseph II, a navy was re-established in 1786. Two cutters, *La Ferme* and *Le Juste*, were purchased from Ostend (still then in the Austrian Netherlands) and they were stationed in the Adriatic at Triest, the start of 132 years of Austrian naval presence there.

In 1797 the Treaty of Campo-Formio, signed with Napoleon Bonaparte, gave Venice to Austria and so Austria acquired a 'Venetian Navy' to add to its 'Triest Navy'. Following Austria's defeat by Napoleon in 1805, the Treaty of Pressburg placed the province of Venetia under French rule. After further defeats at the hands of Napoleon at Austerlitz and Wagram, Austria actually lost her Adriatic coastline. In May 1814 , however, Venetia was returned to Austrian rule and, under the terms of the Treaty of Vienna of 1815, Austria officially acquired the province, and with it the naval shipyards, docks and arsenal at Venice. Several vessels were added to the fleet, but as an economy measure others were sold. It was in the subsequent period that the first major voyages were made - to Brazil, in connection with the marriage of Archduchess Leopoldine to Emperor Pedro I.

Clement notes that by 1833 the Navy had expanded to three ships-of-the-line, eight frigates, eight corvettes, twenty-five brigs and six fore-and-aft schooners. From then until the First World War the Austrian (from 1867 Austro-Hungarian) Navy took part in the following actions:

1840-41 Syria

Following the invasion of Syria by Egyptian troops under Ibrahim Pasha and the surrender of the Ottoman fleet at Alexandria the previous year, the United Kingdom, Austria, Prussia and Russia formed a military alliance against Egypt under the Treaty of London. A combined naval force under the British Admiral Stopford bombarded Beirut and landed troops. Austrian troops under Archduke Friedrich liberated the city of Saida and were instrumental in the fall of St Jean d'Acre. The fall of Saida, the biblical Sidon in today's Lebanon, to Austrian forces accounts for the naming of three later ships *Saida*.

1848-49 Venice

1848 was a year of popular uprisings throughout Europe, and on 22 March the Republic of Venice, which had not existed since 1797, was once more established. Austrian forces were expelled and Vice Admiral von Martini, Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, was taken prisoner. As the majority of the sailors in the Austrian navy at this time were Italian, questions of loyalty arose. The Austrian authorities gave them the option of being freed from their oath of loyalty, and over 80% chose to be released. In August 1849 the Venetians surrendered to the Austrian blockade. The following year the main naval base was moved from Venice to Pola, and in 1853 German replaced Italian as the navy's service language.

1864 Denmark

Following a dispute with Denmark regarding the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, Prussia and Austria occupied them. The Austrian navy was the only effective naval force that could take action against the Danes, but ships had to be moved from the Adriatic to the North Sea. Their presence in the North Sea was resented by the British, and the gunboat *Seehund* ran aground, allegedly as the result of deliberate action by her English pilot, when entering Ramsgate to refuel. Under Commodore Tegetthoff, the Austrian fleet, together with Prussian ships, distinguished itself in a battle off Heligoland on 9 May 1864. This action was the last sea battle ever between wooden squadrons. Again, the successful action was commemorated in a ship's name, *Helgoland.* In August 1864 Denmark surrendered Schleswig and Holstein jointly to Prussia and Austria, but, less than two years later, Prussia and Austria were themselves at war, and Schleswig joined Holstein under Prussian rule.

1866 Italy

In this year Prussia and Austria fought the disastrous Seven Weeks War which led to Austria's loss of Schleswig. In the Adriatic this war meant confrontation for Austria with the Italian navy and another place in naval history. On 20 July 1886 the first battle between armoured fleets in open waters took place. The Battle of Lissa, with the Austrian navy under the command of the newly promoted Rear Admiral von Tegetthoff, was one of very few Austrian successes in this war and arguably the Kriegsmarine's finest hour. The Italian fleet of ten ironclads was defeated after the Austrians, whose fleet included only six ironclads, used Tegetthoff's daring tactic of ramming larger enemy vessels amidships. Italy was deeply embarrassed by losing the battle to an inferior force, and the two Italian Admirals involved in the battle were dismissed from the service.

1897-98 Crete

Crete was the site of a rebellion against Ottoman rule and an assertion of 'Greekness'. A multi-national force was sent in a way similar to today's deployment of United Nations forces. Broadly speaking, the Allies were prepared to prop up the ailing Ottoman empire yet were not prepared to see the Turks suppress the mainly Greek Cretans in a merciless manner. Crete remained in an anomalous position until finally ceded to Greece in 1913.

1900-01 China

The Boxer uprising of 1900 was the best-known feature of Austria-Hungary's involvement in this area. Because of its philatelic importance, a summary appears below.

1913 Montenegro

During the first Balkan War Austria-Hungary joined Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Italy in blockading Montenegro.

During peace time Austrian ships visited the Far East, North and South America and the Pacific Ocean. During Ferdinand Max's (Maximilian's) ill-fated spell on the Mexican throne, they visited that country. Ships were also involved in Arctic exploration, discovering Franz Josef Land. Although now Russian and named Lomonssov, it is still named Franz Josef Land by atlas-makers throughout Europe. The navy was in many respects a white-water navy, but clearly had blue-water capability.
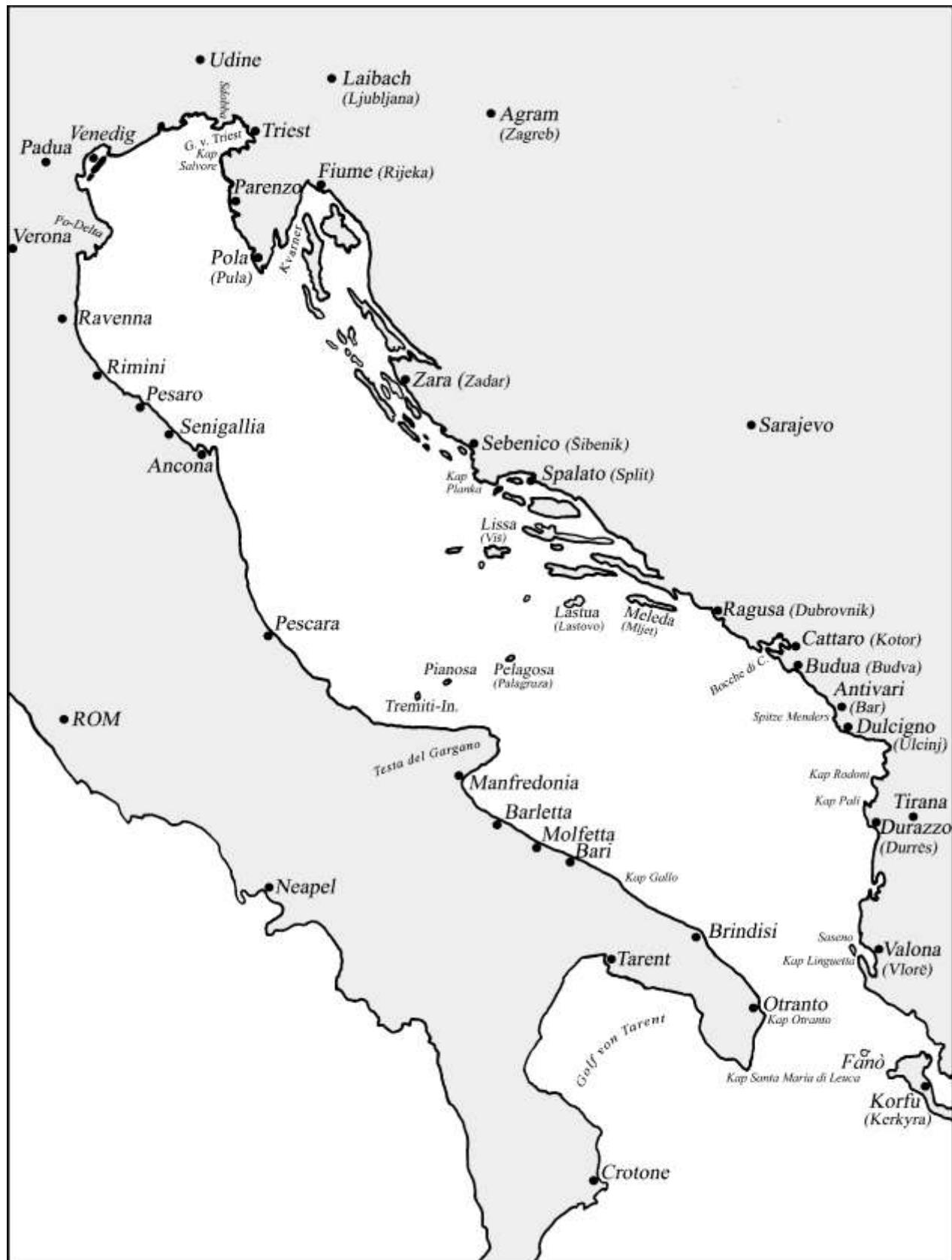
The Navy's main base was Pola with a fine natural harbour, but other bases were at Sebenico, Rogosnica and Cattaro. Some ships were built at Pola but most were built at Trieste. The Hungarian firm Danubius also had a yard at Fiume. The Skoda works at Witkowice supplied most of the armament.

THE BUILD UP TO THE GREAT WAR

Even the most simple analysis of how the First World War came to break out would conclude that the domino effect of the treaties between the major powers made major confrontation the inevitable consequence of a declaration of war between virtually any two European countries. It is not without significance that the two who actually found themselves as the opening protagonists were Austria-Hungary and Serbia. Since Serbia had first re-emerged as a state in 1830, there was a tension as the two countries vied for influence in the Balkans. In 1878 the Congress of Berlin had allowed Austria to gain control of Bosnia-Herzegovina as the Ottoman Empire withdrew a further step from Europe. Serbia would have wished to see the provinces become part of a Greater Serbia since many of the inhabitants were Serbs. In 1908 Austria-Hungary formally annexed the two provinces, causing so much diplomatic activity that the faint-hearted might have expected the whole of Europe to become embroiled in an enormous war. Serbia however did not have sufficient support from Russia to be able to take any effective action, and so the only outcome was yet another increase in resentment felt for the Dual Monarchy by Serb Nationalists. Their day was yet to come.

On 28 July 1914 Archduke Franz Ferdinand, nephew and heir of Kaiser Franz Josef, was visiting Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. Although the Austrians obviously saw this as a reasonably safe visit to make, it resulted in his assassination and that of his wife, at the hands of Bosnian Serb nationalists. It is important to note that they were not in fact Serbian nationals, but that this distinction was of no significance to the Austrian government, who laid the blame for the assassination squarely on the Serbian government.

MAP of the Adriatic

Kaiser Franz Josef, who had lived to see his brother executed, his son commit suicide, his wife assassinated and now his nephew assassinated, was persuaded by his advisors to settle the problem of Serb nationalism once and for all by a military solution. A completely unreasonable ultimatum was delivered to the Serbs, and so began the descent of Europe and subsequently the rest of the world into four years of war.

The Kriegsmarine was involved from the very beginning. *SMS Viribus Unitis* brought the bodies of Franz Ferdinand and his wife back to Triest on their journey to Vienna. The assassination of Franz Ferdinand was a particular blow to the navy as he championed their cause at court - Kaiser Franz Josef consistently showed marked indifference to the navy and is never once recorded as even having worn a naval uniform. Within a month of this sad journey, monitors of the Danube Flotilla would fire the first shots of what would all too quickly be known as the Great War.

To understand the position the Austrian navy found itself in, it is necessary to look back to the way in which it had developed and the level of commitment shown to it. Historically it had always been the poor relation of the Army - indeed, until 1862 it had been a part of it. In that year it achieved autonomy as the Marine Ministry under its Commander-in-Chief Archduke Ferdinand Max, but his departure for Mexico in 1864 signalled a further change: the navy came under the direction of the Marine Section of the War Ministry, where it seems to have remained until 1918.

In 1867, following the Ausgleich and the establishment of the Dual Monarchy, it became the Imperial-Royal Austro-Hungarian Navy - die kk Kriegsmarine. This was technically wrong as these designations were more properly reserved for Austrian rather than Austro-Hungarian bodies. It was not until 1889 that the name was changed to the Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian Navy - die kuk Kriegsmarine. This distinction may seem pedantic, but it was as important to a Hungarian as the distinction between English and British is to Scots. Doubtless Hungarians felt, at least initially, little sense of 'ownership' and this would explain their reluctance to vote funds for the naval budget. Within the Dual Monarchy, foreign affairs and the major issues of defence were dealt with jointly by the Delegations, nominees of the two parliaments at Vienna and Budapest. The Hungarians were always more concerned with Hungarian issues than external relations, and so they often chose to squeeze the budget voted to the armed forces and the navy in particular. In consequence, Austria-Hungary's navy was proportionately smaller than her army, and her ships did not compare with those of her fellow major powers, such as the United Kingdom, Germany or France. The influence of the Hungarian delegates also influenced the placing of construction contracts, and the Hungarian shipyards at Fiume built ships in spite of limited skill and experience.

To be fair, in the two decades leading up to 1914 the Austro-Hungarian Navy had begun to assume a distinctly modern look, and the first of two classes of dreadnoughts was almost complete as war broke out. Vice Admiral Rudolf Graf Montecuccoli held control of the navy from 1904 until his retirement in 1913. He was a career sailor who had fought in the Battle of Lissa and had served on the China station during the Boxer Uprising. His successor was Admiral Anton Haus.

Montecuccoli had family roots in both Austria and Italy, and it is important to appreciate one unique feature of the Austro-Hungarian Navy, its multi-ethnic, multi-lingual composition. Kemp records the composition of non-commissioned naval personnel in 1914 thus:

Croats and Slovenes	34.1%	(7.9%)
Hungarians	20.0%	(20.3%)
German-Austrians	16.3%	(24.0%)
Italians	14.0%	(2.0%)
Czechs, Slovaks and Ruthenes	11.0%	(24.4%)
Poles and Romanians	4.6%	(16.4%)

(The figures in brackets are for the general population of the Empire as recorded in the 1910 census.) Not surprisingly the nationalities with homes around the Adriatic are over-represented and those from deep within the continental land mass are under-represented. What is perhaps surprising is that Italians made up approximately a seventh of the navy whereas they constituted only a fiftieth of the general population. As the main enemy would prove to be Italy, this was more than just an interesting statistic. Officers were drawn more clearly from the German-Austrian lands and had to be competent linguists, proficient in at least four languages. Although German was the official language, and use of German enabled the efficient operation of a ship, most ships would have multi-lingual crews. The reason for this was that there was a correlation between nationality and job. Stokers tended to be Slovene, for example, whereas German-Austrians and Czechs tended to serve in the mechanical and electrical services. A further reason is that Austria was divided into "Ergänzungsbezirke", each of which provided men for specific parts of the armed forces; the kuk Kriegsmarine was primarily served by Triest, Sebenico, and Fiume. [See Dixon-Nuttall, chapter 3 appendix B.]

The Navy was not the hot-bed of nationalism one might have been expected. Like most Habsburg entities it somehow managed to function in spite of its multi-ethnic composition. Although nationalism began to emerge more openly as the war progressed, especially amongst the civilian population, it was not until the naval rebellion at Cattaro in February 1918 that nationalism began to plague the navy.

Officers could join the navy in one of two ways. Roughly half were graduates of the Naval Academy at Fiume. They then served as Kadet on a ship for approximately two years, before progressing to Leutnant by examination. On the other hand, those potential officers who had attended a civilian high school joined the Kriegsmarine as Aspirant for basic training in school ships. They then followed the same programme as Academy graduates. Engineering training was provided at a school in Sebenico.

Shortly after Montecuccoli became Commander-in-Chief, a major review of naval resources was undertaken. What was most obvious was that the navy could only function effectively in a coastal defence role. The two main classes of battleship were the Monarch class (first built in 1890) and the Habsburg class, but their small displacement (all were under 9,000 tons) made their designation as battleships debatable. The next and larger class, the Erzherzogs, appeared during the period June 1906 to December 1907, but they were still only slightly over 10,000 tons and not a match for their rivals in a battle.

The next logical step for the Kriegsmarine to take would be the building of significantly larger ships. The appearance of HMS Dreadnought had moved naval architecture up a gear, and the threat of war in 1908 following the formal annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovnia led to the launch in 1910 of the first of three Radetzky class semi-dreadnoughts, with a displacement of just over 14,000 tons. The offensive capability that full dreadnoughts would give the Kriegsmarine would almost be a lucky bonus that went with inevitable growth. The inevitability with which the Kriegsmarine viewed the building of dreadnoughts was not however shared by those who had the power to approve the purchase of such ships. The first two dreadnoughts were actually laid down in July 1909 in the yards of STT in Triest even though authorisation for the purchase had not yet been granted. Approval was finally given for four dreadnoughts, but the Hungarian Delegation insisted that one be built in the Hungarian shipyard of Danubius in Fiume.

The first of those being built by STT was launched in June 1911, the *Viribus Unitis*, and the second, the *Tegetthoff*, in March 1912. They entered service in December 1912 and July 1913 respectively. The launching of the *Viribus Unitis* liberated a slipway on which the keel of the third ship, the *Prinz Eugen*, could be laid. She entered service in July 1914, a matter of days before the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. The building of the fourth member of the class, the *Szent Istvan*, proved problematic. At first the Danubius yard lacked the facilities to build a ship of such a size, and it was not until January 1912 that work finally began, eleven months after approval had been given. She was not launched until

January 1914 and had not been completed by the outbreak of war in the following July. As the Hungarian harbour of Fiume was unprotected, she was towed to Pola for completion, and finally entered service in December 1915.

Although the appearance of the dreadnoughts was the most obvious evidence of the increasing might of the Kriegsmarine, there were others. In the five years leading up to the outbreak of war, five destroyers/torpedo vessels had entered service and six of the Tatra class had been laid down. Twelve smaller coastal torpedo ships had entered service and delivery had begun of a class of eight high seas torpedo vessels. In May 1914 approval had been given for the first two of an Improved Tegetthoff class of dreadnoughts, although work was never actually started. They would have had a displacement of 24,000 tons. Other designs were under consideration during the war and, had the outcome been different, the post-war Austria-Hungary would have had a formidable navy.

The Triple Alliance which had been signed with Germany and Italy led the Austrians to expect that they would line up their twelve battleships with Italy's nine against France's eighteen. To assist would be the German Mediterranean Division, which consisted of the new and very fast battle cruiser *Goeben* and the fast light cruiser *Breslau*. This would have given the Triple Alliance Forces the advantage in the Mediterranean. The British commitment to support the French was restricted to battle cruisers, but this tipped the balance in favour of the Allies. What was to prove decisive in determining the balance of Mediterranean naval power, however, was Italy's decision to remain neutral as war broke out around her. This meant that for the vast majority of the war the larger ships of the Austro-Hungarian navy were reluctant to leave port. The shape of the naval war was determined rather more by the actions of torpedo boats and submarines.

Why Italy remained neutral as war broke out is not clear. Ostensibly it was because the Austrian attack on Serbia was not a defensive action and so technically the conditions of the Triple Alliance were not invoked. A more likely reason was the deep-seated rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Italy. Italy wanted the Italian speaking parts of the Habsburg empire, especially Triest; she wanted the Dalmatian coast; and she wanted to be mistress of the Adriatic. The nationalism of the age must be remembered and modern comparisons are invalid. Although South Tirol has been under Italian rule since 1918, its return to Austria is on few political agendas; but the reverse situation of 1914 with Austria 'occupying' Italian territory was much less acceptable.

As well as dramatically tipping the balance against Austria-Hungary, the Italian decision to remain neutral had two further effects on any future naval activity in the Adriatic. Since Austria stretched only as far as Cattaro on the eastern shore of the Adriatic, she did not have free access to the main part of the Mediterranean if Italy chose to deny it to her. Would Italy remain neutral? Austria-Hungary feared that she would not, in which case the power struggle would change from being Austria-Hungary versus the overwhelming forces of France and the United Kingdom (a pointless and totally one-sided confrontation) to Austria-Hungary versus Italy - likely to be a bitter struggle! Italy was in no hurry to make her plans clear initially: would she be neutral or would she change sides and join the allies? Germany and Austria-Hungary sensed in Italy's delay the distinct possibility that the Triple Alliance might well collapse into a Dual Alliance.

1914: THE OPENING MOVES

At the beginning of the war Austria had 5 classes of battleships including the latest completed between 1912/15. There were heavy and light destroyers, cruisers, gunboats, torpedo boats, support vessels, training vessels, and submarines. Besides the Adriatic Fleet there was a Danube Fleet of monitors, and a Vistula Fleet. Merchant vessels were requisitioned for war service.

The German *Goeben* had been in dock at Pola in early July 1914, but put to sea as war seemed imminent, making ready to attack French shipping. By 2 August, when Italy formally and finally declared her neutrality, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* were in position to shell the Algerian coast. The German High Command then ordered them to make for Constantinople, but they did not have enough coal to do this. Italy would only allow them to put into an Italian port (Messina) for twenty-four hours, which was insufficient to refuel properly. As the Allies would almost certainly know of their presence in Messina, the *Ulan* and the *Tatra* were dispatched from Pola to assist. The German ships made a successful dash to Constantinople and the Austrian ships returned to port. Turkey did not enter the war until 29 October, and to mollify the Allies the charade of Turkey 'purchasing' the two ships was enacted.

For Austria-Hungary, the naval priority was clearly coastal defence. Taking on the French and/or British fleets would have been folly, and even what coast that Austria held was far from secure. The advanced naval base at Cattaro was actually within range of Montenegran, and from the first months of the war, French artillery on Mount Levcen.

For the record, the following declarations of war were made:

28 July 1914	Austria against Serbia
5 August 1914	Austria against Russia; Montenegro against Austria
10 August 1914	France against Austria
12 August 1914	United Kingdom against Austria
25 August 1914	Japan against Austria
29 October 1914	Turkey declares war against the Allies (but secret alliance concluded with Germany on 2 August 1914)
23 May 1915	Italy joins the war against Austria (following secret Treaty of London with the Allies on 26 April 1915)
14 October 1915	Bulgaria against Serbia (secret treaty with the Central Powers on 17 July 1915)
6 December 1915	Albania declares for the Allies
27 August 1916	Romania against Austria
28 August 1916	Italy against Germany (German U-Boats operating out of Pola had been attacking Italian shipping since Summer 1915)
2 July 1917	Greece against the Central Powers
7 December 1917	United States of America against Austria

NAVAL ORGANISATION

Flag Officers: Großadmiral; Admiral; Vizeadmiral; Kontreadmiral.

Staff Officers: Linienschiffskapitän; Fregattenkapitän; Korvettenkapitän.

Senior Officers: Linienschiffsleutnant; Fregattenleutnant; Korvettenleutnant.

Officers: Seefänrich; Seekadett; Seeaspirant.

And a variety of non-commissioned ranks; at the very bottom was the "Matrose 4th class".

SOME EVENTS DURING THE WAR

[This essay on History was written by Fred Raphael of New York and first published in Vol X No 5-6 of the APS(NY) Journal, in May 1958. The final paragraph was added by A Taylor]

Quite a number of our readers, I feel sure, will want to know what this Navy did during World War I. I certainly was curious myself; and found in the New York Public Library a British publication "The Naval Annual" for 1919 which contains an interesting evaluation of the k.u.k. Navy in addition to a concise report about naval actions in the Adriatic from 1917 to the end of the war. The author points out that the Austrian navy was a small but efficient fighting force built solely for the purpose of fighting the Italian navy. At the outbreak of the War two Austrian dreadnoughts of the Viribus Unitis class were completed and two more were nearing completion. When Italy entered the war the Italian fleet was reinforced by four British battleships, four British light cruisers, twelve French destroyers and seven French submarines.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica the balance sheet of naval power - without the British and French reinforcements - gave Italy an appreciable preponderance of strength in heavy ships: Battleships: Italy 23, Austria 20. Light cruisers and scouts: Italy 9, Austria 26. Torpedo boats: Italy 93, Austria 87. Submarines: Italy 21, Austria 7. The losses compare as follows: Italy 5 battleships, 1 scout, 8 destroyers, 6 torpedo boats, 8 submarines, 11 auxiliary vessels. Austrian losses caused by Italy: 3 battleships, 2 destroyers, 2 torpedo boats, 8 submarines.

Now back to the British report about naval actions in the Adriatic. On July 9, 1916 the Austrian cruiser "Novara" (under command of Admiral Horthy) sank two and damaged another two ships of the British drifter line in the Straights of Otranto. On May 15, 1917, a group of light Austrian cruisers (also under the command of Admiral Horthy), subsequently reinforced by destroyers, sank 14 British drifters and captured 72 men. The "Dartmouth" and the "Bristol" (two British battleships) chased the Austrian flotilla with the help of French and Italian destroyers to the neighbourhood of Cattaro but withdrew when some Austrian battleships came out of the harbour. The "Dartmouth" was struck by a torpedo from a submarine but was able to return to port.

December 9 to 10, 1917: An Italian flotilla penetrated the defenses at Muggia (Trieste); one of the Italian boats entered the harbour, struck the Austrian battleship "Wien" and sank her. The other torpedo boat aimed two torpedos at the battleship "Budapest" and damaged but did not sink her.

June 10, 1918: An Italian torpedo scout attacked and sank the Austrian battleship "Szent Istvan" off Premuda Island, and another torpedo boat damaged a second Austrian dreadnought. These losses caused the Austrian Navy to give up major action that had been planned for an attack on the drifter line in the Straights of Otranto and a simultaneous action against the Italian navy.

October 2, 1918: Durazzo in Albania was bombarded for two hours by three Italian battleships, three British cruisers and auxiliary craft. One Austrian destroyer and a large armed transport were sunk.

On October 30, 1918 the Austrian Navy was turned over to Yugoslavia by order of the Emperor. The vessels carried both the Yugoslav and the Austrian flags. On October 31, 1918 (the day after the Austrian High Command had asked for an armistice) a small Italian boat operated by compressed air penetrated into the inner roadstead of Pola harbor, and attached a torpedo to the Austrian dreadnought Viribus Unitis which destroyed the ship. This action caused a long and bitter dispute between Yugoslavia and Italy about the ownership of the ships of the ex-Austrian navy.

Towards the end of 1917, Styrian, Croatian, Dalmatian, and Italian sailors became mutinous and many of the officers were said to have been killed or thrown overboard. This mutiny was suppressed with great severity. In February 1918, Hungarian and Slav elements of the Austrian Navy mutinied, and nearly every ship was affected. At Cattaro the 32nd Infantry Regiment refused to fire on the mutineers. These events led the Austrian command to make some concessions but the disaffection continued to the end of the war and greatly affected the effectiveness of the Austrian Navy.

Prince Sixtus von Bourbon-Parma was one of Kaiserin Zita's 23 siblings and so was Kaiser Karl's brother-in-law. On 23 March 1917, after he had been smuggled into Austria, he met Karl in secret at Laxenburg castle to explore the possibility of a separate peace between Austria-Hungary and the Allies. However, the Italians rejected any such idea, and the entry of America into the war changed everything.

AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NAVAL MAIL

Naval mail was free of postage during the war, but registration and other special services had to be paid for. The outgoing mail was collected by the Quartermaster-at-Arms, and censored by the First Lieutenant who applied the ship's mark and was responsible for the mail until delivered to a post office.

Most ships serving in the Adriatic used the KuK Marinefeldpostamt Pola 1 office. At the beginning of the war the civilian office Pola 1 was used. However, if the vessel was in another port on the Adriatic (eg the Bay of Cattaro area) and there was no suitable FPA in the area then mail went through the civilian system and received a civilian post office cancel. Another method of forwarding mail (usually from small vessels) was to pass it to a larger vessel who would then forward it with their own mail (examples exist of torpedo boat mail with their own cancel plus another vessel's cancel). The Danube Flotilla's home FPA was 299 in Budapest.

After the use of the civilian Pola 1 office the authorities produced a KuK Marinefeldpostamt rubber canceller for mail early in 1915; this had no date slug. It was followed by a further canceller with a bridged date in the centre. Another more elaborate canceller was used for a short period until mid-1915, with 2 variations of date slug. None of these early cancels are easy to find. The commonest post mark appeared in mid 1915 as a double-circle metal canceller with date and various branch/counter letters. It was in use until the end of the war.

Many vessels had their own canceller – indeed, many large and even smaller vessels had more than one, in various styles sizes and ink colours. Some smaller vessels have no recorded ship's mark as yet, but received transit marks of larger ships in the area. Marks from larger vessels are not uncommon as more mail was generated from those with larger crew numbers. Small vessels with less than 50 crew members generated less mail, and it is not easy to find.

A few enterprising officers generated great quantities of mail; this is normally regarded as philatelic – for example it often features cancels from ships that were not commissioned at the date of the cancellation, if indeed ever. Korvettenkapitän Wutscher had his own printed fieldpost cards which he sent out to nearly every vessel in the A/H Navy; he was the captain of the destroyer SMS Ulan at the beginning of the war but towards the end of the war became captain of the repair vessel SMS Herkules. And Fregattenleutnant Buchberger, who was (in April 1917) captain of SM Tb 85F, had a rubber stamp address applied to his cards.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Lieutenant Commander Ackermann	Head of German U-Boat station at Cattaro
Gabriele d'Annunzio	Italian patriot and poet
Count Armand	French go-between in secret 1917 peace negotiations
Count Arz von Straussenburg	Austro-Hungarian Chief-of-Staff from March 1917
A J Balfour	British First Lord of the Admiralty (1915-16) and Foreign Secretary (1916-19)
Gottfried Banfield	Austro-Hungarian naval air ace; known as 'The Eagle of Triest'
Theobald von Bethmann (-Hollweg)	German Chancellor until July 1917
Rear-Admiral Bullard	United States representative in Adriatic
Prince Burham-ed-din	Head of state in Albania in September / October 1914
Count Burian	Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister from April to October 1918
King Carol	King of Romania until his death in October 1914
Georges Clemenceau	French Prime Minister (1917-20)
Franz Conrad, Count von Hötzendorf	Austro-Hungarian Chief-of-Staff until March 1917
King Constantine	King of Greece
Count Czernin	Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister to April 1918
Essad Pasha	Head of state in Albania from October 1914
Archduke Eugen	Austro-Hungarian Field Marshal on Balkan and Italian fronts until 1918
Archduke Franz Ferdinand	Heir to Austro-Hungarian throne, assassinated at Sarajevo 28 July 1914
Kaiser Franz Josef I	Austro-Hungarian Kaiser until his death in November 1916
Grand Admiral Haus	Head of Austro-Hungarian Navy until his death in February 1917

Paul von Hindenburg	German general appointed Chief of Staff in August 1916; President of inter-war German Republic
Vice Admiral Franz Holub	Head of Naval Section of Austro-Hungarian War Ministry from March 1918
Admiral Henning von Holtzendorff	German Chief of Naval Staff until August 1918
Rear Admiral Miklós Horthy	Captain of the Novara until appointed Austro-Hungarian Fleet Commander in March 1918; Regent of Hungary from 1920 to 1944
Kaiser Karl	Austro-Hungarian Kaiser following death of his great-uncle Franz Josef in November 1916
Alexander Kerensky	Russian Prime Minister from March until October 1917
Lieutenant Waldemar Kophamel	Head of German U-Boat Station at Pola (previously U-Boat captain)
Robert Lansing	US Secretary of State
David Lloyd George	British Minister of Munitions (1915), Secretary for War (1916) and Prime Minister of Coalition Government (1916-22)
Erich (von?) Ludendorff	German general; von Hindenburg's deputy from August 1916; active in inter-war politics
August von Mackensen	German Field Marshal
Tomas Masaryk	Czecho-Slovak politician. Spent the War lobbying the Allies for a free Czechoslovak state. First President of Czechoslovakia from 1918
Count Mendorff-Pouilly	Kaiser Karl's representative in secret peace talks with the British
Dr Georg Michaelis	German Chancellor from July 1917
Admiral Enrico Milo	Italian Governor of Occupied Dalmatia
Captain Nelson	United States officer in charge of submarine-chasers at Corfu
Vice Admiral Maximilian Njegovan	Head of Austro-Hungarian Navy from February 1917 to March 1918
Rear-Admiral Notarbartolo	Italian admiral in charge of occupation of Dalmatia
Paul Painlevé	French Minister of War (1917) under Ribot and Prime Minister (September to November 1917)
King Peter	King of Serbia from 1903 to 1918
Raymond Poincaré	President of France (1913-20)
Gavrilo Princip	Assassin of Archduke Franz Ferdinand
Count Revertera	Austro-Hungarian go-between in secret 1917 peace negotiations
Alexandre Ribot	French politician: Prime Minister (1914 and 1917), Minister of Foreign Affairs (1917) and Minister of Finance (1914-17)

Captano di Fregata Luigo Rizzo	Italian MAS commander responsible for sinking Wien and Szent Istvan
Admiral Reinhard von Scheer	German Chief of Naval Staff from Aug 1918
Dr Ernst von Seidler	Austrian Prime Minister until July 1918
Prince Sixtus von Bourbon-Parma	Kaiser Karl's brother-in-law (brother of Empress Zita); chief Austro-Hungarian go-between in 1917 secret peace negotiations; officer in Belgian army
Jan Smuts	South African politician who acted on behalf of the British government in secret peace negotiations
Rear Admiral Wilhelm Souchon	Commander of German Battle Cruiser Goeben
Count Stefan Tisza	Premier of Hungary (1913-17)
Rear Admiral Ernest Troubridge	Commander of British cruiser Gloucester; court martialled for his failure to engage German Battle Cruiser Goeben but found not guilty; subsequently head of British Naval Mission in Serbia until 1916
Elephterios Venizelos	Greek Prime Minister
Baron Wiesner	Author of official Austro-Hungarian report on Sarajevo assassination
Kaiser Wilhelm II	German Kaiser
Prince Wilhelm zuWied	Head of state in Albania from 7 March 1914 to 5 Sep 1914
Woodrow Wilson	President of USA (1913-21)

The Adriatic Fleet.

Battleships: Arpad, Babenberg, Budapest, Erzh. Ferdinand Max, Erzh. Franz Ferdinand, Erzh. Friedrich, Erzh. Karl, Habsburg, Monarch, Prinz Eugen, Radetzky, Szent Istvan, Tegetthof, Viribus Unitis, Wien, Zrinyi

Cruisers: Admiral Spaun, Aspern, Helgoland, Kaiser Franz Josef I, Kaiser Karl VI, Kaiserin und Königin Maria Theresia, Leopard**, Novara, Panther**, Saida, Sankt Georg, Szigetvar, Zenta. (And Kaiserin Elisabeth, scuttled in China 3 Nov 1914)

[** These were built by Armstrong in Newcastle on Tyne!]

Destroyers: Balaton, Csepel, Csikós, Dinara, Dukla, Huszár, Lika (I), Lika (II), Orjen, Pandur, Reka, Scharfschütze, Streiter, Tatra, Triglav (I), Triglav (II), Turul, Ulan, Uskoke, Uzsok, Velebit, Warasdiner, Wildfang.

Torpedo Gunboats: Blitz, Komet, Magnet, Meteor, Planet, Satellit, Trabant

Torpedo Boats: 1 – 40; 45; 50 – 100 (Many had names but when war came they were numbered.)

Submarines: 1 – 6; 10 – 12; 14 – 17; 20 – 23; 27 – 32; 40 , 41, 43, 47.

Torpedo Warfare Ships: Alpha, Don Juan d'Austria.

Mine Warfare Ships: Chamäleon, Dromedar, Gamma, Kronpr. Erzh. Stefanie, Salamander.

Gunnery Warfare Ship: Adria

Submarine Warfare Ship: Gäa, Pelikan.

Guard Ships: Bellona, Kaiser Max, Kronpr. Erzh. Rudolf, Mars, Sebenico, Spalato, Taurus, Zara.

Basic Training Ships: Custoza, Donau, Hulk Gamma, Schwarzenberg.

Yachts: Dalmat, Lacroma, Lussin.

Service Vessels: Najade, Pola, Teodo, Vesta.

Salvage & Repair Ships: Cyclop, Herkules, Vulkan.

Tugs: Hippos, Pluto.

Hospital Ships: Miramar, Seespitalschiff II, Seespitalschiff III, Seespitalschiff IV, Seespitalschiff VI, Lloyd Dampfer X.

Requisitioned Steamers: Dolfin, Dampfer IV, Dampfer VII, Dampfer VIII, Dampfer XI, Dampfer XIV, Lloyd Dampfer VIII.

Requisitioned from the Royal Hungarian Sea Navigation Company (Adria); S.M. Dampfer XIX, S.S. Balaton, S.S. Jökai .

Requisitioned from the Ungaro-Croata Company: S.M Kusten Dampfer Senj, S.M.D Novi, S.M.D. Cirkvenica, S.M.D. Gödöllö, S.M.D. Istriano, S.M.D. Liburnia, S.M.D. Magyar, S.M.D. Pannonia, S.M.D. Tatra, S.M.D. Valona.

The Austrian Navy, 1800-1918: possible subdivisions of a collection

1800-1900.

Austrian occupation of Lombardy Venetia.

Intervention in Naples.

Venetian Rebellion.

Blockade of Crete.

Boxer Rebellion, POWs in China and Japan

Boxer Rebellion, 1900-02, post-Rebellion to 1913.

Escadre Commando in Ostasian.

Free-post period, 24.12.1900 - 31.7.1901, SMS Zenta, KuK Maria Theresia, Kaiserin Elisabeth, Aspern.

Postal activity 1.8.1901 - end of 1902 (post Rebellion), SMS KuK Maria Theresia, Aspern, SM Tender Shun Yuen.

Post-Boxer Rebellion.

Station ships, 1902 - 1913. SMS Aspem, Kaiser Karl VI, SM Schiff Leopard, Kaiser Franz Josef 1.

Legation Guard / Marine Detachment in Peking 1903 - 1917.

Base Command / Marine Detachment in Tientsin 1903 - 1916.

Austrian POWs in China and Japan (ex Kaiserin Elisabeth), 1914 - 1918. Wan Shou Sze, China; Aonogahara and Kurume, Japan.

General

Uniforms, Austrian Navy League (Flottenverein), war charity cards.

Naval Bases, Adriatic: Pola.

Postal markings.

Shore Establishment Markings: Fortress Pola.

Administration.

Support services.

Fortress defence and army unit mail in receipt of the Pola cancel.

Shore Establishment Markings: Marine.

Administration and operations.

Support services.

Naval and other unit mail in receipt of the Pola cancel.

Naval Bases, Adriatic: Elsewhere

Triest: Naval District H.Q.

Fiume: Fleet H Q

Bight of Cattaro.

Naval communication coastal units: Cherso, Grpastjak, Sebenico, Straza, Castelnuovo (Rose).

Montenegro.

Albania.

Naval Air Service in the Adriatic.

Pola.

Puntisella.

Kumbor (Cattaro).

Sebenico.

Danube Flotilla.

Flotilla Command.

Zentraltransportleitung - ZTL (control of requisitioned shipping).

"Schiffstation", "Patrouillenbootsstation" etc.

Jugoslavia: Belgrade, Pancsevo, Smederevo.

Rumania: Turnu-Severin, Orsova.

Bulgaria: Lom, Belene, Rousse.

Danube Flotilla Command - Order of Battle.

1st Monitor Division: Bosna, Enns, Inn, Sava.

2nd Monitor Division: Temes, Bodrog, Körös, Szamos

Monitor Group: Maros, Leitha

Patrol Boat Division: Viza, Barsch, Compo, Wels, Fogas, Csuka, Lachs, Stör.

Minelayer: Balaton

Minesweeper: Andor

Mining the Danube

Armed steamers: Almos, Samson, Helene, Una, Vag, Szigliget.

Flotilla Command Base Ship: Hebe

Hospital ships: Kulpa, Spitalschiff No.IX

Requisitioned vessels: Traisen, Banhans, Achilles, Tender II.

The Smaller Flotillas.

Bodensee.

Bug.

Lagunen.

Skutarisee.

Submarine Search

Weichsel (Vistula).

Kreuzerflottille.

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A personal bibliography compiled by John Beech

Collecting books on the Austro-Hungarian Navy is considerably more challenging than collecting its postal history; many are out of print. No single bookshop will have more than a tiny percentage of the books listed below. The bookshop at the Heeresgeschichtliches (Military History) Museum (http://www.hgm.or.at/eng/) at the Arsenal in Vienna, however, does carry a good selection of newly published material, but does not cater for internet purchasing.

The essential philatelic references are **Kalis & Kohl** (2002) and **Patka** (1989). Much of the data in these works has appeared previously in the journals of *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Feld- und Zensurpost 1914/18* and *ARGE Militaria Austraca Philatelica*, which can be considered essential reading. Because of the sheer number of articles published, individual articles from these journals have not been listed in the bibliography below.

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Addendum: THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE AND THE FAR EAST, 1898 – 1920 (¹)

First trading contacts with China

Under the Treaty of Rastatt (17 March 1714) at the end of the War of Spanish succession, Austria received the Spanish Netherlands (present day Belgium and Luxembourg). In 1715, the trading ships 'Charles' and 'Empereur Charles III', sailing under the Austrian flag, left Ostend harbour and reached China at Canton. They returned to Ostend laden with porcelain, silk and tea. Having been educated at the Spanish court, Austrian Emperor Charles VI realised the commercial potential of such expeditions and their implications for the Austrian Treasury.

In 1722, Charles VI granted a 30-year trading charter to an Ostend-based company, the 'Compagnie Imperiale et Royale établie dans les Pays Bas Autrichiens', to trade with the West Indies and China. This 'Ostender Kompanie', a rival of the English and Dutch East Indies Companies, made a large profit, a significant part of which was given to the Austrian Treasury.

Because of the political problems between England and the Netherlands, in 1731, under the terms of the Treaty of Vienna, the Ostender Kompanie was dissolved in return for the recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction. During the reign of Kaiserin Maria Theresia, the daughter of Charles VI, a second attempt to trade with China was made by Wilhem Bolt and the Antwerp banker Graf Poli, with the foundation in 1775 of the 'Triester Ostindische Handelkompanie'. This second attempt failed in 1785, after the end of the American War of Independence and the resumption of fierce competition between England and France in international trading in the East. Furthermore, because of piracy, trading in Adriatic and Mediterranean waters during the 18th century was only feasible with the protection of a navy.

It was only after the end of the Napoleonic war that a government initiative was made to establish trading contacts with China. In the meantime, Austria had clearly understood the necessity to deploy a navy to support the expansion of international trading. Corvette 'Carolina' was the first Austrian warship to officially visit China and establish diplomatic contacts. She left Venice on 11 September 1820, sailing firstly to Rio de Janeiro, to drop off the Austrian ambassador to Brazil. Leaving Rio in December 1820, she sailed to China, arriving in September 1821, there to drop off the Austrian General Consul at Canton.

The 19th century conquest of the Chinese market

In the 16th century, the Portuguese had established a trading position in China. They were allowed to remain in Macao Island. At the beginning of the 19th century, British, French, Dutch and U.S. ships took advantage of the harbour at Macao to trade at Canton, but there were many restrictions. The industrial revolution in European countries resulted in a drive to find and establish new markets; the conquest of the Chinese market was given the highest priority. This led to the first war between Great Britain and China (1839-1842). China was defeated and was obliged to sign the Treaty of Nanking which granted important concessions, especially the ceding of Hong-Kong to Great Britain and the opening up of five harbours to foreign residents and trade, namely Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ning-Po and Shanghai. Treaties were also signed with the U.S. and France.

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1 Abstracted from the series of articles in the APS Journal "Austria" by Fred Pirotte on "The Postal History of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the Far East, 1898 – 1920".

Foreign governments complained that the treaty did not go far enough, whereas the Chinese thought that it granted too much. After several incidents, a new war between China and Great Britain allied with France broke out in 1856. It was only in 1860, again after the defeat of China and the occupation of Peking, that a new treaty detailed the legal basis on which intercourse between the Occident and China was to be conducted. With minor modifications, this defined the legal status of foreigners in China until its collapse in 1943.

After the defeat of China by Japan in the war of 1894-1895, Great Britain, France, Russia and Japan claimed exclusive trading rights to certain parts of China. They divided China into spheres of influence and laid claim to territories within them. Thus Russia took the Northern Provinces, and German forces in the Shantong seized Tsingtao and the surrounding land. America acquired the Philippine Islands, hoping to exploit China's potential market. The secretary of state, John Hay suggested the "Open Door" policy which gave equal rights to all the countries. The Europeans nations did not support or enforce this proposal.

After the war against Japan, the Chinese tried to introduce reforms to organise their state on Occidental lines. Following the Japanese example, they tried to find a compromise between reforms and the necessity of not losing the best of its heritage. The young Emperor introduced numerous decrees to found a modern China, but in September 1898, the Dowager Empress Tsu-Hsi intervened and imposed a return to the 'status quo'. The Emperor was imprisoned, many reformers executed, and most of the new decrees annulled.

Austrian engagement in the Far East

For 50 years after the exploratory cruise of the corvette 'Carolina', the Austrian Monarchy showed little interest in China. After the Napoleonic wars, the search for new markets became increasingly important, the impetus being provided by the industrial revolution which had reached Austria.

At first, commercial interest was focussed on the Turkish Empire. Commercial exchanges became very important and these were facilitated by common frontiers and, in 1839, the opening of shipping lines of the Lloyd Austriaco company to some Turkish ports. Consular post offices were opened in many cities and ports of the Turkish Empire. Because of the high quality of their service, they acquired the major part of international postal traffic, so important for trading activities.

It was only in 1868 that Austria renewed its interest in China. Unlike the other Occidental powers and Japan, the Austrian Monarchy did not attempt to develop spheres of influence or to acquire harbour facilities in China. The Monarchy used only Austrian traders living in the Far East, mainly in Japan, and founded small commercial and industrial facilities. For instance, in 1898, there were about 17,000 foreigners living in China, but only 90 were Austro-Hungarians.

In 1868 Austria began to have more frequent warship representations in the Far East. There were cruises by the frigate 'Donau', corvette 'Erzh Friedrich' (1868-1871), corvette 'Fasana' (1871-1873), corvette 'Erzh Friedrich' (1874-1875), and gunboat 'Nautilus' (1884-1887). These cruises were accompanied by diplomatic missions. Starting in 1869, the same chargé d'affaire, later an ambassador, was responsible for Japan and China, but the legation was established in Tokyo.

After the Sino-Japanese war (1894), it was not possible to have the same diplomatic representation for two enemy countries. Furthermore, the terms of the treaty of 1869 permitted the establishment of foreign legations in Peking. On 5 August 1895, Kaiser Franz Josef I signed a decree which created a permanent Austro-Hungarian representation in Peking. The first ambassador appointed to China, Baron Czikann, reached Peking on 22 April 1897. He was replaced in 1906 by Ambassador Ritter von Kuczynskis.

In 1895, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, emulating other powers, decided to maintain permanently a number of warships, or 'station-ships' in the Far East. Their postal history is intricate, and can provide a lifetime of study!

Postal services for station ships in the far East until 1900

Before the Boxer War, the sailors of Austro-Hungarian station ships had postal facilities at their disposal. These were defined by the official publication "Instruktion fur die Behandlung des Postsendungen der in Fremden Gewässern befindlichen K.u.K Kriegsschiffe - Marine Normalverordnungblatt XXXVII - 21 November 1893" (Official rules with regard to handling of postal items on board the Imperial and Royal warships sailing in foreign waters). This publication was only concerned with mail exchanged between warships and the Austro-Hungarian Empire territories.

The exchange of postal items between Austro-Hungarian warships sailing in foreign waters and the sorting offices located in the Empire (Trieste, Wien and Budapest) was effected by sending several items together in parcels named 'dépêches' (German 'Kartenschluss').

Mail from warships destined for the Empire. The dépêches were posted at the civilian general post offices of the ports of call of the warship, then forwarded to the Empire by sea or land, according to the international processes in force.

Mail from the Empire destined for warships. When a warship left Pola, each sorting office (Trieste, Wien and Budapest), where the dépêches were made up, received the detailed dated itinerary of the ports of call. Two different postal routes could be used:

By sea. Dépêches were sent to Shanghai, either via Pontafel and Brindisi and then by English or German mail liner; or via Pontafel and Naples, by English mail liner to Port-Said, and then by French mail liner. The German consular post office in Shanghai was responsible for forwarding the dépêche to the appropriate Chinese coastal ports. The average delivery time was about 20 days.

By land. This method used the railway via Berlin and Moscow, and then the Trans-Siberian railway to Vladivostok or Dairen (Dalny). Depending on the final destination, the dépêche was sent to a Japanese national post office, or to the German consular post office in Shanghai to reach the Chinese harbours having a German post agency; otherwise the dépêche could be sent directly to Chinese harbours or other harbours in the Far East by sea. The average delivery time was 15 days.

The Boxer war

The siege of Peking

Unrest in China grew as a result of increasing political aggression of the European countries in their efforts to establish a presence there. The conservative attitude of the Dowager Empress, and the constant pressures of Occidental powers to gain new privileges in China, provided encouragement to extremists to oust the 'foreign devils'. As a result, during the years 1898-1899, unrest was widespread, particularly in the Northern Provinces. Many secret societies were created, one of which, the 'Fist of Righteous Harmony', attracted thousands of followers. They practised martial arts and believed a magical power protected them against foreign bullets. Because of the 'Fist', foreigners gave them the nickname of "Boxers".

The talk of reforms was formally rejected by the conservatives in China and attacks against missionaries and Chinese Christians began. Foreigners were in grave danger. The Empress Dowager played a subtle game, promising the foreign Powers that the persecutions would stop, but simultaneously encouraging the conservative Chinese ministers.

Following a devastating drought in the Northern Provinces in the first half of 1900, the Boxers converged on Peking and Tientsin. In May 1900, aware of the increasing danger, all foreign diplomats requested additional troops to protect their staff and families who lived in the legations grouped in a compound just outside the Forbidden City.

Support forces drawn from the foreign warships anchored off Taku reached the Peking legations by the end of May. These forces came from warships of the United States, France, Great Britain, Japan, Italy, Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary. The legations were encircled by the Boxers and the first exchange of gunfire took place on 13 June. Following attacks on 20 June it was decided to evacuate the Belgian, Dutch, Austro-Hungarian and Italian legations. The Austro-Hungarian detachment was assigned to the French legation and FK Thomann von Montalmar became the military leader of the legation forces.

At the Peitang mission were concentrated 2 officers and 41 sailors, 70 Europeans, 1000 Chinese Christians (500 of them were armed with pikes) and 2200 Chinese women and children. On 20 June the German Ambassador, von Ketteler, decided to hold talks with the Tsong-Li-Yamen, of the Chinese Foreign Office. He was killed along the road, not by Boxers, but by soldiers of the Chinese Army. On 22 June, a general Boxer attack was repelled with difficulties. The Boxers then attacked daily on several points of the compound. At the end of June, Boxers, assisted by the Chinese Army, began using more destructive cannons. Many officers, men and civilians were killed and wounded.

Following the liberation of Tientsin, 13/17 July 1900, it seemed that the political situation was changing. On 17 July, the Empress Dowager gave the order to stop attacks against the legations. However, sporadic gunfire continued which further increased the number of dead and wounded in the legations.

On 9 August a Japanese messenger reached the legations with the information that the Japanese General Yamaguschi hoped to reach Peking on the 14 August. On that date, at about 2pm, the first detachments of the Indian infantry reached the British Embassy followed closely by the Japanese. Peitang was relieved on 16 August. Of a total of 456 men and officers, 44% were killed or wounded. In Peitang several hundred Chinese Christians died.

The Protocol

Although the Powers had not declared war on China, they deemed a formal settlement necessary to define exact reparations and to guard against the possibility of another outbreak. A final Protocol was signed between the Powers and China on 7 September 1901. Two of its 12 points are noteworthy:

♦ An indemnity of 450,000,000 Taels had to be paid to the members of the Powers in 39 years; Austria-Hungary's share was 4,300,000 Taels.

♦ On-going fortification and policing of legation quarters and concessions, and the military occupation by foreign troops of the railway link between Peking and the sea.

The second point was the justification for the presence of Austro-Hungarian guard detachments in Peking and Tientsin and the permanent presence in the Chinese sea of Austro-Hungarian station warships.

The "Escadre Commando in Ostasien"

On 13 July 1900, it was decided to send two more warships to the Far East: SMS Kaiserin Elisabeth and SMS Aspern. On 16 July, Kontreadmiral Graf Montecuccoli was officially promoted to the rank of Commander of the Austro-Hungarian Squadron in the Far East (K.u.K. Escadre - Commando in Ostasien). Montecuccoli and his staff joined the two warships which left Pola on 23 July 1900 and arrived at the harbour of Taku on 7 September.

In the summer of 1901, the signing of the peace treaty with China was imminent. On 22 June 1901, the Marineobercommando in Wien sent a telegram ordering Kontreadmiral Montecuccoli to prepare for the disbanding of the "K.u.K. Escadre in Ostasien". The four ships of the Squadron were gathered in the roadsteads of Chefoo on 14 July 1901 for last ceremonies of farewell. S.M.S. Zenta left Chefoo on 25 July and S.M.S. Kaiserin Elisabeth on 27 July 1901, having on board the staff of Kontreadmiral Montecuccoli.

It was however decided to retain ships on station in the Far East, and to maintain permanent protective detachments at Peking and Tientsin. Sailors who made up these detachments were from Austro-Hungarian marine forces in Europe on voluntary service in China for fixed periods of duty. Transport of these forces in both directions was performed by outgoing and incoming station-ships. It was sometimes necessary to rapidly increase the strength of both detachments. This was achieved by landing the required number of officers and men from the complement of the station-ship serving off China at the time, but only during the period of the crisis. It is important to note that at all times the High Command and detachments were run exclusively by officers and sailors of the K.u.k. Kriegsmarine.

A SELECTION OF NAVAL POSTAL HISTORY

Feldpost:

K. u. k. Marinefeldpost

K.U.K. KRIEGSMARINE
9. II. 16
S.M.S.
WILDFANG

Pola.

14095

Feldpost.

Korrespondenz-Karte
Cartolina di Corrispondenza

K. u. K. LUFTSCHIFFERABTEILUNG
FLIEGERKOMPAGNIE

K.U.K. MARINEFELDPOST
POLA

K.U.K. MATROSEN-CORPS
15. COMPAGNIE

L.Q.IMPERATRICE
25. APRIL 1915
POLA

An

S. M. SCHIFF
WIEN

Korrespondenz-Karte

K.U.K. KRIEGSMARINE
17
5
15
S.M.S.
WIEN

B A O S S

13. V. 15

DIE ZEIT

(Administration)

WIEN IX.
Liechtensteinstrasse 23
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