

Administration in Habsburg Austria During the Badeni Riots of 1897

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Introduction

A couple of days after large four-day riots in Pilsen in 1897, the District Captain of Pilsen, Leo von Hansgirk, wrote to the Governor of Bohemia, Karl Maria Coudenhove, asking him for permission to resume his vacation.¹ Besides reasoning with the psychological problems of his wife, Hansgirk also referred to a difficult service that he had to endure during and after the outbreak of the unrest in the city: » [My own need of rest] has increased considerably due to 10–11 hours of work every day for the whole 10 days following the excesses.«² For him and many other Austrian bureaucrats, the Badeni riots presented a previously unparalleled challenge. Although the administrative correspondence at the end of the nineteenth century rarely mentions an individual's internal feelings and emotions, other officials also drew attention to the impact of the long and demanding service associated with efforts to maintain peace and order in cities.³ Moreover, organisational stress did not influence only their mental well-being but also the exercise of their office.

The fact that riots and demonstrations are a stressor for the functioning of street-level bureaucrats, especially law enforcement, is well-known to the research in sociology and security studies.⁴ The stress

caused by the outbreak of the riots, however, influences the white-collar officials as well. It significantly impacts their actions and imposes immediate and long-term challenges to the functioning of the offices. From this point of view, the Badeni riots of 1897 were no different, as they put the Habsburg administration in a difficult position. However, the situation was even more difficult because of the relevant amount of organisational stress caused by the complicated administration system in Habsburg Austria. Since the legal and administrative changes of Stadion's Constitution (1849), the October Diploma (1860), and the Imperial Municipal Law [Reichsgemeindegesetz] (1862), self-government and state administration in Habsburg Austria operated side by side. However, as Peter Urbanitsch states: » The competencies between the various state and autonomous authorities were not clearly defined, so the ›duality of administration‹ became an increasingly criticized administrative issue.«⁵ Cooperation was becoming more and more difficult, especially with the politicisation of society at the end of the nineteenth century.⁶ This also complicated the activities of both branches during civil unrest. An inadequate or excessive reaction to the demonstrations and riots could have negatively influenced the relationship of the local populace towards the state in general. Moreover, the riots also affected the political representatives of the

majority society who were fighting for political power in the city. An immediate, strategic, and fast response was crucial to prevent the escalation of violence or to avert some of its most severe consequences. It also provided fertile ground for mending the fraught social and political ties between state and society.

From the administration's perspective, the Badeni riots of 1897 were, however, more often a story of failed practice rather than of successfully dealing with public unrest. The turbulent year brought many immediate problems and exposed the administration's unpreparedness to govern the age of mass politics. The challenges also exposed the weaknesses inherent to the Habsburg bureaucratic system. Suddenly, issues that dwelled under the surface or would not cause a disturbance in a more peaceful setting, crippled the possibility to deal with the unrest effectively. The issues manifested prominently in administrative practice, as internal strains within the individual offices broke out around the Austrian part of the Empire. Against the backdrop of one of the largest crises the Habsburg state had to face in its constitutional era, a conflict broke out between the two tracks of the Cisleithanian, that is the Imperial Austrian administration: on one the hand, the state administration and on the other, the self-governing or 'autonomous' administration of municipalities and provinces.

Based on broad archival research, this article examines the impact of social turbulence and organisational (caused by internal dysfunction of the office) or operational stress (produced by a specific development, such as riots) on the relationship between white-collar state administration and self-government during the Badeni Riots of 1897.⁷ Rather than focusing solely on the riots themselves, the study investigates how the operational stress induced by the unrest combined with the organisational stress of the poorly functioning late Habsburg administration system, and how it affected the internal functioning of these administrative bodies. Initially, the formal and informal competencies of both branches of the Habsburg administration are explored to clarify the options for preventing or halting the demonstrations and riots in the cities. The second part of this research analyses the limits and possibilities of cooperation between the state and self-government, elucidating the motivations behind the decision-making

of individual offices. Finally, this article assesses how the success or failure of joint actions influenced the character of the demonstrations and riots, as well as the administration's position within society. This comprehensive analysis provides a nuanced understanding of the administrative responses to social unrest and their broader implications.

This way, this article contributes to multiple debates. First of all, it is a discussion about the so-called Badeni Crisis of 1897. Historians of the late Habsburg Empire often regard the crisis of 1897, particularly in its political dimensions, as a turning point in the development of the empire. As such, it has been extensively explored in historiography.⁸ However, their socio-political aspects have not been equally examined. When the authors discuss the 1897 riots, they typically do it within the broader context of the language question, anti-Semitism, student activism, or national symbolism. Other historians presented micro-histories of the riots in specific cities or regions.⁹ Although this article follows their path by focusing on a single topic within the context of the 1897 demonstrations and riots, it abandons the regional focus. It studies an arena between politics and the streets, which crucially influenced the Habsburg governance between state and local officials. This way, the article highlights the importance of an actor previously neglected in this context: the administration.

While few works deal with the Habsburg administration during riots, there is rich research on the state administration and self-government in Cisleithania. For a long time, historiography produced mainly traditional histories of administration, which studied the state and self-government as a set of regulations.¹⁰ The last twenty years, however, saw a boom of research that places both branches of governance and their actors in a broader social context. In doing so, it shows that the administrative practice was not uniform. It depended on the abilities of individuals, as well as on the temporal and local context.¹¹ In this regard, my research builds on the works of Peter Urbanitsch, Martin Klečacký, and Claire Morelon.¹² Klečacký and Urbanitsch study the relationship between cities and the district captains. They clarify the importance of cooperation by showing how complicated the life of the state administration could have been if it had failed to properly communicate with the municipal

council. Morelon's research is closest to my article because it deals with social unrest and the authorities' attitudes. However, it focuses mainly on strikes, which – despite their severity – did not pose a similar challenge to the state. My article enriches the works of these authors by analysing the interdependence of both tracks of the Austrian administration in a moment of social crisis, demonstrating how the stress influenced the already fragile cooperation between the state and self-governmental bodies. Success or failure of their cooperation during the public unrest, compared to the time of peace, could lead to terrible consequences for personal lives and the community in the region.

Last but not least, the article indirectly contributes to the understanding of the society and the Habsburg Empire at the beginning of the age of mass politics by analysing the riots as an arena in which the state met with its subjects. Even in a moment of social upheaval, the state could not proceed as autocratically as it did in 1848 without facing backlash from society or other consequences. In concord with Gary Cohen,¹³ I present Habsburg Austria at the end of the nineteenth century as a progressive state for its time, constantly engaging in a dialogue with the local public and their opinions. The two administration tracks are thus presented as organs entangled with local societies and the Empire, which balance out their multiple loyalties to preserve peace in the local communities.

Badeni riots of 1897

After the publication of the so-called Badeni's language ordinances, an equalisation of Czech and German in the internal administration, political and social unrest broke out throughout the Austrian part of the empire. The language ordinances for Bohemia were announced on 5 April 1897, and for Moravia 17 days later. They immediately gained the attention of the political parties across the oppositional spectrum. While they met with mild criticism among the Social Democrats for the ›undemocratic‹ manner of their declaration, they provoked a wave of aggressive protests among the German nationalist parties. Although the German Progressive Party [Deutsche Fortschrittspartei] was the initiator, most liberal parties had joined by summer.

Simultaneously, the way politicians opposed Badeni's government increasingly radicalised. The first ›urgent interpellations‹ were followed by lawsuits against government representatives. The resistance culminated in June when German parties launched a broad parliamentary filibuster. As a result, parliament was adjourned for the first time in 20 years.¹⁴

This step of the government, intended to soothe the hot-headed German politics, backfired. In their spare time, deputies travelled to their electoral districts to agitate for or against the language ordinances. They slowly transformed the political conflict into a social struggle by bringing the debate into the public sphere. In this effort, they were heartily supported by the political press. Together, they convinced the broad strata of the nationally conscious population that the language ordinances were a fundamental question of life or death for the national groups, not only in the lands of the Bohemian Crown but also in the whole of Austria. Throughout the summer, what had initially been the problem of a few thousand officials thus became a concern of a large part of German nationalist society.¹⁵

When the parliament reconvened in September 1897, the opposition of the German parties continued to an increased extent. The obstruction culminated in November when politicians began to physically attack each other.¹⁶ The governmental parties responded by altering the parliamentary bylaws through the so-called ›Lex Falkenhayn‹, which allowed the Speaker of the House to expel MPs from the chamber for three days; after repeated offenses, the expulsion could be extended to thirty days. ›Lex Falkenhayn‹ was a watershed moment for the hitherto neutral mass parties – not only did the Social Democrats join the obstruction, but the Christian Social Party finally succumbed to the nationalist pressure and backed down from its detached politics as well. The uproar in parliament was reflected in the protests in the streets of German-speaking cities. In Graz, large political demonstrations left three dead on the streets. Similarly, Vienna's Ringstrasse witnessed massive clashes between demonstrators and the police. Karl Lueger, the mayor of Vienna and leader of the Christian Socialists, declared in an audience with Badeni that he could no longer ensure peace in the monarchy's capital. However, Lueger had no authority to make such a statement, as he was not responsible for policing the

city. Alarmed by the protests, Emperor Franz Joseph I accepted Prime Minister Badeni's resignation.¹⁷

Throughout 1897, the political conflicts in parliament were accompanied by social unrest in Cisleithanian (especially Bohemian) cities. In the summer, demonstrations and riots erupted in Eger/Cheb, Asch/Aš, Brüx/Most, or Pilsen/Plzeň.¹⁸ However, the largest wave of violence occurred at the end of November. As the streets of cities with German-speaking majorities violently ›celebrated their victory‹ over the Polish prime minister by attacking Czech minorities, thousands of people in Prague attacked not only members of law enforcement but also the property of innocent Jewish and German citizens. Moreover, many other cities with a Czech-language majority followed the capital's example. Although the rioting in Prague ended four days later with the declaration of martial law, unrest in the regions persisted until mid-December.¹⁹ Even after the riots ended, the shadow of the Badeni riots lingered over Bohemian society long after. In the administration, it stayed possibly the longest. In the decade to come, the memory of the Badeni riots, especially in Prague, became a reference point for evaluating the severity of the street and state violence, as well as an adequate reaction to it, and influenced decision-making on both institutional and personal levels.²⁰

Administration in the turmoil of the Badeni Crisis of 1897

Municipal councils and their heads, the mayors, represented self-government at the lowest (municipal) level. Since the 1860s, municipalities had broad competencies to govern themselves: They managed municipalities' property and financed their education and health institutions. Moreover, they were tasked to aid the state in collecting taxes, controlling the population's movements, or drafting conscripts; this was the so-called ›delegated agenda‹. Most importantly for this article, they were responsible for keeping law and order in the territory they governed. From the nature of their office, the mayors stood in a dual position. On the one hand, they were an executor of the will of the municipal councils who elected them to the office. On the other hand, they were a state servant in the case

of the delegated agenda. Here, mayors were supposed to be the main partners for the state authorities in the municipality. Keeping the law and order, however, was not delegated. According to the Municipal Order, it was a matter of their ›own area of responsibility‹ [Eigener Wirkungskreis] of the self-government.²¹

At the provincial level, state administration was represented by the governor of the respective land, while at the local and regional levels, it was overseen by the head of the district office. Since 1868, this position was titled ›district captain‹ [Bezirkshauptmann]. The district captains had a broad authority. Besides symbolic and representative functions, they had mainly a supervising role, controlling the activities of the municipalities. As such, they were authorised to intervene when they considered the mayor failing in performing his duties. Although district captains were not authorised to dismiss the mayor, in severe cases, they could technically propose to the governor of the land to dissolve the whole municipal council and nominate an interim administrator. For that, however, the superior self-governing organ, the district committee, had to approve. Because of this, the district captains rarely ever decided to take this step.²² The so-called statutory cities were the only places where this rule did not apply. In the statutory cities, governors of the land usually acted as the voice of the state, and the self-administration negotiated the situation during the riots and demonstrations with them instead of district captains.²³ However, their specificity made little difference for this article.

By the end of the nineteenth century, this system of Imperial Austrian governance led to tensions and conflicts between the two tracks of the administration. Although the state administration held a dominant role in decision-making within the district for some time after the establishment of this structure, the situation changed by 1900. As Gary B. Cohen remarks: »The imperial state had primacy in what was a fundamentally centralised system, but the autonomy accorded to the crown land diets and their administrative organs and to the communal authorities allowed them important areas of responsibility, which only grew over time.«²⁴ With the development of civil society and mass political culture throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, the initial predominance of the state progressively shifted.

The self-governing municipalities were less answerable to the demands of the state organs and rather responded to their electorate's wishes. Such development, coming hand-in-hand with the nationalisation of municipal politics, opened a way for conflicts over competencies and responsibilities, which erupted in the 1890s.²⁵ The cooperation, or at least mutual respect, between the two administration tracks was highly desirable. Without them, proper governance of the municipalities would have been nearly impossible.²⁶

Conflicts between the state and self-administration were best visible during political crises. Many historians of administration, such as Peter Urbanitsch or Martin Klečáček, consider the Badeni Crisis a pinnacle of such tensions.²⁷ Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, the state administration struggled with nationalizing of the self-government. After the language ordinances were declared in April 1897, this phenomenon reached unprecedented dimensions, as municipalities began to openly oppose the state power. In July 1897, hundreds of towns and villages controlled by German city halls refused to carry out a large part of the agenda delegated to them by the state. Specifically, the self-government was unwilling to fulfil the activities not assigned to the municipalities by the law. By August 1897, 1802 municipalities joined the protest.²⁸

State administration (especially district captains) struggled to adequately deal with the negative attitudes of the political society and municipalities. Simultaneously, they also faced increasingly aggressive anti-government agitation by the German nationalist parties, who often chose the cities as tribune of their protests. In some towns, the tensions led to a small ›war‹ between the mayor and the state representatives. They had long-lasting negative consequences for the relationship between the tracks of the Austrian government.²⁹ In others, however, the district captains demonstrated reluctance or even inability when dealing with the nationalist politics of the cities. It was unclear whether the reason for this failure stemmed from a lack of personal capabilities or from their political beliefs. Especially in districts with a strong affinity toward nationalist politics, however, the affairs occasionally presented too large of a challenge for the state representatives to handle. The district office in the west Bohemian town of Asch/Aš was one of the most

extreme examples of these problems. District Captain Johann Tittmann was, according to the Bohemian Governor Coudenhove, »far too weak and inept, [and lacked] the necessary prudence and energy«.³⁰ After failing to prevent political demonstrations in early summer, Tittmann was removed from office. He was replaced by Johann Dudek, who, however, »has worn himself out in the fight against the hostility towards the government.«³¹ In the same year, he was succeeded by Wilhelm Barvitius. The difficult national conditions in Asch, as well as repeated stressful situations caused by the public meetings and rallies organised by nationalist politicians, had severe consequences for the personal lives of the state representatives. At the same time, they influenced the administrative stability of the district.

Administration and civil unrest

In many other cities, however, the conflicts between the state administration and self-government broke out with the first demonstrations of 1897. The massive operational stress of officials led to various questionable or overly confident decisions on both administration tracks. Compared to the clashes connected to the delegated agenda, the issue was no longer a matter of tax collection or the proper military records. Although their absence could jeopardise the functioning of the administrative mechanism, it did not impact ›ordinary‹ citizens much. Similarly, despite the importance of preserving the state authority, the real damage caused by the anti-government agitation was symbolic. Demonstrations and riots, on the other hand, often had fundamental consequences for the local populations. The lives and property of individuals and groups were at stake. In this instance, a conflict between state administration and self-government could threaten public order in the land; cooperation, on the other hand, could make a crucial difference when preventing violence.

One of the cities demonstrating good cooperation between state administration and the local municipal government was the north Bohemian town with a Czech majority, Louny/Laun. At the first sign of anti-Semitic violence at the beginning of December 1897, District Captain Josef Hruška reminded the Young Czech Mayor

Petr Pavel Hilbert of his duties, but he did not need to worry. Although Hilbert did not take the initiative, he performed his duties with integrity. Municipal policemen, supported by state gendarmes, guarded the houses of Jewish citizens and intervened against the demonstrations and riots in a joint action. Moreover, the mayor appointed ten reliable people familiar with the local conditions to reinforce the lawmen. Although multiple windows were broken by the rioters, District Captain Hruška complimented the efforts of the municipal administration, claiming that »[t]hanks to the increased police presence, there have been no more riots or disturbances of the peace for many days now.«³² The Municipal Council, moreover, decided to show their goodwill by compensating the Jewish population for the damage caused by rioters.

Smooth cooperation prevented a greater escalation of unrest in Louny. The joint action of police and gendarmerie was essential for maintaining order in Cisleithanian towns. Additionally, the involvement of the local community in policing sent an important signal that middle-class society did not support the riots. Such coaction between the state and self-government was possible mainly due to previously good relationships in the town. Only in such a community could the mutual respect between heads of both tracks of the Habsburg administration exist. Hruška and Hilbert operated in Louny for an exceptionally long time and, consequently, could build on years of cooperation. Last but not least, Hruška was active in local civil society organisations. Not only because of this, the District Captain enjoyed great esteem in the town's society.³³ The case of Louny shows how crucial it was for the state and self-government to overcome the stress and cooperate to preserve the safety of Cisleithanian cities.

Such a smooth cooperation, however, was exceptional. Around Bohemia and Austria, state- and self-government struggled to find a common language when dealing with the demonstrations and riots. To understand the limits of the cooperation of both tracks of the Habsburg Austrian administration, it is necessary to consider what options it had to deal with the unrest. Besides the control over policing forces, the state and the municipalities possessed a relevant amount of soft power, enabling them to avoid the outbreak of demonstrations or riots. State administration was

well aware of the mobilising potential of the local civil society organisations and media. Most of their activities consequently consisted of efforts to prevent the dissemination of aggressive nationalist or socialist narratives into society. In 1897, the state administration paid extraordinary attention to censoring hateful articles in the press and restricting public meetings and rallies.³⁴ This did not meet with the understanding of municipal councils, which criticised the state's excessive interference in the social life of local national communities. Moreover, especially the efforts of the district captains to limit public meetings, oftentimes co-organised by the municipalities, often aroused irritation of the self-government.

Conflicts, consequently, occurred regularly. One of the largest struggles over the alleged excessive interventions of the state administration into the local social life occurred in the western Bohemian city of Eger/Cheb. Eger, a predominantly German-speaking town, was one of the largest hubs of nationalist politics in the crownland. As such, it was often the centre of demonstrations and protests in the region, including the most famous one, the so-called »Egerer Volkstag« on 11 July 1897. The original intent of the »Volkstag« was to negotiate the details of the discontinuance of the administration of the delegated agenda in Bohemia. Probably due to this and fear of further escalation of the nationalist moods, the newly appointed interim Head [Leiter] of the District Captainship Stadler von Wolfersgrün, supported by the Governorship, obstinately resisted permitting the event. However, the town hall headed by Mayor Gschier, the event's main organizer, believed the state authorities had no right to take such a step. They argued that the Head of the District Captainship could only officially intervene against public events – but the organisers of the »Volkstag« claimed that the rally was private, as it was limited to guests only. Von Wolfersgrün, on the other hand, opposed the notion, claiming that although invitations were sent out, they were not addressed to individual persons, which made the guests largely anonymous. Consequently, he considered the actions of the organisers a circumvention of the law. Both tracks of the Habsburg administration reacted with stubbornness and irritation. Despite the repeated appeals of Mayor Gschier and colleagues, the state representative refused

to make any concessions and banned the ›Volkstag‹. The Municipal Council, however, insisted on holding the event anyway.

When it became clear that the town hall planned to organise the ›Volkstag‹ at any cost, Stadler von Wolfersgrün requested gendarmerie, Prague mounted state police, and military reinforcements. Simultaneously, the Head of the District Captainship made it clear that he would take over the municipal police in case of necessity. Symbolically, he was demonstrating that he distrusted the municipal council to be unbiased and to adequately intervene in case of an emergency. At the same time, it was meant to be a final warning for the organisers of the ›Volkstag‹. The Municipal Council felt insulted. Not only did it loudly protest against the precautions of the state organs, but it also systematically instigated a popular hatred against the incoming forces – especially the mounted police from Prague, which they depicted as being Czech.

The mistrust and inability of state and self-government in Eger to properly communicate a mutually agreeable outcome had severe consequences. Despite the best efforts of the Head of the District Captainship to sabotage the ›Volkstag‹ in every possible way, for example by not allowing the protesters to enter the assembly room in the ›Schießhaus‹ [Shooting House], the event was a success as thousands of people from all around Bohemia arrived in Eger to join the protests. Although Gschier repeatedly demanded that the police forces withdraw, Von Wolfersgrün ignored his wishes. Later in the evening, the criticism of the state organs, repeatedly pronounced by the speakers during the ›Volkstag‹, as well as inauspicious interventions of the law enforcers, resulted in violent clashes between the protesters and the policing bodies. As a result, tens of people were injured and arrested. Consequently, the relationship between the municipality and the state administration reached its lowest point.³⁵

The conflict between the Municipal Council and the District Captainship continued even after the ›Volkstag‹, as the authorities threatened each other with legal action. However, because of the lack of juridical means, the state authorities did not confront the municipality further. Simultaneously, they hoped to maintain a partially sustainable situation in Eger. The mayor and the council, supported by German deputies, capitalised

on their defiant actions during the ›Volkstag‹. While Gschier was celebrated for his deeds in months to come, Head of the District Captainship Stadler von Wolfersgrün was quietly removed from his office in September 1897. In just three months of his tenure, he had become a hated figure in the local community. This position was incompatible with the performance of his duties – central administration knew of the necessity of a correct relationship between the captain and ›his‹ district.³⁶ Although his actions were largely motivated by orders from the Bohemian governor's office, the Head of the District Captainship paid the price.³⁷ However, the most severe mistake of von Wolfersgrün proved to be an inability to cooperate with the municipality in a moment of social turmoil. Due to the provisional nature of his appointment in the district, von Wolfersgrün was a useful scapegoat in the midst of social conflict. His removal from the office allowed the new district captain to quickly rebuild the damaged relationship between the state administration, the local population, and the self-government.

Conflicts over authority

As can be seen in the case of Eger, the self-government could make the life of state administrators bitter. Besides controlling the municipal police, they held a relevant amount of soft power, allowing them to mitigate or exacerbate violence. Especially in the Czech society of the late nineteenth century, self-government had a peculiar position. Because of its nature as an elected body, municipalities – especially Prague – were considered the country's most important elected Czech bodies for a long time. Consequently, they possessed a relevant level of respect among the local communities.³⁸ During the demonstrations and riots, the authority of the municipalities often proved to be a more effective tool than the state's control over censorship and assembly law.

District Captains did not enjoy similar authority as they were often considered a foreign element by the local societies. Citizens treated them with suspicion. Their acceptance – and, consequently, social capital – largely depended on the time of their service in the district and their ability to build rapport with the

local elites. As state representatives, district captains were usually the object of popular hatred rather than a mediator of mutually acceptable conditions between the state and the citizens. Consequently, most district captains possessed a relatively lower authority than their municipal counterparts. Their capability to sway citizens' minds was limited, and in many situations, they lacked sufficient power to negotiate a peaceful outcome of the protests.³⁹ In this respect, district captains were largely dependent on the support of the self-government authorities.

When the policing forces' efforts to maintain public order started to fail, the social capital of the municipalities was an important factor in hindering or mitigating violence. In north Bohemian Saaz/Žatec, an anti-government demonstration of 4.000 citizens refused to follow the orders of the local policemen to disperse and threatened them with physical violence. In this seemingly hopeless moment, Mayor Constantin Ritter von Schönfeld and multiple councillors, according to District Captain von Campe, persuaded by him, made a speech to the gathering from the window of the city hall. In his appeal, the mayor invited the demonstrators to disperse. This seemed successful until eight gendarmes arrived, which, according to von Campe, »made the crowd completely rebellious.«⁴⁰ Yet again, the situation was saved by the mayor, who again appealed to the people and promised them that the units would retreat from the square. Finally, the moods calmed down and the demonstration ended.⁴¹ Even in a tense and stressful moment of social upheaval, the mandate from the city's people carried by the mayor allowed him to negotiate peace in the city.

Although district captains attempted to make similar appeals, they were rarely as successful as their municipal counterparts. In Hradec Králové/Königgrätz, for instance, the District Captain personally spoke to the protesters in front of his office. Although the report mentions that »many listen quietly, and some even obeyed and walked away«,⁴² even more people reacted in a hostile way. When negotiations took place, the back rows demolished the façade of a nearby hotel.⁴³ Granted, the social capital that municipal bodies as elected organs usually possessed, siding with the protesters, this was a situation they rarely faced during the crisis of 1897. Even in moments when they intervened against the

majority society, they often faced less opposition than their state counterpart. This was visible in the above-mentioned case of Saaz when Mayor von Schönfeld achieved what the law enforcers and district captain could not.⁴⁴ A situation like von Schönfeld's appearance on the main square gives evidence of the essentiality of collaboration between the different bodies of the administration in Cisleithania. Although delegating authority to the municipal authorities was not always possible or did not prevent further escalation of unrest, in most cases, it worked better than the efforts of the state authorities to resolve the situation alone.

Although the state administration was aware of the influence of municipal government on citizens, it was not always able to utilise it. For the district captains, it took a certain level of trust in the municipal government and the mayor to give up control and symbolically step back to let the self-government solve the situation. Particularly in cities where the relationship between the district captainships and the city council was problematic before the riots, it was difficult for the state authorities to properly communicate this issue. Similarly, district captains new to the cities and not yet properly integrated into the local context were usually reluctant to hand over the initiative to the municipalities. In the moment of massive stress on the whole system, the state representatives instead often decided to act autocratically. Unsure of the reliability of the municipal councils, they decided to leave out the municipalities from solving the public unrest. Not only did they not let the municipalities take over, but they also did not consult the mayor on measures to stop the demonstrations or riots, especially on calling in the military reinforcements. As a result, such steps often failed to calm the situation and further deteriorated relations between the two tracks of the Habsburg administration.

The negative effects of the autocratic governing by the state authorities were strongly manifested in Pilsen. When the four days of riots broke out at the end of August 1897, neither the young Czech Mayor, Václav Peták, nor the experienced District Captain, Leo von Hansgirk, were in the city due to vacations. Instead, the respective offices were represented by District Commissioner Václav/Wenzel Bouma, and Municipal Councilor and Police Executive Josef Schmied. Although

they struggled to calm the riots, communication and cooperation between the state administration and the self-government worked relatively well. Problems erupted only when the Bohemian Governor Coudenhove decided to send the Governorship Councilor Octavian Freiherr Weber von Ebenhof to Pilsen to step in until the return of the District Governor.

Weber, unfamiliar with local conditions and probably also instructed by Coudenhove, completely reversed the policy of the Pilsen District Captainship based on negotiations and joint action with the municipality. Instead, he adopted an authoritarian approach characterised by uncompromising military intervention and a zero-tolerance policy toward rioters. Although the riots, at the cost of bloodshed, soon began to subside, the new strategy caused a wide rift between the state organs and the local city hall. While Peták, who had since returned to Pilsen, proceeded with a series of complaints to the Governor, Schmied chose a less diplomatic path. During the last days of the riots, he repeatedly got into public disputes with the intervening soldiers, causing outrage and – according to the Governor – further fuelling the unrest.⁴⁵

The deterioration of the relationships between the state and municipal administration continued even after the end of the Pilsen riots. During the investigation, Hansgirk repeatedly complained about the obstructive attitude of the municipality, which refused to provide the state bodies with any assistance.⁴⁶ Despite this, the experienced District Captain remained surprisingly appeasing. Hansgirk's refusal to confront the self-government became evident in the internal discussions over Josef Schmied's conduct. While the Minister of Interior (Badeni) and the Governor wanted to recommend that Mayor Peták, who had the authority to do so, remove the elected Police Executive from office, Hansgirk disagreed. Instead, he claimed that such a step would further worsen not only the relationship between the two tracks of the government but also between the public and the state. According to Hansgirk, Schmied's behaviour was not a sign of incompetence or a negative attitude towards the state and military but rather a result of his »desire for popularity and importance« within the local society.⁴⁷ The District Captain's leniency towards the self-government was motivated by his belief that preserving communal relationships was

more important than the symbolic authority of the state. Consequently, Schmied got away with an apology and a promise not to repeat similar acts.⁴⁸

Conflicts over the policing of public order

Failed policing of the public order was both the most common cause and a result of the conflict between the state and self-government. When riots or demonstrations broke out, the Habsburg government relied on policing forces to maintain or restore order in the city. As mentioned, the municipal councils were responsible for maintaining law and order in the towns. To achieve that, they disposed of a municipal police force [Städtische Sicherheitswache]. Constables in this body stood directly under the municipal authority and were the most numerous policing force in most cities. On the other hand, the state had the gendarmerie under its control in smaller towns and rural areas of Habsburg Austria.⁴⁹ Moreover, in larger cities, such as Vienna or Prague, state-controlled policemen operated under the leadership of a police director, who was answerable to the governor of the crownland.⁵⁰ If the state- and municipal-controlled law enforcers were unable to preserve the public order, the state administration (after 1891, only the governor of the crownland) had a right to call up the military to fulfil the so-called »Extraordinary Security Service« [Außerordentlicher Sicherheitsdienst].⁵¹

Although the self-government was the track mainly responsible for preserving the public order in the Cisleithanian cities, the municipal policemen were a highly unreliable force by the end of the nineteenth century. The proximity to the politicised town halls, constantly competing over the electorate, made the constables a subject of a conflict of interest. Such partiality exposed the body to criticism. As Claire Morelon points out: »[...] Social Democrats frequently denounced the collusion between employers and municipal policemen, who, being directly answerable to the mayor, were considered to be more biased than gendarmes or soldiers.«⁵² By 1900, the gendarmerie thus technically substituted the policemen as the immediate power intervening during riots and demonstrations. Besides their military training, mainly

their reliability made them a convenient policing organ.⁵³ However, the increase in the number of gendarmes and state policemen in the second half of the nineteenth century did not keep pace with the growth of the cities. Their stations were massively understaffed and had to rely on the municipal policemen's support when dealing with larger demonstrations and riots.⁵⁴ The military ›assistances‹ were problematic as well. ›Extraordinary Security Service‹ was highly unpopular not only among the population of the cities, who were irritated by the presence of foreign and violent elements in the town but also by the soldiers themselves. According to Lohr Eugene Miller, troops had no training to intervene during demonstrations and riots. More importantly, they considered the service unprofessional, unrewarding, and morale-sapping, as the military faced a hostile attitude from the citizens for a long time after the unrest ceased.⁵⁵

The division of the policing powers between the state and self-administration was a reason for most of the controversies between both tracks of the late Habsburg government. Because of the limited number of individual law-enforcing bodies, the success of the policing of public order in 1897 was largely dependent on the cooperation of municipal policemen and gendarmerie. However, Bohemia and Austria's joint action of the state- and municipal-controlled organs was failing.

Right after the riots, messages criticising the inactivity of the municipal policemen arrived to the Land Governorships from tens of municipalities across Cisleithania. The District Captain in Tetschen/Děčín, for example, wrote: »One circumstance that made the interventions more difficult for the gendarmerie was the inadequate and less energetic intervention of the local police both in Tetschen and especially in Bodenbach/Podmokly.«⁵⁶ Since the beginning of the riots on 2 December 1897, the municipal representatives in these predominantly German-speaking twin cities heavily contested the protective measures taken by the state administration. Despite close to 4.000 demonstrators and rioters threatening to attack the local Czech school, the mayor refused to agree to call in military reinforcements.⁵⁷ Moreover, when the attack on the property of the Czech minority in the town began, the policemen failed to even show up, leaving the local gendarmerie crew of seven to face thousands of rioters alone. The Czech school, consequently, was destroyed.

After the District Captain decided to ask for military support despite municipal politicians' objections, the Municipal Council of Bodenbach remarked that »the requisition of military personnel initiated by the k.k. District Captainship in Tetschen will prove to be a completely superfluous measure.«⁵⁸ Similarly, the District Captain in Brüx complained that despite his repeated notification of the mayor, the municipal policemen were nowhere to be found during the late November riots in the city. When they already appeared, the officers proceeded sluggishly and ineffectively. More than the police officers, however, the state administration blamed their municipal superiors for their passivity. Eventually, the District Captain decided to personally take over the constables and noticed that since that moment: »the police organs fulfilled their duty without any complaints.«⁵⁹

Despite the tactical character of the District Captain's comments on the police behaviour, the reluctance of the self-government in Brüx to send policing forces against the citizens of their municipalities was obvious. In other towns, state administrators reached a similar conclusion. The passivity of the officers in Aussig/Ústí nad Labem, Saaz/Žatec Rakovník/Rakonitz was also evaluated as a result of municipalities' orders. According to the state administration, the reason was that it contradicted the political goals of the self-government. In the last-mentioned town, for example, the District Captain Pablasko commented on the unreliability of the Czech-controlled Municipal Council because of its anti-Semitism, and even mentioned the possibility that the self-government representatives were co-organisers of the riots in Rakovník.⁶⁰ In Zwickau/Cvikov, the state administration expressed similar suspicion regarding the upcoming elections in the city.⁶¹ The politicisation of self-government reached a level that influenced one of the most important functions of administration – the protection of the inhabitants of towns and districts.

Two tracks – Two different arenas of action

It was becoming more and more obvious that the officials of the state and self-administration were operating in different arenas. The municipal officials had to

constantly calculate the wishes of their electorate. The year 1897 came at a moment when nationalist politics on a local level started undermining the previous liberal dominance. In many town halls, support for both spectrums of politics began to even out.⁶² It became increasingly crucial not to alienate key – and often nationalistically-minded – middle-class voters to preserve control over the municipal council. The self-government members were aware of the potentially negative effect of radical measures on their image. They were consequently reluctant to grant political opposition an important weapon for the next elections. Although the municipal council did not explicitly refuse to cooperate with state authorities, they often acted with untimely passivity.

Regarding self-government, the missteps during the demonstrations and riots could have resulted in a political loss; the consequences were usually more severe for district captains. In the first place, they cared about preserving the public order and the authority of the state, on which they depended for the support of the self-government. Failure to protect the public order could lead to losing a job or being transferred to a different (and more remote) district.⁶³ However, as Klečáček points out and as is obvious from the above-mentioned case of Stadler von Wolfersgrün in Eger, it was also essential for the district captain to stay on good terms with the local society. In the long term, it was impossible to function in a town that stood against the state officials. Not only could it exclude the district captains from the local community, but it also endangered their careers. In such a case, supervisors often decided to change the head of the district. However, criticism and possible dismissal awaited district captains who were too integrated into the local society, and could have threatened the neutrality of the state action in the region.⁶⁴ The disastrous aftermaths were not limited to lower civil servants – dissatisfaction with the behaviour of the Bohemian Governor Coudenhove after the riots of 1897 caused by his laxity in declaring martial law over Prague almost led to his removal from the position.⁶⁵ Dealing with the demonstrations and riots thus became a real ›walk on eggshells‹ that required tremendous tact and care. All of this had to be dealt with under the immense stress caused by the largest political unrest in Habsburg Austria since 1848.

The state administration's position was even more complicated as it seemingly did not possess enough pressure to coerce the municipalities to step out of their calculated passivity. The sole method of compelling municipalities was by threatening them with §37 of the Municipal Code [Gemeindeordnung, 16. 4. 1864]. Invoking this paragraph enabled the state administration to demand that the municipality reimburse citizens for damages if attacks on individuals or their property resulted from the police force neglecting its duties (if a perpetrator was not brought to justice). In such circumstances, the municipality could have been charged with negligence in preventing the act of violence.⁶⁶ Despite governors' recommendations to invoke §37, the state administrators were reluctant to proceed this way. It was rarely possible to prove that municipalities had neglected their duties, and, in cases where the district governor continued to insist on law enforcement, it could lead to lengthy court proceedings.⁶⁷ This again exemplifies how much the two paths of the Habsburg administration at the end of the nineteenth century diverged.

Even more fundamental, however, were the aforementioned community relations. Although the district governors could have achieved symbolic victories by punishing the municipal councils, the price for it was a further re-ignition of the conflict between both branches of the Habsburg administration. For the same reasons, state officials rarely resorted to dissolving city councils or removing mayors. The counterproductivity of such measures was visible in Graz, where the self-government even used the disputes to strengthen its political position. Although Mayor Franz Graf was listless during the riots, he started causing trouble right after the finish. Graf assessed that it politically paid off to side with the citizens in their conflict against state authorities (especially the military). Not only did the Municipal Council participate in anti-government demonstrations, but it also issued public notices with a palpably anti-military edge. Despite repeated admonitions from Governor Olivier Marquis Bacquehem and local garrison Commander Succovaty, Graf continued with his anti-state activities. As Graz was a statutory city, Prime Minister Franz Thun eventually had to step in and dissolve the Municipal Council.⁶⁸ However, as Armin Sippel mentions: »The

dismissal of the municipal councillors (›Affaire Graz‹) brought the national ›martyrs‹ a wave of sympathy and Mayor Graf heroic status that reached far beyond the city limits.⁶⁹ Franz Graf was re-elected in October 1898 and remained in office until 1912. Instead of punishing the self-governing organ, the state managed to even strengthen their resistance. On the other hand, Governor Bacquehem, who failed in his attempts to mediate between the state and the municipality, was replaced by Manfred Count Clary and Aldringen at the end of the year 1898.⁷⁰

Conclusion

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, differences between the Habsburg Austrian state administration and self-government grew. As the state administration became increasingly more neutral, the municipalities, on the other hand, were more and more susceptible to politicisation.⁷¹ Moreover, the modernisation and formation of mass society, as well as the mobilising efforts of the new parties, intensified the demonstrations and riots during which the rift between both tracks of the administration became most prominent. In this regard, the Badeni riots of 1897 presented a previously unparalleled challenge to the cooperation of the Habsburg state administration and self-government.

In the turmoil of the demonstrations and riots, the cooperation between the state and self-government officials was crucial to preserve order in the cities. When the state administration could use legal measures to mitigate the tensions in the society, the municipalities possessed a relevant amount of respect and authority, allowing them to influence citizens. The joint action was desirable from the policing perspective as well. The number of state-controlled gendarmes was inadequate, and they could only successfully intervene against the demonstrations and riots when supported by the municipal police. Without the support of the municipal councils, the state administration had to rely on extremely unpopular and controversial military ›assistances‹. In a crisis, however, a common action of the state and self-government was often hindered by a lack of communication, disagreement over

competencies, and different goals of the two tracks of the Habsburg administration.

Organisational and operational stress played a crucial role in the conflicts between both tracks of the Habsburg administration in 1897. Even though it did not produce a rift between the two bodies, it exposed and further aggravated it. In a time of political crisis and public unrest, the contradictions inherent in the Habsburg Austrian system of governance resulted in an incapability of further cooperation in many districts. Facing the need for quick and effective response, the communication between mayors and district captains often failed. It was becoming more and more obvious that the officials of the state and self-administration were operating in a different arena. The state administration's need to maintain order often clashed with the self-government's responsiveness to local public opinion and political pressures, resulting in a complex interplay of action and inaction. Politics crept into the governing of the cities and influenced even the safety of the "ordinary" citizens in Habsburg Austria. Moreover, the imperial administration could not act autocratically without facing the opposition of the municipalities or further endangering their position in the local community. They faced the risk of exclusion from society, which made their duties nearly impossible and could result in a job loss or a transfer to a different district. It was thus in the best interest of the state administrators to come to terms with the self-government officials, even at the cost of large concessions and a reduction of their authority.⁷² As a result of structural and cultural factors, enhanced by the operational stress, most of the district captains could not do so. Rather than cooperation, conflicts broke out in the towns of Cisleithania.

Preserving peace and order in the cities was largely a matter of practice rather than strict adherence to specified procedures. In nearly no district or municipality did officials follow the same path of decisions. Claire Morelon writes that despite the ideal of impartiality of the higher state officials, » [...] interventions could take a different form at the local level, highlighting the chasm between theory and practice.«⁷³ The actions heavily depended on the local context, the political situation in the district, the experience of individual administrators, and the assimilation of state civil servants into local

society. Although more research would be needed to determine the exact results, it can be concluded that the captains who had been in the district for a long time had the best chance of reaching an agreement with the municipal councils. On the other hand, the political constellation was a determining factor from the perspective of the municipalities. Especially in cities with strong political opposition or upcoming elections, it was very difficult to persuade the mayor to cooperate in riot control.

Although it may seem that the results of my research confirm the traditional narratives about Habsburg Austria failing under the pressure of the nationalising society, another interpretation can also be made: The empire proved to be a truly participatory state, in which even the broad authority granted to the district captain by the law was subject to public oversight. Amid the upheavals of mass politics in the 1890s, the absolutist roots of local state power in Cisleithania eroded. This disappearance of the old system was achieved by the rise of civil society and the politicisation of public life rather than through political reforms. The state inadvertently facilitated these changes by supporting democratisation through electoral reforms. Consequently, even though the state did not intend to alter the position of the state administrators, it enabled it through an endorsement of a more participative public sphere.

- 1 The paper is based on research from a dissertation project, "Street Politics and Collective Violence in Cisleithania in 1897," at Charles University in Prague and the University of Vienna.
- 2 Request of the District Captain in Pilsen Hansgirk about resumption of his leave from 9. 11. 1897, Archiv města Plzně (AMP), Presidium okresního hejtmanství (POH), Presidiální spisy (PS), inv. n. 1091, b. 24, n. 898/v.p.
- 3 Similarly, Reports of police director Dörfel to Governor Coudenhove considering the police interventions during the December riots of 1897, Národní Archiv České republiky (NAČR), Governorship of Bohemia (GoB), Präsidiale (Präs.), 8/22/7/6, no. 722.
- 4 Ronald J. Burke: Stress in policing. An overview, in: Ronald J. Burke (ed.): Stress in Policing. Sources, consequences and interventions, London / New York 2017, pp. 3–27, at p. 10.
- 5 Quoted from Peter Urbanitsch: Verfassung und Verwaltung. Landesfürst und Stände, Politiker und Beamte, in: Oliver Kühschelm / Elisabeth Loinig / Stefan Eminger / Willibald Rosner (eds.): *Niederösterreich im 19. Jahrhundert. Band 1. Herrschaft und Wirtschaft: eine Regionalgeschichte sozialer Macht*, St. Pölten 2021, pp. 139–174 at p. 172.
- 6 For example, see Catherine Horel: Multicultural Cities of the Habsburg Empire, 1880–1914: Imagined Communities and Conflictual Encounters, Budapest 2023, p. 24.
- 7 Definition of operational and organisational stress, see for example Wolfgang Seibel et al: Verwaltungsresilienz unter Stressbedingungen, in: Der Moderne Staat [dms] – Zeitschrift für Public Policy, Recht und Management 15/1 (2022), pp. 109–129 at p. 110; Burke: Stress in Policing, pp. 3–27 at pp. 8–9.
- 8 The political aspect, see, for example, Berthold Sutter: Die Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen von 1897: ihre Genesis und ihre Auswirkung vornehmlich auf die innerösterreichischen Alpenländer I., II., Graz / Köln 1960/1965; Jan Křen: Konfliktní společenství. Češi a Němci 1780–1918, Prague 2013, pp. 257–269; Otto Urban: Česká společnost 1848–1918, Prague 1982, pp. 456–465; Höbelt: Kornblume und Kaiseradler. Die deutschfreiheitlichen Parteien Altösterreichs 1882–1918, Vienna 1990, p. 172.
- 9 For example, Michal Frankl: »Emancipace od židů«. Český antisemitismus na konci 19. století, Prague / Litomyšl 2007, pp. 251–271; Ester Neblich: Die Auswirkungen der Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen von 1897 auf die deutsche und tschechische Bevölkerung des historischen Egerlandes, Marburg 2002; Helena Krejčová: Pražský prosincový pogrom roku 1897, in: Helena Krejčová (ed.): Ponižení a odstranění: města versus katastrofy, Praha 1998, pp. 73–78; Adéla Hall: Deutsch und Tschechisch im sprachenpolitischen Konflikt: eine vergleichende diskursanalytische Untersuchung zu den Sprachenverordnungen Badenis von 1897, Frankfurt am Main / Wien 2008; Nancy M. Wingfield: Flag Wars and Stone Saints. How the Bohemian Lands Became Czech, Cambridge 2007.
- 10 For example, Jiří Klabouch: Die Gemeindegeldverwaltung in Österreich 1848–1918, Vienna 1968.
- 11 For example, Adam Wandruszka / Helmut Rumpler (eds.): Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918. 2, Verwaltung und Rechtswesen, Vienna 1975; Milan Hlavačka: Zlatý věk české samosprávy: samospráva a její vliv na hospodářský, sociální a intelektuální rozvoj Čech 1862–1913, Praha 2006; John David Deak: The Austrian Civil Service in an Age of Crisis: Power and the Politics of Reform, 1848–1925, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Chicago 2009; Waltraud Heindl: Bürokratie und Beamte in Österreich. 2, Josephinische Mandarine: 1848 bis 1914, Vienna / Graz 2013.
- 12 See Peter Urbanitsch: Bezirkshauptmänner in Böhmen zwischen Nation und Staat (anhand Wiener Quellen), in: Martin Klečáček (ed.): Úředník sluhou mnoha pánů? Nacionalizace a politizace veřejné správy ve střední Evropě 1848–1948, Prague 2018, pp. 11–42; Martin Klečáček: Poslušný vládce okresu. Okresní hejtman a proměny státní moci v Čechách v letech 1868–1938, Praha 2021; Martin Klečáček: A Municipality Against the State: Power Relations Between State and Local Self-Government Representatives, Based on the Example of Bohemia at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century, in: Acta Poloniae Historica 121 (2020), pp. 121–141; Claire Morelon: State Authorities, municipal forces and military intervention in the policing of strikes in Austria-Hungary, 1890–1914, in: Matteo Milan / Alessandro Saluppo: Corporate Policing, Yellow Unionism, and Strikebreaking, 1890–1930: In Defense of Freedom, London 2020, pp. 79–96.
- 13 Gary B. Cohen: Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867–1914, in: Central European History 40 (2007), pp. 241–278 at pp. 254–257.
- 14 Urban: Česká společnost, pp. 460–463; Křen: Konfliktní společenství, pp. 259–260; Lothar Höbelt: Kornblume, pp. 156–160.
- 15 Höbelt: Kornblume, p. 160.
- 16 Described, for example, in Mark Twain: Stirring Times in Austria, in: Harper's New Monthly Magazine 96, (1898), pp. 530–540, online: Stirring Times in Austria - Wikisource, the free online library (03. 05. 2024).
- 17 Political situation, see Urban: Česká společnost, pp. 464–465; Křen: Konfliktní společenství, p. 265; Höbelt: Kornblume, pp. 162–166; Demonstrations and riots in Vienna and Graz, see Oliver Rathkolb: Gewalt und Antisemitismus an der Universität Wien und die Badeni-Krise 1897. Davor und danach, in: Oliver Rathkolb (ed.): Der lange Schatten des Antisemitismus, Göttingen 2013, pp. 69–92; Sutter: Die Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen, II., pp. 176–230; John W. Boyer: Badeni and the Revolution of 1897, in: Lucile Dreidemy et al (eds.): Bananen, Cola, Zeitgeschichte: Oliver Rathkolb und das Lange 20. Jahrhundert, Wien 2016, pp. 69–84 at pp. 80–81; Boyer, Austria 1867–1955, Oxford 2022, pp. 323–324.
- 18 Eger, see Wingfield: Flag Wars, pp. 53–57; Neblich: Die Auswirkungen der Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen, pp. 106–139.
- 19 The files of the riots in different cities are to be found in: NAČR, GoB, Präs., 873/2, 8/1/13/1, boxes 2295 and 2296; Riots in Prague are in separate files, Ibid., 8/22/7, boxes 2554–2558.
- 20 During demonstrations and riots in Prague in 1904, both municipal and state administration referred to riots of 1897, see for example Discussion of the Prague municipality and the Governorship from 1. 3. 1904, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (ÖStA) – Allgemeine Verwaltungsarchiv (AVA) – Ministerium des Innern (Mdi) – Präsidium (Präs.), b. 2091, nr. 3808.
- 21 Klečáček: Poslušný vládce, p. 126; Klečáček: A Municipality against the State, pp. 124.
- 22 Legal and administrative framework of the state and self-administration, see Lukáš Fasora / Pavel Kladiwa: Gemeindeverwaltung und lokale Eliten in den Böhmisches Ländern 1850–1918, Teilergebnisse der Forschung in der Tschechischen Republik, in: East Central Europe 33/1–2 (2006), pp. 337–369 at pp. 341–342; Klečáček: Poslušný vládce, pp. 30–31; Ibid., pp. 126–128; Klečáček: A Municipality Against the State, pp. 121–123; Gary B. Cohen: The Austrian Bureaucracy at the Nexus of State and Society, in: Franz Adlgasser / Fredrik Lindström (eds.): The Habsburg Civil Service and Beyond: Bureaucracy and Civil Servants from the Vormärz to the Inter-War Years, Vienna 2019, pp. 49–65 at p. 50; Urbanitsch: Verfassung und Verwaltung, pp. 164–168; Deak: Austrian Civil Service, p. 114.
- 23 This constellation was valid for the whole of Habsburg Austria. The so-called statutory cities governed by separate municipal rules were

the only places with a different system. These towns – in Bohemia, only Prague and Reichenberg/Liberec – were directly subordinated to the Land Committee [Landesausschuss] in the matters of self-government and to the Crownland Governorship in the issues of delegated agenda. Consequently, the municipal councils acted not only as the executive body of the self-administration but also as the lowest instance of the state authorities (instead of a district captain), see Jan Novotný: Projekt provincie »Deutschböhmen« v ambicích liberecké radnice do roku 1914, in: Documenta Pragensia XIV: Mezi liberalismem a totalitou: Komunální politika ve středoevropských zemích 1848–1918, Praha 1997, pp. 183–192 at p. 184.

- 24 Cohen: The Austrian Bureaucracy, p. 50; Pavel Kladiwa: The Birth of Czech Nationalist Activism in Reichenberg (Liberec) and its Conflicts with the City Hall (with a focus on the conflict during the 1890 census, in: Prager wirtschafts- und sozialhistorische Mitteilungen = Prague Economic and Social History Papers 22/2 2015, pp. 7–26 at p. 13.
- 25 Nationalisation, see Jiří Malíř: Nacionalizace obecní samosprávy a limity demokratizace komunální politiky před rokem 1914 na příkladu Moravy, in: Documenta Pragensia XIV, pp. 73–93 at pp. 73–85.
- 26 Klečacký: A Municipality against the State, p. 123.
- 27 Ibid., p. 123; Urbanitsch: Bezirkshauptmänner in Böhmen, p. 12; Deak: Austrian Civil Service, pp. 268–274.
- 28 Klečacký: Poslušný vládce okresu, pp. 154–156; Similarly, *Die Volkstage des Jahres 1897 in Eger*, in Státní Okresní Archiv (SOKA) Cheb, Fond 14, inventory number (i.n.) 3; Similarly, Heindl: Josephinische Mandarine, pp. 116–118.
- 29 Klečacký: Poslušný vládce okresu, pp. 159.
- 30 Quotes and the information about Asch from Urbanitsch: Bezirkshauptmänner in Böhmen, p. 35; See also, Klečacký: Poslušný vládce okresu, p. 156.
- 31 Urbanitsch: Bezirkshauptmänner in Böhmen, p. 35.
- 32 Cooperation in Louny, see File titled »Laun« in NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/13/1, b. 2296, n. 17384/1897; Quoted from Ibid., 18460/1897.
- 33 Petr Kučera: Spolková činnost druhé poloviny 19. století v Lounech jako příklad rozvoje občanské společnosti a její vliv na činnost městského zastupitelstva, unpublished master's thesis, University of Hradec Králové 2017, pp. 31–32; Michal Navrátil: Almanach československých právníků: životopisný slovník čs. právníků, kteří působili v umění, vědě, krásném písemnictví a politice od Karla IV. počínaje až na naše doby: k III. sjezdu čs. právníků v Bratislavě, Prague 1930, p. 154.
- 34 Baden's concern about associations, see Letter to Bacquehem from 2. 7. 1897, see Landesarchiv Steiermark (LAS), Statthalterei, Präsidium (SP), Aktengruppe (AG) 8, box 364, Fasz. 5 – 4089 – Vereine, n. 5375/1897; Censoring of media, see Report of the Police Director in Prague about the censoring of Prague journals, see NAČR, PM 1891–1900, 8/22/7, b. 2556, n. 18827/1897.
- 35 Events of the »Egerer Volkstag«, see *Die Volkstage des Jahres 1897 in Eger*, SOKA Cheb, F. 14, i. n. 3; Neblich: Die Auswirkungen der Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen, pp. 106–139; Wingfield: Flag Wars, pp. 53–57.
- 36 Klečacký: Poslušný vládce okresu, p. 309–310.
- 37 Neblich: Die Auswirkungen der Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen, pp. 113–139; Štěpán Karel Odstrčil: Politická krajina historického Chebska v letech 1897–1907, unpublished Master's Thesis. Masaryk's University in Brno 2015, pp. 23–24.
- 38 Luboš Velek: Rozvíjení české samosprávy jako náhrady neexistujícího státu a jako předstupně státní samostatnosti, in: Lukáš Fasora (ed.): Občanské elity a obecní samospráva 1848–1948, Brno 2006, pp. 146–151; Jiří Malíř: Samospráva jako prostředek poslanecké kariéry,

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- 39 Ibid., pp. 122–123.
- 40 Quoted from the Report of the District Hauptmann about the events of 27. and 28. 11. 1897, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/13/1, n. 16928/1897.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Quoted from Report of the District Captain in Königgrätz from 3. 12. 1897, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/13/1, b. 2295, n. 17351/1897.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 Other similar cases were, for example, the autumn demonstrations in Reichenberg, where Magistrate Official Ringelhaan persuaded the people to calmly disperse, Ibid., b. 2296, n. 16944/1897.
- 45 Weber's approach, see Statement of Weber about his activities in Pilsen, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/15/4, b. 2316, n. 13080; Report about the military assistance from 2. 12. 1897, Ibid., n. 17302; Report of Hansgirk to the Governor of Bohemia about the military interventions from 4. 9. 1897, Ibid., n. 12656; Complaints of the Municipal Council and Peták, see Ibid., n. 875; Report about the deterioration of the relations between the citizens of Pilsen and the military from 10. 9. 1897, Archiv města Plzně, Presidium okresního hejtmánství, Presidiální spisy, inventory number 1091, b. 24, n. 909/v.p.; Complaint about the behavior of the Police Referent Josef Schmidt from 7. 9. 1897, Ibid., n. 908/v.p.
- 46 Complaint of Hansgirk about the failing cooperation of the mayor's office from 27. 12. 1897, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/15/4, b. 2316, n. 18970.
- 47 Quoted from Discussion about Schmied's behavior, see Answer of Hansgirk to the Governor of Bohemia about Schmied's behavior, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/15/4, b. 2316, n. 1320.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Morelon: State Authorities, pp. 80–81.
- 50 Hermann Oberhummer: Die Wiener Polizei. Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte des Sicherheitswesens in den Ländern der ehemaligen Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie. Band I., Vienna 1937, pp. 265–268.
- 51 Richard Georg Plaschka: Innere Front: Militärassistentz, Widerstand und Umsturz in der Donaumonarchie 1918, Bd. 1, Zwischen Streik und Meuterei, Reprint 2014, Köln 2015, pp. 21–25.
- 52 Morelon: State Authorities, p. 83.
- 53 Lohr Eugene Miller: Politics, the Nationality Problem, and the Habsburg Army, 1848–1914, unpublished PhD thesis, Louisiana State University 1992, pp. 201–202.
- 54 For example, the District Captain Steinfeld complaint in Slaný/Schlan to the Governor of Bohemia from 21. 12. 1897, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/13/1, b. 2296, ad 18743/1897.
- 55 Miller: Politics, the Nationality Problem, and the Habsburg Army, p. 201.
- 56 Quoted from Report of the District Captain in Tetschen about the security in the city from 10. 12. 1897, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/13/1, b. 2296, n. 17695.
- 57 Riots in Tetschen, see Report of the gendarmerie in Tetschen, NAČR, GoB, Präs., 8/1/13/1, b. 2296, n. 17877/1897.
- 58 Report of the District Captain of Tetschen from 10. 12. 1897, Ibid., n. 17695/1897; Answer to the interpellation of MP Jandourek from 13. 3. 1898, Ibid., n. 4478/1898.
- 59 Phone report of the District Captain in Brüx from 28. 11. 1897, Ibid., b. 2295, 16950/1897; Response of the District Captain in Brüx to the interpellation of the MP Černohorský and his colleagues, Ibid., ad. 1840/1898.
- 60 Report of the District Captain in Aussig from 29. 11. 1897, Ibid., n. 17547; Report of the District Captain in Saaz about the behavior of

the municipality, *Ibid.*, b. 2295, n. 1123/1898; Riots in Rakovník, see Report of the District Captain Pablasko in Rakovník from 4. 12. 1897, *Ibid.*, n. 17452/1897.

- 61 Worries of the District Captain Blach in Gabel about the development in Zwickau, see *Ibid.*, b. 2295, n. 17153/1897.
- 62 See, for example, Peter Urbanitsch: *Bürgerliche Eliten, Modernisierung, und Wertewandel in Klein- und Mittelstädten Cisleithaniens 1848–1918*, in: Lukáš Fasora (ed.): *Občanské elity a obecní samospráva 1848–1948*, Brno 2006, pp. 49–65 at pp. 56–57; Miloslava Melanová: *Zápas o libereckou radnici v roce 1885. Formování německého národního hnutí v Čechách*, in: *Documenta Pragensia XIV* (1997), pp. 171–180.
- 63 Which happened in Asch, see Urbanitsch: *Bezirkshauptmänner in Böhmen*, p. 35; Klečáček, *Poslušný vládce*, pp. 309–311.
- 64 Klečáček: *Vládce okresu*, p. 311.
- 65 Sutter: *Die Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen*, pp. 233–236.
- 66 *Gemeindeordnung für das Königreich Böhmen*, quoted from *Landesgesetzblatt Böhmen 1848–1918* (1864), 14, online: <https://alex.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/alex?aid=lbo&datum=1864&page=58&size=45> (2. 7. 2024).
- 67 Such as in Saaz, Report about the reimbursement of the damages in Saaz from 29. 4. 1898, *NAČR, GoB, Präs.*, 8/1/13/1, b. 2296, n. 6957.
- 68 Graf's behavior, see Bacquehem's criticism of Graf's appeal to the citizens of Graz, see *LAS, SP, AG 8*, box 364, n. 3819/1897; Bacquehem's complaint to Gautsch about Graf's behavior, *Ibid.*, 3932/1897; Graf's defense from 1. 12. 1897, *ÖStA, Kriegsarchiv, Zentralstellen, Kriegsministerium und Militärliquidierungsamt, Präsidialbüro*, b. 1031, 52-26/6 ad 3; Dissolution of the municipal council, see Sutter: *Die Badenischen Sprachenverordnungen*, p. 230.
- 69 Quoted from Armin Sippel: *Der Grazer Gemeinderat und seine Bürgermeister von 1850 bis 1919*, unpublished Master's Thesis, Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz 2010, pp. 109–110.
- 70 Sippel: *Der Grazer Gemeinderat*, pp. 109–110; See also Martin Moll: *Wohltätigkeitsfeste, Fahnnenschmuck und Militärmusik: Konfliktfelder zwischen steirischem Deutschnationalismus und kaiserlichem Statthalter um 1900*, in: *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereines für Steiermark Jahrgang 95* 2004, pp. 255–282 at pp. 257–258.
- 71 Klečáček: *Poslušný vládce*, pp. 135–151; Heindl: *Josephinische Mandarine*, pp. 99–105.
- 72 Klečáček: *A Municipality against the State*, pp. 139–140.
- 73 Morelon: *State Authorities*, p. 91.

Abstract

The riots of 1897 accentuated divides in the society. One of the most visible conflicts erupted between the Habsburg Austrian state administration and self-government. Although existing since the 1860s, the Badeni crisis accentuated the discontent. Local cooperation was essential for maintaining order but often failed due to differing goals, political pressures, and poor communication. Despite broad authority, the state authorities could not rule autocratically. As individuals, district captains relied on local support, exposing the limits of their power. These struggles revealed a shift toward the participatory style of governance, which was driven by societal change and mass politics of Cisleithania.

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