

**LEXICAL FEATURES OF DIPLOMATIC DISCOURSE DURING THE PERIOD OF AGGRAVATION OF THE
EASTERN QUESTION (BASED ON ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF TURKEY, 1880)**

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Abstract. The presented work is carried out within the framework of two humanities disciplines; at the junction of history and linguistics. The study aims to analyze the lexical characteristics of diplomatic correspondence in selected documents, to examine the properties of their lexical composition and structural formats, and to determine the role and influence of such correspondence on the resolution of the Eastern Question in the history of diplomacy within the context of the studied period.

The paper gives a definition of diplomatic discourse and emphasizes its characteristics. As the analysis of the constitutive features of French diplomatic discourse in the texts of archival materials of diplomatic correspondence of the crisis stage of the Eastern Question shows, at the lexical level there is a characteristic presence of terminology from the military, legal, and diplomatic fields. The latter is explained by the strong pressure on the weakened Ottoman Empire in order to implement the decisions of the Berlin Treaty. The deciphered and translated handwritten archival materials are introduced into academic circulation for the first time.

Keywords: diplomatic discourse; archival documents; eastern question; hard power; diplomatic correspondence.

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Introduction. While translating the documentation provided by the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, documents were discovered that have a direct connection not only to my native city of Batumi, whose fate was discussed at the Berlin Congress of 1878. Of particular interest were the archival materials related to the so-called Eastern Question.

Dramatic events unfolded in Eastern Europe two years after the signing of the Berlin Treaty, as some of its provisions were not implemented by the leading powers, particularly by Turkey. It appears important to study the available diplomatic documents of that period, their connection to the Eastern Question, as well as to identify the unresolved issues, their causes, and the ways they were addressed in the history of diplomacy of that time.

Therefore, the **aim** and **objectives** of the present article are to analyze the characteristics of the diplomatic correspondence contained in the presented documents, to reveal its influence on international relations, and to study the lexical composition and format of the documentation.

To the History of the Question and Literature Review. The Eastern Question refers to the conventional term used in diplomacy and historical literature to denote a complex of international contradictions of the late 18th - early 20th centuries. They are connected with the struggle of the Balkan peoples for liberation from Ottoman rule and with the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire under the conditions of rivalry among the great powers for the division of Turkish possessions (Austria / Austria-Hungary, Great Britain, Prussia / Germany, Russia, Italy, France) (Vostotchnii vopros, 1985, T. I).

Researchers note the insufficient theoretical development of the issues of diplomatic discourse (Villar, 2006, p. 108; Ceban, 2010, pp. 321–328). Meanwhile, the history of diplomacy goes back to ancient times, and beginning from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance period, there existed a close connection between diplomats and religious figures (Berridge, 2002, p. 2). The lack of theoretical studies does not mean the absence of publications on the specifics of the language of diplomacy. Thus, according to Luc Reychler, works on the history of diplomacy, collections of historical anecdotes, studies on various aspects of diplomatic activity, periodicals or anthologies of diplomatic documents and texts from collective or individual figures are distinguished by their function, topic, or period, and are arranged mainly in chronological order. Diplomatic correspondence includes, in turn, diplomats' memoirs, manuals on procedures and protocols, treaties written by well-known diplomats, as well as internal and interdepartmental correspondence (Reychler, 1979, pp. 11, 20). In our case of interdisciplinary research, some archival documents from the late 19th century of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey are used. These are internal documents of correspondence between the ambassador of the Ottoman Empire and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, including a personal letter composed in accordance with the requirements for correspondence of this kind and an appendix, a report on one of the two meetings of the Delegations of Austria-Hungary chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Baron Haymerlé.

Modern researchers, as well as authors of the nineteenth century, barely mention the specific features of diplomatic discourse, or study exclusively its stylistic aspects (Martens, 1822, p. 115; Berridge, & James, 2001, p. 67). In manuals on diplomacy, at best, one chapter is devoted to diplomatic language, where emphasis is placed on its vagueness and ambiguity (Le Goffic, 1981, p. 188; Le Goffic, 2021, n.d.). Constanze Villar believes that ambiguity in diplomacy is an integral part of communication, creating conditions for a discursive maneuver in favor of power. Moreover, vagueness is a necessary condition of international negotiations, which consist of deals and compromises, and therefore "constructive ambiguity" is inevitable, manifesting itself at different levels: semantic, pragmatic (noise versus information), and legal (official versus unofficial status) (Villar, 2006, p. 251).

Historical and Political Context. The historical and political context of the Eastern Question in 1880 requires a description of the key events of that time; the conflicts in the Balkans, the relations among the great powers, and the role of the Ottoman Empire since behind each sentence of the analyzed document lies a profound historical subtext. Therefore, we consider it appropriate to rely on a brief overview of the events connected with the resolution of the Eastern Question in the second half of the nineteenth century in order to achieve a meaningful translation and subsequent analysis of the texts. These documents were by no means always clearly written with a quill pen and required deciphering, which was carried out by us. As one of the terms of the armistice signed in San Stefano in 1878, following Turkey's defeat in the Russo-Turkish War, the independence of Serbia and Montenegro was recognized, and their territories were expanded at the expense of the Ottoman Empire (Anderson, 1966, pp. 198-204). According to the decisions of the Berlin Congress of

1878, the state of Montenegro obtained access to the seacoast and other significant territorial advantages. Although peace had been established, relations between Montenegro and Turkey continued to occupy the attention of European diplomacy. The reason for this was Turkey's failure to fulfill the conditions of the Berlin Treaty concerning Montenegro (Schaefer, 1920, p. 73; Vujović, 2021). Having promised to comply with the decisions of the Congress, Turkey repeatedly postponed the transfer of territories under various pretexts, using the activity of the Albanian League created and controlled by the Turkish authorities to undermine the implementation of the Berlin Treaty's provisions. On the initiative of England, Austria–Hungary, France, and Italy carried out a demonstration of warships in the waters of the Adriatic Sea near the coast of Dulcigno, with the aim of securing the peaceful transfer of the territories by Constantinople in accordance with the obligations accepted in the Berlin Treaty. However, the Porte avoided fulfilling them, and England then proposed issuing an ultimatum, requiring Turkey to cede Montenegro and its region within three weeks, exerting pressure through the demonstration of naval forces with the coordinated participation of all powers Austria–Hungary, France, Great Britain, and Italy. It is noteworthy that similar actions based on the principle of “hard power,” or the so-called “gunboat diplomacy,” were envisaged for resolving the Greek question as well. Otherwise, in a collective note of protest, the European powers declared their readiness to assist Montenegro by force in occupying the required territories (Vujović, 2021, pp. 120–121). It is necessary to explain the fact that internal correspondence within the Ottoman Empire at that time was conducted in French. The reason lies in the circumstance that as early as the eighteenth century, the French language had firmly established itself as the principal international language in Europe and in territories dependent on European states, replacing Latin as the language of international communication.

During this period, the French language became a means of communication both with foreigners and within the country itself, as noted in his study on the stages of Francophonie in Turkey by Mr. Ekrem Aksoy. Furthermore, the linguistic situation in the Empire was one of the reasons for the use of French in institutions of primary importance: the various ethno-religious groups that made up the Empire did not share a common language.

In the Ottoman Parliament, which was opened on March 19, 1877, sixteen languages were used, although, according to the Constitution, the official language was Turkish. Therefore, from 1854 to 1910, the working language of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was French, and Ottoman diplomats and employees of this ministry communicated with each other in French. The *Pax ottomana*, which the Empire had set itself the task of imposing on the lands it conquered, was, under the pressure of the Western powers, replaced by a *Pax francofona* (Aksoy, 2007, pp. 57–58).

Methods and the Materials of the Study. In the present research, discourse analysis is used as the methodological approach for the study and examination of certain linguistic features found in texts of diplomatic discourse. Two main approaches are applied in the analysis of discourse. The first is based on the study of language use in so-called socially related texts. The second approach consists of the critical analysis of discourse from historical and political perspectives. Thus, this is a research method aimed at studying, in this case, written language within its social context.

As the factual material of the study, two corpora of texts in the French language were used. These were obtained from the official archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey and concern various issues of foreign policy, primarily related to decision-making in the framework of resolving the so-called Eastern Question, connected with Turkey's implementation of the terms of the Berlin Treaty of 1878. Copies of the handwritten original archival documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey were at one time provided to the author for translation from French by the late historian and doctoral candidate of Ivane

Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Mr. Zaur Margiev (see Corpus 1, 2 in the Bibliography: Archival Documents).

Results and Discussion. The Linguistic Aspect of Diplomatic Discourse. Researchers note certain common features that characterize diplomatic discourse. These include the frequent use of terminology of Latin, Greek, and French origin, abbreviations, flexible formulations, expressions of elevated style (since the language of diplomatic documents influences the image of the state), as well as euphemisms (Egorov, 2013, p. 41; Terentiy, 2015, pp. 177–178).

At the same time, it is stated that the grammar and syntax of the language for special purposes, that is, of diplomatic discourse, possess the characteristics of the national language system and are defined by the nominative component of the lexical system (Averbukh, 2004, p. 16). It is also noted that the diplomatic substyle represents a variety of the official–business style, having certain specific features at all linguistic levels (Magomedova, 2008).

By diplomatic correspondence, we understand a corpus of texts belonging to different types of epistolary exchange. On the one hand, these are internal documents of the ministry, such as reports sent by ambassadors to their ministers of foreign affairs, as in our case, as well as instructions and directives from the ministers. On the other hand, diplomatic correspondence includes exchanges between states in the form of various types of notes, memoranda, statements, private letters, and declarations. These fundamentally different documents serve different functions of diplomats, and the totality of such materials is designated by the general term “diplomatic correspondence” (Cohen-Wiesenfeld, 2008).

Definitions of diplomatic discourse often emphasize some of its main characteristics. For example, diplomatic discourse is considered a status-oriented discourse, that is, a type of verbal interaction between representatives of the institution of diplomacy (Kojeteva, 2012, p. 55). Diplomatic discourse is understood as discursive activity in the process of diplomatic exchange (Ceban, 2010, pp. 321–328). It is believed that political and diplomatic discourse represent a particular form of communicative activity aimed at achieving the goals and objectives of state policy (Ardaeva, 2018, p. 114). Some linguists draw an analogy between diplomatic and political discourse, defining political discourse as the actual use of language in the sociopolitical field of communication (Kurtshatkina, 2010, p. 24).

According to Constanze Villar, diplomatic discourse has three characteristic features. The first is the specialization of the diplomatic code and the fixed nature of utterance practices. The second feature is diplomatic ambiguity, which is resolved in the communication process through rhetoric, chosen strategy, and policy. Finally, the third element characteristic of diplomatic discourse is what the author calls dynamic “intersubjectivity,” which provides the discourse with an important role in shaping relations between the participants of communication. Indeed, duly accredited diplomats, in the course of negotiations or correspondence, display a certain subjectivity – what is known as the “secondary space” of diplomatic communication (Villar, 2006, pp. 39 – 50; Lamizet, 2007, pp. 121–123).

French diplomatic discourse of the nineteenth century has its own distinctive features, related to the political, historical, and cultural context. Studies conducted in this area make it possible to conclude that French diplomatic discourse is characterized by both general and specific traits. In the present article, we analyze the main characteristics of French diplomatic discourse of the second half of the nineteenth century, represented in the texts of internal correspondence between the head of Turkish diplomacy in Austria-Hungary and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Ottoman Empire at the lexical level. Among the principal features of the French diplomatic text, scholars note the formulaic nature of speech, a high degree of referential density, the abundance of deverbal nouns and specialized terminology, the use of euphemisms

and metaphors, rhetorical techniques, and the modality of obligation (Khorosheva, Saakyan, 2023, pp. 72–84).

Diplomatic correspondence at the end of the nineteenth century was conducted in French, even between diplomats of the Ottoman Empire, for the following reasons. The close economic, political, and cultural relations between France and the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, together with the role of the French language as an international medium, led to discussions about making it the language of the proposed “Ottoman nation.” Thus, from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, French became the language of the elite in Turkey (Aksoy, 2007, pp. 57–66). Researchers point out that it was precisely France that exerted cultural influence on Turkey during the period of decline and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Turks, having entered into relations with the Mediterranean and European countries, ultimately decided to integrate into Western civilization, which they perceived through France, or, as it is said in Turkey, through “the French window.”

The French language effectively became the second language in Turkey, and this situation continued until the Second World War (Inal, 1988, T. IV). In addition, the foreign policy factor played its role: France, as a secondary power (compared to Great Britain), and the declining Ottoman Empire were compelled to form an alliance, as their common adversary was the Austrian dynasty (Aksoy, idem). The economic factor was also significant: France accounted for three-fifths of the entire volume of Ottoman trade with Europe (Bağış, 1985, pp. 43–52; Groc, & Çağlar, 1985, TT. XIV–XV).

An internal factor also explained why Turkish diplomats communicated with one another in French. The reason was that during the period under consideration, the French language had become not only a means of communication with foreigners but also within the country itself. The various ethnic and religious groups that composed the Empire did not share a common language. This problem arose, for example, in the Ottoman Parliament opened in 1877. According to the Constitution, the official language was Turkish, but the Assembly used sixteen languages, not to mention dialects. The linguistic situation in the Empire was therefore one of the reasons for the use of French in certain institutions of primary importance. From 1854 to 1910, the working language of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was French, which had become the language of education, science, and the press. Ottoman diplomats and employees of this ministry communicated among themselves in French, since subjects who did not know the Turkish language could become civil servants in accordance with the principle of equality adopted by the Porte from Europe.

Much attention was devoted to seeking a balance between the interests of the great powers such as Great Britain, France, Russia, Austria–Hungary, and Germany, each pursuing their own strategies regarding the Ottoman territories. France did not play an active role in international relations in the Balkans. Its cabinet, following in the wake of British policy, nevertheless showed restraint in participating in the demonstration of naval forces that Admiral Jaureguiberry insisted upon: *The Minister believes that the current demonstration of naval forces should be suspended; a letter from the Political Director of Foreign Affairs de Courcel to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Admiral Jaureguiberry considers that the current operation should not be stopped)* (Archives diplomatiques. n.d.). The chronology of events was reconstructed using documents from the French archives (Documents_diplomatiques, n.d.).

Initially, on August 22, 1880, France proposed that the Porte surrender Dulcigno without delay. It later refused to participate in the use of force implied by the “project of a ‘simple’ naval demonstration,” according to a statement by the Foreign Office of the British Embassy dated August 27, 1880. This was preceded by Queen Victoria’s personal letter to the Sultan on August 25, 1880, since, as it is known, the British Queen possessed the authority to declare the commencement of military action. On August 30, Turkey responded to the collective note of protest dated August 3 concerning the surrender of Monténégro. On September 2,

the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed Great Britain of its reservations regarding the demonstration of naval forces under the command of Admiral Lafont. Finally, on September 4, instructions were issued to the admirals of the combined naval forces stationed near Dulcigno. The next stage followed in the form of a collective note of protest, delivered in Constantinople on September 15, 1880.

Thus, within a single day, on September 24, the Porte received a second note, now marked as “urgent.” At this time, Lord Granville expressed the need for threatening rhetoric toward the Porte (Idem). It should be noted that in political discourse, a collective note of protest is an official document issued by a government, requiring appropriate attention and implying a mandatory response from the recipient. In diplomatic practice, it is rare for representatives of several states to issue a collective note. A collective note from a group of embassies is considered a *demarche* and an attempt to exert pressure. To avoid this, as well as accusations of collective *demarche*, another form of delivering identical notes exists (El Protocolo, n.d.) though at this stage of the Eastern Crisis, the European powers did not consider it necessary to apply this method.

Let us turn to the archival documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, which present the official opinions of European countries regarding the resolution of the Eastern Question by the Ottoman Empire after the signing of the Berlin Treaty. In one of these documents, the Turkish ambassador to Austria–Hungary attached to his letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs handwritten protocols of the meetings of both Austrian–Hungarian commissions. Because of the publication’s length constraints, we cite the chronologically earlier protocol of the meeting of the Delegation of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of Austria in Vienna. Austria-Hungary also had its own interests in the Eastern Question, particularly concerning territorial disputes with the Ottoman Empire, and in 1880 it actively participated in diplomatic negotiations. Austria–Hungary sought to expand its influence in the Balkans and was largely oriented toward maintaining stability in this region. The meeting of the Delegation of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of Austria in Vienna took place on October 27, 1880, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary, Baron Haymerlé. The meeting protocol (Corpus 2) contains a brief description of the speech by the rapporteur de Plener and the statements of the Commission members regarding the decision to carry out the demonstration of warships of the leading European powers off the coast of Montenegro, along with the discussion of other issues concerning the observance of the decisions of the Berlin Treaty. Three days later, on October 30, 1880, a meeting of the Hungarian Delegation took place, during which its members expressed their opinions on resolving the tense situation in the Balkans. Reports of both meetings, accompanied by a letter from the Ottoman ambassador to Austria-Hungary, were delivered to the Sultanate of the Porte *cito*, literally the day after the meeting of the second Delegation – Hungary, which testifies to their exceptional importance. It should be noted that this represents only a small portion of the diplomatic communications, among which the French-language documents alone for the year (from December 31, 1879, to December 7, 1880) make up two volumes comprising 567 documents (*Affaires étrangères, documents diplomatiques, Affaires du Monténégro, numéros 1, 2, 1880*). The documents analyzed in our study are dated November 1, 1880, and already on November 26, Turkey abandoned the Albanian city of Dulcigno/Ulcinj, which had become a port two years before the described events. As a result, Montenegrin troops entered Dulcigno, and three days later they occupied the entire region adjacent to the port (Vujovic, 2021, pp. 109–142).

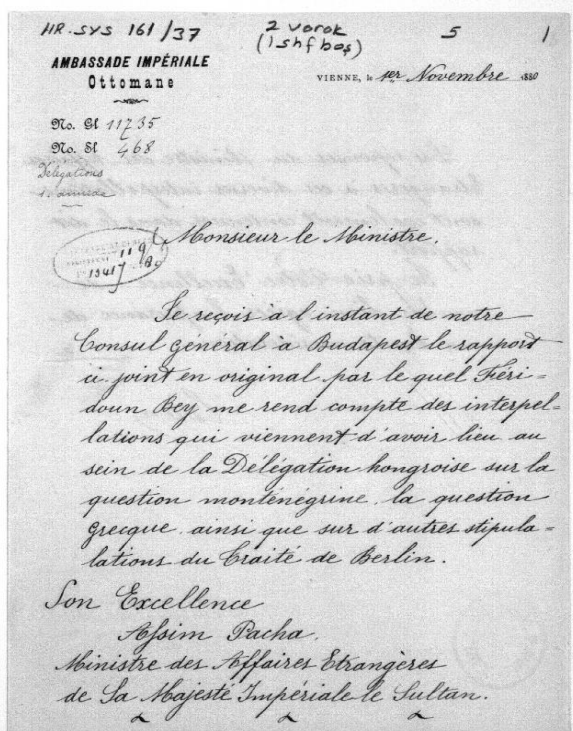
Let us present the translation of the letter from the Ambassador of the Ottoman Empire to Austria-Hungary, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Ottoman Empire (here and hereafter – the author’s translation from French).

Corpus 1. Translation: *Vienna, November 1, 1880. To His Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan. Mr. Minister,*

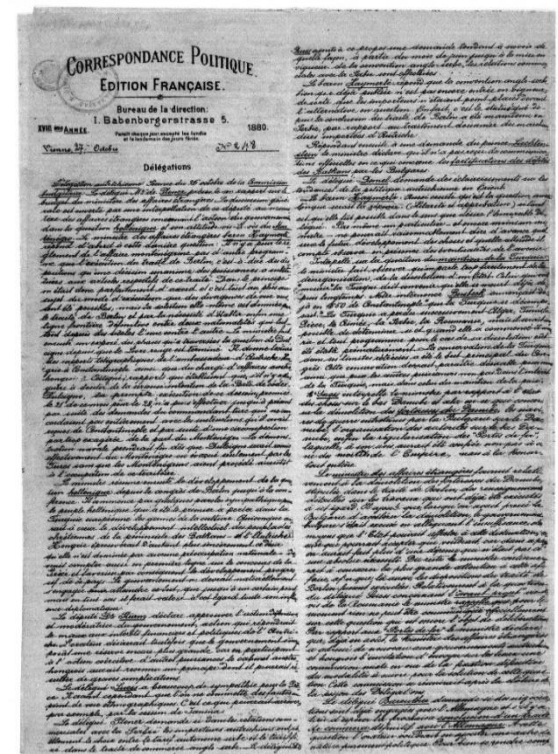
From our Consul General in Budapest, I have just received the original of the attached report, in which Mr. Feridun-bey presents an account of the demands for the implementation of the Berlin Treaty, voiced the day before by the members of the Hungarian Delegation regarding the question of Monténégro, the Greek question, as well as other conditions related to the execution of the Berlin Treaty. The responses of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to these various demands are also contained in the said report.

Please accept the assurance of my deepest respect, Your Excellency. Signature.

In the report of the meeting of the Austrian Delegation Committee, omitting the debates on the Greek and financial questions, let us turn to the most illustrative speeches concerning the resolution of the Eastern Question.



HR.SYS.00161
 Corpus 1



HR.SYS.00161
 Corpus 2

Corpus 2. Translation: Vienna, October 27, 1880.

Austrian Delegation. Meeting of October 26 of the Budget Commission.

Delegate Mr. de Plener presented his report on the budget of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The general discussion opened with this delegate's inquiry to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the government's actions in the Greek question and its position concerning Monténégro.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron Haymerlé, first responded to the latter question: For the settlement of the Monténégro question, there is and can be no other course of action than the fulfillment of the conditions of the Berlin Treaty, in other words, the decisions unanimously adopted by the powers in accordance with the articles of the treaty. Consequently, in principle, all were in perfect agreement, and it is, most likely, a matter of the manner of execution rather than possible differences in point of view. The solution itself is already contained in the Berlin Treaty, which finally establishes a border line between two peoples who have been hostile to one another for centuries.

The Minister then outlined the stages through which the Dulcigno question had passed since the conclusion of the Red Book. The telegram reports read aloud from the Austro-Hungarian Embassy in Constantinople, as well as the reports of the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires in Cettigné, indicated that, despite

the Porte's apparent sincerity in its intention to cede Dulcigno, the promised implementation of this act, set for the 28th of the present month and pledged on the 21st, could not yet be realized due to the requests of the Turkish commandant. These requests did not correspond to the orders he had received from Constantinople, owing to a certain caution—without exaggeration—on the part of Monténégro. The demonstration of naval forces will conclude immediately after Dulcigno is indeed delivered to Monténégro or is left solely by the Turkish side, without being immediately occupied by the inhabitants of Monténégro. (...)

Delegate Demel requested clarifications on the tendencies of Austrian policy in the East. Baron Haymerlé replied: As short as the question is, so long will be the answer. (Liveliness and approval in the hall.) As far as possible, in the spirit desired by the honorable delegate. Even a private person, still less a minister, cannot clearly foresee the course of future events or predict what position he might adopt in the face of probable contingencies.

Regarding the question of maintaining the power of Turkey, the Minister noted that it is too easy to speak of the disorganization and disintegration of the state. He who sees Turkey as dying must admit that it has been "dying" for quite some time. Our internuncio Busbeck, as early as 1650, declared that Turkey was in a state of decay. Turkey has gradually lost Algeria, Tunisia, Greece, Crimea, Serbia, and Romania, yet it is still impossible to determine whether its decline has truly begun or from what moment. Any prediction regarding its collapse would be premature. The preservation of Turkey within its reduced borders was the main goal of the Congress. This preservation should be desired by us, as by other powers, not in the interest of Turkey itself, but in the interest of maintaining peace.(...)

Delegate Bareuther inquired whether joint negotiations with Germany had already begun and whether there was hope for the future conclusion of a definitive commercial treaty with Germany. To this question, the speaker wished to add another of a purely political nature. To have a clear understanding of the new agreement with Germany, he said, it is important to know what instructions were given on this matter to our diplomatic representatives at the Porte and, in particular, whether the commander of the Austrian squadron forming part of the joint fleet had orders to act in concert with the commander of the German squadron. The Minister of Foreign Affairs responded that, as to whether Austria-Hungary and Germany would act in concert on all unsettled issues concerning the East, and especially regarding the demonstration of naval forces, his answer was affirmative. Actions in this regard, he concluded, would be carried out in complete unanimity.

Local correspondents on the ground (Correspondance particulière) complement the overall picture of events: From Scutari they report on October 17 (1880): For several days in a row, popular assemblies have been taking place in the courtyard of the Great Mosque, in which Riza Pacha himself and especially Osman Pacha, as well as Hodo Pacha, recently elected to Liva, are doing everything in their power to restore order. Yesterday, at one of these gatherings, Hodo Pacha used all his eloquence to convince his compatriots of the urgent necessity of peacefully surrendering Dulcigno to the inhabitants of Montenegro. He was listened to in complete silence, and the people dispersed under a heavy impression. Indeed, there are unmistakable signs of despair and discouragement among the Albanians who occupy Dulcigno and its surroundings.

The position of the Porte deprives the League of any hope of retaining Dulcigno for the Albanians. Well-informed people affirm that hundreds of Albanians are abandoning their positions at Mazura Planina and Dulcigno, withdrawing to their villages and losing all hope. The committee established here by the League is almost dissolved. Four of its members, among them the restless Daud Effendi, no longer attend the meetings. Riza Pacha, on the contrary, is gaining more and more influence, and already today one can predict the course of further events in Dulcigno. Bedri Bey, adjutant to Riza Pacha, has departed for Rjeka to discuss with Micho Matanovic the forms and details of the surrender of the port. Undoubtedly, many difficulties remain to be overcome in this matter. Yet the final concession must still be made in order to reach a definitive resolution.

As a result of the lexical analysis and identification of the realia found in the presented corpora, we can note the following features. Some historical realia encountered require additional explanations and interpretations. For instance, when the Minister refers to the so-called *Red Book*:

Le ministre fait ensuite un exposé des phases qu'a traversées la question de Dulcigno depuis que le Livre rouge est terminé.

Translation: "The Minister then described the stages through which the question of Dulcigno had passed since the completion of the Red Book."

The so-called "Color Books," named after the permanent color of their covers, first appeared in England in the seventeenth century. In Austria-Hungary, Red Books appeared for the first time in 1868. They are thematic collections of government publications and other political documents, usually of an official nature (Austria. Bundesministerium, 1868; *Hungarian Red Book*, pp. 16–40; *Austro-Hungarian Red Book*, 1915).

Regarding the lexical composition, it should be noted that alongside diplomatic vocabulary, the texts contain juridical and military terminology, such as *chargé d'affaires* — *chargé d'affaires*; *commandant* — ship captain, commander:

Il donne lecture des rapports télégraphiques de l'ambassadeur de l'Autriche-Hongrie à Constantinople ainsi que du chargé d'affaires autriche-hongrois à Cettigné, qui établissent que s'il n'y a plus guère à douter de la sérieuse intention de la Porte de céder Dulcigno, la prompte exécution de ce dessein promise le 21 de ce mois pour le 28 n'a pu s'effectuer jusqu'à présent par suite des demandes du commandant turc, qui ne concordaient pas entièrement avec les instructions qu'il avait reçues de Constantinople, et par suite d'une circonspection pas trop exagérée de la part du Monténégro.

In the next sentence of the analyzed text, military vocabulary also appears: *démonstration navale* (naval demonstration), *évacuer* (to evacuate, to abandon territory), *l'occupation de ce territoire* (occupation of the territory):

La démonstration navale prendrait fin dès que Dulcigno serait remis effectivement au Monténégro ou évacué seulement par les Turcs sans que les Monténégrins aient procédé aussitôt à

Latinisms are also an integral part of diplomatic discourse after Latin lost its status as the international language. Examples include *status quo* (existing state of affairs) and commercial-legal terminology such as *traitement douanier* (customs treatment of goods): *En fait, c'est le status quo depuis la conclusion du traité de Berlin a été maintenu en Serbie par rapport au traitement douanier des marchandises importées d'Autriche.*

The speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs also contains an antithesis of antonymous expressions as a rhetorical device: *courte ... question / longue ... réponse*; *Le baron Haymerlé: Aussi courte qu'est la question, aussi longue serait la réponse.* Irony is evident in his exaggerated politeness toward his opponent, which can be characterized as a form of negative hyperbole: *Si tant est qu'elle fût possible dans le sens que désire l'honorable délégué.* Further in the speech, there appears a contextual antonymy, where the Baron contrasts *un particulier* (a private person) with *un ministre* (a minister) that is, a person endowed with authority: *Pas même un particulier et encore moins un ministre ne pourrait raisonnablement dire d'avance quel sera le futur développement des choses et quelle attitude il compte observer en présence des éventualités de l'avenir.*

Alongside Latinisms of various kinds (*status quo*, *substitisées* < *substituere*, Latin), the Minister's speech also contains religious and Catholic terminology referring to the office of *internonce*, the papal envoy, since the diplomatic function had remained a prerogative of religious figures until the nineteenth century. Thus, the Minister refers to the statement of the internuncio about Turkey: *Notre internonce Busbeck annonçait déjà en 1650 de Constantinople que la Turquie se décomposait.* A reference to this position is given in the

Dictionnaire Hachette Encyclopédique Illustré: internonce / celui qui fait fonction de nonce auprès d'un État (1999: 973).

Proper names and toponyms are quite expected in diplomatic correspondence. In the speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary, reference is made to the toponym «*Portes de fer*» (“Iron Gates”). The passage refers to the famous mountain pass known as the “Iron Gates” (Serb. Бјерданска клисура, Rom. *Porțile de Fier*), a gorge of the Danube River situated between the termini of the Carpathian and Balkan Mountains (Larousse.Encyclopedie, n.d.).

This relic canyon, dating back five million years, became a gorge and a natural international boundary between Serbia and Romania shortly before the described events since 1878 (<https://worldofscience.ru/geografija-mira/8370-karakteristika-reki-dunaj.html>). However, from Baron Haymerlé's speech it follows that even two years later, in 1880, the question of defining the borders remained unresolved. Therefore, he once again proposed that the Austro-Hungarian government send to the site a mixed commission to finalize all the formalities required for settling the issue: *Par rapport aux “Portes de fer” le ministre déclare que déjà en août le Ministère des affaires étrangères a adressé de nouveau pour gouvernement autrichien et hongrois, l'invitation d'envoyer sur les lieux une commission mixte en vue de la fixation définitive des modalités à suivre pour la solution de cette question.* The matter of the *Portes de fer* was raised a second time by the deputy Guess at the session of the Austrian Commission. It concerned the settlement of the situation surrounding the Iron Gates /*Portes de fer*: *M. Guess interpelle le ministre par rapport à l'état des choses sur le bas Danube et cela en ce qui concerne la démolition des forteresses du Danube, les navires de guerre entretenus par la Bulgarie sur le Danube, enfin la régularisation des “Portes de Fer” laquelle à son avis aurait été confiée non pas à une des moitiés de l'Empire mais à la Monarchie tout entière.* Translation: “Mr. Guess addressed a question to the Minister concerning the state of affairs on the Lower Danube, particularly regarding the demolition of the Danubian fortresses, the warships maintained by Bulgaria on the Danube, and finally the regulation of the ‘Iron Gates,’ which, in his view, should be entrusted not to one half of the Empire but to the Monarchy as a whole.” From the reply of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, it follows that this question likewise remained among the unresolved ones: *Le ministre des Affaires étrangères fournit relativement à la démolition de forteresses du Danube stipule dans le traité de Berlin des renseignements détaillés sur les travaux qui ont déjà été exécuté à cet égard. Il ajoute que lorsqu'on avait pressé la Bulgarie d'accélérer la démolition, le gouvernement bulgare s'était excusé en alléguant l'insuffisance des moyens que l'État pouvait affecter à cette destination. (...) Du reste le ministre continuerait à consacrer la plus grande attention à cette affaire, afin que là aussi les dispositions du traité de Berlin fussent exécutées.*

Translation: “The Minister of Foreign Affairs provided detailed information on the work already carried out regarding the demolition of the Danubian fortresses, as stipulated in the Berlin Treaty. He added that when Bulgaria had been pressed to accelerate the demolition, the Bulgarian government excused itself by citing the insufficiency of resources that the state could allocate for that purpose. Moreover, the Minister would continue to devote the greatest attention to this matter in order that, here as well, the provisions of the Berlin Treaty might be executed.”

It should be added that the necessity of close attention to this issue is entirely understandable, since the Danube waterway had long served primarily as a transportation artery even under the authority of the Porte. This circumstance explains Turkey's persistent unwillingness to yield its strategic positions in the region (danube commission, n.d.).

Military terminology appears repeatedly in the rhetoric of diplomatic documents from the crisis period of international relations related to the resolution of the Eastern Question. This arises from the rigid methods used to resolve the problem, namely, through demonstrations of military power:

“Pour bien se rendre compte de notre entente avec l'Allemagne, ... il importerait de savoir quelles instructions ont été données à cet égard à nos représentants diplomatiques auprès de la Porte et surtout si **le commandant de l'escadre autrichienne faisant partie de la flotte combinée, a l'ordre d'agir de concert avec le commandant de l'escadre allemande.**” **Translation:** “In order to fully understand our mutual understanding with Germany, it would be important to know what instructions have been issued in this regard to our diplomatic representatives at the Porte and, in particular, whether the commander of the Austrian squadron forming part of the combined fleet has been ordered to act in concert with the commander of the German squadron.” The initiative to conduct a demonstration of military force through the squadrons of the combined naval fleet of Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, Russia, and Italy originated from Great Britain and not by chance, given its superior naval capabilities at that time. Meanwhile, following the conclusion of the last Russo-Turkish war, the condition of the Ottoman Empire’s navy left much to be desired, to say nothing of the fact that the Empire had been severely weakened by a series of Russo-Turkish wars throughout the entire nineteenth century, conflicts that had, in fact, a long history dating back to the sixteenth century. Thus, the economic crisis of 1875, together with the financial burden of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, deprived the Empire of the resources necessary to maintain and modernize a large fleet. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman navy rapidly became obsolete and was able to replace its warships only once in a decade (Moreau, 2021, pp. 11-29; Delaroche, 2016, p. 3).

It should also be noted that the lexical analysis of reports from the local unofficial correspondents presented to the Minister in the *Correspondance particulière* revealed lexemes reflecting the realia of the historical period under study. For example, the historical-administrative term and archaism *Liva* proved difficult to translate: “On nous écrit de Scuvari, 17 octobre. Depuis plusieurs jours il y a quotidiennement dans la cour de la grande mosquée des assemblées populaires dans lesquelles Riza Pacha lui-même et surtout Osman Pacha, ainsi que Hodo Pacha, nouvellement nommé Liva, s’efforce de faire valoir leur influence dans le sens de la pacification.” (Translation provided above.) The difficulty lies in the fact that since 1866, the administrative division of the Ottoman Empire consisted of three levels: *sanjak*, *kaza*, and *vilayet* (the latter comprising several *sanjaks*). The *sanjak* was a district, and the district council was known as the *meclis idare liva*. From this, it follows that *Liva* represented an elective office, something akin to the head of a provincial council, according to this administrative reality” (Margiev, 2008, p. 306).

Conclusion. As the analysis of the constitutive features of French diplomatic discourse represented in the archival materials introduced here into scholarly circulation for the first time demonstrates, the diplomatic rhetoric of one of the crisis stages of the Eastern Question is characterized, at the lexical level, by the frequent presence of terminology drawn from the military, legal, and diplomatic spheres. This regularity is explained by the tense situation in the Balkans and by the decision of the leading European powers to exert strong pressure on the weakened Ottoman Empire through a joint demonstration of combined military forces in order to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Berlin Treaty.

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