To What Extent was Diplomacy Professionalised in the French System?

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OLIVER LEWIS, MAR 30 2008

"When I entered the service," wrote Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, "there was no such thing at all."[1] Within the six centuries of the French diplomatic system diplomacy evolved from its ad-hoc, temporary status in political society into foreign services that practiced within a distinct profession. The French system was the European diplomatic system of international relations that began in Renaissance Italy and prevailed until the end of the First World War; it was characterised by secret diplomacy and the first permanent resident embassies. The conscious effort of politicians and diplomats through the duration of the French system gradually transformed their occupation into a profession.

A profession is an occupation that requires some advanced or specialist knowledge in a subject, field or science. Moreover, a profession usually demands prolonged and sustained academic training and a process of formal qualification which ensures controlled entry to the occupation. Professions are controlled and administered by a regulatory body that establishes criteria for admission, training programmes, has some ability to discipline members of its profession and enforce standards and ethics. Professional bodies can also work to protect members and their rights and further the profession generally. The first professions established a distinction based on a requirement for advanced learning, they were the classic learned professions of theology, law and medicine.

Within professions there is an emphasis on formality, standardisation and career progression. A regulatory authority moves some way to establishing unity in a profession, but it is the professionals themselves that establish an informal community of practitioners; a common thread that unites individuals because of the activities they perform. Professionalisation is an informal process begun by practitioners who perceive there to be exacting standards required of their activities which make it necessary to exclude amateurs. The process includes a normalisation of the occupation; it becomes full time, is salaried, and has clear ranks or levels for career progression based on professional competency.

In a Weberian view of society, occupational groups seek professionalisation as means of securing economic, social or political rewards and do so by obtaining a monopoly in the provision of their activity. In this understanding, professionalisation is a form of social closure, excluding 'others' (amateurs) from themselves. Professionals are recognised as having jurisdiction over their practices and the area within which they operate and a selection process with controlled entry and socialisation systems is developed, over all of which there is a monopolisation of professional knowledge. All of these factors result in an increased level of social respectability and the accompanying political and economic rewards[2].

Diplomacy inherited a myriad of titles and there was great confusion in establishing where each procurator, nuncios, envoy or orator should be placed on the hierarchy. A forceful move towards the professionalisation of diplomacy was achieved under the French system, and that was clarification of titles and a clear hierarchy for the profession. In the sixteenth century orator and ambassador began to supplant other titles[3], but an agreed hierarchy of distinct representatives was not established until the Règlement of the Congress of Vienna in March 1815 which defined representatives thus; (1) ambassadors, papal legates and papal nuncios, (2) envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary, (3) ministers resident and (4) charge d'affaires[4]. The most senior representatives, the ambassadors, were understood to only be dispatched to the most important of the Great Powers, while lesser

representatives presented themselves in less powerful states. This system of sending ambassadors to but four or five of the most prominent states persisted into the twentieth century, when the disadvantages of offending lesser states by sending a junior representative became more pressing. In codifying the ranks of the diplomatic services of Europe into a common hierarchy the statesman at Vienna were not only providing the profession with clear career progression but also eliminating the problems that had surrounded precedence.

Debate over precedence was endless, acrimonious, dangerous and could stall negotiations. Precedence was based on appearances – the order of public ceremonies, of coats of arms, titles and claims – which 'brutally symbolised power and status'[5]. Therefore, because changes in precedence represented a rise or fall in status of the sending state or its sovereign, rulers 'were often willing to sacrifice considerable material advantages'[6] for an intangible improvement in position. The 'acute wrangles about precedence'[7] had on occasion resulted in violent confrontations between ambassadors and their retinue, even once bringing France and Spain close to war. Consequently diplomatic precedence has always been of particular importance, argues Berridge, because 'of the sensitivities of princes to their prestige, which is such a valuable currency in international relations'[8]. The Congress of Vienna examined the highly controversial basis of precedence laid down by the Pope in 1504 and completely replaced it. In 1815 they detached precedence from the subjective assessment of the sovereign they represent and instead ordered representatives on the demonstrable fact of the priority of his appointment based on the official date of presentation of their credentials[9], the longest serving diplomat being accorded the highest seniority. Even prior to Vienna diplomatists recognised the absurdity of arguments about precedence and that it regularly interfered with substantial diplomatic activity, therefore the decision to establish a clear and objective system of rank and hierarchy was a very important act in transforming diplomacy into a modern profession.

The development of factors contributing to a distinct diplomatic profession created a notion of professional solidarity – a corporate feeling among practitioners. The community of diplomats resident in the same capital gradually formed a *corps diplomatique* with its own rules and conventions. Responding to the formalisation of ranks after 1815, the longest serving member of the diplomatic corps was not only first in the order of precedence but became the *doyen* (dean) of the diplomatic corps, acting as the spokesman for the resident diplomatic community[10]. The dean of the diplomatic corps, while rarely recognised formally, evolved as the spokesman on matters which affected the entire diplomatic corps, such as the protection of their growing immunities, tax issues, living conditions and so on. The diplomatic corps was an expression of a diplomat's recognition of their solidarity, common interests as diplomats and accepted standards that transcend all differences of nationalist sentiment or individual foreign policy[11]. The expression of common interests in the diplomatic corps developed because diplomats under the French system saw themselves as belonging to a distinct, European and eventually global profession.

The conduct of international relations is improved greatly by the diplomatic corps, and diplomacy as a profession generally, because it fosters a longevity and closeness of relationships between career diplomats. As Nicolson interprets, possessing an estimate of a fellow diplomat's character, reliability and intelligence can produce 'mutual confidence'[12] and trust – particularly useful in negotiations.

Strengthening the corporate feeling amongst diplomatists was a *lingua franca* of diplomacy. Until the eighteenth century the common language of diplomacy was Latin. Advanced by the Papacy, most diplomatic treatises in the sixteenth through to the eighteenth century advocated an understanding of Latin as of utmost importance to a diplomat. Despite resistance the French language gradually usurped Latin as the language of choice to the extent that the 1815 Congress of Vienna and the Congress of Paris in 1856 were conducted in French throughout[13]. English did not achieve equality of rights with French until the end of the First World War and the accompanying increase of the United States in international politics. That any common language developed for diplomatic activity is a major indication of the importance attached to regular diplomatic communication between states with varying languages and of the diplomat's unique political identity. Further, the movement first to French and then to English reflected professional considerations; diplomatic methods had to modernise at the pace of the rest of Europe. Nicolson observes that 'the absence of such a generally accepted medium of communication leads to difficulties'[14] therefore the adoption of a diplomatic *lingua franca* was a practical necessity. The adoption of French mirrored the decline of Papal authority and Latin usage and the proceeding adoption of the English language was a response to the participation of a greater number of states which had English as the common tongue.

A common medium of communication made a technical vocabulary possible. Most professions employ phrases and terminology specific to their career and diplomacy is no different. In the nineteenth century particularly diplomatic parlance echoed the styles of address of its majority aristocratic practitioners and the ceremonial origins of the service. When foreign diplomats are received by the United Kingdom there remains to this day the tradition of accrediting them as 'Ambassador to the Court of St James's[15]. Many of the phrases that remain in use in the twenty-first century have their origins in the French system, such as *persona non grata*, *agrément*, *détente*, *status quo ante bellum*, the ranks of representatives and so on. The innumerable phrases that have no obvious meaning to an outsider do, to a diplomat, possess a known currency value and many can trace their origins to the French system. For example, if diplomatist's government 'cannot remain indifferent to' some act he is clearly understood to imply that it is an act in which his government will certainly intervene[16]. The technical phrases of diplomacy developed over the centuries of the French system to become part of an ordinary diplomatic vocabulary, of which the importance nuances of meaning would be missed to anyone who has not practiced as a diplomat or studied the profession. A specialist means of communicating is a characteristic of a profession because it enables its practitioners to convey very precise meaning in a standard form which cannot be misunderstood. The increase in importance of and urgency in diplomacy over the course of the French system meant that such technical precision was a favourable development.

The acceptance of resident embassies as normal practice, the related high social status it developed, and the shift towards professionalisation enforced the notion that deceit had no place in diplomacy[17]. Richelieu argued that 'those who give the impression of lacking frankness and sincerity rarely advance their cause'[18] to which Guicciardini agreed, declaring the virtues of 'frank sincerity' and the vice of deception which 'is detested and condemned'[19]. Callières favoured honesty in diplomacy, asserting that the representative 'ought to found chiefly the success of his negotiations on the uprightness and integrity of his own proceeding'[20] and that to do otherwise would damage the success of a treaty because it would be founded on lies and not on common advantages. As Berridge confirms, 'greater honesty in diplomacy was a sign of the maturing of the diplomatic system'[21].

A natural progression from Vienna was an effort to modernise career advancement for diplomatists. Nepotism and patronage had dominated promotion in the early centuries of the French system, but in the nineteenth century seniority became a more prominent reason for promotion in the lower and middle ranks of diplomatic services[22]. In 1856 promotion to the first rank of the French diplomatic service required having served as an attaché for three years. After 1830, the British government began efforts to depoliticise the diplomatic service and give it a similar distinction separate from politics that the Civil Service had; Lord Cowley in the 1850s and to a greater degree Lord Lyons was the first senior diplomat to owe his appointment to his professional abilities rather than political considerations[23].

An inevitable consequence of the professionalisation of diplomacy was the slow democratisation of the foreign service[24]. The gradual widening of political participation and representative democracy increased pace following the French Revolution. The formal recognition of any activity as a 'profession' was itself a product of the changing social and political climate in early modern Europe. Political power was concentrating in the emerging European parliaments – away from the monarch, church and aristocracy. Thus it was assured that diplomacy would have to fall into step and open itself to participation from the 'professional classes'. The Macdonnell Committee of 1914 abolished the income qualification of the British diplomatic service, improving the chances of those without private means being able to pursue a diplomatic career.

However, while middle and lower ranks of the diplomatic service began to include commoners the majority of diplomats in the French system, particularly at senior level, were from the governing elite, predominantly aristocratic. In the British diplomatic service patronage continued long after the home civil service had evolved. The British position in the latter French system is summed up particularly well by Jones, remarking that,

*by the 1860s [there were] sufficient career diplomats with both the aspiration to occupy, and the expectation of occupying, the top posts in the profession that, not only was the appointment of 'outsiders' considered to be an affront to the service, but within the service selection had to be made by performance and ability rather than simply by influence and patronage.**[25]***

Consequently, while entrance was competitive and largely based on ability the type of candidate who applied for service during the French system was generally aristocratic. Nevertheless, once within the service progression was, particularly by the late nineteenth century, by seniority and ability. The diplomatic service was a profession, but because of the financial demands made on a diplomatist, the aristocratic ethos of diplomacy and the importance attached to ceremony, it was a profession dominated by the privileged classes.

However, while diplomats of the French system were predominantly aristocratic it was no longer the monarch who determined the foreign policy of their countries. One aspect of the professionalisation of diplomacy was to exclude the royal families of Europe from their traditional place of authority in conducting diplomacy amongst themselves. The focus of power in diplomacy shifted from the 'Court to the Cabinet'; the role of the constitutional monarch was just another of many methods employed to further the government-determined foreign policy of the state. For negotiations to be successful (and ratified by the domestic administration) the diplomatist must represent the actual sovereign authority in their country[26].

The dedicated ministry of foreign affairs was a natural corollary of a professionalised diplomatic service that developed under the French system of diplomacy. Cardinal Richelieu's foreign ministry was the first of its kind; created in 1626 to respond to the demands placed on French domestic political institutions by the developing resident embassies. Permanent ambassadors were the manifestation of the cardinal's policy of continuous negotiation – diplomatic representation in all the major courts – because he believed that negotiating everywhere would increase the reputation and prestige of Louis XIII and France[27]. As Berridge observes, 'more diplomacy multiplied the possibilities of inconsistency in both the formulation and execution of foreign policy'[28] therefore a domestic bureaucratic apparatus was needed to coordinate efforts, manage communication and appointments. Moreover, the mass of intelligence, reports and letters must be preserved in such a manner as to be useful to existing statesman and future diplomatists.

There was an inextricable relationship between the development of political institutions, the MFA and the professionalisation of diplomacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. That the domestic public services would develop in response to the diplomatic service indicates the importance and extent of diplomatic professionalisation in the period. The creation of the British Foreign Office in 1782 and the US State Department in 1789 were examples of a general trend in Europe to bring the administration of diplomacy under the jurisdiction of a single ministry[29]. By the early nineteenth century the 'Diplomatic Services of the [European] nations', argues Nicolson, 'had been recognised as a distinct branch of the public service in each country'[30].

The accoutrements of professional diplomacy were represented in the structure of the foreign ministry. The early (and many contemporary) ministries were divided into units with specialised functions, such as protocol or treaties. That the statesman of the period thought it necessary to have civil servants specialised in the activities and rules of diplomacy is indicative of the normalisation of resident embassies and the features of a diplomatic profession.

Professional diplomacy required professional diplomatists; it was the foreign ministry's responsibility to recruit and train young diplomats. The MFA and the diplomatic service 'increasingly demanded suitable educational qualifications'[31] and, with any profession, new practitioners must pass the necessary examination.

'The standards of European diplomacy, when it first asserted itself as a distinctive calling, were not high standards'[32]; it would take successive nineteenth and early twentieth century governments to formulate a process of candidate selection and training to achieve a professional standard. From the fifteenth century onwards theorists of the French system focused serious attention and strong emphasis on the characteristics of the ideal diplomatist and their training. The character and intelligence of an ambassador are of vital significance[33] when they are expected to be the single most important representative of a state for a number of year

Watson argues that it was the increased pressure of states on each other in the early modern period, in tandem with an increase in a state's ability to project its power outside territorial boundaries, which necessitated a new, urgent and professional means of dialogue between states[34]. To be a professional, a practitioner must be capable of carrying out their assigned functions by virtue of their character or training; any diplomat unable to do so would be an

amateur. In contrast to temporary envoys and special missions, the permanent representatives that emerged from the Italian Renaissance were more efficient in regularly sending reports home and in conducting negotiations[35]. Born of the necessity to be represented by competent ambassadors who could fulfil their functions in the receiving state and their obligations to report to the sending state, theorists wrote of what characteristics were required of the 'perfect ambassador'. Callières, a prominent seventeenth century diplomatic theorist, understood that the French system was professionalising diplomacy. He wished to distinguish the new diplomatists from amateurs drawn from other walks of life 'who were not qualified to carry out negotiations'[36].

Many of the early practitioners of diplomacy in the French system recognised that successful diplomats needed to be more than just adornments to a rival court. There was a conscious effort to outline the characteristics and training required of an ambassador, resulting in an early form of controlled entry. Diplomatic manuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth century agreed on the exclusion of individuals on the grounds of unsuitability; the agents who prefigured resident diplomatists were unsuitable because they were not of the social status to interact with princes and leading statesman. The high aristocracy were excluded for their independence and arrogance. Military officers, clergyman and jurists were also deemed unsatisfactory[37]. Callières thought diplomacy of such importance that its practitioners required extensive knowledge and technical expertise[38] not present in other careers. In his treatise, Callières espouses the advantages of controlled entry, that if it were 'a firm and lasting maxim in France, not to employ any persons in public negotiations, except those that have gone through this kind of apprenticeship, and these sorts of studies… the King would be better served in his negotiations'[39].

But diplomatic service in Callières time had no formal mechanisms of controlling entry – appointments were made by the sovereign or designated official. To guide statesman in their selection Callières outlines in his treatise the temperament of a good ambassador: He should have an attention to detail which is not easily distracted, intuition into the psychology of men, creativity and an ability to improvise, be 'civil and agreeable', humble in that he wishes no advantage other than the success of negotiations, and, above all, 'be able to resist the strong inclination [to] speak before he has well considered what he ought to say'[40]. Pecquet argued that a diplomat should be tutored in his profession from birth. Cardinal Richelieu, the epitome of *raison d'etat*, argued that 'it is absolutely necessary to be discerning in the choice of ambassadors and other negotiators'[41]. While it is the case that the envoys of Greece or the Roman proconsul dispatched on a special mission were often selected for their suitability for the function it is only under the French diplomatic system, which professionalised diplomatists over the course of several hundred years, that desirable characteristics of representatives were outlined frequently and forcefully.

The evolution of requirements for entrants of the British diplomatic service is an illustration of the similar process undergone by many European foreign ministries. Prior to 1856 the only qualifications required of British entrants was a private income of not less than £400, two months' probation in the Foreign Office and nomination by the Foreign Secretary[42]; hardly the recipe for a professional diplomat. Beginning with Lord Clarendon's introduction of an entrance examination in 1856, the requirements shifted their focus to a candidate's quality of handwriting and grasp of foreign languages. Further changes under Lord Lansdowne in 1905 brought the diplomatic service and Foreign Office closer to the Civil Service, requiring candidates to take first the Civil Service examination followed by an additional examination in French and German. Shortly thereafter the selection of candidates passed out of the hands of the Private Secretary and into those of a semi-independent 'Selection Board'[43].

In integrating the diplomatic service with the existing largely professionalised domestic administration the statesman of the French system were affirming the status of diplomacy as an independent career path. The dramatic increase in control over entrance to the diplomatic service, particularly formal and objective entrance via competitive examination, was a major indication of diplomacy's professionalisation.

'It will always be desirable that the foreign policy of any great country should be carried out by professionals trained in their business'[44]; formal methods of diplomatic training were developed, albeit irregular, during the early modern period. Anderson argues succinctly that 'the clearest of all criteria of a true profession is the requirement of some systematic training for entry to it'[45] but that the French system never realised systematic training before 1789, many states not until the nineteenth century.

The acceptance of permanent resident embassies led to the realisation that the representative had an increasing variety of responsibilities. Additional obligations, especially when ceremonial tasks were absorbed into embassies, led to an increase in the number of assistants to help in the functions of the embassy. In the late seventeenth century secretaries, who remained with the embassy, were employed as a means of developing a pool of well-informed and experienced assistants[46]. However, particularly in the early years of the French system, any assistance the ambassador required was performed by unpaid attachés; young men aspiring of a diplomatic career. The best way of visiting foreign countries was by attaching oneself to the resident mission and serving in some junior capacity, receiving 'on-the-job' training. These attaches were unsalaried and, if they received any support at all, it was by the grace of the ambassador to whom they were attached. Early in his treatise Wicquefort argued that 'neither birth… nor study can form an accomplished ambassador without experience'[47].

Travel and experience of foreign countries was universally agreed as necessary training for an aspiring diplomat. Callières advocated foreign travel as far superior to learning of countries in books, asserting that 'we cannot form just ideas of them, but by knowing them ourselves'[48]. Despite the universal agreement of its importance few governments made any provision for helping young men travel abroad. However, Russia under Peter I was the exception; the Tsar sent groups of young nobles to Venice, the Dutch Republic and England in 1697, the Russian minister in the Hague in 1699 had eight attachés , and in the early seventeenth century a number of young men of lower social standing were sponsored by the government to study languages abroad[49]. The training set in motion by Peter was formalised under Catherine II, providing 'for each mission abroad to have two students regularly attached to it' for training in diplomacy and foreign languages'[50]. The Austrian Hapsburg's were the first European power to provide systematic diplomatic training in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, culminating in the creation of the *Orientalische Akademie* in 1754 to train consular and diplomatic staff for the Near East[51]. The more demanding linguistic and diplomatic environment of Constantinople obligated European states to make special provisions. Venice sent men to learn the language as early as 1550, France dispatched young boys to the Near East in 1670 and a Turkish grammar book was published in Latin in 1730. The additional entrance and training requirements of the British Levant Service is an indication of the importance attached to systematically preparing for diplomatic work in the Near East. In his treatise Callières argued that 'every subject of France, who has a view of being employed in negotiations for the King's service, ought to understand the German, the Italian and Spanish languages, together with the Latin tongue'[52]. But even in France support for young men to learn languages was haphazard at best, similar to the occasional assistance given to diplomatic candidates by the British government. The British made one attempt to improve foreign language training for diplomats in 1724 with the founding of the Oxford and Cambridge Regius chairs of modern history, their purpose being 'to obviate the necessity of employing persons of foreign nations in the civil and diplomatic services'[53] by focusing on language instruction to scholars. Nevertheless, few scholars passed with the requisite attainment in two languages and by the third year the scheme was 'clearly moribund', having made very few contributions to the diplomatic list[54]. The Marquis de Torcy instituted an *académie politique* to train twelve young professionals of French diplomacy, six studying in the diplomatic archive he created at Versailles and six to receive special diplomatic training. De Torcy's experiment was dead shortly after his retirement in 1720.

Many theorists believed that the study of treaties and histories of negotiations was important, and this was facilitated by the growing archives of ministries of foreign affairs. Dedicating a chapter of his treatise to the matter, Callières is specific as to the knowledge useful to a diplomatist; he should 'study carefully the modern history of Europe'[55] including the formation of the governments of all European states and the extent of their power, 'all the public treaties'[56], have a grasp of the sciences, and even the genealogies of European royalty. Of singular importance to Callières are the memoirs of diplomatists the like of Cardinals D'Ossat (also praised by Lord Chesterfield) and Mazarin, President Jeannin and Vittorio Siri[57]. Wicquefort expressed a similar sentiment that training should include 'Memoirs, Instructions and Negotiations, and particularly Treaties'[58]. Lord Chesterfield, writing in the eighteenth century to his son – an attaché at the Paris embassy – rated diplomacy as profession that required expert knowledge, just as 'a lawyer knows his law, a parson his divinity, and a financier his calculations'[59].

Lord Malmesbury disliked a focus academia, referring to one eighteenth century colleague as 'merely a man of letters, unacquainted with and unfit for business'[60]. Nevertheless, Malmesbury's attitude in particularly is symptomatic of a limiting condition on early efforts to professionalise diplomacy. The most important diplomatic posts

were prestigious, and prestigious appointments generally went to great aristocrats. As Anderson recognises, great aristocrats were reluctant to engage in 'humdrum routine work and studying documents [because] an important embassy was a prerequisite of birth rather than the culmination of years of painstaking effort'[61].

It was not until the mid nineteenth century that systematic training of diplomatic professionals developed in Europe. The many experiments, ad-hoc support, academies of limited scope and treatises prior to the nineteenth century were the individual efforts of great statesman. Their authority and strength of will held together ideas of diplomatic training, most of which went with them to retirement or the grave. It was only as the source of sovereign authority shifted away from individuals to a collective that systematic training began to be adopted. The 1861 report from the British government's House of Common's *Select Committee to inquire into Constitution and Efficiency of Diplomatic Service* and a later committee chaired by Edward Bouverie examined the question of diplomatic training and instituted changes to the attaché system and encouraged the post-appointment study of international law. This method of training was to remain the staple of the British diplomatic service right up until the First World War.

In the early years of the French system diplomats, particularly from western Europe, received a salary. However, it was irregular, arbitrary and rarely covered the heavy expenses which diplomats had to meet. As responsible for the administration of a profession, the governments and ministries of foreign affairs were wholly unreliable and unresponsive to the financial concerns of their diplomats until the nineteenth century. The infrequent pay of the late sixteenth century French ambassador to Copenhagen left him so heavily in debt that he was unable to appear at court, for a time was in fear of imprisonment, and died bankrupt[62]. Moreover, diplomatic expenses were managed with a severe lack of bureaucratic intelligence in the sixteenth century to the extent that what an ambassador received was based on his successes and how adept his supporters were at lobbying his cause at home. In the seventeenth century only minimal progress was made, for diplomatic salaries were largely guaranteed and usually to a set scale but still infrequent in their arrival; by 1679 payments to British diplomats were over six years in arrears[63]. By the late eighteenth century salaries were arranged in a systematic hierarchy and paid more regularly than in the past, however in contrast to the achievements made in professionalising diplomacy in other areas the standard of financial support was distinctly amateur.

'Diplomacy' as a term was only applied to the conduct of international relations in 1796 by Edmund Burke. Burke's new application of 'diplomacy', firmly reinforced in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna, represented the culmination of several centuries of professionalisation. During the French system diplomacy was separated from domestic politics, becoming a distinct feature of international relations with its own definite form, rules and conventions[64]. Entrance to the diplomatic services of all the major European powers was controlled, based on competitive examination or similar formal academic requirements. This was recognition of diplomacy as an occupation requiring specific training to develop the necessary specialist knowledge that would enable a practitioner to carry out the functions of a diplomat. Inevitably, the entry and training prescribed in each European state reached varying levels of professionalisation that mirrored different understandings of how to best train a diplomat. The MFA, in securing jurisdiction over foreign policy, acted as the professional body for its state's diplomatic service; it controlled the entry, regulated standards, disciplined members of the service, administered the financial aspects of diplomacy and managed the careers of diplomats. Recognised as a full-time occupation diplomats received regular salaries that were increasingly standardized, and could claim expenses for the costs incurred in diplomatic affairs. As a distinct professional body diplomats were accorded specific rights and immunities that applied only to them, which further cemented the growing sense of community and corporate identity that was expressed most successfully in the diplomatic corps.

Moreover, and perhaps crucially, the achievements of diplomats to establish themselves as members of a definite and exclusive profession, with a monopoly of professional knowledge, gave their vocation a very high level of social respectability that it had previously been lacking. To be understood by outsiders as a profession, diplomacy had won a great many social, political and economic rewards. Thus, by the early twentieth century diplomacy in the major European states met all the substantive requirements of a profession, and the glacial evolution to this point had occurred almost entirely within the duration of the French system.

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Written by: Oliver Lewis
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About the author:

Oliver Lewis is an academic advisor to the Ministry of Defence and completing a PhD in International Studies at the University of Cambridge, where he researches on the culture(s) and education of elite transnational groups.