



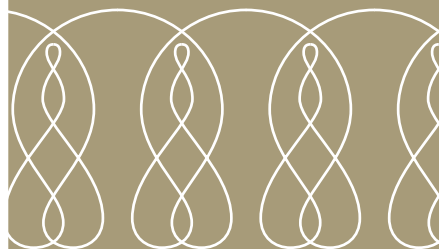
THE

# Hungarian Historical Review

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ACADEMIÆ SCIENTIARUM HUNGARICÆ  
*Austria-Hungary and the Balkans*

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## *Austria-Hungary and the Balkans – from the Perspectives of New Imperial History*

Krisztián Csaplár-Degovics, Gábor Demeter  
Special Editors of the Thematic Issue

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# Austro-Hungarian Colonial Ventures: The Case of Albania

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In his unpublished 1955 doctoral dissertation, Johann Wagner persuasively argued that certain members of the leading political, economic, and military circles in Austria-Hungary were very interested in the possibility of global colonization.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, as the data gathered by Evelyn Kolm clearly shows, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, joint Ministers of Foreign Affairs Gusztáv Kálnoky and Agenor Goluchowski and joint Minister of Finance Benjámín Kállay promoted the idea of creating a competitive military fleet, and they were ready to offer political support for the economic interest groups that insisted on the necessity of colonialism.<sup>2</sup> Two out of these three people initiated and played a crucial role in the 1896 Vienna Conference, where they decided to adopt and implement a new Albanian policy.

This Austro-Hungarian Albanian policy was shaped in part by new colonial ambitions and was not merely the result of a one-time decision made in response to singular circumstances. The new Albanian policy harmonized with the general aspirations of the 1890s: Gustav Kálnoky and Agenor Goluchowski, as heads of *Ballhausplatz*, made political and institutional attempts to include, in some form or another, the practice of global colonization as part of the foreign policy profile of Austria-Hungary. One of their allies in these efforts was Benjámín Kállay, who, as the governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina, was well-versed in both the theoretical and the practical issues of colonization.

This study presents the context and consequences of the 1896 conference from a transnational perspective. It also draws attention to two things. First, historical research on the question of colonization should be extended to the Balkan peninsula in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Second, Austria-Hungary's new Albanian policy was based not only on international models but also on its own experiences in Africa.

Keywords: Albania, Austria-Hungary, colonialism, Balkan Peninsula

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1 Wagner, "Österreichisch-ungarische Kolonialversuche."

2 Kolm, *Die Ambitionen*, 17–21.

## *Introduction*

Historians have paid little attention to the fact that in the 1890s, the ministers of common affairs of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy made a concrete attempt formally to include colonialism in the Austro-Hungarian foreign policy portfolio.

The unusual constitutional structure of Austria-Hungary made this a challenging task. According to the laws on which the Compromise of 1867 rested, Emperor and King Franz Joseph's realm was divided into two large public entities, the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary, each of which had its own government and parliament. The joint ministers of foreign affairs, finance, and war in Vienna were only allowed to deal with common matters as defined in precise terms by the representatives of the two halves of the new empire in 1867. Formally, they did not form a government for the whole empire. The two parliaments could only deal with the joint ministers separately, through delegations of their own envoys. The acceptance of an open portfolio for colonial endeavors was a major political and social challenge for the joint ministers because any kinds of ambitions in this direction could easily have undermined the stability of the dualist system, which had been achieved at no small cost. Colonial policy, after all, raised a number of questions that touched on public law. Who would be responsible for colonization, the empire as a whole or a separate Austria and a separate Hungary? Who would finance the costs of colonial ventures, and who would benefit from these investments? Would colonial issues come to constitute a new, fourth common affair?

Since the study of Austria-Hungary's colonial past has so far been mainly limited to case studies and the study sites have for the most part been found in eastern and southeastern Europe, as far as I know, no conceptual context has emerged that has marked the place of the Dual Monarchy in Europe's colonial past in the global context. This study therefore undertakes to examine, in the order and logic of the unpublished archival sources in the National Archive of Vienna, the global strands of history that can be connected to the Albanian policy of the joint ministry of foreign affairs, also known as Ballhausplatz. The study connects a number of issues and facts which have been part of hitherto unrelated, parallel historical narratives (including consuls, cult protectorate, competition with other powers, the Sudan policy of Ballhausplatz, and imperial pressure groups).

In this inquiry, I focus on a joint ministerial conference held in Vienna in 1896 at which the decision was reached to launch a new Austro-Hungarian

Albanian policy. I also consider the consequences of this conference. Going beyond the historical publications on the conference, including the views of Teodora Toleva,<sup>3</sup> I claim that the new policy had an imperial character but also an equally significant colonial character, since it was a long-term goal of joint ministers Agenor Goluchowski and Benjámín Kállay to bring the territory and inhabitants of geographical Albania in the Western Balkans under the political, economic, and cultural influence of Austria-Hungary in an asymmetrical relationship. Drawing on unpublished archival sources and the secondary literature on international colonial practices at the time, I seek to determine why the term colonial can be reasonably applied to the new Austro-Hungarian policy towards Albania launched at the end of the century. I begin by offering a brief summary of the attitudes in Austria-Hungary towards colonialism in 1890s. I then provide a broad overview from a transnational perspective of the historical context of the conference where the new Albanian policy was adopted. I analyze the minutes of the conference, examine the personalities and roles of the participants, describe the main features of the new Albanian policy, reveal the hitherto unknown roots (e.g. African aspects) of this policy, and present the imperial interest group that managed to keep the new Albanian policy in operation for two decades, in spite of the fact that the people filling the roles of common ministers were constantly shifting.

Finally, it is worth clarifying the concepts used as a basis for a colonial interpretation of the Austro-Hungarian ventures in Albania. Though Albania was far from the only colony of the Monarchy on the eve of World War I, the colonial expansion pursued by the Ballhausplatz towards the territories inhabited by Albanians was a kind of mixture of “border colonization” and “construction of naval networks” described by Jürgen Osterhammel.<sup>4</sup> Albanian politics was at once a border colonialism, as geographical Albania lay in the immediate vicinity of Austria-Hungary. On the other hand, it was also part of the strategies involved in the construction of naval networks, as the target area was surrounded by a wreath of huge mountains towards the Central Balkans, so the region was most easily approached from the sea.

Another source on which I draw in my interpretation of Austro-Hungarian expansionist efforts in Albania as an essentially colonial venture is an article by Trutz von Trotha on colonialism. According to Trotha, the distinctions historians

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3 Toleva, *Der Einfluss Österreich-Ungarns*.

4 Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 4–10.

draw among colonies should be based more on the forms of expansion and the goals set by the colonial power with respect to each individual colony than on classifications according to type (colony, protectorate, or mandate). Thus, building on this idea, I suggest that historians would be well to examine imperial expansion in Eastern Europe as a form of colonial expansion.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Ballhausplatz's Colonization Efforts in the 1890s*

Based on the monograph of Stephen Gross, *Export Empire*, we have reasons to suggest that the colonial policy pursued in the 1890s by the two Austro-Hungarian foreign ministers, Gustav von Kálnoky and Agenor Goluchowski, was originally inspired by the work of the German chancellor Leo von Caprivi.<sup>6</sup> Under Caprivi, the state became the most dominant actor in German (informal) colonialism. Caprivi sought to make Germany a much more active participant in the global project of colonialism than it had been in Bismarck's time, but he did not seek to achieve his aims through a great power policy. He used the organizing power of the state and soft power policies to win the active support of German economic interest groups for his policies. Furthermore, he considered it necessary to win the support of broad sections of German society for the cause of colonialism. In order to do this, he gave active political support to the mass social organizations of the upper and middle classes which promoted colonialism, including, for instance, the Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft (German Colonial Society).

Kálnoky and Goluchowski started taking preparatory steps in the 1890s to transform Austria-Hungary into an openly colonial power. In the Austro-Hungarian foreign ministry, the questions of colonialism and emigration were entrusted to a separate organizational unit independent within Ballhausplatz. Goluchowski also provided political support for Austrian civilian organizations which, through their lobbying and publishing activities, urged the participation of the Dual Monarchy in the colonial partition of the world. Finally, Goluchowski strove to win the support of the political elites of the two empires: the two parliaments and the two delegations debated Goluchowski's ideas concerning possible colonial ventures during the annual negotiations concerning the joint budget (1898–1901).

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<sup>5</sup> Trotha, "Colonialism," 433.

<sup>6</sup> Gross, *Export Empire*, 35.



In 1891, at Kálnoky's instructions, Adalbert Fuchs, who worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was entrusted with the management of overseas and emigration affairs. In 1894, the reorganization of Fuchs' office was ordered. However, the new organizational system, which was based on new departments or *Referatur*, was only put in place under Agenor Goluchowski, who assumed the position of joint Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1895. The new III. Referatur, or third department, headed by Fuchs as section chief (*Sektionschef*), was entrusted with an array of tasks, including colonial policy and the emigration question (*Kolonialpolitik und Auswanderungsfrage*).<sup>7</sup>

This third department was created first and foremost because of economic considerations. The Austrian Empire enjoyed a flourishing period of industrial and commercial development at the turn of the century, and this naturally led to the emergence of new types of lobbying organizations. These organizations included a group of large banking consortia (Bodenkreditanstalt, Wiener Bankverein) and chambers of commerce and industry. Although these lobby groups did not have financial assets or backing that would have made them competitive in the spaces under the control of the great powers, they had enough spare capital to look for investment opportunities in Africa, Latin America, and even the Far East. They soon began to take a growing interest in the question of emigration. Many of their publicists who were engaged in propaganda in support of colonial ventures believed that, as was the case in other European states, the issue of emigration should be linked to the economic interests of Austria-Hungary on the African and Latin American continent. In other words, without active state involvement, the big Austrian banks and the chambers of industry and commerce did not dare take serious independent action. The creation of the third department was thus partly in the interests of the new lobby organizations.<sup>8</sup>

In 1894, Ernst Franz Weisl founded the Österreichisch-Ungarische Kolonial-Gesellschaft, or Austro-Hungarian Colonial Society, on the model of the German Colonial Society. The Society was established to promote the foreign economic interests of the Dual Monarchy and to win social support for the third department of Ballhausplatz. The society was under the political wing of Goluchowski, and in the 1890s, it worked together with the Ballhausplatz consular network on several African endeavors (Rio de Oro, Morocco). The

7 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F4/450, no. 69–70, "Kanzleiverordnungen."

8 Loidl, "Kolonialpropaganda," 38–43.

joint minister either maintained direct contact with them through the head of the third department or held personal meetings with their leaders. Gołuchowski encouraged his officials and consuls to serve as active figures in the society.<sup>9</sup>

In the delegation meetings and the parliamentary sessions held in both halves of the empire at the turn of the century, the possibility of Austro-Hungarian participation in global colonialism was raised during debates concerning the development of the navy and the budget of the joint ministries. It also came up in connection with the Spanish-American War and the suppression of the Chinese Boxer Rebellion.<sup>10</sup> The majority of the Hungarian MPs consistently voted in favor of covering the expenditures of the navy fleet, despite the debates concerning public law. The minutes from meetings of the House of Representatives reveal that Hungary's elected representatives opposed the idea of colonial policy in principle but not in practice. After 1867, most Hungarian deputies, both those of the governing coalition and the opposition, did not rule out the possibility that sometime in the distant future, if the conditions were favorable, Austria-Hungary or even Hungary might join the ranks of the powers who were leading the colonial division of the world, whether through force of arms or economic influence. By "favorable conditions," they meant that Hungarian foreign trade and industry would share in the various opportunities and anticipated benefits in proportion to the so-called quota (the rate at which Hungary and Austria contribute to the costs of common affairs between the two states) or on a parity basis. It is also worth noting that, while supporters of a possible Austrian colonial project would have ventured into Africa, Latin America, or the Far East, the attention of those who were kindling visions of Hungarian imperialism was focused primarily on the Balkans, the peninsula where, according to the consensus of the members of the Budapest House of Representatives, Austria-Hungary already had a colony: Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Drawing on domestic political and public law considerations, the Hungarian prime ministers and the Budapest parliament managed to prevent Ballhausplatz from espousing an open and long-term colonial policy in Africa and the Far East at the turn of the century. Ministers of common civilian affairs drew a number of lessons from this failure. One of these lessons was the need to launch and finance, when the circumstances were auspicious, concrete colonial ventures without, however, calling political attention to their endeavors.

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9 *Jahresbericht der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Colonial-Gesellschaft 1896*; "Kolonialpolitik," 18–19.

10 Kolm, *Die Ambitionen*, 24–25.

*Ballhausplatz's New Albania Policy*

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Albania (understood as a geographical territory) began to play an increasingly important role in Ballhausplatz's visions for the Balkans, primarily for reasons of foreign trade and foreign policy. The strategic importance of the region grew to such an extent for the empire that, at the turn of the century, the joint Viennese ministries announced a new Albanian policy. This was seen as necessary first and foremost to prevent the emergence of a Russian "iron ring" running alongside Austria-Hungary, from the German-Russian border to the Adriatic. But the new Albanian policy was also intended to help keep Italian and Serbian ambitions for the Eastern Adriatic at bay and to prepare the Dual Monarchy for the eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>11</sup>

The direct cause of the new Albanian policy on the eve of the turn of the century and a clear sign of the impending collapse of the Ottoman Empire was a memorandum written in early 1896. The memorandum was written by Muslim Albanian nobleman and later grand vizier of the empire, Ferit Bey Vlora of the Great House of Vlora (grand vizier: 1903–1908).<sup>12</sup>

In the 1890s, Albanian Muslims along the coast of Albania who earlier had been loyal Ottoman subjects were becoming increasingly convinced that the Ottoman Empire would soon disintegrate. Out of concern for the future of the Albanian territories and fearing the ambitions of the neighboring nation states, prominent Albanians who held high civil service or military positions in the capital formed a secret organization. Soon, several similar associations were formed in central and southern Albania. One of the goals of these associations was to cultivate the mother tongue (Albanian) and, through it, the national idea. Members of these circles were increasingly convinced that the Albanian people would never be able to create national and state unity on their own, given their cultural backwardness, their social and ideological fragmentation, the threats posed by neighboring peoples, and the sultan's repressive policy towards the Albanian national movement. In their assessment, it would only be possible to create national and state unity with the help of a benevolent European great power.

In the early spring of 1896, Ferit Vlora, the leader of the Albanian nationalists in Constantinople, met with Austro-Hungarian ambassador Heinrich Calice to

11 ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kwiatkowski, Kt. 2, 1: Albanien in der Politik der Großmächte.

12 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Ferit bey's memorandum; ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kwiatkowski, Kt. 1, Manuscript, 179–181; *ibid.*, Kt. 2, Orange-Pallium, 180.

inquire about Ballhausplatz's plans for Albania and to share his thoughts. He said that, thanks to its policy towards Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Austria-Hungary had managed to win the trust of Albanian Muslims. During the visit, Ferit Vlora gave Calice the abovementioned memorandum. It would be hard to overstate the importance of this document. A leading official of the Ottoman Empire was asking Austria-Hungary, a Christian European power, for protection for the Muslim-majority Albanian people.<sup>13</sup>

Ferit Vlora's memorandum was essentially a detailed political plan, and it ended up serving as the basis of the program of the Vienna Conference of 1896 (where it was discussed) and the so-called Albanian Action Plans that were a product of the conference. Ferit Vlora asked Ballhausplatz to play a role as protector against the Balkan Slavs and also to launch a consistent policy of intervention against the sultanate in support of Albanian nationhood. This interventionist policy was to have a military side and an economic side. Ferit Vlora proposed that Austrian warships appear in Albanian ports as often as possible and that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy acquire railway construction and operation concessions on the eastern Adriatic.<sup>14</sup> In 1897, in a telegram to Ballhausplatz, Ferit Vlora's younger brother Syrja Vlora went even further in his proposals: he called for the establishment of an independent Albania as an Austro-Hungarian protectorate.<sup>15</sup>

Ballhausplatz took the invitation seriously but also with measured caution. The Vlora brothers came from southern Albania, or in other words not from the traditional area of interest for Austria-Hungary. Until 1896, within the framework of the Catholic cult protectorate, only the Catholic Albanians living in the northern regions of geographical Albania belonged to Vienna's jurisdiction. According to the treaties signed with the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the concordat signed with the papal state in 1855, the duties of the cult protectorate included the protection of the free exercise of religion by local Catholics; the maintenance and operation of churches, schools, and other church buildings; providing training for the Albanian Catholic clergy; preventing taxation of the Church by the state; building new denominational schools and churches; providing financial and humanitarian assistance; and generally providing finances for the operation of the local Catholic Church and providing it with legal protection from the Ottoman authorities. The Vlora

13 ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kwiatkowski, Kt. 1, Manuscript, 179f.

14 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Ferit bey's memorandum.

15 Clayer, *Në fillimet e nacionalizmit shqiptar*, 526–27.

brothers were essentially calling for the political and economic extension of this sectarian and humanitarian protectorate power to all Albanians. While it kept this request secret from the outside world and from public opinion in both halves of the empire, Ballhausplatz embarked on a long-term policy of intervention.

Thus, in the name of an influential Muslim group, Ferit and Syrja Vlora, sought the active intervention of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Ottoman internal affairs in the interest of the Albanians against their legitimate ruler, the sultan. When a group of subjects in Africa or Asia sought the active and long-term intervention of a foreign European power in order to assert their interests against their ruler and settle a local, internal political conflict, this is regarded in the secondary literature as the beginning of the establishment of the intervening European state as a colonial power. This type of request, after all, was one of the most important sources of legitimacy for the establishment of colonial rule at the time.<sup>16</sup>

Regrettably, none of the surviving sources contain information concerning Ferit Vlora's views on contemporary European colonial issues. However, drawing on contemporary Ottoman sources, Leyla Amzi-Erdoğdular suggests that the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was as much an anti-colonial experience for Muslims in the Ottoman Empire as the loss of other lands which belonged to the empire in Asia and Africa. According to Amzi-Erdoğdular, in the eyes of the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire, the loss of European territories was qualitatively no different from the colonial annexation of Asian and African provinces.<sup>17</sup>

It would be worth noting, in connection with the independent political initiative taken by the Vlora brothers that they were not the only people to embark on this kind of undertaking among the Albanian pressure groups. In 1901, Haxhi Zeka Mulla, the political leader of the so-called League of Peja, which was a supra-confessional organization which urged Albanian national development, repeated the request, as did influential Kosovo landowner Jashar Erebara in 1903. Zeka and Erebara represented two Muslim Albanian pressure groups which had considerable influence in rural Albanian areas. Like the Vlora brothers, they believed that the fall of the Ottoman Empire was nigh, and Albanians would only be able to prosper under the protection of a great European power. Given of the tolerant policy shown by the Monarchy towards Muslims in Bosnia, both

16 Hofmeister, *Die Bürde des Weissen Zaren*, 33.

17 Amzi-Erdoğdular, *Afterlife of Empire*, 50–51.

Zeka and Erebara saw Ballhausplatz as a suitable protectorate. Thus, Austro-Hungarian intervention was sought not only by a group of Constantinople officials and intellectuals with roots in southern Albania, but also by the leaders of political groups with influence in the Albanian vilayet of Kosovo.<sup>18</sup>

On November 17, December 8, and December 23, a conference was held to discuss the foundations of the new Albanian policy.<sup>19</sup> The meetings were attended by the two aforementioned joint ministers, Agenor Goluchowski and Benjámín Kállay, and several experts were also invited. Head of Department Eduard Horowitz, the leading official in the joint Ministry of Finance, managed affairs concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina and was also involved in Kállay's activities in connection with the World Expositions. Julius Zwiedinek von Sündenhorst, a former student at the Academy of Oriental Languages in Vienna (which trained consuls, interpreters, and economists), was the leading official at Ballhausplatz. He was recognized not only as an expert on Albanian affairs, but also as an international authority and publicist on the Ottoman Empire, trade in the east, the Levant, and Syria.<sup>20</sup>

Norbert Schmucker, another former student at the Oriental Academy, had served in various Albanian consulates between 1881 and 1893. He was invited to the conference in part because he had served as Consul General of Austria-Hungary in Bombay from 1893 to 1896, he was familiar with the Indian subcontinent, and he had been a member of the Austro-Hungarian Colonial Society since 1896 and was one of its liaisons to the Foreign Ministry.<sup>21</sup>

The aforementioned Adalbert Fuchs, head of department for colonial policy, was invited by the common foreign minister. Earlier, Fuchs had been responsible for an array of tasks, including keeping an eye on the territories (mostly in Africa and Asia) to which the Habsburg dynasty or the Common Foreign Office had internationally acknowledged religious, economic, or political claims. He was also responsible for organizing, on request, communication and shipping ties with the regions that had caught the interest of politicians in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy who were eager to pursue colonial ventures.<sup>22</sup>

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18 ÖStA HHStA, I/8, Kt. 685, Akten 1895–1904, Varia 1901, report of Führer, August 27, 1901, 1–3; Verosta, *Die völkerrechtliche Praxis der Donaumonarchie*, 112–13.

19 Schwanda, *Das Protektorat Österreich–Ungarns*, 31; Toleva, *Der Einfluss Österreich–Ungarns*, 51–93.

20 Zwiedinek, *Syrien und seine Bedeutung, Hof- und Staats-Handbuch*, 88, 117, 1005.

21 *Jahresbericht der Österreichisch–Ungarischen Colonial-Gesellschaft 1896*, 4, 38.

22 Wägnér, “Österreichisch–ungarische Kolonialversuche,” 203; ÖStA HHStA, AR, F4/99, Adalbert Fuchs; ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Mérey, Kt. 15/273, A private letter written by Pasetti to Mérey, Ischl, August 26, 1895. Callaway, “The Battle over Information,” 278–87.



Four additional experts were later invited to assist with the implementation of the decisions reached at the conference. Kállay brought in Lajos Thallóczy as an expert on Orientalism, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Albania.<sup>23</sup> Consul General in Shkodra (Northern Albania) Theodor Ippen was called on by the Joint Foreign Minister, partly because of his experience as a civilian envoy in the Novi Pazar Sanjak. Although Ballhausplatz did not include Austria-Hungary's experiences in the sanjaks (which contemporary historian Tamara Scheer has interpreted as informal imperialism)<sup>24</sup> among the colonial ventures, the secondary literature on British Punjab (North-West Frontier Province) suggests that it might well be worth regarding them as such.<sup>25</sup> The Novi Pazar Sanjak in the Balkans and the Punjab in India served very similar functions. While there were differences in the international legal status of the two territories and in the titles of possession, these were the two regions through which the Dual Monarchy and the British Empire could reach the interior of the Ottoman Empire and Central Asia and pursue their ambitions to conquer and control more territory. The tasks and functions of the military occupation regimes, administration, civilian commissioners, and railway construction plans in the two regions are largely comparable.

After graduating from the Academy of Oriental Languages, Julius Pisko served as a consul in Belgrade, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and (geographical) Albania.<sup>26</sup> He trained himself to be an expert in colonial affairs precisely under the influence of his experiences in Albania. In 1902–1903, he took part in the SMS Zenta mission to Africa and Latin America, which had three objectives: to demonstrate Austria-Hungary's great power status, to demonstrate the Monarchy's military capabilities on the ocean, and to make trade policy surveys and gather statistics. As a participant in the military mission, Pisko visited the British, French, German, Portuguese, and Belgian colonies in Africa and studied them as a trade correspondent for the common foreign office. He also assessed possibilities for Austro-Hungarian economic colonization on the African continent. He regularly sent reports both to the joint ministries and to the Austrian and Hungarian governments. On the basis of his work as a publicist, Pisko seems to have identified, in the course of his travels, with the supremacist, racist views which undergirded the British and French colonial projects. Like *all* the Austro-Hungarian consuls who later took part in the ventures in Albania, he

23 Csaplár-Degovics, "Ludwig von Thallóczy," 141–64.

24 Scheer, "Minimale Kosten, absolut kein Blut," 241.

25 McCrone Douie, *The Panjab*, 188–200, 212–19.

26 *Jahrbuch des K. und K. Auswärtigen Dienstes* 1903, 265.

became a member of the Flottenverein (in 1906). The Flottenverein was a mass Austrian social organization which, on behalf of its several thousand members, demanded of the joint ministries and the governments of the two halves of the empire that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy play an active role in the colonial partition of the world.<sup>27</sup>

Heinrich Calice recommended to the conference organizers that they also invite Albanian monk Prenk Doçi. Doçi had taken part in the League of Prizren's uprising against the Ottoman Empire (1878–1881). He escaped execution by fleeing to Rome with the help of the Austro-Hungarian consular service, which turned to Propaganda Fide to help Doçi escape. In Rome, Doçi became secretary to Cardinal Antonio Agliardi, a papal diplomat, who took him first to Canada and then to India as apostolic delegate between 1884 and 1889. During his two major trips to India, Agliardi was entrusted with the task of reorganizing the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in the complex political, administrative, ethnic, and sectarian context of the subcontinent and preparing a concordat on the local *modus vivendi* with Portugal. He developed a close working relationship with Doçi, one of the consequences of which was that, during the Balkan wars, as nuncio in Vienna, he often presented himself as one of the papacy's experts on Albania.<sup>28</sup> It is perhaps worth noting that, in August 1913, the cardinal, who had visited India, referred to the Austro-Hungarian protectorate in Albania as the jewel in Franz Joseph's crown.<sup>29</sup>

As part of the Albanian initiatives, Doçi wrote a memorandum for the common foreign ministry in 1897 in which made concrete suggestions concerning the potential organization of Albania as a state. If one examines his proposals, which included a Catholic Principality in northern Albania as an autonomous administrative unit which would be formally dependent on the sultan but practically dependent on Austria-Hungary, it seems quite possible that Doçi drew on Indian examples when drafting his memorandum.<sup>30</sup>

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27 *Die Flagge* 2, no. 2 (1906): 12; Pisko, *Berichte der commerciellen Fachberichterstatters*; Pisko, *Die Südhalkugel im Weltverkehr*.

28 ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kwiatkowski, Kt. 2, Kwiatkowski: Lebenslauf, 64; ÖStA HHStA PA, XII/419/e/Prinz Achmed Fuad, Pálffy's report to Berchtold, no. 26 A-B, Rome, August 14, 1913, 1–11; Kőszeghy, "A Balkán-protektorátusról," 178–81.

29 ÖStA HHStA PA, XII/419/e/Prinz Achmed Fuad, Pálffy's report to Berchtold, no. 26 A-B, Rome, August 14, 1913, 3.

30 ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kral, Kt. 1, Promemoria – Monsignore Primo Dochi's über Albanien, Vienna, March 14, 1897, 1–15.



*The Role of Benjámín Kállay in Launching Operations in Albania*

The minutes of the conference reveal that the Joint Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Joint Ministry of Finance played different strategic roles in shaping the new Albanian policy. Foreign Minister Agenor Goluchowski was looking primarily for answers to logistical and political questions, for instance where and with whom the so-called “Albanian actions” should be carried out and how the Albanian consulates should be reorganized. In contrast, Benjamin Kállay, the Joint Minister of Finance, wanted to implement the new policy within the framework of a complex great power operation. Kállay determined first and foremost the means which would be used to influence the Albanians and the practical tasks which would need to be carried out in support of Albanian nation building. His main proposal was for Vienna to draft an organizational charter for a future Albanian principality which would lay the foundations for a state which would be formally independent but would practically function as an Austro-Hungarian protectorate.<sup>31</sup>

The strategy adopted by Kállay in 1896 was based largely on his experiences as governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina and his knowledge of British colonial practices. In order to assert the interests of the Monarchy as a great power, Kállay proposed that the plan of action should include the distribution of arms and ammunition to the Albanians and that Ballhausplatz should openly take the side of the former in the recurring Albanian-Montenegrin border disputes. In his assessment, these two steps would offer an immediate sign of the strength of the protections being offered by Austria-Hungary and would win allies for Vienna. Kállay also suggested that some influential Albanian political and military leaders should be provided with financial subsidies from time to time through the consulates.<sup>32</sup>

According to Kállay, an active economic policy was indispensable for the Albanian actions to succeed. In his view, the Austro-Hungarian press should pursue active propaganda to increase trade with the Albanian territories. Albanian merchants, he felt, should be able to bring their goods to Vienna, as this would help win their support. Furthermore, he felt that a trading house should be established to carry out the essential functions of mediation in order to nurture trade between the Dual Monarchy and Albania. Kállay also considered it

31 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, minutes of the conference on November 17, 1896, 6; Behnen, *Rüstung-Bündnis-Sicherheit*, 361.

32 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, minutes of the conference on November 17, 1896, 8, 10–12.

important that, instead of relying on smaller shipping companies, Ballhausplatz get the Trieste-based Austrian Lloyd, the largest Austrian shipping company, for “special and regular service to Albania.” Head of the colonial department Adalbert Fuchs, who organized shipping connections with Albanian ports, was entrusted with this task. Within a few years, the transport link between Austria-Hungary and Albania was established. The aforementioned Austrian Lloyd and Ungaro-Croata, the largest Hungarian steamship company (Fiume), operated the ship services.<sup>33</sup>

Although historians have only rarely made the economic expansion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its trade relations with the eastern Adriatic between 1896 and 1914 the focus of their studies, unpublished archival sources reveal that an Austrian businessman and banker named Paul Siebertz established a department store and printing press in the southern Albanian port town of Vlora in the early years of the twentieth century and even bought a hotel at some point. The infrastructure created by Siebertz furthered the interests of Austro-Hungarian imperial expansion because it physically linked the center to the periphery at a historic moment when not only Ballhausplatz but also the Austrian Industrialists’ Association was aiming to acquire Vlora, together with Thessaloniki. Siebertz’s endeavors also helped consolidate pre-capitalist conditions in the region.<sup>34</sup>

We also know that Zef Curani, an Albanian from the city of Shkodra in northern Albania who had studied at the Vienna Commercial Academy, was one of the Albanian merchants who came into contact with Ballhausplatz as a consequence of the new policy. Curani’s principal tasks in the implementation of operations in Albania included information gathering, propaganda, arms smuggling, nation building, and the creation of a single Albanian alphabet. Ballhausplatz rewarded Curani for his services with regular subsidies. The joint foreign ministry also gave him a financial incentive in the development of Austro-Hungarian-Albanian trade relations: in the summer of 1913, for example, he handled all the shipments of goods between Oboti and Shkodra (northern Albania) on the Buna River to and from the Monarchy (he enjoyed a monopoly), and he received a share of the profits from these shipments. The

33 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, minutes of the conference on December 8, 1896, 22–25; *ibid.* minutes of the conference on December 23, 1896, 7; Der Österreichische Lloyd und sein Verkehrsgebiet.

34 ÖStA HHStA, I/7, Kt. 573, letter from the Alliance of Austrian Industrialists to Goluchowski, no. 1634, Vienna, May 10, 1898, 4; Kolm, *Die Ambitionen*, 18; Gostentschnigg, *Wissenschaft im Spannungsfeld*, 309–16, 480.

relationship between Ballhausplatz and Curani offers a clear example of the kind of soft power imperialism described by Stephen Gross in his aforementioned monograph *Export Empire*.

In connection with the idea of supporting Albanian nation building, Kállay had two fundamental questions in mind. First, he sought to strengthen the social groups and organizations that were capable of shouldering the burden of modern nation building and on which Austria-Hungary could rely. Second, he wanted to nurture national sentiment among Albanians who belonged to social strata which had hitherto been indifferent to the national idea. Kállay wanted to use the new subsidy policy to exert an influence on three social groups: members of the Albanian Catholic Church, Muslim beys from impoverished but respectable families of noble birth, and members of the Albanian diasporas abroad.<sup>35</sup>

Kállay wanted to transform the Catholic Church into a national church. While it was true that the episcopacy in Albania was indeed comprised of Albanians, most of the lower clergy and monastic orders consisted of Italians or pro-Italian priests who were involved in political propaganda in the interests of Italy. Kállay therefore proposed that, in cooperation with the Vatican and the Jesuit order, the noviciates who were being sent to the Albanian territories would in the future be chosen from among young people of Albanian nationality who were studying theology in the seminaries in Austria-Hungary. With this proposal, Kállay sought, in essence, to reconcile the interests of the Catholic Church with Austria-Hungary's foreign policy interests so that the latter would dominate. Kállay made two demands that he expected to be met in exchange for more financial support through the institution of the protectorate: the clergy should actively spread pro-Albanian national propaganda and, politically, it should be loyal to Ballhausplatz's visions. Otherwise, the subsidies would drop or be cut off, or Vienna could even find a way to compel a given monastic order to leave the region.<sup>36</sup>

Kállay agreed with Ferit Vlora's memorandum, and he felt it was important to make the Albanians understand that Austria-Hungary was not supporting a denomination, but rather hoped to further the creation of an independent

35 MNL OL, PMKB, Z 41, 458/3230, Letter written by Handels- und Transport-AG to Weiss, 3230/-1, Vienna, August 1, 1913, 6; Csaplár-Degovics, "A dalmáciai Borgo Erizzo," 6–7; Csaplár-Degovics, "Österreichisch-ungarische Interessendurchsetzung," 181; Gostentschnigg, *Wissenschaft im Spannungsfeld*, 472, 583–84, 609, 650, 658–60, 677–78; Gross, *Export Empire*, 12.

36 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, minutes of the conference on November 17, 1896, 17–18; *ibid.* Minutes of the conference on December 8, 1896, 15, 17, 19–20; *ibid.* Minutes of the conference on December 23, 1896, 2–4.

Albania where Catholics and Muslims would strive together to achieve national goals. He urged the participants in the conference to harness the ambitions of influential beys to reach these goals. The quantities and frequency of the subsidies given to individuals, he felt, should depend on the extent to which the beneficiaries took clear political stances.<sup>37</sup>

The method suggested by Kállay (and later adopted) of selecting the beys is reminiscent of the ways in which the British Empire in West Africa drew distinctions between “good” and “bad” Muslims. Formally, Ballhausplatz strove to maintain a neutral attitude towards the various Muslim groups in Albania, but it supported and strengthened the power, economic sway, and influence of the social stratum of beys who cooperated with it. The Austro-Hungarian consular network, furthermore, was increasingly willing to engage in conflicts with the group of officials running the Ottoman administration when their endeavors threatened the sustainability of the social order. The disruption of the social status quo would have had repercussions which would have been felt on the international stage.<sup>38</sup>

Kállay also suggested that the planned operations should be extended beyond the Albanian territories and that subsidies should be provided to influence the cultural organizations of the Albanian diasporas in Bucharest and Sofia. The print materials published by these cultural organizations in Albanian and then smuggled into the territory of the Ottoman Empire could be used to propagate a national Albanian idea that was also pro-Austrian. The conference adopted and implemented Kállay’s proposals.

When Albania declared its independence in 1912, of the four large groups of the founding fathers (members of the so-called great houses, refugees, beys, and intellectuals who belonged to the diasporas), the latter two became influential political factors in Albanian society, both because of the unusual political circumstances and to no small extent thanks to the support they were given by Austria-Hungary.<sup>39</sup>

If one considers Kállay’s proposals from the perspective of the prevailing colonial practices at the time, the new subsidy policy seems to have functioned

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37 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, minutes of the conference on December 8, 1896, 4–6.

38 Reynolds, “Good and Bad Muslims.” To the distinction of “good” and “bad” Muslims in contemporary Austria, see Gingrich, “Frontier Myths of Orientalism,” 106–11.

39 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, minutes of the conference on November 17, 1896, 19–20; *ibid.*, Minutes of the conference on December 8, 1896, 16, 18; *ibid.*, Minutes of the conference on December 23, 1896, 4–5; Csaplár-Degovics, “Der erste Balkankrieg und die Albaner.”

in part as a tool with which to maintain the diversity of Albanian society by creating a new hierarchy between and within groups which was then controlled and overseen through subsidies. The creation of a national Catholic Church meant that, within the new hierarchy, some orders (Jesuits) enjoyed conspicuously more support, while others (Franciscans) had to make do with less. The deal offered to the Catholic Church in 1896 meant unequal conditions and political subordination for Propaganda Fides on Albanian territory, since the amounts of the subsidies received through the Austro-Hungarian protectorate were also determined by the political reliability shown to Ballhausplatz.

The same logic was applied in secular society to the funding provided for the selected Muslim beys. The Austro-Hungarian consular network identified bey families which, fundamentally because of their economic circumstances, had drifted into the camp of internal opposition to the Ottoman Empire. Their opposition had become an important means of expressing their commitment to the Albanian language and the Albanian national movement (one could mention, for example, the Toptani family in central Albania). As a reward for their political loyalty to Austria, Ballhausplatz began to strengthen the economic position of this social group and its place in Albanian society. Austria-Hungary's ability to use the beys as tools to achieve its ends was limited, however, by the fact that Italy, in pursuit of its own imperialist interests, also began to finance this social group, as well as the members of the lower priesthood, who were partly Italian.<sup>40</sup>

All in all, the implementation of the new Albanian policy was successful and remained secret partly because it was possible to avoid calling any attention to the measures among political circles by bypassing the two parliaments on the issue of funding. There was always enough money for the Albanian policy without it appearing anywhere as a separate budget item. Through the item of "Catholic churches in Levant," Ballhausplatz could use monies provided for the common ministries to pursue its aims in Albania. In addition, since 1864, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been handling the so-called "united Oriental funds," which were pooled from the assets of two civil foundations (the Sklavenredemptionsfond and the Orientalische Missionsfond). The pooled funds were basically used to run Catholic schools and missions in the Ottoman Empire. If additional funds were needed for the new Albanian policy, these budgets could be increased without attracting notice.<sup>41</sup> (For a thorough account

40 Csaplár-Degovics, "Österreichisch-ungarische Interessendurchsetzung."

41 Deusch, *Das k.(u.)k. Kultusprotektorat*, 623–27.

of the concrete details and statistics concerning the use of these funds, see the monographs by Schanderl, Schwanda, Toleva, Deusch, and Gostentschnigg.)

The monarch also regularly used monies from the private funds of the Habsburg family to support the Catholic archdioceses in Albania. The sources contain no concrete indication of the Emperor and King having used these funds to finance political enterprises in Albania, but it is worth noting that as early as 1858, Franz Joseph had given permission to finance specific colonial projects, such as Wilhelm Tegetthoff's expedition to the Red Sea, by secretly using state funds through the private funds of his brother Archduke Maximilian.<sup>42</sup>

### *Pax Austro-Hungarica*

The participants in the Vienna Conference of 1896 thus adopted a policy of subsidies intended to ensure that, in time, the eastern Adriatic would come under the sway of a prince who would rule under an Austro-Hungarian protectorate. Since the minutes of the conference do not reveal what pattern the protectorate would follow, it is worth keeping in mind that two great powers, Russia and Great Britain, had already used this form of rule not far from the Albanian territories. In the eastern Balkans, Russia had held the Romanian principalities (1830s) and Bulgaria (1878–1885) under its power as a protectorate. Similarly, in the nineteenth century, the so-called Septinsular Republic (1797–1812) in the Ionian Islands near the Albanian coast enjoyed protections as a British protectorate, as did Malta (1800–1813) and Cyprus (1878–1914) in the Mediterranean. In each of these territories, the role of the British Empire as protector was a sort of next step to colonization: United States of the Ionian Islands (former Septinsular Republic) was under British colonial rule from 1815 to 1864, and Malta became a Crown colony in 1813, followed by Cyprus a century later, in 1922.<sup>43</sup>

For Ballhausplatz, of the two protectorate models, the Russian was preferable, as the Ballhausplatz officials envisioned a prince and principality in Albania after the possible collapse of the Ottoman Empire rather than an administration led by a governor or administrator.

Kállay proposed that an organizational statute be drafted for the future Albanian principality, a suggestion which indicates that he may have been drawing not only on the models of Wallachia and Moldavia, but also the smaller

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42 Wagner, "Österreichisch-ungarische Kolonialversuche," 58–59.

43 Egner, *Protektion und Souveränität*, 59–79, 62–63, 312–19.

Ottoman units with administrative autonomy and mixed Muslim-Christian populations. These units—Samos (1834), Lebanon (1860–1864), Crete (1868, 1898), and Eastern Rumelia (1878)—had been given an organizational statute (*reglement/statut organique*) in the nineteenth century with international assistance. As the Austro-Hungarian delegate, Kállay had participated in the drafting of the latter's organizational statute.

In the formulation of concrete action programs, or in other words, the operations that it was hoped would lead to the creation of a protectorate, the participants in the 1896 conference drew heavily on the example of Syria. The activities of the French consuls in Syria after 1861 and the new methods they had developed to exert an influence on the local population were incorporated into the practices of Austro-Hungarian consuls. But alongside the international models, Ballhausplatz drew at least as much on its own imperial experiences and practices. Ballhausplatz adopted practices which had been used in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Novi Pazar Sanjak, and it took into consideration and learned from the experiences of the Austro-Hungarian consulate in Khartoum in Sudan (see below).<sup>44</sup>

After the conference, the various tasks were divided up among the joint ministries. Under the influence of the theoretical and practical guidance of Lajos Thallóczy, the focus of Kállay's line was primarily on nation-building tasks. They decided to publish a textbook in Albanian on Albanian national history for Albanian ethnic schools. To further the creation of a uniform Latin alphabet, literature programs were launched in Vienna, Borgo Erizzo (or Arbanasi in Croatian and Arbnesi in Albanian, where the population was Albanian-speaking) in Dalmatia, Brussels (where the French-language journal *Albanie* was published), Bucharest, and Sofia. Several Albanian-language publications were published as part of the program. The joint Ministry of Finance also strove to put forward economic and trade action plans.

The Goluchowski line undertook political tasks: preparing the Albanian elite and intellectuals for the state-building project; logistical and financial support for the Albanian national movement; and the development of a consular network able to carry out the new tasks.

Although the idea arose of creating a separate department within the joint foreign ministry for the oversight and organization of the new Albanian policy,

44 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Fol. 517–736, Pisko, *Elaborat über die Consularämter*, Beilag: 9, Üsküb, January 25, 1897; Toleva, *Der Einfluss Österreich-Ungarns*, 102–29, 427–31.



ultimately, the operations were carried out by the Albanian experts at Ballhausplatz, who worked within the existing organizational structure.<sup>45</sup> (Unfortunately, the sources reveal little concerning what the actual responsibilities of this Albanian department would have been.) Lajos Thallóczy selected the consul candidates for the program from among the students at the Academy of Oriental Languages in Vienna, where Thallóczy himself was also an instructor. After having completed their studies at the academy, the candidates attended a six to twelve month continued training course on site, i.e., at the Albanian consulates, where they learned Albanian and acquired knowledge of the circumstances on the ground. Training courses were also organized for these emerging Albania experts in Borgo Erizzo. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked together with the Dalmatian governorate to organize Albanian language courses in the local schools in part for Austrian and Hungarian citizens who voluntarily sought, either as civilians or as soldiers, to participate in the implementation of the new Albanian policy. Those who received training in these schools included Heinrich Clanner von Engelshofen, for instance, who was a confidante of Joint Chief of Staff Conrad and the most important intelligence officer for Joint Staff and Ballhausplatz in Albania.<sup>46</sup>

The allotment to the consuls of the tasks involved in the Albanian operations was the result of a concerted effort by the two joint ministries. The preservation of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire was still a primary interest for Austria-Hungary, and the preparations underway for the creation of an Albanian state were merely a cautionary step in anticipation of the imminent collapse of the empire, so the consuls had to operate in secret.

Thus, the consuls could not do anything to alter the organizational system of the Ottoman state administration, and they had to build their policies on local structures. Ballhausplatz gave them a free hand in this and did not exercise close supervision over them. Nonetheless, even if the Albanian policies were broken down to the level of the sanjak, they were to be implemented in a coordinated manner. The consuls had to be fluent in Albanian and familiar with local customs and conditions, and they had to build up their own networks of contacts by traveling regularly within the territories of their offices. The consul was expected to build a network of contacts to ensure that, through him,

45 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Fol. 517–736; Pisko, *Elaborat über die Consularämter*, Üsküb, January 25, 1897, 5.

46 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Fol. 517–736, Pisko, *Elaborat über die Consularämter*, Üsküb, January 25, 1897. 3–4; Csaplár-Degovics, “A dalmáciai Borgo Erizzo.”



Austria-Hungary would gain prestige as a protector power and would be able to propagate its vision of the values of civilization. The consuls had to prevail on the Albanian beys to turn to them with their complaints and to seek them out as representatives of their interests and sources of advice, and not the state administration or state officials. The Austro-Hungarian consuls took this pattern from the practice of the French consuls in Syria. The primary means used to build a network of contacts were the distribution of gifts and distinctions of various kinds, regular or temporary subsidies, personal visits (e.g. extended stays with the bey families), measures taken against the state authorities, support for education in Albanian, and cultural and financial support for the Albanian national movement. Ballhausplatz also provided logistical support for the leaders of the national movement: they could bypass the controlled communication channels of the Ottoman Empire by using the local branches of the Austrian Post and Austrian Lloyd, which meant that the secrets contained in their letters were safe.<sup>47</sup>

All in all, the responsibilities and tasks of the consuls described above, the push for the transformation of the Albanian social hierarchy, and the efforts to promote economic expansion were little more than a west Balkan, Austro-Hungarian adaptation of the everyday practices used by the so-called indirect rule protectorates, which were based essentially on the British models in Africa and Asia. The fact that the Joint Chiefs of Staff allowed the military fleet to make regular demonstrations of force in Albanian ports in Ottoman territorial waters buttresses this claim. Indeed, an annual show of military force was one of the features of the British indirect rule in West Africa.<sup>48</sup>

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47 ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Fol. 192–516, Calice's report to Goluchowski, no. 658, Constantinople, February 18, 1897, 1–10; *ibid.*, Private letter written by Calice to Zwiedinek, Constantinople, March 3, 1898; *ibid.*, Reverta's report to Goluchowski, no. 8 D–K, Rome, March 20, 1897; ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Fol. 517–736; Pisko, *Elaborat über die Consularämter*, Üsküb, January 25, 1897. 1–6, and Beilag, 1–45; *ibid.*, The Information Bureau's report on Doçi's memorandum, Vienna, March 29, 1897, 1–13; ÖStA HHStA, I/2, Kt. 473, Fol. 517–736, Die albanesische Action im Jahre 1897; *ibid.*, Der Stand der nationalen Bewegung in Albanien (1901); *ibid.*, Memoire über Albanien; ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kwiatkowski, Kt. 1, Manuscript, 178–191; ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kwiatkowski, Kt. 2; Kwiatkowski: Lebenslauf, 30–79; Toleva, *Der Einfluss Österreich-Ungarns*, 427–31.

48 Crowder, "Indirect Rule: French and British Style"; Green, "Indirect Rule and Colonial Intervention"; Power, "'Individualism is the Antithesis of Indirect Rule': Cooperative Development"; Grishow, "Rural 'Community,' Chiefs and Social Capital," 70; Spear, "Neo-Traditionalism," 4; Nwabughuogu, "The Role of Propaganda"; Fisher, "Indirect Rule in the British Empire"; Reynolds, "Good and Bad Muslims"; Ruthner and Scheer, *Bosnien-Herzegowina*, 36–42, 228.

For as should be noted, Ballhausplatz's new Albanian policy also enjoyed the support of the joint staff. In a memorandum of April 2, 1897, Chief of the General Staff Friedrich Beck pushed for the creation of an independent, pro-Vienna Albania, which he supported with reference to allegedly "vital" reasons.<sup>49</sup> He considered it important to have a strong presence on the eastern Adriatic coast for two reasons from a military point of view. First, control of the area would ensure free passage for Austria-Hungary's military and merchant fleets to the Mediterranean through the Otranto Strait. Second, it would give the Monarchy a strategic position just to the south of Serbia and Montenegro.<sup>50</sup> In effect, Beck's plan would have meant the creation of a cordon sanitaire in Albania that would have protected the sea route, the free use of which was essential if Austria-Hungary sought to maintain its status as a great power. The chief of the General Staff (and Ballhausplatz) was merely adopting a common practice of colonial great powers: the British Empire, for example, surrounded its sea routes to India with a network of British protectorates in order to ensure that these routes remained safe for its ships.<sup>51</sup>

Beck adopted a committed imperialist policy: he asked the Austro-Hungarian consuls in Albania to gather geographical, cartographic, and infrastructural data. He was prepared, furthermore, to carry out independent military operations in Albanian territory, and he accepted the proposal which had been made by Ferit Vlora and allowed units of the joint navy to make regular demonstrations of force. One of the primary tasks of the units of the fleet that were deployed was to give Albanians a tangible demonstration of Austria-Hungary's military capabilities and the protections they enjoyed as a kind of protectorate. The first such demonstration was held in 1902, when the SMS Monarch (1895), SMS Wien (1895), and SMS Budapest (1896), three vessels which belonged to a relatively new class of battleship, docked in Durrës, a coastal city with the largest port in Albania.<sup>52</sup>

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Austria-Hungary's new Albanian policy led to serious great power rivalry between the Monarchy and Italy over the assertion of influence in Albania. To this day, the secondary literature on the

49 KA Operationsbüro, Fasz. 46, no. 29, Beiträge zur Klarstellung der bei einer etwaigen Änderung des status quo auf der Balkanhalbinsel in Betracht zu ziehenden Verhältnisse.

50 Schanderl, *Die Albanienpolitik Österreich-Ungarns*, 64.

51 Krause, *Das Problem der albanischen Unabhängigkeit*, 26–27; Hecht, "Graf Goluchowski als Außenminister," 125–27, 140; Onley, "The Raj Reconsidered," 44–62.

52 ÖStA HHStA, Nachlass Kwiatkowski, Kt. 2, Kwiatkowski: Lebenslauf, 44–45.

subject has reduced this great power rivalry, which unfolded in the ecclesiastical, economic, and cultural spheres, to the phenomenon of informal imperialism.<sup>53</sup> Yet the interests of the two great powers collided in another fringe territory of the Ottoman Empire, namely the Sudan. North Africa was an important cornerstone not only of Austria-Hungary's Balkan policy but also of Italy's.

### *Ballhausplatz's Experiences in the Sudan*

Historians who have done research on the Austro-Hungarian empire's policy in the Balkans have paid little attention to the fact that Ballhausplatz's ambitions in southeastern Europe went hand in hand with its presence in North Africa in the 1880s and 1890s. As early as the British occupation of Egypt and the 1882 Constantinople Conference to address the resulting Egyptian uprising, it had been perfectly clear to joint Foreign Minister Gustav von Kálnoky that any shift of power in Egypt would automatically give rise to international tensions in the Balkans, thus making it difficult to stabilize the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and hampering Austria-Hungary's efforts to position itself in southeastern Europe. Furthermore, the conflict in Egypt threatened Austria-Hungary's economic markets in the Levant. This was primarily why Ballhausplatz took an active political stance in North Africa during these two decades. In the great power rivalry, Ballhausplatz took part in diplomatic negotiations in support of British foreign policy interests.<sup>54</sup>

But how did Ballhausplatz end up getting involved in affairs in the Sudan? From the outset, in the 1840s, the Catholic missionaries from the Habsburg Empire, while spreading the faith and fighting the slave trade, very consciously sought to acquire economic markets for the empire in the region. In 1850, the Khartoum consulate was established to provide political protection for the missions. The Habsburg Consulate and the Catholic missions (Apostolic Vicariate of Central Africa, 1846) immediately developed a symbiotic relationship with each other, and under their oversight, religious and ecclesiastical affairs became completely intertwined (*"indivisibiler ac inseparabiliter"*) with commercial and political affairs. That was in part a consequence of the support shown by the Franz Joseph for the Catholic missions founded by the subjects of the Habsburg Empire in 1851.

53 Behnen, *Rüstung-Bündnis-Sicherheit*, Gostentschnigg, "Albanerkonvikt und Albanienkomitee," 313–37; Komár, *Az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia*, 26, 29, 194; Schanderl, *Die Albanienpolitik Österreich-Ungarns*, 22–23, 71, 117–27.

54 Komár, *Az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia*, 26, 29, 194.

A letter written in 1850 by the Slovenian Father Ignacij Knoblehar, who headed the missionaries, suggests that the monks involved in the mission were aware that, with their work, they could help further the process of colonization.<sup>55</sup>

The symbiosis between the missions in the Sudan and the Habsburg Consulate in Khartoum was so strong and their commercial ambitions so encouraging that Charles Augustus Murray, the British consul General in Alexandria (and also a man who acquired a reputation as an author of fiction), initiated the establishment of a British consulate in Khartoum. At Murray's suggestion, in 1850, John Petherick was appointed consul. Petherick was a merchant and mining expert with a strong knowledge of Arabic and the local conditions. In his reports to the Foreign Office in the 1860s, Petherick repeatedly accused Austria of using its local representatives to organize a colony at the confluence of the White and Blue Niles. Even if Ballhausplatz had entertained this idea, in the 1890s, political colonization had long since ceased to be one of the Dual Monarchy's aims in the Sudan.<sup>56</sup>

When developing the new Albanian policy, which of its experiences in the Sudan did Ballhausplatz learn draw on? The consulates in Khartoum and Albania were able to work closely with the denominational structure of the protectorate under the same conditions because they were all formally subject to the same international agreements. The Ottoman sultans had consented to the establishment of Habsburg Catholic missions and consulates in the Sudan and in the Albanian territories in the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 and the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739.<sup>57</sup>

The Austro-Hungarian consulates in the Sudan and Albania had one important thing in common: the consults sent by Ballhausplatz to both areas were well-qualified, multilingual, and had studied at the Academy of Oriental Languages in Vienna. This stood in sharp contrast to the practices of other great powers, which appointed people from very mixed backgrounds to similar posts.<sup>58</sup>

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55 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/8, a letter written by Knoblecher to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 6, 1850. Sauer, "Ein Jesuitenstaat," 23; Agstner, Das k. k. (k. u. k.) Konsulat für Central-Afrika, 10, 13; McEwan, *A Catholic Sudan Dream*, 43–44; Hill, *Egypt in the Sudan*, 98.

56 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/29/1/IIc, Die österreichische Mission von Central-Afrika 1894, 8–9; Santi and Hill, *The Europeans in the Sudan*, 174–75; McEwan, *A Catholic Sudan Dream*, 42.

57 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/30, Huber's report to the Ministry of Trade, no. 528, Alexandria, August 6, 1850; ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/8, Übersetzung eines Fermans für den Generalvikar von Centralafrika, Constantinople, early April, 1851; Agstner, Das k. k. (k. u. k.) Konsulat für Central-Afrika, 6–17.

58 McEwan, *A Catholic Sudan Dream*, 35–36, 85.

Although state interests and the interests of the Catholic Church were traditionally intertwined in the practices of the Austro-Hungarian foreign policy missions in the Ottoman Empire (the ambassador and consuls in Constantinople were also officials of the cult protectorate), the situations of the consulates in Khartoum and Albania differed from the situations of the other consulates. The Common Foreign Office coordinated its policies in the Balkans and North Africa in the last two decades of the nineteenth century: in order to appear as a successful great power in the former, it abandoned its previously acquired positions in the latter and supported the British Foreign Office. Albania and the Sudan, however, were on the periphery of the Ottoman Empire, where the various great powers had conflicting interests. In the Sudan, the British, French, Italian, and Egyptians competed to assert their interests. In Albania, Ottoman, Italian, Austro-Hungarian, and French ambitions collided.

The experiences in the Sudan were also useful in the development of the new Albanian policy because the work of the consulate in Khartoum was intertwined not only with the management of the protectorate but also with the efforts to handle the political tensions that had developed with Italy over the operation of the protectorate. These tensions stemmed essentially from the two problems discussed below, each of which also affected the work of Propaganda Fide.

Although 90 percent of the missions were financed by the Monarchy or the recently unified Germany, the institutions where the next generation of missionaries was trained were still in Italy (which also had unified in the meantime), in territories which had belonged to the Habsburgs. With the birth of the modern Italian state, Italian missionaries became increasingly committed to serving their government's aspirations for power. While the Ballhausplatz consuls and the personal commitment of Franz Joseph provided political protections for the missions in the Sudan and the missions were financed almost entirely by the German-speaking regions of Europe, many Italian missionaries were increasingly supportive of Italy's great power aspirations. They were encouraged in their work by the ambitions of the Italian state in neighboring Ethiopia and Somalia. According to Walter Sauer, the missionary order in the Sudan, which was created by Daniele Comboni, pursued a similar nationalist church policy.<sup>59</sup>

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59 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/28/2/I; ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/29/1/II: 1871–1911/d–j; McEwan, *A Catholic Sudan Dream*, 85, 93, 120, 126, 133, 137; Sauer, “Ein Jesuitenstaat in Afrika?” 61.

The other conflict of a legal nature related to the cult protectorate concerned the exercise of consular functions. In international relations, it has long been accepted that each state has formalized the right to protect its citizens in foreign affairs affecting its citizens. For many missionaries, the creation of a unified Italy means a change of nationality (or more precisely, citizenship). One could think of the aforementioned Daniele Comboni (1831–1881), for instance, who was one of the most prominent leaders of the Vicariate of Central Africa and who, from one moment to the next, went from being a Habsburg subject to being a subject of the House of Savoy. For decades, the Austro-Hungarian and Italian consuls struggled in their day-to-day workings with the legal complexities of this change of citizenship. Some Italian consuls were also sometimes eager to intervene in the affairs of Catholic clergy who, although Italian nationals, were Austrian citizens.<sup>60</sup>

The activities of missionaries of Italian nationality and Italy's great power ambitions in North Africa created lasting friction between Ballhausplatz, the Consulta (the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and Propaganda Fide (1866–1890). These frictions may have played a role in the decision of the papacy to work together with Austria-Hungary in its ecclesiastical policy in the Albanian territories at the turn of the century. The events which had taken place in the Sudan were repeated: this was why, in part, Ballhausplatz sought to replace members of the lower clergy and the orders in Albania who were of Italian nationality with Albanian priests educated in Austria.

It is worth keeping in mind, in the interests of understanding the broader context, that, in connection with the cult protectorate, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Austria-Hungary was confronted in North Africa and Albania not only by Italy but also by France. The French state had an older protectorate over Catholics in the Ottoman Empire dating back to the sixteenth century. Furthermore, in the nineteenth century, the French cult protectorate also went beyond its denominational borders and became an instrument with which France could pursue political aims. Between 1878 and 1903, the governments in Paris attempted to take the position of the Austro-Hungarian cult protectorate in the Albanian territories from the papacy.<sup>61</sup>

At the same time, as the French colonial ventures got closer and closer to the Austrian mission houses in the Sudan, the French Catholic Church

60 Benna, "Studien zum Kultusprotektorat," 33–35; Gstrein, *Unter Menschenbändlern im Sudan*, 25.

61 ÖStA HHStA, I/8, Kt. 710, Umfang und Art der Ausübung des französischen Kultusprotektorates, 1–175; Ippen, "Das religiöse Protektorat," 296, 299–300; Deusch, *Das k.(u.)k. Kultusprotektorat*, 635–36.



wanted to annex the Vicariate of Central Africa too. It made its first attempt to do in the 1860s, when Franz Binder from Transylvania was serving as consul in Khartoum. The second attempt came during the Mahdi uprising, when Europeans were forced to flee the Sudan. Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie, cardinal of Carthage and Algiers and Primate of Africa, was laboring ambitiously to Christianize the continent. With the help of Propaganda Fide, Lavigerie was able to get his hands on the two most important Austrian mission houses, Gondokoro and Heiligenkreuz. After the British put down the Mahdi uprising, the two mission houses were returned to the Vicariate of Central Africa. They were returned not only because the British sought to push the French out of the region. The events were also shaped by the fact that British General Charles Gordon, who was leading the efforts to consolidate the Sudan politically, was working alongside Rudolf Carl von Slatin, an Austrian colonial figure who had entered British service (and who had been raised to the rank of Pasha by the Ottomans).<sup>62</sup>

Finally, it is worth considering why it was possible for the Monarchy to benefit directly in Albania from its experiences in the Sudan. This was due primarily to the simple fact that, since the early 1880s, however Ballhausplatz's internal organization (the grouping of cases and referrals) shifted, the European, Asian, and African territories of the Ottoman Empire and its vassal states in Europe and Africa were always in the hands of the same referent. In 1896, this was Julius Zwiedinek, who was entrusted in part with developing concrete plans for the Albanian operations (the other person in charge of the Albanian action plans was the aforementioned Norbert Schmucker, who at the time was the Austro-Hungarian consul general in Bombay).<sup>63</sup>

Another clear indication of the ways in which the cult protectorate policies in the Sudan and Albania had an impact on each other after 1896 is the fact that, in accordance with Ballhausplatz's system for managing documents, the consulate in Khartoum received extracts or copies of some of the statistics concerning payments related to operations in Albania. Accordingly, duplicates of certain cult protectorate documents relating to Albania (understood as a

62 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/28/2/I, Africa 2a, a letter written by Reverta to Kálnoky, no. 46, Rome, December 31, 1889, 5.

ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/28/2/I, Africa 2b, Centralafrikanische Mission and Abgrenzung des Sudan Vicariats; ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/29/1/IIc, Die österreichische Mission von Central-Afrika 1894, 26; Hill, *Slatin Pasha*; McEwan, *A Catholic Sudan Dream*, I, 74–76, 116–17, 120.

63 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F4/450, no. 69–70, “Kanzleiverordnungen”; ÖStA HHStA, AR, F4/456, Referats- und Geschäftseinteilungen.

geographical region) were also filed under the heading “Africa” in the Austrian State Archives.<sup>64</sup>

Later evidence that Ballhausplatz’s Balkan and Albanian policy was not completely divorced from its approach to North Africa is found in the person of Aristoteles Petrović. Petrović left his post as consul general in Alexandria to become the Austro-Hungarian delegate to the International Control Commission for Albania, which was formed in 1913. Petrović was also one of the experts in charge of colonial affairs for and a confidant of Leopold Berchtold, the joint foreign minister.<sup>65</sup>

### *The Albanian Lobby*

In time, the people responsible for the implementation of the decisions reached at the 1896 conference and the participants in the operations in Albania formed a lobby which, by the year of annexation, had grown into an imperial interest group. Kurt Gostentschnigg devoted an entire monograph of several hundred pages to a detailed presentation of the activities of this lobby, including the ways in which it influenced Ballhausplatz’s Albania policy, so in the discussion below I limit myself to the most important features of this interest group.<sup>66</sup>

The Albania lobby never formally organized into an association. It was very heterogeneous, as it was made up of loosely connected subgroups. Members were recruited from different social strata and ethnicities, and they joined the lobby for varying reasons and with varying aims. However, the interest group did have a strong Catholic, aristocratic character. The subgroups consisted of diplomatic officials, military officers, aristocrats, scientists, scholars, journalists, and one official-historian. For the most part, they were indifferent to Albania. In their eyes, the Albanian cause was little more than a means of demonstrating the strength and unity of Austria-Hungary as an empire, both to the outside world and domestically. In the last decade and a half of the Dual Monarchy, they came together to form a supranational lobby which, step by step, brought Ballhausplatz’s Albania policy under its influence.

The lobby was both the driving force behind Austro-Hungarian policy towards Albania and the source of expertise on the culture and region. The interest group functioned within the sphere of the joint Foreign Ministry. Some

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64 ÖStA HHStA, AR, F27/28/2/I, Africa 2b, Abgrenzung des Sudan Vicariats, Subventionen III–VI.

65 *Jahrbuch des K. und K. Auswärtigen Dienstes 1914*, 378–79; Bridge, “Tarde Venientibus Ossa,” 319–30.

66 Gostentschnigg, *Wissenschaft im Spannungsfeld*.



of its members were also ministry officials or consuls. In time, they emerged as experts on the Albanian question in the eyes of the relevant policymakers. Step by step, they instrumentalized the foreign ministry and, through it, the consular network. They participated in Albanian nation-building and state-building as external ethnic entrepreneurs.<sup>67</sup> This was possible because the changes in personnel at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not drastically hamper the work of the lobby and its pursuit of the original program. The Albanian beys and the diaspora communities involved in Vienna's project and the various political and cultural operations undertaken in the service of this project were able to count on continuous subsidies from Vienna over the span of some two decades. In the first decade of the new century, some members of the lobby were also continuously recruiting new members who were committed to the imperialist Austro-Hungarian Albanian policy: experts in the Foreign Ministry who had been in charge of Albanian affairs since 1896 were joined at Ballhausplatz for the most part by new young people selected and appointed for this purpose from among the students at the Oriental Academy by Lajos Thallóczy (including, for instance, Carl Buchberger and Konstantin Bilinski Jr.).

In addition to the work of the lobby, another important part of the background of Vienna's aspirations and operations in Albania was the birth of Albanian studies as a modern, scientific discipline in Austria-Hungary. In the 1850s, Habsburg consuls serving in Albanian territories began, purely out of their own interests, to pursue scholarly research in which they examined questions concerning the linguistic, ethnographic, and historical aspects of the almost unknown Albanian people.<sup>68</sup> In time, their research was published in book form. As the great powers began to take an increasing interest in Albania, some of the most eminent Balkan historians of the time also started studying Albanian history, including for instance the Czech historian Konstantin Jireček, the Croatian Milan Šufflay, and the aforementioned Thallóczy.<sup>69</sup> By the turn of the century, modern Albanian studies had claimed its place as one of the philological sciences. By supporting this new discipline, Ballhausplatz gained another opportunity to increase the support it enjoyed among the activists of the Albanian national movement, much as it also gained new opportunities to arrive

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67 Gostentschnigg, "Die albanischen Parteigänger Österreich-Ungarns," 119–70; Csaplár-Degovics, "Österreichisch-ungarische Interessendurchsetzung," 180.

68 Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*.

69 Thallóczy, *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen*; Thallóczy et al., *Acta et diplomata res Albaniae*.

at clearer assessments of the economic potential of the Albanian territories and to arrive at a more precise scholarly and statistical understanding of Albania.

Though the new discipline of Albanian studies was not the product of great power politics, it nonetheless was in a closely symbiotic relationship with the politics of Ballhausplatz after 1896 and with members of the Albanian lobby. Officials in the common foreign ministry regarded Albanian studies as an imperial discipline. In 1911, Head of Department Karl Macchio noted in a summary for internal use that the study of Albanian culture and history played the same role for Austria-Hungary as Egyptology did for France and Mesopotamian studies for Britain. All three disciplines were important because of the interests and aims of the great powers in the east, and the financial support that was provided was an indispensable part of great power politics. It is worth noting, however that unlike Egyptology and Mesopotamian studies, Albanian studies not only gained an institutionalized form in Austria-Hungary.<sup>70</sup>

### *Conclusion and Epilogue*

Though the archival sources that I have drawn on in the course of this inquiry avoided the use of the contemporary colonial terminology, in my view, one can confidently regard the new Austro-Hungarian Albanian policy of 1896 as a fundamentally colonial policy. On the one hand, the Austro-Hungarian ventures in Albania fit Osterhammel's concepts of "border colonization" and "construction of naval networks" and Trotha's interpretational perspective on colonialism. Coastal Albania before World War I was a perfect example of an ideal potential colony according to the turn-of-the-century definition. It was relatively close to the Dual Monarchy, which meant that formally, the new Albanian policy formally fell into the category of so-called border colonization.<sup>71</sup> Albania was separated from the interior by high mountains and was therefore most easily accessible by sea, which means that from a certain perspective it could have been considered an overseas territory. Almost all of Albania's coastline was splotted with swamps that were breeding grounds for malaria. This strip of land which belonged to the Muslim East was practically unknown in Europe. There was a considerable cultural difference and distance between the potential colonizer and

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70 ÖStA HHStA PA, XIV/21, Äußerung betreffs der materielle Unterstützung des [...] Werkes "Acta et diplomata res Albaniae med. Illustrantiam," Vienna, October 25, 1911.

71 Trotha, "Colonialism," 433; Wendt, *Vom Kolonialismus zur Globalisierung*, 234; Osterhammel and Jansen, *Kolonialismus*, 1–8; Osterhammel, *Colonialism*, 4–10.

the colonized. In 1896, the Dual Monarchy began diligently acquiring scientific knowledge of the region and its culture, a project that enjoyed the support of the joint ministries, the scientific institutions in both halves of the empire, and the joint Austro-Hungarian General Staff.<sup>72</sup>

On the other hand, the unpublished sources cited in this study (the memoranda written by the Vlora brothers, joint Chiefs of Staff Friedrich Beck, and Head of Department Karl Macchio and the minutes of the 1896 conference) very clearly reveal that Ballhausplatz's operations in Albania were aimed at establishing an unequal, asymmetrical relationship with the Albanian territories: geographical Albania was to be made dependent on Austria-Hungary politically, economically, and culturally. Through a policy of subsidies and an indirect form of rule adapted to the circumstances in the western Balkans (based in part on military and economic influence), Ballhausplatz sought to transform and control the hierarchy of Albanian society and the Catholic Church; and through the Albanian nation-building project, Ballhausplatz wanted gradually to transform and replace the local cultural mindset, which essentially had been under the influence of the Muslim, oriental Ottoman Empire, with the Central European, Christian values of the "civilized" empire of Austria-Hungary.

The fact that Adalbert Fuchs, who was the head of Ballhausplatz's colonial affairs department, took part in the launch of the operations in Albania further confirms that the empire's Albania policy was indeed fundamentally a colonial undertaking, as does the fact that the Austro-Hungarian consuls involved in the day-to-day shaping of Albanian policy (as did many of the members of the Albanian lobby, including Friedrich Beck, Ferenc Nopcsa, and Leopold Chlumetzky) were all members of the Austrian Flottenverein. The contemporary British and French analogies in Syria, West Africa, and India also lay bare the colonial character of Albanian politics.

The final stop, as it were, of the Austro-Hungarian policy towards Albania in 1912–1914 was the complete economic exploitation of the emerging independent state of Albania. The propaganda efforts of the Albanian lobby between 1896 and 1912 had successfully mobilized society in the two halves of the empire. In Austria, in 1913, inspired by the formation of the British Albanian Committee, an Albanian Committee was formed consisting of aristocrats and leading figures from large industrial and financial interest groups. The primary objective of this committee was to bring the financial affairs of the new Balkan

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72 Ruthner, Habsburgs "Dark Continent," 45–48.

country under its control through the organization of the Albanian National Bank. In an interesting episode in the evolution of colonial thinking in Austrian public opinion, when a revolt broke out in Albania against the princely power in June 1914, civil activists began to recruit a so-called Albanian Legion in Vienna in defense of public order and the interests of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The goal of the recruiting office was to organize independent fighting units consisting of volunteers who would travel to Albania at their own expense and fight against the rebels in central Albania with their own weapons. According to unpublished archival sources, within 24 hours, 2,000 people had signed up, and according to the Vienna police, nearly 10,000 more were expected to arrive the following day. In the end, this office, with which the Austrian Albania Committee was in direct contact, was closed by the Vienna police at the request of joint Foreign Minister Berchtold. Despite the Foreign Ministry's prohibition, however, several dozen volunteers still traveled to Albania to take part in the fighting.<sup>73</sup>

As for Hungary, the establishment of Albania went hand in hand with the birth of independent Albanian studies in Hungary, which served Hungary's imperial aspirations of Hungary at the national level.<sup>74</sup> More important was the fact that an Austro-Hungarian-Italian negotiating committee agreed to divide Albania economically into three spheres of interest in November 1913 (50 percent for Italy, 25 percent for Austria, and 25 percent for Hungary). Key to the Hungarian success was, first, that the members of the Asiatic Society of Hungary (the Turanian Society), as Hungarian state-officials, play a significant role in the imperial and colonial actions of Ballhausplatz in Albania and Anatolia between 1912 and 1914. Second, the Hungarian Prime Minister István Tisza pressured Leopold Berchtold to win acceptance for the Budapest government's national aspirations.<sup>75</sup>

Ultimately, the way in which Albania was economically partitioned reveals that colonialism did not become a fourth common cause within the Habsburg Empire. Austria and Hungary acted as separate colonizing parties. In talks with

73 ÖStA HHStA, XIV/64/26, Löwenthal's report to Berchtold, No. 51A-B/P, Durazzo, July 11, 1914. KA MKFE, Kt. 203, Haber's report, no number, Vienna, June 27, 1914. KA AOK-Evidenzbureau, Kt. 3498, Hranilovic: Albanien 1914, Anwerbung von Freiwilligen für Albanien; OSZK, Kézirattár, Fol. Hung. 1677, Bosniaca IX/6, a letter written by Berchtold to Tisza, Vienna, June 27, 1914. Freundlich, *Die albanische Korrespondenz*, XXXVII, 499–500.

74 Csaplár-Degovics and Jusufi, *Das ungarisch-albanische Wörterbuch*, 73–98.

75 MNL OL, K 255, 672/6 (1913), no. 4926/P.M./1913, "II. rész; Elnökség," [Part II. Presidency], Budapest, December 19, 1913, 1–5.

the Italian representatives, a joint team of economists of Austrian and Hungarian nationality took part in the negotiations. In other words, the international negotiations were conducted at the level of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The signing and of the agreements and their parliamentary approval, however, were the responsibilities of the respective Austrian and Hungarian authorities. Formally, this never actually took place, as the January 1914 coup d'état led by the Young Turks took events in Albania in an entirely new direction.

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# The Prochaska Affair Revisited: Towards a Revaluation of Austria-Hungary's Balkan Consuls

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Consuls and consular diplomacy in the long nineteenth century are enjoying a growing interest across various historiographies. This article explores the prominent case of the Austro-Hungarian consul Oskar Prochaska in an effort to offer insight into consular officials as actors of diplomacy and empire in a Habsburg setting. Prochaska, who famously got caught up in a major diplomatic crisis during the First Balkan War in 1912, has never been studied as a protagonist in the events that came to be known as the Prochaska Affair. This calls for an analysis of Prochaska's diplomatic activity as consul, understood here as his social interaction with his counterparts and adversaries on the ground in Prizren, Kosovo. Adopting a local perspective on a crisis of European and global importance, the article argues for a revaluation of consuls and their bureaucracy as a promising subject for cultural and social histories of the Habsburg Empire and its foreign policy, both in the Balkans and around the world.

Keywords: diplomacy, consuls, Balkan Wars 1912–13, Serbia, Austria-Hungary

## *Story*

It began with a mistake. When Oskar Prochaska, the Habsburg representative in Prizren, heard of the approaching horrors of the battlefield, he should have known better than to write any letters home. In the early days of the First Balkan War, the consul should have realized that his courier could be intercepted and his correspondence seized. This is indeed what happened on October 24, 1912 on the road between Prizren and the post office at Ferizovik (Ferizaj, Ferizović/Uroševac).<sup>1</sup> That afternoon in Kosovo, the finer points of diplomatic custom did not impress a Serbian cavalry patrol. Nor did civilian concerns have much bearing on the soldiers' superiors. They broke the seals and read the letters. Any

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1 See the reports written by Prochaska and forwarded via telegraph by his immediate superior Consul Heimroth in Üsküp to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, November 26–27, 1912, no. 104, 106–107. These became part of a voluminous internal dossier which can be found in *Hans-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv* Vienna, *Politisches Archiv* (hereafter cited as HHStA PA) XII 415; for the three reports, see fol. 101–106 and 117–120.

resistance, any information that could aid the enemy, had to be suppressed.<sup>2</sup> With his own written words, the consul, too, had revealed himself to be an enemy.

A week later, when Serbian forces finally reached Prizren, Prochaska may have anticipated what was coming. Unlike his Russian colleague, the only other foreign consul who had stayed behind, Prochaska did not greet the new rulers at the gates, nor did he show up at their celebrations of victory, waiting instead for instructions from Vienna to arrive. As time went by, none would. The Serbian military now controlled all lines of communication between the war zone and the world. Or rather, all means except for word of mouth. Rumors spread through town and country: Had the Austrian consul organized resistance, handed out weapons to the locals? Had shots been fired from the attic of his consulate, had the consul even fired at the Serbian soldiers himself? In Prizren, there were people willing to attest to this, and Prochaska's silence seemed to confirm his guilt. So did his hiding behind the consulate's high walls and his refusal to visit with the new commanding general, Božidar Janković, or any Serb official.<sup>3</sup> With his own lack of action, the stranded diplomat had isolated himself even more.

Meanwhile, the consul's lost letters traveled up their captors' chain of command, from desk to desk and from Kosovo to Belgrade, and briefly even to Saint Petersburg.<sup>4</sup> The many officers, government officials, and diplomats who

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2 Circulating information on violent transgressions (whether real or alleged) was common during the Balkan Wars, as belligerents sought to mobilize support for their own causes and condemn their opponents; see Çetinkaya, "Atrocity Propaganda." On the heightened brutality of the conflict, which displayed "elements of a civil strife," see Delis, "Violence and Civilians." The political function of violence during and after the Balkan Wars in a broader perspective is discussed in Biondich, "Balkan Wars." For a long-term perspective on everyday violence in Ottoman Kosovo up to and including 1912–13, see Frantz, *Gewalt und Koexistenz*.

3 General Janković in Prizren to Army High Command in Skopje, November 7–20, 1912, no. 661. DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 255.

4 Passages in DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 255 and 464 indicate that Prochaska's original letters and/or copies passed from the hands of General Božidar Janković (Third Army) via Živojin O. Dačić (civil servant and author) to Crown Prince Aleksandar (First Army) and later, after an excursion to Russia, to Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Nikola Pašić, who intended to keep them. In addition, there are several documents in Miloš Bogičević's edition of Serbian sources (Boghitschewitsch, *Auswärtige Politik*) which detail how the letters were sent in secret between Serbia and Russia. They also contain a passage in which Pašić writes that "we will, if necessary, make use of them [i.e. Prochaska's letters], but of course only if we can say that we found them accidentally and not that they have been taken from the courier." (Ibid., vol. 1, no. 227–229, 232–234, quote on 234.) One must add, however, that Bogičević, a disgraced former Serbian diplomat, is known to have manipulated and falsified documents in his edition very frequently, which calls into question the assumption that the passages on Prochaska's letters are genuine. Nonetheless, the underlying intention to keep and use them seems credible enough and shines through in the much more reliably edited documents in DSPKS as well.

saw them never publicly acknowledged their existence. What precisely it was that Prochaska wrote to his mother in Vienna and his brother in Brno (Brünn) is not known, but a Serbian internal report summarizes what irritated the letters' unintended audience so much: "Mr. Prohaska [...] says that our army bombed and set fire to Priština and massacred its inhabitants, that Serbs and Montenegrins are *die Wilden*, and many other untruths."<sup>5</sup> This says it all. Frank in expression and careless in delivery, Prochaska's words betrayed his private feelings to a very partial public in the Serbian military and government, convincing "the savages" as he called them that the rumors of his scheming must be true.

But the consul Prochaska is not remembered only for having penned these outrageous letters. He is remembered as the man who caused the Prochaska Affair, a major diplomatic crisis on the European stage.<sup>6</sup> Much like the precise contents of his letters, the details of his activity on the ground have remained elusive, and the local roots of the conflict remain unexplained. Cut off as he was from the world beyond Prizren, Prochaska found himself on his own and, as we will see, unable to cope. The world, in turn, began to wonder what had happened to Prochaska. Once again, rumors arose, but this time in Austria-Hungary and in the press, and now it was the consul who was portrayed as the victim. Had Prochaska been detained, insulted, injured, even executed? Had he—the most sensational claim of all—been castrated by the Serbs?<sup>7</sup>

For several weeks in the winter of 1912, war over the consul's sad fate seemed imminent and necessary to many in the Dual Monarchy. The passions stirred across the Habsburg Empire, and across Serbia in defiant reply, had turned a matter of diplomatic discretion into a raging public spectacle.<sup>8</sup> While the two governments' internal investigations were conducted behind closed doors, Europe looked on in sympathy with one side or the other. By the time it transpired that Prochaska was well and unharmed, just as the Serbs had always maintained, the public agitation so long in the making would not simply go away. It turned against the Habsburg elites, especially the foreign minister and his top

5 See the previously cited report by Janković, point 9 and annex point 19. DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 255.

6 A useful overview can be found in the online encyclopedia article by Hall, "Prochaska Affair."

7 On the Prochaska Affair in two important Viennese newspapers, see Gulla, *Prestigeverlust oder Krieg?*, 64–82. The notions of "civilization" vs. "barbarism" in the press coverage of the Balkan Wars in a broader perspective are explored in Keisinger, *Unzivilisierte Kriege*, a short English version of which appears in Geppert et al., *Wars*, 343–58.

8 As Tamara Scheer has pointed out, issues of Austro-Hungarian domestic and foreign policy were closely intertwined both in government thinking and the press coverage of the Balkan Wars; the public perceived the events as anything but distant; see Scheer, "Public Sphere," 301–19.

officials, who appeared as warmongers and bullies against their tiny, innocent neighbor. Indeed, the pressure that Vienna had put on its adversaries in Belgrade forced them to back down. The Serbian government issued a public apology for its share in the escalation and quietly abandoned its most coveted aim, which was to gain a harbor on the Adriatic.<sup>9</sup> In effect, however, this momentary victory cost the Habsburgs dearly. It antagonized the Serbs even further and deepened the impression already prevalent, both among European diplomats and in the public eye, that the Dual Monarchy always tried to cheat and manipulate its smaller Balkan rivals.<sup>10</sup>

### *Context*

The Prochaska Affair shaped the political outcome of the Balkan War of 1912 for Austria-Hungary and Serbia and thus brought both one step closer to the Great War of 1914. Accordingly, Prochaska's name is found in many histories of Austro-Hungarian foreign policy, Habsburg-Serbian relations, and the build-up to World War I, though it is usually mentioned only in passing.<sup>11</sup> Apart from

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9 The larger foreign political context is explored from an Austro-Hungarian and German perspective in Kos, *Interessen*. Prime Minister Pašić paid a personal visit to the Austro-Hungarian representative in Belgrade, Ugron, to express his regrets about the incident and also confided that his government had already resolved internally to give in on the harbor question. See Minister Ugron in Belgrade to Foreign Ministry in Vienna, December 21, 1912, no. 186 A–C. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 215–223.

10 For example, as late as July 21, 1914 in St. Petersburg, the French president Poincaré alluded to the Prochaska Affair (together with the similarly inflammatory Friedjung Affair of 1909) in a public exchange of words with Szapáry, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Russia. See Paléologue, *Ambassador's Memoirs*, vol. 1, 18.

11 Although offering different interpretations, various authors underscore the crisis's "manipulative" character (i.e. its alleged orchestration by various interest groups) as well as its place in the run-up to the First World War. See for example, Friedjung, *Zeitalter*, vol. 3, 222–27 (pro-war circles and the governments on both sides are to be blamed for fueling and delaying the resolution of the Prochaska Affair, while the Viennese press deliberately scandalized it in order to attack the Ballhausplatz's changed press policy). Seton-Watson, "Murder at Sarajevo," 491 ("the imaginary Prochaska incident was invented [by the Austrians] to prepare opinion for a war"). Ćorović, *Relations*, 553–56 and 575–76 (Prochaska was biased by his "hatred for the Serbs" and "these incidents were welcomed and deliberately exploited" by his government). Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, 283 and 445 ("a modest but inept exercise in media manipulation that provided further ammunition for those who claimed that Austria always argued with forged documents and false accusations"). Scheer, *Minimale Kosten*, 71–72 (given their "mistrust against Serbia" that had been nourished by years of alarming political reports, Habsburg officials were "certain that abuse [against Prochaska] could actually have occurred"). Rauchensteiner, *First World War*, 104 ("incompetence and a targeted campaign" resulting in a "loss of prestige and credibility" for the Habsburgs, a development which their rivals happily exploited). Bjelajac, "'Humanitarian' Pretext," 133–35 (biased reportage created by Prochaska and his colleagues contributed to the spread of misinformation and atrocity propaganda against Serbia).



scattered references, very little original and in-depth work on the Prochaska Affair was published over the course of the past century. Moreover, there has hardly been any interest in Oskar Prochaska (1876–1945), the man and diplomat, so much so that he does not appear as a historical actor in the scholarship, or even just as an active participant in his own story.

Most traditional histories of Austro-Hungarian foreign relations and the power politics of empire, even if they consider seemingly remote and unimportant places such as Prizren at all,<sup>12</sup> would still not pay much attention to people like Prochaska because he was merely a consul.<sup>13</sup> The reasons for this neglect seem to lie in the late-Habsburg period itself. Even though, by the turn of the twentieth century, consular activity had long since become essential to the conduct of diplomacy, with hundreds of imperial-and-royal consulates dotting the globe,<sup>14</sup> consular officials generally could not hope to be perceived as fully competent diplomats. As members of a predominantly bourgeois institution, most consuls were separated from their blue-blooded superiors by a wide social gulf in a division that reflected Habsburg society at large.<sup>15</sup> Later observers, frequently drawing on anecdotal evidence, were led to believe that the rigid social hierarchies that pervaded the Habsburg foreign service precluded most consuls not only from socializing with their aristocratic “betters” (which is accurate)<sup>16</sup> but also from engaging in actual diplomatic work.

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12 Compare the comprehensive argument for “previously overlooked forms, venues, geographies, and levels” of international/diplomatic history from an Ottomanist perspective in Alloul and Martykánová, “New Ground.”

13 As exemplified by Helmut Rumpler’s brief and rather superficial but subsequently frequently cited assessment that the consular service had no form of political or diplomatic mandate and was therefore largely irrelevant except with regard to matters of trade. See Rumpler, “Rahmenbedingungen,” 48–50. On the misrepresentation of consuls in a broader historiographical perspective, see Leira and Neumann, “Past Lives.”

14 To give precise numbers, in 1900, Austria-Hungary maintained 414 consular representations around the world, most of them honorary offices. Among the 77 *effektive Ämter* (i.e. those staffed by salaried state officials), there were 24 consulates-general, 40 consulates, eleven vice-consulates, and two consular agencies. See Agstner: “Institutional History,” 39–40.

15 On the social and cultural history of the Austro-Hungarian foreign service (albeit with relatively few remarks on consuls), see William D. Godsey’s pathbreaking work in Godsey, *Aristocratic Redoubt* and Godsey, “Culture of Diplomacy.”

16 One popular anecdote comes from Paul von Hevesy (Hevesy Pál). In 1912, the year of the Prochaska Affair, Hevesy arrived at the Austro-Hungarian embassy in Constantinople as a newly appointed attaché. When Hevesy started spending time with colleagues from the consulate as well, his peers at the embassy intervened: “Either you socialize with us or with *them*.” This anecdote appears in works by several authors, including in Matsch, *Auswärtige Dienst*, 92.



Today, as actor-centric and socially-informed biographic approaches to diplomacy are gaining traction, historians are finally ready to perceive consuls as diplomats and actors of empire.<sup>17</sup> Social practices and micro-level interactions come into focus, raising large-scale questions about the relations between “society,” “state,” and “empire” beyond the outdated national paradigm.<sup>18</sup> Further inspiration can be found in new histories of the state administration. Here, too, scholars increasingly study state officials as actors, both individually and collectively.<sup>19</sup> All three branches of the Habsburg foreign service (the central ministry; the diplomatic service; and the consular service) were part of the same bureaucratic organization and, as such, must be studied together. The hundreds of foreign-service officials employed in Vienna; at embassies and diplomatic missions; and at consulates answered to a common hierarchical structure and worked towards shared objectives, at least ideally.<sup>20</sup> That said, the foreign service was anything but lifeless and monolithic.<sup>21</sup> Consuls, whose numbers grew rapidly from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, added to the diversity of this bureaucracy and the Habsburg civil service at large with their varied backgrounds, skills, and career trajectories.<sup>22</sup>

There is now a growing interest in consuls across different historiographies.<sup>23</sup> Notably, in the context of the Balkans in the long nineteenth century, Holly Case’s argument that the activity of foreign consuls in the Ottoman Empire led

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17 On actor-centric and biographical approaches to diplomatic history and the history of empires, see e.g. Mösslang and Riotte, *Diplomats’ World*; Thiessen and Windler, *Akteure der Außenbeziehungen*; Tremml-Werner and Goetze, “Multitude of Actors”; Buchen and Rolf, *Eliten im Vielvölkerreich*; Hirschhausen, “New Imperial History?”; Nemes, *Another Hungary*.

18 For a comprehensive discussion of practice-based approaches to diplomatic history, see the introduction to Hennings and Sowerby, *Practices of Diplomacy*.

19 Adlgasser and Lindström, *Habsburg Civil Service*; Deak, *Multinational State*; Göderle, “De l’empire des Habsbourg”; Heindl, *Bürokratie und Beamte*.

20 For a study of intra-imperial policy rivalries in which consuls play a part, see Callaway: “Battle over Information.”

21 See Godsey’s works (as cited above) and more recently also Somogyi, “Influence of the Compromise.”

22 In recent years, two voluminous handbooks have been published by the most prolific scholars of the Habsburg consular service, Rudolf Agstner (posthumously) and Engelbert Deusch. Their many works are of mixed quality and reliability, as the two authors generally did not seek to place the rich source material they unearthed over many years in a larger context of analytical questions and academic debates. That said, both have created indispensable preconditions for further research, especially with their handbooks. See Agstner, *Handbuch* and Deusch, *Konsuln*.

23 For an introduction to new approaches to consular history, see Ulbert and Prijac, *Consulship* and Melissen, “Consular Dimension.”

to a “quiet revolution” of the international order deserves wide discussion.<sup>24</sup> When it comes to Austria-Hungary, however, studies focused specifically on consular diplomacy, the consular bureaucracy, and consuls as agents of formal and informal empire are still few and far between. A quick review of important exceptions (Nicole Phelps writing on transatlantic migration and international law, Alison Frank Johnson on emotions and honor codes, Barbara Haider-Wilson on transnational entanglements, and Ellinor Forster on intermediaries and knowledge production) serves to underscore the potential of the field.<sup>25</sup>

Given that the primary direction of Austria-Hungary’s imperial ambitions faced to the southeast, any exploration of Habsburg consuls as political actors should take into account the Balkan-Mediterranean region in which Prochaska and his colleagues were engaged.<sup>26</sup> So far, the great importance of this region to the k.u.k. imperial project contrasts with a dearth of in-depth studies on Habsburg consuls, whose names are usually limited to the footnotes (where their reports are cited) or who are portrayed as the featureless chess pieces of their distant masters. Once again, there are important exceptions: among them, Tamara Scheer’s book on the Habsburg “presence” in and around Taşlica (Plevla, Pljevlja) just north of Kosovo sheds much light on everyday life and local diplomacy at an Austro-Hungarian consulate;<sup>27</sup> an article by Krisztián Csaplár-Degovics traces in detail how consuls built local networks of informants and political clients in central Albania;<sup>28</sup> and Dušan Fundić’s recent monograph on Austria-Hungary and the creation of the Albanian state offers a complex view on consular activity.<sup>29</sup> It is no coincidence that these three works investigate the same part of the world and that two of them tackle the same context, specifically, the Habsburgs’ cultivation of relations with Albanians. Indeed, by 1900, this had become the primary political task for Prochaska and his colleagues in the central

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24 Case, “Quiet Revolution.”

25 Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations*; Frank, “Bureaucracy of Honor”; Haider-Wilson, *Friedlicher Kreuzzug*; Forster, “Mapping and Appropriating.”

26 For an example of newer studies on this topic, see Brendel, “Drang nach Süden.” An overview of the political role of Austria-Hungary’s consuls in the Balkans is given in Kammerhofer, “Konsularwesen.” Further material on consuls as actors of empire can be found in Gostentschnigg, *Wissenschaft*.

27 Scheer, *Minimale Kosten*. While not formally a consulate, the Austro-Hungarian “civil commissariat” in Taşlica was always headed by a consular official and performed the regular duties of a consulate (on this, see *ibid.*, 107–18).

28 Csaplár-Degovics, “Interessendurchsetzung.”

29 Fundić, *Austrougarska i nastanak Albanije*.

Balkans. Nevertheless, it bears repeating that consuls' political roles were varied and not limited to this region alone.

The final academic work that needs to be discussed here is also the most important contribution on the Prochaska Affair. In the 1970s, the renowned Habsburg historian Robert Kann explored the topic in a lecture that was later published as a booklet.<sup>30</sup> This, in itself, was already fortunate. Without the help of Kann's erudite and stylish account, the Prochaska Affair might have faded from the memory of Habsburgists altogether. But Kann's short text also has its limitations. It remains firmly centered on Vienna and pays exclusive attention to elite actors at or near the foreign ministry. With much of the given space devoted to a discussion of the press coverage and public opinion, Kann's account offers little information on Prochaska in Prizren. On the contrary, Kann uses every opportunity to belittle the consul, depicting him as more of a curiosity than a serious subject of inquiry.<sup>31</sup> While Kann's study offers considerable insight into the political events of the day and manages to place the Prochaska Affair in its diplomatic context on the highest level, it falls short in its overall failure to take a local dimension into consideration as well. To date, Kann's essay remains the only dedicated study of the Prochaska Affair, and while it continues to be highly useful and relevant, it should by no means be seen as definite.

It seems unsatisfactory, then, that we know nearly nothing about the situation in Prizren, where everything began. Let me therefore pose the simple question: What did Prochaska do during the Prochaska Affair?

### *A Local Affair*

Events unfolded rapidly in Kosovo during the first weeks of the war. On October 17, 1912, Serbia joined its allies and declared war on the Ottoman Empire. Soon thereafter, Prochaska's letters were seized en route to the post office (as mentioned above) and the first detachments of the Serbian forces reached Prizren and captured it without a fight. Well before the end of the month, telegraphic contact between Vienna and its three consulates in Kosovo had been lost.<sup>32</sup> On November 5, General Janković arrived in Prizren and established his administration. On November 8, the Serbian envoy in Vienna

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30 Kann, *Prochaska-Affäre*. The text is 39 pages long.

31 Ibid., 1 and especially 36–37.

32 Minister Ugron in Belgrade to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, October 19, 1912, no.112. HHStA PA 385. When Prochaska forwarded Tahy's report that Mitrovica was being cut off by the Serbian military, this

demanded that Prochaska be immediately recalled, leading the Ballhausplatz to push for an investigation that would allow an Austro-Hungarian consul to travel to Kosovo.<sup>33</sup> It took several weeks to agree on the particulars, during which time the Serbs began to gather information for their own purposes. Vienna spoke of deliberate delaying tactics, while the Pašić government blamed an uncooperative military.<sup>34</sup> In the end, both procedures ran parallel and separate from each other in another sign of the two governments' mutual distrust.

As part of the Serbian investigation, General Janković filed a first report on Prochaska's alleged activity on November 20.<sup>35</sup> This preliminary report mostly consisted of a long list of unlikely rumors and unfavorable interpretations of the consul's daily work with political clients, but it also included several points that seem more plausible. Four of them involve Nikolai Alekseevič Emelianov, the Russian consul, who had probably raised these allegations himself. According to the first one, Prochaska had stopped an Ottoman officer in the street shortly before Prizren was captured and berated him in public for his intention to seek Emelianov's protection. Prochaska had then led the officer (and the 6,000 lira he had intended to take to the Russian consul) to his own consulate. Another allegation notes how Prochaska had publicly exclaimed on two occasions (once in the presence of an unnamed foreign consul, who must have been Emelianov) that he was opposed to the offensive alliance of Montenegro and Serbia and that "Austria will never allow it!," meaning its success.<sup>36</sup> Finally, the third and fourth allegations contrast the two consuls' reactions to the arrival of the Serbian administration: Emelianov had established personal and official relations by visiting the general two times within 24 hours and had also taken part in a celebratory church service, whereas Prochaska had refused any contact whatsoever.<sup>37</sup>

Complaints about Prochaska's discourteous behavior also set the tone in the general's second and longer report, dated December 19, with which the Serbian

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was apparently also the last of his own telegrams to make it through to Vienna; see Consul Prochaska in Prizren to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, October 23, 1912, no. 74. HHStA PA 385.

33 Foreign Minister Berchtold in Vienna to Minister Ugron in Belgrade, November 8, 1912, draft. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 2–3.

34 On the protracted negotiations from the Austro-Hungarian point of view, see HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 2–17 and 39–41. The conflictual relationship between the Serbian civil government and the military is discussed in Newman, "Hollow Crown."

35 This is the previously cited DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 255.

36 DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 255, annex points 10 and 14.

37 Ibid., annex point 20–21.

investigation came to a close.<sup>38</sup> After several pages which mostly repeated the previous allegations against Prochaska and added supporting testimony by townspeople, Janković's account took a sudden turn to the personal: "Apart from the above," wrote the general, "I consider it necessary that, for a more accurate assessment of the incorrect actions of Mr. Prohaska, I present his attitude towards me, as the commander of the army and the occupied area, and my relationship with him."<sup>39</sup> The remainder of the report suggests that Janković felt truly offended by Prochaska's every action: that the consul had not introduced himself, neither in an official capacity nor in private; that he had treated one of Janković's officers, whom the general had sent with what amounted to a formal invitation to meet, rudely; and overall, that Prochaska had refused to recognize the Serbian administration but at the same time had pestered Janković with all kinds of petitions in writing and by sending his consular messenger-interpreter (*dragoman*).<sup>40</sup> The general, in turn, took a corresponding stance and refused to deal with Prochaska's complaints. Instead, Janković informed his adversary through the dragoman that he was simply not acquainted with Prochaska on a personal level and that there was also no legal procedure in force that could compel him to acknowledge the consul's presence in an official capacity. He then let Prochaska know that this would not change until the consul visited with him directly.<sup>41</sup>

Faced with the general's ultimatum, Prochaska announced himself for November 17. This is how Janković described their meeting:

That same day, at 11.30 am, finally, after a whole thirteen days of demonstrations, Mr. Prohaska presented himself—a short, chubby, squinting, unsympathetic figure. As soon as my adjutant reported him, I let him in. When he entered the room, he introduced himself to me; I received him politely and seriously, greeted him with a handshake, building on the power of a benevolent God, as far as this was possible with this type. However, the following was characteristic of the man's upbringing and arrogance: as soon as I shook his hand and while I had not yet offered him a seat or sat down, he immediately sat down on the first chair closest to him, while I remained standing, looking at him from above with a questioning regard, which he fully understood

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38 General Janković in Prizren to Army High Command in Skoplje, December 6/19, 1912, no. 796. DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 464.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

and, embarrassed, he stood up [again]. Only after this fiasco of his, I offered him to sit down and did so as well, and then our conversation began.<sup>42</sup>

The rest of the meeting, according to Janković, brought only further embarrassment to Prochaska, since the general had the upper hand on all questions. (This impression is reinforced by Prochaska's own reportage, which only devoted a few inconclusive lines to their conversation.<sup>43</sup>) Janković, it is obvious, had many reasons to mistrust Prochaska and found his suspicions confirmed in the consul's antagonistic behavior and rudeness in personal relations. There is a strong element of contempt in Janković's descriptions of Prochaska's person throughout his report. To give another example, when Prochaska decided to leave Prizren, Janković withdrew one of his higher-ranking officers from the military escort after he learned that the consul would be traveling with his "mistress." He also reported with visible satisfaction that Prochaska had been chased out of Prizren by an angry mob on the day he left town.<sup>44</sup>

In sum, relations between the two officials were strained from the outset and only deteriorated when they met face to face. Prochaska made the worst possible impression on Janković by fumbling the rules of both official procedure and social courtesy. While Janković might have been biased against Prochaska, the representative of a hostile power, it seems that the consul, at least during this encounter, did not display the polished manners that were expected of a gentleman and diplomat. With that being said, Prochaska was also the victim of unfavorable circumstances. When the fog of war had cleared, the Serbian government acknowledged that its military had acted inappropriately when it hindered the consul's work and barred him from communicating with his colleagues and superiors.<sup>45</sup> There is also reason to believe that Prochaska's Russian counterpart, Emelianov, was in fact a bitter rival and in cahoots with Janković. In Prochaska's subsequent reportage, we read the following about the first days of the Serbian occupation:

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42 Ibid.

43 Prochaska's report in Consul Heimroth in Üsküp to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, November 27, 1912, no. 106. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 104, 106.

44 DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 464.

45 The negotiations that resulted in the Serbian government's public apology are an interesting topic on their own: see various documents towards the end of the dossier on the Prochaska Affair in HHStA PA XII 415.

Local Russian representative Emelianov did not return my three consecutive visits, by now completely ignores this consulate and apparently regards himself not as a Russian representative but as a Serbian agent.<sup>46</sup>

Prochaska felt humiliated and enraged by what he perceived as unjustified slander and chicanery against his person by Emelianov and especially the Serbs.<sup>47</sup> He was convinced that it had been the general and his officers who had arranged for the group of people who had harassed him in the street.<sup>48</sup> Even a decade later, writing in retrospect, Prochaska still felt very much aggrieved:

I was abused, threatened, marauding soldiery and *komitadjis* rioted in front of the consulate and threatened to put it on fire, I was blockaded inside, savaged soldiers were quartered (as guards!) in the consulate, who threatened to shoot if I left the house, my horses were stolen, every night those arrested during the day were massacred behind my garden, in short, those were three upsetting weeks, and I was cut off from the outside world and, due to the constant agitation in newspapers and pamphlets, in growing danger of life. At my departure, I was led like a prisoner right through a lane of soldiers and wild rabble, who kept screaming, among the worst abuse against the Monarchy and myself, that I should be killed, hurling large pebbles, petrol tankards and such against my carriage, so that it is a miracle that I got out alive. I can say without exaggeration that—at least before the World War—no consul has ever been treated like this.<sup>49</sup>

Placed side by side, both the consul's and the general's comments about their mutual relationship express remarkably similar emotions.<sup>50</sup> What, then, are we to make of the two men and their grudge against each other? Recent works on diplomatic representation and interpersonal communication as well as “face-to-face diplomacy” suggest some analytical themes for further study.<sup>51</sup>

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46 Prochaska's report in Consul Heimroth in Üsküp to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, November 26, 1912, no. 104. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 103.

47 Prochaska's report in Consul Heimroth in Üsküp to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, November 27, 1912, no. 107. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 118–9.

48 Ibid., fol. 119.

49 Letter, Prochaska in Brno to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, December 28, 1922. HHStA MdÄ AR F4 272 Personalia Prochaska-Lachnit, Oskar.

50 Compare Prochaska's report (ibid.) with the entire second half of Janković's final report (DSPKS, vol. 5/3, no. 464).

51 Rack, *Unentbehrliche Vertreter*; Steller, *Diplomatie von Angesicht zu Angesicht*; Holmes and Wheeler, “Social Bonding”; Holmes, *Face-to-Face Diplomacy*; Trager, *Diplomacy*, especially “The Fruit of 1912 Diplomacy,” ibid., 151–73.



More attention should also be paid to the third main protagonist, the Russian consul Emelianov, among many other local actors in the shared urban setting of Prizren.<sup>52</sup> All this requires adding a decidedly local view to Prochaska's story and its diplomatic significance, which I have tried to sketch in brief and in only one of the many possible ways.<sup>53</sup> After all, if Prochaska and Janković had been ministers meeting in a palace or gilded drawing room, we would already have many volumes of analysis and portraiture.

This does not mean that only sources locally produced in Prizren are relevant. For example, historians have sometimes interpreted Prochaska's antagonistic behavior as a deliberate, officially sanctioned tactic to spark a diplomatic conflict.<sup>54</sup> Judging by the Habsburg foreign ministry's internal files, however, this ran counter to its intentions. In response to the Serbian complaints about Prochaska that had reached Vienna in early November, the ministry had immediately issued new instructions to its consuls in the occupation zone: "The situation brought about by the war," they began, "is merely *de facto* and lacks recognition under international law." Although the consuls were never to fail to observe this, they were also instructed to act in their own interest and "get in touch with the factual rulers and strive to maintain the best possible relations." The only line not to cross was to commit "acts that could be interpreted as the direct recognition of the sovereignty of any of the Balkan states or the annexation." Moreover, while all "contractual and customary rights" that consuls enjoyed under the Ottomans continued to be in force, exceptions might be tolerated on account of the ongoing war. In case of problems, consulates were to turn to the foreign ministry and their supervising embassy in Constantinople.<sup>55</sup> In other words, these were extremely flexible, practical guidelines. They insisted in principle on upholding the *status quo ante* but also acknowledged the demands of the evolving situation, encouraging consuls to interact with the new authorities in an amicable way.

Unfortunately for Prochaska (and Janković), this good advice never reached Prizren. Does this mean that Prochaska's poor performance can be excused because he simply did not get the circular? In order to answer this question, we

52 For an approach that places diplomatic actors in a shared urban social context, see Do Paço, "Trans-Imperial Familiarity." Cities as sites and consuls as actors are discussed in Leira and Carvalho, "Intercity Origins."

53 Compare the discussion in Ghobrial, "Global History and Microhistory."

54 See e.g. Bjelajac, "'Humanitarian' Pretext," which echoes traditional Serbian historiography.

55 Foreign Minister Berchtold in Vienna to Minister Ugrom in Belgrade, November 8, 1912, no. 5042. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 4–6.

have to take a brief look at his colleagues in neighboring consulates and how they portrayed their own actions at the time. This is because Consul Heimroth in Üsküp (Shkup, Skopje, Skoplje) as well as Vice-consul Tahy and his Chancellery Secretary Umlauf in Mitrovica were cut off from communications in much the same way and faced similar difficulties, but seem to have managed much better.

One advantage that Consul Heimroth had was the benefit of collegial company in Üsküp, the provincial capital. After the Ottomans had lost the Battle of Kumanovo on October 23–24 and retreated in chaos, the remaining foreign consuls formed a provisional government council to try to maintain order and organize humanitarian relief. The consuls also ventured outside the city to meet the advancing Serbian army in the field and offer to surrender without bloodshed.<sup>56</sup> In their various ad-hoc measures, the consuls exceeded their mandate as neutral observers, choosing instead to rely on their combined authority to avert even greater disaster. There were also some tricky situations that Heimroth had to tackle on his own. Early on, a deputation of local notables asked the consul to hoist the flag of Austria-Hungary over the city, hoping that this would spare it from being shelled, but Heimroth refused on the grounds of international law. He also opened the doors of the consulate to refugees. When a group of Ottoman officers begged him for shelter, he allowed them in, too, but felt relieved when they changed their minds and left, since their presence might have compromised his own position. After the arrival of the Serbian army, Heimroth consented to the placement of a military guard inside his consulate, knowing that a refusal would put him in danger.<sup>57</sup> Overall, Heimroth's various choices seem quite appropriate and may have prevented further escalation.

In Mitrovica, a small town bordering Serbian territory, Ladislaus von Tahy (Tahvári és Tarkeői Tahy László) found himself in an isolated position that is quite comparable to Prochaska's situation farther south. Tahy also experienced similar difficulties with the new Serbian administration. Unlike Prochaska, however, Tahy paid a visit to the Serbian military commander as soon as the latter had arrived on October 27.<sup>58</sup> During this meeting, Tahy argued that, as a diplomat accredited to the Ottoman authorities, he was not permitted to establish any official relations with the Serbian military but that he intended to carry on with his duties until new instructions would arrive. Unfortunately

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56 Consul Heimroth in Üsküp to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, November 18, 1912, no. 125–126. HHStA PA XII 386, fol. 509–218 and 521–524.

57 Ibid.

58 Tahy's official daily chronicle (*Amtserinnerung*), November 6, 1912. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 20–24.

for Tahy, however, his initiative was not crowned with success. In the days that followed, his Serbian counterpart did not return the visit, which humiliated Tahy and caused him lasting emotional distress.<sup>59</sup> The Serbian authorities began to prevent the consul and his personnel as well as their clients from entering and leaving the consulate. Tensions rose to the point that Tahy decided to leave and return home on November 7.<sup>60</sup> In doing so, he probably chose wisely, since his regular activity had become impossible and his attempt to reach a compromise had obviously fallen on deaf ears.

Tahy left behind a caretaker, Chancellery Secretary Umlauf, who would rise to the occasion and display remarkable diplomatic capabilities.<sup>61</sup> Umlauf's daily chronicle from that time gives the impression that he was aware that any argument or other small occurrence might cause trouble and create another diplomatic incident. Far from remaining passive, though, Umlauf acted on his newfound role as the sole representative of the Dual Monarchy in Mitrovica. As such, he entered into a protracted conflict with the local Catholic priest, who tried to shift away from Habsburg protection to a pro-Serbian course. Umlauf's quiet struggle with Don Nikola Mazarek culminated one Sunday towards the end of November. The consul went to attend mass and noticed that the Austria-Hungarian flag had been removed from its usual place near the altar. In response, Umlauf stood still in the middle of the church and did not take his seat until the priest had the flag brought back in. Other examples could be added, such as the skillful way in which Umlauf used procedural arguments during a meeting with the Serbian consul Milan Milojević to assert his position as a serious consular representative in all but official rank.<sup>62</sup> In sum, Umlauf, the experienced chancellery official, used his understanding of a consul's ceremonial role and his technical knowledge to stand his ground successfully in an unprecedented situation.

This quick comparison of Prochaska's actions with those of his colleagues indicates that there were indeed different paths that the isolated consuls could take. Success required active communication and an ability to judge when proper procedure should be followed and when flexibility was preferable, which is

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59 Minister Ugron in Belgrade to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, January 9, 1913, no. 17. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 301–302.

60 Tahy's official daily chronicle (*Amtserinnerung*), fol. 24.

61 Chancellery Secretary Umlauf in Mitrovica to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, January 3, 1913, no. 1 secret. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 260–274.

62 Ibid., fol. 269–271.

exactly what the instructions from Vienna that never reached Kosovo had tried to suggest early on in the conflict. When the Ballhausplatz's internal investigation concluded in mid-December 1912, it did so with a mixed picture: clearly, Prochaska had been wronged on multiple occasions by the Serbian military, but he had also added to the tensions himself, and in some cases the picture remained quite murky.<sup>63</sup> In Belgrade, Minister Stephan von Ugron (Ábránfalvi Ugron István) thought that “calm cold-bloodedness and a tactful demeanour” on part of Prochaska and Tahy might have prevented the worst, and cited Heimroth's much more favorable example.<sup>64</sup> Likewise, Consul Heinrich Wildner, also in Belgrade, believed that his two colleagues should have met their adversaries with “tact and adaptability” to “repair” their strained relations with them. According to both Wildner and Ugron, the special privileges that foreign consuls enjoyed under Ottoman rule had given them an inflated sense of status and made them inflexible; indeed, perhaps it would be wise to recall the old guard and send fresh faces to the Balkans.<sup>65</sup>

## *Conclusions*

In this article, I have used the case of a single individual to try to make a larger point about Habsburg consuls as important but understudied actors of diplomacy and empire. In retrospect, Prochaska's lack of caution, social courtesy, and, altogether, diplomatic skill in the high-stakes setting of a town under military occupation created a cascade whose magnitude the consul himself could not even begin to comprehend while the communication blockade lasted. Prochaska cannot be held responsible for what others outside Kosovo—soldiers, diplomats, politicians, journalists—made of his predicament in pursuit of their own varied motives. The consul was, however, very much responsible for how it all had

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63 Compare the marginal notes that Consul Theodor Edl added to an edited copy of Prochaska's previously cited three reports. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 145–50. Edl had been entrusted with carrying out the Ballhausplatz's investigation and had visited the Kosovo consulates to make his own appraisal. The debriefing meeting for which he prepared these notes took place on December 15 back in Vienna. The following day, the foreign ministry released a short, amicably-worded communiqué in which it informed the public that the conflict had been settled. On the disappointment and public outrage that followed, see Kann, *Prochaska-Affäre*, esp. 8–9 and 18–33.

64 Minister Ugron in Belgrade to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna, December 13, 1912, no. 400 res. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 143–144.

65 Consul Wildner as quoted in letter, Minister Ugron in Belgrade to Section Chief Macchio in Vienna, January 21, 1913. HHStA PA XII 415, fol. 323–324.

started, and he could have taken steps to defuse the situation later on. Therein lies his agency as a diplomat and his appeal as a subject of history-writing.

The unusual prominence of Prochaska's case and its relevance to multiple historiographies make clear why consuls deserve our full attention. In my own work, I follow an actor-centric and practice-based approach, but the true strength of the contemporary scholarship on the Habsburg Empire lies in its polyphony and openness to experimentation.<sup>66</sup> Other methods and perspectives, and less obviously striking cases than the Prochaska Affair, should also be explored to allow us to gain a deeper and more varied understanding of Habsburg consuls as part of the foreign service and the imperial bureaucracy as a whole. If the same scrutiny and erudition that the best traditional diplomatic scholarship has produced were also to be applied to the study of consuls and extended to the broad variety of contexts beyond courts and capitals in which they were active we would glean many new insights into the local (or regional or "provincial") life-worlds of diplomacy and empire.<sup>67</sup> In the Balkans, Austria-Hungary's ambitions depended on its ever-widening network of consuls, and much the same can be suspected of its growing engagement across the world as an "empire without overseas colonies."<sup>68</sup> Prochaska, for instance, concluded his tarnished career at the consulate-general in Rio de Janeiro,<sup>69</sup> out of harm's way but still as a member of an imperial bureaucracy with a global presence and outlook.

There is a rich source tradition on which a cultural and social history of consuls and consular diplomacy in the Habsburg Empire could be founded. This includes both consular reports, which are already a principal source in nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Balkan history,<sup>70</sup> and administrative papers, such as the consuls' personnel files. These often very messy boxes are rarely examined and always full of surprises. Prochaska knew this, too. Near the top of his personnel file, we find a request from 1922 in which the former consul

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66 For a general perspective, see Feichtinger and Uhl, *Habsburg neu denken* and for various approaches to the history of diplomacy and international relations, Haider-Wilson et al., *Internationale Geschichte*.

67 Regrettably, consuls do not play any noticeable role in the most recent, highly detailed surveys of Habsburg foreign policy in the Dualist period; see Rauscher, *Fragile Großmacht* and Canis, *Bedrängte Großmacht*.

68 For a recent discussion of global approaches to late-Habsburg history, see Hirschhausen, "Habsburgermonarchie in globaler Perspektive?" side by side with Judson, "Global Empire"; and compare Sauer, "Habsburg Colonial."

69 Deusch summarizes and comments on Prochaska's time in Brazil and his return after World War I in *Konsuln*, 538–42.

70 On the value of consular reports as a source for Balkan history, see the introduction to Frantz and Schmitt, *Politik und Gesellschaft*.

asked if “possibly existing ‘*evrak i muzire*’—harmful papers” stemming from the Prizren incident could be removed from “this mysterious folder.” As a native of Moravia, Prochaska had become a Czechoslovak citizen (although he later opted for Austria), and he feared that his old file, when handed over to Prague, might get him in trouble again.<sup>71</sup> The bulk of the paperwork that the Prochaska Affair had generated in the foreign ministry had, however, already been collected separately.<sup>72</sup> It is quite possible that previously unknown documents could still be found, especially in the administrative collections, which diplomatic historians have usually not taken into account. Although archived separately from each other, political and administrative papers were produced by the same group of people in a shared bureaucratic setting.<sup>73</sup> When analyzed together, the two types sometimes complement and sometimes subvert each other, bringing diplomacy to life.

Over the course of the past century, generations of historians who took note of the Prochaska Affair never cared to portray the consul at its center as a complex protagonist and veritable (albeit catastrophic) diplomatic actor. I have attempted to offer a different perspective. In doing so, I have also tried to tell a good story.<sup>74</sup> Thanks to a thriving community of scholars, the stories we tell of the Habsburg Empire are transforming: studies on consuls and diplomacy can add to this common project.<sup>75</sup> My sincere hope, therefore, is that the curious case of Oskar Prochaska, dusted off a little, will inspire historians of the Habsburg Monarchy from various backgrounds and with varying interests to consider giving consuls a try in their work as well.

“For many years, we have lived without knowing that a certain Mr. Prochaska represented us,” wrote *Pesti Napló* on its front-page on November 27, 1912, at the height of the crisis. “One day, we reach for the newspaper and find that we have a new hero named Prochaska, whose shed blood calls for vengeance.”<sup>76</sup> Today, a

71 Typed extract from letter, Prochaska in Adamov (Adamsthal) to Consul-general Kraus in Vienna, June 25, 1922. HHStA MdÄ AR F4 272 Personalia Prochaska-Lachnit, Oskar.

72 In the previously cited dossier in HHStA PA XII 415.

73 Future studies on histories of knowledge in the Austro-Hungarian foreign service may find it useful to consult Wiedermayer, “Geschäftsgang” and to consider the methodological reflections with a special emphasis on Austrian/Habsburg archival contexts in Hochedlinger, *Aktenkunde*.

74 I believe that, for historians, engaging in storytelling (trying to tell engaging stories) is more than a matter of personal taste, but rather a professional responsibility and skill that we should actively seek to develop and experiment with; compare the extended reflections offered by Cronon, “Storytelling.”

75 See Judson, *Habsburg Empire* and, on the need for renewed interest in matters of “statecraft,” diplomacy, and foreign policy, Cole, “Visions and Revisions.”

76 *Pesti Napló*, November 27, 1912, 1 (my translation of Kann’s German translation of the Hungarian original as given in Kann, *Prochaska-Affäre*, 32).

diplomatic history freed from narratives of pride and pain can contribute essential insight into empires and nation states by recognizing the many and diverse people who inhabited and built them. It can dissolve strict dichotomies of thought, endeavoring to overcome rather than perpetuate divisive political and academic traditions. For many years, we have lived without knowing what a certain Mr. Prochaska could represent to us, and I hope that one day, we may reach for a new kind of Habsburg diplomatic history and find out so much more.

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# Hungarian Freemasons as “Builders of the Habsburg Empire” in Southeastern Europe

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In the 1890s, Hungarian Freemasonry began to expand its sphere of influence in southeastern Europe. The establishment of lodges in the southeastern border areas and even outside the Kingdom of Hungary exemplifies this expansion. When devising explanations for this policy, the Hungarian Freemasons made use of colonial and imperial discourses to justify expansion into the “Orient” with reference to the alleged civilizing role they attributed to Freemasonry. They divided the world into two parts from a cultural-civilizational point of view: one where Freemasonry was already established and flourishing and another where this form of community and social practice was not yet known or established. This discourse was entangled with political, economic, and academic practices that were prevalent among the Hungarian Freemasons. Masonic activities and discourses therefore merit consideration in the cultural and social context of their time and analysis from the perspective of new imperial histories, especially since the importance of the discourses and political symbolisms used in the expansion and maintenance of imperial structures has already been pointed out by many historians and scholars of cultural studies within the framework of New Imperial History and postcolonial studies

With a view to the undertakings of Hungarian Freemasons in the Balkans, this paper asks whether Hungarian Freemasons can also be considered “Builders of the Habsburg Empire.” This question is particularly relevant given that Freemasonry was only permitted in the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy. Thus, Hungarian Freemasons acted as both national and imperial actors, and they did so independently of Vienna. As the framework for my discussion here, I focus in this article on the discourses and activities of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary and the contributions of the most relevant actors, such as the Turkologist Ignác Kúnos and the journalist and deputy director of the Hungarian Museum of Commerce, Armin Sasváris.

Keywords: freemasonry, Balkan Peninsula, Budapest, empire building

## *Introduction*

In the 1890s, Hungarian Freemasonry began to expand its sphere of influence in southeastern Europe. The establishment of ties to Ottoman, Greek, and later Bulgarian Freemasons and of lodges in the southeastern border areas and even outside the Kingdom of Hungary (for instance, in cities such as Belgrade,



Sarajevo, and later İzmir) exemplifies this expansion. Thus, the Hungarian Freemasons made use of both transnational fraternal as well as colonial and imperial discourses, justifying their policy of expansion into the “Orient” with reference to the civilizing role they attributed to Freemasonry. These discourses were entangled with the political, economic, and academic practices that were prevalent among the Hungarian Freemasons.

Against this backdrop, this paper aims to analyze the networks of Hungarian Freemasonry from the perspective of New Imperial History. Austria-Hungary has already been analyzed by historians and scholars of cultural studies within the framework of New Imperial History and postcolonial studies, especially since researchers began calling attention to the importance of the discourses and symbolic politics used in the expansion and maintenance of imperial structures.<sup>1</sup> However, Hungary’s role as an independent actor in these processes has not yet been investigated in the international historical research. Indeed, Hungary was not an independent geopolitical actor. Nevertheless, Ignác Romsics has written about the “Hungarian imperialist idea,” referring both to the hoped-for shift of power to Budapest and the aspired expansion of Hungarian positions in the Balkans.<sup>2</sup> Recently, Krisztián Csaplár-Degovics and Gábor Demeter considered Hungarian ideas concerning penetration into the Balkans in the nineteenth century and the first decade and a half of the twentieth.<sup>3</sup> Both Csaplár-Degovics and Demeter elaborate on Hungarian endeavors in the European “Orient” and the imperialist aspirations behind these endeavors. They also take a stand in

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1 Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike Hirschhausen and also Pieter M. Judson in his “new history” of the Habsburg Empire write about “imperializing nation-states” and “nationalizing empires.” They argue against a strict distinction between empire and nation-state in the nineteenth century. Kerstin Jobst, Julia Obertreis, and Ricarda Vulpius argue in their article for a multifocal rather than a two-dimensional view of Eastern European empires, while Claudia Kraft, Alf Lüdtke, Jürgen Martschukat, and, elsewhere, Johannes Feichtinger call for rethinking colonialism and imperialism from the perspective of Eastern European state structures. By introducing the concept of micro-colonialism, they want to break down dichotomies such as center-periphery. They consider that there was not a single empire-wide colonial discourse, but different bearers of power. In the same volume by Claudia Kraft et al., Anna Weronika Wendland makes Orientalism as a form of cultural colonialism fruitful for her argumentation in order to show the relativity and constructedness of metropolis and periphery. See Jobst et al., “Neuere Imperiumsforschung in der Osteuropäischen Geschichte”; Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*; Kraft et al., “Einleitung: Kolonialgeschichten”; Feichtinger et al., *Habsburg postcolonial*; Feichtinger, “Komplexer k.u.k. Orientalismus”; Wendland, “Randgeschichten?”

2 Romsics, “A magyar birodalmi gondolat,” 124.

3 Demeter, “A modernizációtól a kolonizációs törekvésekig”; Csaplár-Degovics, “A századfordulás Közép- és Délkelet-Európa értelmezési lehetőségei globális perspektívából”; Csaplár-Degovics and Jusufi, *Das ungarisch-albanische Wörterbuch von Zoltán László* (1913).



the historical-theoretical debate concerning whether one can even speak about imperialism or colonialism in relation to Austria-Hungary, let alone Hungary. Moreover, the imperialist policies of the colonial powers were not always focused on geographical expansion but rather on economic penetration (one might think, for example, of the British in the Ottoman Empire). In this sense, as Demeter argues, it is possible to speak about Hungarian imperialism, as Hungary was involved in similar undertakings in the Balkans.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Csaplár-Degovics draws attention to informal Hungarian foreign affairs, which can be considered Hungarian imperial policy.<sup>5</sup> I start from his theoretical vantage point and take into consideration the functions of imperial discourses and practices in culturally or economically asymmetrical relations, and I also consider the uses of colonial discourses and practices in relation to Masonic expansion.

This study is based on Jessica L. Harland-Jacob's investigations into British Freemasonry's connections with imperialism and colonialism. Harland-Jacob sheds light on the reciprocity of Freemasonry and imperialism, calling the British Freemasons “Builders of Empire.”<sup>6</sup> Following Harland-Jacob, this paper asks whether Hungarian Freemasons can also be considered “Builders of the Habsburg Empire” with a view to the endeavors of the Hungarian Freemasons in the Balkans. This question is particularly relevant, given that Freemasonry was only permitted in the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy. This also meant that Budapest and not Vienna was the center of Habsburg Freemasonry, and this created a reciprocal situation between the Austrian Crown Lands and Hungary. This becomes even more apparent when one considers the situation of the so-called Austrian border lodges. After 1867, the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary (SGLH) also offered Austrians opportunities to found their own lodges on the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom in the vicinity of the Austrian border. However, the Austrian Freemasons had to orient themselves towards the Hungarian capital and accept the leading power of the Hungarians in Freemasonry in the Habsburg Monarchy. Thus, Hungarian Freemasons were acting as both national and imperial actors. Against this background, the strivings of Hungarian Freemasons in the Balkans, which after 1867 became the target

4 Csaplár-Degovics, “A századfordulós Közép- és Délkelet-Európa értelmezési lehetőségei globális perspektívából,” 154; Demeter, “A modernizációtól a kolonizációs törekvésekig,” 287.

5 Csaplár-Degovics, “A századfordulós Közép- és Délkelet-Európa értelmezési lehetőségei globális perspektívából,” 154.

6 Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of empire*.

of Austro-Hungarian imperialism,<sup>7</sup> gain more relevance. In this paper, I analyze the discourses used by the SGLH and the activities in which the SGLH engaged. I also consider the contributions of the relevant lodges and some prominent actors, including Turkologist Ignác Kúnos (1860–1945), who served as director of the Oriental Academy of Commerce (Keleti Kereskedelmi Akadémia), which was supposed to further the spread of Hungarian products to the East through the training it provided.<sup>8</sup> I also take into consideration the contributions of Armin Sasvári, a journalist and deputy director of the Hungarian Museum of Commerce. I take a closer look at the lodges and Masonic relations, but I also put the networks into a larger context and analyze them from the perspective of imperialism as policy, practice, and discourse. On the meta-level of academic discourse, my findings are also intended further a nuanced answer to the following question: how should new findings regarding Austria-Hungary's behavior in the Balkans be interpreted from the perspectives of New Imperial History?

### *Freemasonry in the Habsburg Monarchy and Austria-Hungary*

Freemasonry was established in England early in the eighteenth century, but its origins can be traced back to the local fraternities of the fourteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Modern Freemasonry spread quickly all over the continent. It was a melting pot of intellectuals and the middle class on a spectrum of political ideologies that ranged from progressive to radical revolutionary. The secret to the efficiency of the lodges lay in the fact that they united the followers of the Enlightenment ideals and thus helped the existing political tendencies break through.<sup>10</sup> While Freemasonry in Anglo-Saxon countries maintained a relationship of trust with the respective dynasty and state,<sup>11</sup> Freemasons in continental Europe were perceived by the rulers and religious authorities as people who challenged the existing class society and state order around the time of the French Revolution.<sup>12</sup> This perception, together with the fact that the Freemasons did indeed have many goals which diverged from the goals of the ruling classes, is one of the

7 Donia, *Islam under the Double Eagle*, 9; Schöllgen and Kießling, *Das Zeitalter des Imperialismus*, 3.

8 Erdélyi, "A Keleti Kereskedelmi Akadémia és az orientalisták: tudomány, a gazdaság és a politika interakciója."

9 Reinalter, "Die historischen Ursprünge und die Anfänge der Freimaurerei"; Bogdan and Snoek, *Handbook of Freemasonry*.

10 Reinalter, *Die Freimaurer*, 128–29.

11 On the early development of modern Freemasonry, see Bogdan and Snoek, *Handbook of Freemasonry*.

12 L. Nagy, *Szabadságkőművesek*, 15–16.

primary reasons why Freemasonry in France, Italy, and Europe’s eastern stretches was always more politically active (so-called Latin lodges) than it was in Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia.

The Brotherhood entered the Habsburg Monarchy in various ways with the help of English, Prussian, and, later, French lodges in the mid-eighteenth century. The transfer of masonic ideas and structures was closely linked to the mobility of certain intellectual groups. Reform-minded aristocratic state officials, officers, doctors, students, university professors, and even clergymen brought Freemasonry to Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>13</sup> The Habsburg dynasty’s dealings with the lodges were dynamic: while the fraternity enjoyed the relative protection of the dynasty in its initial phase (1740s), the subsequent period up to the end of the eighteenth century was characterized by ever-increasing state control and growing mistrust.<sup>14</sup> This contrasted with the fact that most lodge members were unwilling to participate in revolutionary activities, both because of their social position and because of the prohibition laid down in basic Masonic law.<sup>15</sup> The state distrust for the brotherhood stemmed from Freemasonry’s function of testing the mechanisms of a democratic, bourgeois society in the protected space of the lodge.<sup>16</sup> With the sense of community created by the rituals and secrecy, the practiced principle of equality, and their civic ideal of equality, the Freemasons challenged the traditional social structure and thus indirectly also the ruling structure of absolutism.<sup>17</sup> As Reinhard Koselleck aptly describes this inherent contradiction of Freemasonry, “Directly apolitical, the mason is indirectly political.”<sup>18</sup> In 1795, Emperor Franz I ordered the lodges to stop operating because some Austrian and Hungarian freemasons were thought to have been involved in the uprising against Austria. The suspected rebels were executed, and Freemasonry was banned for the next 72 years.<sup>19</sup> After the Civic Revolution and War of Independence of 1848–1849, the first Hungarian

13 Aigner, *A szabadkőműveltség története Magyarországon*; Berényi, *A szabadkőműveltség kézikönyve*, 101–3.

14 For a general view of the Habsburg Freemasonry at the time of Enlightens, see Seewann, “Freimaurer (Ungarn).”

15 According to the Constitution of James Andersen (1723/1738, London), the members of the lodges were not allowed to politicize within the lodges. Budde, *Blütezeit des Bürgertums*, 18; Reinalter, *Die Freimaurer*, 53–54; Bogdan, “The Sociology of the Construct of Tradition and Import of Legitimacy in Freemasonry,” 218–19.

16 Budde, *Blütezeit des Bürgertums*, 15–17; Michaud, “Felvilágosodás, szabadkőműveltség és politika a 18. század végén.”

17 Seewann, “Freimaurer (Ungarn),” in *Lexikon Zur Geschichte Südosteuropas*, 240.

18 Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise*, 68, 74.

19 Berényi, *A szabadkőműveltség kézikönyve*, 82–84.

freemason networks were developed as a consequence of the fact that many of those who had taken part in the revolution were forced to flee the country.<sup>20</sup> They tried to explore the political potential of Freemasonry in the hope that this kind of an international organization would be helpful for the Hungarian cause, and they joined lodges in Italy, Switzerland, England, France, and the United States.

As a result of the Compromise of 1867, the Habsburg Monarchy was transformed into the dual state of Austro-Hungary. Hungary became autonomous with self-rule over internal matters. This constitutional restructuring paved the way for the golden age of Hungarian Freemasonry. The first prime minister, Baron Gyula Andrásy, himself a Freemason, overturned Franz I's ban after 72 years.<sup>21</sup> While Freemasonry was used as a means of organizing resistance after the struggle for freedom, after the Compromise, it became the stronghold of a political elite that saw Hungary's future in loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty. This loyalty was reflected in the "respect for the law of the land"<sup>22</sup> demanded by the basic document of Hungarian Freemasonry and in the frequent references to Emperor Franz Joseph in lectures and writings.<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, the independent Hungarian Freemasonry that emerged after 1867 had its spiritual kinship through its context of origin with the generally more radical, actionist so-called Latin lodges.<sup>24</sup> This meant that the aforementioned Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary, which was founded in 1886 as the main institution of Hungarian Freemasonry, supported virtually all the positions that mattered to the liberal and radical bourgeoisie. Politically, socially, ethno-nationally, and denominationally it united the most diverse parts of society in the Hungarian half of the empire and evolved into the motor of various socio-political developments.<sup>25</sup> The different socio-cultural circumstances (the liberal nationalism of the nineteenth century, the later formation of the bourgeoisie, and the delayed processes of

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20 Vári, "Magyar szabadkőművesség külföldön."

21 L. Nagy, *Szabadkőművesek*, 54.

22 Ibid., 51.

23 "A nyolcvanéves király." *Kelet*, August, 1910, 295.

24 The lodges in non-Protestant countries began to interfere in politics in the nineteenth century through manifestos and acts committed under the banner of liberal nationalism and secularism. This caused conflicts and fractures in the international Masonic landscape. In 1815, the Grand Lodge of England amended Andersen's constitution to make belief in an explicitly Christian God a condition of membership. As a result, a great dispute arose over faith. This resulted in the Grand Orient de France amending its own constitution in 1877 to remove any reference to faith. L. Nagy, 48–49.

25 L. Nagy, 55.

democratization) led the Freemasons in Hungary to become politically active and induced them to offer possible solutions to social problems.

Lodges were closed societies in which rules applied that differed from the rules in the outside world. The structural criteria of the society were abolished. Ethno-confessional and social differences played no role in the interactions within the lodge or in the admission of new members. On the contrary, the mixing of different social classes and ethno-confessional groups was an explicit wish of the SGLH.<sup>26</sup> It is important to emphasize this practice of inclusion, as the lodges hosted many multilingual citizens of Austria-Hungary.<sup>27</sup> These people belonged mostly to the new elite of Germans of Jewish origin who in the 1880s began joining the lodges in growing numbers. Therefore, Hungarian Freemasonry was linked to the rise of a new economic elite whose large number had very successfully modernized by collaborating with the Magyar nobility.<sup>28</sup> The lodges favored the organic fusion of the new and old elite into a new bourgeois upper and middle class, since the decisive factors for membership were performance and character rather than origin. In particular, the Jews of Hungary took advantage of the symbolic resources of freemason networks and the inclusiveness of the lodges in order to achieve a social role which corresponded to their economic strength.<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, they were the ones who turned with “patriotic enthusiasm”<sup>30</sup> to the southeast to develop new markets under the slogan of economic nationalism, and as multilinguals, they proved perfect mediators of Freemasonry in the European “Orient.”<sup>31</sup>

### *Hungarian Freemasonry in the Balkans*

Despite the boom in Hungary, Freemasonry remained banned in Cisleithania. Since it was allowed to exist officially only in the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom, the SGLH had a monopoly within the multi-ethnic Austro-Hungarian Empire and could develop without competition. By 1896, there were 2,805

26 “Oda kellene törekednünk, hogy társadalom minden rétegéből igyekezzünk az alkalmas anyagot kiválasztva, ügyünknek megnyerni.” [We should strive to select the appropriate material from every social stratum and win it for our cause]. “Marcel Neuschloss XII. Rendes közgyűlés” *Kelet*, April, 15, 77.

27 Buchen and Rolf, “Eliten und ihre imperialen Biographien,” 14–15.

28 Patai, *The Jews of Hungary*, 195.

29 Karády, “Asszimiláció és társadalmi krízis. A magyar-zsidó társadalomtörténet konjunkturális vizsgálatahoz”; Karády, “Elitenbildung im multiethnischen und multikonfessionalen Nationalstaat.”

30 McCagg, *A history of Habsburg Jews*, 192.

31 Sdvižkov, *Das Zeitalter der Intelligenz*, 231.

members in 40 lodges.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, unlike Hungarian political institutions, the SGLH was able to act as an autonomous player in the international arena of Freemasonry. This was the initial period of Masonic internationalism,<sup>33</sup> when relations among the European Masonic umbrella associations were intensifying under the aegis of universally understood fundamental values. Around 1900, the lodges and grand lodges built up a dense network of correspondence. Their members visited one another across state borders, and the first international Masonic conferences were organized. This was accompanied by a lively exchange of ideas reflecting ideational motivations, pragmatic motivations, and conflicts.<sup>34</sup> In the process, masonic Grand Lodges attempted to draw into their own spheres of activity areas like the “Orient,” which had not yet been opened up to Freemasonry.

Lodges had occasionally been founded in southeastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean as early as the eighteenth century, but it was not until the 1860s that their number began to increase notably.<sup>35</sup> The Ottoman Empire and the new states that had seceded from its territory were considered “free prey” for foreign grand lodge authorities, which did not have their own masonic grand authorities that would have taken control over the foundation of new lodges. Therefore, the founding of new lodges was mostly initiated by foreigners and inspired by foreign grand lodges.<sup>36</sup> This changed to some extent after the establishment of the first domestic grand lodges in the last third of the nineteenth century. These lodges tried to establish themselves within but often also beyond their own national borders.<sup>37</sup> As a result of these developments, southeastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean region became an area in which an array of interests collided when the SGLH came on the scene in 1886, and this lasted into the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, while the SGLH was able to carry out its activity as a sole actor within the Dual Monarchy, in

32 “Bericht der Symbolischen Großloge von Ungarn über das Jahr 1896.” *Orient*, March, 25, 1897, 31.

33 Berger, “Europäische Freimaurereien (1850–1935)”; Berger, “un institution cosmopolite?” *Rituelle Grenzziehungen im freimaurerischen Internationalismus um 1900.*”

34 Berger, “Europäische Freimaurereien,” 25–30.

35 See Lennhoff et al., *Internationales Freimaurer-Lexikon*; Grimm, “Freimaurer (SO-Europa ohne Ungarn)”; Boogert, “Freemasonry in Eighteenth-Century Izmir?”; Beaurepaire, “Le cosmopolitisme maçonnique.”

36 Paul Dumont writes of Ottoman Freemasonry in the nineteenth as a “by-product of Western penetration.” Cf. Dumont, “Freemasonry in Turkey: a by-product of Western penetration,” 481–82.

37 Marković, *Freemasonry in Southeast Europe*; Dumont, *Osmanlılık, ulusçu akımlar, ve Masonluk*, 93.

38 Conti, “From Brotherhood to Rivalry. The Grand Orient of Italy and the Balkan and Danubian Europe Freemasonries”; Žugić, “I Garibaldini e la fondazione della prima Loggia in Serbia,” 84.

the “European Orient,” it entered an arena of competing foreign grand lodges, where it tried to expand its sphere of influence over the course of its more than three decades of existence.

The expansion of Hungarian Freemasonry began when Hungarian lodges encouraged the local elites in the southeastern borderland to become Freemasons and establish their own lodges. In 1889, the Lodge Stella Orientalis was founded with the support of the Hungarian Lodge Árpád in Semlin/Zemun (today a district in Belgrade) and later in Pancsova/Pančevo.<sup>39</sup> Both cities were border towns in the Habsburg Monarchy on the Danube River, very close to Belgrade. This is why “all the prestigious circles of Belgrade were represented” in the Stella Orientalis, such as the merchants Stojko Obradović and Izsó Neumann.<sup>40</sup> This is true of another lodge in Belgrade, Pobratim, on the other side of the Danube River in the Kingdom of Serbia. It was founded as the first lodge of the SGLH outside the Habsburg Monarchy one year after the Stella Orientalis in 1890.<sup>41</sup> The two lodges played a key role in Serbian-Hungarian relations. Because of their proximity to each other and their common institutional affiliation, their members, who were predominantly Serbian (though the members from Pancsova were citizens of the Dual Monarchy, while the others were citizens of the Serbian Kingdom), were able to maintain contact and interact without any problems.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the members of the two lodges saw an advantage in Freemasonry and their affiliation to the SGLH. However, the question arises as to what motivated the SGLH to promote the founding of lodges outside the monarchy.

It was the lodge Demokrácia (Democracy) in Budapest that had a particularly strong interest in targeting territories in southeastern Europe for Hungarian Freemasonry. It belonged to one of the largest lodges and one that actively worked for social progress. Its program included education of the common man, the promotion of the peasantry, the question of workers, and universal suffrage. It supported the Free School of Social Sciences (Társadalomtudományok Szabadiskolája) and the Galilei Circle (Galilei kör), both of which were meeting places for members of the young intelligentsia.<sup>43</sup> The members of Demokrácia

39 The Árpád, located in Szeged, organized Freemasonry in several towns in southern Hungary, such as Szabadka, Zombor and Orsova. “Bericht der Symbolischen Großloge von Ungarn über das Jahr 1889.” *Orient*, March, 1890, 93–94; Péter, “A szabadkőművesség Szegeden,” 265.

40 A “‘Stella Orientalis’ páholy felavatási ünnepélye.” *Kelet*, January, 24, 5. Palatinus, *A szabadkőművesség bűnei*, 245.

41 “Eine neue Loge in Belgrad.” *Orient*, October, 1890, 224.

42 *Kelet*, 12, no. 1 (1900): 5.

43 Pataky and Dzubay, “A szabadkőmves szervezetek levéltára,” 107. Demokrácia Páholy, 117, 119.



were mostly lawyers, journalists, businessmen, bankers, or merchants related to the “Orient” in some way.<sup>44</sup> The most important actors among them regarding networking in the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire were the journalist and secretary of the State Industry Association (Országos Iparvédelmi Egyesület) Mór Gelléri (1854–1915), the secretary and later deputy director of the Trade Museum Ármin Sasvári (1853–1924), and the founder and first director of the Orient Trade Academy, the internationally known aforementioned turkologist Kúnos. The first two were also involved in the foundation of the Lodge Pobratim.<sup>45</sup> Their connection to some key figures among Serbian academics, politicians, and businessmen, such as politician and literary scholar Svetomir Nikolajević (1844–1922), made the affiliation with the SGLH possible. The first Serbs were admitted to the Hungarian Masonic Union on October 5, 1890 during a celebration which was reported on in detail by Gelléri, who was also the editor of the Masonic magazines *Kelet* and *Orient*.<sup>46</sup> This meeting took place under the motto of Masonic brotherhood and “Serbian-Hungarian friendship.”<sup>47</sup> Sasvári welcomed them with the following greeting:

It is not with suspicion that we look at the progress of Serbia, but we are pleased when it jealously preserves and expands its national character [...]. And again you [the Serbs] turn to us, to your old ally, with whom you fought against the Crescent.<sup>48</sup>

In the meanwhile, the SGLH considered the foundation of the Pobratim as the first step in an expansionist policy of Hungarian Freemasonry into the “Orient.” It referred in its documents to the conquest of Serbia by and for (Hungarian) Freemasonry.<sup>49</sup> It believed that “with the Masonic opening of this Lodge a new era will dawn not only in Serbia, but perhaps in the whole Orient for Freemasonry, which will conquer new territories for the victory of our

44 MOL P 1083-I-38-XLVI Demokrácia Páholy, Névjegyzék 1912.

45 MOL 1106-1 Demokrácia Tagok felvételi kérelmei, anyakönyvei (Életrajz, jellemzések) no.292; Mór Gelléri, “Eine neue Loge in Belgrad.” *Orient* 12, no. 10 (1900): 222–26.

46 Ibid.

47 *Orient* 12, no. 10 (1900): 223.

48 “Nicht mit Misstrauen Blicken wir auf den Fortschritt Serbiens, sondern wir freuen uns, wenn es seine nationale Eigenart eifersüchtig bewahrt und erweitert [...]. Und wieder wendet ihr [die Serben] an uns, an euren alten Verbündeten, mit dem ihr gemeinsam gegen den Halbmond gestritten.” *Orient* 12, no. 10 (1900): 225.

49 “Bericht der Symbolischen Großloge von Ungarn über das Jahr 1890.” *Orient* 3, no.1 (1891): 10

philanthropic principles.”<sup>50</sup> The use of terms familiar from colonial discourses, such as “conquest” of the “Orient” and “suitable terrain,” indicated power-based cultural relations. The Hungarian nation was presented in the discourse as bringing “light” in the form of Freemasonry, as well as lofty and progressive principles, to the Serbian soil.<sup>51</sup> Thus, the argumentation mixed thinking styles of colonialism and Masonic ideals such as fraternity to justify expansionist undertakings and aims.

In the new century, the intention among Hungarian Freemasons to expand into southeastern Europe was even more explicitly in the foreground. From 1906 onwards, expansion was included as a goal in the annual “work program,” a kind of declaration of intent of the SGLH:<sup>52</sup>

The most effective factor of masonic ideas is the establishment of new workshops in those Orients [i.e. places] where there is not yet a Lodge, each Lodge shall consider it one of its main tasks, as soon as it is sufficiently strengthened, to unfurl up our flag on the pinnacles of new castles.<sup>53</sup>

To achieve this goal, the Grand Lodge called upon the Lodges to launch a campaign to acquire the leading men of the society.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the SGLH created a suitable climate for further initiatives to found new lodges, such as in Sarajevo, which in the wake of the Austro-Hungarian annexation (1908) was home to a large number of state bureaucrats.<sup>55</sup> There, because of the Austrian prohibition, Hungarian Freemasonry again had the privilege to integrate the local elite into the economic and cultural cycle of the Empire, while Austria had to accomplish this task without this effective tool. The SGLH tasked the Budapest Lodge *Demokrácia* with the foundation of the lodge in the new territory of Austria-

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50 “mit der fr[ei]m[aure]rischen Eröffnung dieser Loge nicht nur in Serbien, sondern vielleicht im ganzen Orient eine neue Aera für die Fr[ei]m[aure]rei heranbrechen werde, welche zum Siege unserer menschenfreundlichen Prinzipien neue Gebiete erobern wird.” *Orient* 3, no. 1 (1891): 10.

51 “Wie wir [die ungarische Freimaurerei] in ihr [in der Pobratim] nicht nur eine neue Loge sehen, sondern weil hier davon Rede ist, dass wir das für die Fr[ei]m[aure]rei so geeignete serbische Terrain unserer kön.[igliche] Kunst erobern“ sondern “im benachbarten Königreiche eine neue Aera eröffnen.” Ibid.

52 “Arbeitsprogramm 1906.” *Orient*, October 20, 1906, 255; “Arbeitsprogramm.” *Orient* September 30, 1907, 223.

53 “Der wirksamste Faktor der freimaurerischen Ideen ist die Errichtung neuer Werkstätte in solchen Orieneten [d.h. Orte], wo es noch keine Loge besteht, jede Loge betrachte es als eine ihrer Hauptaufgaben, sobald sie genügend erstarkt ist, unsere Fahne auf der Zirne neuer Burgen aufzupflanzen.” Arbeitsprogramm, 20. Oktober 1906. *Orient* October 20, 1906, 255.

54 Ibid.

55 Malcolm, *Geschichte Bosniens*, 175–76.

Hungary.<sup>56</sup> Its members systematically searched for state employees who had been sent to Bosnia and Herzegovina and were open to Freemasonry, such as Mór Gerő, the Director of the Hungarian Commercial Bank in Sarajevo, and Ernő Borda, a Bosnian government engineer.<sup>57</sup> The SGLH showed a strong interest in masonic development in the new area, and this clearly reflects the importance of these initiatives. The SGLH did not leave the task of organizing the new lodge to the Zagreb Lodge Ljubav bližnjega, which was also subordinated to the SGLH and wanted to take the foundation of the Sarajevo lodge into its own hands with the permission of the SGLH.<sup>58</sup> In this sense, during the preparations in Sarajevo, Demokrácia spoke of “preparing the ground accordingly for further work,” or in other words, “preparing the lay population of these countries for our ideas and institutions [...]”<sup>59</sup> After two years of intensive preparations, however, all mention of the Sarajevo project disappears from the archival sources. Further research needs to be done to find out the reasons of its failure. For the moment, all that can be said is that it was related to mobility dynamics.

As a result of the annexation of Bosnia, there was a cooling off between the Serbian and Hungarian Freemasons. Where the preparations were being made to found a lodge in Sarajevo, the members of Demokrácia were busy with another issue regarding the “Orient”: the establishment of a Hungarian-Ottoman masonic network. The exchange between the Hungarian and Ottoman Freemasons began in 1908 with the Young Turk Revolution and the establishment of the Ottoman Grand Orient in 1909.<sup>60</sup> These two events were closely intertwined with each other and resulted in a forced change of elites with the rise of the Committee of Union and Progress, the Young Turks’ more and more centralistic and nationalistic branch of power. Since most of the members of this committee were Freemasons in Saloniki and Constantinople/Istanbul (people such as Mehmed Talaat, Midhad Şükrü, and Maliye Nazırı), the

56 “Aus dem Jahresbericht der Loge Demokrácia.” *Orient* January 18, 1909, 50.

57 MOL P 1083-38-XLVI Demokrácia Páholy, A Demokrácia páholy jelentése az 1909. Évről. Bp, 1910, 23; MOL P 1083-38-XLVI Demokrácia Páholy, member list 1912.S 8, Palatinus *A szabadság bűnei*, 103.

58 “Sitzung des Bundesrates am 18. Januar 1909” *Orient* January 18, 1909, 14.

59 “Boden für die weitere Arbeit entsprechend zu bearbeiten [...] die profane Bevölkerung dieser Länder auf unsere Ideen und Institutionen vorzubereiten [...]” “Brief der Loge Demokrácia an die Loge Pobratim P 1106-1.

60 “Sitzungen des Bundesrates am 26 April.” *Orient* April 26, 1909, 143; Letter from the Ottoman Grand Orient to the SGLH on November 16, 1909. MOL P 1083-38-XLV Idegen páholy jelzetű iratok.

establishment of friendly relations with the new Masonic authority was not only a Masonic but also a political act.<sup>61</sup>

Hungarian-Ottoman Masonic relations intensified at the end of 1909 as a result of a visit of Ottoman Masons to Budapest. In autumn 1909, an Ottoman delegation was traveling through Europe promoting their new government. Many of the Ottomans who were part of this delegation were also Freemasons. Rıza Tevfik led the delegation, which included journalists Hasan Tahsin and Samuel Levy and the CUP officer Kâzım Nami Duru. On the Hungarian side, the Grand Master and internist Árpád Bókay, Ignác Kúnos, the politician and writer Pál Farkas, the chemist Ignác Pfeiffer, and the aforementioned Ármin Sasvári gave speeches in honor of the guests in Turkish and French.<sup>62</sup> While of course working in the interests of achieving the official aims of their trip, these men were also striving to have the young Ottoman Grand Orient recognized by the European masonic authorities. They also spent a week in Budapest from October 21 to 27, where they were invited to a banquet “in honor of the Ottoman Freemason” at the Hungarian Grand Lodge.<sup>63</sup> The meeting resulted in a mutual commitment to cooperation inside and outside the lodges in future. Kâzım Nami Duru, an Ottoman Freemason and an emblematic figure of the Young Turk movement, held an enthusiastic speech to the Hungarian Freemasons in Turkish:

Give us more light! Where should we take this full light from, if not from you, dear Hungarian blood comrades, to whom we are tied indissolubly and inseparably not only by the general and eternal ideas of Freemasonry but also by the relationship of race and language. Come to us, be it to Saloniki or to Istanbul! Our brotherly arms will await you there, long live the Turkish-Hungarian brotherhood, freedom, and equality!<sup>64</sup>

The view of the Ottoman Freemasons, who considered the Hungarian Freemasons their Hungarian brothers and teachers, corresponded with both the Freemason concept of transnational fraternity and the Hungarian nationalist aspiration to identify the Hungarians as a cultural nation. As a cultural nation, the

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61 For the entanglements of Freemasons and the CUP, see Hanioglu, “Freemasons and Young Turks”; Iacovella, *Gönye ve hilal İttihad-Terakki ve Masonluk*; Koloğlu, *İttihatçılar ve masonluk*; Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in opposition*, 39.

62 “Festrede zu Ehren der türkischen Brüder.” *Orient*, October 22, 1909, 274–84.

63 Ibid.

64 *Orient*, October 22, 1909, 277.

Hungarian people could assert its claim to the right to play an allegedly civilizing role vis-à-vis its southeastern neighbors. At the same time, this role gave them the right to economic penetration into the areas where they transmitted culture understood in Western terms.<sup>65</sup> I discuss this in greater detail below.

The political transformations of the Balkans over the course of the Balkan wars directed the attention of the Hungarian Freemasons to the new states in southeastern Europe. A long article in a 1913 edition of *Orient* by Ármin Sasvári, one of the best connoisseurs of the region, offers ample testimony to the strong interest among Hungarian Freemasons in the “Balkans.”<sup>66</sup> Sasvári had been a student of the famous orientalist and Turkologist Ármin Vámbéry, and he later had worked as a journalist. In 1875, he reported as a war correspondent during the uprising in Herzegovina.<sup>67</sup> In 1890, he became the secretary of the Hungarian Trade Museum, where he headed the newly established information office. In 1907, he was made deputy director.<sup>68</sup> In *Orient*, Sasvári analyzed the Balkan Wars and the political developments from the point of view of Hungarian Freemasonry. He also reported on the visit of the Albanian Freemason and politician Dervish Hima (1873–1928), who had conversations with the Hungarian Grand Master and other officials in the Hungarian Freemasonry organizations and pleaded for support for Freemasonry in Albania and an Albanian state against Serbian territorial claims. In this conversation, the Hungarian Freemasons offered to allow the Albanian lodges to work under the SGLH until the establishment of their own grand lodge, and they also provided him with additional contacts in the political sphere.<sup>69</sup> This meeting represented the beginning of official Albanian-Hungarian Masonic relations, and the article describes a hitherto unnoticed chapter in Albanian-Hungarian relations as well. Thus, it can be claimed that the SGLH was one of the political puppet masters of Albanian-Hungarian rapprochement, which certainly corresponded with foreign policy developments within the Dual Monarchy,<sup>70</sup> since Albania’s independence had been recognized

65 Hidvégi, *Anschluss an den Weltmarkt*, 341.

66 *Orient*, February 3, 1913, 47–54.

67 “A szandzsák meg szállása 1879 augusztus havában.” *Pesti Napló*, November 3, 1912, 38.

68 Szinnyei, “Sasvári Ármin.”

69 *Orient*, February 3, 1913, 52–53.

70 Milo, “Politika austro-hungareze ndaj Shqipërisë në vitet 1914–1918,” 21; Csaplár-Degovics, “Lajos Thallóczy an Albanian Historiography,” 122–23; Csaplár-Degovics, “Az első magyar-albán szótár születése.”

by the great powers at the London Ambassadors’ Conference on July 29, 1913, after long negotiations and with the help of Austria-Hungary.<sup>71</sup>

On the eve of World War I, a Hungarian freemason lodge called Zoroaster was established in Izmir/Smyrna.<sup>72</sup> The city was not only one of the most important trading centers in the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century but also a multicultural metropolis<sup>73</sup> where many Masonic lodges existed.<sup>74</sup> How did a Hungarian lodge get into the Ottoman Empire? The *Zoroaster* was founded by Christians and Jews of the Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, and Germany and was affiliated with the SGLH.<sup>75</sup> The link between Budapest and the Freemasons in Izmir was Josef Kármán, the head of the Hungarian Commercial Bank Inc. Towards 1912, he became the branch director of the bank’s new branch in Izmir. By that time, he had joined the lodge “Neuschloss, a régi hívek” in Budapest,<sup>76</sup> whose members were engaged, as he was, in the financial sector.<sup>77</sup> All other founding members switched to Zoroaster from the French lodge of the city, which consisted for the most part of Jews.<sup>78</sup> According to the Zoroaster member list, its founding members were part of the upper middle class: a doctor, a lawyer, merchants, and Armenian dragomans.<sup>79</sup> The Armenians in Izmir maintained a large communication network which linked the various empires, and they controlled trade with Persia.<sup>80</sup> New members who joined the lodge in the following years were mostly merchants from Austria-Hungary or Germany or employees of the Hungarian Commercial Bank Inc.<sup>81</sup> The lodge was a sort of mixture of an intellectual club and a charitable association where the German-speaking elites of the city gathered. On the other, however,

71 Scheer, “Österreich-Ungarns Besatzungsregime in Südosteuropa im Ersten Weltkrieg und Albanische Fragen,” 294.

72 “A szabadkőműves országgyűlés.” *Kelet* May, 1914, 7. For a first analysis, see Turóczy, “Freimaurerei: ausgrenzende Entgrenzung?”

73 Nezihi and Üyepazarci, *İzmir’in tarihi*; Smyrnelis, *Smyrne, la ville oubliée?*

74 Dumont, *Osmanlılık, ulusçu akımlar, ve Masonluk*, 88.

75 MOL P 1083 38./CXXI, Zoroaster.

76 MOL P. 1083-38-VIII Neuschloss, a Régi Hívek.

77 Pataky and Dzubay, “A szabadkőműves szervezetek levéltára,” 39.

78 MOL P 1083 38./CXXI; Dumont 2000, S. 88.

79 The members were: Angelo Margulies, Josef Kármán, Stephan Avedikián, Jules Szilvassy, Josef Margulies, Bernath Burger, Albert Tarica, Vadis Bardisbanian, Jaques Ungar, Ornik Zakian, and Max Watzke. MOL P 1083 38./CXXI.

80 Schmitt, *Levantiner*, 223.

81 MOL P 1083 38./CXXI, Zoroaster, 51.

it was a social interest club, where social, spiritual, and even business practices could be cultivated.

### *Imperial Freemasonry?*

What does imperial Freemasonry constitute? Several aspects of Freemasonry in Austria-Hungary suggest that it should be understood as imperial Freemasonry. The first is simply its expansionist undertakings, i.e., the establishment of lodges outside the state borders. The Pobratim, the Zoroaster, and the failed attempt to found a lodge in Sarajevo are examples of this. These practices were accompanied, on the one hand, by discourses of egalitarian Masonic brotherhood and, on the other, by discourses of cultural superiority and a civilizing mission. The inclusive principle of fraternal equality made the Masonic lodges attractive for non-Hungarians too, both in an ethnic and political sense, as the lodges seemed to function at least in part as sites where elites could come together and exchange ideas regardless of ethnic-national, confessional, or social boundaries.

At the same time, Hungarian Freemasonry cherished the claim of ethical-intellectual leadership. They divided the world into two parts from a cultural-civilizational point of view: one in which Freemasonry was already established and flourishing and one in which this form of community and social practice was not yet known or established. One recalls the passage cited earlier in this essay from an article *Orient* according to which the “South Slavic” parts of the monarchy were “a prototype of such civilizational neglect.” This imagined cultural hegemony led the Hungarian Freemasons to see the “Orient” as a culturally fallow area that was eager to be cultivated. Hence, they interpreted the foundation of the first Hungarian lodges in the southeastern territories of the monarchy and outside as “conquests” for “the royal art.”<sup>82</sup> This interpretation made Freemasonry compatible with the colonial discourse of the Dual Monarchy, which justified expansion by reference to an alleged civilizing mission.<sup>83</sup> While the Dual Monarchy quickly abandoned its colonialist goals in Africa, it clearly pursued imperialist goals in the “European Orient” through political influence and economic-cultural practices.<sup>84</sup> These undertakings and discourses used in various bodies in Austria-Hungary with regards to the lands on its southeastern

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82 *Orient*, January, 1891, 10.

83 Loidl, “*Europa ist zu enge geworden*,” 9.

84 Bilgeri, “*Österreich-Ungarn im Konzert der Kolonialmächte*.”



borders have been examined in the secondary literature under the banners of micro-colonialism,<sup>85</sup> border colonialism,<sup>86</sup> and Orientalism.<sup>87</sup>

However, exclusively Hungarian endeavors can be identified by means of Freemason sources that go beyond Freemasonry. They were characterized by cultural or economic asymmetric relations, and thus they can be interpreted as imperial practices. Indeed, the informal politics practiced by Hungarian Freemasons, especially towards the “European Orient,” reached its peak in the High Imperialism in the years before and during World War I.

Despite the (narrowly interpreted) ban on politics, independent Hungarian Freemasonry interfered both in domestic and foreign affairs in the interests of Hungarian politics. The prerequisite for this was that by the turn of the century the SGLH had become a significant player both in Hungarian society and in Central and Southeastern Europe. It acted with other Masonic major authorities as well as with actors from other fields to achieve certain common political goals, such as the secularization of the state.<sup>88</sup> This can be seen in the fusion of political motives with Masonic ones in the Hungarian-Ottoman Masonic friendship. The same socio-political goals and similarly understood political ideals played an important role in the fact that a relationship of trust quickly developed between the two Freemasonries. For instance, the Freemasons took up the cause of secularism in Hungary and in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>89</sup> In addition, there was also a strong connection understood culturally, historically, and economically that went beyond the Masonic concept of brotherhood. And again, it was Sasvári who talked about the Hungarian-Turkish (Ottoman) relationship and about the potential for future cooperation between the two nations on the basis of Masonic ideas and this strong friendship:

85 Wendland, “Imperiale, koloniale und postkoloniale Blicke auf die Peripherien des Habsburgerreiches.”

86 Gingrich, “The Nearby Frontier: Structural Analyses of Myths of Orientalism.”

87 Kraft et al., “Einleitung: Kolonialgeschichten”; Ruthner, “Kakakniens kleiner Orient.”

88 “Sitzung des Bundesrates am 6. März.” *Orient*, March, 6, 1905, 86–87; “Protokoll der am 7. Und 8. April 1906 abgehaltenen XXI. Ord. Grossversammlung der Symbolischen Grossloge von Ungarn.” *Orient*, April 8, 1906, 8–9.

89 The speech held by Rıza Tevfik offers one example. Tevfik was a Bektashi leader and Freemason as well. In his speech, he made the following proclamation: “We want to put an end to the secular rule of the church and we strive to make religious conviction a private matter of every citizen.” [Wir wollen die weltliche Herrschaft der Kirche ein Ende machen und wir streben danach, daß die religiöse Überzeugung zur Privatsache jedes Bürgers werde.]. *Orient*, October 22, 1909, 281. For the Hungarian attitude, see A Demokrácia páholy jelentése az 1909. évről. MOL P 1083-38-XLVI Demokrácia, 23.

We proclaim Turkish-Hungarian solidarity. When the nation, being the defensive wall of Christianity, reaches out to the Turkish nation, which strides on top of the Mohammedan word, so it gives a shining example for Freemasonry, which will be universal, if all the nations embrace one another without race and faith.<sup>90</sup>

In this extract, as in the abovementioned speech given by Kâzim Nami Duru (who spoke about “Hungarian blood comrades”), the idea of Turanism resonates, and this was an idea which, given its cultural and economic overtones, received a strong boost at the time in Hungary.<sup>91</sup> Turanism formed the ideal basis of Turkish-Hungarian Masonic rapprochement. Scientific, political, and idealistic arguments concerning the alleged common “descent,” common national interests, and shared masonic philosophy intertwined. The purpose of Turanism was to strengthen the Hungarian cultural, political, and especially economic presence in the Balkans and in the Ottoman Empire, or, as historian Balázs Ablonczy notes in his monograph, “to colonize with love.”<sup>92</sup> It meant the alleged mutual strengthening of common interests and treating the Ottoman Empire and Balkan states as equals. In the scholarship on Turanism, it has been presented as a kind of “Hungarian imperialism.”<sup>93</sup>

This rapprochement, the prelude to which was the Ottoman-Hungarian Masonic meeting in Budapest in 1909, took place without consultation with Vienna. On the official political level, such a meeting between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire would have been unthinkable, first and foremost because of Hungary’s legal status but also because of the international political mood after the annexation crisis (1908), in the wake of which Austria-Hungary found

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90 “Verkünden wir also die türkisch-ungarische Solidarität. Wenn die Nation, die so viele Jahre lang die Schutzmauer der Christenheit gewesen ist, dem an der Spitze der mohammedanischer Welt schreitenden türkischen Volke die Hand reicht, dann geben sie der Freimaurerei ein glänzendes Beispiel, die nur dann universell werden wird, wenn alle Völker der Erde einander umarmen, ohne Unterschied der Rasse und des Glaubens!” *Orient*, October 22, 1909, 277.

91 Turanism, an idea of that the Turkic peoples once had a common homeland, has its origins among the Hungarian Orientalists, especially Lajos Thallóczy and Ármin Vámbéry. In the nineteenth century, Turanism was an idea which meant different things to different people, but it was definitely a “hit,” not only in the Ottoman Empire but also among the (allegedly) related peoples. The strongest voice was from the Turáni Társaság, or “Turanian Association,” which was founded 1910 and which enjoyed the support of the Hungarian government. Ablonczy, *Keletre, magyar!*; Fodor, *Hungary between East and West The Ottoman Turkish Legacy*; Fodor, “A Konstantinápolyi Magyar Tudományos Intézet,” 413–16. For more research on the Hungarian-Ottoman relationship in the main years of the “Turanian vision,” see Fodor, “A Konstantinápolyi Magyar Tudományos Intézet megalapítása.”

92 Ablonczy, *Keletre, magyar!*, 61.

93 Demeter, “A modernizációtól a kolonizációs törekvésekig,” 315.

itself increasingly isolated. Thus, despite the cultural and economic aspects, the rapprochement of the Masons of the two nations (the Hungarians and the Ottoman Turks) has to be evaluated primarily as a political act. There are other arguments in favor of a political reading of Ottoman-Hungarian Masonic relations. Even if, on the Hungarian side, high-ranking political officials were only indirectly involved in this Freemason network, the network certainly gave them greater political agency. In addition, deputies such Pál Farkas (1878–1921), who was later the “representative” of the Ottoman Grand Orient, were active players in the rapprochement. Farkas was an assimilated Jew and belonged to the circle around István Tisza and his conservative-nationalist party, Nemzeti Munkáspárt, or National Workers’ Party. In the literary field, he published in *Új idők* (New Times), a journal edited by Ferenc Herczeg (and founded by his stepfather’s publishing house), and later *Magyar Figyelő* (Hungarian Watchman), which represented conservative, nationalist political, social, and artistic values.<sup>94</sup> Farkas prepared and nurtured the cooperative initiatives by making himself available as a contact person between the two major authorities.<sup>95</sup>

The entanglement of politics and Freemasonry in the Ottoman-Hungarian Masonic network became even more evident during World War I, when the two states became official allies.<sup>96</sup> World War I also showed the political impotence of Freemasonry, which was unable to use Masonic ideals to transcend these frontlines. The international Freemason landscape shifted dramatically. Different camps emerged along the frontlines, and the Grand Lodges of the opposing states engaged in war propaganda.<sup>97</sup> Hungarian Freemasonry was no exception.<sup>98</sup> Only when the new emperor of Austria-Hungary adopted a new policy aimed at making peace was Hungarian Freemasonry able to carry out its political activity behind the scenes, exploring the conditions of a special peace with the help of its international networks.<sup>99</sup>

At the Ottoman-Hungarian Freemason meeting in 1909, the Freemasons of the two Empires promised to support each other inside the lodges and in the economic sphere. These pledges were not merely empty rhetoric, as revealed by

94 Balázs, *Az intellektualitás vezérei*, 40.

95 “Sitzung des Bundesrates am 25 April.” *Orient*, April 25, 1909, 143; Farkas *Staatsstreich und Gegenrevolution in der Türkei*, 31–33.

96 Ağaoğlu, *Müttefik devletlerin büyük localar toplantısı Berlin 1918*.

97 Berger, *Mit Gott, für Vaterland und Menschheit?*, 266–81.

98 Bókay, “Die ungarische Freimaurerei und der Weltkrieg. Rede des Grossmeisters in der Grossversammlung der Symb Grossloge von Ungarn am 30. Oktober 1915.” *Orient*, October 30, 1915, 2.

99 Berényi, “A magyar szabadkőművesség béke-kísérletei.”

a journey taken by a Hungarian to Istanbul and Saloniki, which included masonic meetings.<sup>100</sup> This shows that many Freemasons, who were industrialists, factory owners, representatives of particular interest groups, and economic experts and who formed a prominent part of Hungary's new bourgeois elite, used their transnational Masonic networks to improve Hungary's economic position within the Monarchy.<sup>101</sup> Through the informal channels of freemasonry, they were able to circumnavigate the “matters of common interest” that were supposed to ensure a common economic policy directed from Vienna. Furthermore, mutual visits by the Ottoman and Hungarian Freemasons (for instance in 1909 and 1910) served to further “Masonic fraternization,” and, in connection with this, to strengthen economic ties. Gelléri was again on this trip, and he reported on the results to the Hungarian Masonic audience and the whole journey. While the report in *Orient* was about the Masonic meetings, where the most important representatives of the Ottoman politics and economic life were also present,<sup>102</sup> the report for the lay readership was about the practical implementation of the “Hungarian-Turkish friendship,” especially in the field of economics and education:

I will only say that the Young Turks, as well as the leaders of the government and the authorities, have always emphasized that it is time not only to promote Hungarian-Turkish friendship in words, but to realize it practically in the field of the economy, for the benefit of both nations. Men such as Nazim Bey, Riza Tevfik, Kiazim Nami Bey, Taxim Bey, Adil, Huszni, and others who are leaders of public life in Saloniki and who hold the political and social leadership of the Young Turkish Movement in their hands, have expressed their fullest support for this.<sup>103</sup>

The practical implementation of “Hungarian-Turkish friendship” in the “field of the economy” corresponded with the plans of the SGLH after the trip, which organized the training of many Ottoman and later Albanian youths in Hungarian industry. This was clearly the result of this cooperative endeavor, which Hungarian Freemasons not only organized, but also made possible financially.<sup>104</sup>

100 “Aus dem Bundesrate am 25. Mai 1910. Besuch in türkischen Logen.” *Orient*, May 25, 1910, 137–39.

101 Sasvári, Ármin Balkán szerződéseink és iparunk, *Honi Ipar*, Oktober 1, 1908, 4.

102 “Gelléri, Mór, Ungarische Brüder in der Türkei.” In: *Orient* 22, no.5 (1910): 148–150.

103 Mór Gelléri, “Ausflug ungarischer Industriellen und Händler in die Türkei.” *Magyar Ipar*, May 15, 1910, 465.

104 MOL P 1106-1 Demokrácia ügyviteli iratok; Brief von Gelléri Mór an den Großmeister der Symbolischen Großloge von Ungarn. Öffentliches Rundschreiben; ibid. Török ifjak elhelyezésének terve;

## Conclusion

Following Harland-Jacobs, in this essay I have considered the extent to which the Hungarian Freemasons could be considered builders of the Habsburg Empire. There was a fundamental contradiction in Hungarian Freemasonry from this point of view: a tension between national and supranational ambitions, as it was structurally doubly embedded in the Hungarian political nation and the Dual Monarchy. Therefore, Hungarian Freemasonry was closely connected with both imperial and national traditions. Freemasons from all over the empire gathered in the lodges regardless of ethnic-confessional or national affiliations, and this was perceived as something which enriched the federation. The members felt committed primarily to their respective political nations, but the imperial framework was never questioned. It accepted as a given context which allowed greater room for movement and development in business, politics, education, and so on. The rhetoric and actions of many lodges and freemasons show that they wanted to strengthen Hungary’s position within the Monarchy, but at the same time, they staged Hungary as an imperial player in geopolitical terms in particular toward the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire while still functioning within and not challenging the dualist framework. This interpretation corresponds with the findings of much of the research in New Imperial History, which examines “imperializing nation-states” and “nationalizing empires,” because both forms of rule appropriated elements of power maintenance and expansion from each other.<sup>105</sup> Thus, it calls into question any strict distinction between empire and nation-state in the nineteenth century.

The networking and the founding of lodges of the SGLH in the “Orient” were interpreted as acts of Masonic fraternization but also as a way of “bringing light” to the cultures on the periphery. Thus, they corresponded with the soft-colonial and imperial discourses and practices of the monarchy. The difference was that it was the Hungarian, not the Austrians, who were the leading power in the Freemasonry in the Habsburg Monarchy, and the Freemason center was Budapest, not Vienna. The Hungarian freemasons were agents of Masonic diplomacy. In this context, the personal discursive entanglements as well as the entanglements of practices among freemasonry, politics, economics, and

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Gelléri Mór, “Bosnyák, török és albán ifjak a magyar iparban.” *Honi Ipar*, January 4, 1914, 7–8.

105 Leonhard and Hirschhausen, *Empires und Nationalstaaten im 19. Jahrhundert*, 12.

culture toward the “Orient” reveal the very imperialistic attitude of Hungarian Freemasonry.

So, can the Freemasons be considered “Builders of Empire”? My answer to the question is that the Hungarian Freemasons saw themselves as the “Empire Builders” of a specific Hungarian imperialism. They neither sought nor intended to break the balance that had been created by the Compromise of 1867, because they saw their existence within the Monarchy, but they still demanded more and more independence, and they used the Masonic networks to pursue national interests. A history of Hungarian Freemasonry which examines these entanglements can convincingly demonstrate tendencies and aspirations for more autonomy without necessarily exaggerating them. Although the Hungarian political elite, which liked to see in Dualism the myth of independence and the equal status of Budapest and Vienna, apparently did not use all the tools at its disposal to help shape foreign policy, its activities along the unofficial channels of Freemasonry, especially from the beginning of the twentieth century, reveal clearly that it nonetheless made some efforts in this direction. Thus, I would suggest that future studies on Austria-Hungary should perceive Hungary as an actor within the framework of New Imperial History and should draw on new sources, beyond the classical sources of diplomacy and politics, that have not been considered so far.

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# “Let These be our Colonies: Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina!” Rezső Havass and the Outlook of Hungarian Imperialism at the Turn of the Century\*

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Hungarian imperial thought after the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy became a fantasy of past times, and thus the imperial propaganda of Rezső Havass was long irrelevant by the time of his death in 1927. In spite of this, Havass was called the “wholehearted devotee of Hungarian imperialism” in his obituary, a man who believed in further Hungarian expansion with the faith of prophets and whose goal was to resurrect the imperium of Louis I of Hungary. The present study analyzes the career trajectory of Rezső Havass and his multiple and overlapping identities in order to uncover the different faces of Hungarian imperialism before the Great War. Havass was a “bourgeois citizen,” a “Hungarian fanatic,” “a scholar,” and a “clerk and chairman of business companies,” or in other words, he had an array of identities which made him capable of using historic, legal, political, and economic arguments to aid the advancement of Hungarian imperialism. For Havass, the Hungarian Kingdom was undoubtedly a would-be-colonial empire with well-defined political goals (the colonization of Dalmatia), and his texts mixed and vulgarized elements of the sciences subordinated to political goals. For instance, it is relevant that the empire was a facilitating factor for geographical scholarship in the case of Havass, besides the obvious political leanings. My main research question concerns the modalities of imperial thought in Hungary through the case study of Rezső Havass. What did it consist of? How did it compare to other notions of imperialism and economic expansionism? And how widespread was it in the public sphere in Hungary?

Keywords: Habsburg Monarchy, imperialism, imperial propaganda

Other countries have overseas possessions, colonies, which provide comfortable income for those who cannot succeed at home. Let these be our colonies: Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina!<sup>1</sup>

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1 Havass, *Dalmácia és a magyar ipar, kereskedelem*, 49.

The idea of the Magyar imperium seemed a fantasy of old times after the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy, and similarly, the expansionist propaganda of Rezső Havass had become obsolete by the time of his death in 1927. Nonetheless, Havass' work provides us a broader perspective from which to understand the nature of Magyar imperialism at the turn of the century.<sup>2</sup> Though fantasizing about the Magyar imperium became pointless in the interwar period, Havass' necrology described him as "a sincere devotee of Magyar imperialism"<sup>3</sup> who believed in the expansion of the Hungarian Kingdom with the faith of prophets and whose primary aspiration was to reestablish the empire of Louis I of Hungary.<sup>4</sup> As the necrology stated, Havass was also a "prolific writer" and a "warm-hearted scientist." Kálmán Lambrecht, a paleontologist and researcher at the Hungarian Royal Geographical Institute (Magyar Királyi Földtani Intézet), emphasized, by contrast, Havass' multiple affiliations and ties. Havass was a "bourgeois in the sense of the *civis romanus*," "a fanatic Magyar," "a scientist," "the creator and promoter of new thoughts," and also a man who worked in the management of several joint-stock companies.<sup>5</sup> Together with his multiple and overlapping identities, Havass' imperial prophetism, therefore, provides excellent empirical material which sheds light on the nuances and mechanisms of imperial ideology in Hungary in the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy.

Havass was longtime employed at the First Hungarian General Insurance Company (Első Magyar Általános Biztosító Intézet) as the head of the mathematical department, until his retirement in 1904. He then became a supervisory board member at several joint-stock companies.<sup>6</sup> In 1910, he

2 Many historians treated Havass' work as part of discussions concerning Hungary's imperial past: Holec, *Trianon*; Demeter, *A modernizációtól az expanziós törekvésekig, a liberalizmustól a turanizmusig*; Varga, "The Two Faces of the Hungarian Empire"; Bali and Pap, "A magyar 'Fiume és Adria kutatás' néhány történeti aspektusa, különös tekintettel Havass Rezső munkásságára."

3 Leidenfrost, "Havass Rezső †," 59–60.

4 Louis I of Hungary, also known as Louis the Great (Nagy Lajos), was the king of Hungary and Croatia between 1342 and 1382 and the king of Poland between 1370 and 1382. The rule of Louis I represented one of the "greatest" periods of Hungary's history in the imagination of nineteenth-century historiography. His "historical greatness" was often portrayed by romantic poets in the nineteenth century, for instance Dániel Berzsenyi (1776–1836) and Sándor Petőfi (1823–1849).

5 Lambrecht, "Havass Rezső. Emlékbeszéd," 105–6.

6 The address and housing registry in Budapest gave the following information about Havass in 1910: he was a supervisory board member at the Nemzeti baleset-biztosító részvénytársaság (National Accident Assurance Company Limited), the Egyesült budapesti fővárosi takarékpénztár (Unified savings bank in Budapest), and the Budapesti általános villamossági részvénytársaság (General electricity limited company in Budapest). He was also a member of the directorate at the Gschwindt-féle szesz-, élesztő-, likőr- és

was still the vice president of the Hungarian Geographical Society (Magyar Földrajzi Társaság), vice president of the Elizabeth People's Academy (Erzsébet Népakadémia, an association to promote public education in Hungary), and an elected member of the National Council of Museums and Libraries (Muzeumok és Könyvtárak Országos Tanácsa).<sup>7</sup> In 1902, Havass was awarded the honorary title of royal councilor (királyi tanácsos),<sup>8</sup> and he was a long-time member of the legislative committee (törvényhatósági bizottság) in Budapest. Thus, he belonged to the Budapest bourgeoisie at the turn of the century. He was familiar with the contemporary historical, legal, political, and economic fields and he readily applied this expertise in the "practical sciences," to use a contemporary expression, to help the cause of Magyar imperialism with regard to the question of Dalmatia.

Walter Sauer's description of Austrian historiography and the Austrian public image concerning the colonial past is true for Transleithania. According to Sauer, there is an alleged abstention from any discussion of colonial intervention, imperialism, and expansionism when considering the common past of Austria-Hungary, in spite of the fact that Austria-Hungary was not an anti-colonial state and numerous attempts to establish formal and informal colonies have been described in the secondary literature.<sup>9</sup> Following Sauer's line of thought, many historians have recently addressed the past of the Habsburg Monarchy as a colonial past, particularly from the perspective of postcolonial theory.<sup>10</sup> For instance, Habsburg rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina is no longer interpreted in the contemporary narrative of a "civilizing mission" or a "humanitarian intervention." Instead, the province is examined as a "colony" of the Habsburg Empire and analyzed in the framework of postcolonial theories, with a focus on both cultural and economic processes.<sup>11</sup> In this vein, the present paper looks at

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rumgyár részvénytársaság (Gschwindt's factory of spirits, yeast, liqueur, and rum limited company). *Budapesti cím- és lakásjegyzék 1910*, 502, 515, 537, 548.

7 Ibid., 365, 541.

8 "Új királyi tanácsos."

9 Sauer, "Habsburg Colonial."

10 Most recently in Hungary: Csaplár-Degovics, "Nekünk nincsenek gyarmataink és bódítási szándékaink." *Magyar részvétel a Monarchia gyarmatosítási törekvéseiben a Balkánon (1867–1914)*. For a comprehensive historiographical account of the issue, see *ibid.*, 14–40.

11 Aleksov, "Habsburg 'Colonial Experiment' in Bosnia and Hercegovina Revisited." Born and Lemmen, *Orientalism in Ostmitteleuropa, Diskurse, Akteure und Disziplinen vom 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*; Donia, "The Proximate Colony. Bosnia-Herzegovina under Austro-Hungarian Rule." Feichtinger et al., *Habsburg postcolonial*; Gingrich, "The Nearby Frontier"; Gingrich, "Kulturgeschichte, Wissenschaft und Orientalismus. Zur Diskussion des 'frontier orientalism' in der Spätzeit der k.u.k. Monarchie." Heiss and

the work of Rezső Havass as an explicit part of Hungary's colonial past: Havass' objectives were not achieved (and thus remained very much imaginary), but they exemplified the conceptual framework of colonial thinking in Hungary before World War I and demonstrated wide public support for such endeavors.

Rezső Havass was trained as a geographer, but his texts under discussion here are not scientific works. In his propaganda for the re-annexation of Dalmatia, Havass vulgarized scientific arguments and provided kindling for the public image of Magyar colonial prospects. Still, the case of Havass shows that the relationships between science, politics, and empire were not hierarchical or one-way relationships.<sup>12</sup> His travelogues retained scientific findings (in geography and history) and turned them into a political means of producing colonial propaganda, but geographical and historical research, for instance, also profited from Hungary's colonial prospects in the Balkans. In other words, the empire used science as a means of furthering its political goals—one obvious example is the Kronprinzenwerk—yet the sciences also profited from the visions of the empire. In this case, the empire served as a “facilitating” space for researchers: the imperial space provided opportunities for mobility within and outside the empire, and the empire itself provided a large geographical area for research.

The most obvious examples with which to illustrate this relationship are Adolf Strausz and Rezső Havass. Their sphere of scientific activity was inherently connected with the very existence of the Habsburg Monarchy and the Kingdom of Hungary. It is quite illustrative that both suddenly halted their previous scientific and public engagements after the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy. Adolf Strausz (1853–1944) was a professor at the Oriental Academy of Trade (Keleti Kereskedelmi Akadémia) in Budapest, and he published manifold works on the Balkans from cultural, political, and economic perspectives. The last publication by Strausz before 1914 dealt with the geopolitical situation in the Balkans and the role Turkey should play in restructuring the region.<sup>13</sup> After the Great War, however, Strausz ceased his scientific activity in this field and, in the interwar period, he published only one monograph, a work on the history of

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Feichtinger, “Distant Neighbors: Uses of Orientalism in the Late Nineteenth-Century Austro-Hungarian Empire.” Šístek, *Imagining Bosnian Muslims in Central Europe*.

12 Arend, *Science and Empire in Eastern Europe*; Ash and Surman, *The Nationalization of Scientific Knowledge in the Habsburg Empire, 1848–1918*.

13 Strausz, *Az új Balkán felszígét és a török birodalom*.

the Jewish congregation in Rome.<sup>14</sup> The dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy represented a sudden rupture in Strausz's academic career on another level as well. The Oriental Academy of Trade, which provided his livelihood when he taught there as a professor between 1891 and 1918 and provided financial support for his research trips to the Balkans, was closed down and the faculty was dismissed after 1920.<sup>15</sup> 1918 thus represented a sudden halt in Strausz's career. The same picture goes for Havass. He published over 100 articles, papers, and essays between 1878 and 1916 but only four titles in the last decade of his life, including three papers in *A tenger* (The sea) and a commemorative volume on the fiftieth anniversary of the Hungarian Geographical Society.

The main goal of the present paper is to look at the conceptual grounds of Hungary's colonial objectives through the lens of Havass' propaganda concerning the reunification of Hungary with Dalmatia. This, of course, entails a change in perspective: I look at Hungary not as a colonial power, which it was not, but as an unsuccessful would-like-to-be colonial state with well identified colonial goals. I am particularly interested in the ways in which different fields of knowledge interacted with one another, transgressed disciplinary frontiers, and were vulgarized by Havass and others. Between the turn of the century and the outbreak of the Great War, colonial ideas and concepts had become an integral part of the public imagination through continuous repetition in the daily press, commemorative books, tourist guides, and even school trips. For Havass, the Hungarian Kingdom represented a colonial empire with well-defined political goals (i.e., the colonization of Dalmatia), and his scholarship mixed elements of the sciences subordinated to political goals (and also an approach to the sciences that followed its own logic). My main research question concerns the modalities of imperial thought in Hungary through the case study of Rezső Havass. What did it consist of? How did it compare to other notions of imperialism and economic expansionism? How widespread was it in the public sphere in Hungary? I approach these questions in three smaller case studies. First, I analyze the components of Havass's economic expansionism and the place of Dalmatia within it; then, I turn to the most important means of economic expansionism, the railways, and describe how new railways lines were meant to aid the Magyar imperium. Lastly, I analyze the cultural and historic arguments for the re-annexation of Dalmatia.

14 Strausz, *A római ghettó*.

15 Erdélyi, "A Keleti Kereskedelmi Akadémia és az orientalisták."

## *Economic and Territorial Expansionism*

The most quoted article by Rezső Havass is a manifesto entitled “On Magyar imperialism,” which was published in *Budapesti Hírlap* (Budapest Herald) in 1902.<sup>16</sup> Havass argues that the principal goal of Magyar imperialist politics is to revive the power and authority of the Kingdom of Hungary at the time of the Árpád dynasty and the House of Anjou. The most often repeated trope is the importance of reclaiming the territorial integrity, the political power, and the authority of the kingdom as it stood at the time of Louis I. Yet the main issue for the contemporary observer is the country’s economic dependency and under-development vis-à-vis Austria. For Havass, the solution must therefore be economic: no further expansion could be done in the port of Fiume (today Rijeka, Croatia), and there was no other way to nurture the increasing flow of trade and transportation. The Hungarian economy therefore desperately needed to establish other port cities for its economic expansion, and the Hungarian re-annexation of Dalmatia could provide a solution. The coastal cities and ports of Dalmatia were mostly underdeveloped and unexploited, so their integration into Hungary’s trade network might represent the geopolitical foundations for Hungary’s greater economic expansion. In short, these ideas represented Havass’s patriotic mission and his public endeavors aimed at promoting the re-annexation and articulating the necessary geographical, cultural, and historical arguments. To quote Havass,

the advocates of Magyar imperialism do not want to create daydreams in front of the Hungarian nation, rather, they aim to profit from those factors that could be used to bring about the cultural and material improvement of the Magyar nation and to further glorify her, without engaging in adventurous undertakings, based on the legal grounds from the nation’s history, and without weakening the power status of the Monarchy.<sup>17</sup>

Havass’ stance vis-à-vis the Habsburg Monarchy is very clear: he was not searching for territorial expansion outside the Monarchy but rather was seeking to reconfigure the power balance within the monarchy. The underlying economic strategy involved active economic interventionism and industrial policy in the Balkans, the expansion of railway lines to fit the needs of Hungarian trade

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16 Havass, “Magyar imperializmus.”

17 Ibid.

and industry, and the introduction of new trade policies more beneficial for Hungarian producers. Havass wrote in detail about the role of the railways, a subject to which I return in the second part of this paper.

Havass evaluated efforts at the trialist reorganization of the Dual Monarchy in view of the above programmatic article, and the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy was not sought for either in this case. In a lecture at the national assembly of the Hungarian Geographical Society in Nagybecskerek (Zrenjanin, Großbetschkerek, today in Serbia) in 1909, Havass characterized the idea of trialism as a conscious effort to weaken Hungary within and outside the monarchy. With the aid of trialism, the goal of the “Austrians” was to “weaken our national forces” and “annihilate our economic independence.”<sup>18</sup> The south-Slav state created in this way would not be sustainable as the third, “dwarf” member of the Habsburg Monarchy. In the case of the south-Slav state, national unity would be also missing, even though national unity was also missing in the case of Hungary, Havass admitted. But Hungarians formed a “cultural nation” (*kultúrallam*) and were well positioned to solve this problem:

The fact that Hungary geographically forms a closed area and that it has a historical past and also the numerical, material, and intellectual force of ten million Magyars ensure the leadership of the Magyar nation and rule out any competition.<sup>19</sup>

The second issue is that the planned south-Slav state would be dependent on the neighboring “Magyar Empire” from the perspective of trade and transportation. The south-Slav territories of the Habsburg Monarchy therefore belong to Hungary in a geopolitical sense: “If Bosnia and Herzegovina, which belong to the body of the Magyar Empire, came into the possession of Austria, it would be as absurd as attaching Tirol to Hungary.”<sup>20</sup> The arguments against trialism are similar to the motifs for the re-annexation of Dalmatia. The connection between Hungary and the south-Slav states was imagined in a hierarchical way but presumed to be productive for both parties. Although Hungary had a clear economic superiority, Hungarians should share the “fruits of civilization” with the south-Slav region:

For us, who are the stronger, the bigger, it is an obligation to approach the south-Slav region in the spirit of old, traditional Magyar politics. [...] We have to bring the very tissue of Magyar culture to the South-

18 Havass, “A trializmus földrajzi szempontból,” 382.

19 Ibid., 382–83.

20 Ibid., 388.



Slavs and to the Adriatic coast so that its light could gather the people in the region around us.<sup>21</sup>

The program was rather phantasmal, as was well expressed in the lack of reactions on the other side of the Leitha and in the apathy of the Hungarian political elite, but this political apathy was in contrast with infrastructural investments and trade policies in the region that attracted close attention from both Vienna and Budapest.

This points to another element in the ideology of imperialism: the civilizing mission of the colonizer and the hierarchical relationship between center and periphery, colony and colonizer. This civilizing mission was well described in the first part of a play, a trilogy by Havass entitled *Fényben* (In the light):

We should be all one in our singing! The rivers flow together and become a sea, a great, magnificent, and unconquerable sea. Our peoples merge in this way into a magnificent whole. My princess, to remember my visit today, I shall build a tower here which will indicate until the end of times that the Hungarian king was here, as a good friend, who is a builder and giver and not a conqueror who destroys and takes. You shall live according to your old laws and customs, no one should disturb them. But I expect from you to act with brotherly love and loyalty vis-à-vis the Hungarian king and his people.<sup>22</sup>

The benevolent nature of Hungarian rule in Dalmatia—which allegedly resulted in centuries of loyalty to Hungary—was emphasized by other influential figures. The historian Henrik Marczali wrote that “The cities of Dalmatia would never forget the centuries that they lived under Hungarian protection while preserving their absolute freedom.”<sup>23</sup> Dalmatians remember these centuries as the “savor of sweet honey.” Havass found seeds for this argument in Lajos Thallóczy’s essays. Thallóczy found out that, in 1783, an anonymous writer sent a memoir to the chancellery arguing that Dalmatia legally belonged to Hungary. Although the chancellery agreed with the conclusions, they hid the memoir because it could have caused diplomatic conflict with Venice.<sup>24</sup> Thallóczy was more candid in another publication:

[The cities of Dalmatia] welcomed Austria with joy because they were fed up with Venetian rule. The secret archives of Vienna and

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21 Ibid., 390.

22 Havass, *Fényben... Három magyar-dalmát történelmi kép; Színmű*, 23.

23 Marczali, *Az Árpádok és Dalmácia*, 102.

24 Thallóczy, “Pray György, a magyar korona melléktartományai,” 523–24.

documents of the Council of War prove that citizens, the clergy, and the educated did not forget the rule of the “Hungarian crown,” and Austria meant Hungary for them. In Split, the esteemed party turned to the palatine to be able to rejoin the Hungarian crown. It became a considerable campaign, as the Hungarian coat of arms was set up in cities and on islands, priests proclaimed their loyalty to the Hungarian king in the pulpit. Thugut, the minister of foreign affairs at the time, however, prevented the annexation of Dalmatia to Hungary.<sup>25</sup>

This passage pleased Havass so much that he quoted it countless times in his texts on Dalmatia.<sup>26</sup> In terms of the reference to historic rights, Havass was not alone in reclaiming the possession of Dalmatia. In a book about the public law status of Dalmatia, László Dús emphasized that Dalmatia belonged to the Hungarian crown, the main reason being that the Hungarian crown had never renounced its connection with Dalmatia.<sup>27</sup>

Another pamphlet, entitled “Dalmatia and Hungarian industry and trade,” describes in detail the essence of this Hungarian economic expansionism.<sup>28</sup> The point of departure was that the economic stagnation and crisis in Hungary threatened Széchenyi’s prophetic famous contention that, “while many think that there once was a Hungary, I wish to believe that there will yet be a Hungary.” The remainder of the article details the advantages of the enforcement of Act XXX of 1868, which proclaimed the re-annexation of Dalmatia to Hungary.<sup>29</sup> Mining, especially asphalt and coal production, had not yet been exploited in the province. Natural resources and infrastructure were available to establish a large-scale aluminum industry. The cement industry had promising potential and could compete with producers in the West. Unexploited natural resources

25 Thallóczy, *Magyarország és Ragusa*.

26 Havass, “Dalmácia Magyarországhoz való vonatkozásai tekintettel Fiuméra,” 72; Havass, “Dalmácia” (1903) (the same article was published in three daily papers); Havass, “Magyar emlékek Dalmáciában,” 1; Havass, “A magyarok tengeri politikája,” 115.

27 Dús, *Dalmácia a magyar közjogban*.

28 Havass, *Dalmácia és a magyar ipar, kereskedelem*.

29 The re-annexation of Dalmatia was not the most pressing topic in the daily press, but Havass was not the only person asking for the implementation of Act XXX of 1868. As early as 1872, *A Hon* (The Homeland) published an article entitled “Those who divide Hungary” (Törs, “Kik osztják fel Magyarországot?”). The article complains that nothing has been done to implement the law, although five years had passed since Francis Joseph had taken the oath. In contrast, *Pester Lloyd* started to mobilize public opinion against the re-annexation of Dalmatia. According to the critics, Dalmatia did not want to rejoin Hungary, and this step would dangerously increase the proportion of the Slav population in Hungary, and the infrastructural burden of the state would also increase dramatically. For the writer of *A Hon*, naturally, the return on the investment, in a couple of decades, would surely cover the costs.

were abundant in the province, such as hydropower (through the exploitation of waterfalls), viniculture, pomology, and fishing, and the local conditions could make tea production possible in the region. Dalmatia was currently at a disadvantage because, according to Havass, the Österreichischer Lloyd neglected the development of trade and transportation on the Adriatic Sea. At the time, there were only four banks and two savings banks in the province, so Hungarian financial institutions could easily establish new branches. Havass' agenda represented an economic colonialism that proposed to exploit Dalmatia's resources after re-annexation. This strategy was also intended to improve the economic situation of both parties. According to one of the most quoted arguments against Austrian "rule" in Dalmatia, "Vienna" had failed to care for the province since having acquired it, and it had failed to make significant cultural and infrastructural investments.

The Dalmatian ports offered the most significant potential from the perspectives of economy and trade. There were many reasons behind their growing importance. First, there were 56 cities on the Dalmatian coast, all of them potential ports unexploited by the Dual Monarchy. Second, the Suez Canal had transformed trade routes in general, and from the moment it had opened in 1869, the ports on the Mediterranean Sea became capable of engaging in trade with Asia. The monarchy, however, had failed to profit from its favorable position. In terms of the volume of transportation on the Suez Canal, English, German, French, and Dutch trade all significantly surpassed trade by the Habsburg Monarchy, in spite of the fact that Trieste and Split (Spalató) were more easily accessible. Naturally, "Austrians" refused to give up Dalmatia, because in doing so, they would have completely relinquished to Hungary control of and access to the Balkans. For Havass, the re-annexation of Dalmatia would bring about economic independence for Hungary in the long run, which was much needed after the (future) establishment of an independent customs territory. To sum up, the importance of Dalmatia lay in the abundance of natural resources, potential trade connections and developments, and the fact that Dalmatia could be a potential target for Magyar emigrants.<sup>30</sup>

30 Havass called attention to this program on several occasions in daily journals: Havass, "Dalmácia," *Budapesti Napló*, January 14, 1903, 1–2; Havass, "Dalmácia," *Budapesti Hírlap*, December 5, 1905, 4; Havass, "A dalmát kérdés"; Havass, "Dalmácia és a fölirat"; Havass, "Dalmácia visszacsatolása," *Magyarország*; Havass, "Kereskedelmi érdekeink Dalmáciában"; and so forth. For a complete bibliography of Havass' works, see Leidenfrost, "Havass Rezső †," 113–15. For a comprehensive bibliography on Dalmatia and the Hungarian-Dalmatian question, see Fodor, "Dalmácia és a Magyar-dalmát kérdés földrajzának hazai bibliográfiája."

The idea of economic expansionism was widespread among Hungarian economists and public figures debating Balkan politics,<sup>31</sup> and as historian Gábor Demeter has persuasively argued, “[g]eography was already, before 1914, a promoter of economic and then territorial expansion.”<sup>32</sup> In this regard, Havass was a typical exponent of Magyar imperial thought. The concept of economic expansionism relied on various sets of arguments, including legal arguments (such as the reference to Act XXX of 1868), references to historic rights (the conquest of Hungary by the Árpád dynasty and Louis I of Hungary), allusions to geographical cohesion or closeness, economic needs (especially as regards international trade), geopolitical considerations (vis-à-vis Vienna but also Russia, Turkey, and Italy), and cultural and humanitarian appeals. Havass differed from such figures as Dezső Szegh<sup>33</sup> and Adolf Strausz<sup>34</sup> in the sense that the latter two did not envision territorial expansion as part of economic expansion. The means of expansionism remained strictly economic and cultural: a railway strategy to foster and further Hungarian trade because, now, “our own favorable trade position is utilized by other countries in relation to Eastern trade.”<sup>35</sup> Significantly, Strausz was a professor at the Oriental Academy of Trade in Budapest, and he participated in forming the next generation of tradesmen in the Balkans at the turn of the century. Havass could also find an ally in Pál Hoitsy who, as the editor of *Vasárnapi Újság* (Sunday Newspaper), disseminated different forms of Magyar imperial thought to the greater public. Hoitsy argued that, from the perspective of geography, Hungary, which was pressed between East and West, was forced to pursue expansionist politics ad infinitum. Romania and Serbia had to be occupied to regain Hungary’s old glory and to enable the Magyar nation to assimilate the nationalities within its borders.<sup>36</sup>

For Havass, the numerical growth of Magyars was closely connected to the economic power of Hungary, and he examined nationalist arguments from this

31 For a comprehensive account: Demeter, *A modernizációtól az expanziós törekvésekig, a liberalizmustól a turanizmusig*.

32 Ibid., 137.

33 Dezső Szegh wrote mostly on Albania: Szegh, *Magyarország a Balkánon*; Szegh, “Gazdasági feladataink Albániában.”

34 Strausz, *Bosznia és Hercegovina politikai, gazdasági és földrajzi leírása*; Strausz, *Az új Balkán félsziget és a török birodalom*.

35 Szegh, “Gazdasági viszonyunk Bosznia-Hercegovinához,” 830, quoted by Demeter, *A modernizációtól az expanziós törekvésekig, a liberalizmustól a turanizmusig*, 83.

36 Hoitsy, *Nagymagyarország*; Demeter, *A modernizációtól az expanziós törekvésekig, a liberalizmustól a turanizmusig*, 136.

perspective. The lecture entitled “The Slovakization of Upper Hungary” started as follows: “Who could deny that the more numerous its population becomes, the greater the power of the nation will be.”<sup>37</sup> Following the lead of József Kőrösy’s similarly entitled study,<sup>38</sup> Havass argued that the so-called Slovakization of some of the counties in Upper Hungary (the territory of Slovakia today) was obvious, and the Magyar nation had lost some 100,000 people in Pozsony, Nyitra, Bars, and Hont Counties. Statistical findings indicated the decrease of Magyar population and prompted immediate action. In another article, Havass addressed the phenomenon of “pseudo-Magyarization.” At the turn of the century, the spread of Hungarian as the official language and the language in everyday use took place primarily in cities and towns, as had been emphasized in the 1899 lecture. Havass argued that, in contrast to declarations made by people when the census was taken, “half of the population prefer not to use Hungarian in Budapest.”<sup>39</sup> Havass highlighted the situation on the outskirts of the capital: he visited Pomáz, where everyone spoke Serbian and German, although they were all locals. For Havass, it is not “chauvinism to speak up against these conditions, it is rather self-defense.” He contended that, “[i]f the national spirit could permeate society in the capital, there would not be any people speaking foreign languages in Budapest.”

For Havass, the best tool with which to achieve these national goals was economic expansion, and the scientific foundation of this expansion was to come from geography. The Hungarian Geographical Society established the Department of Economic Geography in 1912. The department was intended to promote economic interests from the perspective of geography, and economic interests were to benefit the “national goals” first and foremost.<sup>40</sup> For Havass, the “vivacity of the Magyars,” by which he meant the numerical growth of the Hungarian-speaking population, was inseparable from Hungarian economic expansion. In this way, Dalmatia as a potential target of emigration would help maintain the numerical growth of Magyars, because the future colony (Dalmatia) could preserve the migrants for the Magyar nation, in contrast to overseas migrants, who began using different languages and were thus “lost,” as it were, to the Hungarian nation.

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37 Havass, “A Felvidék eltótosodása,” 56.

38 Kőrösy, *A Felvidék eltótosodása; Pozsony, Nyitra, Bars, Hont, Nógrád, Pest, Gömör, Abauj, Zemplén és Ung megyék területéről*.

39 Havass, “A főváros magyarsága.”

40 Havass, “A földrajzi elem a magyar nemzeti célok szolgálatában.”

The problem with the Tisza government, in the eyes of Havass, was that it failed to control or influence the direction of emigration. In addition, more than 30 years after the Compromise of 1867,<sup>41</sup> the government had failed to make friends in the Balkans or among the non-Magyar nationalities in Hungary. Hungarian emigrants were left without guidance and thus were lost to the Magyar cause in the long run. In a rather condescending tone, Havass declared that “they had not even abandoned our Slovaks [tótjainkat] in such a despondent way.”<sup>42</sup> The most important issue with the Hungarian ruling elite, however, was that it had neglected the development of the “Magyar imperium.” Past governments had not encouraged the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Kingdom of Hungary and had not taken the opportunity to move settlers into Bosnia, especially Székelys. Havass asks a pointed question: “[d]id we work to create a situation in which Bosnians and Herzegovinians would themselves ask to get the advantages of Hungarian citizenship?”<sup>43</sup> He concludes his article with an invitation to pursue imperial policies: “Let us raise the flag of Hungarian imperial politics. Let us give the Magyar nation ideals that fit the fight of its soul. Hungary is entitled to have Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.”<sup>44</sup>

Two issues must be emphasized concerning the economic expansionism envisioned by Havass. First, the most important difference that distinguished his views from other Magyar ideas was that it involved explicit territorial expansion, namely the incorporation of Dalmatia into Hungary. However, this territorial expansion was imagined within the framework of the Dual Monarchy and via the transformation of the power balance between the two states of the Habsburg Monarchy. Austria, thus, became Hungary’s most important “competitor” and the (only) threat to Hungary’s economic independence. Secondly, Havass mixed up nation and empire in the ideology of economic expansionism. The principal goal was to elevate the standing of the Hungarian crown and Hungarians, but by “Hungarians,” Havass understood mostly people who both spoke Hungarian as a native tongue and allegedly identified as part of the Hungarian nation. For instance, economic development in Hungary should contribute to the growth of the Magyar (Hungarian-speaking) population and not to the growth of other

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41 Havass, of course, referred to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, which created the Dualist Monarchy.

42 Havass, “A magyar imperium,” 1.

43 Ibid., 2.

44 Ibid.

ethnic communities within the territories of the Hungarian crown. The goal was thus to further the growth and prosperity of the Hungarian nation. Yet, the re-annexation of Dalmatia, according to public law, could only take place with Dalmatia as part of Croatia-Dalmatia-Slavonia, thus within the framework of a Magyar empire and not the Kingdom of Hungary. The compromise between Hungary and Croatia in 1868 and specifically the passage that declared Dalmatia's re-annexation envisaged the re-annexation to the Hungarian empire (as part of Croatia) and not to Hungary proper. The Croatian historian Ferdo Šišić emphasized this idea in his book on the Dalmatian question.<sup>45</sup> The Croatian parliament requested several times the re-annexation of Dalmatia, but they always meant re-annexation to Croatia.

### *Economic Policy Instruments: Railways in the Service of Economic Expansion*

The re-annexation of Dalmatia was not on the agenda of the political elite in Vienna or in Budapest, but the construction of railways was discussed and carried out in the province. In practice, Act XLVIII of 1912 regulated the construction of a railway line between Ogulin and Knin<sup>46</sup> based on a compromise reached at the common ministerial council and the 1907 financial compromise between the two delegations. The latter stated that the two governments agreed that a railway line was going to be constructed from Rudolfswerth via Möttlingen to Karlovec, and a direct line would be built between Ogulin and Knin. The construction of the latter was to be completed by December 1911. Another important point of the 1907 compromise was that tariff policies would be set in parity between the two states of the Habsburg Monarchy regarding transit traffic to Dalmatia.<sup>47</sup> This agreement was welcomed by Havass, but it did not meet with unanimous approval by the Hungarian public. Critics stated that the costs were excessive and the Austrian economy benefitted most from the future direct connections between Vienna and Dalmatia.

For Havass, the railway connection between Dalmatia and Hungary was a means with which to further the economic expansion of Hungary and an utterly necessary step forward: “[i]t is peculiar that other nations make war to

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45 Šišić, *A mai Dalmácia földrajzi fejlődése és a visszacsatolás kérdése*.

46 For a description of the railway line, see Gönczy, “A magyar-dalmát vasút.”

47 Radó, “Ogulin-Knin”; Polgár, “Uj vasut az Adriához”; Polgár, “Vasuti politikánk fontos kérdése Dalmáciában.”



take possession of seashores and maritime transportation is used to enhance their economic independence and development: whereas our longing for the sea consists only of rallying cries which sound nice but are never acted upon.”<sup>48</sup> Charles Loiseau and Guiseppe Gentilizza<sup>49</sup> were quoted to suggest that the destiny of Dalmatia was crucial for the status of Hungary as a great nation. Loiseau, however, was much more critical of the Habsburg mission in the Balkans than he seems in Havass characterization of his ideas. For instance, Loiseau called attention to the abuse of power against non-Magyars in Hungary, in particular concerning parliamentary elections. From his perspective, Hungary could only delay the political rise of Romanians, Slovaks, Serbs, and other national minorities, and the right way of state building would be federalism instead of the proclamation of a unified Hungarian political nation. The conclusion of the article was oracular: “And yet, we need it, the Slav pressure—and they [the Hungarians] know it!”<sup>50</sup>

On another occasion, Loiseau drew attention to the potential economic and political consequences of Habsburg expansion in the Balkans.<sup>51</sup> The Habsburg Monarchy planned to construct a railway line between Sarajevo and Mitrovica that could potentially transform trade networks in the region. This railway line would also help lay the way for the construction of direct line between Vienna and Salonika and badly hurt the economic interests of Italy. Loiseau, here, gave a succinct summary of the civilizing mission:

To bring this barbaric country [Macedonia] a caress of civilization—and why would only one great power have the privilege of doing this good work?—is, first, to open schools. [...] It is also to spur economic relations. [...] It is to form a new generation of Italians, lay and clerks, to better know the history and language of Schkipetare. [...] Finally, it is to help bring about the development of the postal services.<sup>52</sup>

Loiseau also expressed his opinion concerning Hungary’s customs policies, which in his assessment were imperial and served to further exploitation by Hungary of the import of Serbian pork: “[a]nd on this market, this great power [Hungary] dictates the law through customs tariffs, railway tariffs, and through

48 Havass, *A magyar-dalmát összekötő vasút jelentősége*, 1.

49 Gentilizza, *Il Mare Adriatico e la Questione Balcanica*, 14.

50 Loiseau, “Le magyarisme à la salle Wagram,” 590.

51 Loiseau, “Les chemins de fer.”

52 Ibid., 219.

the exercise of—often unfair—public health regulations.”<sup>53</sup> Loiseau himself was thus far from sympathetic to the cause of Austria-Hungary.<sup>54</sup>

Contrary to Loiseau’s assumption, there was controversy between Austria and Hungary and inside Hungary as well concerning the choice of the railway line through Dalmatia. For instance, the *Österreichische Rundschau*<sup>55</sup> questioned the rationale of building a line between Ogulin and Knin (the so-called Lika line) instead of a line between Novi and Knin (the so-called Una line in Bosnia), because the former heavily favored Hungarian interests and strictly Hungarian tariff policies could be applied on this line. Hungarian experts also criticized the choice of the Lika line. It was a region with limited access to water, and this significantly raised construction costs. The Lika line was 55 kilometers longer and over 100 million Kronen more expensive than the Una line. In their eyes, it was problematic that the Lika line traversed thinly populated and agriculturally unproductive regions, and, finally, it favored Austrian interests by furthering trade via Vienna and Trieste.<sup>56</sup>

Havass naturally refuted these contentions and pointed out that with the construction of the Una line, Hungary would lose its influence on tariff policies for Dalmatian transportation. The ultimate motive, though, concerned imperialism. First, the Lika line would “bring culture, at last” to Lika-Krbava County in Croatia-Slavonia. Second, “the main goal is after all to connect Budapest and Hungary with the Dalmatian coast.”<sup>57</sup> In a significant way, Havass turns to Friedrich Ratzel to support Hungary’s imperial expansionism. The German geographer, nowadays known for laying the foundations of the concept *Lebensraum*, wrote in *Anthropogeographie* that, “Umgekehrt es ist verheissungsvoll, wenn ein eingeschlossenes Volk sich eine Lücke in den Gürtel bricht, der es umgibt, oder sonstwie seine Expansionskraft bezeugt.”<sup>58</sup> Ratzel took the example of the political rallying cry “Tengerhez magyar, el a tengerhez” (“To the sea Hungarian, to the sea,” originally the title of an 1846 article by Hungarian politician Lajos Kossuth) to prove that such an “expansion power” can have political consequences. At least, the development of the Lika line was,

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53 Ibid., 221.

54 Two monographs by Loiseau also expressed this attitude: Loiseau, *Le Balkan Slave et la crise autrichienne*; Loiseau, *L’équilibre adriatique (l’Italie & la question d’Orient)*.

55 *Österreichische Rundschau* (July 1910): 69–71. Quoted by Havass, “A magyar-dalmát összekötő vasút jelentősége,” 75–76.

56 Ibid., 76.

57 Ibid., 80.

58 Ratzel, *Anthropogeographie*, 116.

according to Havass, necessary to halt the expansionism of Austrian trade, even at the expense of Hungary's economic development.

Havass called attention to Austria's efforts to curtail Hungary's economic expansion. The planned construction of the "island railway" (this line would combine a steam ferry and railway lines through Istria, Pag, and so forth to Zadar) in Dalmatia would simply be a means of economic expansionism for Austria.<sup>59</sup> Austria also aimed, according to Havass, to monopolize maritime trade through the connection between Vienna and Split. The subvention of the Österreichische Lloyd, the establishment of a port on the Istrian coast, next to Fiume, were all part of this strategy.<sup>60</sup> Havass would repeat what had been already stated concerning the Lika line:

The railway line to Split must belong to the Hungarian railway jurisdiction and must be a Hungarian line, for it will be profitable, for it bears important political and economic interests, and it can contribute to the protection of Rijeka.<sup>61</sup>

The investment would yield remarkable profits. The port of Split was closer to the Suez Canal than Trieste, Genova, Marseille, or Hamburg, and thus it could assume an important role in trade with the East. But there were other resources in the region. The waterfalls along the Cetina River could provide industrial electricity, Brač (an Island close to Split) was a major producer of high-quality marble, there was a burgeoning cement industry in Split, as well as a spa, wine exports, and so forth.<sup>62</sup> These assets ensured the importance of rail connections between Split and Budapest. Havass' call did not go unnoticed. A critical review appeared in *Vasuti és közlekedési közlöny* (Railway and transportation gazette) claiming that it was not economically rational to oppose the construction of the Split-Vienna line. The main goal of the Austrians was to develop Split (and potentially alleviate the traffic going through Trieste) and not to create a competitor for Fiume. Hungarians, rather, should concentrate their efforts on developing Fiume, which could not become a competitor, as it lacked the appropriate infrastructure. The anonymous writer completely dismissed Havass' contentions as propaganda and proposed a more rational approach:

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59 Havass, "A dalmáciai szigetvasút," *Magyar Külkereskedelem*; Rezső Havass, "A dalmáciai szigetvasút," *Gazdasági Mérnök*.

60 Havass, "A budapest-spalatói vasút," 35–36.

61 Havass, "A budapest-spalatói vasút," 37.

62 Ibid., 38–40.

We have so many things to do, more directly and more urgently, that we don't have time to wander in a foreign land. We are deeply sorry that Dalmatia is a foreign country, but today, to think about its re-annexation and especially to plan our transportation policies in view of this idea would not be far-sighted or economically rational behavior.<sup>63</sup>

Dezső Szegh, an influential economist and prolific writer on economic expansionism in the Balkans,<sup>64</sup> also opposed the establishment of the Lika line in favor of the Una line, as the latter would be shorter, cheaper, more profitable, and more efficient. In addition, the Una line better fit Hungary's existing trade policies with regards to trade with the East. Szegh proved this statement with references to "objective facts, so to speak, on a mathematical basis."<sup>65</sup>

In his response, Havass rejected the notion that the re-annexation of Dalmatia would be a "utopian enchantment" because all parties (including Dalmatians and Croats) were in favor of this constitutional change. He also reiterated the need to construct the Ogulin-Knin line on the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom and make it a "Magyar" railway.<sup>66</sup> In 1908, the Austrians suddenly got interested in Dalmatia, for they feared that Hungary would re-annex it. Like many of his contemporaries, Havass believed that it was Austria that benefitted mostly from the Dual Monarchy. Cisleithania had a positive trade balance vis-à-vis Transleithania and wanted to maintain the economic dependency of Hungary, in his assessment. The goal for Hungary, in contrast, was to free itself from this dependency through enhanced trade relations with the rest of the world. The port of Fiume was not sufficient (with its mere 20 square kilometers). The solution could be found in the ports of Dalmatia and in the training of Magyar sailors who would work for Magyar economic independence and Magyar economic expansion.<sup>67</sup>

As in the case of cultural belongingness (see below), Havass was not the only public figure to write in favor of the railway line between Ogulin and Knin. For instance, Iván Polgár, a Cistercian monk, historian, and professor at the Cistercian Gymnasium in Székesfehérvár, described the Dalmatian railways as a crucial component of Hungarian railway investments. For Polgár, railway investments should be profitable in the sense that the income generated by new lines would

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63 N., "A budapest-spalatói vasut," 299.

64 Demeter, *A modernizációtól az expanziós törekvésekig, a liberalizmustól a turanizmusig*.

65 Szegh, "A dalmát vasuti összeköttetés," 613.

66 Havass, "A dalmát kérdés és a Budapest-spalatói vasut."

67 Havass, "Ausztia mozgalma Dalmáciáért."

cover the interest on the capital and make further investments possible. The rationale behind the construction of the Ogulin-Knin line (as planned by Act XLVIII of 1912) was to direct the traffic to the lines of the Hungarian State Railways (MÁV) and open up new trade networks for Hungarian products.<sup>68</sup> Dalmatia should belong to Hungary by “historical law,”<sup>69</sup> yet the construction of railway connections between Hungary and Dalmatia was in the interest of Hungarian economic growth, regardless of whether Dalmatia would be annexed to Hungary as stipulated in Act XXX of 1868 or not.

### *Culture and History in the Service of Imperialism*

One important pillar of Havass’ propaganda was the cultural and historical relations between Dalmatia and Hungary. The richly illustrated monograph, entitled *Dalmatia*, included all the cultural monuments and memories that illustrated Dalmatia’s earlier attachments to Hungary.<sup>70</sup> One such case is the preservation of the remains of Katalin and Margit, daughters of Béla IV of Hungary, at the cathedral in Split. According to the report, “the royal relics were kept in garbage and dirt,” and this was a clear sign of anti-Magyar sentiments in the province. Havass rejected this claim, because the unusual condition of the tomb was due to the refurbishment of the cathedral at the time, and the Dalmatian sense of fraternal attachment to Hungary was unquestionable.<sup>71</sup> Havass attempted to prove that Dalmatia and the Magyar nation belonged together culturally by citing cultural-historical examples that were repeated for decades, in some cases even in the interwar period. For Split, it was the royal tomb. For Zadar, the capital of Dalmatia, it was St. Mary’s Church, which had been erected partly by Coloman of Hungary and the conquest of the region by Louis I. For Trogir and Klis, the important event was Béla IV of Hungary’s escape from the Tartar invasion. These historical events served as encouragement for contemporary Hungarians to visit Dalmatia, as explained in 1901 in *Vasárnapi Újság*,<sup>72</sup> and the places were the backdrop for the aforementioned drama *Fényben*.<sup>73</sup> The goal of the trilogy was to draw attention to Hungary’s glorious past so that the present

68 Polgár, “Vasúti politikánk fontos kérdése Dalmáciában.”

69 Ibid., 166.

70 Havass, *Dalmácia*.

71 Havass, “A spalatói magyar ereklye.”

72 Havass, “Képek Dalmáciából.”

73 Havass, *Fényben... Három magyar-dalmát történeti kép; Színmű*.

generation could gather strength from this example in the unfortunate age of the interwar period.

The public image of Dalmatia was very similar to what Havass recounted many times, at least from the perspective of school field trips to Dalmatia. Reports of field trips to Dalmatia specifically mentioned visits to attractions in the province that were somehow related to Hungarian culture of history. In the case of Zadar, student groups stopped at St. Mary's Church and St. Simeon's Church, and they would observe the Roman-style tower of the former, erected to remember the Coloman's parade in the city, and the silver casket in the latter, offered to the city by Elizabeth of Bosnia, the wife of Louis I. A Catholic Gymnasium in Budapest issued the following report of the silver reliquary: "Seeing this invaluable piece of rare perfection gives us an understanding of the power, richness, and glory of our country at the time of Louis I."<sup>74</sup>

Other mentions include Klis (Clissa), a small village which provided shelter for Béla IV when he fled the Tartar invasion. The teacher reports that on the visit to this stronghold, "we sang the National Anthem and our Kurutz songs with such emotion!"<sup>75</sup> Efforts to nurture these "historical reminiscences"<sup>76</sup> would continue in Split with visits to the tomb of the daughters of Béla IV in the cathedral and to Trogir, where Béla IV also stayed in 1242. Havass' drama entitled *Dalmácia* (Dalmatia) was also not ignored by the schools. In 1903, several schools reported to have watched the "patriotic drama" at the Urania theater following a request by the pedagogical council.<sup>77</sup>

Havass' distinctive imperial agenda was echoed by teachers on the field trips. The stenography teacher at a trade school in Budapest rambled on about the prospects of Magyar foreign trade in his introduction to the report "Magyar world trade. A desire of all true Magyars." This was followed by a rhetorical question: "But is Magyar world trade not a dream, a reverie or a castle in the air?"<sup>78</sup> The answer was a firm no, as demonstrated by the school trip itself. Others gave a more explicit description of Magyar imperialism in Dalmatia. For József Andor (cited above), the goal of the trip to Dalmatia was to show students "the ancient places of the old Magyar empire."<sup>79</sup> The Magyar empire lost its old

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74 Andor, "Dalmácia és Montenegró," 13–14.

75 Hauschka, "Tanulmányutunk Dalmáciába és Boszniába," 38.

76 Székely, "Tanulmányútunk," 41.

77 "Adatok az iskola történetéhez," 6.

78 Székely, "Tanulmányútunk," 15.

79 Andor, "Dalmácia és Montenegró," 10.

glory for a reason: “the decline of national virtues and the empowerment of national defects led us to lose this fairy province.”<sup>80</sup> What remained of Magyar imperialism in the province was remarkable, however, because the material remnants of Magyar rule in Dalmatia were almost invisible, and we would look for them in vain as “a sign that Magyar rule was not violent and did not leave its mark on anything.”<sup>81</sup> A field trip description by the Gymnasium in Trsztena (Trstená), a Slovak town at the northern border between Upper Hungary and Galicia, offered further proof of the benevolent nature of Hungary’s imperial past.

Once the wind was glowing a Hungarian tricolor on Orlando’s Column in front of St. Blaise’s Church. Under the protection of this tricolor, Dubrovnik lived in security, in wealth with privileges, and in peace. And Dubrovnik had its heyday under the protection of this tricolor.<sup>82</sup>

Other travel reports replicated these tropes without the imperialist voice. The architect János Bobula Jr. described Dubrovnik in 1911 in exactly the same way as Havass spoke about Dalmatia. The portrait of the coastal city started with a reminiscence about Magyar rule in the province. The traveler wondered, while strolling through the alleys of the old town, whether a knight of Béla IV or Ladislaus I of Hungary would come and block his way, and he imagined how Sigismund of Hungary, the Holy Roman Emperor, would watch animals and plants from the window of the monastery, just like visitors in the early twentieth century did.<sup>83</sup> But Bobula dismisses these thoughts with a melancholy sigh:

Let’s not pass time with these reminiscences, because we can only get depressed by knowing our weakness. Knowing that we have to tolerate silently that the “pearl of the Adriatic,” which the Árpáds brilliantly put on the Holy Crown of Stephen, is today under foreign rule, without any historic rights.<sup>84</sup>

Not surprisingly, the most important landmark in the city is the cathedral that contains the relics of St. Stephen. Others were just describing Dalmatia as a touristic destination. A handbook for travelers by Sándor Paulovits, a senior clerk in Tolna County, copied most of the information from Havass’s book

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80 Ibid., 9.

81 Ibid., 13.

82 Ágoston, “Dalmácia,” 12.

83 Bobula, “Raguza,” 149.

84 Ibid., 150.



on Dalmatia without references to the annexation.<sup>85</sup> Lajos Czink, a teacher at a secondary trade school, described Lissa with the necessary references to Coloman of Hungary, Béla IV, and Louis I but without any mention of Dalmatia's re-annexation.<sup>86</sup> Béla Dezső, a Gymnasium teacher, recalled the times of Béla IV but again did not make any contentions concerning how Dalmatia belonged Hungary.<sup>87</sup> The linguist Béla Erődi gave a comprehensive summary of Dalmatia's touristic destinations and only reinforced the idea that it was, now, a foreign country. The remains of Béla IV's two daughters were mistreated in Split because of "ethnic hatred," and the bishop refused to transport them to Hungary because the Magyars had not built a direct railway line between Split and Budapest.<sup>88</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The case of Rezső Havass offers persuasive support for the notion that empire and nation are not binary oppositions in the case of the Habsburg Monarchy<sup>89</sup> and they worked together well in Havass' imperialist ideology. For the Magyar nation, economic expansionism as a form of imperialist politics was a means to develop and sustain Hungarian political and cultural influence. The idea of a Magyar imperium was thus not alien to the thinking of Havass and his contemporaries.<sup>90</sup> On the contrary, it was shared and practiced by many. It might have seemed little more than a daydream a century after the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy, but it was a political program espoused by many around 1900. The imperialist ideology of Havass was present both in discussions about the establishment of new railways (namely in the case of the Ogulin-Knin railway line) and in the reconsideration of Hungary's trade network and transportation routes. Naturally, it was also present in the image of Dalmatia from a historical and cultural perspective. School trips and tourist guides characterized Dalmatia as a former colony of the Hungarian Kingdom and were guided by the cultural and historic reminders of Hungarian rule in the province. Respected historians like Henrik Marczali and Lajos Thallóczy were equally interested in the distant

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85 Paulovits, *Ragusa és környéke tájékoztatója*.

86 Czink, "Lissa (Vis)."

87 Dezső, "A magyar-horvát szigettenger."

88 Erődi, "Tanulmányi kirándulásom Dalmáciában."

89 Judson, "Where Our Commonality Is Necessary...."

90 See: Varga, "The Two Faces of the Hungarian Empire."

past of Dalmatia as a source of historical rights for the Hungarian crown. This was, of course, the Magyar perspective. The argument concerning historic rights could support claims to the region both by Cisleithania and by Transleithania, not to mention Italy and Croatia.<sup>91</sup> Foreign travel handbooks mentioned Hungarian relics, but they presented a much more nuanced picture of the common past and present. Maude M. Holbach's travel book only mentions one Hungarian relic, "the marvelous silver-gilt sarcophagus said to contain the body of the Simeon of the Presentation in the Temple" offered by Queen Elisabeth of Hungary to the Church of St. Simeon.<sup>92</sup> Another travel report bluntly criticized Hungarians:

It [Dalmatia] also suffers from imperial politics, the absolutely necessary connection of its state railway at Knin with the Austrian system being persistently vetoed by Hungary, which hopes thus to coerce it into supporting the Magyar party in the Diet.<sup>93</sup>

Hungarians might have been alone in thinking that Dalmatia should belong to their kingdom, but they imagined this settlement in the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. Havass and others like him harshly criticized "Austria" as the main competitor with and enemy of Hungary's economic development and the country that did the most to curtail Hungarian independence, yet they remained in the Dualist framework and envisaged only a reconfiguration of the power balance within the monarchy. Robert Musil, in *The Man Without Qualities*, might have written that Austrians were primarily nothing at all and there was no such thing as Austria in the imagination of the peoples of the Habsburg Monarchy. For Hungarians like Havass, "Austria" very much existed, and it was the country that connoted the Habsburg empire. But this empire contained in itself another empire, the Magyar imperium.

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91 See: Šišić, *A mai Dalmácia földrajzi fejlődése és a visszacsatolás kérdése*.

92 Holbach, *Dalmatia*, 38–39.

93 “Snaffle,” *In the Land of the Bora*, 62.

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# Borderline Syndrome in Fiume: The Clash of Local and Imperial Interests

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As the only seaport city of the Hungarian Kingdom, Fiume (present day Rijeka, Croatia) was a key area for policies implemented by the central government in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. It was a multi-ethnic hub, an economic, social, political and cultural center, and a highly intensive contact zone where people from various parts of world with different interests and aims met. Fiume was a border, a filter, and a frontier. Moreover, it was an important area in the Hungarian state-defense system. Three important factors deserve particular attention. First, that Fiume was physically enclosed within the Croatian Kingdom, and very much as if it had been an enclave, it did not have common borders with Hungary. Second, due to the way the Hungarian government exercised power and devised its strategies to create a support base (and also because of a fear of efforts towards expansion by Slavs), the government created an Italian-speaking political elite that ruled over Fiume. Third, Fiume enjoyed extraordinarily wide municipal autonomy which included the right to maintain public order and security in the city. The local elites wanted to preserve these rights from the encroaching state.

My study has two purposes. First, I discuss the main reasons for the establishment of the border police. Why was it such a vital question for the Hungarian state at the national and the local level, and why did Fiume became the most problematic element in this issue? I highlight how and why the problem of the border police emerged as one of the most crucial conflicts in relations between the state and its port city.

Keywords: border police, Fiume, Hungarian government

## *Introduction*

Less than one year after the scandalous events in Fiume in connection with the parliamentary election of 1901, a clearly agitated Ferdinando Kischer,<sup>1</sup> a

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1 Ferdinando Kischer was the former royal prosecutor, a retired judge, and politician who belonged to the Autonomy Party. He was also a city representative. Several scandals and protest actions against the central government can be attributed to him. For example, in 1899 he participated in the vandalization of the newly opened tramway in Fiume. In 1898, he smuggled into Fiume issues of *La Difesa*, a “forbidden” paper of the Autonomy Party published in Sušak. He secretly distributed issues of the paper, and in 1901, he took part in the upheaval that accompanied the parliamentary elections.

member of the Autonomy Party,<sup>2</sup> rose to deliver a speech to the council of local representatives, the *Rappresentanza*.<sup>3</sup> The city father addressed Francesco Vio,<sup>4</sup> the *podestà*<sup>5</sup> of the city, and warned him of the dangers with regards to the border police to be organized in Fiume.<sup>6</sup> In his somber response, Vio said that the Legal Committee was already looking into the matter.<sup>7</sup>

In their proposal submitted a few days later, the committee supported Kuscher's opinion and also deemed the setting up of the police force problematic. The committee noted the importance of protecting Fiume's autonomy and declared that the Budapest government should give up its plans or find another solution to achieve its goals. For example, border policing tasks and prerogatives could be assigned to the city police, which was under the supervision and control of the *Rappresentanza*.<sup>8</sup> The proposal caused a great uproar among the political elite of the governing party, as it was considered unacceptable for any city in the Kingdom of Hungary to question the sovereignty of the Hungarian state and defy its will.

There were four main factors that made the relationship between the central government and the Fiume municipal administration particularly critical. First, as Fiume is located on the eastern coast of the Adriatic and was the only seaport of the Kingdom of Hungary, it played a crucial role in the economic, foreign, and domestic policy of the Hungarian governments. Second, Fiume was not directly

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2 The Autonomy Party began as a group of Fiume citizens who opposed the centralizing efforts of the central government. This group became a party in 1896 under the leadership of Michele Maylender. Their main goals were to protect the Italian language and culture in Fiume and to safeguard the city's autonomy.

3 The *Rappresentanza* was a council of 56 representatives of Fiume and the Fiume district led by the mayor or *podestà*.

4 Francesco Vio was a lawyer and one of founders of the Italian literary society, the *Circolo letterario*. He was also city representative who belonged to the Autonomy Party. He served as first deputy mayor and then mayor (*podestà*) from 1902 to 1913, intermittently.

5 *Podestà* was the title of an office essentially the same as mayor of Fiume and the Fiume district between August 1872 and November 1918. From October 31, 1918 on, the mayor was called *sindaco*. This title ceased to exist after the fall of d'Annunzio and the creation of the Free State of Fiume. Then, in order to emphasize the separation of Fiume and Italy, the Italian government reintroduced the term *podestà* in the new entity. In the Kingdom of Italy, the title of *podestà* was introduced by the administrative reform of 1926.

6 By Fiume I mean the city and districts (Cosala, Drenova and Plasse) of Fiume in the Dualist era.

7 "Az állami határrendőrség és a *rappresentanza*." *Magyar Tengerpart*, November 9, 1902.

8 Officially, the town police (in Italian, *Sezione di Pubblica Sicurezza*) was the Public Security Department of the Town Council, and thus it was under the authority and control of the *Rappresentanza*, which was led by the *podestà*.

connected to the Hungarian mainland. It existed, rather, as an enclave wedged between Austria and Croatia, and it was only as a *corpus separatum adnexum*<sup>9</sup> that the city was part of the Hungarian administration.<sup>10</sup> Third, Fiume as a multi-ethnic<sup>11</sup> and multilingual city, required increased control and extraordinary measures on the part of the Hungarian government, since, as a logical consequence of these circumstances, it was highly exposed to changes at the local, regional, imperial, and global levels. To borrow a metaphor from Georg Simmel,<sup>12</sup> Fiume was both a bridge and a door for Hungary to the Balkans and to the world, and it was, vice versa, a gateway for the rest of the world to Hungary.

The specific geographical location of Fiume, the heterogeneous linguistic and ethnic composition of its population, and its multiple border function were also symbolically expressed in the name of the town. The Italian word “fiume” and its Croatian version “rieka/rijeka” mean river, and the town and district borders meet the criteria of borders and barriers separating administrative areas and states, of contact zones connecting natural social, linguistic and economic features, of buffer zones, frontiers, and filter zones with permeable gates.<sup>13</sup> That is why Fiume in the Dualist era offers a revealing case for the study of the dilemmas of the separation of roles and functions.

The unique geographical and legal situation of the city was also manifest in the fact that, in Fiume, the power of the state was represented by a governor<sup>14</sup> appointed by the emperor in accordance with the proposal of the prime minister and the minister of commerce. The governor was also the chairman of the Maritime Authority. He played a very important role in his capacity as chairman, because the governor’s powers extended beyond Fiume to the entire Hungarian-

9 The concept of the Fiume *corpus separatum adnexum* (separate annexed body) dates back to Maria Theresa’s rescript of April 23, 1779, which made the city of Fiume, which had been given to Croatia in 1776, directly subject to the Hungarian Crown and affirmed the city’s privileges. Imperial interests, the economic development of the coast and the eastern parts of the Habsburg Monarchy, and thus perhaps the motivation of the Hungarian nobility to pay more customs duties were also reasons behind the empress’ decision.

10 The situation of Fiume from the perspective of public law was controversial throughout the entire period, as Croatia also laid claim to the port city and its surroundings. The disagreements between Hungary and Croatia were settled by the “Fiume Provisory” issued in 1870. Although the emperor intended the measure as a temporary means, the provisory remained in force until the autumn of 1918.

11 According to official census data, the ethnic distribution of the population of Fiume in 1900 was as follows: 45.6 percent Italian, 32.5 percent Croatian and Serbian, 9 percent Slovenian (Wend), 7.4 percent Hungarian, 5 percent German, 1.5 percent other. *Népszámlálás 1910*, 69.

12 Simmel, “Híd és ajtó.”

13 Péntzes, “The impact of the Trianon Peace Treaty.”

14 Officially: Royal Governor of Fiume and of the Hungarico-Croatian littoral.

Croatian coastal region, at least in maritime and commercial matters.<sup>15</sup> However, the governor (and thus the Hungarian state) had no absolute power even in Fiume, because, in accordance with the 1872 city statute, Fiume enjoyed exceptionally broad administrative autonomy. The power resulting from this autonomy was mostly exercised by the podestà and, under his leadership, the Rappresentanza, or the body of representatives that not only controlled cultural and economic issues but also had administrative and policing rights.

This privileged status inevitably became a hotbed of conflicting interests between the centralizing ambitions of the state and the municipality of Fiume, which “fervently protected” its autonomy. Although the conflict eventually led to a gradual erosion of the city’s autonomy, the city fathers were able to counter the state’s ever-increasing need for control and they successfully blocked some of the state initiatives to transform local society. Furthermore, Fiume not only preserved its autonomy (if undoubtedly in a limited form), but also managed to retain it in the aftermath of the world war, when the status of the city changed radically.

What naturally follows is that the problem posed by setting up the Fiume border police, therefore, was much more than an isolated, local conflict, and it was linked to and part of the modernizing and yet Janus-faced centralizing efforts of the state. In the present paper, I therefore consider how the introduction of the institution of the border police in Fiume (specifically) was significant as an example of these centralizing efforts and the resistance with which they sometimes met. I also identify fields where the interests of the state and the city clashed and examine how these conflicts were impacted by the characteristics and the functioning of borders. In addition to presenting the main periods of the history of the border police, I also discuss why the Fiume city fathers found the idea of the state border police offensive and what means and strategies they relied on in their struggle to stifle or at least impede the centralizing efforts of the state.

### *State Aspirations*

In December 1905, Royal Prosecutor Lajos Orosdy<sup>16</sup> of Nagykanizsa was turning the pages of *Budapesti Közlöny* (Budapest Gazette) with considerable excitement every morning, hoping to spot the announcement that would mark an important

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15 For more details, see: Ordasi, “Modellváltások.”

16 Lajos Orosdy was the royal prosecutor of Nagykanizsa. He was then appointed to serve as captain of the Fiume border police, and in 1905, he was made ministerial councilor of the Fiume Governorate. On

milestone in his life. Finally, on Christmas Day it was communicated in the official journal of the government that he was listed in payment class VII by the minister of the interior and had been appointed captain of the newly organized border police.<sup>17</sup>

Although it remains unclear whether Orosdy considered his appointment a professional challenge or a punishment or whether he thought about the fate of his son, who had been born out of wedlock and was later legitimized, the new position required him to take a 300-kilometer journey, which was anything but comfortable. Furthermore, he had to move all his belongings and adapt to a radically different environment. The new place of service for the 45-year-old official, born in Hontbesenyőd (today Pečenice, Slovakia),<sup>18</sup> was the border police headquarters in Fiume.<sup>19</sup> However, the border police act (Article VIII of 1903) that served as the foundation of the appointment was yet to come into effect: Fiume had to wait more than seven years.

It was not unusual for a law to come into effect years after it had been passed, but regarding the national political significance of the border police, it is rather interesting that the executive order of the Ministry of the Interior was given no earlier than in the last days of December 1905. Some of the reasons for the procrastination may have been the weakness of the administrative system, the poor financial state of the legal authorities, and several crises faced by the government.

Yet in this transitory period, the issue remained on the agenda. The problems that necessitated setting up the border police were becoming an onerous burden for the whole Hungarian political elite, and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which was already struggling with a structural crisis, was facing new dilemmas posed by the governmental, personal, and dynastic changes in the Balkans.

The most crucial problems for the Kingdom of Hungary were that emigration and immigration rates were not decreasing, illegal labor and prostitution were on the rise, smuggling and the circulation of illicit documents and principles were

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October 29, 1918, together with Governor Zoltán Jekelfalussy, he moved to Budapest for good, and they managed the affairs of the Governorate from the Hungarian capital. After World War I, he was promoted and decorated several times. He eventually retired as deputy state secretary.

17 *Budapesti Közlöny*, December 24, 1905.

18 Settlement in Upper Hungary (today Slovakia) near Léva (today Levice, Slovakia).

19 The sources do not reveal precisely why he was selected for the position in Fiume, but according to articles in the papers *Pécsi Napló*, Orosdy's knowledge of criminalistics and his knowledge of Italian and (presumably) a Slavic language must have been weighed in the balance. "Királyi ügyészből határszéli rendőrkapitány," *Pécsi Napló*, December 29, 1905.

out of control, individuals were appearing who posed a threat to public order and safety, and no effective methods had been put in place to protect against pandemics. This cause conflicts, uncertainty, and upheavals not only in the settlements and regions along the border but in the entire state, and this turmoil had serious social and political consequences. These consequences included, in particular, the waning of the ruling elite's political support, a rapid decrease in the number of the working-age people and men who could be conscripted into the military, and the appearance of new groups (mainly the so-called Galician Jews) which acted as rivals of the local population. Emigration and immigration were closely related to the problems of nationality, citizenship, and place of residence, and the tensions surrounding emigration and immigration, in turn, created a new wave of conflicts. In Hungary, no citizenship other than Hungarian was recognized.<sup>20</sup> Consequently, anyone who did not have Hungarian citizenship was considered a “foreigner” and could be expelled from the country. This mentality had much in common with the procedure applied by villages to banish individuals they deemed noxious from the community.<sup>21</sup>

Border defense and maintaining law and order were the tasks of counties and town municipalities. The model had been transformed on a number of occasions and had been gradually centralized, but it remained somewhat inefficient. As part of an effort to address this, a bill on setting up the border police was passed in 1903.<sup>22</sup> The legislation process sparked heated debates inside and outside the parliament. Most of these debates concerned how to establish the new institution and its functions, prerogatives, and tasks. In the end, the members of parliament agreed to place the organization directly under the Ministry of the Interior and to set it up as a civilian authority. In other words, the body could not have taken on a military character, neither in its functions nor in its appearance. Behind this decision lay the principle of the primacy of parliament and government over county and city municipalities and also over the military administration. The government was also intent on establishing and operating a “Hungarian” body along the borders that was independent of Austria or, at least, separate from it.<sup>23</sup> MEPs also agreed that, in order to make it more effective, the organization,

20 *Az 1901. évi október hó 24-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója, X. kötet*, January 13, 1903, 272.

21 Szikinger, “Rendvédelmi jog.”

22 Parádi, “Határrendőrség a történelmi Magyarországon.”

23 *Az 1901. évi október hó 24-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója, X. kötet*, January 13, 1903, 281.

which was seen almost as a panacea, should be deployed in as many areas as possible and should be given exceptionally broad powers.<sup>24</sup>

The border police not only checked the passports of travelers along the borders, but also participated in investigations, intelligence gathering, surveillance, and the detection, screening, and removal of enemy intelligence agents and persons deemed to be dangerous. It also provided operational support for the armed forces during the war.<sup>25</sup> The border police (in its area of operation) had the right to judge in the first instance in cases of offences under its jurisdiction,<sup>26</sup> and its members also had discretionary powers. In other words, they could resort to bribery, hire and pay off civilians deemed trustworthy, or even threaten them in the name of the greater public good and the interests of the state.<sup>27</sup>

The involvement of the local population in the official procedures, in addition to obtaining “insider” information and exploring social networks, was also necessary because the border police had a relatively small number of personnel,<sup>28</sup> which cast doubts on its effectiveness due to the proliferation of its tasks and its disproportionately defined operational areas. This was true even though the function of the new organization was the surveillance and keeping of the borders rather than participation in direct operations and border defense.<sup>29</sup>

The purpose of setting up the border police was the protection of the entire country, but the measures it entailed mainly concerned the border areas. The localization of problems, however, also entailed an increase in the influence of the state government, which sharpened the conflicts of interest between the central power and local elites in the municipalities concerned. This explains why it was József Kristóffy,<sup>30</sup> minister of the interior of Fejérváry's Darabont government,<sup>31</sup> who defied the power of the counties and towns, who took

24 When the border police was established, it operated in 25 counties, and when the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy collapsed, a border police force was active in 30 counties.

25 Parádi, “A dualizmuskori Magyar Királyi Pénzügyőrség.”

26 Ernyes, “Magyarországi rendőrségek a dualizmusban,” 24.

27 Parádi, “A dualizmuskori Magyar Királyi Pénzügyőrség.”

28 In 1906, there were 160 people on duty. By 1914, this number had risen to 451.

29 Szabó, “Határvasdász zászlóalj,” 165; Parádi, “A dualizmuskori Magyar Királyi Pénzügyőrség.”

30 József Kristóffy was a Liberal Party politician. He served as minister of the interior in the Fejérváry government between 1905 and 1906.

31 Géza Fejérváry served as minister of war between 1884 and 1903. He was prime minister in 1905–1906. The government under Fejérváry was mockingly referred to as the *darabontkormány* or guardsman government, in part because Fejérváry had distinguished himself with his career in the military rather than as a politician. In spite of the victory of the opposing coalition in the 1905 elections, the emperor first asked István Tisza, who had resigned as prime minister, to take charge of government affairs. He



it upon himself to set up the border police and thus limit the powers of the counties' and cities' jurisdictions in December 1905.<sup>32</sup>

### *Local Concerns*

Although Lajos Orosdy had been feverishly preparing for the trip, his expectations with regards to the new position were yet to be fulfilled. The reason for this was that Kristóffy, who had already been in the midst of a serious internal political crisis, postponed the establishment of the twelfth, Fiume precinct due to the persistent protests of the Autonomy Party. Furthermore, Kristóffy declared in his Circular no. 91 000 that he would be regulating the operation of the institution at a later, more appropriate time. Thus, Orosdy could not assume his office and was only able to move into the rented flat as a private citizen.

Kristóffy's resignation had other, more serious consequences. For example, the unanimous outcry of the Hungarian public, which was already critical of the government, which it considered unconstitutional. It also sparked protests by the public in Fiume. The former, while complaining about the loss of their own powers, protested against the minister of the interior's retreat and the privileged position of the port city, citing the need for maximum public safety and equal treatment. The majority of the political elite felt that the corpus separatum of Fiume did not imply that it had rights that superseded state interests or that the local council could refuse to enact national laws for any reason. This opinion was shared by the authors of *Magyar Tengerpart* (Hungarian Seashore),<sup>33</sup> a newspaper

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then appointed Géza Fejérváry to head the country. This appointment by the emperor of Fejérváry to such a position of influence led to serious internal political conflicts. Public opinion considered him an unconstitutional ruler, and in many Hungarian cities (including Fiume) and counties, a "national resistance" campaign was launched against him. This campaign took the form refusals to pay taxes and levies, in addition to mass demonstrations and sharp criticism in the press. Fejérváry was dismissed, but only after a secret pact had been reached between the ruler and the opposition coalition in April 1906, according to which the opposition renounced many of its demands in exchange for the formation of a government under Sándor Wekerle. After Fejérváry's resignation in April 1906, he resumed his post as captain of the Hungarian Royal Guard.

32 153. Circular no. 91 000 of 1905 issued by the minister of the interior of the Kingdom of Hungary to all jurisdictions except the town of Fiume on the implementation and enforcement of Article VIII of Act 1903 on the Border Police. *Magyarországi Rendeletek Tára* 1905, 1460. *Parádi*, "Határrendőrség a történelmi Magyarországon."

33 *Magyar Tengerpart* was a Hungarian-language press organ in Fiume active between 1893 and 1906. It supported the Hungarian government and state initiatives.

published in Fiume. With its usual cynicism, the paper gave the following advice to the city fathers at the end of 1902:

Do not fear for the powers of the autonomous police, nor should Kuscher fear for the celebrated police force. The border police shall not curb their rights. Our brave city policemen will continue to escort drunk people in, they will continue to silence the shouts of the nighttime revelers, and they will remain in the position they are in now. We demand serious work from our city councilors to look after the true interests of the city and to cherish the citizens. [...] Let them work and not deal with politics!<sup>34</sup>

A mere five years later, Viktor B. Thoroczkay<sup>35</sup> gave a speech in parliament in the same spirit:

Fiume is an ungrateful child of the Hungarian body, and in spite of the fact that we spend millions on it, when it comes to the interests of the Hungarian state, Fiume, this ungrateful child, joins forces with the enemies of the Hungarian nation and protests against the Hungarian nation. Let me mention one example only: the question of the border police... This Rappresentanza has so far prevented the establishment of the border police in Fiume.<sup>36</sup>

The supporters of the state power were therefore overjoyed when, in November 1906, news got out that the Fiume border police would still start its operation in January 1907 under the leadership of Orosdy.<sup>37</sup>

The enthusiasm of the press that wrote in support of the government was due to state administrative reasons. More precisely, the establishment of the Fiume border police was not intended as an ultimate goal. Rather, it was to be the first step toward the long-planned nationalization of the city police. István Tisza essentially confirmed this in an address<sup>38</sup> before the parliament, when he argued that the border police staff needed to be increased and the resulting cost increases had to be accepted, because “as soon as the general organization of

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34 “Politika a városházán.” *Magyar Tengerpart*, November 12, 1902.

35 Vilmos Thoroczkay was lord lieutenant of Aranyos County and secretary of the Governorate.

36 *Az 1906. évi május hó 19-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának irományai*, XVIII. kötet, May 14, 1908, 227.

37 “Határrendőrség Fiumében.” *Budapesti Hírlap*. November 23, 1906.

38 István Tisza was the son of Kálmán Tisza and leader of the Hungarian Liberal Party. He was elected to serve as prime minister in 1875. He was leader of the Liberal Party from 1903 to 1905 and of the National Party from 1913 to 1917.

the police is done, the border police should naturally be integrated into it.”<sup>39</sup> Yet the plan to reorganize and then expropriate the Fiume police was nothing new. In the second half of the 1870s, the central government had already identified reorganization as a long-term goal in order to remedy the problems that required greater state involvement. These problems included the Russian-Turkish war, the deluge of Bosnian refugees, the difficulties around the regulation of the customs territory, and the establishment of the financial directorates. It was at least as significant that, with the increased spatial presence of the state, instances of fraud, omissions, and the overall shortcomings of the Fiume authorities were becoming more apparent.

The state only achieved partial success in the direct reorganization of the city police. There were several reasons for this. First, according to the city statute of 1872, the organization was supervised by the Fiume council of local representatives. Second, this document contained a special legal guarantee which stipulated that the basic statutes of the city and the regulations of the power exercised by the Rappresentanza could be modified or amended only with the consent of the council of the representatives. In other words, the state could not directly eliminate the autonomous institutions and the powers of the municipality of Fiume. Therefore, the state wished to apply the same method it was using in the fields of administration and education in the city. First, the government created the state “copies” of the institutions that belonged to the autonomous jurisdiction of the Rappresentanza. Then, by taking over the functions of these institutions, it made them redundant and eliminated them.<sup>40</sup>

What made the issue of the possession and appropriation of the police force(s) even more relevant was that it affected the power competencies abilities of the Rappresentanza and its ability to defend itself. In other words, as long as they maintained control over the police, the city fathers were able to conceal certain self-serving activities in which they engaged. This consideration could not have been negligible, as the city fathers were often involved in dubious deals through their family connections or personal interests. Nicoló Gelletich,<sup>41</sup> for instance, who was the royal notary and a member of the governing party,

39 *Az 1910. évi június hó 21-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának irományai, XXIV. kötet*, April 24, 1914, 68–69.

40 DAR JU 5. 75. Pres./1903 (file no. 75.) box no 349; DAR JU 5. 75. Pres./1903 (file no. 75.) box. no 349. In this regard, Governor László Szapáry's opinion is interesting.

41 Nicoló Gelletich was royal notary in Fiume and one of the leading figures of the local Liberal Party, which supported the central government. He was also a member of the Rappresentanza for many years.

regularly imported wine from the taverns of the tavern keepers Sirola Udovicich and Malogna without paying excise duty. Of course, it was not he who was prosecuted for the misdemeanor, but his agent, Giuseppe Pluhars, who was tried at the Hungarian Royal Court of First Instance in Fiume.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, anomalies related to the questionable financial management of the Fiume police also caused something of a stir, as did fears of irredentism.<sup>43</sup>

However, Governor Sándor Nákó,<sup>44</sup> who had been carefully balancing municipal and state interests since 1906, firmly rejected the accusation made by the joint minister of war, according to which Fiume was a hotbed of irredentism. Defending the town's population, Nákó said that only a few people followed the extremist pro-Italian line, as the majority of the locals were not even engaged in politics. Even in February 1909, the governor considered it premature to follow the proposals made by the minister of war for the establishment of a state police force,<sup>45</sup> and he was expressly concerned about "the introduction of a uniformed special border police." Nákó was expecting that the new emigration law would solve the problems. He hoped that the new law would replace the city police with border police officers with the status of civil commissioners. According to him, this special border police detail, consisting of eight to ten plainclothes officers, could perform other police and political tasks in addition to their duties in the emigration house, and the Rappresentanza would have no objections to them.<sup>46</sup> But even the governor did not deny that there were serious problems with the city police. For example, like all city or municipal police, the Fiume police was dependent on the ruling party (in this case the Autonomy Party).

Nákó also noted that it is difficult to find a sufficient number of reliable individuals to serve in Fiume anyway. On the one hand, because the official language of the municipality was Italian, only Italian-speaking Hungarian citizens could be recruited to the force or serve as non-commissioned officers. On the other hand, because of the extremely high prices in the port town and the modest

42 DAR JU 5. Ad 40. Pres./1883. Box no. 8.

43 DAR JU 5. 102. Pres./1909. Box no. 35.

44 Sándor Nákó was a parliamentary representative from Nagyszentmiklós who was elected to serve in 1906. He then served as governor of Rijeka and president of the Maritime Authority between 1906 and 1909.

45 He continued to support the proposals of the Joint Ministry of Defense. See: MNL OL K 26. Lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 814./1914. (file no. 3028.) Act XXVII; MNL OL K 26. Lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 3028./1913. (file no. 3028.) Act XXVII.

46 MNL OL K 149. 516. responsibility./1909. box no. 64; *Az 1910. évi június hó 25-ére birdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának irományai, I. kötet*, July 18, 1910, 247–48.

salaries of the police officers, very few people applied for the jobs advertised. The governor also enclosed a list of the employees of the Fiume police, drawing the attention of the minister of war to a very important compromise. Namely, that in the previous few years, there had been so few applicants that Hungarian citizenship, which in theory was essential for the service, was not even required of them any longer.<sup>47</sup> According to the governorate report, most of the force had to be recruited from Austria (including Dalmatia and Istria), and not from the Kingdom of Italy (!), but they had to be able to speak Italian.<sup>48</sup>

Nákó changed his mind two months after he had written a letter to the minister of war because of the so-called Steindl scandal,<sup>49</sup> which prompted him to request the minister of the interior to set up the border police without undue delay.<sup>50</sup>

### *The Reactions of the City Fathers*

The city fathers of Fiume responded in a particularly sensitive way to any initiative that foreshadowed increased control of their municipality by the state. No wonder, then, that they instinctively loathed any rumor about the reorganization of the police force or the introduction of the border police. It is revealing that on every such occasion, the podestá called an extraordinary meeting at which the more temperamental members of the Rappresentanza were taking turns “ringing the alarm bells.” As *Magyar Tengerpart* put it rather cynically,

Border police—they moaned and suffered. So much pain in these two words! And the city fathers were overcome with bitterness in the meeting room of the town hall, which has witnessed much more bitter moments in the past. As if they had come to attend a funeral.

47 MNL OL K 149. 516. res./1909. box no. 64.

48 DAR JU 5. 102. pres./1909. box no. 35; MNL OL K 149. 516. res./1909. box no. 64; Gegus and Székely, *A közbiztonság almanachja 1910. évre*, 104.

49 Fiume police’s management of money was often criticized, and on numerous occasions the force was even suspected of embezzlement. One of the most resonant incidents occurred in 1909, when Otto Steindl, a city police officer, was elected city secretary. László Szabó, a councilor to the minister of the interior, and János Kramer, the councilor for accounts, found numerous irregularities and exceptional disorder in Steindl’s former office. Steindl (and the city council that employed him) found himself in a particularly awkward situation when the local press criticized him and evidence was found of misappropriation of the fines and funds confiscated from emigrants that had been entrusted to him. Matters were made even worse when Steindl, who was trying to flee, was arrested at the Austrian border at the home of Superina Menotti, a prominent activist who espoused the Greater Italy ideology and a man with a criminal record. Steindl was taken to the state prison. MNL OL K 149. 516. res./1909. box no. 64.

50 MNL OL K 149. 516. res./1909. box no. 64.

They were sad and they were many. So many as would be impossible to convene in two weeks were the circumstances different. Now they have come because the “sacred autonomy” is in danger. The state has organized an armed body against it—the border police...<sup>51</sup>

Indeed the members of the Rappresentanza were dismayed. This body was not a fully uniform, permanent organ of government with respect to its constitution or political agenda, but it could wield great energies to make the central government change its mind. The rhetoric of the city fathers mostly built on two arguments: that the border police were unnecessary and inefficient and that the establishment of this border police would be a violation of the city’s autonomy. The discourse that prevailed in Fiume was therefore characterized by both down-to-earth, rational arguments and the population’s outrage and resentment towards the state.<sup>52</sup> First and foremost, the city fathers claimed that the establishment of the border police in Fiume was an unnecessary burden, because the main tasks of this border police were already being performed by the city police,<sup>53</sup> and the existence of two institutions with overlapping prerogatives would inevitably lead to political conflicts and disagreements over their jurisdictions. Municipal representative Stanislao Dall’Asta, for instance, insisted that, although the border police were set up in order to control immigration and emigration, these services had been done perfectly well by the city police. In other words, Dall’Asta said, any complaints were nothing but “defamation, spread deliberately.”<sup>54</sup>

After Dall’Asta’s address, the Socialist Pietro Stupicich<sup>55</sup> also rose to speak. He too warned the city fathers of the dangers of the border police: “This is a Trojan horse that they cunningly want to drag into this castle of autonomy so that they can catch us off guard and deprive us of our rights. [...] The border police are nothing but the state police—in disguise.”<sup>56</sup> He also added that when the draft bill was debated, one of the most prominent arguments concerned so-called

51 “Fiume a határrendőrség ellen. A városi képviselőtestület ülése.” *Magyar Tengerpart*, December 3, 1905.

52 DAR JU 5. 477. pres./1905. box no. 29; DAR JU 2. The relevant issues of *Protocollo della Rappresentanza*.

53 DAR JU 5. 75. pres./1903. (file no. 75.) box no. 349; DAR JU 5. 499. gen./1904. (file no. 1904. I-2. 6425.) box no. 349.

54 “Fiume a határrendőrség ellen. A városi képviselőtestület ülése.” *Magyar Tengerpart*, December 3, 1905.

55 Pietro Stupicich was a representative of the Social Democrats in Fiume and also a member of the city council.

56 “Fiume a határrendőrség ellen. A városi képviselőtestület ülése.” *Magyar Tengerpart*, December 3, 1905.

protections against the Israelites arriving from Galicia. However, he said, this deluge of Polish Jews had never posed a risk for Fiume.<sup>57</sup> Giovanni Ossoinack<sup>58</sup> was similarly practical. He said before the plenum that the government should find different instruments with which to control emigration, first, because the “fixed and immobile” border police could act against agencies which operated freely in the interior of the country and enticed people to emigrate and, second, because the organization was easy to fool anyway: emigrants just had to get off the train in Buccari and cross the Austrian border via a side road.<sup>59</sup> The fact that Ossoinack’s concerns were not unfounded is also evident from the parliament’s diaries, which contained numerous complaints about the activities of the agents and the officials and private individuals who collaborated with these agents. In one of his speeches, Ferenc Buzáth<sup>60</sup> reported that agents (“human traffickers”) often dressed emigrating Slovaks in civilian clothes, put them on trains, and led them on foot past the major stations so that they could be handed over to the agents of the various shipping companies at the border.<sup>61</sup>

The common feature of the speeches made in defense of the autonomy of Fiume was that they did not lack exaggeration or bombastic rhetoric. More important, however, were the references made to the legal contradictions and the unalterable nature of the statute. Dall’Asta referred to this in his next address:

The Rappresentanza shall be liable to organize the police and the healthcare services. [...] If the organization of the police is pried from our hands, so to say, then all our rights to autonomy will be gone. What is left, then, of the statute? Nothing... And the statute cannot be altered without us and against our will. Because Article 127 stipulates that “The present statute may only be altered or amended with the consent of the Rappresentanza of the free city of Fiume and the district thereof.”<sup>62</sup> [...] We stand on the side of the law and do not shy away from protecting our rights.<sup>63</sup>

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57 Ibid.

58 Giovanni Ossoinack was a former ship captain. He served as a city councilor who supported the more extreme tendencies of the Autonomous Party.

59 “A rappresentanza és a határrendőrség.” *Magyar Tengerpart*, November 27, 1902.

60 Ferenc Buzáth was a pharmacist and a member of the Catholic People’s Party. He served parliamentary representative from the city of Beregszász (today Berehove, Ukraine).

61 *Az 1910. évi június hó 25-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőbáznak irományai*, I. kötet, May 8, 1903, 273.

62 *Statuto della Libera città di Fiume e del suo distretto*. Fiume, Emidio Mohovich, 1872, 95.

63 “Fiume a határrendőrség ellen. A városi képviselőtestület ülése.” *Magyar Tengerpart*, December 3, 1905.



The above argument was popular among the city fathers. Andrea Bellen followed a train of thought very similar to that of Dall'Asta's

by establishing a border police, they want to deprive Fiume of one of its most important rights. In accordance with the city statute, there is no place for any police in Fiume other than the autonomous city police. [...] If the government wants to introduce border police in Fiume in any form, it shall be our obligation to protest against this with every means possible.<sup>64</sup>

La Voce del Popolo's<sup>65</sup> poem entitled "Let us stand in line" hits a very similar note, encouraging the city's readership to recognize that the issue was sensitive from the perspective of the future of the city's autonomy:

For it is poetry when we fight for our homeland and for the city we were born in, and the struggle of he who rises to protect the constitution is poetry worthy of praise and glorification: And the fight to protect the statute is poetry no less sublime and beautiful. And our statute shall remain intact. Thus spoke the Rappresentanza, but if their words do not suffice, the people will say it likewise .... We must clearly distinguish between the nation and the government. The nation is not hurting us; what is more, the nation loves us and respects us, its most prominent sons are with us, from Kossuth<sup>66</sup> to Apponyi.<sup>67</sup> But this government.... Was it an accountable government compelled to give an account before the parliament of its deeds and certify the abomination caused by bringing the state police to Fiume? But this government is nothing but a mob of bribed nobodies and Austrian soldiers, a government that assassinates without punishment the millennial Hungarian constitution.<sup>68</sup>

With regards to the reservations of the leaders of Fiume, the issue of language also needs to be mentioned. The draft bill made Hungarian the official language of the border police, which, according to the Rappresentanza's

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64 Ibid.

65 *La Voce del Popolo* was a press organ of the the Autonomous Party of Fiume. It often adopted a strong critical stance towards the government.

66 In this case, this Kossuth was Ferenc Kossuth, the son of the famous Lajos Kossuth, one of the leading figures of the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848–1849. In 1906, Ferenc Kossuth was made minister of trade in the government of Sándor Wekerle. After the fall of the cabinet, he became leader of the Independence 48 and Kossuth Party.

67 Albert Apponyi was a parliamentary representative who was one of the leading figures of the Independence 48 and Kossuth Party after the government of Sándor Wekerle was dismissed. He later served as head of the Hungarian delegation to the Paris peace talks.

68 DAR JU 5. 117. gen./1906. (file no. 1906. I-2. 6425.) box no 533.

interpretation, contradicted the provisions of the statute that specified Italian as the language of the Fiume jurisdictional institutions. Therefore, although by 1906 the Rappresentanza had finally agreed to accept the establishment of the organization and, citing the existing practice and its redundancy (as a kind of maximum concession), had even accepted that the Fiume border police could limit the city's right to use Italian to correspondence with local authorities, it consistently insisted that at least the phrase “and communicate verbally with Hungarian-speaking parties in Hungarian” be deleted from the draft.<sup>69</sup> It must be noted that even the government supported the Rappresentanza in these efforts.<sup>70</sup>

As we have seen above, the city fathers were keen to put the Italian language and Italian culture, local patriotism, and the city's autonomy at the center of their arguments, but at the same time, for moral and rational reasons, they also made room in their discourses for patriotic rhetoric and emphasized their loyalty to the state. It is another matter that for the people of Fiume, the unconstitutional exercise of power by Géza Fejérváry's government was in fact primarily a pretext to sabotage the implementation of the law. When the issue of the border police was raised again and again under the governments of Prime Minister Sándor Wekerle and István Tisza, the members of the Rappresentanza protested with the same fervor as they had against Kristóffy and Fejérváry.

The city fathers tried to solve the problems they faced by using five main tactics. First, during the Rappresentanza meetings, they symbolically protested against the law “imposed” on them and the manner in which it was implemented. All the more so, because István Tisza's second cabinet introduced the institution into the city without consulting the Rappresentanza.<sup>71</sup> Second, submissions were made to the governor and his deputy offering compromises and asking for intervention.<sup>72</sup> The central idea of these initiatives was that the Minister of the Interior should legislatively entrust the tasks of the border police to the municipal police. In return, the municipality of Fiume offered to significantly expand and modernize the organization.<sup>73</sup> What they forget to emphasize, however, was that the city, which was already a heavy borrower of state loans, would have covered

69 DARJU 5. ad 1583. gen./1907. box no 533. The statute did not stipulate the official language of the city.

70 DARJU 5. 78. pres./1907. box no. 533.

71 *Az 1910. évi június hó 21-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának irományai*, XX. kötet, November 12, 1913, 47–49.

72 DARJU 5. 365. gen./1906. (file no. 1906. II-1.25.) box no. 533.

73 DARJU 5. 499. gen./1904. (file no. 1904. I-2. 6425.) box no. 349.

the additional costs of the developments by taking out new loans. Third, the city fathers also presented the matter to the House of Representatives and the ministers. Their aim was to draw attention to the perceived injustice and, with the help of their influential supporters, to take a stronger stand against the government's "despotism." Fourth, the city fathers used the local Hungarian and Italian press to air their concerns. Thus, dilemmas and criticisms concerning the police and border police were published in the local newspapers *La Voce del Popolo* and *La Bilancia*,<sup>74</sup> as well as in the weekly *La Giovine Fiume*<sup>75</sup> and in some of the capital's newspapers. Indeed, as the correspondence between the governor and the minister of war testifies, the news from Fiume spread beyond the borders and became increasingly resonant in Istria and the Apennines and also in the neighboring Croatian territories. Fifth, as a result of the ever-increasing tensions, marches and demonstrations were held.<sup>76</sup>

The persistent resistance of the Fiume town fathers finally bore fruit. The central government repeatedly postponed the implementation of the decree enacting the border police law, citing the prevailing local political conditions and the inopportuneness of the time. This affected the life of Lajos Orosdy, who remained idle in Fiume. In 1907, he was reassigned to Brassó (today Braşov, Romania), but he was made redundant and was temporarily retired. Orosdy went back to Fiume in the summer of 1911, when Károly Khuen-Héderváry<sup>77</sup> appointed him to serve as administrative advisor to Governor István Wickenburg<sup>78</sup> in the rank of councilor of the ministerial department.<sup>79</sup> Orosdy's second term in Fiume proved a much greater success than the previous one. In 1912, he got

74 *La Bilancia* was originally an Italian-language daily newspaper which was supportive of the central government and the state. In the 1910s, it changed direction and became increasingly critical of the government.

75 *La Giovine Fiume* was the newspaper of the organization which went by the same name and which was founded in 1905 by a group of young denizens of Fiume who were sympathetic to Italian irredentism and called for accession to the Kingdom of Italy. It was founded in 1905 and remained in print until 1912.

76 MNL OL K 26. lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 6605./1913. (file no. 3028.) Act XXVII. ad 367. pres./1911; MNL OL K 26. lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 431./1912. Act XXVII. (file no. 291); MNL OL K 26. lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 544./1912. Act XXVII. (file no. 291); MNL OL K 26. lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 582./1912. Act XXVII. (file no. 291).

77 Khuen-Héderváry Károly was lord lieutenant of Győr County. Between 1883 and 1903, he was viceroy (*bán*) of the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia. He served as prime minister of Hungary from June to November 1903 and again from 1910 to 1912.

78 István Wickenburg joined the governorate of Fiume in 1885 as a ministerial clerk. He then became deputy governor in 1910. Between 1911 and 1917, he served as governor of Fiume and president of the Maritime Authority.

79 Hivatalos rész. *Budapesti Közlöny*, August 3, 1911.

married and started a family, and having climbed the career ladder, he finished his life as a deputy state secretary in 1943.<sup>80</sup> His son Róbert was also successful. In 1916, he disappeared from the lines of the Hungarian Army that was fighting on the Eastern Front. He crossed several borders in his flight, and reappeared as a certain Roberto Tartini/Bartini, but in the end he made a career in the Soviet Union as an airplane engineer by the name Robert Oros di Bartini.<sup>81</sup>

In the end, the city fathers could not fight the powerful advances or the legal expansion of the state. This was already indicated by the fact that the governor dissolved the Fiume representative body in the most critical situations and, as the municipal elections of 1911, 1914, and 1915 show, he also strongly transformed its composition by asserting his influence both formally and informally.<sup>82</sup> The perfect moment for the central government to realize its long-delayed plan for the border police was the “state of emergency” declared in 1912 because of the Balkan wars, or in other words a situation in which a much more direct, centralized form of government was introduced to guarantee law and order and public safety. It is to be noted that this solution was based on the British model,<sup>83</sup> which, as opposed to the Prussian military model and the Austrian one that followed the Prussian,<sup>84</sup> made the government the holder of such exceptional wartime power. In Hungary, the army could not control the civil administration, and the High Command could not even control the border police.<sup>85</sup>

However, war preparedness also required the Hungarian government to introduce restrictive defense measures. These measures included restrictions on fundamental civil rights, the appointment of government commissioners, tighter restrictions on issuing passports, censorship of telecommunications and the press, tighter restrictions on the exercise of the rights of association and assembly, the establishment of martial law, and the extension of the scope of

80 “Dr. Orosdy Lajos ny. h. államtitkár.” *Tolnamegyei Ujság*, May 12, 1943.

81 Ciampaglia, Giuseppe. *La vita e gli aerei di Roberto Bartini*. This topic has recently been researched by Svetozar Nilović Tozo.

82 Ordasi, “Modellváltások.”

83 Deák and Gumz, “How to Break a State.”

84 In Austria, as of 1906, the army could take over control of the administration in so-called extraordinary situations. As István Szikinger points out, the Austrians tried to persuade the Hungarian government to adopt similar measures, but their efforts were unsuccessful. One explanation for this may be the political elite’s ideals and values of constitutionalism, libertarianism, and the priority of human freedoms, while this position of the elite may also have been due more to interdepartmental conflicts. Above all, this stance was based on the rational consideration that the Hungarian government did not want the political and police administration of the country to fall into the hands of the joint army. Szikinger, “Rendvédelmi jog.”

85 Parádi, “A dualizmuskori Magyar Királyi Pénzügyőrség,” 52–53.

military jurisdiction. In a similar fashion, the minister of the interior in a circular ordered authorities to arrest and remove all aliens and/or persons who posed a threat to public order.<sup>86</sup> Internments started, and deportations were becoming more and more frequent. Under these circumstances, the obstacles that had prevented the establishment of the border police had been overcome by the summer of 1913, though it had been evident by that time even to the MPs that the organization was too expensive and was not suitable to serve its purpose elsewhere.<sup>87</sup>

### *The Border Police in Fiume*

When Dezső Késmárky<sup>88</sup> learned that the minister of the interior had listed him in grade three of payment class VII and appointed him councilor of the border police,<sup>89</sup> little could he have suspected that he would soon live the most trying years of his life. As this distinction was followed by Késmárky's relocation to Fiume,<sup>90</sup> it can be assumed that the new title and the higher salary were, as a kind of incentive, both a reward and a token of trust given in advance, but also a “wedge” to be presented to the locals and a “weapon” of commanding presence. The higher rank and salary entailed more rights and responsibilities and also higher social prestige, which generally was a vital condition of the successful work of state officials. Késmárky in particular seemed a promising choice for the position, as he had been born in Szekszárd, had relatives in the so-called Southern Territories,<sup>91</sup> had received an education in law, and could speak Italian

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86 Szikinger, “Rendvédelmi jog”; DAR JU 5. 3931./1913. (file no. 1913. I-2. 14.) box no 596. nr. 38100. V. Minister of the Interior to the Governor. This was provided for by Act V of 1903 on the Residence of Foreigners in the Countries of the Hungarian Crown, the so-called Immigration Act, which made registration of foreigners residing in the country compulsory. The act also regulated this process and entitled the authorities to investigate any so-called foreigner's identity, citizenship, and, if deemed necessary, residence and previous life, as well as their living conditions. The authorities were empowered, furthermore, to take measures deemed necessary against such individuals in the alleged interests of public security.

87 *Az 1910. évi június hó 21-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának irományai*, XX. kötet, March 31, 1911, 364–66.

88 Dezső Késmárky served as police captain in Gyöng and then as high sheriff. In 1906, he was made unpaid border police captain in Mezőlaborc (today Mezőlaborc, Slovakia). In 1907, he was transferred to Brassó and in 1908 to Pancsova (today Pančevo, Serbia). From 1913 to 1917, as border police councilor, he served as captain of the border police in the border area of Fiume.

89 The title councilor made him the border police captain's superior.

90 DAR JU 5. 285. pres./1913. 42. d.

91 Dr. István Késmárky, Legal Academy director in Pécs, was a nephew of the editor of the magazine *Dunántúl*.

and maybe a Slavic language, and had many years of bureaucratic experience in Budapest. The government expected no less of him than to start the operations of the new border police smoothly and make the local population accept the institution. However, these expectations were rather hard to meet.

Késmárky arrived in Fiume in June 1913, a few days before the enactment of the law.<sup>92</sup> He was accompanied by 70 border policemen, five officers, and several detectives.<sup>93</sup> Considering that in 1913 the entire *national* staff of the border police consisted of 451 individuals, this was a sizeable contingent.<sup>94</sup> This high number (which the governor still believed to be insufficient)<sup>95</sup> was partly justified by the conflicts in the Balkans. Also, the government drew conclusions based on the events of the previous years and wanted to prepare for the resistance with which its efforts might meet from the citizens of Fiume.<sup>96</sup>

All the more so, because Icilio Baccich,<sup>97</sup> the second vice-president of the city and someone who was very popular with the local citizens and was making a visit to Fiume, was escorted by a city policeman to the police station for no apparent reason. Only at the police station was Baccich informed by police director Saverio Derencin, who had been the target of many accusations (partly because of his alleged Croatian origins) made by the Autonomists, that he had been expelled for agitation and for propagating irredentist ideas and had to leave the city within eight hours.<sup>98</sup> What made the expulsion of Baccich possible was his Italian citizenship, as he was considered an “alien.” He came from an aristocratic family of Croatian origin from Ragusa (or Dubrovnik by its Croatian name) and therefore was born an Austrian citizen. When he lived in Fiume, he acquired Hungarian citizenship, but he then moved to Ancona in 1912 and became an Italian citizen.<sup>99</sup> His appearance in Fiume offered a useful pretext to Governor István Wickenburg to instrumentalize the city police and get rid of a man who was considered a threat. What Wickenburg failed to take

92 MNL OL K 26. lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 6605./1913. (file no. 3028.) Act XXVII. MT./13.

93 Appointment of councilor for the border police. *Dunántúl*, June 26, 1913.

94 József Parádi has shown in his research that, together with other military and civilian armed bodies, a total of 3,324 people were involved in border guard duties in 1913. Parádi, “A dualizmus kori Magyar Királyi Pénzügyőrség.”

95 DAR JU 5. 378. pres./1913. box no. 42.

96 DAR JU 5. 309. pres./1913. box no. 42.

97 Icilio Baccich was a Fiume lawyer from a Ragusa family. He served as town councilor and tended to support the more extreme wing of the Autonomous Party. In 1912, he became deputy mayor of Fiume. He was one of the most important local critics of the Hungarian government.

98 “Lo sfratto al dott. Icilio Baccich!” *La voce del Popolo*, June 10, 1913.

99 “Fiume II.” *Pesti Hírlap*, June 28, 1913.

into consideration was that the expulsion of Baccich would meet with the disapproval of his own political camp, the Lega Autonoma,<sup>100</sup> a group that was hard to assemble, and that a municipal crisis would unfold.

The Rappresentanza protested unanimously against the steps taken by the police, which was all the more strong a cautionary sign, since after 1911 the majority of the Rappresentanza belonged to the more moderate Lega Autonoma party rather than to the Autonomists.<sup>101</sup> The expulsion of Baccich, however, blurred the lines between the two groups. The Legists were also outraged, and they joined the solemn protest organized by the Autonomy Party. Their common stance on the issue revealed the depths of the crisis, and the city fathers forced Mayor Francesco Vito to resign.<sup>102</sup> When Wickenburg dissolved the protesting body, the members of the substituting General Committee also gave back their mandates.<sup>103</sup> The consequence of the new municipal scandal was that, for lack of a better solution, the minister of the interior gave the powers of the Rappresentanza to the governor, who thus became a kind of government commissioner.<sup>104</sup> This, according to the citizens of Fiume, meant the suspension of their autonomy, even though István Tisza never for a moment ceased to deny that this had been his intention.<sup>105</sup>

Therefore, the locals were definitely hostile as they waited for the border police to take office, and the arriving force was welcomed by a crowd of protesters at the police station. If the national press reports are to be believed, the border police had to make their way with their “bayonets forward” to their quarters in the Emigration House under the protection of the municipal police and the military.<sup>106</sup> In the meantime, the Italian press also did not cease to criticize the border police. The *La Voce del Popolo* sardonically called the border police members “sycophants,”<sup>107</sup> and he sometimes also referred to them

100 Lega Autonoma was a local party created and brought to power between 1911 and 1913 with the help of Governor István Wickenburg. It consisted for the most part of more moderate elements of the Autonomous Party who were willing to cooperate with the Hungarian state.

101 DAR JU 5. 177. pres./1914. box no. 43.

102 “Una seduta storica della Rappresentanza municipale.” *La Voce del Popolo*, June, 1913; DAR JU 2. Protocollo della Rappresentanza. June 13, 1913.

103 MNL OL K 26. lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 3287./1915. (file no. 3287.) Act XXVII. MT./11.

104 MNL OL K 26. lot 1042. 1915. Act XXVII. 6658./1913. (file no. 3028.) Act XXVII. MT./14.

105 *Az 1910. évi június hó 21-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának irományai*, XX. kötet, November 12, 1913, 47–49.

106 “A határrendőrség felállítása Fiumében.” *Pécsi Napló*, June 25, 1913; “Tüntetés a fiumei határrendőrség ellen.” *Magyarország*, June 26, 1913.

107 “A magyar állameszme védelme.” *Népszava*, August 26, 1913.



as alien conquerors put at the throats of the Fiume citizens by the two *Pistas* (Pista is a nickname for István).<sup>108</sup> This is also understandable, since only two of the officers listed in the Hungarian Directory of Officers came from Fiume and had experience there. One was the son of one of the technical directors of the Rice Husking and Starch Factory, Erik Beusterien, an assistant clerk.<sup>109</sup> The other was Mario Minach, a detective inspector from a distinguished Fiume family. Everyone else came to Fiume from the highlands well beyond the city borders, apart from Rafael Ninkovich, who came from Novi Sad.

Although the exact number, composition, and origin of the force cannot be determined due to a lack of sources, it can be reasonably assumed that some of them were local residents and/or the members of the municipal police. This raises the question as to how many of the border guards on duty spoke German, Italian, and some Slavic languages (and how well), which were essential if they were to perform their duties. After all, the most important tasks of the border guards included reconnaissance, gathering information, and effective cooperation with the border population, and each of these responsibilities required a good command of the above languages. As Governor István Wickenburg once put it, “A detective must speak at least one Slavic language and German, because without these [languages], he is of no use whatsoever when on duty.”<sup>110</sup>

Finally, with regards to the staffing of the border police, the very delicate balance of powers and financial resources among the different government bodies cannot be overlooked. The dilemma was already evident in the fact that while Wickenburg and Késmárky were striving to expand the staff, minister of the interior János Sándor<sup>111</sup> regarded the increasingly independent and expensive organization with concern. Therefore, János Sándor, fearing for his own influence and the budget of his ministry, warned the governor to refrain from increasing public spending by recruiting new members and also from supporting the expansion of the border police’s jurisdiction.<sup>112</sup>

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108 “Oggi: 21 giugno 1913.” *La Voce del Popolo*, June 22, 1913, István Tisza and István Wickenburg.

109 DAR JU 5. 6543. gen./1913. (1913. I-2. 14.) box no. 533.

110 DAR JU 5. 406. pres./1917. box no. 58.

111 János Sándor served as chief deputy from 1891 to 1902. He was state secretary to the minister of the interior between 1903 and 1905 and then served as minister of the interior in the second Tisza government from 1913 to 1917.

112 DAR JU 5. 496. pres./1913. box no. 42.

*Everyday Problems and Extraordinary Challenges*

What is certain is that on June 25, 1913, the border police started to operate in Fiume in accordance with Article 1903:VIII and at the same time, the city police lost a great deal of its powers. The city police were only able to continue temporarily with those tasks and cases that were either already in progress or for which the appropriate systems had not yet been put in place.<sup>113</sup>

The strict instructions and the obligatory *modus vivendi* ordered from above (out of necessity) seemed to have had their effect. Only two months later, Wickenburg was already boasting to the Minister of the Interior that the city fathers had formally recognized the new organization as a public utilities committee made up of members of the *Lega Autonoma*, and the Autonomy Party had agreed to allow border police to travel free on the city tram.<sup>114</sup> However, the acceptance and the integration of the border police were far from smooth and seamless. This was true for at least three reasons. First, the various authorities were in rivalries with one another, gloating over the others' failures and condemning one another at every turn. Second, as was the case in other parts of the country, the border police were deployed to break up mass protests, strikes, and demonstrations organized around election periods. Third, the border police often "harassed" common people or people belonging to the middle class.<sup>115</sup>

The border police often had to deal with offences such as the case of Vreja Kauzlari of Sušak. Charges had been brought against the "Croatian woman of Greater Serbian sentiments" because she allegedly had claimed that Franz Joseph I's manifesto entitled "To my peoples!" "could not have been written by His Majesty, as the King was already old and soft in the head."<sup>116</sup> Aladár Molnár, a state-employed educator in Fiume who had been born in Hungary (and whose native tongue was Hungarian) and who was propagating Bolshevik ideology, must have had a similar view (he was the father of the Marxist historian Erik Molnár). He was prosecuted by the Austrian Minister of the Interior himself for high treason and the defamation of a member of the Royal House.<sup>117</sup>

113 DAR JU 5. 7204./1915. (file no. 1915. I-2. 14.) box no. 596. nr. 38000. V.-a. Minister of the Interior to the Governor.

114 DAR JU 5. 380. pres./1913. box no. 42.

115 "A magyar állameszme védelme." *Népszava*, August 26, 1913.

116 MNL OL K 149. 2802. res./1914. box no. 60.

117 MNL OL K 149. 4039. res./1914. box no. 60.

In addition to insults brought against the monarch and his family, ethnic agitation and slanderous statements blaming the “other party” were also common. The case of the wife and daughter of Giovanni Kvaszt offers a revealing example. According to Késmárky, they were reported to the police by their neighbor, the wife of Jenő Ragasics, who was probably of Slavic origin. Ragasics’ wife claimed that her neighbors were “constantly vilifying Hungarians”. As Késmárky put it, “they call them disgusting Hungarians, wish for them to be hanged, they say the war was our fault and that we should go back to Hungary to die and rot there, for we are<sup>118</sup> mere Hungarian swine.”<sup>119</sup> Antonia Kucias, a 21-year-old resident of Fiume who spoke Italian as her mother tongue but was a Hungarian citizen, was sentenced to ten months in jail, because, as a prostitute, “in the brothel she used to praise Italians incessantly and sang songs reviling the Hungarian-Austrians.”<sup>120</sup>

A more thought-provoking and complex case was that of Teodoro Biasi, who, in the local pub owned by József Kirincich “attempted to extract military information from Mihály Horváth, István Kulcsár, Zsigmond Véghelyi, and Pál Bodai of the 19th k.u.k. Infantry Regiment, who were drinking at that location.” In order to achieve his goals, Biasi offered drinks and cigarettes to the soldiers, who not only turned down his offer but chased him off in their outrage. Biasi was apprehended when, while praising Italy and running away from the soldiers, he attempted to commit suicide. The real piquancy of the case was not its near-tragic ending, but Késmárky’s closing line: “I have to note that the abovementioned is the brother of Miklós Biasi, Deputy Head of the City Police.”<sup>121</sup> Teodoro Biasi’s ties to someone in power probably contributed to the fact that he was acquitted by the court of Fiume.<sup>122</sup>

The border police also spent a significant amount of their time during the day confiscating politically dangerous documents, postcards, correspondence, and press products. These items included not only documents smuggled in from abroad, but also, as the press lawsuits against *Novi List* and *La Voce del Popolo* and their journalists show, papers published in the port city.<sup>123</sup> The misdemeanors and offences related to printed materials often entailed house searches, confiscations, relatively high fines, and often even physical atrocities. Thus, these cases provided

118 The plural refers to the Hungarians in the port city, and Késmárky uses it in the first person, plural.

119 MNL OL K 149. 492. res./1916. 1. file. box no. 88. 3931. no. /1915.

120 MNL OL K 149. 965. res./1916. 1. file. box no. 88. d. 5542.no./1915.

121 MNL OL K 149. 498. res./1916. 1. file. 418. res./1916.

122 MNL OL K 149. 498. res./1916. 1. file. 418. res./1916.

123 DAR JU 5. 517. pres./1913. box no. 42.

a fertile source of stories for the outraged autonomist press. What further eroded trust in the border police was the fact that several prominent public figures, such as G. T. Stipanovich, Director of the Coastal Bank and Savings Fund,<sup>124</sup> were under surveillance, and as the example of Edmondo Manasteriotti illustrates, they were often banned from crossing the border.<sup>125</sup>

Many of the members of the border police staff had only a limited knowledge of the local conditions, and this also caused several misunderstandings. A plainclothes border policeman named János Jakab, for instance, allegedly “insulted” County Lord Lieutenant (főispán) Vinko Zmaić.<sup>126</sup> On one occasion, patrolmen mistook one of the non-commissioned officers of the Japanese military committee staying in town for an assassin and arrested him.<sup>127</sup>

The most high-profile conflicts in which the Fiume border police were involved were linked to two bomb attacks. The first was committed in October 1913 by the members of Giovine Fiume under the leadership of Luigi Cussar<sup>128</sup> and Francesco Drenig<sup>129</sup> as a protest against the introduction of the border police and against the politics of Wickenburg.<sup>130</sup> The second, in the spring of 1914, according to Riccardo Gigante’s<sup>131</sup> pamphlet “Bomb”<sup>132</sup> (and other documents), was allegedly staged by Italian citizens hired with the knowledge and support of the governor and the border police officer Erik Beusterien, who

124 DAR JU 5. 637. pres./1914. box no. 45.

125 DAR JU 5. 4501. BM. res. box no. 45.; DAR JU 5. 907. pres./1914. box no. 46.

126 DAR JU 5. 670. pres./1914. box no. 45.

127 “A japán altiszt és a fiumei határrendőrség,” *Népszava*, October 8, 1913.

128 Luigi Cussar was the first president and then one of the most active members of La Giovine Fiume, founded in 1905. He was the son of and heir to the owner of the Cussar metal foundry in Fiume and owner of the foundry from 1902 to 1917.

129 Francesco Drenig was a poet, literary translator, and art critic from Fiume. He was also a member of La Giovine, the irredentist society. After World War I, he was editor of the cultural magazines *La Fiumanella* and *Delta*. His works were often published under the pseudonym Bruno Neri.

130 MNL OL K 26. lot 995. 1914. Act XXVII. 6647./1913. Act XXVII. (file no. 6647); Dubrović, *Francesco Drenig*.

131 Riccardo Gigante was a Fiume politician, a member of the more extreme wing of the Autonomous Party, and one of the leaders of La Giovine. In the autumn of 1918, he joined the Italian National Council of Fiume and demanded the annexation of the city to Italy. In September 1919, he became one of Gabriele d’Annunzio’s main supporters, and in November, he was appointed Sindaco (the Italian administrative term for mayor) of Fiume. After the fall of D’Annunzio, he resigned as Sindaco, but in 1921, at the head of a group of fascist troops and the Legionnaires of Fiume, he carried out a coup against Riccardo Zanella and the Free State of Fiume, which Zanella sought to create.

132 MFS FEGD. 64. bis. 4/7. *La Bomba*.

had wished to discredit the members of Giovine Fiume.<sup>133</sup> Though the role of neither the governor nor of the border police can be clarified,<sup>134</sup> the sources do indicate at least that the second bombing was committed by a bricklayer from Ancona, an Italian citizen named Arduino Bellelli, who had been commissioned by a certain Giuseppe Scipioni, a lawyer from Ancona. While Bellelli was completely unknown to the governor and the authorities, the same cannot be said about Scipioni. Scipioni had played a key role in a case involving the forgery of Albanian money or, rather, the unveiling this affair.<sup>135</sup> Both bombings were carried out in an extremely tense foreign and domestic political situation, and they both generated considerable consternation and controversy beyond the borders of the country.<sup>136</sup>

The primary cause of the negative international reputation of the Fiume border police was not the assassinations, but the increasing number of conscriptions, expulsions, and internments, mostly to Kiskunhalas and Tápiósüly.<sup>137</sup> Above all, the authorities took action against men of conscription age who were not citizens of the Hungary or of the port city, among whom were Serbs, Croats, Montenegrins, and, of course, Italians. However, the border police also focused their attention on residents of Fiume and Hungarian citizens. Beyond public safety and health reasons in most cases,<sup>138</sup> these steps were justified by reference to power/political considerations.

This exceptional situation created a unique opportunity for the government to filter out the social groups and individuals it considered dangerous, to break the dominance of the Autonomy Party, and, as a result, to influence the composition of the Rappresentanza in a way that was favorable to it (the government), and to minimize the body's capacity to act in its own interests. The border police often waited for a proper pretext and opportunity to take action against the city fathers and have them removed from Fiume in one way or another. This

133 MNL OL K 26. lot 995. 1914. Act XXVII. 2953./1914. Act XXVII. (file no. 2953); MNL OL K 26. lot 995. 1914. Act XXVII. 4258./1914. Act XXVII. (file no. 2953.)

134 Considering the discretionary “rights” of the border police, the procedure followed by Beusterien does not seem atypical of the system or even exceptional.

135 The report of the administrative committee to the minister of the interior on his draft bill no 1316 on the “H. royal state police in Fiume.” *Az 1910. évi június hó 21-ére birdetett országgyűlés képviselőbáának irományai, LIV. kötet*, 303–9; “Az államrendőrség hatáskörének kiterjesztése.” *Pesti Hírlap*, August 13, 1916.

136 Ordasi, “Bombamerényletek.”

137 DAR JU 5. 1128. pres./1915. box no. 50. See Somogyi, *A tápiósülyi civil internálótábor*; Végső, “Olasz áldozatok”; Stelli, *Storia di Fiume*, 207–10; Gecsényiet al., *Sülysáp: Az első világháború viharában*.

138 DAR JU 5. 178. pres./1915. box no. 47.

was how Edmondo Manasteriotti, Alcide Rack, Francesco Drenig, and other members of the Giovine Fiume ended up being interned in Kiskunhalas, and it was also how Luigi Cussar was taken to Tápiósüly as a final destination.<sup>139</sup> It was rather characteristic that Ferdinando Kuscher, who had warned of the dangers of the border police as early as 1902, only escaped internment because of his age (he was 66 years old).<sup>140</sup>

## *Epilogue*

The establishment and operation of the border police cannot be viewed separately from the centralization politics and modernization efforts of the state. This trend was also fueled by the protracted world war and the gradually worsening daily crises which arose as a consequence of it. The problems (food and fuel shortages, influxes of Austrian refugees, epidemics, strikes, unemployment, general social tensions) needed to be addressed as quickly and efficiently as possible. However, only a well-organized and centrally controlled organization could do this. Acting on these considerations, in July 1916, minister of the interior János Sándor took a decisive step and proposed a bill concerning the nationalization of the Fiume police force, although the bill was enacted only half a year later. The new body started operations on May 1, 1917, and it essentially took over the majority of public security tasks from the city police.<sup>141</sup> Although the border police were intended primarily to be the “antechamber” of the state police and the personnel of the two bodies constituted “a single national force” under the law, the border police did not cease to exist with the creation of the state police. Furthermore, though Fiume had to contribute 280,000 koronas to the maintenance of the state police, according to the administrative committee, only part of the city police staff could enter into the employment of the state.<sup>142</sup>

139 Stelli, *Volontari e internati fiumani*, 174–88.

140 Stelli, *Storia di Fiume*, 208.

141 *Magyarországi Rendeletek Tára* 1917, 654–61. Circular no 37,000. of 1917 of the Hungarian Royal Minister of the Interior on the enactment of the Article 1916: XXXVII on the Hungarian Royal state police and the description of its powers.

142 Article 1916: XXXVII on the Hungarian royal state police in Fiume. The administrative committee found this amount not only fair but also beneficial to Fiume, as it was less than what the city had spent earlier on its own city police. *Az 1910. évi június hó 21-ére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának irományai*, LIV. kötet, 1910–1318. The report of the administrative committee to the minister of the interior on his draft bill no 1316 on the “H. royal state police in Fiume,” 303–9, The expansion of the powers of the state police.

According to János Sándor's design, only people with the necessary professional qualifications, language skills, experience, and politically and socially irreproachable behavior could be appointed to the new organization. However, it was in the governor's discretion to decide who could be trusted. This re-selection of the staff resulted in significant changes, as shown by the list published in the Hungarian Directory of Officers. The name list includes 25 individuals for the year 1918 instead of the eight to ten people for the previous years, but many of the border police staff members who had been serving in Fiume for years were not among their numbers. One of the reasons for the staff changes was obviously the world war and the resulting compulsory military service, but a push for increased efficiency and the more rational and practical national distribution of tasks was also an important factor, as was the need to ensure the authority and integrity of the corps.

To achieve these goals, certain individuals were replaced on purpose. The much-criticized Késmárky was transferred to Szombathely as district Chief of Police, where he served until he died in 1922.<sup>143</sup> Késmárky was probably replaced because his "past in Fiume" would have reflected badly on the new organization. In his place, the Minister of the Interior appointed and tasked with chief-of-police responsibilities István Török<sup>144</sup> of Törökfalva, who was department councilor of the Ministry of the Interior and the son of Kálmán Török, the highly respected first director of the Csillag Prison in Szeged.<sup>145</sup>

István Török arrived in the port town on August 25, 1917, where he spent approximately as much time as Lajos Orosdy. The fate of Török and of the organization under his leadership was sealed on October 23, 1918, when the crowd from Sušak, celebrating Croatian independence, joined by soldiers from the Jelačić regiment, broke into Fiume and, wreaking havoc, raided the court. There were many accounts of acts committed by the Croatian "mob" in which the topos of the state and border police force's unsuitability to handle the situation was a recurring element.<sup>146</sup>

Though the defense of the borders was not the task of the state police and the border police, the citizens of Fiume could never forget or forgive that the

143 Dezső Késmárky was the district chief-of-police. *Dunántúl*, August 15, 1922.

144 István Török served as advisor to the minister of the interior and clerk of the Construction Committee of the National Archives until his appointment as head of the Hungarian State Police in 1917. MNL OL K 148. 781. cs. 29252/1917. pres. XIV. t. 1112. a. sz.

145 Nagy, "A magyar börtönügy arcképcsarnoka"; DAR JU 2. Protocollo della Rappresentanza. 1907. Originally, the amount was 290,000 forints.

146 See Hesz, "Fiume az összeomlás után."



Hungarian law enforcement bodies failed to defend the town and that an even greater tragedy was prevented only because of the sobriety of the officers of the joint army. All the less so, because a few days later Governor Zoltán Jekelfalussy, as per the alleged instructions of Prime Minister Sándor Wekerle, handed over Fiume to the South Slavic Commission and traveled to Budapest with a few of his officials. According to the diary of Deputy Governor Lajos Egan, that night, the majority of the police force followed Jekelfalussy's example. This had two consequences: The maintenance of law and order was taken over first by the Croatian military and then by the allied troops, and the border police and the state police force de facto ceased to exist as a relevant factor. Thus, any members of their staff left as soon as possible.<sup>147</sup>

The collective retreat of the police can be explained by the fact that, as members of the armed forces of a hostile and defeated state, they had no rights or authority necessary to perform their duty. Furthermore, they became the main target of the new regimes. Although István Török stayed in Fiume until as late as January 26, 1919,<sup>148</sup> it cannot be ruled out that his relatively lengthy stay was due to his wife's illness and that he ultimately left only when he did because of her death on January 14, 1919.<sup>149</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The issue of the establishment of the Fiume border police fits into the context of the modernization and centralization efforts of the Hungarian state. This was also reflected in the ambitions behind the programs set out, such as the intention to maximize state oversight and control and the need to transform local society and employ the labor force more rationally and efficiently. The underlying motivation was that the Kingdom of Hungary wanted to keep and increase its economic potential and vitality, strengthen its position within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and guarantee its own security. However, emigration and immigration (which increased dramatically around the turn of the century), strikes (which were becoming more and more frequent), and the phenomena that accompanied the power shifts in the Balkans made it clear to the Hungarian political elite that such goals could not be achieved without granting the fundamental conditions of existence for the population.

147 Ordasi, *Egan Lajos naplója*, 56.

148 Ibid., 123–26.

149 "Halálozás. Dr. Törökfalvi Török Istvánné." *Pesti Hírlap*, January 25, 1919.

The government's desire to act was shown by the fact that the parliament was ready to approve an increasingly higher budget for the Ministry of the Interior, which was tasked with solving the problems. As a result, ambitious measures were taken to keep the prevailing social order and maintain public security and public health. Furthermore, a decision was reached according to which, in the towns and bigger villages along the border where the border traffic was higher, the border control tasks should be assigned to a civil law enforcement body rather than to the local police. According to the centralist plans, this body would have been established by the nationalizing of the municipal and court police, but due to the resistance of the county representatives, the first step was the establishment of the border police. Thus, local interests could only be gradually subordinated to the objectives of the state.

Pursuant to the order enacting article 1903: VIII, the border police, that is, the top organization of the institution, would have been introduced in twelve settlements along the border.<sup>150</sup> At the same time, the members of the Fiume council interpreted the initiative as another attack on the city's exceptionally broad autonomy. The gradual removal of the powers of the municipal police, which was an armed body maintained by and at the disposal of the municipality, undeniably meant a loss of power for the Rappresentanza and the podestà who led it.

The dissonance was not only due to public law reasons, but also had serious economic, social, interpersonal, and foreign political antecedents. The economic consequences included, for example, curbing smuggling and limiting the trade in counterfeit wine and other dubious quality goods. Closely related to this were the social problems (difficulties making a living and the resulting tensions), which were challenges for social groups and individuals alike. The border police even impacted interpersonal and intergroup relationships. The majority of the local population frowned on those who joined the border police, and those who "transferred" from the city police to the border police were even more despised. Also, the organization proved a very effective means of breaking the dominance of the Autonomy Party and thus of limiting the ability of the Rappresentanza to assert its interests.

The issue of the border police became the most important source of conflicts between the state and Fiume. Although the city fathers did their best to prevent

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150 DAR JU 5. 4698. gen./1905. (1905. I-2. file no. 6425.) Ministry of the Interior. 111906./1905. III-a. box no. 349.

the enactment of the law, the Fiume border police finally began operations in 1913. This was mainly due to the enormous financial sacrifices the government had made to set up the border police and the “state of emergency” measures introduced in 1912, which also created an opportunity for an unprecedented extension of state power in Fiume.

However, the organization, as numerous omens had made predictable from the outset, failed to fulfil the ambitions attached to it for domestic and foreign political reasons. The antipathy of the population and the unwillingness of the denizens of the city to cooperate significantly decreased the local integration and legitimacy of the border police. Furthermore, the perception of the border police was further undermined by ambivalent legal interpretations and jurisdictional frictions, the outdated and/or incomplete technological tools at their disposal, and the conflicts that arose from the unfortunate procedures initiated by policemen who had only a superficial knowledge of local conditions.

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JU 2 Administrative documents. The magistrate of Fiume

JU 5 Administrative documents. Governorate documents. General and presidential documents

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Z 33 Pesti Magyar Kereskedelmi Bank [Hungarian Commercial Bank of Pest] (PMKB)

K 26 Archives of the Prime Ministry, Prime Ministry's Centrally registered and archived documents, 1913–1920

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# From Empire to Oblivion: Situating the Transformation of the Habsburg Empire in a Eurasian Context from the Eighteenth Century to the First World War

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In this essay, I situate the Habsburg Monarchy in the Eurasian imperial context by bringing together a variety of recent secondary literature dealing with the Habsburgs and examples of empires in world history. In doing so, I show how the Habsburgs paralleled and diverged from other polities that have been more consistently identified as empires. I also offer a schema for thinking about polities in terms of both how uniformly they are organized internally (i.e., how unitary they are) and the extent to which they can enforce the will of the center (how much like a state they are). This schema draws inspiration from a number of works, chiefly Karen Barkey's *Empire of Difference* and Valerie Kivelson's and Ronald Suny's *Russia's Empires*.

By applying this schema, I argue that the Habsburg Monarchy certainly embodied some characteristics of empire, even as its agents sought to transform it into something more similar to but still distinct from emerging nation states elsewhere. I argue that the Habsburg Empire underwent dramatic state consolidation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and that many of the transformations and challenges it experienced in this period were broadly similar to those which other empires underwent or faced. I begin by defining “empire” and showing how the Habsburgs fit into that definition in the eighteenth century. I then discuss attempts to reform the Habsburg Empire into a more unitary, less structurally imperial polity, though I also keep in mind the ways in which it retained imperial characteristics. Specifically, I examine the role of nationalism in supporting and challenging imperial rule. Finally, I examine the destabilizing challenges the Habsburg Empire faced, in particular elite consensus and international legitimacy (or lack thereof).

Keywords: Habsburg Monarchy, empire, nation state, imperialism, nationalism

Doomed, anachronistic, a relic of a bygone age. Traditionally, this was how the Habsburg Empire was described by historians.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, earlier works have tended to take for granted the triumph of the nation state over empire as the dominant political form. However, since the end of the Cold War, these views

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1 A. J. P. Taylor in 1948 called it an empire “out of time and out of place.” Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809–1918*, 9.

have come under growing scrutiny. While no historian is seriously advocating a return of either the Habsburg Empire in particular or empires in general, a new appreciation for the significance of both has developed. Empires have dominated so much of human history. How can we understand this history without offering accounts of imperial political forms?<sup>22</sup> The Habsburg Empire, more specifically, has come in for a significant reevaluation, and the current consensus seems to be that it was not quite as doomed or “backward” as was once thought.

In this essay, I synthesize work on the modern Habsburg Empire<sup>3</sup> with more comparative works on empire in general. I argue that the Habsburg Empire underwent dramatic state consolidation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and that many of the transformations and challenges it experienced in this period were broadly similar to those which other empires underwent or faced. I begin by defining “empire” and showing how the Habsburgs fit into that definition in the eighteenth century. I then discuss attempts to reform the Habsburg Empire into a more unitary, less structurally imperial polity, though I also keep in mind the ways in which it retained imperial characteristics. Specifically, I examine the role of nationalism in supporting and challenging imperial rule. Finally, I examine the destabilizing challenges the Habsburg Empire faced, in particular elite consensus and international legitimacy (or lack thereof).

### *Defining Empire and the Habsburgs in the Eighteenth Century*

Framing the Habsburg Monarchy as an empire is not just a question of terminology or convention. It is also an analytical issue. Framing the Monarchy as such helps situate it in world history and make useful comparisons between the Monarchy and other polities. There are good reasons to see it as an empire.

The most important characteristic of empire is that it is *diverse*. This diversity is often understood in ethnic or religious terms, but perhaps political diversity is more important. Empires are composed of several constituent units, typically territorial, each of which has a unique relationship to the imperial center. These units may interact with each other, but the most important relationship is the one between the center and these units. I avoid using the term periphery here because these constituents could actually be quite central to the imperial whole, whether

<sup>22</sup> Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, 1–3.

<sup>3</sup> Due to limitations of space, I limit myself in this essay to the Austrian or Central European Habsburgs and do not consider the Iberian branch of the dynasty.

geographically, politically, or economically.<sup>4</sup> Each of these relationships is also open to renegotiation, which does not affect the other center-constituent relationships.

A useful metaphor to understand this arrangement comes from Karen Barkey's *Empire of Difference*. In her study of the Ottoman Empire, Barkey characterizes empire as a “hub-and-spoke network” without a rim.<sup>5</sup> This characterization highlights the individual relationships between the center (the hub) and the subordinate entities or constituent units (the spokes). To extend the metaphor, each spoke could be of a different character, i.e., different material, different width, even varying lengths. In an imperial structure, there is no need for each constituent entity to be identical to the others, nor is there any need for all such entities to have identical relationships with the center. This model applied rather neatly to the Habsburg case, where imperial crownlands in the nineteenth century were generally prohibited from coordinating with one another and where the imperial legal and administrative systems privileged center-constituent relationships over inter-constituent ones. This prohibition was made explicit in the 1861 regional provisions on the crownlands.<sup>6</sup> However, this prohibition was steadily weakened over the course of the following decades, as I describe below.

This focus on diversity, whether political or cultural, resonates with many other comparative studies on empire. Jane Burbank's and Frederick Cooper's synthetic work *Empires in World History* offers a good example. Burbank and Cooper define empires as “large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over space, polities that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people.” In the same paragraph, they note, “[t]he concept of empire presumes that different peoples within the polity will be governed differently.”<sup>7</sup> A central feature of empire is the embrace and deliberate maintenance of difference, both horizontally (among the ruled) and vertically (between ruler and ruled). In keeping with this definition, the authors apply their comparative method to tease out various “imperial repertoires” in order to understand how diverse empires have managed and ruled over their populations. This word “repertoire” speaks to the non-systematic approach empires adopted. Imperial rule is often improvised and flexible. Imperial rulers have their habits, which shape what and how they could imagine ruling. They are constrained by circumstance and informed by past experience. This approach looks “for actions

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4 Osterkamp, “Cooperative Empires,” 130–31.

5 Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 9.

6 Osterkamp, “Cooperative Empires,” 134.

7 Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, 8.

and conditions that pushed elements into and out of empires' strategies," rather than insisting on "false dichotomies of continuity or change, contingency or determinism."<sup>8</sup> Flexibility and adaptability are key features of imperial rule, and they underpin the management of political and cultural diversity, which was and is a consequence of imperial expansion.

These same themes crop up in Valerie Kivelson's and Ronald Suny's coauthored volume, *Russia's Empires*. Kivelson and Suny identify four characteristics of empire and then focus on two key ones. These four characteristics are (i) a supreme sovereign, answerable to no one, (ii) a wide range of disparate lands and peoples, (iii) a strict hierarchy between metropole and provinces, and, most fundamentally, (iv) emphasis on differentiation rather than integration or assimilation.<sup>9</sup> In their conclusion, the authors focus on two poles: authoritarian, even autocratic politics on the one end and diversity on the other.<sup>10</sup> As an empire becomes more authoritarian, it suppresses diversity. Conversely, as the imperial center embraces diversity, empires become less authoritarian and more conciliatory with their constituent units.

Moving beyond Europe, William Rowe's *China's Last Empire* gives an account of the Qing dynasty, which ruled much of East Asia from about 1636 until 1912. In his introduction, Rowe succinctly summarizes the various historiographical shifts in thinking about late imperial China. One of the major "turns" he identifies is the "Inner Asian" turn, a development of cultural history. This approach emphasized representations of reality over facts, de-essentializing categories and resituating them as "culturally negotiated and historically contingent."<sup>11</sup> Such an approach will be familiar to scholars of the Habsburg Empire, who have witnessed the deconstruction of nationalism and nationality in the historiography of late imperial Austria in the past few decades.<sup>12</sup> A central argument advanced by this turn in the historiography of the Qing is that the dynasty constructed a "Manchu" ethnic identity for itself after its conquest of China proper. Unlike previous dynasties, the Qing conceived of a universal empire with remit to rule over as many people as possible, i.e., a multinational polity. In this framework, China proper was simply one component alongside others, such as Tibet, Outer

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8 Ibid., 3.

9 Kivelson and Suny, *Russia's Empires*, 4.

10 Ibid., 397.

11 Rowe, *China's Last Empire*, 5

12 E.g. Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls*; Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*; Deák, *Beyond Nationalism*; King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*.

Mongolia, and Xinjiang. Rather than imposing a single, homogenous culture upon these various pieces, the Qing deliberately cultivated separate ethnic identities for their various constituencies. This separation extended into the self-presentation of the Qing themselves, who adopted a multitude of roles to legitimize their rule over a multitude of peoples. The Confucian “Son of Heaven” was only one among many such roles.<sup>13</sup> Diversity thus played a critical role in shaping Qing rule and the specific form of empire which emerged in East Asia in the seventeenth century.

These understandings of empire apply to the Habsburg context. The Habsburgs were known for expansion more through strategic marriages, inheritance, and diplomacy than direct military conquest. They acquired the Kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary in 1526 by election, and these titles were legally converted into hereditary titles in the seventeenth century. While military conquest did play a role in these acquisitions, that conquest was legitimized through a legal claim based on a preexisting title or realm.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the Habsburgs, like other feudal monarchs, had to contend with the historical privileges and traditions peculiar to individual political units or, more specifically, with the local nobility’s legal claims based on historical precedents predating Habsburg rule. These could not easily be swept aside without undermining the imperial claim to the title itself, since these claims often entailed an obligation to uphold the rights and privileges of the local nobility. This constituted one half of the reciprocal relationship between monarch and subject, the other half being the military and financial support provided (as an obligation) by the monarch’s subjects. These issues of noble privilege and the historic rights of crownlands persisted in some form or another into the nineteenth century, even informing later nationalist discourses, particularly in the Bohemian and Hungarian crownlands. Each province brought with it its own specific history and legal traditions, forcing the imperial center in Vienna to reckon with this legal diversity long before the rise of modern popular nationalisms. In this way, the structure of the Habsburg realms was quite similar to imperial formations elsewhere.

An illuminating example of these issues comes from Galicia, the Austrian portion of the Polish partition added to the empire at the end of the eighteenth century. Despite Habsburg ambitions to impose a model of uniform, centralized rule, Vienna was forced to accept local power structures in order to rule. As

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13 Ibid., 6.

14 Beller, *A Concise History of Austria*, 50, 61, 73.

Iryna Vushko demonstrates in *The Politics of Cultural Retreat*, the Habsburgs and their officials in Vienna initially imagined Galicia as a *tabula rasa* or blank slate. They imagined that they had a “civilizing mission” to improve Galicia, extirpating its “backwardness” and the “pernicious influence” of the landed nobility on the peasantry.<sup>15</sup> The imperial bureaucrats who were sent to Galicia from all parts of the Monarchy were quite surprised by what, or rather who, they found there. They quickly sympathized with the Polish-speaking nobility thanks to a shared elite culture (i.e., they spoke French, read contemporary literature, etc.). Over time, many bureaucrats adopted Polish language and culture, married into the local nobility, and raised Polish children. This constituted a rejection of the imperial center’s designs for Galicia. The imperial authorities were forced to accommodate the local nobility and incorporate existing elites into the imperial administration.<sup>16</sup> This inclusion paralleled the way in which the local nobilities in other crownlands had historically controlled their local administrations prior to 1740.<sup>17</sup> This inclusion is also particularly striking, considering that Galicia was carved out of Poland and only acquired a distinct legal, cultural, and political identity as a region or crownland after having become part of the Habsburg Empire.<sup>18</sup> The inclusion of the local nobility also throws into relief the kind of diversity which characterized the Monarchy at the beginning of the modern era. Rather than a single, unitary state, the Monarchy before the nineteenth century was composed of semi-autonomous component pieces or, to return to Barkey’s metaphor, spokes, each of varying make and length, populated by specific, local structures of power.

### *Making a Unitary Polity*

In the eighteenth century, various actors began seeking to reform the Habsburg Empire into a more tightly knit, unitary state. I distinguish between being unitary and being a state (i.e., stateness) in order to avoid methodologically coupling the two. I use the word polity as an umbrella term to refer to any kind of constellation of political power that independently exercises authority. Thus, I conceptualize two separate axes for describing polities. One axis runs from a unitary polity toward a more decentralized, loosely constituted one. Unitary

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15 Vushko, *The Politics of Cultural Retreat*, 6, 47.

16 Ibid., 3, 8.

17 Ibid., 6.

18 Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia*.

polities are characterized by uniform relationships between the center and the polity's constituent units, i.e., all the spokes radiating out from the hub are the same. By this definition, imperial polities are only minimally unitary, if at all. Polities may also be centralized if the central government has a high degree of control over the constituent pieces, but this need not be the case. The second axis describes the degree of “stateness,” i.e., state capacity, or the extent to which a government can exert its will on the communities, individuals, and territories it claims to govern. High degrees of stateness are characterized by an extensive state apparatus (e.g. bureaucracy, law enforcement), the function of which is to carry out the will of the government. In this section of the essay, I focus on how the Habsburgs and other empires transformed themselves into more unitary polities and the challenges they encountered in this process.

As Pieter Judson has demonstrated in his synthesis of recent Habsburg historiography,<sup>19</sup> the Habsburgs of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, in particular Joseph II, embarked on an ambitious program of reform. First, the imperial center sought to bolster and make more complete both its knowledge of and ability to act in the various crownlands. In doing so, the Habsburg center sought “to consolidate its control over several very different territories.” In practice, this meant bypassing “traditional local relationships of power” and “breaking the traditional political dominance exercised by regional powerbrokers, the local nobility.” This leads neatly into another of Judson's themes: the Habsburg reconceptualization of the proper relationship between the government and both its aristocratic and common subjects. The Habsburgs and their advisers in the late eighteenth century developed and sought to implement a new notion of imperial citizenship, one which “saw the people of the empire in essentially comparable and interchangeable terms, rather than in traditional hierarchies of privilege.”<sup>20</sup> The imperial center sought to break down the existing corporate relationships whereby individual subjects related to the center only via their local, crownland hierarchies. While Judson specifically emphasizes the development of a centralized state, it is also possible to read these changes as moves toward a unitary polity where the specificities of local legal and political history are minimized and the constituent units have a uniform relationship to the center. This does not necessarily mean that the center comes to dominate, only that each unit has the same rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis

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19 Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History*.

20 Ibid, 17–18.



the center. At the same time, the reforms that Judson describes met with only limited success.

Despite setbacks, over the course of the nineteenth century, reformers and politicians in the Empire gradually molded it into a somewhat more cohesive polity. As John Deak has shown, after Joseph II, the imperial bureaucracy became one of the main forces pushing for change. Deak's work focuses on Vienna and its imperial reformers from 1740 until 1914.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, this means that Habsburg Hungary receives less attention, but his discussion remains quite illuminating. He argues not only that Maria Theresa and Joseph II initiated a radical program of organizing new state structures and personnel to govern the realm (in short, a bureaucracy), but also that the people who staffed this bureaucracy imbibed a specific ethos of service to and reform of the Habsburg polity. This ethos, or perhaps a professional culture, helped to animate and motivate the bureaucracy to be an agent of reform and state consolidation, even when Joseph II's successors (particularly Francis II, who ruled first as Archduke and then as Emperor of Austria from 1792 to 1835) did not share the Josephine zeal for reform.

In addition, Deak's account indicates that the agents of imperial consolidation were not constant. While reform began on the throne with Maria Theresa and Joseph II, in the nineteenth century, the initiative seems to have shifted toward the bureaucracy. Jana Osterkamp's work on the concept of "cooperative empires" points to an additional shift in the early twentieth century.<sup>22</sup> Osterkamp argues that while cooperation between the imperial crownlands in the Cisleithanian (or non-Hungarian) portion of the empire was formally forbidden,<sup>23</sup> in practice, it became increasingly necessary in order to deal with the ballooning debt crises on both the provincial and imperial levels of government. Osterkamp links this growing cooperation to the de facto federalization or *Veränderung* of the empire, beginning with the delegation of administrative powers to the crownlands in the 1860s via the 1867 fundamental law of the state and the 1861 regional statutes. Essentially, the crownlands' power to pursue modernization projects (principally building and improving infrastructure, schools, and hospitals) increased without a commensurate increase in their power to collect revenues. This led after 1880 to a massive increase in the debt of the crownland governments.<sup>24</sup> Osterkamp

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21 Deak, *Forging a Multinational State*.

22 Osterkamp, "Cooperative Empires."

23 Ibid., 134–35.

24 Ibid., 139–40.

argues that, in response to this crisis, a “paradigm shift” occurred in 1905, when, “for the first time in the history of the Habsburg monarchy,” representatives from the Cisleithanian crownland legislatures met for joint consultations.<sup>25</sup>

These and similar meetings continued over the following years, with the upshot that the crownlands successfully negotiated as a bloc with the imperial government to receive a portion of imperial revenues in order better to support their own finances. Further reforms to increase cooperation among the regional and imperial governments to manage debt and income were only interrupted by World War I. Osterkamp calls these developments the emergence of a “cooperative empire,” since they represent an unprecedented degree of horizontal, interregional cooperation.<sup>26</sup> I would also argue that these developments can be read as a move away from imperial forms of government, since the relationships between the provinces and the center, as well as between the centers, became more homogenous, i.e., all these relationships were regulated together rather than separately. Additionally, the impetus for reform and consolidation came not from the imperial center, but from the regions themselves. This point highlights the way in which empires, like the Habsburg Empire, can reform into less imperial and more state-like formations and that the push for reform can come from a variety of political actors. As Osterkamp herself argues, “one must acknowledge that the process of change from empire to a nonimperial state is fluid.”<sup>27</sup> Of course, it is also important to keep in mind that while all of this was happening, Hungary remained an entirely separate part of the empire, indicating that imperial consolidation can take place in a politically heterogeneous environment.

The Habsburgs were not alone in these endeavors. As Victor Lieberman argues in his 1,500-page work *Strange Parallels*, politics in both Europe and Southeast Asia experienced dramatic state consolidation in the mid to late eighteenth century. He does not focus exclusively on empires, although they figure prominently in his analysis. He situates this parallel in a millennium-long cycle of political consolidation between 800 and 1830, synchronized in four cycles. A general trend toward greater political and eventually cultural consolidation was occasionally punctuated by periods of collapse and crisis, but these interregna grew gradually shorter over time. As Lieberman argues, by the

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25 Ibid., 140.

26 Ibid., 142–43.

27 Ibid., 145.

nineteenth century, these trends had produced “an unprecedentedly powerful and extensive formation.”<sup>28</sup>

Lieberman makes several claims in reference to what he terms the “protected rimlands” of Eurasia, namely northwestern and northeastern Europe (he focuses on France and Russia), Japan, and mainland Southeast Asia, all of which were located on the periphery of the traditional core of settled, agrarian, Eurasian polities in South Asia, China, and the Mediterranean littoral. These “rimlands,” from the sixth century through to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, “domesticated world religions, developed unprecedentedly grand architectural complexes and/or public works,” and underwent “secondary state formation,” to borrow Barbara Price’s term. Lieberman terms the principalities founded in this era “charter states” in the sense that “their religious, dynastic, and/or territorial traditions” became normative and legitimizing for local successor states. These “charter states” disintegrated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with territorial consolidation resuming sometime between 1450 and 1590. This consolidation grew in scope and efficiency into the nineteenth century. The increased solidity of emergent states reflected the combination of three trends: first, the expansion of monetary resources, which in turn was a result of growing populations and trade; second, the greater inclusiveness of cultural identities; and third, the improvement of administrative and military technologies, which was motivated by interstate competition.<sup>29</sup>

Lieberman’s work also clearly shows how the Habsburg experience of state building fits into Eurasian, not just European, trends. He himself notes this at several points in his argument, emphasizing territorial expansion, the establishment of a professional army, and broadly the unification of administrative structures.<sup>30</sup> These transformations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are covered in broad strokes in this essay. An earlier interesting moment to situate in Lieberman’s cycle is the establishment of the Habsburgs in Austria. The Habsburgs gained the duchy of Austria for the first time in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. In doing so, they supplanted the Babenberg dynasty, whose last male heir had died in 1246.<sup>31</sup> The Babenbergs traced their rulership back to 976,<sup>32</sup> during the “charter states” period identified

28 Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, vol. 1, 457.

29 Ibid., 77–78.

30 Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, vol. 2, 207, 280–81.

31 Beller, *A Concise History of Austria*, 26–27.

32 Ibid., 13.

by Lieberman. The Habsburgs claimed legal continuity with the Babenbergs, using forged documents purportedly from that era to attempt to cement their position in the Holy Roman Empire in 1359.<sup>33</sup> Their use of burial sites as early as 1280 also demonstrated a claim to the Babenberg tradition, along with the grander pretension to Carolingian heritage.<sup>34</sup> This use reinforces the idea of the Babenbergs as the Habsburgs' normative and legitimizing charter state, although an argument could also be made for the Carolingians and even the Romans.<sup>35</sup> The Habsburgs later experienced a period of political fragmentation at the end of the fourteenth century, beginning with the Treaty of Neuberg in 1379.<sup>36</sup> The Habsburgs also acquired the Bohemian and Hungarian crowns in 1437, only to lose both of them again within 20 years.<sup>37</sup> These events coincide with a period of political fragmentation in Lieberman's schema.<sup>38</sup> These crowns were reacquired more permanently in 1526, in the period which Lieberman identifies as state consolidation among the Eurasian rimlands.

Lieberman ends his analysis roughly in 1830–1850, but it is interesting to note the broad shift after those dates toward political disintegration, i.e., the next “cycle” in Lieberman's schema. The period after 1830 was marked by an increase in smaller polities and a weakening of imperial power, even as the imperial center in Vienna sought to hold off these forces. The 1848 revolutions in the Habsburg lands generally took on a liberal nationalist character, challenging the imperial center's political and cultural authority (even though these revolutions failed). As Alice Freifeld has shown in *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary*, the failure of 1848 in Hungary was mythologized in ways which mobilized and united Hungarian-speakers behind the crownland's elites, contributing to the growth in Hungarian nationalism over the following decades.<sup>39</sup>

While these forces did not overthrow Habsburg rule, the empire was eventually destroyed by interstate competition in the form of World War I, along with the Russian and Ottoman Empires and the German Empire to some degree. Notably, six years earlier in 1912, the Qing Empire in China had collapsed. In its place, a republic was declared under pressure from colonial powers (another form of interstate competition) and anti-colonial nationalism

33 Ibid., 30.

34 Stercken, “Shaping a Dominion,” 335–36, 343–44.

35 Rady, *The Habsburgs*, 35–36.

36 Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1526–1918*, 7.

37 Beller, *A Concise History of Austria*, 34.

38 Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*, vol. 1, 78.

39 Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary*.

(challenging the cultural authority of the imperial center and its traditions). Thus, one can situate the transformations within the Habsburg Empire in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century within Lieberman's Eurasian framework as part of a long pattern of consolidation and disintegration. The progressive growth and intensification of state power and territorial consolidation and the challenges to imperial authority in the nineteenth century fit within the broader Eurasian trends for which Lieberman argues.

### *Nationalism and Empire: A False Dichotomy?*

Despite these moves toward consolidation, the Habsburg Empire retained significant imperial characteristics in its final decades. Several scholars have pointed to the ways in which the empire participated in European colonialism, including its so-called "cultural mission" in Bosnia and Habsburg civil society's engagement with colonial ideas.<sup>40</sup> In this section, and focusing on domestic developments, I argue that empires and nationalist politics are able to coexist and even synergize. I then suggest that this is a feature of imperial diversity, or empires' tendency to govern pluralistically. In this way, the Habsburg Empire's ability to accommodate and even make use of nationalist politics is an important way in which it retained imperial characteristics even toward the end of the empire's existence and after a century of political and administrative consolidation. While the empire did ultimately dissolve into nationally-defined successor states, prior to 1914, nationalists were able to work within the framework of the empire to pursue their own goals.<sup>41</sup>

Scholarship in recent years has already turned to addressing the relationship between nationalism and imperialism. Osterkamp, cited above, argues that we would do well to break down the dichotomy between empires and nation-states in order to conceptualize specific, historical states as existing along a sliding scale rather than in discreet categories.<sup>42</sup> A more comprehensive treatment comes from Stefan Berger's and Alexei Miller's edited volume *Nationalizing Empires*. This volume focuses on the emergence of nations at imperial cores rather

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40 On Habsburg participation in European colonialism, see Sauer, "Habsburg Colonial" and Ruthner, *Habsburgs "Dark Continent."* Another interesting work on this topic is Bach, *Tropics of Vienna*. On Bosnia as a Habsburg colony, see Ruthner et al., *Wechselwirkungen* and Ruthner and Scheer, *Bosnien-Herzegowina und Österreich-Ungarn, 1878–1918*.

41 Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*, 270, 274–75.

42 Osterkamp, "Cooperative Empires," 145.

than throughout empires' constituent pieces. These "imperial nationalisms" were symbiotic to the empires they occupied, seeking to reform the empire so that it could be more effective without seeking to incorporate all the lands and subjects of the empire into the nation located at the empire's core.<sup>43</sup> However, the Habsburgs did not fit neatly into this schema, as shown by one contribution to *Nationalizing Empires*, since there was no clear imperial core that emerged out of the confluence of economic, cultural, and political forces.<sup>44</sup> In contrast to this work, I am interested not so much in the role of nationalism in the imperial core, i.e., at the center, as I am in the relationship between imperialism and nationalism throughout empires' component parts.

One complex example of this synergy between nationalism and imperialism in the Habsburg case comes from Bosnia. In *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, Robin Okey argues that the Habsburgs occupied the Ottoman province of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878 in an attempt to neutralize the threat posed by Yugoslav, Croatian, and Serbian nationalist movements, specifically by promoting a separate Bosnian identity that would align with imperial interests, based on existing religious communities and the history and tradition of the province. The province contained a diverse population most of which spoke a South Slavic language and practiced Catholicism, Christian Orthodoxy, or Sunni Islam. Austro-Hungarian officials (the empire having officially become Austria-Hungary in 1867 and Bosnia being occupied in 1878 as a "condominium" shared by the two halves) and Croatian and Serbian nationalists all saw in Bosnia the human material for their various political and cultural projects. The occupying Austro-Hungarian forces, primarily under the governorship of Benjamin von Kállay, sought to block Serbian and Croatian nationalist influences. They pursued this goal by building schools and infrastructure to promote a Bosnian civic identity with the Muslim population as a conservative backbone but without making religious affiliation a defining element. In doing so, von Kállay sought to foster and instrumentalize Bosnian nationalism against other South Slav nationalisms and harness it to the interests of the imperial center.<sup>45</sup> Even if von Kállay's project met with only limited success, it nevertheless demonstrates that imperial proponents like him could conceive of nationalism as a useful political tool.

Of course, Habsburg interactions with nationalist projects were not always so deliberate. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, specific decisions and

43 Berger and Miller, "Introduction," 4–5.

44 Komlosy, "Imperial Cohesion, Nation-Building, and Regional Integration in the Habsburg Monarchy."

45 Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, 60–65.

laws at the imperial level inadvertently boosted nationalist demands, enabling nationalists to use imperial institutions to support their nation-making projects. For example, the provision in the 1867 constitution stipulated equality between the languages of the Habsburg Empire, granting citizens on an individual basis the right to conduct their affairs in a recognized language of their choosing. In spite of the intentions of the provision's framers (who sought to ensure that German would remain the principle language of "serious" affairs while conceding "less important" matters to other languages), this quickly enabled nationalists across the empire to make demands on behalf of their claimed language, even if they still could not invoke "the nation" in a legal sense. Language became a proxy for nationality, backed up by imperial guarantees of equality. This in turn led to the 1905 Moravian Compromise, in which the imperial state sought "to defuse the national conflict in Moravia" between Czech and German nationalists by obliging citizens of the crownland to register formally as belonging to one nationality or the other. This would enable a segregation of political and administrative institutions along national lines. While no similar agreement came together for Bohemia, others were implemented in Bukovina in 1910 and Galicia in 1914.<sup>46</sup> In this way, the empire created a legal framework which enabled and emboldened nationalist politics.

The other major imperial institution which contributed to the nationalization of politics was the census. Benedict Anderson, writing about the Southeast Asian context, argued that the census is an important tool in the imagining of national communities.<sup>47</sup> In the Habsburg context, the census became a tool for nationalists to make claims about and on behalf of their imagined nations. The 1880 census was the first to ask respondents to indicate a "language of daily use" or "Umgangssprache." Government officials deemed this information necessary in order to govern and communicate with their citizens. However, an international convention established in 1872 stipulated that each respondent could only list one language, erasing bilingualism in the official records at a stroke. Furthermore, while imperial officials refused to make an explicit connection between language and nationality or ask about nationality on the census, nationalists had no problem linking the two.<sup>48</sup> This linkage, combined with the understanding of the census as a supposedly objective representation of reality, allowed nationalists to use the census to make claims about the relative strengths of their nations and in turn to demand state support for education

46 Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 12–14.

47 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 168.

48 King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 58–60.



in minority languages.<sup>49</sup> Nationalists were thus able to use imperial institutions, such as the census, to pursue their political-cultural projects.

In other cases, nation-building projects were able to establish and develop themselves within existing imperial structures without necessarily seeking to overthrow them. This is one argument that Beno Gammerl makes in his comparison of late nineteenth-century Canada and Hungary in his work on citizenship. His comparison shows how both sub-imperial entities pursued homogenizing nationalist policies. Canada implemented exclusionary mechanisms to limit and control immigration from other parts of the British Empire (primarily to maintain a “white Canada,” excluding Asian immigrants and limiting the rights of indigenous First Nations peoples). In contrast, Hungary sought to encourage non-Magyars to adopt Magyar culture and join the ethnically defined Hungarian nation, especially after 1879.<sup>50</sup> However, Gammerl argues against reading these nationalist tendencies as evidence of a desire on the part of these groups ultimately to secede from their respective empires.<sup>51</sup> Rather, they are evidence of the ways in which nation-state projects could develop even within imperial frameworks. Hungary was able to pursue Magyarization thanks to the Compromise of 1867, which afforded Hungary significant autonomy in its domestic affairs. At the same time, Canada coordinated with the British imperial government to discriminate against fellow British subjects from India without damaging the prestige of British subjecthood. This was achieved by only allowing immigration by Indian subjects who had arrived directly from India (and not via another country such as the United States) and instructing shipping companies to avoid selling tickets to Indian subjects, thereby cutting off the only means of traveling directly from India to Canada. This combination of policies seems to have satisfied London’s preference for “indirect discrimination.”<sup>52</sup> In both cases, Hungary and Canada were able to pursue nationalist policies of social engineering without seceding from their respective empires.

Work from other parts of Eurasia seems to support these conclusions. Prasenjit Duara has examined Japanese imperialism in the puppet state of Manchukuo, which was established in northeast China or Manchuria from 1932 until 1945. Recent scholarship has shown how Manchukuo was a place of paradoxes, where it was “difficult to disentangle imperialism from nationalism,

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49 Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 24–25.

50 Gammerl, *Subject, Citizen, Other*, 47.

51 Ibid., 52.

52 Ibid., 30–31.

modernity from tradition, frontier from heartland, and ideals of transcendence from ideologies of boundedness.” Duara sees these paradoxes not only in Manchukuo specifically, but also in the wider problems of early twentieth-century modernity. He argues that “no matter how imperialistic the intentions of its builders, Manchukuo was not developed as a colony but as a nation-state,” one which sought international legitimacy by claiming to represent the authentic culture of Manchuria and its inhabitants.<sup>53</sup>

As Duara explains, the Pan-Asianism in the Japanese civilizing mission produced a number of tensions between inclusivity and exclusivity. On the one hand, Manchukuo was an ally and sovereign partner in a regional (East Asian) anti-Western coalition. On the other, it was subordinated to Japanese interests and constrained by a neo-colonial power structure.<sup>54</sup> Duara locates this tension between equity and hierarchy, or national sovereignty and imperial power, in the need of both nationalism and imperialism to adjust themselves to the ideological circumstances of the interwar period. On one side, imperialists were forced to accommodate demands for self-representation among their subjects. On the other, nationalism had to adapt to the “territorial imperative” that drove contemporary politics into competition and expansionism in order to achieve its goals.<sup>55</sup> In this context, Manchukuo nationhood helped legitimate Japanese indirect rule and imperial domination. In this way, Japanese imperialism sought to accommodate itself to calls for greater self-government around the world by instrumentalizing notions of Manchukuo nationhood. Thus, the Habsburg Empire was not unusual in its ability and willingness to work with ideas of nationhood to legitimize itself.

### *Destabilizing Challenges in Global Context*

The Habsburg Empire encountered several challenges that threatened its long-term survival, both at home and abroad. Two significant challenges were the struggle for consensus at the imperial center and the empire’s faltering international recognition and legitimacy abroad. In other words, do imperial elites at the center itself agree on what needs to be done? And do other polities, especially powerful neighbors, recognize the legitimacy of the polity in question (in this case, the Habsburg Empire)? While the answers were usually yes to both questions in the

<sup>53</sup> Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 1.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 1–2.

Habsburg context, there were key points when Habsburg officials struggled to reach a consensus or convince other polities of the empire's legitimacy. They were not alone among other imperial polities in facing these challenges.

Two examples come from, first, the British Empire, as described by Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher in *Africa and the Victorians*, and, second, the Portuguese Empire, as discussed by Sanjay Subrahmanyam in *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500–1700*. Both works focus on European maritime empires and illustrate the importance of consensus among imperial policy makers in distinct time periods. Robinson and Gallagher use the term “the official mind of imperialism” to characterize imperial decision making and explain British imperial expansion in Africa. They focus on decision making in Britain rather than factors in Africa.<sup>56</sup> This “official mind” of imperialism centered on the machinery of imperial policymaking in London, more specifically in Whitehall. Official policy represented an accumulated mass of experience and tradition which had been passed down “unbroken from Pitt and Canning to Palmerston and Clarendon” through the “great country houses of the land.” They continue: “Most ministers had been born in the Eighteen twenties and thirties, read classics or mathematics at Oxford or Cambridge and serve their political apprenticeships in junior posts under Palmerston or Disraeli in the late Fifties and Sixties.”<sup>57</sup> Ministers shared a certain outlook, and even as governments came and went, the general consensus on imperial policy remained the same. A united elite culture at the imperial center facilitated the implementation of imperial policy.

Subrahmanyam's multi-layered account of the Portuguese Empire in Asia from 1500 to 1700 provides an informative counterexample. One of Subrahmanyam's main arguments is that the Portuguese imperial center lacked a clear consensus on its maritime expansion into the Indian Ocean. Metropolitan Portugal was “riven by tensions, between different social classes, within the elite itself, and between different regions.” These tensions inhibited the formulation of a consistent policy on maritime expansion, which in turn led to several shifts in policy during the sixteenth century. These shifts included a growing elite snobbery against commerce, a reorientation from the Indian Ocean to Brazil, and an unwillingness by the Iberian Habsburgs to fund colonial expansion in Asia. These factors, along with changes in Asia itself and growing European competition, meant that Portuguese possessions in the Indian Ocean region

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56 Robinson et al., *Africa and the Victorians*, xi.

57 Ibid., 22.

shrank considerably.<sup>58</sup> A lack of elite consensus and sustained focus on long-term goals contributed to Portugal's imperial decline in Asia.

In the Habsburg case, the lack of consensus among the elites manifested not only as conflicts between the imperial center and its constituent pieces but also at the center itself, exemplified in the transition from Joseph II to Francis II. As Deak argues, the experience of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars caused the Habsburgs, who feared unrest and sought political stability, "to turn sharply away from their state-building project."<sup>59</sup> This change of direction created an ideological conflict between the court and the recently created bureaucracy.<sup>60</sup> Francis II and his court deliberately neglected and stifled the bureaucracy wherever they could, even as they paradoxically relied on it to buttress their power, while the new caste of educated elites in the bureaucracy sought to carry on the Josephinist project.<sup>61</sup> While the bureaucracy carried on reforms throughout the nineteenth century, it did not regain the kind of support it had had under Joseph II.

Indeed, the fissures in the Habsburg Empire only became more substantial as time passed, particularly between the upper echelons of the imperial military and other parts of both the government and wider Habsburg society. Ultimately, the military's discontent with the direction of Habsburg society and imperial politics proved fatal for the empire. Jonathan Gumz and John Deak make this argument convincingly in their account of how the Habsburg military high command (AOK or *Armeeoberkommando*) tore apart the civilian administration in the first two years of World War I. Crucially, the assault on the rule of law by the military was rooted in a deep-seated disdain among the military elite for the growth of constitutional government after 1867 in the empire. A particular target was the state administration, which the military leadership regarded as complicit in what it also regarded as dangerously disloyal nationality politics. In short, where the civilian bureaucracy saw a need for compromise with nationalist politics, the military high command saw a need for repression. This difference in perception contributed to "an increasingly hostile set of oppositions between the army, the state administration, and broad swaths of the political classes." In turn, in 1914 the military used the war and the exceptional state that military necessity provided in order radically to alter the political and legal life of the

58 Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 290–92.

59 Deak, *Forging a Multinational State*, 32.

60 *Ibid.*, 34–35.

61 *Ibid.*, 62.

empire, suspending constitutional guarantees of rights and privileges.<sup>62</sup> As Gumz has argued elsewhere,<sup>63</sup> the military used this situation to attack any perceived nationalist sentiment or disloyalty to the empire, up to and including summary executions of suspected traitors.<sup>64</sup> It is thus hardly surprisingly that, when the Austrian *Reichsrat* or parliament was reconvened in May 1917 for the first time since February 1914, things did not go well. Many of the deputies had become hostile to both the military and the state administration, and there was little political will for compromise. While they were not openly calling for the end of the empire, deputies demanded that the civilian and military administrators who had arbitrarily imprisoned and executed Habsburg citizens be punished.<sup>65</sup> The legitimacy of the empire had been seriously damaged by the military's cooptation of the bureaucracy and its effort to impose its own vision of politics. This schism between the military and civilian elites proved fatal in 1918.

The other challenge for the Habsburg Empire and emergent Habsburg state was international legitimacy. The late nineteenth century bore witness to academic delegitimizations of the Habsburg polity on the grounds that a multinational state was unnatural and undesirable. In his article “The Sociological Idea of the State,” Thomas Prendergast lays out the debates that took place among sociologists, political scientists, and legal scholars in the late 1880s, pitting Habsburg scholars primarily against their French and German counterparts. Prendergast argues that Habsburg scholars developed a useable, “sociological” concept of statehood which in turn provided a theoretical legal basis for a multinational state. These debates mattered because they informed the curricula which trained the empire's jurists and administrators. These people were, according to proponents of “sociological” statehood, “key to propagating and entrenching a correct understanding of the Austrian state.” This conception of the state attracted the support of people like Tomáš Masaryk (future founder of Czechoslovakia) and Polish-Jewish sociologist Ludwig or Ludwik Glumpowicz. Glumpowicz in particular argued that western European and Habsburg states represented not mutually opposed modern and pre-modern political forms but, rather, analytically comparable phenomena.<sup>66</sup> This approach opposed emerging political-legal schemata in France and Germany, as well as Italy, which took

62 Deak and Gumz, “How to Break a State,” 1109–13.

63 Gumz, *The Resurrection and Collapse of Empire in Habsburg Serbia, 1914–1918*.

64 Deak and Gumz, “How to Break a State,” 1126–27.

65 Ibid., 1131–32.

66 Prendergast, “The Sociological Idea of the State,” 330–32.

the nation state to be the natural form of modern politics and cast multiethnic polities like Russia and the Ottoman Empire as backward and antimodern. The fact that the Habsburg Empire did not always fit neatly into these schemata only lent weight to the idea that it was somehow abnormal. Austrian scholars like Masaryk and Glumpowicz repeatedly argued that the conceptual categories of German constitutional law, for example, were “weapons in the war on Austrian legitimacy in particular, and multiethnic statehood in general.”<sup>67</sup>

The Habsburg or Austrian state was not alone in this regard. As Antony Anghie has argued in *Imperialism, Sovereignty, and International Law*, international law in general and the concept of sovereignty in particular have deeply colonial histories. International law as a discipline grew out of the European civilizing mission, which justified colonial rule over indigenous peoples globally by defining these peoples as non-sovereign and by maintaining an increasingly refined and elaborate distinction between “civilized” and “uncivilized” or “universalizing” and “particular.” These distinctions helped undergird the colonial relationship, baking colonial attitudes into the very heart of international law. This same international law also made it virtually impossible for former colonies to take their former overlords to court for damages inflicted by colonial rule.<sup>68</sup> While the Habsburg Empire was not itself colonized, the very form of its political organization was delegitimized by European legal theory. These arguments in turn facilitated the partition of the empire in 1918, even while Germany, its former ally, retained the majority of its pre-1914 European territory.

## Conclusion

In this essay, I have argued that the Habsburg Empire sought to reform and consolidate itself in the period from the 1740s until World War I. In spite of these reforms, the empire did not become a unitary state but continued, rather, to function much like an empire. Besides the obvious case of Hungary separating from most Austrian institutions in 1867, the Habsburg Empire also worked with and through a number of sub-imperial nationalist projects, none of which convincingly occupied a core role in the empire’s identity. By accommodating these nationalist projects, the Habsburgs exemplified a key characteristic of empire: its ability to govern diverse populations and territories without seeking

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67 Ibid., 340.

68 Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty, and the Making of International Law*, 2–4.

to homogenize those territories. Additionally, despite moves toward political consolidation, the empire faced several destabilizing challenges. Two key such challenges were an imperfectly united elite culture and a struggle to hold on to international legitimacy. Both factors fatally undermined the empire's legitimacy from the inside and outside during World War I. However, I have also argued that, from all of these perspectives, the Habsburg Empire was not unusual. Many of these experiences had parallels in other empires throughout Eurasia and beyond, whether land-based or maritime-based. The Habsburg Empire therefore should be read not as an anomaly in imperial history, but as an instructive example for comparative study.

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# Materializing Imperial Rule? Nature, Environment, and the Middle Class in Habsburg Central Europe

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*New imperial history* has fundamentally transformed our understanding of empires and questioned established certainties with regard to paths of state building and state formation. This challenge has proved fruitful for historians of Austria-Hungary, as it has led to a new perception of the Dual Monarchy as a sometimes innovative and in certain regards even progressive polity.

The observation that nature and environment became more closely entangled with imperial rule and politics in the nineteenth century and had an impact on common notions of what modern empire actually was serves as a starting point for this study. Along three representative repositories of imperial knowledge—Czoernig's *Ethnographische Karte* (1857), the Hungarian *Czigányösszeírás eredményei* (1893), and the catalogue accompanying one part (the Austrian) of the Habsburg contribution to the 1900 *exposition universelle*—it shows how new spheres of the non-human became entangled with imperial politics and were transformed into resources with which to further the imperial project. These three examples, I argue, are just three minor elements against a larger discursive backdrop that slowly furthered the embodiment of a notion of modern empire, which featured the improvement of the natural environment as a constitutive aspect of its exercise of power.

Consequentially, this raises the question of a *cui bono*, placing the focus on a considerably large body of imperial civil service, not only in charge of this operation but also functioning as the driving force behind it. I understand the middle-class officials who made up the administration as the imperial intermediaries identified by new imperial history, and I shed light on the diversity of this increasingly important social class, a diversity which resulted from the ongoing engagement and subtle participation of middle-class civil-servants in the imperial project. I also keep a close eye on the resources they could mobilize, particularly expert knowledge.

I seek to further a more nuanced understanding of the social transformation that Austria-Hungary's imperial project underwent in the long nineteenth century as this distinctive polity (Austria-Hungary) relied on the middle classes as central imperial intermediaries who furthered the modernization of the Dual Monarchy by fostering specific sets of values and furthering the use of resources the appropriation and exploitation of which have left lasting marks in Central European mentalities.

Keywords: Habsburg Empire, environmental history, Central Europe, 19th century, central administration, middle-class, forestry, nature, landscape

In this article I show how the emergence of a centralized middle-class imperial administration in Central Europe in the long nineteenth century created at the same time a homogeneous imperial environmental sphere that this emerging administration came to consider “natural.” During this process, environment as “nature” was transformed from something local into a fundamental resource of imperial rule which, under the management of an administration that fed itself from the steady supply of members of a growing middle class, was supposed to benefit the integration of local society into the emerging imperial society and the creation of a larger, more unified imperial identity. The Habsburg Empire around 1900, I argue, was fundamentally different from its embodiments 100 or 200 years earlier insofar as it had successfully transformed from an *ancien régime*-style polity into a modern middle-class empire. This metamorphosis was made possible in no small part, I argue, by two processes. The first of these processes was the materialization of the knowledge necessary for power, by which I mean, throughout this article, giving concrete form to information, for instance with the creation of maps and statistics, which in the case of the Habsburg Empire gradually came to replace the individuals who had stored this information. The second process was the large-scale systematic mobilization of the Empire’s (non-human) environment.

The predominant reading of Central European history in the secondary literature (especially though not only for the long nineteenth century) has changed substantially over the course of the past decade. This took place in large part simply because the focus on national histories lost much of its explanatory purchase, while more comprehensive approaches that are striving to account for the complexity of the entanglements that characterized this region around 1900 moved to the foreground.<sup>1</sup> The increasing absorption of newer theoretical debates and methodological innovations, such as postcolonialism, new imperial history, and the history of science, have furthered Digital History and its successive integration into the research programs and routines of historians, but the work of anthropologists and sociologists has also had a strong impact on the field.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Fillafer, “Einleitung”; Varga, “Writing Imperial History.”

2 Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*; yet also Deak, *Forging a Multinational State*; Surman, *Universities in Imperial Austria*; Fillafer, *Aufklärung habsburgisch*; Gammerl, *Subjects, Citizens and Others*; Bowman et al., “An Imperial Dynamo?” Though not all these studies follow the “revisionist” narrative, they all display remarkable distance from the teleological narrative of nationalization. Among the more recent studies that take a more conservative stance, see Beller, *The Habsburg Monarchy*. The history of science exerted considerable

New imperial history has unquestionably left a significant imprint on the rewriting of Central European histories over the past decade, yet even the most recent comprehensive accounts of Central European history in the long nineteenth century are flawed with regard to certain facets.<sup>3</sup> I would like to point out one particular aspect here, which concerns the neglect of most subjects dealt with by environmental humanists in historical accounts of Habsburg Central Europe on the macro level.<sup>4</sup>

In the following, I begin with a discussion of the methodological and theoretical aspects which could be relevant to a rethinking and rewriting of Central European history, especially with regard to the long nineteenth century, derived from some of the larger trends in the historiographical research.<sup>5</sup> This

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influence for instance on the history of knowledge and furthered the development of a substantially better understanding of administrative history: Göderle, *Zensus und Ethnizität*.

3 New imperial history has been implemented thus far particularly with regard to Central Europe in the long nineteenth century, probably first by Leonhard and von Hirschhausen, *Empires und Nationalstaaten*. also Judson, "L'Autriche-Hongrie était-elle un empire?" Particularly research on the eighteenth century is still very much dominated by the research paradigm of the fiscal-military state, Godsey, *The Sineews of Habsburg Power*.

4 According to Kupper, *Umweltgeschichte*, 12f., environmental historical research on Europe in general is still in its beginnings. There is, however, some work on former Cisleithania, though very little on the macro level, and significantly more on former Transleithania. Some insights into recent research are granted by conference announcements and reports, Tagungsbericht. *The Environmental History of the Central European Borderlands*; and *Exploiting Nature, Making an Empire*. For the Austrian half of Habsburg Central Europe, see Coen, *Climate in Motion*; Frank, *Oil Empire*; Ganzenmüller and Tönsmeier, *Vom Vorrücken des Staates in die Fläche*; Wüst and Drossbach, *Umwelt-, Klima- und Konsumgeschichte*; Landry, Kupper, and Winiwarter, *Austrian Environmental History*. A renowned school of social ecology based at the Vienna University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences has exerted a significant influence on the rethinking of environmental history, for instance the work of Verena Winiwarter, Martin Schmied, and Simone Gingrich. It exceeds the regional scope of Habsburg Central Europe in terms of time and space. Research on former Transleithania is well developed, including a very recent special issue of The Hungarian Historical Review, edited by Gábor Demeter and Beatrix Romhányi, *Natural Resources and Society*. Further special issues of journals include *Természeti kibívások – társadalmi válaszok*, *Korall*. For an overview, see Kiss, "A Brief Overview on the Roots and Current Status of Environmental History in Hungary." See also Rácz, *The Steppe to Europe*; Horváth, *Víz és társadalom Magyarországon a középkortól a XX. század végéig*; Horváth et al., *Mensch und Umwelt im pannonischen Raum vom 18. bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*.

5 In the research running up to this article, digitally available and accessible sources played a significant role, yet it quickly became clear that the sheer mass of potentially relevant data required advanced tools to design an efficient research process. Together with my research group, made up of historians and engineers, including specialists at the Graz University of Technology, I used a self-developed tool with the working title *advanced digital research environment* (ADRE), which can structure mass data and extract specific information. This tool uses machine learning algorithms out of the class of NLP (natural language processing) frameworks, particularly BERT in different pretrained versions. Furthermore, we used SpaCy and diverse annotation tools which helped in data preprocessing, as well as several image segmentation

includes new imperial history, environmental humanities, and the major terms and fields that come with this expression. Then, I offer a quick sketch of the tools from the expanding toolbox that the digital humanities (or digital history?) have to offer, and I consider how these tools could prove particularly helpful when dealing with the challenges that come with the long nineteenth century, an epoch which is unlike any other (with the exception of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries), as the historian is faced with the task of grappling with an immense and incalculable wealth of sources, both primary and secondary.<sup>6</sup> I then offer a point of departure for an environmental humanities' perspective on Habsburg Central Europe. First, I discuss the degree to which environmental aspects have become a central part of accounts of the history of the empire during the nineteenth century. Then, I demonstrate the degree to which interaction with natural environments on two levels—that of discourse and that of administrative action—had become part of imperial politics by the end of the long nineteenth century.

### *The Promises of (New) Imperial History*

Several studies in the early 2000s focused on the dynamics of the emergence, expansion, and to a lesser extent decline of empires before Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper offered a programmatic reading of global history through the eyes of imperial power.<sup>7</sup> *Empires in World History* provides possibly the shortest definition of what an empire is and how understanding imperial rule reduces complexity and furthers the clear identification of important processes more easily in historical research. Burbank and Cooper break empire down to only a few features, three of which I consider particularly relevant to the Habsburg case. The first is its heterogeneity in terms of its population. The second is its mode of domination, which was usually indirect and reliant of the cooperation

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algorithms. Prototypes of ADRE were very helpful in extracting relevant source data from larger research data lakes and in building the datasets used in the research process. The documentation of this process will be published in due time in an article of its own, which will deal with the challenges presented by data-driven historical research, fueled by deep-learning algorithms.

6 Lässig, "Digital History Challenges and Opportunities for the Profession." On the challenge this poses to editing, see Vogeler, "The 'Assertive Edition'."

7 I would consider Dominic Lieven among the first to pick up on this perspective. Lieven, *Empire*; Darwin, *After Tamerlane*; Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*.



of certain elite groups. The third is its way of building resources through a multitude of possible strategies.<sup>8</sup>

Despite its weaknesses, I argue that this concept of empire is helpful when it comes to analyzing complex political entities and structures such as Habsburg Central Europe, first and foremost since it offers an alternative to other, even more problematic terms, such as “state.”<sup>9</sup> The concept of imperial history allows us to frame complexes of political power in a flexible, even fluid way, which helps give us a grasp on what Habsburg notions of rule in the nineteenth century encompassed. The case of the Habsburg Monarchy, which was a constitutive part of the Holy Roman Empire and at the same time stretched far beyond its limitations, has challenged historians of Central Europe for decades. The fall of the Holy Roman Empire did not exactly contribute to a clarification of the situation, since its political orientation and power interests remained bifurcated for another half-century. The *Kaiserthum Oesterreich*, as the Habsburg Monarchy was called between 1804 and 1848, was usually referred to as *Kaiserstaat*, which translates into English as the Austrian Empire, a difference in terminology (the different between “staat” or “state” and empire) which illustrates unintentionally the underdetermined character of the political entity in question, which indeed lay between a state and an empire. During the short-lived era of neo-absolutism, the Habsburg Monarchy sought for transformation into central statehood.<sup>10</sup> In 1867, however, the Compromise turned it into a unique empire, consisting of one part openly striving towards nation-statehood and another that successfully combined the remains of decades of central state-building with resurfaced fragments of its *ancien régime* structure.<sup>11</sup>

This series of at least four different configurations in the imperial history of the Habsburg Monarchy in less than one century exemplifies the impossibility of the task of nailing down the narrative of a single political entity in this case. Trying to account for further central developments in nineteenth-century Central Europe, for instance the territorial extension or the constitutional genesis of

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8 The concept has met with substantial criticism as well, and particularly the term “empire” can make it difficult to operationalize the idea behind it, as it is historically overlaid and refers to a multitude of different meanings. For criticism and debate, see Ghosh, “Another Set of Imperial Turns?” With regard to Habsburg Central Europe, see Wendehorst, “Altes Reich, ‘Alte Reiche’ und der Imperial Turn”; Fillafer, “Imperium oder Kulturstaat?”

9 However, even recent literature by renowned scholars continues to consider “state” a well-suited framework for analyses of Habsburg Central Europe: Beller, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, 5f.

10 Deak, *Forging a Multinational State*, 99ff.

11 Göderle, *Zensus und Ethnizität*, 93ff.



Habsburg rule, further complicates the situation. New imperial history offers a chance to unravel this complex and puzzling story by narrowing the focus to just two aspects: rule and the buildup of the imperial intermediaries whose contributions finally provided for the upkeep and mediation of imperial rule.<sup>12</sup> Imperial history has contributed to an unlearning of the dominant narratives of teleology in history by replacing the well-established focus on idealized (Western) ideas of statehood and offering instead, as critical tools or perspectives, alternative forms of political and social organization.<sup>13</sup>

### *Empire and Its Environments*

Environments are an issue that have only lately been drawn into discussions of new imperial history.<sup>14</sup> The entire program of the environmental humanities which has emerged in the surge of a multi-disciplinary analysis of the Anthropocene has added substantially to older and deeply rooted research traditions in the field of environmental history. This concerns, in particular, a rethinking of the strong binary opposition between nature and culture, and many (frequently implicit) basic assumptions that go with this *Great Divide*.<sup>15</sup> The intensity of the debate around the Anthropocene has substantially furthered our understanding of the web of life, and it has turned out to be necessary in many places to renegotiate the relationship between “human” and “non-human” in a way that does not simply lead to another binary understanding of a complex social and material reality.<sup>16</sup> The theoretical advance seen in the past decade leaves us in a precarious situation, as very much has been thrown into question, and with good reason. Not only have the physical limits of the human body been questioned, but human coevolution with animals has also become an important issue, and the new approaches which have emerged toward materialism now provide ways to scrutinize the influence of matters on historical processes.<sup>17</sup> The term “human” merits reflection, as the human is in constant exchange and permanent coevolution with its environment.

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12 Wendehorst, “Altes Reich, ‘Alte Reiche’ und der Imperial Turn.”

13 Other macrohistories, such as Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*; Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World*; Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World*.

14 Peterson, *Pipe Dreams*, 4ff.

15 Generally Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*; in terms of history Kreitman, “Feathers, Fertilizer and States of Nature,” 18ff.

16 Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life*, 13ff.

17 Bennett and Joyce, *Material Powers*; Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*; Fishel, *The Microbial State*; Rees, “Animal Agents?”

When it comes to an analysis of events and long-term developments, it might turn out to be necessary to look closely at the chains of translation providing for these to take place.<sup>18</sup> Power-relations are never out of the equation, of course, and it can prove challenging to keep an eye on social configurations and resource inequalities among human and non-human actants.<sup>19</sup>

Like many other research programs rooted in the cultural history of the 1980s and sharing a theoretical heritage with the linguistic turn, imperial history tends to be uneasy with the analyses of the material foundations of societies which give no consideration of environments. Regarding Habsburg Central Europe, the situation is particularly dire, though this applies to its German-speaking areas much more than to most other regions.<sup>20</sup> None of the large comprehensive studies on Habsburg Central Europe published in the past two decades devotes as much as a chapter to the question of environment.<sup>21</sup> Among the older work, particularly social and economic history showed some interest in the matter, though this interest was mostly limited to agriculture. However, some sizeable studies do exist, particularly regarding Hungary.<sup>22</sup>

### *Habsburg Central Europe through the Lens of Imperial History*

Habsburg Central Europe evades description and analysis according to the categories and terminologies of nation-state histories, as stated above. To what degree can imperial history contribute to a clearer understanding of the essence of this flexible and territorially fluid polity between c. 1800 and 1918? Or, to frame the question slightly differently, by focusing on which specific quality of Habsburg rule could historians identify the core of Habsburg rule?

Burbank and Cooper suggest separating imperial rule analytically from the institutions built to transmit the exercise of power over populations. Regarding the Habsburg Empire, this would mean looking at those on whose close collaboration Habsburg rulers depended. For several centuries, Habsburg rule

18 Latour, “Circulating Reference”; Göderle, “Die räumliche Matrix des modernen Staates.”

19 Füssel and Neu, *Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie und Geschichtswissenschaft*.

20 Environmental, agricultural, and infrastructural histories were written for instance in Hungary, the former Czechoslovakia, and former Yugoslavia between the 1960s and the 1990s. See Hadač et al., *Obrožena příroda*; Rácz, *The Steppe to Europe*.

21 There are, however, two important readers on environmental history by scholars with a particular focus on Central Europe: Winiwarter and Knoll, *Umweltgeschichte*; Kupper, *Umweltgeschichte*.

22 Thematic issue of The Hungarian Historical Review under the title *Natural Resources and Society*. The Hungarian Historical Review 9, no. 2 (2020).

over enormous territories relied on the cooperation of aristocratic elites, which took care of administration, security, and jurisdiction on the regional and local levels. Habsburg rule was an indirect one. The ruler played hardly any role in his or her subjects' daily lives and experiences, although *Supplikationen* offered a way to appeal directly to the emperor.<sup>23</sup>

This complex and slow apparatus provided a surprising degree of flexibility, since the different regions worked as segregated modules. The ruler dealt primarily with his aristocratic proxies in charge of regional and local affairs, a system that allowed to keep imperial administration slim and flexible, as bureaucratic tasks were outsourced and taken over by the emperors' imperial intermediaries. At the same time, *ancien régime* rule had significant disadvantages. It was relatively slow in terms of recruiting and mobilization, it was expensive from the ruler's perspective, as his proxies had a strong interest in providing as little money and men as possible in the context of taxation and military mobilization, and it proved increasingly inefficient. It further allowed an enormous range of economic and social particularities to coexist inside one single polity. Different formations of knowledge fundamental to running an empire remained strictly separated. It was particularly the ruler's lack of information regarding the composition of environmental resources and populations on local and regional levels, yet also his deficient understanding of the spatial configuration of the empire that put him at a severe disadvantage by the mid-eighteenth century in Central Europe, at the latest.<sup>24</sup>

The regencies of three Habsburg rulers—Charles VI, Maria Theresia, and Joseph II—saw the introduction of a number of important lines of action that connect Habsburg Central Europe in the mid-eighteenth century and Habsburg Central Europe in the mid nineteenth century (according to Koselleck, the so-called *Sattelzeit*). Charles VI initiated significant infrastructure projects, such as the *Reichsstrassen*, and Maria Theresia created a number of centralized administrative agencies and began to tackle issues of population census. Joseph II finally went ahead with the project of imperial centralization and furthered the production of significant topographical and cadastral maps.<sup>25</sup> These three

23 Some groundbreaking and relevant research on the issue of the *Reichsbofrat* has been conducted in an international cooperation between the universities of Graz and Eichstätt as well as the Historical Commission of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences in the past 15 years: Haug-Moritz and Ullmann, *Frühneuzeitliche Supplikationspraxis und monarchische Herrschaft*; Schreiber, "Untertanen als Supplikantinnen und Supplikanten."

24 Helmedach, "Infrastrukturpolitische Grundsatzentscheidungen des 18. Jahrhunderts"; Göderle, "Modernisierung durch Vermessung?"

25 Koselleck, "Einleitung"; Helmedach, *Das Verkehrssystem als Modernisierungsfaktor*; Tantner, *Ordnung der Häuser*.

rulers laid the foundation of a fundamentally new architecture of imperial rule. By giving material form to the transmission of rule through the construction of buildings for administrative agencies, roads, and canals and the transformation of knowledge into paper, they tried to reduce their dependance on aristocratic elites and further their own policy spaces.<sup>26</sup>

Their attempts to wrest the significant knowledge formations required for the successful exercise of imperial rule from the aristocratic elites which had been in charge of the transmission of rule for centuries proved tiresome and difficult, yet as I will show in the following pages, the long-term operations they launched and the processes they initiated constitute a crucial line of continuity for any understanding of the modernization of Habsburg Central Europe in the long nineteenth century.

### *Mapping Lands, Assessing Resources, Counting Animals and Subjects*

As mentioned above, it is extraordinary difficult to fashion a cohesive historical narrative concerning whatever political entity the Habsburg Empire between 1804/1806 and 1918 might have been. There was a central sphere of imperial rule, but it extended rather to the northeast than to the southwest, which is not in line with the dominant historiographical narratives that try to emphasize the coherence of twentieth-century *Deutsch-Österreich*.<sup>27</sup>

It is probably easiest to follow the trail of successful (and failed) attempts to further imperial consolidation on the crucial level of Burbank's and Cooper's imperial intermediaries by identifying the outlines of the different embodiments Habsburg rule underwent during the long nineteenth century. From the mid-eighteenth century onward, Habsburg rulers invested in a growing central administration, struggling to get better control of the resources necessary for imperial rule, which included humans and animals, or so-called natural resources. Drawing on three cases, I will offer examples of how this recalibration of imperial rule can be observed.

The expansion of the central administration, which encompassed, as I argue, the civil service yet also at least to some extent the military (for instance when it came to the enormously important mapping operations), was one trail to be followed, even though it did not emerge in a linear way.<sup>28</sup> The second

26 Göderle, "Modernisierung durch Vermessung?"

27 An impressive overview is provided in Kaps, "Habsburg maritim."

28 Deak, *Forging a Multinational State*; Adlgasser and Lindström, "The Habsburg Civil Service."

trail to be followed is the long-term operations and processes that proved so resilient that they endured the regencies of two or sometimes three different rulers.<sup>29</sup> The land survey (started in 1807) and the cadastral mapping operation (begun in 1816) were both launched by Francis II/I. The land survey was only finished in 1869 under Francis Joseph, and the cadaster was finished in 1861. Both operations yielded substantial knowledge necessary to the modernization of rule, and both required tremendous resources in an era of scarce finances and significant political, social, and economic change. The realization of these projects thus must have been a strenuous effort.

If we try to keep these two facets in mind before we step back to look at the bigger picture and the long lines of development of Habsburg Central Europe in the long nineteenth century, the Habsburg struggle for power and rule presents itself as an ongoing negotiation between rulers and different groups competing for roles as imperial intermediaries. It makes sense to frame the two major factions involved in this altercation as the older and settled aristocracy on the one hand and well-educated though hardly established middle-class social risers on the other.<sup>30</sup> This long and tiresome negotiation between Habsburg rulers, their established aristocratic proxies, and the well-trained middle-class experts successively seeping into the growing central administration extended over well more than a century, ebbing forth and back, before ending in the interesting situation of the post-Compromise era. I plead for an interpretation of this as a process of imperial transformation rather than a long and teleological prelude to nation-statehood. During this transformation, which was not telic but (much to the ruler's dismay) open-ended, we observe the substitution of one group of imperial intermediaries for another, and surprisingly, we see not only the older group involved in the new arrangement in the end, but also the emergence of new opportunities for larger groups of an increasingly integrated imperial society, and we also see an increase in terms of political participation.

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29 Göderle, *Zensus und Ethnizität*; Göderle, "Modernisierung durch Vermessung?"; Tantner, *Ordnung der Häuser*.

30 For an excellent depiction of these two groups and the social logics of the *ancien régime*, see Siemann, *Metternich: Strategist and Visionary*. Further Godsey, "Adelsautonomie, Konfession und Nation"; Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*; Fillafer, *Aufklärung habsburgisch*. Heindl also touches on this issue, yet a comprehensive analysis, a *Gesellschaftsgeschichte* of Habsburg central Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century remains a desideratum, and if such a work were to aspire to include all of Central Europe relevant to Habsburg rule in the nineteenth century, it would probably be an impossible task.

## *Redesigning an Empire, Stitching Things Together*

The details of the transformation of imperial rule are particularly interesting. I argue that the engagement of well-trained experts of middle-class descent in the ranks of the relatively new imperial central administration redefined the relationship between the empire and its different actors, ranging from humans to animals to material objects and resources.

The central process during the transformation of imperial rule was the production of a knowledge formation of crucial importance by the ruler himself. As the emperor's view concerning the details of his subjects and his lands was blocked by aristocratic proxies who were not willing to share this delicate information with him, rulers in consecutive order began the tiresome work of producing their own knowledge bases. This process began with the launch of census operations and the like, as well as land surveys. Censuses and mapping operations are difficult to carry out, and the logistics behind them are similarly complex and challenging.<sup>31</sup>

Due to the extension of the Habsburg Monarchy, a considerable number of experts was required to address this enormous task, yet at the same time, the resources of which the imperial administration disposed in terms of staff and financial means were extremely limited. The first conscriptions began in the 1760s, followed soon by the *Josephinische Landesaufnahme*, both of which were measures that did not immediately yield the results that were hoped for.<sup>32</sup> Rulers and the relatively small, centralized administration that was in place by that time, however, began to understand the breadth and the difficulty of the task that lay ahead of them.

In the long run, however, the beginning of this centralized production of a massive and comprehensive knowledge resource created a core of modern imperial administration.<sup>33</sup> In contrast to the eventful political history of the Habsburg Monarchy in the long nineteenth century, its administrative history contains persistent strands of continuous development. Mapping and the production of statistical knowledge and statistical tools were not yet tasks particularly close to the ruler's interests. We observe, on the contrary, an interesting dynamic that was transimperially representative: middle-class experts

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31 Göderle, "Volkszählung und moderner Staat."

32 Tantner, *Ordnung der Häuser*.

33 Gugerli and Speich, *Topografien der Nation*.

who had joined the ranks of the imperial administration advanced these fields with significant personal engagement and sometimes even their own money.<sup>34</sup>

In the 1740s, Maria Theresia recognized the necessity of redefining her relationship with her imperial intermediaries if she sought to remain politically competitive. Once she realized that this reform was extremely unlikely to happen, she started to rebuild imperial rule by creating new institutions that were supposed to circumvent the issues she encountered in accessing information concerning the subjects and objects encompassed by her sovereignty.<sup>35</sup> From that moment onward, the fabric of modern empire was woven from at least two sides.

### *Middle-class Interests and Imperial Politics in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*

Unlike the aristocratic intermediaries of imperial rule, the middle-class experts and bureaucrats who were supposed to provide their rulers not only with information but also comprehensive knowledge usually disposed of little financial means or other forms of valuable capital.<sup>36</sup> Their dependence on the ruler could be considerably larger than that of aristocrats in the transmission of imperial rule. The middle classes' lack of resources beyond education, knowledge, and expertise is an important aspect to be taken into consideration in the study of the ongoing process of imperial transformation.

On the other hand, rulers depended on middle-class experts to advance their knowledge base and to further their degree of control over the lands they ruled. The first half of the nineteenth century provides particularly interesting examples in the case of Habsburg Central Europe. Emperor Francis II/I neither discontinued nor abandoned most of the institutions and innovations inherited from Joseph II. On the contrary, he hesitatingly advanced and consolidated the

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34 On "transimperiality," see Schär, *Tropenliebe*; Hedinger and Heé, "Transimperial History."

35 In the context of the history of science and more recently the history of knowledge, a transition from an early-modern notion of information and an emerging concept of knowledge took place in Central Europe in the eighteenth century. Information refers to a more delimited snippet of knowledge, to be recontextualized and reconfigured in order to become knowledge, which encompasses a more complex resource to be used in a specific setting. Lately, historians have begun to operationalize the term data as well, which is used for the mass of uniformized information processed from the second half of the nineteenth century onward. Brendecke et al., *Information in der Frühen Neuzeit*; von Oertzen, "Machineries of Data Power"; von Oertzen, "Die Historizität der Verdattung."

36 An interesting recent study by Lackner, "Eine Frage der Tradition"; on capital, see Bourdieu, "State Nobility."



respective progress that had been made. While he acted only reluctantly with regard to the installation of a statistical office, he launched the land survey in 1807 and the cadastral mapping operation in 1816. Mapping in particular required a considerable workforce of men (primarily well-trained military staff) who had significant respective qualifications.

The two mapping operations launched by Francis were only finished in the 1860s, making up for a large and quite costly process running in the background. It proved sufficiently resilient to resist a revolution and two successions to the throne. Once the statistical office started in 1829, it constituted a significantly smaller operation in the first place.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, maps and statistical tables were produced in large numbers, yet when it comes to statistics, only the smaller part of this material was created by the imperial bureaucracy, which does not mean that it was not produced by imperial bureaucrats. Middle-class civil servants were among the most important contributors of statistical information beyond the official authorities. The prominent case of Karl Czoernig is illustrative here. Czoernig remains an excellent example of a well-trained expert in the Habsburg administration whose ambition regularly went beyond his professional duties. An impatient polymath with a weakness for statistics, Czoernig did in his spare-time what he was not supposed (and sometimes not allowed) to do in his service. Like other young and ambitious bureaucrats of his generation (i.e., members of the new social strata composed of well-educated social risers of middle-class descent who were filling in for *ancien régime* predecessors after 1815 during the slow expansion of the civil service), Czoernig appears to have had his private and his professional interests aligned. Middle-class interests and imperial politics had little in common at first sight, yet surprisingly, they often overlapped in the decades after 1830.<sup>37</sup>

### *The Naturalization of Imperial History: Czoernigs Ethnographische Karte, 1857*

The term public-private-partnership, which came into increasingly prominent use in the late 1990s and early 2000s, turns out to be surprisingly well suited to describe a common mode of cooperation between rulers and selected middle-

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37 Rumpler, "Carl Josef Czoernig Frh. von Czernhausen"; Göderle, "State Building, Imperial Science, and Bourgeois Careers," see further Czoernig's statistical works.

class civil servants. The latter engaged in large and frequently costly operations to produce stellar bodies of significant knowledge. Rulers, in turn, granted financial support, yet, crucially important, they generously authorized the use of further pieces of restricted administrative knowledge and sometimes even of bureaucratic resources.<sup>38</sup>

Among the probably most outstanding examples of this phenomenon is Karl von Czoernig's famous *Ethnographie der österreichischen Monarchie*, published in 1857 and stretching over several volumes.<sup>39</sup> The book came with an ethnographic map based on the work of Joseph von Scheda, an officer in the Habsburg army and a leading cartographer of the era. What makes Czoernig's map so important for an inquiry into the natural history of the Habsburg Empire is its composition. In an 18-page-long preface, Czoernig relocates the Habsburg Monarchy by connecting it with several new layers of legitimacy. Prior histories of Habsburg rule had relied primarily on the illustration of the Habsburg families sovereign descendency, its provenance in the Roman-Greek pantheon on the one hand and that of the Catholic Church on the other. Czoernig provided additional legitimacy for Habsburg rule. He mobilized further support from an unexpected side, the inhabitants of Habsburg Central Europe.<sup>40</sup> According to him, populations and also mountains and rivers ensured that Habsburg rule was firmly rooted in a larger harmonic ensemble. The *Kaiserstaat* (emperor's state) rested solidly on foundations that equally balanced the heterogeneity of European peoples (*Völkerstämme*), climates, landscapes, and cultures. Situated in the middle of Europe, the Austrian Empire reflected the continent's diversity in a single entity. It reconciled the mild south and the harsh north and Europe's industrial centers and backward peripheries.<sup>41</sup>

There is another interesting passage in the preface which describes the task with which Czoernig was entrusted: "[...] [Czoernig] war darauf bedacht, neben der gleichzeitigen Bearbeitung der Darstellung der materiellen Hilfskräfte des Staates auch die Materialien zu einer ethnographischen Karte der Monarchie zu sammeln."<sup>42</sup> Czoernig, who was the acting head of *Direktion der administrativen Statistik*, the key statistical authority of the Habsburg Empire since 1841, refers

38 Göderle, "State Building, Imperial Science, and Bourgeois Careers."

39 Czoernig, *Ethnographie der österreichischen Monarchie*.

40 Ibid., VI.

41 Ibid., 23ff.

42 English: "he was eager, while working on the presentation of the material resources of the state, also to gather material for an ethnographic map of the monarchy." Czoernig, *Ethnographie der österreichischen Monarchie*, VI.

to the twofold task he was supposed to perform. First, he was charged with assessing the material resources of which the empire disposed. Then, he was to gather the information required for the production of an ethnographic map. In the German original, there are two references to matter: once as a resource and once as a representation of knowledge. Czoernig was one man in a long line of Habsburg bureaucrats who were charged with putting the knowledge required to run an empire into material form. Tables and maps were material representations of the large quantities of information that was of fundamental importance to effective rule. In the era of the *ancien régime*, this information had not been accessible to the ruler nor to anyone else apart from the imperial intermediaries who were charged with its production and administration. This kind of knowledge was stored socially rather than physically. The transformation, by middle-class civil servants, of this knowledge into material form meant the modernization of imperial rule.

Though Czoernig's narrative comes to no less than 712 pages and covers all matters touching Habsburg rule, it focuses primarily on what he refers to as ethnography. Czoernig refers only twice in his magnum opus to the overarching aspect of natural harmony that distinguished the *Kaiserstaat*, yet he does so in prominent and strategically important places—once in the preface and then on the opening page, i.e., in the two parts of the book that would have been read even by a reader who took only a short look at the enormous volume. In doing so, he slowly opened a backdoor for new actors to take their place on the stage of Central European historical discourse: mountains, forests, and streams.

Czoernig's *Ethnographie* and particularly his statement concerning the challenges related to the analysis of the material foundations of imperial rule and the materialization of the knowledge necessary for rule mark a point of culmination in a process that had been underway for more than a century by the time the book was published. Czoernig and the fellow officials he mentions in his work, Scheda and von Coronini, were among the first Habsburg bureaucrats to dispose of significant knowledge on the materiality of empire. Their statistical (Czoernig) and cartographic (Scheda, von Coronini) work and that of their predecessors put them in a position to put together significant knowledge concerning the lands, vegetation, populations, livestock, and natural resources of the Habsburg Empire. They belonged to the generation of civil servants which gone past the threshold to reach reliable comparisons, and they stitched patches of data together and produced a comprehensive picture of Habsburg Central Europe as a polity. In close collaboration, they offered an image of

Habsburg Central Europe as a unified and harmonic entity, presented by them as a confluence of many diverse natural features rather than as an arbitrary patchwork rug made up of territories and fiefdoms.

Czoernig and Scheda together produced a central European landscape and a population. Scheda's spectacular map, focusing on the topography of Central Europe, created the first highly aesthetic "natural" foundation for Habsburg rule by turning its legitimacy upside down. If one looks at this map, "natural" borders immediately become visible, and the wider public clearly sees the inner coherence of the *Kaiserstaat*. At once, the notion that there could be no further commonality than the emperor's person to glue this territory together becomes absurd.

Particularly to the east, the northwest, and the west, Scheda's powerful representation of the important mountain ranges instills a sense of a nomological demarcation. The craftsmanship of this map lies in its composition, as can be seen toward the south, in northern Italy, and Dalmatia. The latter in particular lacks defining topographical features that would make it a part of the compact mass of the imperial territory. However, two legends, placed on each side of the Dalmatian coast, fill the empty space. They restore the balance of the map and provide additional information to charge the "natural" harmony of the structure with further meaning. To the left, the political structure is explained. It reproduces and further emphasizes the dominant natural features rendered visible in the map. To the right, Czoernig's ethnographical features are described. That they do not entirely match the political and natural realities given visual form by the map is a major *raison d'être* of Habsburg rule. Mediation and settlement were the complex and difficult tasks to be executed precisely by the emperor.

The results of Czoernig's ethnographic survey are plotted in no less than 14 colors, eight of which are dominant. At least visually, colors pair with distinct landscape features on more than one occasion, and Czoernig refers to this in his work as well when he describes the German-speaking groups as hardened dwellers of the Alpine regions and draws a connecting line between the Hungarian speakers, their language, and their supposed origins on the plain that formed the geographical center of the Monarchy.<sup>43</sup>

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43 A rich and lucid literature exists on mapping nationality in particular in Central Europe. For an overview, see Labbé, *La Nationalité*; Hansen, *Mapping the Germans*. The aspect of nature, however, has not been considered in detail so far.

*Improving Environments and Populations: The “Gypsy Census” of 1893*

As has been shown in the previous section, by the 1850s, leading imperial bureaucrats of bourgeois descent had already begun to provide new sources of legitimacy for Habsburg imperial rule. According to the knowledge to which they had given material form, the *Kaiserstaat* reflected a natural order of things, and its environment was an essential asset with regard to the resources at the rulers’ (and their subjects’) disposal. Following this argument, its longstanding history proved that its eminent diversity in terms of the peoples, languages, and cultures it accommodated was neither anachronistic nor an anomaly. Rather, the Austrian Empire fulfilled an important function, serving as a bridge between many different peoples, landscapes, and histories that met in the very heart of Europe.

The coincidence between what were considered characteristic traits of individual tribes (*Volksstämme*) and respective topographies was an important argument used by Czoernig to emphasize the degree to which the shape and the structure of the Habsburg Empire and its administration harmonized with the natural conditions offered by Central Europe.

Czoernig’s book was published at the climax of neo-absolutism. The 1850s saw an enormous boost toward administrative centralization. It had been the emperor’s wish to remove the remains of the *ancien régime* from participation in imperial rule, which meant that the functions earlier performed by lordships and other representatives of the old regime had to be taken over immediately by a new imperial central administration.<sup>44</sup> A major strategic aspect of this process was the finalization of the territorialization of imperial rule, which required a new settlement on the constitution and the regulation of centralized administration built entirely on territory.<sup>45</sup> Bureaucracy worked, roughly, on four different layers: the municipalities; the layer of the *Kreise* (later districts); the layer of the *Kronländer* (provinces); and, finally, the top layer in Vienna, where all the ministries and the imperial administration were located. Each municipality covered a particular territory, each district covered a number of municipalities, each province encompassed a limited number of districts, and the empire was made up by the totality of its provinces. The totality of municipalities therefore constituted the entire territory of the Habsburg Monarchy. Each house, each

44 Brandt, *Der Österreichische Neoabsolutismus*; Deak, *Forging a Multinational State*.

45 On the notion of the territorialization of rule, see Kreitman, “Feathers, Fertilizer and States of Nature”; Elden, *The Birth of Territory*.

tree, and each flower was attributed to the responsibility of a municipality, a district, and so on.<sup>46</sup>

This concept constituted a rupture with century-old and well-established practices and imaginations of space. It turned the *ancien régimes* principles of space upside-down, and it created interstices on which imperial administration could build, a process that led to a lasting transformation of the relationship between empire and its environment.<sup>47</sup> Territorialization, however, came at a price. Maps and statistics worked slowly yet very well when it came to assessing the resources and capacities a territory had to offer if these assets remained stable and immovable. The Habsburg administration successfully operationalized an idea of space that divided the enormous area of the empire into relatively small containers, namely the municipalities. The sum of the far more than 20,000 municipalities, with all their resources, made up for the combined human and non-human resources of the empire, according to this logic. Although administrative reality soon revealed the flaws of this system and the suppositions it rested on (neither human nor livestock resources of empire were immobile), the combination of statistical information and cartographic knowledge became one of the foundations of modern empire.<sup>48</sup>

By the second half of the nineteenth century, statistics and cartography had become two branches of eminent importance in the imperial administration. Both developed autopoietic logics accordingly.<sup>49</sup> Whereas cartography primarily produced visualizations of imperial power to be used in all branches of the bureaucracy, statistics had become a tool for the production and representation of knowledge used by many civil servants in most fields of civil administration. Beyond the central statistical services, which were mainly in charge of the census, statistical data was produced by many different branches of administration on different levels.<sup>50</sup>

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46 Göderle, *Zensus und Ethnizität*, 86ff.

47 On the concept of fractal spaces, see Bretschneider and Duhamelle, “Fraktalität.”

48 Göderle, *Zensus und Ethnizität*, 101–10.

49 Luhmann, *Soziale Systeme*, 60ff.

50 It is impossible to offer a complete overview of the abundant production of statistical data in Habsburg central Europe after the Compromise, as even the central statistical offices in Vienna and Budapest do not appear to have had a clear idea of the dimension of this phenomenon. To provide but two examples, the Bohemian provincial statistics and the statistics of the Chamber of Commerce both produced statistical data on a significant scale and were both directed by important figures in the Habsburg administration (Rauchberg and Riedl), yet their work does not appear to have found significant consideration in the official statistical series.

Not only were maps and tables formidable tools of visualization, they also advanced planning and offered a foundation for arguments concerning what the empire should look like in the near future. Cadastral and topographic maps for the first time offered illustrations of the overwhelming proportion of “nature” in the Dual Monarchy, an impression further emphasized by statistical work concerning used and still unused “natural” resources, from livestock to forests to fields. Moreover, these representations placed “nature” in the imperial sphere of action. It rapidly became an object of imperial politics and schemes. Many principal interventions led by middle-class bureaucrats that had as an objective the “improvement” of imperial resources and populations aimed precisely at a structural modification of tendencies, activities, and habits seen, at least by the imperial administration, as natural, habits and tendencies involving both humans and their livestock and domesticated animals.

Whereas the example of Czoernig’s map shows that “natural” conditions could be used to support and emphasize legal claims and the legitimacy of rule, the case of “Czigányösszeírás eredményei,” or the “Gypsy Census” of 1893, shows that nature was also a predominant area of bureaucratic intervention. The head of the Hungarian statistical office, Dr. Antal/Anton Herrmann, compared the “Gypsy” population of the country to inarable land that requires significant improvement through structural measures. He names drainage and the construction of dams, measures that are supposed to allow agricultural land use indirectly through the improvement of the soil.<sup>51</sup>

Apart from the racist discourse of which these sentences are part, it is important to keep two aspects in mind here. The first is epistemic and emphasizes the conviction that both human and non-human dwellers of empire are basically subject to modification and improvement. The second important aspect here is the fact that an administration dominated by the middle class had little leverage for direct intervention into people’s lives. Administrative interventions therefore frequently aimed at a modification of conditions and circumstances, a strategy first put to use in controlling imperial “nature.”

Dominant imaginations of modern empire were therefore derived from a practice of imperial rule that had been developed over the course of little more than one century. This practice involved the incessant creation of new traffic and urban infrastructures, the production of new and better agricultural land and the administration of many of these projects from a top-down-perspective, and

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51 *A Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott czigányösszeírás eredményei*, 5.



the use of the rich and detailed maps and tables produced by the statistical and cartographical services.<sup>52</sup> The long nineteenth century saw the invention of the Habsburg Empire as a coherent natural sphere, and its ongoing improvement through imperial politics was a major aspiration for imperial politics.

### *Modern Empire and Its Forests on Display: Exposition Universelle, 1900*

In April 1900, the *exposition universelle* was opened in Paris. It featured more than 76,000 exhibitors and attracted 48 million visitors, which made it an enormous success.<sup>53</sup> The Dual Monarchy was represented by no less than three different delegations, one for Bosnia-Herzegovina, one for Hungary, and one for Austria.<sup>54</sup>

The Austrian contribution to the exposition reflected a considerable material effort on at least two levels. First, it included buildings, models, maps, samples of different products, catalogues, brochures, and a considerable delegation of high-ranking bureaucrats as well as representatives of industry, commerce, agriculture, and commodities. The *General-Commissariat* alone numbered two dozen members, all of them renowned experts and high-ranking members of the ministerial bureaucracy. The *exposition universelle* was a show of force of enormous significance. Nation states, empires, and manufacturers met in open competition in front of an enormous audience. A closer look at the exposition shows the importance of economic and technological leadership to imperial rulers and their administrations, yet it also reveals the dense fabric spun between economic, industrial, and administrative elites.<sup>55</sup> Second, the Cisleithanian presence at the *exposition universelle* literally displayed the materiality of modern empire, the wide array of things, objects, and non-human life it encompassed and required for its operation, and the degree to which empire, its middle classes, and its environments were interlocked in this common effort. When referring to the material dimension of imperial rule as represented in the *exposition universelle* 1900 thus, we need to consider the enormous costs it involved as much as the

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52 Göderle, “Modernisierung durch Vermessung?”; Helmedach, *Das Verkehrssystem als Modernisierungsfaktor*; Petrovic, “Die Schifffahrt und die Wirtschaft im mittleren Donauraum.” On infrastructure in general, see van Laak, *Alles im Fluss*.

53 Kretschmer, *Geschichte der Weltausstellungen*, 152.

54 Though the official denomination for the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy was *Die im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*, which was frequently referred to as *Cisleithanien*, the expression Austria had become common even in the official language. I refer here to the title of a catalogue that accompanied the Cisleithanian effort: *Staats- und Fondsforste*.

55 Mölk, *Perspektiven der Modernisierung*.

ties it had to the material foundations of rule, which the Austrian contribution to the exposition sought to display in abundant clarity.

The exposition represented a dashing triumph of Western superiority. Its salons, displays, and promenades subtly united a rich cultural heritage (Western and Orientalized) with the mastery of modern technology, which represented the added value of the emergence of the middle classes.<sup>56</sup> However, alongside the spectacular and exotic sights at this show of force, the exhibition also included many less flashy yet all the more remarkable displays, one of them effortfully organized and arranged by the *Staats- und Fondsforste*, administrated by the *k.k. Ministerium des Ackerbaus*. It came with a large and detailed catalogue that proudly featured its key parameters and left little doubt about the forest administration's own assessment concerning its contribution to the modernization effort.

The catalogue displayed significant knowledge of the composition and use of the central European forests that formed part of the *Staats- und Fondsforste*, thus the proportion of the afforestation that was controlled by the central administration. These areas encompassed the remains of large and heterogeneous widely spread properties that were only merged under a common administration in the second half of the nineteenth century, when structured silvicultural land use under a centralized management began. To this end, the ministry of agriculture created an agency of its own, which disposed of seven regional offices, each in charge of a larger territory. The Gorizian branch of the forest and domain authority covered no less than four crownlands: Carinthia, Carniola, the Austrian Littoral, and Dalmatia. The forest and domain authorities constituted something interesting in the larger context of the imperial administration. They were fully within the ministry of agriculture and therefore the larger bureaucratic apparatus, yet they did not reproduce the larger and more general structure of central administration. The six regional offices did not fit into the overarching architecture of fifteen crownlands. The district offices of a given region (of the six) did not match the borders of the political districts. The personnel of this authority consisted of a middle-class staff made up primarily of forestry professionals with significant training and expertise. The forest and domain authority interlocked larger parts of the silvicultural environment and the imperial administration via its middle-class personnel.

The catalogue begins with a comprehensive description of the areas under control of the forest and domain authority. The properties it managed emanated

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56 On one aspect, see Brockmeier, "Die Pariser Weltausstellung."

from “priorly much larger [yet dispersed] possessions of *Cameralgüter*, *Montanforsten* and *Fondsgüter*” that originally (probably early nineteenth century) accounted for more than 13 percent of the imperial territory. These possessions shrunk over the course of most of the nineteenth century, before the establishment of said authority consolidated the situation (when these properties combined covered no more than 4.5 percent of the total territory), which finally led to a slight recovery (to around 5 percent of the territory in 1900).<sup>57</sup> That the forest and domain authority knew its forests very well becomes clear in the next section of the catalogue, when a range of different tree species is presented in detail, including their respective preferred habitat conditions and their roles in the total population of trees owned by the state. Most important were the spruce and the European beech, which accounted for 51 and 20.5 percent of the total tree population respectively, followed by fir (18 percent), larch (4 percent), pine (3 percent), and diverse deciduous trees (2.2 percent). The authority’s impressive data on the composition of its forests came from its continued efforts concerning forest surveying. It displayed similarly impressive knowledge on the wide variety of climatic conditions occurring over the total area of the Habsburg forests.

The next section of the catalogue deals with the personnel employed in the service of silvicultural land use. The forest and domain authority disposed of a total staff of 1,474 people, predominantly specialists, including half a dozen engineers. According to the catalogue, the core mission of the authority consisted of ensuring the sustainable management of the tree population (“der Staatsforstbesitz [sollte] vornehmlich aus Gesichtspunkten der Förderung der allgemeinen Wohlfahrt bewirtschaftet werden”),<sup>58</sup> yet this task appears to have gone markedly beyond simple forest economy. Among the three major sources of the forests administrated by the authority, particularly those emanating from the former *Montanforste* (forests that were exploited in the context of mining operations and sometimes early industrialization) were frequently in bad shape and required significant investment, and large scale reafforestation was necessary in many places. Soon after the ministry of agriculture had taken over control of the forests in 1873, it built large capacities to this end by creating permanent tree nurseries. As a next step, selective cutting was introduced to reduce clearcutting, though even in 1900, almost three quarters of the yearly revenue came from clearcutting and only one fifth through selective cutting, yet the areas suffering

57 *Staats- und Fondsförste*, 5–6.

58 *Ibid.*, 12: “The state forest [should be] managed primarily in the interest of the common welfare.”

from deforestation had still become smaller. The forest and domain authority homogenized forestry across the territory of Cisleithania and developed best-practice approaches concerning the maintenance of the forests. Reafforestation was afforded in a blended procedure, mixing natural dissemination, sowing (particularly larches) and tree planting (primarily spruce), thus trying to balance ecological and economical objectives. Certain tree species were promoted regionally, for instance Swiss pine in some Alpine areas, yet in cooperation with the agricultural university of Vienna, the authority extensively experimented with tree species not native to Central Europe as well in the hopes of improving the yield of its forests.<sup>59</sup>

Further sections of the catalogue dealt with working conditions in the forests administrated by the forest and domain authority and with the general yields of these forests. The authority was very keen on presenting itself as an attractive and fair employer, particularly of the seasonal workforce required for the maintenance of the forests. The financial performance of the forests was subject to a critical assessment. In comparison with private forest properties in Cisleithania or other state-owned forest domains in the German Empire, which yielded between 6 fl. 19kr. and 29 fl. 19kr. per year and hectare, the forest and domain authority yielded only 1 fl. 54kr. per year and hectare.<sup>60</sup> There were, however, single domains that fared significantly better in Bohemia, Lower Austria, and Western Galicia, which yielded between 17fl. 45kr. and 5 fl. 84kr. yearly per hectare.<sup>61</sup>

What were the major reasons for the overall poor performance of the forests managed by the forest and domain authority? It was, after all, an agency that claimed to be on the forefront of modern silvicultural administration and disposed of an adequate organizational structure, significant expertise, and sufficient means to render its assets profitable. This question deserves more attention than can be given here, yet servitudes and usufructs certainly were one factor. The forest and domain authority simply had no undivided claims to many of the more profitable assets it administrated. The *ancien régime* continued to exert influence in large patches of the modern state forest, thus surviving

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59 Ibid., 31–35.

60 Ibid., 42.

61 Ibid. According to this list, several things appear to be particularly interesting, as it does not fully correspond with the major modernization narrative usually applied to late Habsburg Cisleithania: for once, the predominantly German-speaking west of the empire was more a significant part of the problem than a beacon of best-practice.

in a mode of coexistence with modern empire with which the latter grappled, a mode which further included grazing rights. The situation of many assets also played a role, as many forests were in exposed positions, which rendered silvicultural use in some cases impossible. The poor infrastructure added to the problem. Whereas older forest industry had relied heavily on log driving as a primary means of transport, the forest and domain authority desperately tried to move as much transport as possible to roads and tracks, but the construction of these infrastructure elements was costly and difficult.

The forest and domain authority made a proud display of its unbroken spirit of modernization and its capacities, competences, and achievements. The challenges and difficulties it dealt with, however, can also be read and understood as a larger self-description of the modern Habsburg Empire on the eve of a new century. Surely, it was the middle-class perspective that was represented here, but most scholars will agree that by 1900, larger parts of the Habsburg Monarchy should be considered an embodiment of a middle-class empire. It was a polity not only run by this growing social group, but also integrating at significant speed and to the benefit of this class. Another important feature is the slight moment of divisiveness concerning the empire's composition, expressed by three different exhibition presences of different parts of Habsburg Central Europe. Most important, however, was the degree to which modern empire was interlocked with its environment and to which environmental resources were crucially exploited to finance further imperial integration (forestry was an eminently important branch of the Habsburg economy. The 5 percent of the Cisleithanian territory that was controlled and exploited by the forest and domain authority stretched over the entirety of Cisleithania (except for Moravia), yet it represented a very coarse-meshed net. In miniature, it realized the overall claim of the imperial administration: it successfully controlled an immense area. Yet the limitations with which it was confronted were all the more visible. The *ancien régime* continued to exist in many places and successfully prevented the empire from fully benefiting from what was considered modernization. The resulting weak profitability and the owner's takeout barred important investments. And at the same time, negotiations with the quickly growing working class were not only tiresome but also costly. The middle-class empire was gaining ground, but this came at a price.

## Conclusions

The analytic framework provided by new imperial history offers a good point of departure for a thorough analysis of the metamorphoses of rule that Habsburg central Europe underwent in the long nineteenth century. It provides a flexible terminology with which to identify, balance, and describe the different actors which made up for empire in this period. Though new imperial history has not emerged from a scholarly tradition with a particular focus on environmental history, this article shows that it offers sufficient opportunities to integrate such a perspective.

This article showed the degree to which the emergence of middle-class empire in Central Europe depended on a transformation of patterns of perception and exploitation of natural resources. In the beginning, the text recontextualizes the historiography of empire and statehood in nineteenth-century Central Europe, stating that the political landscape of this region was ambivalent and fluid for longer stretches of time, yet that statehood in particular provides an unsuitable terminology and little explanatory power to account sufficiently for an analysis of the political history of the region. After opting for imperial history as the most suitable analytical repertoire, the article presents its key insight: that middle-class bureaucrats successfully replaced established aristocratic elites as mediators of imperial rule in this region in a painstakingly long and slow process of transformation that began in the mid-eighteenth century.

Consequently, the text stays with the emerging middle class. It investigates the strategies that were successfully put to use and the resources that were exploited. In the main section of the article, I present three examples in order to illustrate three essential points. The first example from the 1850s shows how the Habsburg Empire rendered nature accessible to imperial politics by thoroughly integrating it into its master representations and entangling it with key parameters of imperial politics, such as the linguistic and ethnographic diversity of its peoples. The second example, from the 1890s, demonstrates the degree to which the improvement of nature in the empire had become a common and successful tool of imperial politics and a possibility to be used beyond nature. The third example finally shows how close the ties between modern empire and nature had become and the degree to which non-human actors of the imperial ensemble had to contribute to this ongoing operation. The *exposition universelle* left a lasting impression on the degree of modernity to which the Austrian part of the Habsburg Empire lay a claim, yet it also illustrated that it was possibly

less an empire as a united whole that had allied itself with a natural world it claimed to control and more one particular group within this empire, namely an interconnected middle class that benefitted from the larger European project of global imperialism.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Neighbours of Passage: A Microhistory of Migrants in a Paris Tenement, 1882–1932. By Fabrice Langrognet. London–New York: Routledge, 2022. 216 pp.

Fabrice Langrognet is authority to reckon with. He who holds a PhD from Cambridge, serves as a research scholar at several renowned institutions, and has had a career in the French government. His focus even during his volunteer work at a French NGO was migration and asylum law. His research deals primarily with the everyday lives of working-class migrants in the Paris area, and his most recent book, *Neighbours of Passage*, published as a part of Routledge's Microhistories Series and edited by Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Szijártó, builds on this work. In this sociocultural microhistory of migrants living in a few buildings in the heart of Plaine-Saint-Denis, Langrognet offers glimpses of the struggles and identities of the inhabitants of this neighborhood as well as an overview of the world in which they live and interact with one another. Langrognet addresses the questions he raises at a level of complexity that is rarely achieved by historians of migration. While the subject of this book is very much French, the discussion goes beyond France. Langrognet's inquiry merits the attention of scholars of Central Europe as well, as he showcases fresh methodologies and shows the full potential of a microhistorical approach and also speaks about the current, often politicized topic of migration.

In his introduction, Langrognet lays down the fundamentals of this work. He uses a microhistorical approach in the hope of showing more intersectionality, nuance, and complexity than an average migration historian concentrating exclusively on the macro level. He also makes explicit his aspiration to correct grave errors found in the works by migration historians by righting such wrongs as presupposing the existence of bounded ethnic units, presuming national societies at both ends of the migration process, and lastly, concentrating on the macro levels of migration. Langrognet's methods are a mix of digital research drawing on judicial and police records, the press, records of municipal archives, and census records and the use of oral history. Based on this wide array of sources, he aims to answer at least two major questions of migration history: how and why did people migrate and how did the dynamics of sociocultural differences change over time as people moved? To summarize, as any good



microhistorical work aims to do so, Langrognet seeks to question hegemonic beliefs and mainstream narratives.

In the first chapter, titled “Setting the scene,” Langrognet acquaints his reader with the backdrop of his inquiry, calling attention to the different identification processes of the inhabitants. We get to know the surroundings and the specific tenements, down to the individual characteristics of the different buildings and the gradual decay of the tenement, which is due to many different factors. Using several different sources, Langrognet even offers metaphorical glimpses of the interiors of the tenement.

The second chapter concentrates on the social factors. In this chapter, Langrognet explains the major demographic features of the area, the change in health conditions in the timeframe under discussion, and the origins of the inhabitants of the area. He then offers some discussion of the most common occupations of the tenants and the average incomes. Thanks to diligent micro-research, he includes work performed by women, which is often missed or ignored by historians who rely too heavily on official censuses. Langrognet tries to reconstruct the division of labor between men and women based on photographs, though he presents his numerical findings as facts without mentioning the dubious reliability of such photographs as sources. He may have accounted for these methodological problems, but he offers no explanation of this for his reader.

Our individual protagonists return in the third chapter. Langrognet goes through the different motivations for migration. This is where microhistory absolutely shines. We see the individuals in this chapter, the methods they used to relocate, the length of their travels, and so on. Langrognet sometimes identifies the individuals by name and sometimes provides only their addresses, but he is careful not to deprive them of agency. They are portrayed as real actors and not used simply as illustrations. Langrognet uses this approach in the fourth chapter too, which shows the networks that brought new migrants into the community and explores different aspects of chain migration. Unfortunately, this subject is hijacked by a disproportionate focus on the role of child trafficking. As engaging and meticulous as these subchapters are, child trafficking is almost presented as the main form of chain migration at the expense of other important aspects, which brings an otherwise splendid first part of the book to a lackluster close.

The second section of the book opens with a lively image of a wedding, which provides an excellent introduction to an interesting experiment. Langrognet aims

to reconstruct the real scope of intergroup connections, especially marriages, without necessarily putting a distorted emphasis on ethnicity. In order to do this, he uses the distances between people's towns of birth as a metric. He points out that national identification was not the main factor for southern Italian migrants in marriage, for whom regional affinities were more important, whereas Spaniards preferred national ties. He neglects to mention that the very different national histories of the two source countries could easily explain this difference. He also examines aspects of people's cultural identities, such as jobs, beliefs, and spoken languages, which clearly reveal a great deal about the lives and social networks of the inhabitants of the tenement.

Life in the mixed world of the tenements was not free of conflict. The sixth chapter is dedicated to these confrontations. Drawing on police reports, judicial sources, and newspaper articles Langrognet shows that, at least to the extent that these sources reveal, interethnic conflicts were very rare in the tenement. Conflicts were much more common within closely-knit groups that were ethnically relatively homogenous. Langrognet also provides an in-depth analysis of an extraordinarily violent conflict that caught the attention of many journalists at the time. His approach is exceptional: he uses his sources to describe the motivations of the participants in the fights convincingly and to show that, while one might have assumed that ethnicity was the reason for the violence, this was not in fact the case.

Langrognet then showcases instances in which states and individuals negotiated problems of nationality. Though nationality was a clear-cut subject on paper, in practice, things were more complicated. When compiling census data in connection with military service or welfare benefits, state institutions did not rely on the simplistic images this kind of data tended to suggest. Langrognet again draws on accounts concerning the lives of people who lived in these communities, but this time, these figures serve as little more than illustrations. His conclusion is well supported, but this chapter remains underwhelming, as Langrognet makes no genuine effort to use the tools of microhistory to show intersectionality in all its complexity.

The last chapter is dedicated to the period of the Great War, which redrew the borders of people's understandings of nationality and put new limitations on their mobility. Langrognet examines the changing experiences of the residents of the tenements amidst a war, including changes in work opportunities and conditions, the transition from the front to the home country, and new waves of immigration from new sources. Though chronologically this is not the end of

the timeframe of this book, this editorial decision makes sense, as Langrognet can show this shift as the end of an era in this closing chapter.

The conclusion of the book begins with a glance towards the future of the tenement, up to the present day. The author then laments the methodological problems faced by the oral historian due to difficulties of recalling individual experiences and the unreliability of personal memory. Lastly, he confidently summarizes how he wishes, with this book, to inspire other scholars to mix microhistorical accounts and quantitative statistics-based research.

This monograph is not perfect. In some instances, it does not live up to its own expectations concerning the approach of microhistory, for instance when it fails to show the real agency of its actors. But this does not mean that *Neighbours of Passage* is not a great work. For the most part, Langrognet delivers what he promises in his introduction. He uses a wide array of sources very competently, and his arguments are always clear. As one would expect from a former speechwriter for the president of the French Republic, his style is eloquent. Langrognet has a way of painting vivid images, his reasoning is immersive, and the whole book is engaging. It will be intriguing and informative for anyone interested in microhistory, novel methods, and the always relevant questions surrounding migration.

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Words in Space and Time: Historical Atlas of Language Politics in Modern Central Europe. By Tomasz Kamusella. Budapest–Vienna–New York: Central European University, 2021. 250 pp.<sup>1</sup>

Tomasz Kamusella is a scholar from Poland whose main fields of research have been language politics, nationalism, and ethnicity, topics he has studied from an interdisciplinary perspective. The idea of his recent book *Words in Space and Time: Historical Atlas of Language Politics in Modern Central Europe* (hereinafter referred to as *Historical Atlas*) came in the mid-2000s as he was finishing his seminal monograph *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe* (Palgrave, 2009). Hence, this interdisciplinary, encyclopedic atlas represents a synthesis of his previous work with the difference that cartography is now given a central place. Inspired by Paul Robert Magocsi's renowned *Historical Atlas of (East) Central Europe* (1992/2019), Kamusella, working in close cooperation with professional cartographer Robert Chmielewski, elaborated a series of annotated maps as spatial expressions “for the formation of political processes that would have been difficult to express in words alone” (p.ix).

The *Historical Atlas* contains 42 chapters, along with a glossary, a bibliography, and an index. Each chapter consists of map(s) and an explanatory text, which is reminiscent of historiographical narratives, as well as reflections on the theoretical concepts on which these texts are based. As he explains in the introduction, Kamusella was born and raised in a multi-ethnic and multilingual region of Upper Silesia (Poland), so he encountered many contradictions between his daily experiences and the narratives to which he was exposed in his formal schooling. This prompted him to re-examine the radical “demographic engineering” which took place in the region. Although *Historical Atlas* resonates with a historiographical approach, it is in a methodological sense based on concepts from sociolinguistics and nationalism studies, such as *Einzeisprache*, dialect continuum, and ethnolinguistic nationalism. The choice of a comparative approach, in Kamusella's view, distances Central Europe (hereinafter referred to as CE) from the self-celebratory monologues disguised as national language histories and reduces any national myopia. By comparing CE with different

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1 This review results from the projects Probing the Boundaries of the (Trans)National: Imperial Legacies, Transnational Literary Networks and Multilingualism in East Central Europe financed by the Research Council of Norway (Grant number 275981), and was realized with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, according to the Agreement on the realization and financing of scientific research.

world regions, he aims to show that CE ethnolinguistic nationalism based on the myth of language as a natural (living) entity and the tripartite ideological concept of (one) “language = nation = state” is not necessarily present in other social and political systems.

The *Historical Atlas* moves chronologically, starting with CE’s dialect continua, speech communities, writing technology, and the emergence of states from the ninth century onwards. The maps show simultaneously the official and the unofficial borders of different political entities. With the intention of presenting the dynamics of ethno-linguistic communities and their literary languages, Kamusella chose the milestones in history, mainly those that changed the demographic structure of the region.

Maps 1–6 depict the distribution of dialect continua and writing systems from the ninth century until the establishment of Ottoman rule in the region. These maps distinguish dialect continua and writing systems, “as full literacy became the accepted norm actualized through (...) *Einzel Sprachen* in the meaning of ‘written languages’” (p.8; Maps 1–2). In the first half of the eleventh century, migration and socio-political changes altered the ethnolinguistic makeup of the region, i.e., expansion of Finno-Ugric and Turkic ethnic groups to the Danubian Basin and the gradual division of the original Slavic dialect continua into a north and a south Slavic part (Maps 3–4). Maps 5–6 illustrate the main political, social and ethnolinguistic change caused by the establishment of Ottoman rule across Anatolia and the Balkans, while the west of CE was under Habsburg rule.

Maps 7–10 represent the changes that began to take place in 1721, when many long wars finally came to an end, especially the religious ones, as well as the war between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans. As Kamusella explains, “At that time the logic of expulsions or exterminations was (ethno-)religious in its character, not (ethno-)linguistic” (p.34). Lav Šubarić collaborated on map 9, which shows the Latin-language geography of early modern Europe. Map 10 is devoted to the official languages and writing systems in 1721, when the “separation of a ‘holy tongue’ and a secular *Einzel Sprache* also marked the boundary between the politics of early modernity dominated by religion and the modern age of ethnolinguistic nationalisms” (p.49).

Maps 11–17 elaborate the social, political, and ethnolinguistic changes that took place from 1721 until World War I, changes which further invigorated ethno-linguistic nationalism. The atlas’ series depicting violent “demographic engineering,” including the most important incidences of ethnic cleansing, slavery, and genocide, begins with map 11. Map 12 shows that “neither the rise

and spread of ethnoreligious and ethnolinguistic nationalism across Central Europe during the nineteenth century, nor the founding of successive nation-states influenced in any substantial manner the pattern of the region's dialect continua as obtaining since the late Middle Ages" (p.58). Map 14 shows the isomorphism of language, nation, and state in CE by 1910, revealing that most people in the region lived in non-national polities, e.g., Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, etc. At the same time, ethnolinguistic nationalism was a growing force. Representations of CE topography in different sources in 1910 were elaborated by Michael Talbot (Ottoman Turkish, Map 15), Agata Reibach (Yiddish, Map 16), and Walter Żelazny (Esperanto, Map 17).

Maps 18–25 focus on the linguistic and socio-political processes from 1908 until the beginning of World War II. Map 18 offers an overview of the quasi- or short-lived polities of the period between 1908 and 1924 with a list of 74 state formations. The processes of ethnic cleansing in CE during the Balkan Wars, World War I, and in the aftermath of the Great War are depicted in map 19. World War I "destroyed or dramatically overhauled all Central Europe's polities" (p.91) and led to the dissolution of multinational empires, population exchanges, and increased isomorphism of language, nation, and state (Map 20). Map 21 is devoted to non-state minority, regional, and unrecognized languages and written dialects in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Maps 22 and 23 offer representations of linguistic areas (*Sprachbünde*) in CE. Map 25 shows the growing tendency towards isomorphism of language, nation, and state in CE, while Map 26 shows ethnic cleansing during the 1930s.

Maps 26–31 geographically illustrate and describe instances of ethnic cleansing from the rise of fascism in the 1930s to the end of the Cold War. Map 31 shows the outcome of these violent processes, which were characterized by strong inclinations towards isomorphism of language, nation, and state. Despite the fact that after World War II there was hardly any isomorphic nation-state in Europe and regardless of the political supranational endeavors of the Soviet Bloc and Yugoslavia, ethnolinguistic nationalism was "the sole fully accepted ideology of statehood construction, legitimation, and maintenance across the region" (p.131).

With Map 32 on the Moldavian language and the imposition of Cyrillic and Latin scripts on Moldavian speakers, Kamusella addresses the issue of deviation from the rule of "(one) language-nation-state" in CE. Maps 33–39 bear evidence of, among other things, management of difference in multiethnic regions and universities by the year 2009. Ethnolinguistic homogeneity has been very clearly

maintained as the norm of statehood, despite the fact that multiculturalism is allegedly a priority in the agenda of the European Union.

Map 40, which was coauthored by Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov, provides information on native languages and the religion of the Roma communities in CE. Map 41 depicts place names in CE as written in Silesian. It was made in collaboration with Andrzej (Andreas) Rocznio, one of the first codifiers of the Silesian language.

The last map (42) compares the isomorphism of language, nation, and state in CE on the one hand with the isomorphism of language, nation, and state in East and Southeast Asia on the other, which Kamusella reminds us are the “only two clusters of ethnolinguistic nation-states in the world” (p.176), with the difference that “the former coalesced after 1918, while the latter emerged in the wake of World War Two.”

The Glossary includes short explanations not only of the linguistic terms used in the monograph but also other theoretical, methodological, social, political, cultural, demographic, and legal terms. *Historical Atlas* is certainly a treasure trove of accumulated linguistic, socio-theoretical, historiographical, and geographical knowledge, and it is hard to believe that one man managed to unite all this knowledge in a synthetic overview with a common methodological and theoretical basis of critical sociolinguistic and nationalism studies. Some of the maps, however, can be faulted for a lack of precision or for showing a clear bias towards the argument that Kamusella is striving to present persuasively. Nevertheless, I regard this impressive academic endeavor as a call for dialogical memory and a thorough critical reexamination of European humanistic studies, which to this day remain largely based on national foundations. It should help scholars and curious readers from Central Europe deconstruct the myths that still shape the main ways of thinking and direct political action in the region. In addition, it offers in-depth insights into the emergence and construction of linguistic, national, and political identities from the ninth century to the present day, (re)interpreted through the unusual prism of ethnolinguistic nationalism.

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The Rise of National Socialism in the Bavarian Highlands:  
A Microhistory of Murnau, 1919–1933. By Edith Raim. Routledge, 2022.  
244 pp.

Acclaimed historian Edith Raim, a scholar of Nazi-era Germany and lecturer on contemporary history at the University of Augsburg, has undertaken a micro-historical approach which challenges prevailing understandings of the rise of the NSDAP in Weimar Germany. She calls into question the common perception that rural Catholics resented the rising tide of National Socialism and were less inclined to vote for Hitler and his party. To reveal other factors which may have influenced Germans apart from the urban-rural and Catholic-Protestant divides, she examines the interwar history of the small Bavarian town of Murnau (today Murnau am Staffelsee). This town is particularly interesting because, contrary to what the grand narrative would suggest, rural Catholic Murnau was aligned with the Nazi party from very early on, while neighboring towns were less so.

Raim divides her book into four chronological parts, each of which offers a detailed overview of political, economic, and cultural developments. As the discussion covers a period of more than 15 years, Raim's account differs from earlier microhistories, which are often centered around specific criminal cases. She is well aware of this detail, and she notes in the Introduction that twentieth-century microhistory is still something of a new genre with its own challenges. The extended timespan and microhistory approach, however, hardly efface the agency of individuals. In fact, this is a pivotal point that Raim makes throughout the book. She aims to put more instances of "everyman" agency into the histories of the twentieth century, which tend to be driven by an impetus towards grand narratives. Raim delivers on this aim, which is arguably the most important and innovative aspiration underlying her narrative. Individual forces, however, come together with those which mobilized a whole community for a cause or rather, in the case of Murnau, against a cause, specifically that of the Weimar Republic.

The first chapter offers an overview of Murnau before the war with a focus on the composition of the population and the power dynamics within the town. The second provides a summary of events from 1918 to 1923. The reader comes to know the entrepreneurial Bavarian town, in which individuals who belonged to the middle and upper classes held near absolute political and social power. World War I had a huge impact on the town's community, as many male citizens (more than the German average) died on the frontline and injured veterans returned to the town in 1918.

The collapse of the monarchy and the proclamation of the Bavarian Soviet Republic in 1919 exacerbated sentiments of despair and anger. The backlash against new ideas and the social upheaval in the fundamentally traditional highlands were immediate and long-lasting. The *völkisch* movement, which rested on the pillars of social traditionalism, antisemitism, anti-republicanism, and the *Dolchstoß* myth, emerged almost immediately, and the NSDAP fed on this sentiment from the outset.

It was crucial in these times that prominent individuals in Murnau, such as leaders of the social clubs and influential figures in the local press, became ardent Nazi supporters themselves. By 1923, when hyperinflation peaked and the Beer Hall Putsch was orchestrated, Murnau was lost to *völkisch* and specifically National Socialist beliefs. The existence of a decent number of alehouses in the town where people could gather and the inclination of retired or discharged officers to retreat to a conservative milieu gave this movement even more momentum.

The third chapter details how the relative stability in Germany in the mid-1920s did not change anything substantially in Murnau when it came to politics. There were two reasons for this. First, pro-NSDAP community leaders were already entrenched in Murnau, and though they faced a few setbacks, they were nonetheless able to maintain local party influence even after the failed coup attempt. Second, the 1920s did not really “roar” in the highlands. Because of the prevailing sense of economic insecurity, fear of falling incomes and falling social status was nigh universal among members of the Murnau middle class. This gave rise to a campaign against department store chains, for example, where antisemitism again was often used.

Finally, the fourth chapter examines how the NSDAP managed to achieve an absolute majority among the voters of the town. While their direct involvement in local council politics turned out to be a half-success at best, their grip was so strong that Murnau residents preferred antisemitic tropes to the facts they were perfectly able to see with their own eyes. During the Great Depression, a Jewish benefactor fully funded a hospital for the town, creating employment for many destitute workers. He was commemorated on a plaque for his gratuity (which was taken down when the Nazis took over the country), but the whole affair did not affect Murnau voter preferences. It did not help that a pivotal local bank went bankrupt, deepening the economic crisis in the region. Furthermore, the Nazi instigators of a local mass brawl were let go with near impunity by the courts. If

anyone in Murnau was still on the fence about the power of the NSDAP and the precariousness of the Republic, this also seemed to offer a clear answer.

I have two minor concerns about Raim's otherwise excellent book. The first concerns a phenomenon I personally would have liked to have read a bit more about. Based on the story Raim tells, Murnau citizens were fluidly alternating between two collective identities, loyal subjects to an all-German ("Prussian," nonetheless) ruler on the one hand and rebels against an unjust tyrant on the other, evoking heroes of local peasant rebellions. This switch depended on whether the ruling party in Berlin suited their ideological communal preferences. On the surface, this suggests a very utilitarian and opportunistic approach, which is not something one would expect from a small rural town, even putting pro-Nazi sentiments aside.

My second reservation, however, concerns the conclusion of the book. Raim contends that Murnau offers an example of how Weimar democracy gradually eroded and died, but I would argue that, based on her findings, this is not quite the case. Even if NSDAP candidates did not win an absolute majority in the town before November 1932, Murnau was already a lost cause. Apart from a few fledgling years in the early 1920s, local politics was dominated by the Nazi party or its stand-in formation, the *Völkischer Block*. Interwar Murnau clearly consistently resented and detested the Republic, and supporters of pro-Weimar parties were in the permanent minority once the local elites put their lot in with the far-right after 1923. Even if one argues that this had happened because the pro-Weimar parties had given up on Murnau, this does not necessarily prove Raim's point. Democracy was not slowly suffocated on the shores of the Staffelsee. It died in its infancy.

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*The True Story of the Christmas Truce: British and German Eyewitness Accounts from the First World War.* By Anthony Richards. Barnsley: Greenhill Books, 2021. 228. pp.

The recent monograph by Anthony Richards examines the famous Christmas truce of 1914 between the British and German soldiers on the Western Front. Richards is the head of the Documents and Sound Department at the Imperial War Museums and a best-selling author who has published several popular academic books about the military history of World War I and World War II. His recent monograph aims for a wide audience while also trying to contribute to more focused academic discussion.

Although historians have written a fair amount concerning several aspects of the temporary ceasefire, Anthony Richards' monograph is important in part simply because of his unique methods of researching and writing. First, he focuses on the voices of individuals by using oral history. Second, he seeks to debunk widespread misconceptions about the Christmas Truce familiar from television and musical adaptations. Third, unlike many earlier works, he uses German sources, including interviews and memoirs, to discuss the events of December 1914.

As Richards notes at the beginning of the book, the most important problem is that we have inherited a rather distorted notion of the story of the ceasefire, as most people focus only on the football match played between the enemy troops. This has served as the basis for other distorted or simply inaccurate notions, such as legends which were born in the autumn of 1914 related to the hopes for the end of the war.

The book has eight chapters in addition to the foreword, introduction, and conclusion, and it can be divided thematically into three main parts. The first part offers a general overview which deals with the current knowledge and most important preconceptions about the event. Richards contends that the temporary ceasefires that were held on the Western front on Christmas Eve or in the first days of the new year can be explained by the principle of "live and let live." As we know, there was an informal agreement between the enemies regarding ceasefires under extraordinary circumstances, such as poor weather conditions or the need to bury dead soldiers. This simply means that soldiers were reluctant to initiate aggression under these circumstances. As a ceasefire was actually held on Christmas of 1914 that was more extensive in space and time, one can understand why this ceasefire has been judged in a special way

in the historiography. Contemporary writers and later historians had difficulty fitting it into the narrative of the bloody war. Marxist historians even interpreted it as a proletarian uprising.

In the second section, Richards writes about the conditions and causes which led to the temporary ceasefires. He shows the pre-truces which evolved in November and December thanks to the closeness of the trenches. There is no doubt that the fact that soldiers could give something to the soldiers fighting for the other side also contributed to the ceasefire: as we know, there was a huge social action in the last months of 1914, when a large number of packages from the hinterland were given to soldiers. This created the set of circumstances in which the first steps came from the German troops. Richards notes that the sight of a Christmas tree was important, as were the sounds of Christmas carols, because these sights and sounds could awaken empathy in soldiers on both sides. Namely, the religious side of that time of year had considerable significance, as Christmas meant a sort of moment of relief in a soldier's life, even for soldiers who were not religious.

Richards also points out that the temporary treaties were scattered across the western front, which means that the event in question (the Christmas truce of 1914) was not part of a larger contiguous peace. Only two-thirds of the English line was affected by the temporary ceasefires, which can be explained by a few factors. At the same time, as truces were formed in an informal way between commanders, one would assume that soldiers themselves took little part in the process, apart from exchanging meals or cigarettes or telling each other jokes. But the fact is that an array of extraordinary events took place during the Christmas truce. For instance, some of the German soldiers had been hairdressers before the war, so they cut the English officers' hair. Soccer matches were also memorable moments of the ceasefires, though they were merely spontaneous events and not part of some organized choreography.

The third thematic section of the volume contains the last three chapters and deals with the afterlife of the Christmas truce. Richards writes about the reasons for the ceasefire, and he sums up its most significant characteristics. He emphasizes that ceasefires were not a result of spontaneous initiatives. Rather, they were a clear sign and symptom of the human desires which first found expression in the autumn of 1914. He notes that Christmas was significant not only for Christians and thus the Christmas season could touch everyone involved in the events. At the same time, the most important reason behind the ceasefires was the desire among soldiers to improve their living conditions, as they were

unable to repair the trenches and bury the dead when under constant artillery fire. As there was no precipitate at Christmas, it an ideal period to deal with these tasks. Some shared culture and shared traditions also facilitated communication: one advantage on the western front was that some German soldiers could speak English, as they had worked as hairdressers in Great Britain before. This enabled the two sides to communicate by shouting from the trenches or even showing notes to enemy soldiers when the opposed trenches were very close. The shared language also made propaganda less effective and, indeed, less common on the western front in 1914. However, as Richards adds, this was the last great ceasefire. In the later years of World War I and throughout World War II, fighting was more aggressive, as military techniques changed and resulted in more casualties.

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Citizens without Borders: Yugoslavia and Its Migrant Workers in Western Europe. By Brigitte Le Normand. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. 286 pp.

The most recent monograph by historian Brigitte Le Normand, *Citizens without Borders: Yugoslavia and Its Migrant Workers in Western Europe*, explores the relationship between the Yugoslav state and its migrant workers during the 1960s and 1970s. Like other parts of the European South in the post-World War II era, Yugoslavia witnessed mass migration to the economically booming states of Western Europe, first and foremost to the Federal Republic of Germany. Yugoslavia was unique in being the only state-socialist country that officially permitted migration to the capitalist side of the Iron Curtain, and Le Normand reconstructs key features of this migration with empathy for the protagonists which is matched by her scholarly rigor.

How migrants were perceived and constructed as subjects is the focus of the first two empirical chapters of the monograph. Le Normand then proceeds to unpack the ways in which the Yugoslav authorities at a range of levels, from the federal and republican right down to the municipal, sought to build and maintain relationships with Yugoslavs abroad and how migrants responded to these efforts. This represents the bulk of the study, seven of the ten chapters. The Yugoslav authorities intervened to shape migrants' understandings of home and to advocate on their behalf, in part to ensure that the understanding of these migrants as "our workers temporarily employed abroad" retained some of its plausibility and thus kept these individuals within the fold of the imagined community of Yugoslavia.

Le Normand draws on sources from historical archives in Croatia and Serbia as well as Yugoslav scholarly publications, print media, and films from the 1960s and 1970s. The exclusive focus on Yugoslav sources (as opposed to, say, historical archives in Germany and Austria) is a well-considered choice justified by her argument that the Yugoslav authorities had similar worries and hopes for Yugoslav migrants, regardless of which Western European state they were located in. Approaching a large phenomenon like Yugoslav migration to Western Europe, which involved millions of people by the 1980s, necessarily involves a degree of selectivity. Le Normand's approach has been to focus on the Serbo-Croatian speaking, Yugoslav-side of a broader transnational web of actors as she documents the Yugoslav state's cultural, informational, and educational programming across Western Europe during the 1960s and 1970s.



The introduction provides a succinct historiography of Yugoslav labor migration in Europe, noting that it was hardly a novel phenomenon, as patterns of seasonal and long-term migration had existed previously, often on a mass scale. Le Normand draws on Yugoslav social scientists who produced much research on migration as it was happening (e.g., Ivo Baučić), as well as outsiders who began to weigh in on the evolution of Yugoslav labor migration policy and the extent to which it would facilitate development or not (Carl Ulrich Schierup). Yugoslav disintegration and war shifted the attention of researchers to different kinds of migrants, namely refugees and people who were becoming part of a growing diaspora. Over the course of the past two decades, however, researchers have returned to the topic of labor migration with the critical distance that comes with hindsight. Le Normand sets the stage here for an exploration of elements of mass migration in postwar Yugoslavia, problematizing the ways in which knowledge about migrants was produced, measured, and (re)framed by the Yugoslav state and assessing how migrants were governed and administered transnationally. She very quickly deconstructs knowledge production achieved by drawing on the work of social scientists (i.e., experts with claims to objectivity), and cultural knowledge expressed through film (with film being informed by both expert knowledge and stereotypes, cultural tropes, anxieties, and the creative impetus of individual filmmakers) is presented as a productive way to gain insight into how labor migrants were perceived by Yugoslav society. Chapter Three provides a deeply insightful overview of migrants on film, with the common thread being that the phenomenon of migration and individual migrants are portrayed as problematic or somehow deviant. What remains to be addressed, however, is the reception of such films by their audiences. How were these film narratives interpreted by Yugoslavs at home and abroad?

Chapter Four examines the phenomenon of the Zagreb-based radio show “To Our Citizens of the World” and the creation of an affective community and central node connecting migrants and their families and friends, as well as state institutions. The agency of migrants comes to the fore here with the claim made by program director Cino Handl that migrants were a particularly challenging and sophisticated audience. Following this, Le Normand turns the focus to the Croatian periphery of Imotski, a major center for labor migration. This chapter (the fifth) provides a microstudy of the Croatian Spring, which politicized the issue of labor migration during what was probably the most serious crisis of Tito’s Yugoslavia until the 1980s. In Chapter Six, the focus

is expanded to Western Europe, as Le Normand examines how the Yugoslav state turned to associational life to address ideological contradictions in its labor migration policy and to counter the influence of émigré groups that were hostile to newly arrived migrants. Such associations can be considered “nodes in a transnational web of governance” (p.138), going beyond the notion of an imagined community (such as radio and print media) to offer concrete sites for an embodied experience of home and community making.

Voice is again given to migrants in Chapter Seven through an analysis of responses to surveys conducted by the Zagreb-based Institute for Migration and Nationality. The timeframe, 1970–1971, ensures that the socioeconomic and political issues of concern coalescing around the Croatian Spring remained prominent and migrants “talked back” about how to best “fix” Yugoslavia. The final two empirical chapters focus on education. Chapter Eight reconstructs the attempts to build a transnational education system for the second-generation Yugoslavs in Western Europe by drawing on the experience of other southern European countries and taking into account the need to cohere with the policies of host states. Chapter Nine then extends this discussion to include perspectives on the women and men who facilitated this education. Yugoslav teachers in Western European states demonstrated considerable agency despite being constrained by the states which were hosting them and the states which had sent them. It also considers the themes of importance for migrants, above all love for the homeland (with the homeland being quite often diffuse or not fully defined).

Homeland, in its “nested” form, i.e., extending outwards from the family and the local community all the way to the republic and the federation, is again invoked in the conclusion, in which Le Normand maps out suggestions for other fruitful avenues for future research, including perspectives from outside the Serbo-Croatian core which this study focuses on and a more thorough exploration of the dynamics of migration and return migration in the 1980s during the mounting tensions of the post-Tito era. Le Normand has provided an extremely comprehensive and readable account of the multifaceted phenomenon of Yugoslav labor migration. The study covers a lot of ground; in fact, each individual chapter could be extended into a much longer standalone study. The most innovative feature is the way in which the author deftly moves between the various levels of analysis to offer empirically varied perspectives of the Yugoslav state (from the municipal level to the federal level) *and* the individual migrants. The book is likely to be of interest not only to scholars of Yugoslavia but also

to readers with an interest in migration history more generally. It is surely one of the most authoritative accounts of Yugoslav labor migration, and it will feature prominently in further research and teaching on this subject.

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Victim of History: Cardinal Mindszenty, a biography. By Margit Balogh. Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2022. 934 pp.

Margit Balogh's biography of Cardinal Mindszenty is providing a balanced and detailed (934 pages) narrative of his life based on an extraordinarily wide scope of primary documents from numerous archives in various parts of the world. Her biography is a translation of parts of the two-volume Hungarian monograph (more than 1,300 pages) that was published in 2015 in Budapest (Research Centre for the Humanities).

This monograph tells in nine long chapters and numerous sub-chapters (about 100) the various stages of Mindszenty's life. Chapter One begins with his childhood in a small village, followed by Chapter Two, which covers the 25 years he spent working as a teacher and priest in Zalaegerszeg. Chapter Three covers his tenure as bishop of Veszprém during the last years of World War II, when he was imprisoned by the right-wing Arrow Cross Movement, allied to Nazi Germany. Chapters Four and five recount his appointment to serve as Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of the Catholic Church of Hungary and his first conflicts with the postwar government, the Communist Party, and the Soviet occupation army, when he became the leader of the anti-Communist opposition. Chapter Six deals in detail with his arrest, torture, and the staging of the show trial against him, followed by Chapter Seven, which covers the six years of imprisonment until he was liberated during the Revolution of 1956. The eighth tells of his 15-year stay as a "guest" of the US Legation (Embassy since 1967), where he had found refuge in 1956, and the complicated negotiations between the Vatican, the Hungarian Communist government, and the US concerning his departure. The final chapter narrates the last five years of Mindszenty's life in exile (Vienna) and his conflict with Pope Paul VI, which ended in his removal from the chair as archbishop in 1973. The book ends with brief conclusions.

The detailed narrative provided by this extraordinary biography of Mindszenty (born József Pehm) offers many fascinating insights into Hungarian history. For this review, I would like to select only a few of the less well-known parts of Mindszenty's life, since research has focused almost exclusively on the few years during which he served as primate of Hungary, between 1945 and his arrest in 1949, as well as his role in 1956.

In Balogh's account, we learn about Mindszenty's adventures in western Hungary, where he was prominent as a socially and politically active priest in the Horthy period, which spanned two and a half decades of his adult life.

Mindszenty is presented as an engaged parish pastor who organized Catholics for his cause, had a new church built, and opened schools and caritative institutions. He was a very skilled organizer who did not shy away from confrontation, almost reminiscent of the famous fictional Italian character Don Camillo, the antipode of the Communist mayor, Peppone. Mindszenty founded a press (Zrinyi Printing and Book-Selling Co.) and a newspaper in 1920–21 (*Zalamegyei Újság*) in order to spread the messages of his legitimist and irredentist tendencies and his criticisms of the Horthy regime (pp.39–40). In the mid-1920s, he actively supported a legitimist candidate of the opposition (p.70–75). In 1938, he celebrated the First Vienna Award and gave his open support to the Imrédy government before getting slowly alarmed about growing German influence in Hungary and the anti-clerical tendencies of Nazism (pp.86–89). During World War II, Pehm became Mindszenty, probably in protest against rising German influence (the name Pehm is etymologically rooted in the German word “Böhme” or bohemian), and he was appointed to serve as bishop of Veszprém. In this function, Mindszenty reacted to the beginning of the Holocaust in his dioceses. On June 7, 1944, the *Zalamegyei Újság* published a speech by Mindszenty in which he stated that the church has been “antisemitic,” but that she would defend all those who were baptized, because the church “cannot abandon natural law” and “without proven crime and legal judgement, the life of no-one can be taken away.” (p.118). But after almost all the Jews in the area had been deported to Auschwitz, Mindszenty admitted in a letter, “we could have done more and been more forceful” (p.120). A few months later, he was arrested by the Arrow Cross because he refused to take an oath and protested against the senseless prolongation of the war. This arrest was most probably one of the reasons why he was later selected to serve as archbishop of Esztergom and primate of Hungary, since it demonstrated to Pope Pius XII that Mindszenty would not shy away from personal sacrifice in a difficult time. Such was probably the “strong personality” the Pope was looking for in a country that had been occupied by a hostile, anti-Catholic army.

Other not so well-known episodes of Mindszenty’s life include the fifteen long years he spent in the legation (which only became an embassy in 1966) of the United States between his flight on November 4, 1956 and the day he left for Rome on September 28, 1971. Balogh reflects, as in other parts of the book, about the radically changed political, social, and cultural context in which the cardinal found himself and his ideas. Now, in a time of détente and negotiation between the United States, West Germany, and the Communist governments of the Soviet Union and its Central and Eastern European allies, his strict anti-

Communism seemed to be anachronistic. This was when Pope Paul VI, who had trouble understanding Mindszenty and his stubborn character, called him “a victim of history.”

This book is extremely significant not only for readers interested in twentieth-century Hungarian history, but also for those interested, more generally, in the history of the Cold War, as well as the diplomatic and church history of the twentieth century. No comparable biography of Cardinal Mindszenty exists in English. The scholarship and the analysis of his personality and the historical context are very sound, and the text is based on thorough, exemplary analysis. The documentation is comprehensive and of outstanding quality. This is now the standard biography of Cardinal Mindszenty. None of the numerous, mostly hagiographic or superficially critical books about his life can compare to the scholarly quality of this impressive study. Margit Balogh has written a profound and readable biography of one of the most fascinating figures of the twentieth century.

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The Women's International Democratic Federation, the Global South and the Cold War: Defending the Rights of Women of the Whole World? By Yulia Gradskova. Abingdon: Routledge, 2021. 212 pp.

In her article published in 2010, historian Francisca de Haan made an important historiographical intervention, arguing that the work of the “leftist feminist” organizations is left unknown in Western historiography due to still prevalent Cold War legacies.<sup>1</sup> To demonstrate her point, she referred to the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), an international leftist organization dedicated to peace, women's rights, anti-colonialism, and anti-racism. After this, scholarship on the work of the WIDF began to flourish, gradually providing the WIDF with its rightful place in the historiography of women's history. This position is now assertively confirmed through Yulia Gradskova's new book *The Women's International Democratic Federation, the Global South, and the Cold War*.

Yulia Gradskova explores the work and development of the Women's International Democratic Federation in the period between 1955- and 1985. She focuses on the work for, and with, women from the countries of the Global South-Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Working within the frameworks of transnational history and postcolonial feminist studies, Gradskova critically reviews the internal and external dynamics of the WIDF, exploring the discussions, conflicts, and broad network of collaboration that shaped this organization.

Relying on the interplay between micro and macro history, Gradskova examines both development of the WIDF, and personal accounts of this development. She draws her arguments from a variety of primary sources, most of which are held in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF). Following Chiara Bonfiglioli's classification, Gradskova describes sources as external—materials aimed at external readers, and internal, materials circulated among the members of the organization. To challenge the selective nature of the external sources—public speeches, periodical publications, and bulletins), Gradskova offers a close reading of the sources, often going against the grain. This is well illustrated through her analysis of the changing discourse of the organization amidst the changes emerging from the post-1945 political, economic, and social developments in the international order. The internal

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1 De Haan, Francisca, “Continuing Cold War Paradigms in Western Historiography of Transnational Women's Organisations: The case of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF),” *Women's History Review*, 19, no. 4 (2010): 547–73. doi: 09612025.2010.502399



documents, such as protocols and minutes of congresses and meetings, and correspondence among the members, deepen her analysis, offering revealing insights into the inner life of the WIDF.

Divided into nine well-structured thematic chapters, this monograph navigates readers through the most dynamic period in the history of the WIDF. Chapter One serves a twofold purpose: it outlines the history of the WIDF, situating it in the historiography of the transnational women's movements. Building on de Haan's conclusion concerning the absence of the history of the WIDF in the historiography of women's movements, Gradskova further notes that, interestingly, the history of the WIDF was also neglected in the historiography of women's movements written in state-socialist countries. Nonetheless, she highlights a noticeable growth in scholarship related to the WIDF, with new perspectives offered by authors such as Katherine McGregor, Pieper Mooney, and Kristen Ghodsee—to name a few. Lastly, Gradskova argues that the roles of the women from the Global South are only just starting to be explored, and a special issue of the *International Review of Social History* dedicated to Women's Rights and Global Socialism (and including three articles on the work of the WIDF, one by Gradskova), proves her point.

In the second and third chapters, Gradskova takes her readers through the early development of the WIDF, its ideology, and its activities. She addresses two enduring assumptions (phrased as accusatory questions) concerning the WIDF: was WIDF a Soviet pawn used for foreign policy goals, and was WIDF a purely communist organization? Analyzing internal documents exchanged between the Committee of Soviet Women (CSW) and its representatives at the WIDF, Gradskova skillfully provides an answer to the first assumption, showing that even though the Soviet Center did try to influence the work and development of the WIDF, playing an important role for the organization, the WIDF still operated under its own steam. This was made possible through the work of individual members of the WIDF, who forthrightly challenged WIDF's methods and tactics. Gradskova also persuasively addresses the second assumption: using numerous examples, she shows that the WIDF was not a homogenous communist organization but an organization consisting of activists of different political affiliations, whose activism and ideas shaped the organization's trajectory.

While the book has a very clear structure, Chapters Three and five create a comprehensive whole, interrupted, unfortunately, by Chapter Four. While Chapter Four discusses the ideology of the WIDF, built on the idea of struggle for peace and protection of mothers and children, Chapter Five argues that

WIDF based its view on women's rights on the state-socialist and, especially, the Soviet model. As Gradskova demonstrates, the Soviet model of emancipation was most often propagated through the images of the representatives of the Soviet Central Asian Republic, which functioned as tools with which to legitimize the success of the state-socialist program for women and to attract women activists from the Global South. This goal was also achieved through organized visits of the representatives of the Global South to the Soviet Union. This led to the establishment of a broad, transnational network of contacts and friendships among the activists which, it could be argued, were among the most important achievements of the WIDF.

Chapters Four and Six are intrinsically connected. The former discusses how the problems of women from the Global South were discussed within the WIDF, and the latter focuses on the role women of the Global South played in the organization. Chapter Six deserves special consideration, as it stands out as one of the most exhilarating chapters of the book. First, it demonstrates how WIDF, as a transnational organization, reacted to the strikingly changing world during the years of independence struggles and decolonization. Second, it serves as proof of the importance of the agency of individual activists for the development of the organization. Using numerous examples, Gradskova describes how women from the Global South called for structural and organizational changes that would make the WIDF more inclusive, less white, and more prepared to struggle with the problems encountered by women from newly independent countries.

The agency of individual activists is a topic further explored in Chapter Seven, in which, through the lens of microhistory, Gradskova analyses biographies of prominent WIDF activists: Fanny Edelman, Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim, Salwa Zayadeen, and Funmilayo Ransome Kuti. By approaching the subject from this perspective, Gradskova allows her readers to see how individual activists experienced and contributed to the conversations on women's rights amidst political and social transformations of the postwar world. The following chapter extends this discussion to the human rights era of the 1970s and 1980s, showing how the rise of the radical feminist movement in the West influenced the expansion of the activities of the WIDF towards the Global South. The last chapter offers a summary of Gradskova's conclusions concerning the history and heritage of the WIDF.

Overall, what distinguishes Yulia Gradskova's book is her ability to tell a nuanced history of an organization, showing that WIDF was not a monolithic

organization existing in a vacuum but a transnational organization shaped by the changing political, economic, social, and even geographical landscapes of the postwar world, and the activist practices of its members. Although aimed at an audience with previous knowledge of the topic, this book represents a long-awaited examination of transnational left women's activism. It thus constitutes a substantial contribution to the historiography of women's history. Finally, given the wealth of information it contains, the variety of thought-provoking perspectives from which it approaches its subject, and its interdisciplinary character, this book will serve as an excellent resource in educational environments and will spark new discussions and debates on this important topic.

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THE

# Hungarian Historical Review

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The Hungarian Historical Review is a peer-reviewed international journal of the social sciences and humanities with a focus on Hungarian history. The journal's geographical scope—Hungary and East-Central Europe—makes it unique: the Hungarian Historical Review explores historical events in Hungary, but also raises broader questions in a transnational context. The articles and book reviews cover topics regarding Hungarian and East-Central European History. The journal aims to stimulate dialogue on Hungarian and East-Central European History in a transnational context. The journal fills lacuna, as it provides a forum for articles and reviews in English on Hungarian and East-Central European history, making Hungarian historiography accessible to the international reading public and part of the larger international scholarly discourse.

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THE

# Hungarian Historical Review

*Austria-Hungary and the Balkans  
— from the Perspectives of New Imperial History*

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