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“Statistical Approaches to the Nationality Question in
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"On my honour as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it."

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Abstract

Die vorgeschlagene Dissertation untersucht die Nationalitätenfrage in Österreich-Ungarn aus der Zeit um 1880-1910. Der Begriff der Nationalität innerhalb der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie hat sich sowohl in der historischen Geschichte des Kaiserreichs bis in die Gegenwart als auch während der Lebenszeit des Kaiserreichs selbst erheblich gewandelt, wobei verschiedene Versuche seitens der Bildungseliten in den kulturellen Zentren des Reiches unternommen wurden, um die Einwohner von Zisleithanien und den Ländern der Krone des Heiligen Stephanus nach Kriterien zu beschreiben, zu kategorisieren und zu quantifizieren, die je nach Art des Versuchs und der Anforderungen der Stunde zu- und abnahmen, sich verbogen und brachen. Diese These nimmt insbesondere einen Faktor in den Blick, die Sprache als Variable, die mehr Aufmerksamkeit verdient, und zwar aus dem doppelten Grund, dass sie sowohl für Statistiker als auch für Publizisten in den bürokratischen Zentren des Imperiums ein wesentliches Untersuchungsfeld einnahm und damit zu einem „realen“ Bezugspunkt für Gesetzgeber, Pädagogen, Gelehrte und Beamte; sowie für die – vielleicht noch bedeutsamere – Tatsache, dass das Konzept Österreich-Ungarns als Flickenteppich von eingestreuten Nationalitäten, die durch Muttersprache und „Ethnizität“ unterscheidbar sind, in der Belle-Epoque ein vorherrschendes Bild in der Wahrnehmung Kontinentaleuropas geblieben ist, oder vor der Entstehung des Staatssystems nach den beiden Weltkriegen. Diese Dissertation soll den Versuch unternehmen, bedeutende Versuche innerhalb der bürokratischen Zentren des Reiches in Form von statistischen Aufzeichnungen und Tabellen, Karten und Ethnographien aufzuzeigen, die die Nationalitätenfrage betreffen und in der Zeit von 1880-1910 kulminieren, wo festgestellt werden kann, dass die Faszination für ethnolinguistische Kriterien ihren Höhepunkt erreichte. Der Zeitraum 1880-1910 wird auf der Grundlage von Volkszählungsberichten ausgewählt, die in Österreich-Ungarn ab 1880 erstellt wurden und Faktoren wie Religion, Sprache des täglichen Gebrauchs sowie Standardmessungen der Bevölkerungsveränderungen nach Geburt, Migration usw. berücksichtigen. Diese ist keine historische Analyse per se; dh geografische, politische oder personelle Veränderungen innerhalb des Imperiums sind keine wesentlichen Faktoren innerhalb der allgemeinen Thesenfrage. Vielmehr soll in dieser Arbeit versucht werden, Kräfte und Motivationen innerhalb Österreich-Ungarns aufzudecken, die Eliten dazu drängen, seine Einwohner nach Sprache zu quantifizieren. Lesekompetenz der deutschen Sprache sowie allgemeine Lesekenntnisse in einer Reihe von slawischen und romanischen Sprachen haben den Zugang zu Primärquellenmaterial einschließlich gesetzgeberischer und historischer Aufzeichnungen ermöglicht, die über die Österreichische Nationalbibliothek aufbewahrt und zugänglich gemacht werden.

Abstract

The proposed thesis examines the nationality question in Austria-Hungary from the period of approximately 1880-1910. The concept of nationality within the Austro-Hungarian empire has undergone substantial transformation both in the historical record of the empire through to present day, as well as during the lifespan of the empire itself, in which various attempts were made on the part of education elites in the cultural centers of the Empire to describe, categorize, and quantify the inhabitants of Cisleithania and the Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen according to criteria which waxed and waned, bent and broke according to the nature of the attempt and demands of the hour. This thesis takes one factor in particular, language, as a variable deserving of greater attention, for the dual reason that it came to occupy both a substantial field of investigation for statisticians and publicists in the empire's bureaucratic centers thereby becoming a "real" point of reference for legislators, educators, scholars, and officaries; as well as for the—perhaps yet more significant—fact that the concept of Austria-Hungary as a *Flickenteppich* of interspersed nationalities distinguishable by mother tongue and "ethnicity" has remained a dominant image in perceptions of continental Europe during the *belle-époque*, or before the emergence of the state system in the wake of both World Wars. This thesis shall make the attempt to indicate major attempts taken within the empire's bureaucratic centers in the form of statistical records and tables, maps and ethnographies as they pertain to the nationality question and culminate in the period of 1880-1910 where it may be discovered that the fascination with ethnolinguistic criteria reached its peak. The time-period 1880-1910 is chosen based on census reports created within Austria-Hungary beginning in 1880 controlling for such factors as religion, language of daily use, in addition to standard measurements of population changes according to birth, migration, etc. The thesis is not a historical analysis *per se*; that is to say, geographic, political, or personnel transformations within the Empire do not constitute major factors within the general thesis question. Rather, this thesis shall attempt to uncover forces and motivations within Austria-Hungary pushing elites to quantify her inhabitants according to language. Reading proficiency in German, as well as general reading knowledge of a number of Slavic and Romance languages has permitted access to primary source material including legislation and historical records preserved and made available via the *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*.

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Introduction: The Monarchy and the Peoples

“In other countries, dynasties are episodes in the history of the people; in the Habsburg Empire peoples are a complication in the history of the dynasty.”¹ Thus begins A.J.P. Taylor his history of the Habsburg Monarchy from 1809, the year of the War of the Fifth Coalition which recalled Metternich from his station in Paris and elevated him to the status of *Außenminister der Habsburgermonarchie* through 1918, the year of its ultimate demise and two years following the death of the Empire’s nearly seventy-years reigning monarch, Francis Joseph. In truth, the peoples of the monarchy complicate its interpretation to the point of reducing Austria-Hungary to a pure abstractum. To be sure, the history of Austria-Hungary is primarily a record of dynastic and administrative endeavor of expansion and consolidation within an area to this day regarded for its relative “backwardness” compared to the highly developed industrial, financial and cultural centers within the industrialized nations of the 19th century world. Austria was indeed in possession of many of these centers, with major cities such as Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Lemberg, Kraków and Trieste continuing to attract visitors and scholars alike as preserved artifacts of “*die Welt von Gestern*.” Yet outside of these nodes of cultural *Elan*, Austria-Hungary languished behind those geographical areas able to consolidate their territories under the flag of unity and progress, the ultimate dissolution of the Dual Monarchy system being the plain testament for this shortcoming. It might be argued that the major obstacle to progress in agriculture, industry and science was repression—where a rigid social structures, tied invariably to the status of nationality and language, precluded entry into a mobile middle class, the result was floundering innovation. Taylor refers to the Habsburgs as “Landlords” of the Crown Lands; where Germans comprised merely one third of the population of *Cisleithania*, still they, together with their Magyar colleagues, devised a schema of systemized granting of rent-capturing privileges to the landed aristocracy permitting the landed classes to enrich themselves on the land at the expense of capitalistic development of the land, a situation not terribly unlike the comparative development of Southern and Northern America, the one dominated by a brutal feudalistic slave labor, the other operating within a liberal system allowing for iterated multiplied return on labor.² The chief object of the established classes, therefore, was not to administrate or improve, but to consolidate their hereditary possessions. Yet where large parts of Cithleithania—Lower Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, were able to industrialize and

¹ Taylor, A.J.P. *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918: A History of the Austrian Monarchy and Austria-Hungary*. Hamish-Hamilton, London. 1948. Pp. 10.

² Ibid. pp. 9-21.

transition into developed economies following the dissolution of the Dual-Monarchy, Hungary herself was, economically speaking, backwards, with high rates of illiteracy reigning and little industry developing throughout the Kingdom prior to 1870; compared to Cisleithania, with its capital in Vienna, Hungary would never achieve similar degrees of population or development.³ Yet already it is imperative to identify reasonably the territories collectively forming *Cisleithania*, the land falling west of the Leitha, a tributary of the Danube, and *Transleithania*, the realm “beyond.” From 1804 onwards, the area approximately representing the lands that would be deconstructed by the victorious powers in 1919 was known as “The Empire of Austria” (*Kaiserthum Oesterreich*) and was united by the Habsburg Monarchy. A series of concessions to second most represented national group in the Empire, the Magyars, leading to the *Ausgleich* or Compromise of 1867, gave rise to the Dual Monarchy known as “Austria-Hungary” (*Österreich-Ungarische Monarchie*), after which point the Austrian lands are more easily distinguished from the Hungarian, but would not settle definitively after 1878 the nominal fate of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Kondominium Bosnien und Herzegowina*).⁴ The Kingdom of Hungary, otherwise designated as the Lands of the Crown of St. Stephen (Hungarian, *A Magyar Szent Korona Országai*), despite displaying greater geographic congruence than its Austrian colleague, remains a somewhat more elusive territory, occupying the Hungarian basin at its foundation and extending to the Carpathians along its northeastern flank into the Banat in northern Serbia and to the Dalmatian coast in the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia (Croatian, *Kraljevina Hrvatska i Slavonija*); never, following the dissolution of the Kingdom and trimming of its national borders, would these appendages be associated with “Hungary” again, unlike the . Hungarians, in spite of the official policy of Magyarization ensuing in the 19th century which should ensure the territory of the Crown Lands with the Hungarian language and nationality, remained strewn throughout the kingdom, forming a core in present-day Hungary, southern Slovakia, and northern Serbia, and would always maintain ample stock in Transylvania. Uniting each half of the Dual Monarchy was the Danube, flowing from its source in Baden-Württemberg through to the Danube Delta in Bessarabia and the Dobruja in northern Romania, passing along its course the cities of Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade and Bratislava (*Preßburg*); Bucharest, Sofia, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Sarajevo and Pristina all fall within its basin. More even

³ Millward and Saul. *The Development of the Economies of Continental Europe 1850-1914*. London. 1977. Pp. 271-331.

⁴ Treaty Between Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and Turkey (Berlin, 13 July 1878), Article XXV.

than the Alps and *Voralpen* distinguishing present-day Austria, the Danube has come to signify as an enduring geographic testament to Austria-Hungary and South-Eastern Europe more generally.

In order to accurately assess census reports taken throughout Austria from 1880-1910 and their accompanying statistics and documentation, it is important to relay the methodology used in creating the final statistical product. A comprehensive overview of the Empire according to its inhabitants can be found on a contemporary work outlining the life and times of Francis Josef. The passage contains both general geographical observations of the Empire in addition to precise designations of places and their respective inhabitants. It is curious to note that generous use is made of literary terms to designate the peoples making up the population of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, pointing to analysis of the population according to ethno-linguistic lines as a “literary” or reconstructed exercise rather than one devoid of attempts at stylizing such reenumerations. Thus we find the designation “Magyar” in place of “Hungarian”; “Teuton” instead of “German”; and “Latins” instead of “Romanian and Italian speakers”. Similarly, antiquated terms prove to be preferred over the modern equivalent; as such, it is common to read such designations as “Roumanian” in place of “Romanian” and “Ruthenian” in lieu of “Ukrainian”; a testament to the high degree of nostalgia present in contemporary analysis of the extinct geopolitical unit of Austria-Hungary. Nevertheless, such comprehensive geographical overviews of the Empire are useful, and provide an overview not only of the geographical boundaries of the Empire spanning from present-day Austria, Czechia and Italy within its western quadrant to the historical region of Bukovina and Timișoara in the East. Most critically, a brief overview presents the observer with a fact that even concessions in regard to nostalgia cannot suppress: the Austro-Hungarian Empire represented one of the most linguistically diverse geopolitical units in Europe of the 19th century, accounting not only a wide breadth of dialects and regional heterogeneity, but also incorporating populations bearing entirely different language families, spanning from the familiar German speaking population, to speakers of an array of Romance and Slavic speakers likely unquantifiable in terms of their regional diversity. Finally, the population included a critical set of speakers distinct from their Indo-European neighbors in tongue, comprising the namesake of one half of the Empire: Hungarians. The overview presented by Palmer is thus as follows:

The Empire of Austria became the largest country in Europe apart from Russia, spanning the centre of the continent. It linked in common allegiance to the dynasty towns as far distant as Milan in Italy and Czernowitz (now Chernovtsy) in the Ukraine. All of present-day Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia

and Croatia fell within its frontiers at the time of Francis Joseph's birth. So too did such cities as Lublin in Poland, Cluj and Timișoara in România, and Venice, Verona, Mantua and Trieste in Italy. In the provinces of Lower Austria (around Vienna) and Upper Austria (around Linz) the population was almost exclusively German, while in Lombardy and Venetia it was overwhelmingly Italian. Everywhere else the nationalities were mixed: even in Vienna there was a considerable Czech minority in the outer districts. Germans could be found in every province; they constituted about a fifth of the total population of the empire—in 1830 some 6.5 million out of a total 34 million. Sometimes the Germans were a majority in a province, as in Tyrol (with an Italian minority) or in Styria and Carinthia (Slovene minorities); but often they were so concentrated as to form Teuton islands in a Slavonic, Magyar, or Roumanian sea. The empire could therefore never be described as a Germanic institution, even though German was the first language of sovereign and Court. Throughout Francis Joseph's reign his empire was always to have more Slavs—Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Serbs, Slovenes, Ruthenes, Ukrainians, Poles—than Germans or Magyars or Latins (Italians and Roumanians).⁵

Nostalgic representations of the Empire in film in the 20th century, including the filming of the works of Stefan Zweig or the *Third Man* take Vienna and Schönbrunn as their focal points, and not far-flung corners of the Empire. This stands in stark contrast to the literary canon of Russia; where Saint Petersburg undoubtedly forms an uncontested capital of Tsarist Russia, still a great stock of its literary heroes are located in the Caucasus in Circassian gear or with white forage caps... “The role of the Caucasus for nineteenth-century Russia is not unlike that of the Indian Frontier for the British army. The Caucasus also inspired some of Russia's greatest writers. In this respect, it must be admitted, the impact of the Caucasus was greater than that of India. Pushkin's *Capture of the Caucasus*, Lermontov's *Hero of Our Time* and Tostoy's *Hadji Murat* invite comparison with the works of Kipling.”⁶ The remaining ethnic groups within the Empire did not proceed to their successor states without inspiring similar, and in some cases more opulent, depictions of nationalist struggle against the imperial aggressor. Depictions of the Italian struggle against Habsburg rule found lavish technicolor expression in such 20th century films as *Sissi* and Italian film director Luchino Visconti's 1954 adaptation of *Senso*, the latter dramatizing the Austrian occupation of the present-day provinces of Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. Here, too, the struggle between nations is only imagined, if one analyzes the existence of the nation through the lens of a unifying language, for the dialects falling along the Friulan-Veneto-Neapolitan-Sicilian continuum and beyond were in the first year of data collection for the general census to take

⁵ Palmer, Alan. *Twilight of the Habsburgs: The Life and Times of Emperor Francis Joseph*. Grove Press, New York. 1994.

⁶ Seton-Watson, H. *The Russian Empire 1801-1917*. Oxford History of Modern Europe. Pp. 281.

place in Austria-Hungary so far from intelligible that distinctions were made well into the 19th century between “Tuscan” and the remaining Italian languages.

The Significance of the Nationality Question for the 19th Century

A brief survey of Gustav Freytag’s *Völker- und Sprachenkarte Österreich-Ungarns* presents the beholder with a tantalizing spectacle: a multicolored sea spanning across Central and Southeastern Europe, each tint representing a distinct nationality within a political geographic representation of Austria-Hungary at the turn of the 20th century. In nearly every history encountered of Austria-Hungary, the reader will come across an impressive list of nationalities together forming the base of the empire: Germans, Magyars, Czechs, Ruthenes, Bosniaks, Roumanians, Serbs, Slovenes, Slovaks, Poles, Latins, and others. It may be reasonable to suggest that language formed a sort of common denominator in constructions of ethno-linguistic identities through the crystallization of state system that succeeded the Austria Hungary in 1919. Multicolored maps and demographic tables created out of census reports taken between 1880-1910 (*Volkzählungen*) separating percentages of a population in a given region by language (*Umgangs-sprache*) and denomination (*Religionsbekenntnis*) present the surveyor of Austria-Hungary with an ostensibly predictable, variate system of nations forming constituent components within the Empire according to their ethno-linguistic categorization.⁷ Whether the geographical space of the Empire represents a “palimpsest,” as Nikos Kazantzakis described “the face of Greece” through its historical transformations⁸, or whether the colored maps in the style of Gustav Freytag Verlag are more akin to a “jigsaw puzzle” is to say one in the same thing: the destiny of political boundaries and influence is a direct product of the interactions of peoples, and whether those peoples were constructed, consolidated or imagined on their own accord or on behalf of some more tangible and recognizable clan. In analyzing in the various means that were applied to the conception of the various nations, it becomes clear that these were in fact invented out of imaginations of the lettered classes; yet precisely this ethereal invention was sufficient to produce an actual one, namely, the drawing of borders along supposed lines representing hard demarcations of nationality, these in turn born out of conceptualized statistical and categorical approaches

⁷ *Volkzählung vom 31. Dezember 1910*, veröffentlicht in: *Geographischer Atlas zur Vaterlandskunde an der österreichischen Mittelschulen*. K. u. k. Hof-Kartographische Anstalt G. Freytag & Berndt, Wien 1911.

⁸ Translation from the Greek by Reed, F. A. Kazantzakis, Nikos. *Journey to the Morea*. Simon & Schuster, New York. 1965. “The face of Greece is a palimpsest bearing twelve successive inscriptions; Contemporary; the period of 1821; the Turkish yoke; the Frankish sway; the Byzantine; the Roman; the Hellenistic epoch; the Classic; the Dorian middle ages; the Mycenaean; the Aegean; and the Stone Age,” p. 7.

contrived to divide peoples along ethnolinguistic criteria; and, from the basis of 19th century conceptions in particular, it is observed that language above all other factors served as a common denominator in the perception and subsequent creation of nation states, the statistical tables delivered as the final product in the *Volkzählungen* of 1880-1910 their visual completion, aided by ostensible scientific reasoning characteristic of the era. On the other hand, even extensive commentary on the nationality question and elaboration of census reports in Austria-Hungary leads to the more simplistic and inclusive observation vis-à-vis the status of the nationalities in the *Vielvölkerstaat*; that is, the very absence of an absolute majority in the Dual-Monarchy provided sufficient motivation on the part of national groups and the ruling elite to approach the nationality question with particular attention.⁹ From the vantage point of the historian, it is possible to analyse the three consecutive census reports with a deterministic outlook; such of quantification, however, cannot be said to reflect a premeditated and conscious desire on the part of the Viennese administration to reduce the inhabitants of the Empire along national-linguistic lines. Put another way, where statistics are highly politicized and imperfect, it nevertheless bears constant reminding of the ethnic composition of these territorial entities, even approximately, as we subconsciously begin to associate their composition with their namesake:

“Even the Austrian authorities, asked to include a question on language in their censuses (a step recommended by the International Statistical Congress of 1873), though unenthusiastic, did not say no. However, they thought, one had to give time for the hot national tempers of the past ten years to cool down. They thought they could safely assume that this would have happened by the census of 1880. They could not have been more spectacularly mistaken.”¹⁰

With certainty, it cannot be stated that there was any one answer to the calming of national tempers, the nationality question itself a display of complexity to such a great degree that it is nearly impossible to identify any group within the Dual Monarchy as “German” or “Magyar;” rather, such termini become instruments for reducing the complex factors at play in the administrative management and political development of the state that are essential for approaching the Empire of approximately 52 million inhabitants in 1914.¹¹ More critically, “the nationalities” serve as placeholders in an infinitely complex institutional and legal architecture which would dissolve completely in the span of a single year following

⁹ Brix, E. *Die Umgangssprachen in Altösterreich zwischen Agitation und Assimilation: Die Sprachenstatistik in den zisleithanischen Volkszählungen 1880-1910* (Vienna, Cologne and Graz 1982). Introduction.

¹⁰ Hobsbawm, E. *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914*. Random House, New York. 1987. p. 97.

¹¹ Compared to 51.3 million in 1910 and 45 million in 1901 (Headlam).

November 1918, with increasing legal reference made towards their existence throughout the latter half of the 19th century the basis for their assessment in their relations with the dominant, ruling classes present in Vienna and Budapest which would increasingly distinguish themselves on the basis of belonging to a ruling, and not subject, nation. It is thus the institutionalization of the nationalities which forms the decisive factor in their formation. This institutionalization took on innumerable forms, from the process of “legalization” of nationality and language, to nostalgic depictions in literature and academia, and finally to statistical approaches to ethnicity as exemplified in census report methodology of the 19th century. Dr. Emil Brix, in his thorough analysis of the nationality question of *Altösterreich* in the context of the census reports of 1880-1910, posits the following:

“Der Gedanke des nationalen Proporz, der weit über ausschließlich sprachliche Ansprüche einzelner Nationalitäten in Amt und Schule hinausging, war trotz der vorhersehbaren Folge einer derartigen Maßnahme, expressis verbis der Perpetuierung des Nationalitätenstreites, zu einer der Forderungen der nationalen Vertretungen geworden. In zunehmendem Maße sollte der einzelne im Schulwesen und in allen öffentlichen Angelegenheiten nicht nur die eigene Sprache anerkannt wissen, sondern auch Vertretern der eigenen Nationalität gegenüberstehen. Diese beabsichtigte Institutionalisierung der nationalen Verhältnisse formte sich schon 1873 in Böhmen als Recht aus, in sprachlich gemischten Gebieten, zunächst nur auf der Ebene der Schule, im Rahmen der Landesgesetzgebung, nationale „Sektionen“ einzelner Schulaufsichtsbehörden einzurichten. Dieses Prinzip der „nationalen Autonomie“ überstieg das bis dahin geübte Prinzip der „Sprachkenntnis“ in einem Ausmaß, daß das Nationalitätenrecht in eine neue Entwicklungsphase eintrat, in der die individuelle nationale Bestimmung zu einer notwendigen Grundlage für politische Organisationsformen wurde.“¹²

Outside of legal ordinances meant to guide language policy at a macro-level within the Dual Monarchy, schools provided the grounds for the formation of nationalities where the state could exert its jurisdiction, precisely through the medium of language of instruction. As such, much study on language policy in Austria-Hungary focuses on language policy as it developed in schools, with measures to introduce mandatory instruction (Hungary, 1873) or forced school closures (Slovakia, 1874) and curtailing of faculty functions (Romania, 1905)¹³ on the basis of nationality representing preferred mechanisms of the state to extend or reduce exposure of a key element of national formation to its inhabitants. At the same time, such attempts at localizing the formation of the nationalities could only take place outside of the direct supervision of the state; as such, the formation of the nationalities must be considered a

¹² Brix, pp.37.

¹³ See Berecz, Agoston. *The Politics of Early Language Teaching: Hungarian in the primary schools of the Dual Monarchy*. Center for Historical Studies, Central European University. 2013.

systematic process whereby macro-level direction from the state in the form of legal ordinances (e.g., Badeni, 1897), statistical representations (Austria-Hungary 1880-1910, Russia 1897), and population exchanges (Lausanne 1923) coupled with local attempts to increase or curb national exposure formed the administrative basis for national formation. Policy, however, whether at the state or local level, represents only a single facet of national formation and more precisely its enforcement; the conception of nationalities themselves was rather driven in purely abstract terms by cultural and elite entities able to conceptualize national identities and produce images for consumption among the literate classes. Such images were coupled by descriptive terms including the ever-important concept of “ethnicity” through formation of formalized methodologies in the emerging field of “ethnography,” the key element of which can be considered increasing preoccupation with the foreign which coincided with increasing devotion to the scientific method throughout the 19th century.¹⁴

The significance of ethnicity for contemporary perceptions shines through effervescently in 19th century; particularly if one considers literature a form of primary source material, derived perceptions serve the utility of generating questions further approximating a clear image of the concept of nationality for inhabitants of the Dual Monarchy. To illustrate the relative distinction of German, for example, apart from the other groups within the empire, one need only turn to the most illustrious representative of *Jung Wien* at the turn of the 20th century. Hoffmanstahl approaches the question of foreign languages in the Empire in two essays written in 1914.¹⁵ In the first, “*Boycott fremder Sprachen?*,” Hofmannsthal cautions against the ban of foreign language instruction in Austrian schools following the outbreak of the First World War, stating “the vehicle of all true knowledge of the foreign is the knowledge of the foreign language.” The spectacular irony, apart from the fact that he is referring to the instruction of English and French in Austrian schools for the advancement of German minds, lies in a concluding remark: “No better way has been given to the German character to remain predominant in the world than this: that it understands the world.”¹⁶ The key observation is that this attitude directly preceded the dissolution of the Austrian state only five years later. Nor does mention of the other languages of Austria find its way into his reflections in “The Value and Dignity of the German Language” composed in 1927, but only

¹⁴ the term *Völkerkunde* was first elaborated by German historian August Ludwig Schlözer (1735-1809) in Göttingen. See: Vermeluen, Han. *Early History of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment*. Leiden. 2008.

¹⁵ Cited from Luft, David S, Translator & Editor, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and the Austrian Idea: Selected Essays and Addresses, 1906-1927*. Purdue University Press, West Lafayette. 2011.

¹⁶ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, “Boycott fremder Sprachen?” in *Reden und Aufsätze*, vol. 2, 1914-1924, 351-55. First printing, *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna), September 27, 1914.

vague references to Greeks and Romans.¹⁷ Indeed, it is perplexing to observe what minimal impact the various nationalities of the Monarchy left in German literature, with the noteworthy exception of Yiddish and related dialects earning a direct place within the literary backdrop of Viennese society. Taken from another angle, that Austrian literature has remained decidedly inward-looking throughout its history should be taken as no less than amazing when one provides a survey of concurrent literary themes present on the continent within the territories of the remaining great powers. Thus it is so that the bearer of keys to the Viennese occult in Schnitzler's *Traumnovelle* is of Polish Yiddish origin wielding an accordingly colored dialect and not Magyar or Slovenian. Stefan Zweig in his memoir *die Welt von Gestern* goes even so far as to say that Viennese culture... is Jewish culture.¹⁸ In contrast, invocations of the peoples of the Empire, with the exception of occasional diminutive reference, remain absent. For this, one is left to English writers who documented their fantastical journeys through the Balkans, each incidentally comparable in character. So we have it that Lord Byron already in 1816 added his romantic glitter to the Greeks in their struggle for national independence in his *Siege of Corinth*, some two to three centuries after Christian coalitions had guaranteed their sovereignty over encroachment from the east in Vienna. More strikingly, Patrick Leigh Fermor has perhaps added more to the literary imagination of the Great Hungarian Plain by way of his crossing the Danube from the then Czechoslovakia into the town limits of Esztergom, in so doing providing incidentally likely the only passage an English speaker will ever encounter its Hungarian name, *Alföld*, in his travel memoirs, than any German text of Austrian provenience has achieved throughout the duration of the joint monarchy or subsequently. "I am drinking a glass of milk on this chestnut horse on the Great Hungarian Plain."¹⁹

Language was not only a demographic consideration that would become a statistical weapon for administration, but also a malleable instrument to express authority along the lines of acknowledged privilege. Thus we find the ubiquitous designation *k.u.k* following the *Ausgleich* of 1867 extending enhanced legal status to the Kingdom of Hungary to refer to the *kaiserlich- und königlich* dual state monarchy of Austria-Hungary, each respective entity

¹⁷ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Wert und Ehre deutscher Sprache," in *Reden und Aufsätze*, vol. 3, 1925-29, 128-33.

¹⁸ Zweig.

¹⁹ The author's story is quite remarkable and offers first-hand account of his encounters with Magyars and "Gypsies" in 1934 as a young man on his journey on foot to "Constantinople." See Leigh Fermor, Patrick. *Between the Woods and the Water, On Foot to Constantinople: The Middle Danube to the Iron Gates*. New York Review Books. New York, 1986.

relating its power over its multiethnic dominion according to its status as imperial or royal authorities.²⁰ This process, however, would prove to work both ways, to suit the needs of the authority. Thus, while the process of “Magyarization” influenced statistical numeration of the population of the Kingdom of Hungary to reflect an overwhelming majority presence of ethnic Hungarians claiming Magyar as their official tongue by 1880, so to would a considerable portion of the same population, approximately one-third in total, find itself as a minority group some fort years later in 1919 in the successor states of Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia as per the delineations of Trianon.²¹ No matter the consequences, the concept of “nationality” was consolidated in both Austria and Hungary through the use of language as an approximate metric and for differing, often short-sighted, political aims. This in turn led to consequences for the Empire’s inhabitants through the imposition of nationalist identities unto people on the basis of “language of daily use,” itself a diagnostic phenomenon associated with the pressure to quantify inhabitants according to ethnolinguistic criteria. Everywhere the significance of bureaucracy cannot be understated, for administrative measures adopted in Budapest and Vienna were imbued with particular authority and reach and thus carried more palpable consequences for the inhabitants of the Dual Monarchy, this due to both the highly developed institutional architecture of the Austrian state as well as its ability to effectuate administrative aims, in part due to the significance and resources devoted to its military. More generally, however, it can be stated that a class system emerged within the Dual Monarchy whereby those equipped with a dominant language possessed inevitable privilege and advantage against those who did not. According to Hobsbawm:

“Bureaucracy, again, was a crucial element, both because it decided the official status of a language and because, in most countries, it provided the largest body of employment requiring literacy. [...] Those whose first language was an unofficial vernacular would almost certainly still be excluded from the higher ranges of culture and private or public affairs, unless as speakers of the official and superior idiom in which they would certainly be conducted. In short, the very fact that new lower-middle and even middle classes had been educated in Slovene or Flemish emphasized that the major prizes and the top status still went to those who spoke French or German, even if they did not bother to learn the lesser language.”²²

²⁰ Schjerve, R. *Diglossia and Power: Language Policies and Practice in the 19th Century Habsburg Empire*. Mouton de Gruyter. Berlin. 2003. Pp. 23.

²¹ The statistic of 31 per cent is often cited as the total portion of ethnic Hungarians who ceased to form part of the Kingdom of Hungary, see Treaty of Peace Between The Allied and Associated Powers and Hungary and Protocol and Declaration, Signed at Trianon June 4, 1920.

²² Hobsbawm. P. 159.

By this, then, it can be argued that bureaucracy was the factor that “created” the nationalities; just as the nations were contrived as a romantic product of fanciful imagination of writers and emergent “ethnographers” of the 19th century, so too was their existence administered into existence through bureaucratic processes; if a law derives its authority from its general recognition as legitimate, then the recognition of nationalities through their taxonomic registry into “history” can be considered as bearing no lesser degree of authority. This process of enumerated, describing, consolidating according to perspective and appetite in the imperial capital provided the authority and means for codification according to survey methods developed for the purposes of the *Volkszählungen*, and found yet further degrees of confirmation not only through the iterated bureaucratic processes taking place within the administrative organs of the Dual-Monarchy, but illustrated and multiplied by the cultural elite, removed from the “people” in any physical or practical sense and for that very reason decisive in their projected imaginations. Thus we look to the *Freytag & Brandt Verlag* in order to collect an kaleidoscopic image of Austria-Hungary and not to topographic studies of Transylvania or Galicia; the one provides the “glamour of strangeness,” the other the habitual and ordinary. Therefore, it is not entirely inaccurate to suggest that the formal process of standardization which took place on the part of cultural elites within the Empire, precisely of those languages which ultimately produced a significant literary canon, *created* the nationalities. To quote Taylor again, we find that “The nations who appeared on the stage of history in the 19th century in 1848 were the creations of writers and still existed only in imagination; they were nations in which there were more writers than readers.”²³

This observation invites further expatiation of its corollary; not only was linguistic nationalism the product of people who wrote and read, but, more specifically, of Europeans—and more precisely still—Europeans of the Western type. Kemal Atatürk’s observation that “there are a great many countries in the world, but there is only one civilization,”²⁴ must be taken in the context of peoples who wished to assert themselves through actualization of an independent state identical in anatomy to the very body they wished to free themselves from. The realm is geographically and racially distant, but nevertheless underwent a similar reconfiguration of power structures and approximately during the same time period. During the period of national formation in Latin America, the minority cultural elite “were well

²³ Ibid. pp. 28.

²⁴ Speech to the press (29 October 1923), quoted in Vakur Versan, ‘The Kemalist Reform of Turkish Law and Its Impact’, in Jacob M. Landau (ed.), *Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), p. 247

education in European thought and letters, but as statesmen, journalists, poets and academics, they confronted the problem of the racial and linguistic heterogeneity of the continent and the difficulties of integrating the population into a modern nation-state.”²⁵ This remark is important, for while the cultural elite may have spoken, drafted letters and administered in the approximate fashion of, and even outwardly resembled, Europeans, their impact on politics carried profound affect unto the inhabitants of the variegated states in whose populations “indigenous, mestizo, black, or mulatto peasants and slaves predominated.”²⁶ To state merely that nationalities were imagined by the lettered classes takes away from the fact that they *were* constructed, often brutally, and this physical materialization more often than not used multicolored maps and statistical tables—the initial conception very well likely born out of “love for the glamour of strangeness”²⁷—as its preferred base material. Invented or not, the classification, by any serious survey of the matter, seemed to stick and, this analysis would argue, proved to be the single most significant concept in power politics. Indeed, there is no room for suggestion that language as a tangible factor in the emergence of the nation state and whether that state remained purely imagined or in actuality realized. While it is easy to point out the absurdities inherent in Italian Irredentism, nevertheless it must be conceded that the logic generating the claim is sound if it is compared against similar calls to unite “common” peoples under one flag.

This process of observatory national genesis can be said to take on the form of two “types,” the one constructing nationality on the basis of purely practical terms, as via the targeted refining and fostering of a standard literary language, the second abandoning scientific reconstruction of the nationalities in favor of grandiose, romantic representations, often nostalgic, though at times adopting at least the guise of serious ethnographic enterprise. Of the approaches to constructing identity belong to this secondary type, none can be considered as vast and prolific as the *österreich-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild*, otherwise known as the “*Kronprinzenwerk*,” attributed in design to Crown Prince Rudolf, though involving the contribution of many hundreds of editors and illustrators. The monolithic work spans twenty-four volumes appearing between 1886 and 1902 provides rich descriptions of the countryside, landscape, and inhabitants of the provinces of Austria and Hungary, including novel designations to describe *das Küstenland* to include the regions of

²⁵ Series Editors’ General Introduction to de Machado de Assis, Joaquim Maria, *The Posthumous Memoirs of Brás Cubas*. Library of Latin America. Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford. 1997, p. vi-vii.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Excerpt from Lawrence, T.E., *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph*. Originally published as a private edition by the George Doran Publishing Company in 1926. First Anchor Books Edition, New York, 1991, p. 31.

Gorizia, Gradiska, Trieste and Istria, as well as the more exotic appanages to Austria appearing towards the end of its publications, including Bukovina (1899) and Bosnia and Hercegovina (1901).²⁸ All in all, the volumes cover some twenty-three regions of Austria-Hungary complete with descriptions and engraved depictions of local inhabitants showcasing both national dress (*Tracht*) and such scenes of bucolic life including the harvesting of wheat in Western Galicia (“Polish uplanders”) a joining of Western Ukrainians in the Supcarpathians (“Hutsul Wedding”), and a grouping of “highlanders” in Cieszyn Silesia in traditional garb (“Gorals in Lesser Poland”). The work is nostalgic in character and presents an idyllic depiction of harmonized life among the inhabitants of the Empire. Critically, the *Kronprinzenwerk* carries with it the tone of *pater patriae*, where the “father nation”, the German, takes on a parent role relative to the diminutive nations, adorned with descriptions and illustrations in taxonomic fashion characteristic of the era; it must be regarded as no coincidence that the *Naturhistorisches Museum* in the first district in Vienna was celebrated its inauguration three years after the appearance of the first volume of the *Kronprinzenwerk* in 1889.²⁹

Where the presentation of the “peoples” of the monarchy may be considered condescending in such a light, it must be stressed that this dichotomy found expression in real terms as well. The connection between class and language was most apparent in the upper strata of society; aside from the more general adherence to the stylized High German as a distinguishing characteristic of differentiation from the proletariat and provincial inhabitants of the empire, French represented the surest mark of belonging to the upper strata of society. It is therefore no coincidence that the same language was designated as the first language of instruction of Francis Joseph outside of his native German. The former he had acquired by the age of eight, thereby preceding his formal instruction in any language spoken within his inherited realm, Hungarian and Czech becoming components of his formation only at the age of 10 in the spring of 1841. And of course, the dialogue among the convening negotiating parties of the Congress of Vienna of 1814-15 to rectify the mess caused by the belligerent French under the command of the pestiferous Corsican was conducted in French. The language of choice in international diplomacy of the 19th century may seem trivial, but becomes all the more significant in light of the attempts made on behalf of statistical offices

²⁸ *Die Österreich-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild. Auf Anregung und unter Mitwirkung meiland Seiner kaiser. und könig. Hoheit des durchlauchtigen Kronprinzen Erzherzog Rudolf begonnen, fortgesetzt unter dem Protectorate Ihrer kaiser. und könig. Hoheit der durchlauchtigen Frau Kronprinzen-Witwe Erzherzogin Stephanie.* 24-volumes. Kaiserliche und königliche Staatsdruckeri. Wien. 1886-1902.

²⁹ Add note.

made to quantify their inhabitants according to which tongue they prayed in. Certainly, the affairs of high society were conducted in but a select few languages far from representative of any national composition of “minority languages.” Consider, for a moment, that *War and Peace*, first published in 1869, is conducted in but five languages; Russian, French, German, Italian, and English.³⁰ As such, the connection between language (nationality) and class for the 19th century is not to be underestimated; access to the dominant language of the state served as the primary vehicle for upward mobility in a predominantly agrarian society; likewise, limitation to a minority language—or, more likely, illiteracy—formed a hardly surmountable obstacle to entry into the bureaucracy of the developing state architecture in the 19th century.

Though at the present stage of analysis it may be considered nearly an aside, the concept of an “ethno-state” deserves special attention, not only in the context of Austria-Hungary in the 19th century, but in regard to the formation and transformation of the state-system more generally, through the 20th century and beyond. Thus we find the observation on the part of Hobsbawm, “We are now so used to an ethnic-linguistic definition of nations that we forget that this was, essentially, invented in the later nineteenth century.”³¹ For the purposes of our analysis, it is most critical to lend attention to the factors that drove the formation of successor states following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1919. As has been stated, the primary force of such transformations, finding their expression in the physical formation of state boundaries, was language. This may be due to simple observational phenomena; whereas physical features within populations are impossible to distinguish definitively, an absence of intelligibility between tongues provides a clear means of distinguishing “peoples” between those of one tongue and those of another; particularly in instances where broad expression of culture by any other means—in pre-industrial societies urban architecture and settlement formation, religious and burial practices, agricultural and animal husbandry practices, etc.—is nearly indistinguishable. In the case of the area comprising the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the 19th century, the observer is met with a collection of geographical entities forming a masse in Central and Eastern Europe, primarily Christian, but also incorporating former Ottoman settlements, most notably in Bosnia, coming under Austrian administration in 1878 following the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-

³⁰ Reading it in the original, one might be surprised to find that the narrative commences with a dialogue in French, which furthermore dominates much of the dialogue throughout the entire first book, “*Eh bien, mon prince, Gênes et Lucques ne sont plus que des apanages, des pomestya, de la famille Buonaparte.*”

³¹ Hobsbawm, p. 39.

1878.³² Distinction between the various Christian denominations is equally deserving of independent analysis, but falls somewhat outside the language question, even if one considers the proximity of Orthodox Christianity to the Pan-Slavic movement, finding expressions to various degrees in attempts to “liberate” Slavic peoples from foreign, super-imposed paternal states, namely Turkey and Austria.

Statistical Approaches the Construction of Nationality in the 19th Century

With the defining the landscape of states beginning the process of modernization of governance and administration to the local level throughout the 19th century, states, including the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, found ample motivation to begin with the business of taking inventory of its main engine of production, the population. The application of statistical methods with the aim of quantifying populations began in the 19th century. In 1806, the ministry of the interior (*ministère de l'intérieur*) under Napoleon I commissioned a statistical assay of the *premier empire* by administrative division according to the primary spoken language of the inhabitants. The results are recapitulated in a collection of essays outlining the status of dialects of the French language (*patois*), numbering approximately one-hundred in 1830, spoken within and outside of France. It is noteworthy that out of all administrative divisions surveyed according to primary language of use, merely six languages were chosen to distinguish among approximately 38 million inhabitants.³³ Philip Ther, in his assessment of the “dark side” of nation states which he implements to define the practice of “ethnic cleansing” taking place following the formation of states according to nationalist criteria in the 20th century, presents the following overview of the statistical “craze” which came to occupy the minds of policy makers in the 19th century culminating finally in the International Statistical Conference of 1873:

In the late eighteenth century, Europe’s absolutist monarchies began to carry out regular demographic inquiries into their populations. These were principally designed to gauge tax revenue and numbers of potential army recruits. By the mid-nineteenth century, more sophisticated data was being gleaned from the censuses and used to develop infrastructure such as school systems. Europe experienced a veritable craze for statistical methods and their potential for planning “progress.” In 1853, a group of experts from a number of countries convened for the world’s first International Statistical Congress. The Prussian delegation claimed that nationalities could be

³² Occupation and *de-facto* annexation of Bosnia to Austria-Hungary preceded the definitive annexation in 1908, forming the basis of the so-called “Bosnian Crisis.” The terms of the occupation arising in the aftermath of the conflict between Russia and the Ottoman Empire are outlined in Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty.

³³ Coquebert de Montbret, E. *Mélanges sur les langues, dialectes et patois. Essai d’un travail sur la géographie de la langue française. Bureau de l’almanach du commerce*. Paris. 1831. Pp. 15-16.

ascertained by applying the criterion of language. Austrian experts dismissed this as simplistic in view of their experience of a multinational state. But by the third International Statistical Congress in St. Petersburg in 1873, the Prussian—and now German—view prevailed. Over the next two decades, all continental empires, including the Ottoman Empire, set up central statistical offices. They all proceeded to carry out censuses inquiring into linguistically defined nationality. In this way, theorists made a major contribution to narrowing conceptions of nation down to one specific, supposedly objective criterion.³⁴

Such methodology of quantifying inhabitants according to language led inevitably to the synonymous construal of language with “nationality,” and it must be considered beyond coincidence that the peak of this interpretation, represented through the production of statistical tables, colored maps, and so forth, coincided nearly perfectly with the period of unifications on the European continent in the latter half of the 19th century and became subsequently the standard guidelines for establishing national frontiers in Central Europe following the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy. Without doubt, myriad problems existed in such an approach to the nationality question in Central Europe, from the obvious methodological inconsistencies to blunt negligence. Taylor observes that “National statistics were a constant weapon of political struggle; in 1919 they became a deciding factor in the drawing of the frontiers, though they were not designed for that purpose and not suited for it... Far from being a ‘natural unit,’ the Habsburg monarchy was a geographic nonsense, explicable only by dynastic graspings and the accidents of centuries of history.”³⁵ Where concepts such as “identity” or “ethnicity” become troublesome and are by nature superimposed designations not bearing any tangible meaning, still language through varying means of institutionalization can be interpreted as a distinct and foundational aspect in the daily lives of administrative subjects in the 19th and 20th centuries. As will be seen, the formation of standardized literary varieties often came about as a response to oppressive foreign rule; in the case of the Balkan peninsula, this process found expression over a period of centuries first in response to Ottoman and again in response to Austro-Hungarian rule. It is thus appropriate to speak of the formation of the “nation” in connection with the emergence of standardized varieties of Romanian, Serbian or Slovene even where the concept of the “nation” as a generally coherent grouping of peoples bearing similar ethnic and linguistic traits was, in essence, fiction. Nevertheless, this pattern of grouping, regrouping, quantification, and modification found its real expression through the formation of state

³⁴ Ther, Philip. *The Dark Side of Nation States: Ethnic Cleansing in Modern Europe*. Translated from the German, *die dunkle Seite der Nationalstaaten. Ethnische Säuberungen im modernen Europa*. 2011. Chapter 1.

³⁵ Taylor, A.J.P. *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918: A History of the Austrian Monarchy and Austria-Hungary*. Hamish-Hamilton, London. 1948. p. 262.

boundaries, the consequences of which for the inhabitants of South-Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries cannot be underestimated. Put in somewhat different terms, it can perhaps be considered a luxury to dismiss “race” as a social construct; the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, often cited as the first instance of population exchange on ethnic grounds sanctioned through international law, provided for the forcible exchange of Greek and Turkish civilians numbering in the hundreds of thousands. The brevity of the first article is a demonstration of the meaning of nationality as a matter-of-fact; “As from the 1st May, 1923, there shall take place a compulsory exchange of Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory, and of Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory.”³⁶ Where the instance of Lausanne, naturally, took place *after the fact* of the census reports outlined in this thesis, still the objectives and attitudes towards populations as moveable objects within a system of nation states in the early 20th century must be taken as a precedent to motive in international politics preceding its negotiation and despite the subsequent nature of its enforcement.

Therefore, the aim is to start from the vantage point of a visual representation i.e. the “Distribution of Races in Austria-Hungary,”³⁷ based on data produced in various tables according to the findings of census reports compiled between 1880-1910. Multiple instances of such *Sprachenkarten* produced in Germany and Austria around the turn of the century offer an excellent starting point for commentary introducing the issue of constructed national identities. Data tables stemming from the *k.u.k. Statistikamt* and now made available through the *Österreichische Nationalstatistik* contributing to the realization of such maps shall be included in the appendices. An initial research proposal on the basis of such data with the aim of deriving conclusions pertaining to economic power on the basis of ethnicity. The term “ethnicity” shall be used freely throughout the thesis and should not be taken to carry any overtly precise connotation or indication of subjective value. Rather, the analysis takes for granted that inhabitants of the political space known as “Austria” were speakers of various languages practicing different creeds and adhering to different rhythms of daily life according to climate, neighbors, and whichever imperial jurisdiction they had the fortunate or misfortunate to fall under. “Ethnicity” thus serves as some sort of common, if crude,

³⁶ Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations Signed at Lausanne, 30 January 1923. Lausanne Peace Treaty VI. The Treaties of Peace 1919-1923, Vol. II. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. New York. 1924.

³⁷ For a contemporary English-language version of the map produced by Freytag & Brandt published in the United States, see: Shepherd, William R. “Distribution of Races in Austria-Hungary.” Historical Atlas. New York. 1911.

denominator. Most generally, it refers to the language variant spoken within the family, but this, too is imperfect: for (as has been reminded by multiple authors on the subject), languages spoken within a single family could range from one to several, to exclude consideration of dialects (in Austria the distinction between Standard German and “*Dialekt*” remains relevant to the conception of social status and regional identity), regional variety bordering between dialect and clear distinction of language (Moldovan, Romanian; Ruthenian and Italian dialects).

Die Volkszählungen von 1880-1910

For the period of 1880-1914, Britain was the uncontested leader in global commerce; and yet, hardly any city has inspired images of the *Belle Epoque* than Vienna, which, together with its co-capitals Budapest (joined as a single municipality in 1872) and Prague enjoyed great expenditure on decorative works and entertainment.³⁸ Raw dimensions suggest that the Austria-Hungary was indeed a great power in the final decades of the 19th century. In 1880, the first year in which Austria began systematically carrying out censuses on the Empire’s inhabitants, her population amounted to some 38 million, a figure second only to the recently united Germany, with 45 million, and Russia, with 89 million, and would retain her place as superior in population to Great Britain, France, and Italy through 1910, where the Austro-Hungarian monarchy presided over 50 million souls.³⁹ In 1879 she maintained a peacetime army amounting to 267,000 men, approximately twice that of Great Britain, and in 1913 succeeded in mobilizing 3 million.⁴⁰ By other metrics she remained backward well into the 20th century, with literacy rates in Hungary remaining below 70% as late as 1913.⁴¹ Despite the rapid growth of the rail connecting the various corners of the Empire and rate of urbanization which increased the population in Vienna and inner suburbs at a rate of 15.5 percent throughout the 1880s⁴² Austria-Hungary remained a relatively rural geographical space languishing behind even Italy in 1890 with an urbanization rate of scarcely 18 percent.⁴³ The presentation of such statistics is useful for two reasons: first, and quite

³⁸ Palmer, Alan. *Twilight of the Habsburgs: the Life and Times of Emperor Francis Joseph*. Grove Press, New York. 1994. p. 228.

³⁹ Population statistics according to the summation found in Taylor, A.J.P. *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*. Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1954. p. xxv. Cf. similar statistics in Hobsbawm, “States and populations 1880-1914.”

⁴⁰ Hobsbawm, Table 12.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Palmer, p. 228.

⁴³ Cf. urbanization rates (as percentage) of 61.9 for England and Wales, 34.5 Belgium, 28.2 Germany, 25.9 France, 21.2 Italy, and 14.6 Poland. deVries, Jan. *European Urbanization 1500-1800*. London, 1984. Table 3.8.

obviously, such delineations are useful for understanding the spatial aspect of the Empire, thus better “shelving” the various peoples of the Empire according to their respective localities and social landscape. Secondly, a critical analysis of Austria-Hungary points to the painful fact that, despite her relative demographic weight and agricultural output in Europe of the 19th century, Austria-Hungary languished far behind the leading powers of Great Britain, France and the German States in terms of innovation. Repeatedly the observer of Austria-Hungary will find the designation “backward” to describe the degree of development and sophistication of institutions linking the motley array of nationalities. Such descriptions beg the question to whether the relative suppression of national expression led to hampered development within the Empire, or whether the diversity of tongue itself thwarted cohesive growth. Clearly, no set of statistical indicators exist which can explain such disparity of growth in such terms; nevertheless, closer analysis of the bureaucratic institutions of the Empire shed light on this apparent disparity.

Hitherto discussion has focused primarily on those administrative forces in play that consolidated structure of privilege and dominance in the empire according to nationality; nevertheless, it must be stressed that considerable concessions were allotted to the ethnic groups within the Dual-Monarchy that were, fundamentally, a product of enlightened rule that the Viennese authority intermittently integrated into its governance system. Whether such attitudes towards and ultimate fate of the nationalities is due to individual motive, captured in already mentioned romantic depictions of struggle against Habsburg rule is uncertain (a history of the Empire centered on the life of Francis Joseph II notes that the young Kaiser, a product of the year 1848, witnessed his first battle under the command of Radetzky in the same year of his inauguration as Kaiser in 1848 and his last in 1916 attempting to grasp the tactical commentary of fighter pilots); in any case, the ultimate dissolution of the Dual Monarchy system at the hands of internationalism lies beyond the scope of the language question *per se*; nevertheless, by 1867, the question of the status of the nationalities had occupied a place in the ministerial contemplations of Vienna and Budapest such that first conciliatory approaches towards the nationality question should be introduced into the legal architecture of the Empire. The Constitution of Austria (*Staatsgrundgesetz*) of 1867, also referred to as the *Dezemberverfassung*, serves as the founding legal document amending the “Compromise” (*Ausgleich*) of 1867 dividing the Austrian Empire into two halves, *Cisleithania* and *Transleithania*, otherwise known as the “Austrian” and “Hungarian”

halves of the Monarchy (*Reichshälfte*).⁴⁴ Article 19 of the *Dezemberverfassung* concerns the question of language policy in particular and has been cited as a benchmark altering the course of nationalistic development in the Dual Monarchy through to its ultimate dissolution and states definitively. The entire article makes reference to several privileges which should be enjoyed by all nationalities inhabiting the territory of the Dual-Monarchy, including the equality of all *landesüblichen Sprachen* in all schools, public institutions and official matters with the guaranteed recognition of the state; the pith of the article is contained in the first sentence and is succinct: „*Alle Volksstämme des Staates sind gleichberechtigt, und jeder Volksstamm hat ein unverletzliches Recht auf Wahrung und Pflege seiner Nationalität und Sprache.*”⁴⁵ By this, it can be stated that the legal foundation of language policy in Austria-Hungary was one of perfect equality, formally granting no privilege to any dominant language regardless of numerical representation or preference in the administrative centers in Vienna and Budapest. Two important ordinances passed in Austria in the 19th century must be taken into consideration to understand the legal basis and political motivation in establishing a census system. The first, *mit der Vorschrift für die Vornahme der Volkszählungen*, dated 23 March 1857, and is quite succinct in text and calls for a first general census to be carried out in the same year under observation of Austrian state authorities and the *Reichsrat*.⁴⁶ The second, dated 29 March 1869, is more comprehensive in nature and contains five major criteria that should characterize the census process.⁴⁷ According to the provisions, five in total, the census should be carried out in all “*im Reichsrat vertretenen Königreiche und Ländern*” according to their composition previous year, to take place in 10-year increments beginning from from December 31, 1880 (“*vom 31. Dezember jedes mit Null endendes Jahres*”⁴⁸), designating the Ministry of the

⁴⁴ Österreich-Lexikon, R. u. M. Bamberger, E. Bruckmüller, K. Gutkas, Verlagsgemeinschaft Österreich-Lexikon (2 Bde). AEIOU, in: Austria-Forum. “Dezemberverfassung.” 1995.

⁴⁵ *Staatsgrundgesetz vom 21. December 1867, über die allgemeinen Rechte der Staatsbürger für die im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder. Art. 19.* „*Alle Volksstämme des Staates sind gleichberechtigt, und jeder Volksstamm hat ein unverletzliches Recht auf Wahrung und Pflege seiner Nationalität und Sprache. Die Gleichberechtigung aller landesüblichen Sprachen in Schule, Amt und öffentlichem Leben wird vom Staate anerkannt. In den Ländern, in welchen mehrere Volksstämme wohnen, sollen die öffentlichen Unterrichtsanstalten derart eingerichtet sein, daß ohne Anwendung eines Zwanges zur Erlernung einer zweiten Landessprache jeder dieser Volksstämme die erforderlichen Mittel zur Ausbildung in seiner Sprache erhält.*“

⁴⁶ Reichsgesetzblatt für das Kaiserthum Österreich Jahrgang 1857. Kaiserliche Verordnung vom 23. März 1857 mit der Vorschrift für die Vornahme der Volkszählungen. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Historische Rechts- und Gesetztexte. 1857.

⁴⁷ Reichsgesetzblatt für das Kaiserthum Österreich Jahrgang 1869.. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Historische Rechts- und Gesetztexte. 67. Gesetz vom 29. März über die Volkszählung. 1869.

⁴⁸ Marek, Richard. *Geographische Ergebnisse der Volkszählung vom 31. Dezember 1910*. Geographische Zeitschrift 18. Jahrgang., 12. Heft. 1912. Pp. 682-696

Interior (*Minister des Inneren*) as the executive body in carrying out the census.⁴⁹ The languages of Austria-Hungary according to Gustav-Freitag are reconstructed the following table, organized in a schema from most to least represented nationalities within the Empire according to absolute number and percentage. The figures, „nach den neusten statistischen Veröffentlichungen bearbeitet,“ derive from extensive censuses carried out in in 1910 in Austria Hungary.⁵⁰ While extensive commentary on the figures is warranted, nevertheless a succinct overview of the general state of the nationalities according to official state statistics shall prove useful. While census reports were carried out as early as the 18th century in Austria, Hungary, and Russia, the most comprehensive and yielding ethnographic maps in a similar style to that produced by Gustav-Freytag were completed but in four successive series between 1880-1910 following an initiative of the Austrian administration in Vienna. As head of the *Statistische Zentralkommission*, the *Volkzählung* was carried out under the direction of Robert Meyer (1855-1914), a Viennese professor and statesman occupying high positions in finance and political economy by the latter stages of his career.⁵¹ The nationalities in 1910 were construed as follows (Table I).

Table I⁵²

Nationality	Number	Percentage of population
Germans	12,010,669	23.4%
Hungarians	10,067,992	19.6%
Czechs	6,442,133	12.5%
Poles	4,978,959	9.7%
Serbians and Croats	4,380,981	8.5%
Ukrainians (incl. Ruthenians)	3,998,872	7.8%
Romanians	3,224,755	6.3%
Slovaks	1,967,970	3.8%
Slovenes	1,256,048	2.4%
Italians	802,8884	1.6%
<i>Staatsfremde</i> and others	2,313,569	4.5%
<i>Total</i>	51,390,223	-

Though far from reaching a majority in the Empire as a whole, Germans, without doubt, were the most numerous in the population, representing approximately one quarter of the

⁴⁹ Gesetz vom 29. März.

⁵⁰ Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Historische Rechts- und Gesetztexte. Österreichische Statistik, Neue Folge.

⁵¹ Winkelbauer. Meyer, Robert. Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon 1815-1950. Band 5, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Wien. 1972. S. 442. Meyer was incidentally Professor of the *k.u.k Orientalische Akademie* or *Konsularakademie* (Diplomatische Akademie Wien) from 1890-1910.

⁵² Geographischer Atlas zur Vaterlandskunde an den österreichischen Mittelschulen, bearbeitet von Prof. Dr. Rudolf Rothaug, Kartographische Anstalt G. Freytag und Bendt, Wien 1911, Tabelle 2.

population with 12 million inhabitants. In Cisleithania, numbering 28 million inhabitants in total, this proportion reached closer to 40 percent. In Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Carinthia, Salzburg, Styria, Tirol, and Vorarlberg, Germans collectively formed a robust majority, as well as in parts of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. Enclaves of German minorities perforated all parts of the monarchy, even in far-flung Bukovina, a predominantly Romanian and Ukrainian region settled on the eastern frontier of the Empire. Equally expectably, Hungarians represented the second most robust nationality in the population, numbering 10 million in 1910, the great majority of them, some 9.944 million, residing in Transleithania, where Hungarian speakers accounted for 54 percent of the population.⁵³ In the territory of Hungary itself, this proportion was reached approximately 88.4 percent of the population.⁵⁴ Likewise, in Croatia-Slavonia, which enjoyed some degree of autonomy as a distinct Kingdom within the Kingdom of Hungary following the Croatian-Hungarian Settlement of 1868 (Croat. *Hrvatsko-ugarska nagodba*; Hung. *Horvát–magyar kiegyezés*), Croats and Serbs collectively formed some 87 per cent of the population.⁵⁵ Of the three largest cities within the Empire according to population, none was without a clear majority nationality representing the nationality of the region. Thus, whereas Germans comprised some less than a quarter of the population of the monarchy as a whole, they nevertheless represented 94.2 percent of the population of Vienna according to the official census results, with Hungarians composing 86 per cent of the population of Budapest.⁵⁶ Urban statistics, in particular outline the nature of national statistics, it being, of course, absurd to assume that nearly all inhabitants of Vienna in 1910 were native speakers of one language.

Yet where a certain degree of flexibility remains vis-à-vis language as a variable, in that even crude representations of cities and regions produce a rough understanding of the linguistic landscape of a geographical entity, other population metrics remain more rigid in their reporting and assessment. The distribution of religion within the Empire is a complex topic deserving of its own study; suffice it to say that the Dual-Monarchy was majority Catholic (76.6 per cent in 1910), with notable Protestant (8.9), Orthodox (8.7), Jewish (4.4) and Muslim (1.3) minorities;⁵⁷ Muslims, in particular, provided a significant point of contention vis-à-vis demographic policies pursued in the South-Eastern Europe, where

⁵³ Basic Library of Hungarology. *Hungary in the 20th Century*, Volume II. Natural environment, population and society, churches and denominations, economy, “Population of Hungary.”

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ The Croatian-Hungarian Compromise, in contrast to the better-known “Ausgleich” of 1867 between Austria and Hungary, is complex and deals largely with territorial and commercial issues.

⁵⁶ Österreichische Nationalstatistik.

⁵⁷ Geographischer Atlas zur Vaterlandskunde.

significant Muslim minorities existed alongside Christian populations, particularly in those areas acquired from the Ottoman Empire in the Romanian War of Independence 1877-78 in the case of Romania following its annexation of the Northern Dobruja.⁵⁸ While Muslims in the Orthodox countries of Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria were allotted nominal protections at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, Muslims, in the absence of lobby or national representatives, initiated a period of emigration from South-Eastern Europe, with Greece and Serbia equally pursuing a policy of actively encouraging emigration of the Muslim sectors of the population; in the Dobruja, the newly independent Kingdom of Romania went about “nationalizing” the population via targeted settlement and introduction of schooling in the region.⁵⁹ Like the Bukovina or Bessarabia, the Dobruja represents an example of a slight piece of territory made object of contention among the middle and great powers characterized precisely by a high degree of linguistic and religious heterogeneity among the inhabitants in the absence of a single dominant ethnic element. Detailed demographic surveys of the region were carried out beginning in 1878 following its transition to Romania and again in 1880, 1899 and 1913 in the aftermath of the Treaty of Bucharest, each census demonstrating a higher proportion of Romanians, from 21 per cent in 1878 to 56.8 per cent in 1913; the same surveys reveal a severe reduction of Turkish and Tatar populations, from 21.6 per cent and 31.5 per cent in 1878, respectively, together forming a dominant Turkic element in the Black Sea region to jointly representing approximately 10 per cent by 1913.⁶⁰

While the figures represented in the census reports must be taken critically, still their value in terms of assessing the nationality question in Austria is immeasurable. Interestingly, sources reflecting statistics specific to the Kingdom of Hungary point out interesting observations on the skewed nature of such statistics, and in the case of Hungary, specifically, rich reference to the process of “Magyarization” can be found in the literature surrounding census reports.⁶¹ Equally, this process can be found in the reverse, for while Czechs accounted for some 91.5 per cent of the population of Prague together with large parts of Bohemia and Moravia (excluding what would later be referred to as the “*Sudetenland*”), the Czechs remained deprived of significant status within the monarchical system as was eventually conceded to the Hungarian and Croatian-Slavonic areas of the Empire. As far as

⁵⁸ Ther, Ch. 1. Cf. Toumarkine, Alexandre. *Les migrations des populations musulmanes balkaniques en Anatolie 1876-1913*. Istanbul. 1995.

⁵⁹ Ibid. The Kingdom of Romania existed from 1881-1947 out of the vassal principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.

⁶⁰ Roman, I.N. “La Population de la Dobrogea d’après le recensement du 1^{er} janvier 1913.” Demetrescu, A. *La Dobrogea Roumaine. Etudes et documents*. Bucharest. 1919.

⁶¹ Basic Library of Hungarology.

the major nationalities are concerned in Austria-Hungary, the Czechs occupy a unique position in the Austrian monarchy for possessing on the one hand highly developed administration, culture and industrial output through their position in coal and iron-rich areas embedded in Bohemia and Moravia. In Prague, where Czechs accounted for more than 90 per cent of the population, a variety of German developed among the German speaking population which later would be referred to as *Prager Deutsch*, incidentally serving as a medium between the Alemannic and Bavarian dialects spoken in present-day Austria and *ostmitteldeutschen* varieties of central Germany and which later would play a significant role in performance and proliferation of radio; nor can the significance of the predominantly Czech speaking city for German literature be neglected, producing such literary figures as Franz Kafka, fluent in both German and Czech, and Rainer Maria Rilke, who nevertheless completed his education in Lower Austria.⁶² Critically, the Czechs, unlike the Magyars, Croats, or even Romanians, were deprived of significant national status and as such excluded from the institutionalization of dualism extending to the cosmopolitan elite of Vienna and Budapest, a factor which may be considered as significant in the ultimate dissolution of the Dual-Monarchy; what is more, efforts to further integrate the status of Czech in to the legal architecture of the Empire was met with uproar on the part of ethnic Germans in response to the infamous language ordinances of 1897 (*Badenische Sprachenverordnung*) on the part of Count Kasimir Felix Badeni, Minister-President of Cisleithania from 1895-1897, which established Czech and German as co-official administrative languages in Bohemia and Moravia and, critically, obliged civil servants, irrespective of nationality, to respond in Czech to all official inquiries carried out in the same language. In addition, the ordinance obliges officaries to present documentary evidence of proficiency in both national languages (*Landessprachen*) through examination taking place no later three years after entry of duty.⁶³ The resulting uproar has been described as one of the most dramatic episodes in Austrian parliamentary history, with virulent demonstrations carried out by both Czech and German national groups and extending to violent street confrontations.⁶⁴

The episodes Most generally, it can be said that in each respective sector of the

⁶² Cf. Povejšil, Jaromír. *Das Prager Deutsch des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts—ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Schriftsprache*. Hamburg, 1980.

⁶³ Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Historisch Rechts- und Gesetztexte. Landesgesetzblatt Böhmen 1848-1918. Verordnung der Minister des Innern, der Justiz,, der Finanzen, des Handels und des Aderbaues vom 5. April 1897 betreffend die sprachliche Qualifikation der bei den Behörden im Königreiche Böhmen angestellten Beamten.

⁶⁴ Sutter, Berthold. *Die badenischen Sprachenverordnungen von 1897: ihre Genesis und ihre Auswirkungen vornehmlich auf die innerösterreichischen Alpenländer*. Graz. 1960.

Monarch—German, Hungarian, and Croat-Slavonic, a dominant national element existed and played a substantial role in the formation of the successor states, in the case of both ethnic Germans and Hungarians to their expense. Further, if there were any single majority element to be found in the Empire, it was Slavic. Where no single Slavic nationality outnumbered the German or Hungarian populations, collectively, they represented a plurality within the empire, amounting to approximately 45 percent of the population, with the Czechs the most numerous constituent national element among them. Central to the generation of all of these statistics is the concept of *Umgangssprache*. Herein lies the very heart of the nationalities question, for while the application of metrics to this intricate facet of human interaction is apparent through the visual construction of tables and maps, its interpretation without proper conception of the methodology is fruitless; and indeed, careful study of circumstances producing the indicator shed light on its relational futility. Peter Judson in his analysis of the nationality question in the Habsburg Empire analyzes the concept of *Umgangssprache* in depth, for where there is a generally clear distinction between the German *Muttersprache* and *Umgangssprache* in their most general sense, the designation *Umgangssprache* for statistical purposes is less clear. First, *Umgangssprache* did not refer to one's mother language, but rather, the language of "language of daily use," or rather, *die Sprache, deren sich dieselbe im gewöhnlichen Umgange bedient*; as pointed out correctly by Judson, this benchmark was not particularly useful, as within provinces, villages, and even families, multiple languages could be used on a daily basis for different uses;⁶⁵ more critically, however, the ultimate meaning of the term does not remain answered through this observation. In practical terms, the concept was more clearly delineated in an ordinance preceding the second *Volkszählung* in 1890 dated 25 August of the same year. The text namely provides instructions („*Belehrungen*“) for civil servants carrying out the work of the census with example tables provided („*Richtschnur*“). Regarding the entry criteria to accompany the designation of *Umgangssprache*, specifically, the *Belehrungen* provide the following indications:

Absatz 19. Umgangssprache. Zu Spalte 11. Diese Spalte ist nur für die Angehörigen des im Reichsrate vertretenen Ländergebiets auszufüllen. Für jede solche Person ist die Sprache, deren sich dieselbe im gewöhnlichen Umgange bedient, jedenfalls aber nur eine der nachbenannten Sprache anzugeben, und zwar: Detusch, Böhmisch-Mährisch-Slovakisch, Polnisch, Ruthenisch, Slovenisch, Serbisch-Kroatisch, Italienisch-Ladinisch, Rumänisch, Magyarisch (letzere nur in Bukowina). Für Individuen, welche wegen ihres geringen Lebensalters, eines körperlichen Gebrechens oder gänzlichen Mangels an geistiger Entwicklung thatsächlich

⁶⁵ Judson. Pp. 309.

*keiner Sprache sich bedienen, ist von oben bezeichneten Umgangssprache jene einzutragen, welche mit Rücksicht auf die Verhältnisse als Umgangssprache solcher Individuen angenommen werden muss and von deren Eltern oder den Stellvertretern derselben angegeben wird.*⁶⁶

Herein we derive several critical observations to the concept of „*Umgangssprache*“: first, *Umgangssprache* did not refer to the mother tongue of a subject *per-se*, but rather, the language in which they expressed themselves most frequently and freely. Second, the guidelines for the Census report adopt fundamentally reductionist approach; as such, Bohemian (Czech), Moravian, and Slovakian are condensed into a single entry designation while other major languages (Yiddish) are excluded or interchanged (Ukrainian, Ruthenian), to leave no mention of the strength and diversity of dialects present in the crown lands.⁶⁷ Finally, as has been pointed out by Schmidt *et al.*, in contrast to other census taken between 1880-1910, the Austrian censuses limited the recording of mother language to a single language instead of multiple. Interestingly, accommodation is made towards the disabled to register primary language according to the parents or *Stellvertreter* of the individual in question.⁶⁸

It should be obvious but bears reminding that statistics attempting to characterize the status of nationality bore no identifiable degree of precision; aside from the percentages themselves being little more than approximate, the designations of “German,” “Hungarian” and so forth captured virtually nothing of the genuine state. Various encounters with notes on travel and the peculiar situation of the Eastern provinces within the Empire (Galicia, Bukovina) highlight at once the challenges associated with the topic (i.e. asymmetric development within the empire ranging from highly developed to economically backwards) as well as guiding elements within (clear domination or privilege of singular ethnic groups

⁶⁶ „Beamte, die bei den Gerichts- und Staatsanwaltschaftlichen Behörden, sowie bei denjenigen Behörden, welche den Ministerien des Innern, der Finanzen, des Handels und des Aderbaues unterstehen, nach dem 1. Juli 1901 angestellt werden, haben die Kenntnise beider Landessprachen in Wort und Schrift nachzuweisen... Dieser Nachweis ist entweder gelegentlich der für den betreffenden Dienstweg vorgeschriebenen praktischen Prüfung, oder bei einer hierfür einges anzuberaumenden Prüfung, der sich der Beamte spätestens drei Jahre nach seinem Dienstantritte zu unterziehen hat, zu erbringen,“ „Badenische Sprachenverordnungen.“ Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Historisch Rechts- und Gesetztexte. Reichsgesetzblatt für die im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder XLV. Stück—Ausgegeben und versendet am 25. August 1890. Verordnung des Ministeriums des Innern vom 9. August 1890 betreffend die Vornahme der Volkszählung im Jare 1891. II., Belehrung zur Ausfüllung der Anzeigezettel, cf. Schmidt and Bietigheim-Bissingen.

⁶⁷ Some related statistics indeed distinguish between the Czech and Slovakian varieties, both of which display a degree of mutual intelligibility falling along a dialect continuum; Ruthenian, according to its present denomination, is a Western Slavic language spoken primarily in the Subcarpathian region of Western Ukraine, distinct from Ukrainian or Slovakian.

⁶⁸ Schmidt and Bietigheim-Bissingen. *Sprache, Nationalität und Recht: ein Vergleich zwischen den böhmischen Ländern und Belgien (1880-1938)*. Beiträge zur Rechtsgeschichte Österreichs. 2017.

over minority groups). Aside from complete lack of reference to differences in regional dialect in a predominantly agrarian and largely illiterate society, the recapitulation of national-linguistic characteristics does not take into account even major languages spoken by large portions of the population, notably Yiddish, spoken by a considerable portion of the Empire's 2 million Jewish inhabitants, as well as Roma, whose population is equally unrepresented in census reports for the Hungarian monarchy. Even for areas where the dominant languages are crudely represented, the final reflection in the statistical reports of the *Volkszählungen* are insufficient to relate any meaningful data on the national characteristics of the inhabitants. To take again the Bukovina, first falling under Austrian administration in 1774 following its separation from Moldova at the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-74, as an example, statistics related from the 1910 *Volkszählung* report but four languages spoken by the population of approximately 800,000 in 1910 with its capital of Czernowitz, or Chernivtsi, in present-day Western Ukraine: Ukrainian (38.4%), Romanian (34.4%), German (21.2%) and Polish (4.6%).⁶⁹ Here, distinction is necessary to more precisely understand the general status of the Ukrainian speaking population. According to exhaustive study of various census reports carried out in Bukovina beginning in 1774 as part of the Russian census of Moldova,⁷⁰ Romanians represented more than half of the population of the region, with an additional third comprised of Ukrainian speakers further distinguished between Ruthenians and Hutsulians, both terms not devoid of national character to describe the Ukrainian population of the Subcarpathian region of present-day Western Ukraine.⁷¹ Additional minorities present in the region according to the same source include Jews, Slovaks, Armenians, and Lipovenians, Russian Orthodox colonists, to offer no commentary on the distinction between the Moldovan and Romanian dialects characterizing the Romanian group.⁷² Such related statistics for but a small region on the fringe of the Cisleithanian frontier are exhausting; yet precisely due to its complex demographic structure, the historical region of Bukovina is worth additional scrutiny. Likewise, Czernowitz again provides an example of the meaning of the German speaking population for the metropolitan life of the Empire, for while Bukovina, at least at the time of its handing over to Habsburg possession in 1775, may be construed as an entity characteristic of the distinctly non-Austrian elements of the Empire, still its capital city Czernowitz through its cultural and

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ The "first general census of the Russian Empire" did not take place until 1897.

⁷¹ Ungureanu, Constantin. *Die Bevölkerung der Bukowina (von Besetzung im Jahr 1774 bis zur Revolution 1848)*, die Volkszählung von Bucovina. Centrul de Studiere a Populației. 2011.

⁷² Ibid.

institutional development throughout the Austrian administration period would come to reflect Viennese influence on the subject population. Perhaps precisely due to the non-Austrian character of the formerly Moldovan province, in October 1875, one hundred years after its integration into the Habsburg Empire, the *Franz Joseph Universität Czernowitz*, the final *k.u.k.* university of its type to be established in the Empire, was founded to coincide with the one-hundred-year celebration of the incorporation into the Habsburg Empire.⁷³

Die Landesstreitkräfte Österreich-Ungarns

It has been noted that the assembled administrative architecture of Austria-Hungary is the most significant factor in understanding the statistical management of the nationality question. Of the institutions within the Empire, the military (*Landesstreitkräfte Österreich-Ungarns*), from the time of the *Ausgleich* representing one of the joint-institutions of the double monarchy under single administration, remains one of the most significant institutions worthy of scrutiny in the Austro-Hungarian administrative system. As a product of the *Vielvölkerstaat*, the army, as the land, was comprised of national groups representing each corner of the Empire and, as such, organized its administrative structure along the lines of multiple languages. Historian Eric Blomm, who adopts a modernist approach in his analysis of the transformations in consciousness leading to the pan-European conflict in 1914, presents the following:

“The ministry of war alone, which absorbed a great proportion of aristocratic bureaucrats, supervised three separate armies: the Austrian, the Hungarian, and the combined Austro-Hungarian forces. And if this were not enough administrative effort, each of them housed a Babel of languages, all of which the officers were encouraged to learn and all of which were spoken at the ministry. The men of an army unit might be commanded in one language (commands, after all, are linguistically not very complex), but might have another *Dienstsprache* for technical expressions and a third *Regimentssprache* for use with other soldiers. Some regiments contained recruits who spoke three different native languages. One of them, containing Hungarians, Germans and Slovaks from a region of high emigration to America, even adopted English as their *Kommandosprache*. The officers had learned it at school, and the ranks had all picked up an adequate working vocabulary from America-bound friends and family members.”⁷⁴

To what extent the mishmash of languages affected the chain of command in the army is unclear; certainly in peacetime the delivery of orders did not experience any great

⁷³ Corbea-Hoisie, Andrei. *Czernowitz. Modernisierung an der Schwelle zur Moderne*. Laboratorien der Moderne. 2016.

⁷⁴ Blom, Philipp. *The Vertigo Years: Europe, 1900-1914*. Perseus Books Group, New York. 2008. p. 34.

impediment on the basis of nationality. In times of crisis the confusion of languages was more likely to be a cause for concern among the army; particularly for the First World War, several indications of confusion exist pointing to the challenge generated by the “Babel” of languages, with one *k.u.k.* officer’s exasperation at the practice of soldiers reporting their nationality to their commanding officer noted in an unpublished memoir (*“Im Kampfgraben alarmierte ich dann das Bataillon. Jeder Mann sollte mir im Vorbeigehen seine Nationalität nennen...Tscheche, Tscheche, Pole, Italiener, Deutscher, Pole, Tscheche, Tscheche, Pole, Pole, Italiener! Einer versteht den anderen nicht, der Kompanieführer versteht nur Deutsch! Nachdenklich ging ich in dieser Nacht heim!”*).⁷⁵ Here, Rothenburg again provides valuable clues as to which patterns of communication prevailed in the ranks of the Austro-Hungarian army; in 1901, nearly two-thirds of the standard units within the Army used at least two languages, utilizing combinations of German or Magyar with whichever language happened to predominate in any given company, with some units utilizing exclusively Slovak (2 units) or Rumanian (3) as their language of command, and yet others utilizing as many as three, with one unit noted as utilizing Hungarian, Rumanian and Ruthene at once.⁷⁶ The composition of the army according to nationality likewise yields unique insight into bureaucratic structure of the Empire along national lines if one considers the distribution of officers versus enlisted men. As noted by Rothenburg in his study of the Austro-Hungarian Army from its seminal stages with the arrival of the Charles V in 1522 through the end of the First World War, between 1901-1906, out of approximately twenty-nine thousand regular and reserve officers, the bulk serving one-year volunteer terms, the German-speaking element clearly prevailed ; whereas Germans made up only 24 percent of the population, in 1906 for every 1000 regular serving officers, 791 were German, thus rendering German-speakers three-times more represented in the officer corps than the general population, with the remaining officer corps composed of Magyars (97 per 1000 regular officers), Czechs (47 per 1000), Poles (23) and Serbs and Croats (22).⁷⁷ Rothenburg makes the astute observation that, where the officer corps was structured largely along class distinctions, the array of enlisted men more accurately reflected the ethnic composition of the empire. In 1906, for every 1000 enlisted men, 267 were Germans, 223 Hungarians, 135 Czechs, 85 Poles, 81 Ruthenes, 67

⁷⁵ The reference stems from a study of memoirs conducted at the University of Vienna, „... *Der da grübelnd in die Nacht ging, hieß August Urbanski, österreichisch –ungarischer Offizier in der k.u.k. Armee im ersten Weltkrieg. Das Manuskript seiner unveröffentlichten Lebenserinnerungen hat Tamara Scheer gefunden.*“ Scheer, Tamara. Gedenkjahr 1914 in acht Sprachen: Es ist Krieg, und einer versteht den anderen nicht. *Der Standard*. Vienna. 2014.

⁷⁶ Rothenburg, Gunter. *The Army of Francis Joseph*. Purdue University Press, 1976. Pp. 126-27

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 128-29.

Croats and Serbs, 64 Rumanians, 38 Slovaks, 26 Slovenes, and 14 Italians.⁷⁸ Such statistics reflect the simple observation that entry into a specialized class i.e., the officer corps, bore the prerequisite of a middle-class upbringing; thus, whereas the army as a whole was constituted more generally along the lines of the actual national structure of the empire, positions of privilege remained reserved for those nationalities more able to field a substantial middle-class, thus were German speakers more greatly represented among the officer ranks than the remaining nationalities. Most generally, if one utilizes statistics from the army to divine insights into the nationality question applicable to the Empire as a whole, it may be argued that a crude class system existed within the Empire, whereby German (and Hungarian) speakers formed an elite or dominant cultural unit, with the remaining nationalities falling in a distant second place. Outside of the military institutions, literacy rates further corroborate the concept of the nationality-class system which emerged within the Empire, with the highest rates of literacy in Hungary found among German speaking communities (70.7 per cent), followed by Hungarian (67.1 per cent), Croatian (62.5 per cent), Slovak (58.1 per cent), Serbian (51.3 per cent), Romanian (28.2 per cent), and Ruthenian (22.2 per cent).⁷⁹

Magyar Királyság

No commentary on Austria-Hungary is complete without extensive attention devoted to the Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen (Hungarian, *a Szent Korona Országai*), in 1900 representing the largest territorial entity in the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy comprising 19 million inhabitants or approximately 40 percent of the Empire's population.⁸⁰ The general census (*Népszámlálása*) carried out in Hungary in 1910 enumerates inhabitants of the Kingdoms of Hungary and Croatia-Slavonia, together constituting *Transleithania*, according to mother tongue (*a népesség anyanyelve*). Hungarians amounted to some 20 percent of the population within the entire Austro-Hungarian monarchy, thus representing the largest single national group in the Empire after Germans, themselves comprising approximately 23 percent of the population.⁸¹ Within the Kingdom of Hungary itself, Hungarian speakers, representing more than half of the entire population of Hungary and Croatia-Slavonia with 10 million

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Kaplan, Robert B., Baldauf, Richard B. *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. I: Hungary, Finland and Sweden*. 2005.

⁸⁰ Including the population of Croatia-Slavonia. See *Hungarológiai Alapkönyvtár. Magyarország a XX. Században. V. Népesség és társadalom*. "Population of Hungary." Babits Kiadó. Szekszárd, 1996-2000.

⁸¹ According to statistics from Freytag & Berndt, 1918. Freytag & Berndt. *G. Freytags Völker- und Sprachenkarte von Österreich-Ungarn. Vergleichende Grösse der Nationalitäten in Österreich-Ungarn—Perzentuelles Verhältnis der Nationalitäten in den größten Städten Österreich-Ungarns. Nach den neusten statistischen Veröffentlichungen bearbeitet*. Vienna. 1918.

primary speakers, predominated, followed by Roumanians with 2.9 million primary speakers, Germans (2 million), Slovaks (1.9 million), Croats (1.8 million), Serbs (1.1 million) and Ruthenians with 470,000 primary speakers.⁸² Yet whereas Hungarians represented the largest national group in Hungary, still the observation must be made that within the Hungarian portion of the monarchy approximately half of all inhabitants assumed an ethnic and linguistic identity distinct from the Hungarian. Given their robust numerical representation, commentary on the nature of the Hungarian language is warranted. With the exception of minority languages such as Gagauz, a variety of Turkish spoken in Moldavia and parts Southern Ukraine, Hungarian represented the sole language within the Empire falling outside of the Indo-European family of languages.⁸³ Given its stark lexical heterogeneity from other languages within the Indo-European group and agglutinative grammatical structure comprising 18 cases, Hungarian is considered an exceptionally difficult language to learn for speakers lacking contact in early life.⁸⁴ This lack of proximity to the neighboring languages groups, Slavic or Latin, has been cited as a potential factor in accelerating nationalist yearnings for speakers of other languages within Hungary.⁸⁵ Where consonance with the administrative language, Hungarian (*magyar nyelv*), may have been an unrealistic hope for practitioners of language policy in the Hungarian lands, the product of neighboring literary circles may have been far more accessible for speakers of Croatian or Serbian, who shared a common literary language both within and outside the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary.

Tremendous efforts were taken to revitalize the Hungarian language (*nyelvújítás*) beginning in the mid-19th century, most notably by Ferenc Kazinczy, who is credited with augmenting the Hungarian lexicon by such an extent that is argued that a plurality of words used in modern Hungarian speech represent direct descendants of words coined by the author in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.⁸⁶ Among the accomplishments attributed to Kazinczy include the introduction of approximately ten thousand words throughout the “reform period” (Hungarian *nyelvújítás*) comprising the establishment of new word constructions for

⁸² *Hungarológiai Alapkönyvtár*.

⁸³ Hungary in particular was also home to a considerable number of Romani speakers, an Indo-European language falling within the Indo-Aryan language group. Other minority languages are difficult to quantify using contemporary statistics taken at the national level. See Berger, Herbert. *Die Vielfalt der indischen Sprachen* in Rothermund, D. *Indien. Kultur, Geschichte, Politik, Wirtschaft, Umwelt. Ein Handbuch*. C.H. Beck, Munich. 1995. S. 101-110.

⁸⁴ Hungarian Academy of Sciences, University of Debrecen. *Klasszikus Magyar Irodalmi Textológiai Kutatócsoport*, Classical Hungarian Literary Textology Research Group, Ferenc Kazinczy. 2009.

⁸⁵ See Meillet, Antoine. *La Situation linguistique en Russie et en Autriche-Hongrie*. *Scientia*, vol. 23. Paris. 1918.

⁸⁶ Wurzbach, Constantin von. *Kazinczy, Franz*. In: *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*. 11. Theil. Kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei. Vienna. 1864. S. 97-110.

scientific and literary purposes in addition to the proliferation of contained dialect words throughout the Hungarian speaking lands.⁸⁷ Such contributions to the literary canon of the Hungarian half of the Monarchy cannot be underestimated. Among the most significant points along this line includes the late introduction of the Hungarian language as the official language of the Hungarian state in 1844, prior to which Latin served as the sole official language in legislative and administrative procedures.⁸⁸ Hereby we observe two facts: first, it can only be assumed that such extensive efforts to bolster the expressive potential of the language alone made possible the replacement of Latin, the language of a minority elite, with Hungarian, the language of the common people, as the official language of the Hungarian lands; second, the adoption of Hungarian as official language of the state in 1844, interestingly preceding only by a slight margin the revolutions of 1848. Further legal provisions to guarantee the status of minority languages include the Nationalities Law (Hung. *évi XLIV. törvénycikk a nemzetiségi egyenjogúság tárgyában*) of 1868 passed in Hungary under the liberal government of Count Gyula Andrássy, by which concessions were made notably in the “Croatian Slavonian countries” i.e., present-day Croatia.⁸⁹ It has been noted that the Slavic minorities within the Hungarian half of the monarchy were eager to make particular use of the *Gleichberechtigung aller Nationalitäten* as a means to upgrade the status of their respective language and culture relative to the German and Hungarian.⁹⁰ Where this observation should be regarded as weak at this stage in the presentation of the language question, still the remark serves as a further example of the pattern of “upgrading” single languages to a new legal height and status.

On the southern flank of the territory of Hungary proper, serious efforts to standardize the variants of Serbo-Croatian were arranged by philologists and linguists representing the literary elite of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia (“Carniola,” Slov. *Vojvodina Kranjska*) in the

⁸⁷ Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

⁸⁸ *A Pallas nagy lexikona* “Hivatalos nyelv,” Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár – Hungarian Electronic Library

⁸⁹ German *Nationalitätengesetze*, cf. Gogolak, Ludwig. *Ungarns Nationalitätengesetze und das Problem des magyarischen National- und Zentralstaates*, in HBM IJJ/2. 1980. Cf. Hungarian Electronic Library, “...that which the authorities are required to use in their official operation. In Hungary, with the exception of the Croatian Slavonian countries, the official language of the state was Latin for a long time. The III36. t.-c. since the Hungarian; however, the Act on National Equality (1868. XLIV. t.-c.) made significant concessions to non-Hungarian nationalities living in Hungary. In Rijeka H. is Italian. Throughout the territory of the Croatian-Slavonian countries, the language of both the legislature and the administration and legislation is Croatian (Section 56 of Act XXX of 1868), and even within the borders of the said countries H. is almost Croatian (§ 57). Submissions from Croatian-Slavonic countries in Croatian shall be accepted by the joint government and answered in the same language.”

⁹⁰ “Der steile Weg zu den Nationalitätengesetzen Zisleithaniens (1867) und Transleithaniens (1868)” in Vogel, Friedman, et al. *Linguistische Zugänge zu Konflikten in europäischen Sprachräumen—Korpus, Pragmatik, Kontrovers.* Universitätsverlag, Winter, Heidelberg. 2016. pp. 208.

mid-19th century, most notably through under direction of Serbian folklorist Vuk Karadžić finding expression in the Vienna Literary Agreement of 1850 (Serbo-Croat, *Bečki književni dogovor*). The Agreement, among other things, reminiscent of efforts to standardize German and Italian on the basis of a single extant dialect (the dialects spoken in the area of Saxony and Tuscan, respectively), foresaw the generation of a new Southern Slavic dialect to serve as a common literary language for Serbs and Croats alongside standardization of the Latin and Cyrillic scripts.⁹¹ As in the case of Magyar, such attempts to enhance and standardize the language of the Southern Slavs must be considered fundamental in the ultimate formation of the Croatian state, itself experiencing a degree of transformations from Habsburg rule to union with Yugoslavia and independence throughout the 20th century; though it has been noted by Dragica Malić in his work, *Development of the Croatian Literary Language*, that such reforms did not find genuine expression until well into the 20th century, when serious efforts to establish a standardized and grammatically uniform Croatian literary language were undertaken in Croatian literary circles.⁹²

These observations, however, fall secondary to the general process of oppressive language policy, not only in Austria-Hungary, but through the formation of the European state system more generally, by which the state or official language received preference and mandatory education in schools. In the Dual Monarchy, this phenomenon found significant expression in the process of Magyarization which formed the major policy of the Hungarian state following the *Ausgleich* of 1867, by which non-Hungarian nationals living within the Hungarian lands should adopt the Hungarian nationality and language. As noted by several commentators on the language policy of Hungary and Croatia-Slavonia, mandatory instruction of Hungarian in schools throughout the Kingdom of Hungary from the mid-19th century onward became a defining characteristic of the process of “Magyarization” taking place, by which the subject nationalities should assimilate into the Hungarian sphere of identity at the expense of local language and nationality. As such, modern-source commentary on the results of the census reports carried out by the Hungarian administration in Transleithania from 1880 onward concede to the doubtful figures contained in the census reports.⁹³ Several instances of the brutal Magyarization policies are cited in literature, with

⁹¹ Milisavac, Živan. *Jugoslovenski književni leksikon*. Novi Sad, Yugoslav Literary Lexicon. 1971.

⁹² Malić, Dragica. “Razvoj hrvatskog književnog jezika,” *Hrvatska gramatika*. Školska knjiga, Zagreb. 1997.

⁹³ Basic Library of Hungarology. Cf. *Publications Statistiques Hongroises. Nouvelle Série. 42. Volume. Recensement Général de la Population des Pays de la Sainte Couronne Hongroises, en 1910. Première Partie. Données Principales de la Population par Communes et par Hameaux, Colonies Plus Populeux. Par Ordre de M. Le Ministre Royal Hongrois du Commerce, Rédigé et Publié par l'Office Central de Statistique du Royaume de Hongrie*. Census reports published in dual language Hungarian-French text. Budapest. 1913.

the most salient comprising the closure of Slovak schools occurring the 1874 together with a law passed in 1879 mandating that Hungarian be spoken in all schools throughout the Kingdom as a mandatory subject.⁹⁴ With reference to Article 19 of the Constitution of Austria-Hungary, such measures can be interpreted as deliberately contrary to the guarantee of a multilingual state; nevertheless, several instances of the erroneous nature of this point of view must be addressed. First, such instances are often cited without reference to the many measures taken on the part of Hungarian authorities to institutionalize instruction of non-Magyar national languages in schools throughout the Kingdom, thereby constituting a “centrifugal” tendency of the state towards *Wahrung* and *Pflegung* of the minority languages.⁹⁵ Moreover, the establishment of Hungarian as the mandatory language of instruction pursuant to the Education Act in 1879 applied to state schools where Hungarian was the accepted nationality; in practice, non-Hungarian communities remained free to instruct pupils in the preferred community language as guaranteed by the Nationalities Law.⁹⁶ Nor can it be suggested that the policy to strengthen the status of Hungarian in schools throughout the Kingdom was without advantage; as has been observed by Hobsbawm and corroborated further by evaluation of demographic data and relative mobility, proficiency in the dominant state language to a native level served as a near prerequisite to entry into the privileged career classes; granting minorities within the Kingdom subsidized access to the administrative apparatus of the state, or, as formulated by Marác, “[It is wrong to suggest that] the introduction of the teaching of Hungarian, the official language as a compulsory subject a few hours a week was a grave mistake made by the Hungarian state, for in this way the non-Hungarian citizens could have been included in the communicational networks of the state.”⁹⁷

Thus, on the subject of the policies of the Hungarian state, it must be stated that two perspectives stand out from the literature; those sympathetic to the Dual Monarchy, and those focused on its undermining. The former are concentrated primarily along similar loyalist terms, whereas the latter range from the critical to purely artificial designs aimed at dismantling the Dual Monarchy on the basis of contrived nationalistic hostilities. This latter

⁹⁴ The law in question is

⁹⁵ Cf. Berecz

⁹⁶ “State schools” amounted to only 12 per cent of all primary schools in Hungary. Marác, László. Multilingualism in the Transleithanian part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918): Policy and Practice. *Jezikoslovlje*. 2012. For the law establishing Hungarian as a mandatory language of instruction, refer to the Education Act XVIII of 1879 (1879. évi XVIII. törvénycikk a magyar nyelv tanításáról a népoktatási tanintézetekben, in Szentesítve: 1879. V. 22. Kihirdetve: az országgyűlés képviselőházában 1879. V. 24., a főrendek házában 1879. V. 25.).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

device, quite expectably, found expression beyond the decisive timeframe of 1880-1910 when the nationalities had already entered open confrontation, as in 1915 with the formation of a “Czech Legion” in Russia and formation of an independent Czecho-Slovak army composed partially of recruits in the United States and prisoners of war stranded in Italy.⁹⁸ Taken together, it is difficult to assess to what extent such policies were truly oppressive, as framed for those hostile to the Dual Monarchy, or benign. The following passage stems from an allied perspective of the monarchies comprising the Central Powers throughout the First World War. Where its tone is exaggerated and caustic, still the perspective of the Hungarian state as an oppressive obstacle to the nationalist aspirations of non-Hungarian groups is well positioned as tied closely to the policies of Count István Imre Lajos Pál Tisza de Borosjenő et Szeged, or Count Tisza, who served as Prime Minister of the Hungarian state from 1903-1905, and, as the Kingdom itself, has attracted criticism on the part of nationalist observers within the Empire unsympathetic towards the designs of the Liberal Party to strengthen Hungarian as the guiding national element within the Kingdom:

“... But the Magyars tried to suppress the language, schools, and culture of the subject races...Indeed, the present war arose quite as much out of the question of Austria-Hungary and its subject nationalities as it did out of the German ambition to dominate Europe. Even German love of domination would not alone have sufficed to set the whole world on fire, had not German Culture been in alliance with a force equally regardless of the rights of others, the determination of the Magyars of Hungary to “Magyarize” the Rumanians, Slovaks, and Croats who swelt within the borders of their State. In theory the law of 1868 gave cultural liberty to the Slavs in Hungary, but in practice this law was a dead letter. The whole Government machinery was used to oppress any man who wished to remain a Slav or Rumanian, or to bring up his children as such. The policy of the Hungarian Premier, Count Tisza, represents this ‘will to oppress’ on the part of the Magyars. The Magyars numbered only 45 per cent of the population of Hungary. And Count Tisza’s policy was not even the policy of the Magyar nation, but of the Magyar oligarchy who deprived even their own race of all political power.”⁹⁹.

As such, the policies of the Liberal Party under the leadership of Count Tisza and the Hungarian State have been identified as characteristic elements of Magyarization policy within the territories of the Kingdom of Hungary by the turn of the 20th century. Nevertheless, coupled with the above mentioned observations, it is false to suggest that the non-Magyar nationalities were concerned purely with liberation from the monarchy; commentary in Hungary itself on the part of non-Hungarian elites and national

⁹⁸ Rothenburg, pp. 212.

⁹⁹ Dumba, Constantine and Trevelyan, G.M. “Austria Finds Danger in the Balkans,” essay from *Source records of the Great War*, editor-in-chief, Charles F. Horne, Ph. D., directing editor, Walter F. Austin, LL. M., with a staff of specialists.

representatives spoke in favor of preservation of the monarchy precisely due to its role as a unifying entity in Central Europe. An article published in *Slovenský týždenník* as late as July 1914 makes an appeal to the Slovak peasantry equating the Dual Monarchy with a national homeland.

We, Slovaks, have always been devoted to the Habsburg Empire based on the equality of nations. Devotees of an empire the late Franz Ferdinand wanted to create [...] We are more in need of an empire like this than the Romanians, the Southern Slavs or the Germans in Austria. Because if the Habsburg Empire dissolves, the Romanians find a homeland in Romania, the Southern Slavs in Serbia, the Germans in Germany. It is only us who have nowhere to join. Nowhere is national future safeguarded for us more than within the framework of a just Habsburg Empire.¹⁰⁰

The First General Census of the Population of the Russian Empire for the Year 1897

The general census carried out in Russia is useful for comparison with the *Volkszählungen* for several reasons, suffice it to say that Imperial Russia, like Austria-Hungary, represented a multiethnic state with—at its core—a hereditary imperial system; as such, comparison of the statistical approaches to the nationality question within each state is a useful exercise in its own right. The following data was obtained under the title of the “First General Census of the Population of the Russian Empire for the Year 1897” (*Pervaya vseobščaja perepis' naseleniya Rossiyskoy Imperii 1897 goda*).¹⁰¹ As in the case of the *Österreichische Nationalstatistik*, the General Census in Russia yielded linguistic tables apparently representing the national structure of the empire. As in the case of Austria, these figures require significant dissection in order to understand their true properties, nevertheless an overview is useful for comparative purposes. The census identifies more than ninety nationalities of which nineteen can be considered major (amounting to at least 170 thousand inhabitants) and seven amounted to at least 2 per cent of the population (in descending order, Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, Belarussians, (Yiddish speaking) Jews, and Fins), this out of a total population of 125 million. The census carried out in imperial Russia thus comprises a far greater quantity both in terms of absolute number of inhabitants, as well as in consideration

¹⁰⁰ *Slovenský týždenník*, 3 July 1914. Janek, Istvan. The Invasion of the Hungarian Territories of Austria-Hungary. *Bulgaria and Hungary in the First World War: a view from the 21st Century*. Budapest-Sofia. 2020.

¹⁰¹ Demographic Institute of Higher School of Economics, Moscow (*Institut demografii NIU «Vysšaja škola èkonomiki»*), *Pervaja Vseobščaja perepis' naselenija Rossijskoj Imperii 1897 g. Pod red. N.A. Trojnickogo. t.II. Obščij svod po Imperii rezul'tatov razrabotki dannyh Pervoj Vseobščej perepisi naselenija, proizvedennoj 28 janvarja 1897 goda. S.-Peterburg, 1905. Tablica XIII. Raspredelenie naselenija po rodnomu jazyku*. 2020. Excludes the population of Finland.

of territory, the Russian Empire in 1895 covering a total area of nearly 23 million square kilometers, or nearly thirty-seven times the territory of Austria-Hungary.¹⁰²

Table II¹⁰³

Rank	Nationality	Number	Percentage of population
	Russian (“Great Russians”)	55,667,469	44.31%
	Ukrainians (“Little Russians”)	22,380,551	17.81%
	Turkic-Volga Bulgar	13,373,867	10.64%
	Poles	7,931,307	6.31%
	Byelorussians (“White Russians”)	5,885,547	4.68%
	Yiddish (“Yevreysky”)	5,063,156	4.03%
	Fins (comprises Fins, Estonians, etc.)	3,502,147	2.79%
	Germans (“Nemetsky”)	1,790,489	1.43%
	Latvian	1,435,937	1.14%
	Karvelians (Georgians, Mingrelians)	1,352,535	1.08%
	Lithuanian	1,210,510	0.96%
	Armenian	1,173,096	0.93%
	Romanians, Moldovans	1,121,669	0.89%
	Dagestani	1,091,782	0.87%
	Samogitian	448,022	0.36%
	Tajik	350,397	0.28%
	Greeks	186,925	0.15%
	Bulgarians	172,659	0.14%
	Ossetians	171,716	0.13%

The methodology of the census carried out in Russia bears several similarities to that carried out in Cisleithania, the most salient feature of each being the limitation of nationality according to the entry of a single mother language which, in the final product of the census reports, yields tables outlining percentages of inhabitants according to nationality. However, unlike in the Austrian census, the Russian census report is more straightforward in its definition of “mother tongue” (*Rodnoj yezik*), as captured in a preserved copy of the General Census Form (1897) in the Kiev Governorate in present Ukraine:

“Enter here the language which you consider to be your native.”¹⁰⁴

Unsurprisingly, Russians made up the single largest linguistic group falling within the Tsarist realm’s 1897 borders, amounting to approximately 55.6 million or 44.3% out of a

¹⁰² Cf. Headlam, J.W. Austria-Hungary. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition. Cambridge. 1911.

¹⁰³ Demographic Institute of Higher School of Economics, Moscow

¹⁰⁴ Kiev Governorate, 1897. Kyiv State Archives, Kyiv, Ukraine. Translated from the Russian. «Здесь вписывается название того языка, который каждый считается для себя родным. Для русского языка достаточно обозначительны «Р», для малороссийского «М.Р.», для болгарского «Б.Р.», прочие языки должны быть прописаны полностью, напр. польский, французский, английский, немецкий, еврейский, татарский, мордовский, и и. д.»

total population of 125.6 million.¹⁰⁵ It must be stressed that indication of Russian as one's mother tongue did not constitute belonging to a single or even approximate ethnic group as might indication of Kipchach or Uzbek.¹⁰⁶ The relative closeness of Russian ("Great Russian") and Ukrainian ("Little Russian"), as well as Belorussian ("White Russian"), though a subject of great debate and not politically uncharged, might also be highlighted as a distinguishing feature of the Russian Empire as a majority Slavic nation than Austria, whose proportion of Slavic speakers according to the census of 1910 amounted to approximately one-half of the Monarchy. With the designation "Little Russia" (Russian *Malorossiya*), we reach an inverse observation to those regarding progressive efforts to embed dialects into the literary heritage of a people; namely, the part on the Russian cultural milieu within the Russian Empire to reduce the status of neighboring ethno-linguistic groups to mere "dialects" of the Great Russian variant. The initial etymology of the word assumes no such view of superiority of the word, referring instead merely to the greater and lesser territories of the *Rus'*, or territory forming present-day Russia and Ukraine.¹⁰⁷

Despite the framework of reference for its use and appearance in 19th century literature, there is irony contained in the statement; whereas great continuity exists among the Slavic languages in lexicon, the bulk deriving from Proto-Slavic and later from the constructed Old Church Slavonic by the Byzantine missionaries Cyril and Methodius, Russian represents an anomaly within the Slavic language family, bearing a great portion of its derived words from Mongolian and Turkic ("Tatar"). Historian Richard Pipes makes several critical observations to this point: unlike the remaining Slavic languages, and in part borrowing a great deal portion of their vocabulary from Latin and German, Russian bears several vestiges of Mongo-Turkic rule in Old Russia, particularly in the realm of administration, commerce, storage, transport, finance, possession, and repression; thus the Russian words for "chains" (*kandali*), "treasury" (*kazna*), "money" (*denga*), "customs" (*tamozhnia*) all derive from Mongo-Tartar origin.¹⁰⁸ The observation at first glance may seem superficial, but in actuality may be considered paramount to the distinct development of Russia as an authoritarian "dominion," the sole property of a single ruler, and to the oriental heritage of Russia distinguishing its course of cultural development from that of the Slavic areas in closer proximity to the West.¹⁰⁹ Yet even controlling to exclude speakers of

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Even this comparison is imprecise and does not reflect a fair blanket assessment of ethnic diversity in Russia.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Fasmera, Max. "Malorossi," *Etymological Dictionary of the Russian Language*. Moscow. 1986.

¹⁰⁸ Pipes, Richard. *Russia Under the Old Regime*. London, 1974. Pp. 74.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. Pipes identifies "patriarchal dominion" as the critical driving force in the creation of the Russian state.

Ukrainian and Belorussian according to the 1897 census, native Russian speakers carried a greater plurality than did German speakers in Austria. Moreover, unlike in the case of Austria-Hungary, dominion was wielded not by a network of nobility strewn across multiple nationalities each representing substantial portions of the population, but was concentrated in a single dynasty, the House of Romanov, which chosen the Russian as its preferred ethnic attribute. By this assessment, then, it can be argued that the Russian Empire was “Russian” at its core, a feat so far removed from the German element in Austria that the former, despite its greater degree of ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity, can only be considered to have carried greater nationalistic potential in the long term than the former; and indeed, while the Austria-Hungary would never unite as a similar territorial and ethnic unit following its dissolution in 1918, the Russian Empire, despite the ravages of the civil war which would ensure within its borders following the ousting of the Tsar, bore after 1922 a clear territorial successor with a common language and social-economic system to unite its satellite republics.

In a similar way that Austrian literature has remained homogenous in its illustration of heroes and society, so too must it be considered ironic that Pan-Slavism is a Russian and not an Austrian creation. Ironic if one considers that the former, despite its fantastic superiority in size remained decidedly homogenous as it pertains to the diversity of Slavic languages spoken within its borders—its (Slavic) peoples, persecuted or not and for whichever reason, and with only the most modest exemptions if one considers the concessions granted at various stages throughout its projects of Russification, remained united under the Orthodox and thus Russian yoke. The instance becomes more logical if one considers Pan-Slavism to be a deliberate act of foreign-policy designed to weaken rival powers’ grip upon their own national enclaves vis-à-vis the Tsarist regime in its quest for security of passage in South-Eastern Europe. And still the matter must be discussed at greater length: where the Austrians sought to squash the representation of Slavic languages through the preferential use of German within the Empire’s borders (school closures), the Kremlin exploited the variegated Slavic presence in South-Eastern Europe as a means to expand and consolidate its own sphere of influence. Most critically, the comparison of the census taken in Russian within the same time frame as the *Volkszählungen* carried out in Austria between 1880-1910 bears several insights that permit greater understanding of the interplay of pressure from national groups and administrations more generally: First, despite the large extent of nationalities, the Russian census of 1897 tends to concentrate its focus on a small number of nationalities, further taking a blanket approach to Eastern Slavic groups (Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian) into a unified Russian block, hence “Great Russians,” “Little Russians,” and “White Russians,”

from the point of view of the demographic survey carried out at the hands of the Russian imperial administration, form two-thirds of the population of an empire uniting perhaps the most diverse range of ethnic and linguistic groups throughout the Eurasian continent of any modern state at the end of the 19th century; second, and in a similar vein, the census, if its results are to be taken as accurate, then the Russian state possessed a majority ethnic element (Russian) while the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy system did not; finally, it can be stated that quantification of inhabitants according to national linguistic criteria was primarily a political exercise, but with no predictable outcome; where statistics were manipulated and used to achieve political ends in Austria during and after their completion, in Russia the process of Russification, or blatant suppression of non-Russian ethnic groups, as in Poland (1831-33, 1841-47, 1863-64) or Ukraine (1917-1922). Taken together, the census reports of both Austria and Russia were an exercise first and foremost of *state* authority, and not representative of initiative on the part of the nationalities themselves.

Conclusion

The nationality question in Austria-Hungary, even if assessed in the short timeframe of 1880-1910, is immense, short forays into uncovering the forces behind the formation of nationalities in the 19th century an incomplete task at best. A survey of the systemized legal architecture collectively forming the “language policy” of Austria-Hungary represents the basis of such a foray, while the meaning of local political imperatives, and, crucially, the influence of cultural elites together represent a united force in the national genesis preceding the formation of national frontiers in the early 20th century. This process of national formation then found “physical” expression in the publication of statistical reports, from the very beginning through their methodology setting the unattainable task of providing a descriptive survey of the realm according to single national identities which, by 1880, displayed highly variegated and often merely rudimentary approaches to formation in any actual sense, but accelerated through the progressive application of statistical methods to describe populations and efforts on the part of a literary elite to resuscitate and standardize language, and thus common identities at the national level, through linguistic reform. This process, in turn, has oft been likened to a story of national struggle, in the case of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary pinning “oppressed” national groups within the empire against their German or Magyar masters; this story of national struggle has taken on replication in popular fiction, as the Habsburg authority in Northern Italy has come to invoke, as well as finding expression in genuine historical episodes, including the dramatic scenes following the

Sprachenverordnungen of Badeni. Taken together, the nationality question has come to define the ultimate process of dissolution of the *Vielvölkerstaat*, the leadership of which is judged precisely for their inability to make good on their promises to the nationalities to enjoy greater prestige and autonomy within a kingdom of half-compromises; however, critical surveyors of the Dual Monarchy should caution against taking a deterministic approach to the nationality question on the Old Continent, for the legal architecture in place alone is a testament to the conscious effort on the part of the Austrian and Hungarian administrations to provide solution for the inhabitants of the Dual Monarchy to the nationality question despite the primacy of German and Hungarian interests in providing direction to the affairs of the state and Austro-Hungarian society; the latter ethnic groups, by the final stages of the Dual Monarchy, had achieved sufficient privilege by 1880-1910 to be considered of highest status in the monarchy according precisely to their language and ethnic belonging, while the conciliatory practice of “compromises” had extended only weakly to the highly developed national groups within the Empire, and never would reach a point of even precarious equilibrium. The results of the *Volkszählungen* of 1880-1910 and similar conscious efforts on the part of imperial administrations by the end of the 19th century thus serve as testaments of the obsessive preoccupation with quantification according to nationalistic lines on the part of imperial bureaucracy which outlived the administrations themselves. Where the nationalities can be said to have been “imagined” by a cultural elite combining representation models stemming from literature and contemporary “scientific” and statistical conceptions of ethnicity as reflected in population and census reports, the actual enforcement of policy utilized such conceptions as guiding elements in the formation of policy in the 19th century. In conclusion, the adoption of language as the defining criterium for nationality on the part of policymakers together with the formal quantification of inhabitants along national-linguistic lines informed policy of 19th century international politics, finding expression both in the legal architecture evolving around the nationality question as well as in real policy outcomes concerning population and state boundaries following the dissolution of Austria-Hungary in 1919.

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