Imperial Loyalties: Pluralism of Belonging, Territories, and Spaces in the 19th Century

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Abstract

The Habsburg Monarchy has often been called a "Europe en miniature." A diversity of political territories and spaces, nations and nationalities, languages, denominations, and churches was typical throughout the 19th century. This article addresses the complexity with a fresh approach. Drawing on the new history of emotion, it combines new perspectives of territories, spaces, and loyalties in order to shed fresh light on nation building processes within the empire.

Post-Habsburg loyalties and identities, with their historical territorial references, still permeate our everyday experiences. My deli merchant from next door, where I buy Romanian specialties, sees himself first and foremost as a Transylvanian Saxon from Sibiu, or Hermannstadt as he would call it. My Prague relatives and colleagues distinguish among themselves according to language melody and mentality, who comes from which of the former Habsburg regions of Moravia, Silesia, or Bohemia. When I sit together with a glass of wine in Vienna, Graz, Klagenfurt, or elsewhere, having a chat with Austrian colleagues, they introduce me to a variety of identities of Styrians, Tyroleans, Vorarlbergers, or Carinthians, albeit with a wink of irony.

In this article, I pursue the question of how the interweaving of loyalties, territories, and spaces can be described historically. I do not perceive territories and spaces solely as important structural-historical elements of the comparative history of empires, which I touch on in the first part of this article, which looks to Russia, China, and the USA. Territories and spaces are also essential for the social and cultural history of politics and emotion, and are often neglected in this area. In the second part, I analyze the example of the Habsburg Monarchy, where territories and spaces have shaped the emotional affiliation of individuals and groups with long-term consequences for both German and non-Germans. Conversely, as the third section demonstrates, deeply felt or convincingly propagated affiliations have created political spaces and sometimes even lead to the creation of new political territories.

Imperial Pluralism of Territories and Spaces

In imperial contexts, loyalty has to be thought of in the plural (Osterkamp and Schulze Wessel 2016, 9). Whereas in the modern nation-state the inculcation of loyalties focuses on "the nation, right or wrong," in empires, the inculcation of loyalties has to address multiethnic and multiconfessional

societies and has to take place at territorially layered levels. Thus, imperial loyalties mirror both the societal diversity and the territorial multi-tieredness of empires. The attempt of this article is to overcome the traditional focus on national loyalties and nationalism within the framework of the rising nation state in the 19th century. Instead, it aims at strengthening the perspective of territories and spaces for a broader understanding of loyalty, identity, and affiliation, with a special focus on border regions.

The pluralism of territories and spaces is considered one of the most important characteristics of empires (Maier 2006, 34). *Territories* have geographically fixed *borders*, within which state rule is exercised as a permanent activity of local and regional authorities. Instead, *spaces* mark existing and imagined differences between economic orders, nations, language groups, or religions, and do not always have clear borders, but sometimes only approximate and fuzzy demarcations and *boundaries* (Middell and Naumann 2010, 159).

The inherent pluralism of territories and spaces distinguishes empires from modern nation states. Empires are traditionally considered to be spatially constantly expanding, legally complex dominions. The political division of space into uniform territories, on the other hand, is assigned to the modern nation state based on uniform principles of power and administrative construction. Legal, political, and sociological thinkers defined the nation state by referring to the principle of "one state, one nation, one territory" (Breuer 2004; Kersten 2000). Albeit imperial rulers were also driven by the strong political desire to unify their territories, they often integrated newly conquered territories by upholding local legal systems and later did not find the political strength and the needed financing or lost the political will to complete a territorialization process according to uniform principles (Deak 2015).

Interestingly, not only the unity of the modern state, but also the diversity of imperial territories historically emerged from a similar political desire, the wish for rationalization of rule (Osterhammel 2010, 168–173). If one compares the three empires China, the USA, and Russia with each other, these imperial territorialization efforts become obvious. In China, as an empire that was bureaucratically organized already early on, the territorial schemes date back to the Middle Ages; the number and borders of the Chinese provinces have hardly changed since the 17th century. The Chinese provinces have thus not grown historically, but were administrative constructs. More obviously, the plan-square scheme of the American states, which still characterizes the political geography of the United States today, was created in an "artificial" way. It corresponded to the will of the American founding fathers for administrative unambiguity. This grid sought to dominate the North American continent rationally and reaches down to the famous agricultural grid-system at a local scale. In the Russian empire, imperial territoriality was to develop around urban centers. Under Catherine II (reign 1762–1796), the governorships (the later governorates) were each grouped around a city as an administrative center, although not all governorships and governorates in Russia developed a comparable intensity of administrative rule. The order of the imperial territories was always multitiered and reached down from large to smaller ruling units. In some of these territories, multiple loyalties developed in a similar way.

The Habsburg empire followed a complex path of territorialization. The era of enlightenment with its unifying centralization efforts under the Empress Maria Theresa (reign 1740–1780) and the emperor Joseph II (co-regent 1765–1780, regent 1780–1790) stood in contrast to the imperial narrative of being a composite monarchy consisting of historical lands, based on the so-called Pragmatical Sanction of 1713 that had been popularized before and became the official narrative in the Vormärz (pre-March 1848) period again (Godsey 2018; Schennach 2020; Osterkamp 2020, 46–49). Large-scale administrative territories with central authorities in Vienna, subordinate *Statthaltereien* (governorships), and districts shaped the picture on the one hand – a territorial diversity "from above." On the other hand, until 1918 the Austrian crownlands and even the Hungarian *Komitate* (counties) also asserted themselves as administrative territories – a territorial diversity "from below." The complex setting of territorialization "from above" and "from below" led to an even more complex inculcation of loyalties in the Habsburg than in other imperial territories.

As imperial territories, imperial *spaces* were also scaled differently – with immediate effects on the emerge of loyalties (these different scales inform our understanding of transnational history, see Patel [2010], Hadler, Middell [2017]). A typical example of an imperial space is *frontier*. In Chinese, American, and Russian imperial history, frontiers are understood as contact zones that are characterized by economic exchange and societal relations between different ethnic groups and denominations on the one hand, but are politically contested sides on the other (Osterhammel 2010, 471). For a long time, borders of empires were typically frontiers. In the USA, the frontier shifted westward in the course of the state-building process. In the Russian case, the expansion of the state to the east, to Siberia, is described by at least some historians as a frontier because it was also accompanied by a Russian settlement policy and a cultural appropriation of Siberia in Russian collective memory (Rieber 2004; Bassin 1999). Between Russia and China, the Mongolian territory was a disputed contact zone with economic exchange relations and religious conflicts (Rieber 2015). In the east and south of the Habsburg Monarchy, "frontiers" were located in Galicia, Bukovina, and in Croatia-Slavonia with its military border. These areas formed a military defense belt against the Russian and Ottoman empires (Marin 2012). The Bosnia-Herzegovina region had also been treated as a militarily contested "frontier" before it was conquered and incorporated through the Berlin Treaty of 1878 and annexed in 1908 (Donia 2015).

Territorial Diversity and Multiple Loyalties

The history of emotion and loyalties enriches our understanding of the history of territories and spaces, which has mostly been described as a history of power or economy (Mann 2012, 1984; Komlosy 2018). The history of loyalties shows, how political territories and spaces have always been and still are tied to specific social groups, which cannot be overlooked in historical observation and can be related to each other in new ways (Nellen and Stockinger 2017). The Habsburg pluralism of territories and spaces, according to my thesis, offered the empire the opportunity to integrate very different social loyalties. The territorial diversity of the Habsburg Monarchy thus corresponded to multi-level loyalties in society and thus contrasted deeply with the ideal of merely homogenous nation state.

The intertwining history of loyalties, territories, and spaces provides new answers to old questions of comparative history of empires: what held them together and why did they disintegrate (Berger and Miller 2015; Stockwell 2013; Hirschhausen and Leonhard 2011; Motyl 2001; Barkey and Hagen 1997)? The more recent history of empires no longer characterizes "empire" solely in terms of its characteristics of hugeness, great power, military expansion or colonies (imperialism), or the asymmetry of the center-peripheries-distribution of power and resources. Social diversity with a multiethnic and multi-confessional population is now seen as a central feature as well.

For empires, more than for nation-states, the territorial order of rule had to take into account the possible diversity of social, economic, ethno-national, or confessional loyalties. Conceptually, loyalties encompass not only their outward expression by behavior, but also the inner realm of emotion (Osterkamp and Schulze Wessel 2016). Here, the new history of emotions comes center stage (Frevert 2014). Typically, empires were characterized by a political culture of subtle differences with multi-level, hierarchically ordered loyalties. Despite the formal legal equality of nationalities after 1867, this also applied to the Habsburg Monarchy (Judson 2016). It was part of everyday political life that the Austrian German-speaking group and the Hungarian-speaking one were considered privileged compared to the other groups.

A hierarchy of loyalties followed from the multilevel nature of territorial rule. The first case demonstrates that the multilevel nature of the rule order affected not only the mutual relationship of peoples, but also a single community. The territorial frames of the political loyalties within the German-speaking population were multiple too, even if this group was mostly perceived as a unified one at that time and today. These multiple loyalties existed not only in the imperial peripheries, but also in the imperial center (on this in the next part).

Afterwards in this article, the focus changes in a twofold way. On the one hand, it is no longer a question of how rule shaped loyalties. Instead, I ask how marginalized groups developed certain spatial concepts from their political loyalties. What was the contribution of their loyalties to the spatialization of domination in an empire? Second, the focus is no longer on the imperial core, but on the peripheries.

Unintended Openness: Two "German" Empires in One Loyalty

The intertwined history of Habsburg loyalties, territories, and spaces reveals particularities in comparison with other European empires. Typically, the territorially and spatially overlapping character of imperial loyalties is seen as a feature of the population and subjects in the imperial borderlands, peripheries, and frontiers (Osterkamp and Schulze Wessel 2016, 9). For a long time however, German-speaking inhabitants of the Habsburg Monarchy could not relate their imperial loyalty to one clear-cut territory or political space, too. They experienced an uncertainty of loyalty and identity that became pressing in times of crisis. Here, I do not allude so much to the various territorial losses when, for example, the Italian provinces broke away in the second half of the 19th century. The ambiguous relationship of Germans' loyalties, territories, and political spaces has to be traced back to the dualist domination of the Viennese rulers. The Habsburgs were leading monarchs both in their "own" dynastical territories and in the Holy Roman empire (until 1806) or the German Confederation (1815–1866). Hence, questions of emotional affiliation were touched in a special way. Habsburg loyalties of the German-speaking group referred to two different cores, the two "empires" – "Germany" and "Austria" – while the territorial and spatial meaning of the "Germanys" and "Austrias" in the 19th century was constantly shifting.

The intimate connoisseur of the 19th century Wolfram Siemann has argued Austrian emperors stood in a similar relationship to the German Confederation as did the kings of England, Prussia, Denmark, and the Netherlands: metaphorically speaking, each of them had one foot in the German Confederation (Siemann 2016, 786). Thus, all these rulers had to deal with the ruling institutions of the German Confederation in Frankfurt, where the royal elections were held before 1806, in Regensburg, where the German Ambassadors, the *Gesandten,* met, or in Wetzlar, where the Imperial Court (*Reichsgericht*) settled disputes between member states and thus limited in their rule.

However, I take a different stance. The rulers in the Vienna Hofburg were not monarchs *in* the Holy Roman empire or, after 1815, *in* the German Confederation like other European rulers from Britain, the Netherlands or elsewhere. The Habsburgs were the centuries-long ruler *of* the Holy Roman empire. Due to the prominent rule of the Habsburgs as emperors of the old empire, the political intertwining of both territories was inextricably linked, even though both orders of rule never merged into a single territory (Mat'a 2019, 30; Gotthard 2019, 372). If one compares the special nature of the Habsburg empire with other European empires, this dualistic hegemony was matched by ambiguous loyalties of its elites, subjects, and nationalities. It would not have occurred to any of the English king's subjects to extend their royal allegiance and loyalty to the king to his German territories in Hanover. In Austria the case was different.

Historically, the "territorial openness" of Habsburg German loyalties can be most clearly seen in the period after the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and in the revolutionary years of 1848–1849. Leading politicians in Austria, including State Chancellor Clemens von Metternich, thought in the pre-March period of the relationship between the German Confederation and the Habsburg Monarchy in the form of a composite but single empire (Siemann 2016, 789). For the European great power status of Germany and Austria, they considered the federal construct to be cumbersome but nevertheless indispensable. The territorial openness of Habsburg loyalties among Germans, however, became even more evident in 1848. When the first revolutionary National Assembly of the German Confederation began to meet in Frankfurt in spring 1848, numerous German-Austrian deputies took also part in the negotiations. They dreamt of a united and reformed

German state that included the Habsburg hereditary lands. This hope increased when a Habsburg Archduke, Johann, was appointed provisional imperial administrator (*Reichsverweser*) of Germany. The *Wiener Gassen-Zeitung* expected him to "to seize the wheel of Germany with a strong hand and an honest will […] Thy kingdom come, amen" ("Wird der Erzherzog Johann deutscher Reichsverweser werden wollen?", July 5 1848, 118).

For centuries, the Habsburg Monarchy and the Holy Roman empire or German Confederation had territorially interlocked like two tectonic plates. Though this overlapping of powers never was complete, the hereditary lands with multiple territorial affiliations to the Habsburg empire and the German Confederation were: the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Archduchies of Upper and Lower Austria, the Duchies of Styria, Carinthia and Carniola, the Margraviate of Moravia, Istria the County of Tyrol, Görz-Gardisca, Trieste, as well as Austrian-Silesia. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Salzburg and the Diocese of Trento had initially been independent clerical territories of the Old German empire, before they were secularized and then fell under Habsburg rule after the Napoleonic Wars; they further consolidated the monarchy as the Catholic supremacy of the German states (Gotthard 2019, 360). The kingdom of Galicia-Lodomeria, the kingdom of Lombardo-Venetia, and the lands of the Hungarian Crown of St. Stephen as well as Dalmatia lay outside the Holy Roman empire and the German Confederation respectively.

The revolutionary year 1848 brought the openness of affiliations and loyalties into the streets. The former imperial equation of the two "German" empires in one loyalty was reversed by the new revolutionary equation of "one nation, one state." In many Habsburg lands that belonged to the German Confederation, some German-speaking inhabitants positioned themselves as "all-Germans." In March 1848, the black-red-gold flag flew on the Schlossberg in Graz, as it did on St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna or in the streets of Berlin, Frankfurt, or Dresden. In the debates on the territorial reorganization of Central Europe, in Frankfurt's Paulskirche, or in the Austrian Reichstag in Kremsier, the focus was never solely on democratization, parliamentarization, the abolition of serfdom, and the further equalization of society, but also on the nationalization of state-building.

Unlike in other European states, the political question of belonging, territory, and space was at stake in an elementary way both for the elites in the center and the rural population in the margins of the peripheries. Some Germans understood their imagined revolutionary new state as a "Reich" in a hegemonic-imperial sense, which would encompass both the federated German territories and the Habsburg territories. The famous catchword for this option became the seventy-million-strong empire (so called *Siebzigmillionenreich*) under the Austrian Schwarzenberg government (Doering-Manteuffel 1991). Other Germans wanted a new state under national auspices and felt connected in a cultural and linguistic community that no longer enclosed the non-German population and realms of the Eastern member states Prussia or Austria (Wollstein 1977). Still other "Germans" understood affiliation in a historical sense, so they considered themselves primarily as Tyroleans, Styrians, Bohemians, or Bavarians, and only secondarily as "Germans" (Langewiesche 2008; Bruckmüller 1996, 159–199).

In 1848, the tectonic overlap of two political territories intensified the earthquake in Central Europe caused by the revolution in 1848–1849. The aftermath was felt for a long time. In the neoabsolutist, somewhat stagnating Bach era after the ebbing of the revolutionary upheaval, the political landscape seemed to have merely changed. Furthermore, it remained open whether the German Confederation would become a territorial state in the 1850s, with the inclusion and hegemony of the Habsburg Monarchy (Müller 2006; Stollberg-Rilinger 2006). It was also open whether the Habsburg Monarchy would instead be transformed into a unified territory. The internal differences between Hungarian and non-Hungarian parts of the empire would have had to be bridged for this purpose, as Interior Minister Alexander von Bach last attempted to do (Ordinances No. 9 and 10/1853 RGBl.). A diversity of imperial loyalties of the German speaking groups continued to correspond with the territorial diversity of two cores.

Spatialization of Multiple Loyalties

Whereas the German-speaking groups in the Habsburg empire had to struggle with the ambiguous consequences of nationalist ideas for their own empire, the revolution shaped the idea of imagined territorial belonging and loyalty also in the non-German population in a new way. The border regions became battlefields not only in a literary sense, but were a showcase for competing and conflicting loyalties. Before the revolution, the imperial strategy in the peripheries was almost exclusively based on securitization policies. In 1849, much indicated that not only political, but also the territorial order of the empire as a whole and of the peripheries would in the future be more responsive to the new political factor of politics, the nationalities, albeit not on equal footing for all of them (Osterkamp 2020). Already in the Vormärz, new territories for nationalities had been discussed repeatedly as a structural principle for the order of power. In 1818, the state chancellor Clemens von Metternich considered an administrative subdivision of the dynastical territories according to language groups. In the March Revolution, Mikhail Bakunin and František Palacký pleaded for a federation of nationalities in Central Europe. The idea of reorganizing the Habsburg territories with new territorial borders drawn along ethnic lines was taken up by both the Slovene nationalist Matija Kavčič and the German nationalist Ludwig Löhner in the Austrian Reichstag. Ethnographic mapping, such as the famous maps by Carl Czoernig, made it possible to experience this connection between linguistic nationality, space, or territory, which overwrote historical crownland borders (Judson 2016, 242; Osterkamp 2020).

National equality developed its territorial-spatial dimension of national belonging at several stages. Initially oriented toward political equality and equal rights for nationalities in government agencies, schooling, and churches, but also in representative bodies such as provincial diets, the principle had a territorial component in its practical implementation. The Bohemian lands were to be divided into different administrative areas with Czech, German, or both official languages (Stourzh 1985, 47). A territorial division according to language groups was also discussed prominently for Galicia, for the Polish- and Ukrainian-speaking populations. Similar debates were held by politicians in Tyrol for the division of crownland into Italian- and a German-speaking administrative parts. In Styria, autonomous regions for Slovenes and Germans were discussed since 1848 as well. Although this attempt failed, a united Slovenia continued to exist in their ideas and discourses as an *imagined space* (Reill 2012). The Italians of Tyrol also failed in 1848 with their wish for an autonomous Welschtirol. A space imagined as "Italian" nevertheless lived on among them and could – freed from territorial fixations – rely not only on the southern Tyrol, but also on a future unified Italy (Cole and Heiss 2007; Cole 1995). The Serbs in the south of Hungary, to whom the monarch and government had promised their own territory, the Serbian Voivodeship, now started to imagine a Serbian political space both within the monarchy and crossing the borders of the monarchy. This was also not limited to the territory of the voivodeship, but sometimes extended as a "Greater Serbian" idea to various southern Slavic regions (Bataković 2014). The imaginary of the nationalities increasingly designed political spaces with only vague boundaries (Haslinger 2010).

The post-revolutionary tendency to adapt the territorial diversity of the empire to the political spaces of the nationalities, however, provoked sharp criticism. Even prominent advocates of equal rights for nationalities voiced criticism. For example, the Hungarian top politician and state thinker Joseph Eötvös wrote that the planned equality of rights would lead to the dissolution of the historical lands: "From Tyrol to Transylvania, there is hardly a province whose borders would not be subject to significant changes if they were divided according to nationality" (Eötvös 1850, 82). In the end, the emperor and the government took sides with these critics. The territorial diversity of the Habsburg empire, with its subdivision into the territories of the central authority(ies), the crown-lands, and, at the middle level, comitats and districts, remained basically intact until 1918. The territorial units were legitimized by dynastic property and heritage or by history. Upholding the order of historic crownlands paved the way for political spatialization of those national loyalties that

were not framed territorially. The Habsburg history of loyalties, territories, and spaces thus showed two sides of the same coin – territorialization of loyalties in the crownlands and the empire and spatialization of loyalties crossing imperial and inner-imperial borders.

Despite justifying the territorial division of the Habsburg empire "historically" or "dynastically," political territories and territorial borders could also be negotiated "from below." In 1848 the land of Salzburg was reestablished after the revolution of 1848, which had previously been united with Upper Austria. The decisive factor here was a successful petition campaign "from below" that had been initiated and organized by the Salzburg lawyer Franz Peitler. In other cases, negotiations proved unsuccessful at all and the Viennese government was ready to both ignore history as a justification for the territorial order and to make concessions towards a spatialization of national loyalties (see for the Slovakian case Malfér [2001]). After the end of the neo-absolutist era, Transylvania, which had lived for centuries with its own constitutional tradition at the easternmost edge of the empire, lost its status as a crownland and was instead incorporated into the Hungarian part of the empire after the Austrian-Hungarian Compromise in 1867.

Although most Habsburg nationalities did not receive "their own" imperial territories in the decades after 1848, the spatialization of national loyalties could no longer be stopped.

Loyalty Spaces between Habsburg Transylvania, Galicia, and Bucovina

In the remaining part of the article I illuminate the spatialization effects of loyalties by shifting our focus to the eastern provinces. The eastern peripheries like Transylvania, the Bucovina, and eastern Galicia were inhabited by a highly diverse population in ethnic-national, confessional, social, and economic terms. Societal diversity met territorial and spatial diversity here.

Transylvanian Romanians

Around 1848, Transylvanian communities that had previously mostly acted "offstage" entered the political stage, seeking to use the revolutionary slogan "one nation, one state" for their own ends. In the Habsburg empire, they mostly ended up not with a new national territory, but a new nationally imagined space. One example of a community that had long been politically "invisible" was the *Romanians of Transylvania*, who lived in a country whose constitution had regulated the coexistence of nationalities since the Middle Ages. Although numerical majority in Transylvania, the Romanians did not belong to the constitutionally privileged "nations" of the Saxons, Székely, and Magyars. They remained also in the shadow of the movement of the "Young Romanians" in the neighboring autonomous principalities Moldova and Valachia, both of whom got caught between the fronts between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in 1848, as liberal Austrian newspapers such as Grazer Zeitung noted ("Donau-Fürstenthümer", April 30, 1848, 4).

Politically, religiously, and socially disadvantaged within the empire, they brought to the emperor in March 1849 the desire for a Romanian administrative territory. Their address dated one day after the violent dissolution of the Kremsier Reichstag and one day after the adoption of the monarch's "March Constitution." This demanded that the Romanian territory was to transcend the historical borders of Transylvania, Hungary, the Banat, and Bukovina and include all the Romanians of these crownlands ("Memorandum of the united Romanian leaders of Transylvania, Hungary, the Banat, and Bukovina from March 5, 1849 to the Vienna Imperial Government," printed in Brote 1895, 174–181; Hitchins 1977). In order to justify their wish, they referred to their military support and allegiance for the imperial side in the war of 1848–1849 against the Hungarians (Neamtu 2013). Paragraph 72 of the March Constitution guaranteed them national equality. However, this administrative reorganization of a new eastern province along national-ethnic borderlines did not take place. Instead, Vienna stuck to the traditional multinational and multireligious system of rule in the region. The imperial East was reorganized by the founding of the separate crownland Bukovina in 1849–1860 and 1861–1918, of the short-lived Vojvodina in 1849–

1860, and finally by the re-establishment of Transylvania separate from Hungary in the early 1860's until 1867.

The Romanian nationality of Transylvania was granted political participation only for a few years, when in the early constitutionalism of the 1860s, Transylvanian electoral law underwent reform. In contrast to the centuries before, Romanians now had the opportunity to participate in political decision-making in the state parliament, counties, and courts (Kutschera 1985, 120–123). In 1861, a Romanian and Saxon majority was established in the Transylvanian state gubernium. In the years 1863–1865, the Transylvanian provincial diet, with its Romanian plurality, followed by the Hungarians, and then the German-speaking Saxons, was convened because Vienna needed the Transylvanian votes for the Viennese "Reichsrat" that should represent the Habsburg Monarchy as *Gesamtstaat* (Stourzh 1985, 50). According to a contemporary historian, the Viennese government enacted "a provisional state parliament with the most careful retention of the old constitutional principles, but at the same time with due regard for the requirements of modern times, namely the finite equality of the Romanian nation" (Friedensfels, 1877, 141, 383).

In the Transylvanian diet, in addition to the three "historical" nations including Hungarians, Székler, and Saxons, the Romanians should now be included as newcomers and a "fourth nation" (Hitchins 2005, 54). The legal ground-stones for this had been laid down by the Vienna Court Chancellery for Transylvania under the court chancellor Franz Nádasdy (Brote 1895, 209–215). It acknowledged the equality of the Romanian language as the third national language in Transylvania, a Romanian nation, and its Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox religions (Vietor 1979, 11; Decree No. 190/1872 RGBl.). Had this legal project been realized, the regional interplay of loyalty, territory, and space would have been changed in a groundbreaking and nationally fairer way. Unfortunately to the Romanians, the legal reorientation did not achieve any practical effect (Brote 1895, 216–224). The Austrian central government under Belcredi made a radical u-turn and in 1865 forced the union of Transylvania with Hungary. The Romanian and Saxon elites protested in vain.

Only the newly built, state-funded Greek Catholic Metropolis survived the 1865 caesura, but its work and imperial support "from above" led to internal Romanian conflicts with the Greek Orthodox (Hitchins 1977). Thus, from 1865 to 1918, the Romanian community of Transylvania did not develop as a political nation with its own territory, but spatialized transnational Romanian loyalties independently of it. Associations, newspapers, religious schools, and regional banks formed the institutional backbone and, as the historian Sorin Mitu convincingly put it, this "resulted in the formation of a parallel public sphere with a national character – a 'Romanian civil society'" (Mitu 2016, 22). The imagined territory of a "Romania" remained alive and was strengthened by the foundation of the Kingdom of Romania beyond the Habsburg borders. After the turn of the century, particularly some Romanian nationalists, e.g. Aurel Popovici in the circle around Franz Ferdinand, demanded a territorial reorganization of the monarchy from a national basis and thus a Romanian territory.

Galician Ruthenians

The Ukrainian-speaking *Ruthenians* in Habsburg Galicia and Bukovina experienced the historical development of the interweaving of national loyalty, territoriality, and political spaces in a different way. The revolution of 1848 led to an unprecedented political mobilization of this Ukrainian-speaking population of Galicia and Bukovina. The Habsburg name Ruthenians for the Ukrainians referred to the Latin name of Rus', i.e. the well-known medieval state Kievan Rus, the cradle of their community and their religion. The mobilization was supported by the Uniate Catholic clergy and unexpectedly broke ground with a petition campaign (Osterkamp 2016). The demands to the Viennese government and the Austrian Reichstag in Kremsier, respectively, were aimed at an autonomous territory. The Ruthenians first proved successful. A community, which had been declared both by Poles and Russians to be a "branch" of the Polish or Russian nation, respectively, now in 1849 had been officially recognized as a Habsburg nationality. However, Ruthenians also

failed. Their desire for an autonomous territory received the approval neither of the Kremsier Reichstag in its draft constitution nor of the emperor in his constitutional octroi of March 4, 1849. Within the multiethnic and multiconfessional settings of Galicia and Bukovina, they obtained nationality equality on paper with the Galician Poles or the Bukovinian Romanians and Germans.

In 1851, the tide seemed to turn again in favor of the Ruthenians. In various internal, non-public gatherings, the emperor and the government discussed a constitutional revision. Probably on one of these occasions, the Minister of the Interior Alexander von Bach demanded a territorial novelty in a corresponding memorandum. He referred to the "government principle of equal rights for nationalities," which had determined the guidelines of imperial policy since 1849. For the Ukrainian-speaking population of eastern Galicia, Subcarpathian Hungary, and northern Bukovina, he demanded "a Ruthenia of their own," because the Carpathian Slavs had to be "treated isolated from the Magyars."[1] Bach wanted to cut out his "Ruthenia" from the rebellious regions such as Galicia dominated politically by the Polish elites and of Hungary dominated politically by Magyar magnates and gentry. Despite this strategic background, his high tone of nationality as a governing principle was remarkable (Berger Waldenegg 2005). In Bach's memorandum, nationality became a primary structural force for *organizing imperial space.* Bach was simultaneously concerned with the effectiveness of rule and the security of the empire. With a "Ruthenia," he wanted to reduce the size of rebellious Hungary by keeping Ruthenian-Slavic areas (especially in Bukovina) separate from it. The same applied to the rebellious Poles of Galicia, about whose "moods for a Kingdom of Poland" he gathered police reports.[2] Like many others, among them contemporary liberals (Judson 1996), Bach trusted the *mission civilisatrice* of the Germans when he wrote that "it is easier to Germanize the Carpathian Szlaves than to magyarisize them." In this way, Bach also wanted to preserve "Slavic monarchism," i.e. the loyalty to the emperor (Berger Waldenegg 2005, 32–45).

On the threshold of neo-absolutism, Bach's idea no longer prevailed. The equality of nationalities became a principle for reorganizing administrative territories, not crownlands. Galicia, Hungary, and the Bukovina remained unified "kingdoms" and crownlands, but were divided into "administrative regions," whose borders in the aforementioned regions took into account the majority population of the Poles or Ruthenians respectively (Decree of the Ministers of the Interior, Finance and Justice of 19 January 1853, No. 10/1853 RBGl.; Decree of the Minister of the Interior of 30 April 1854, No. 112/1854 RGBl.; Brauneder 2006, 219). The Ukrainian-speaking population of Bukovina, however, was not united with its conationals from Hungary or Galicia. The idea of an autonomous Ukrainian-speaking crownland beyond the existing historical borders, and later the idea of ethnically divided nation states in the region beyond the crownland borders remained alive, as with the Romanians, also with the Ruthenians until 1918 and beyond.

Habsburg "Saxony"

In the case of the *Transylvanian Saxons* (Germans), the historical interweaving of loyalty, territory, and space reached a different quality once again. Unlike the Romanians and Ruthenians, the Saxons were not an underprivileged group. The Saxons of Transylvania identified themselves with German language, culture, and statehood, were in their majority Protestants of both confessions whose religions were protected by document despite various waves of Catholic missionary activity. They possessed their own assembly (the National University) to provide them with political representation and participation (Friedensfels 1877, 384). Above all, the diet's proceedings and the constitution secured the autonomy in cultural and denominational matters. Other Transylvanian "nations," whose representatives the Saxons once disparagingly called a "handful of nations," were not allowed to interfere in these national matters (Friedensfels 1877, 139).

In the Hungarian March Revolution 1848, these privileges became precarious. The Transylvanian diet, with a majority of Magyars and Széklers, decided to form a union of Transylvania with Hungary. The union was triggered by a shift of identity among the Hungarian-speaking Széklers,

who recently had started to perceive themselves as ethnic Hungarians. The Viennese liberal politician Franz von Hartig called the union of 1848 "suicidal" because it corresponded less to a "union" in the sense of a confederation of equals and more to a subordination of Transylvania to Hungary (Hartig 1850, 354). At the end of the war of separation between the Hungarians and the Habsburgs, Russian troops in coalition with Austria occupied Transylvania. The country was put under Austrian military administration.

In the original constitutional tradition *before* the revolution, the Transylvanian constitution had established a connection between nation and its non-contiguous territory in the form of the privileged "Sachsenland" or "Königboden." Like the Romanians of Transylvania, the Saxons *after* the revolution justified their more far-reaching demands by their loyalty to the Emperor in the war against the Hungarians. On December 21, 1848, they demanded Franz Joseph II to establish their own crownland. An imperial patent then actually promised them the "direct subordination of the nation under the crown" as part of "an organic association of the individual nations on the basis of equality" as well as the "representation of the Saxon nation by its own deputies to a general Austrian Reichstag" and much more (Imperial Patent of December 21, 1849, No. 44/1849 RGBl.).

In neo-absolutism, Vienna no longer felt bound by the promise of an independent crownland "Sachsenland," which would have been territorially non-contiguous and ethnically dominated by a Romanian majority. Transylvania as a whole, not only the Sachsenland became part of the new Gesamtstaat as a crownland with its own governor (Friedensfels 1877, 367–384). The office of the "Sachsencomes" remained vacant between 1852 and 1860 (Friedensfels 1877, 245, 284). Significantly, the later division of Transylvania into districts cut up the historical spaces like the historical "Sachsenland" and was based on the composition of nationalities (Teutsch 1910 (1984), 293, 297 f.). In 1865, Vienna did nothing in order to prevent the reintegration of Transylvania into a union with Hungary. However, the "National University" of the Saxons and "also the equal rights of the citizens of any nationality living in this area" as well as the equal rights of the recognized religions, now extended by the "Greek-oriental church," remained in place beyond the caesura of the 1867 settlement (XXXXIII. Law Article/1868, in Brote 1895, 232–235).

With the imperial promise of a crownland of their own, the Saxons had gained the most from the nationalities presented here and then lost the most. The status of the Transylvanian Saxons may well have remained higher in the distinction culture of the monarchy than the prestige of the Ruthenians and Romanians even afterwards (Berger Waldenegg 2005, 35). Once again, the *mission civilisatrice* of "strengthening the German nation […] in the interest of the unified state" played an important role (Teutsch (1910) 1984, 296). The Saxons were considered supporters of the Greater Austria concept of a unified state (Martius 1957, 71f). However, in contrast to Romanians and Ruthenians, the Transylvanian Saxons' ideas of belonging could never again, since 1865, bind themselves to a "separate" political territory in the region. The formative power of historical-territorial legacies and loyalties largely lives on in German-speaking novels and poems from Transylvania as well as in the "cultural memory" sites, such as the Transylvanian archives and libraries in Germany today.

Habsburg Loyalties, Territory, and Space in the Peripheries

The spatialization of loyalites "from below" thus sometimes resulted in an administrative territorialization "from above." This again created a new cycle of loyalty, space, and territory. The imperial "territorialization" of nationalities "from above" radiated onto religions and their spaces, for example. In the case of the Eastern Churches, the United Romanians in Transylvania were given a Greek-Catholic metropolis, but the same support was denied to the "Greek-Orientals" until 1864 (Friedensfels 1877, 220, 331). Slovakian Catholics did not prevail with their request for a diocese with a majority Slovakian population (Hrabovec 2001, 82, 94–105).

The dwindling relevance of religion for the political-territorial order meant that some of the religious elites made the concerns of "their" respective "nationality" their own. The clergy established schools in the vernacular. Religious representatives wrote petitions, newspaper articles, and

pamphlets for the national cause. Since the 1860s, clergymen have been eloquent deputies in the state parliaments or the Imperial Council, and like Josip Strossmayer, they fought for the social cause of the peasantry (Hrabovec 2001, 93).

The planned division of church territories according to national criteria failed. Existing church territories remained in existence, which in the case of Protestantism and Orthodoxy sometimes overwrote ethnic lines of demarcation (Turczynski 1976, 271; Schwarz 2001, 125). Nevertheless, the national political commitment of many churches promoted a different development and spatialization, especially in the peripheries described here. In addition to the territorial diversity of the Habsburg empire, not only did alternative national spaces emerge, but these often had additional religious connotations. The radical territorial upheaval of 1918/1919 at the intersection of the three empires, the Habsburg empire, the Russian empire, and the Ottoman empire, therefore resulted not only in national but also in confessional conflicts and change.

Loyalties, Territories and Spaces as a "Breathing System"

Historical examples have shown that in the Habsburg empire, the relationship of loyalties, territories, and spaces in the 19th century was negotiable for many social groups, although not for all. The pluralism and entanglement of loyalties, territories, and spaces provided a helpful concept for a better understanding of the history of empires, one that completes the traditional perception of empires as complex center-periphery-relation.

What can we learn from Habsburg history for the history of other empires? The character of the Habsburg Monarchy as "two empires in one loyalty" and with two centers – the German Empire and the Habsburg dynasty – sharpens the view of the diversity of loyalties even among the imperially privileged groups. What contemporary elite considered the imperial center that was not clearly territorially anchored either within the British Empire, Russia, or other empires. In Russia, elite loyalties referred not only to Russia proper, but also to the network of Volga cities or later even to the conquered Siberia. In Great Britain, shifting elites' loyalties can still be observed today when it comes to England as an imperial core or the various Unions of Britain. In the course of the historical change of political territories and changing imagined imperial spaces, elite loyalties behave dynamically, too.

In the peripheries of empires, the diversity of political loyalties has been even more pronounced. In imperial peripheries, and especially in the former "frontiers," a motley society reflected the history of changing territorial allegiances or spatially tiered orders of rule. In such multilingual and multi-religious societies, regional, national, and religious loyalties competed with each other. At the same time, imperial centers induced not only hierarchy but also the transformation of loyalties. The means for this range from imperial language policy, or a missionary agenda to *divide et impera* to pit individual social, national, and religious populations against others. Loyalties in their historical transformation were therefore always the product of imperial negotiation – even against the backdrop of territorial concessions or losses.

The triad of loyalty, territory, and space illustrates manifold historical dynamics. Historically, loyalty follows not only politically given territories, but follows also imagined national or religious spaces. Around 1918, the principle of self-determination suggests that political territories should follow national loyalties and the nationally imagined spaces exclusively. One hundred years later, we are still far from a stable balance of allegiances, territories, and imagined spaces of belonging. The proposed tentative triangular perspective shows loyalties, territories, and spaces within empires and their aftermath thus as a "breathing system."

Notes

1 Hereinafter Bach's memorandum "Carpathian Slavs and Ruthenians: The Question of Their Reassignment to Hungary." ÖStA AVA Nachlass Bach K. 33.
2 ÖStA AVA Bach K. 14.

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Abbreviations

Reichsgesetzblatt für die im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder [Imperial Law Gazette for the Kingdoms and Lands represented in the Imperial Council] (RGBl.)

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