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THE NON-UNIFORMITY OF THE CHURCH: LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESES IN LATE HABSBURG AUSTRIA

Tamara SCHEER

University of Vienna, Institute for East European History, Spitalgasse 2, 1090 Vienna, Austria
Pontifical Institute Santa Maria dell'Anima, Via della Pace 20, 00186 Rome, Italy
e-mail: tamara.scheer@univie.ac.at

ABSTRACT

The Roman Catholic Church is often spoken of in the singular. This article argues that this was not applicable for language politics. The many dioceses in late Habsburg Austria approached the organization of language use differently, whether it be the internal language use, the ordinariate language, or the daily language use in the many parishes. The reasons for this varied organization were mixed: so called historical traditions, but most importantly, individuals acting, on top bishops. Beside, many priests actively took part in local (nationalist) language discourse, and bishops judged their activity differently.

Keywords: Roman Catholic Church, austrian history, language diversity, nationalism

LA INCONSISTENZA DELLA CHIESA: ETEROGENEITÀ LINGUISTICA E DIOCESI CATTOLICHE NELL'AUSTRIA DEL TARDO PERIODO ASBURGICO

SINTESI

La Chiesa cattolica romana viene spesso definita al singolare. Questo articolo sostiene come ciò non sia corretto, se si guarda alle politiche linguistiche. Le molte diocesi nell'Austria del tardo periodo asburgico affrontavano la gestione dell'utilizzo della lingua in modo differente, sia per quanto riguardava l'uso interno, ovvero la cosiddetta la lingua dell'ordinariato, sia in relazione all'idioma adoperato nelle singole parrocchie. Le ragioni di questa mancanza di uniformità erano molteplici e dipendevano in primo luogo da tradizioni storiche, ma anche, soprattutto, da decisioni individuali, in particolare da parte dei vescovi. Inoltre, molti sacerdoti partecipavano attivamente al discorso linguistico (e nazionalistico) locale e i vescovi non giudicavano questa attività in maniera omogenea.

Parole chiave: Chiesa cattolica romana, storia austriaca, diversità linguistica, nazionalismo

INTRODUCTION

For the time being, Slavonic does not seem to be the provincially recognized language in heaven. Rieger and his comrades should urgently insist the Czech language to be introduced by compulsory decree as exclusive language of daily use in communication with the heavenly hosts. (N.N., 21.08.1883, 4)

The introductory quote is taken from a short newspaper commentary about the emperor's birthday festivities in August 1883. It was printed in *Mährisches Tagblatt*, a German-language newspaper located in the bilingual (German and Czech) province of Moravia. The report targeted the language use during a celebration of the »local Slavic« military veterans' association¹. The author argued that during the street parade on the way to church a »Slavic« march had been played. Only afterwards, in the church, a »German hymn« would have been sung. The author described the scenery for his reading audience in a cynical way. He criticized that German was not exclusively used. Recently, Christa Hämmerle called this kind of rhetoric to be of »German hegemonic« character and a »cultural-imperialist gesture« (Hämmerle, 2022, 513, 519). It was often applied by German nationalists in Austria when another language was used or more precisely when both locally recognized languages were used equally. The author also called on František Ladislav Rieger in a polemical way. He should ensure that not only in the Austrian state, but also in heaven, Czech should become the exclusive language of daily use. Rieger, born in 1818 in Bohemian Semil/Semily², was elected member of the Bohemian Diet and the *Abgeordnetenhaus* (Lower House) of the Austrian parliament, the *Reichsrat*. From 1897 he was also appointed member of the latter's Upper House (*Herrenhaus*) which meant designated by the emperor. Rieger was, of course, a national activist politician but in a way that his engagement for Czech representation within the Austrian state administration was seemingly finally ennobled.

The opening quotation involved wordplay on language administration in Habsburg Austria. Terms were used that contemporary readers were familiar with. The author, for example, used the term *Umgangssprache*, a term used in the Austrian census instead of mother tongue (Brix, 1982, 102f.). However, the author neglected that there might have been city dwellers involved who wanted to have both *landesübliche* (provincially recognized) languages used during the festivity. Overall, efforts to include all locally recognized languages during public state festivities, which the emperor's birthday was, was a regular practice all over the monarchy (van Drunen,

2019, 244–268). The opening comment demonstrates that especially in bi- and multilingual regions attention was paid on language use – who used when which language in a certain context and when not – regardless if the event took place in a state, private association or religious context.

The Austrian Roman Catholic (arch)dioceses (from here onwards referred to only as dioceses to ease reading) between 1867 and 1914 stretched from Lemberg/Lviv/Lwów, Krakow in the North and East, to Capodistria/Koper and Trieste(e)/Trst in the South (Werner, 1888; Gottsmann, 2010). In most Austrian dioceses, (arch) bishops (from here onwards referred to only as bishops to ease reading) decided for the bulk autonomously when it came to the language use within their territory. What the correspondence among bishops and the bureaucratic work of ordinariates from across Habsburg Austria reveal is that diversity of language took an important place not only in the overall organization, but in the daily pastoral care in the parishes, hospitals, prisons and schools. Of course, not everywhere the same way. There were some dioceses that administered territories in which the population was more or less monolingual or better in the respective province only one language was recognized as *landesüblich*.

This article focuses on Habsburg Austria in Dualist times (1867–1914) and analyses how language diversity was administered and debated in the many dioceses and by the respective bishops and their ordinariates. It will show that they followed different approaches in recognizing languages, and that there was no uniform procedure established. I have separated this article into two major spheres: the language use in the administration of a diocese, and human resources.

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND THE ORGANISATION OF DIOCESES

Austrian provincial authorities were bound to legal regulations when it came to the recognition of languages in administrative affairs. In general, Article 19 of the fundamental law of the Austrian Constitution from 1867 granted citizens the right to use their language before state institutions (RGrBl., 1867, 396). However, provincial constitutions limited this general right. First of all, the language had to be recognized locally. German had the status of a so called *landesübliche* language in almost all parts of Habsburg Austria: Lower and Upper Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Salzburg, Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Trieste, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Bukovina and Galicia. On the other hand, it had no such status in Dalmatia, Gorizia and Istria. Czech was one of the provincial languages in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia,

1 Cole gives a concise insight into the military veteran associations, not only into members, approach and organisational structures but also in what ways they appeared and were discussed in the public (Cole, 2014).

2 Place names appear in all provincially recognized languages at all times in alphabetical order.

Polish in Galicia and Silesia, Ruthenian in Galicia and Bukovina, Slovene in Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Trieste, Gorizia and Istria, Italian in Trieste, Gorizia, Tyrol, Istria and Dalmatia, Serbo-Croatian in Dalmatia and Istria and Romanian in Bukovina (Hugelmann & Boehm, 1934, 60; Brix, 1982). Second, a recognized language had to reach twenty percent of speakers in a community to be recognized. In addition, the implementation was characterized by many shortcomings. Citizens were regularly hindered in the use their language or to be understood (properly) by state authorities. Beside the practical side, the meaning of language use changed in the late nineteenth century. Historian Peter Urbanitsch is right when summing up that »language was no longer the primary means of communication, but rather a distinguishing feature for a group [that] desired to distinguish itself from the others« (Urbanitsch, 2011, 65).

According to Article 15 of the Austrian constitution's fundamental law, the language use within a diocese was an »internal affair« (RGL., 1867, 396). Therefore, although Roman Catholic institutions were not addressed by Article 19, the politicization of language use affected the organization of spiritual life. However, the state, at least in my period of investigation, had a decisive say in some ecclesiastical matters, and many of them were (co-)decided by the emperor and his subordinated ministerial and provincial authorities. The Austrian Ministry for Religion and Education on top, after having consulted the provincial governors, was involved in payments from the religious funds (*Religionsfonds*) and in appointments of clergy to state institutions such as schools. Most appointments of bishops not only needed an imperial approval, but the emperor chose from a shortlist of three (Mischler & Ulbrich, 1905, 627). With regard to the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the state, Laurence Cole summed up that nineteenth century liberalism aiming at restricting the church, at the same time granted far reaching autonomy in some matters (Cole, 2000, 221). Therefore, not bound to Article 19, the Roman Catholic Church had to take the legal framework into account in order to avoid conflict with state authorities, and not to be accused by parishioners of neglecting their rights even more than the heavily criticized state. Many dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church were dependent on imperial, ministerial as well as provincial rules, and always had to consider the local debate on language use.

Language use in diocesan administration was multifaceted. Like the Austrian provincial administration, dioceses often distinguished between *innere* and *äußere Amtssprache*, the officially established internal and outgoing administrative language (Stourzh, 1985; Hugelmann & Boehm, 1934, 150–151). The term used

in the Roman Catholic dioceses was language of the ordinariate.³ Among the dioceses were some that at least officially recognized only one such as Linz, Salzburg and Vienna. All administered a territory located in provinces that recognized only one provincial language, German. There were also those, such as Bressanone/Brixen and Celovec/Klagenfurt, that recognized only one, although being part of bilingual provinces, Tyrol (German and Italian) and Carinthia (German and Slovene). Dioceses that recognized two ordinariate languages were Olomouc/Olmütz (Czech and German) and Trento/Trento (German and Italian) both stretching over bilingual provinces, Moravia (Czech and German), and Tyrol.⁴ The latter used as administrative terminus technicus *Anteil* (partition/share).⁵ These *Anteile* can be interpreted either as a bifurcation of the diocese by language or as a public demonstration of the equal status of both predominant languages within the diocesan territory.

In some cases, dioceses with only one ordinariate language became bilingual. This was the case for Marburg/Maribor, and Laibach/Ljubljana. Both used only German and only later introduced Slovene as second. When a diocese recognized more than one they had to take them into account in many areas of administration, including corresponding with hundreds of priests in that language, or accepting applications of young men to join the seminaries. This shift in the dominant language is clearly visible in the archival documents of the Marburg/Maribor diocese. When Slovene became allowed to be used in internal and official correspondence, from one month to another the overwhelmingly used language turned from German to Slovene. Language use in applications to join the seminary from the years 1882 and 1899 in comparison reveal that most letters were now addressed in Slovene and no longer in German (NAM-74 and NAM-33). In the period concerned there was even a debate to establish an entirely new diocese aiming at separating a so called monolingual territory from an otherwise bilingual area. The idea's *spiritus rector* was the papal nuncio in Vienna, who suggested to found a diocese of Cheb/Eger that should exclusively be of German language. This proposal met with fierce resistance from the Moravian and Bohemian bishops. Bishop Edvard Jan Brynych (Hradec Králové/Königgrätz) rejected the idea with the argument that dioceses should only be created out of pastoral needs, and not of national (Jonová, 2010, 76–85; Jonová 2015a, 161–173; Jonová, 2013, 35–43).

Recognizing more than one ordinariate language meant to take them into account in many areas of administration beside internal correspondence. Inscriptions and information signage on buildings and walls certainly had most publicity. Many former inscriptions on Roman

3 When the language use of the parishioners was targeted, regardless if it was *Ordinariatssprache* or not, the term *Volkssprache*, language of the people, was often used (cf. Gottsmann, 2010, 10).

4 DL, Bi/A9, Sch. 5, Fasz. 10a-c, Johannes Maria Gföllner, Participants of the Bishop Council in 1912.

5 As one example for the practice of *Anteil* (cf. Trienter Diöcesan-Blatt für den deutschen Antheil, Nr. 19, 1881).

Catholic facilities are no longer visible and can be traced only through annotations in sources or on images. I highlight here one example which is still visible. It is two signs on the parish church in Moravian Ostrau/Ostrava. On the left above the main entrance, the inscription in German with a Czech equivalent below reads: The construction of this church began on October 4, 1883. On the right side above the main entrance, the inscription continues, but now first in Czech, with German below: Completed and consecrated on March 3, 1889. In comparable cases, when public institutions had to decide upon language use on buildings, often the decision-making process was accompanied by a public debate (Scheer, 2022, 232–234). The more linguistically mixed a place was, the more frequently such negotiation processes might have occurred.

Outgoing printed material such as gazettes, circulars for priests, parish registers as well as public announcements such as posters on church walls and cemeteries also reflected the language use of a diocese. The diocesan newsletters and gazettes are particularly worthy of mention here. The languages used for the text clarify that there was no uniform approach.⁶ In each diocese, authorities were running their own system, which sometimes changed during the investigated period. There were diocesan ordinariates that printed two versions, one edition in this language, one in the other. There were also dioceses where it seemed to have been decided not to divide the readership according to language use, and therefore to use both languages in a joint edition. The question arises of what was given more prominence, because it was always used first or above the other. Finally, a bilingual edition meant for the diocese that many more pages had to be printed and then sent to the entire diocesan area. These editions are usually twice as heavy as the others, which resulted in higher postal charges. In the archive of the Triest(e)/Trst announcements can be found that were published in even four languages. The bishop's pastoral letter from 1899 had a Croatian, German, Italian and Slovene version.⁷ Archbishop Friedrich Egon von Fürstenberg (Olmütz/Olomouc) published his pastorals in what was seen as the most neutral language, Latin, but also in Czech and German (Jonová, 2015b, 116–117).

In addition to the use of languages, it is of interest if the content dealt with the diversity of languages, and if so, in which context. Historian Pieter M. Judson, who studied nationalisms in the late Habsburg Monarchy and their dynamics and actors, concludes about printed media: »Printed media sources tell the historian far more about their producers than about their subjects« (Judson, 2006, 182). This argument can also be applied to diocesan press products. An analysis of the diocesan press reveals that the topic has not been similarly prominent in all of them, not even among those overlooking linguistically mixed

areas. In addition to personnel news and legal provisions, gazettes reported about conferences and provided texts for use in the parishes. In order to ensure, for example, that important contents were correctly reproduced according to episcopal decisions by all parish priests, texts to be read from the pulpit were often sent out in more than one language to ensure all versions were correct. For example, a pastoral letter issued by the ordinariate that addressed the clergy of the diocese of Budějovice/Budweis ended with the note: »This pastoral letter, written in both provincial languages, is not intended to be read to the people from the pulpit; it should, however, be communicated to the more educated laity.«⁸ The use of language was also a repeated theme in the announcement of events and festivities. It is important whether there had always been equivalent events offered in the other language(s) and if, in the same number, or if there were official religious events that excluded the speakers of other language(s). For example, when in 1908 the Ordinariate Gazette of the above mentioned diocese announced spiritual exercises in its German edition, the offer targeted »priests of German language« and »men and male youth of German language« (N.N., 1908, 3). In contrast to many other comparable events of that time, where German priests and German men were usually addressed, it is noticeable that this formulation is more vague. It can be interpreted as referring to men who either speak German as their mother tongue or as a second language. If this wording was chosen intentionally, it could apply not only to persons of German nationality, but to all who spoke German.

The diocesan publications reveal that believers' language diversity was also a recurring theme. For example, the Bishop of Triest(e)/Trst-Capodistria/Koper, Andrej Šterk, took up the theme in his pastoral letter of 1899 and addressed it in four languages: »But where is this love and this holy peace today? We see hatred, discord and disunity, defamation and persecution among individuals, among families and among nations: people hate each other without knowing each other, for no other reason than because the other was born of a mother who spoke a different language.«⁹

Beside addressing an already ongoing conflict within their diocese that was connected to language use, publications reported about the events that either focused on the diversity or dealt with it to a certain degree. In 1898, a pastoral conference dealt with this topic: »How should the priest do pastoral care in nationally and confessionally mixed parishes?« The editors from the ordinariate of the diocese of Budějovice/Budweis showed a certain sensitivity for the theme when it was expressed at the beginning: »It is not easy to say which of the two sub-questions is more difficult, which more

6 A comparative analysis has been made easier since the Austrian National Library has digitised many of them: <https://alex.onb.ac.at/>

7 ADTC-AGPO, Fasc. 18, Pastoral of Bishop Andrej Maria Šterk, 1899.

8 AES-R, B 11, 9, II B 61, No. 19, »Erläss des bischöflichen Ordinariates von Budweis an den Klerus der Diöcese«, Pastorals, 8.7.1868.

9 ADTC-AGPO, Fasc. 18, Pastoral Letter of Bishop Andrej Maria Šterk, 1899.

important: for, on the one hand, agitation, passion and sensitivity make the national question an extremely delicate one, while, on the other hand, pastoral work in confessionally mixed parishes places the greatest conceivable demands on the priest.« This shows that the first question was not seen exclusively as one of ecclesiastical politics. It testifies to a certain pragmatism, but presupposed that the priests were also open to such an approach, because it was further stated:

How should the priest behave in nationally mixed parishes? With the exception of the hypocrite, the outward behaviour of every human being is an outflow of the inner attitude. The priest who has formed a correct view of himself and his relationship to the nationally mixed parish entrusted to him, in accordance with divine law, will therefore behave correctly in his pastoral work. (N.N., 1899, 122–127)

The question arises, however, because it was so explicitly emphasized, whether this behavior was expected only in »nationally mixed« parishes or also in monolingual ones. Were priests in the latter allowed to devote more space to the national question or, to his own national convictions, according to his »inner attitude«? Overall, it is important to emphasize that the diversity of a diocese and its parishioners was not equally problematized everywhere at equal number and in the same way. It was less contentious in monolingual areas, but there is also difference between dioceses in multilingual provinces. The language diversity of believers was regularly brought up in, for example, Triest(e)/Trst and Olmütz/Olomouc, and almost never in Bressanone/Brixen and Celovec/Klagenfurt dioceses.

The diocese of Bressanone/Brixen is worth having a closer look. Here, the non-German language groups (beside Italian, also Ladin) were often marginalized (also intentionally), although this was often not done first hand by the highest church authorities, on top the bishops. This diocese stretched over the province of Tyrol that recognized German and Italian. There was another diocese located in the more Italian speaking parts of Tyrol, Trento/Trient, but also the Bressanone/Brixen territory was linguistically mixed. When large festivities were to take place, organizers from both dioceses had to ask the provincial governor in Innsbruck/Isprucco for permission. In 1909, the head of the committee successfully addressed governor Markus von Spiegelfeld to accept the announcement poster for the *Tiroler Landeskatholikentage* (Tyrolean Catholic Days). While the poster suggested – there was only a German version submitted – that it would be a joint Tyrolean event, in the internal

letter the organisers made clear that the poster should only be used in *Deutsch-Tirol* (German-Tyrol). *Deutsch-Tirol* was not a term officially recognized by the state, but often used by German speaking organizers to refer to these parts headed by the diocese of Bressanone/Brixen, while Trento/Trient was responsible for so called *Welsch-Tirol* (the term *Welsch* refers to the Italian speaking population of Tyrol). Although both terms, *Deutsch-Tirol* and *Welsch-Tirol*, were often used in that period also in public, they totally neglected that in most places the population was mixed. The approved poster for the alleged joint *Tiroler Landeskatholikentage* therefore deliberately excluded Italian and Ladin Tyroleans of Roman Catholic faith. While the event itself was not organized by a diocese, bishops and many priests then appeared as honorary guests and lecturers during the days. The entire official program, also approved by the province, ended up in German language.¹⁰ The *Tiroler Katholikentage* show that during religious festivities inclusion and exclusion were not at all only of diocesan responsibility, rather often an interplay between religious associations run by their members and the clergy. Similar to Tyrol, also the so called *Gesamtösterreichische Katholikentage* (All Austrian Catholic Days) were dominated by the German language.

Finally, even in the neighbouring German Empire authors recognized that the *Gesamtösterreichische Katholikentage* were »a fiction« and not joint at all, rather dominated by Catholics of German language. The other »nations« would have been only »indicated in welcoming speeches« held exclusively in German (Eckhardt, 1910, 229–230). In 1910 one of these, then called *Allgemeiner Katholikentag* (General Catholic Day), took place in Innsbruck/Isprucco with a tight program. There were bishops and delegates attending from outside Tyrol, among them from Gorica/Gorizia/Görz, Lemberg/Lviv/Lwow, Brno/Brünn and Linz. However, although there were plenty of lecturers invited, including Switzerland and Germany, there was seemingly only one official speech given in another language than German. It was the bishops' delegate from Laibach/Ljubljana, the priest Ignacij Žitnik, who gave his speech in German and in Slovene.¹¹ Approaches as recurrently demonstrated Roman Catholics all over Austria-Hungary not to be universal community, rather to consist of two separate groups with only a bishop in common.

To sum up: there was no uniformity in how Austrian dioceses dealt with language diversity, and how the other language group(s) were represented. The correspondence among bishops reveals that this was also not intended, neither informally nor that it has to be brought up during the regular meetings of the Austrian *Bischofskonferenz* (Episcopal Conference), a public cor-

10 TL-STV, Präs, 1909, box 787, ZI 2552, *Generalsekretär Dominikus Dietrich to Statthalterei*, 26. 04. 1909, as well as *Statthalter Markus von Spiegelfeld*, approval, 28. 04. 1909.

11 TL-STV, Präs, 1910, box 813, ZI 5734, *Allgemeiner Katholikentag*.

poration that existed since 1849. The *Bischofskonferenz*, however, when going through the minutes of the regular gatherings, reveal that handling linguistic diversity was only brought up rarely and was usually part of other issues such as school reform.¹² The correspondence among bishops reveals many of them were convinced that dioceses across Austria faced unparallel situations when it came to language use. In his letter to the archbishop of Olomouc, the archbishop of Prague argued for joint action within a *Bischofskonferenz*-meeting, because they would share comparable difficulties, »the North and the South« would not understand.¹³ Only from the letters' context it becomes obvious that they two bishops were talking about language diversity. With North they probably meant Polish dominated Galicia, and with the south, in their view, the German dominated dioceses of Styria, Carinthia, and even Carniola, although all three held a large proportion of parishioners of Slovene mother tongue, and in the last they made up the overwhelming majority. The *Bischofskonferenz* was therefore also by its bishops not to be seen as the forum where to discuss – and even less agree – a joint agenda when it comes to the language use.

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND THE CLERGY

In the late 19th century, the staff of a diocese, when it came to higher and educated positions, consisted almost exclusively of priests. Priests worked in various spheres of a diocese and were able to exercise inclusion and exclusion of the other language group on a daily basis: in the administrative offices of the ordinariate, in the many parishes, schools, prisons, the military etc. It is therefore important how they were designated. The already discussed examples had in common that very often how the language policy of a diocese appeared in public was strongly related not only to the respective bishops, but on daily practice of the many priests.

The gazette of the Budějovice/Budweis diocese already cited earlier left no doubt what some bishops of linguistically diverse dioceses expected from their clergy: they should act as intermediaries between episcopal interests and the parishioners. When it comes to language disputes priests were seen to have the opportunity to either calm down and take over a unifying approach, or to become nationalist activists and therefore propagate dissimilarity. However, bishops were also priests about whom the emperor had a clear standpoint of how they should act and deal with language diversity.

Finally, it was him who chose for most dioceses from a shortlist of three. Before such a shortlist was presented, the procedure to come to this final three names usually already started months ago, and went through many hands. In places where more than one language was used, this appointment process often met with a debate. Before the candidates were presented to the emperor, the Austrian Minister for Religion and Education worked on the proposal of the provincial governor. For this report, the provincial governor usually collected proposals from bishops of neighbouring dioceses. He was also responsible for collecting information about proposed candidates from police authorities. To these proposals often the phrase »political irreproachable and loyal conduct« was added to candidates' biographies.¹⁴ Most often – when reading between the lines – the focus on this conduct was if someone had acted in a nationalistic way. There was therefore already a selection process very early, so that what was usually sent to the ministry was only »politically correct« candidates.

Archival documents reveal that in linguistically diverse dioceses the question of a candidate's mother tongue and language skills dominated considerations of the suitable character of the candidate. When a new bishop for the diocese of Parenzo/Poreč-Pola/Pula was needed in 1913, the bishop of Laibach/Ljubljana, Anton Jeglič, addressed the head of the provincial government, Konrad Hohenlohe:

However, since a very Italian-minded priest has held the episcopal seat in Parenzo [Poreč] for 28 years, no injustice would be done to the Italians of this diocese, who make up only one third of the population, if a Slav were to be appointed. If, however, for any reason, the afore mentioned gentlemen [his other proposals] would not be acceptable, I take the liberty of proposing a pious, energetic and politically highly correct priest of my diocese, who is proficient in the Italian language, namely Dr. Franz Ušeničnik, professor of pastoral theology in Ljubljana.¹⁵

Another example of how important the nationality issue and language skills were in the appointment of a bishop is that of Franz Xaver Nagl, later cardinal and archbishop of Vienna, whose first episcopal appointment was of multilingual Triest(e)/Trst-Capod'Istria/Koper. The k.k. Minister of Education and Religion, Wilhelm von Hartel, argued to Nagl as follows:

12 In the diocesan archives, the debates of the *Bischofskonferenz* can be usually found in the correspondence of the bishops and are not separated from other material. There is to be found the debate before a meeting when bishops came up with topics for discussion, the debate itself and the printed minutes afterwards.

13 ZAOPO-AO, Inv. c. 3566, BA 27, box 1550, Correspondence 1857–1915, Franz Schönborn, archbishop of Prague, to Friedrich Fürstenberg, archbishop of Olmütz/Olomouc, 03. 11. 1888, 16.

14 ÖSTA-AVA-NK, Sg. 11, Kt. 111, Dioceses in Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Littoral, Istria, Trieste and the archdiocese of Gorica/Gorizia/Görz (1888–1918), Konv. »Domherren Capodistria«, governor of Triest(e)/Trst to Minister of Religious and Educational Affairs, 21. 11. 1987.

15 NAL-ABJ, 331, 4, Jeglič to Hohenlohe, 18. 01. 1913.

*On the other hand, I am still of the opinion that Your Reverence, because of Their German origin and the fact that They do not belong to or are not beholden to any of the parties represented in this diocese, but can take a complete and unbiased position on all claims, would safeguard the highly important interests of the Catholic Church in the administration of this diocese to an extent that would not be the case with the other priests who are eligible for this office.*¹⁶

By parties, exclusively nationalities defined by language use and those who claimed to be their representatives, are targeted, and not, for example, internal church differences, as Péter Techet describes them in his book. In his introduction, Techet gives an example of the same diocese, but from the experience of another bishop who complained that he faced complaints from all sides – the Croats accused him of favouring the Italians and vice versa (Techet, 2021, 19). Thus, Hartel's fears were not groundless. Since Nagl spoke only German and Italian of the four predominant languages, Hartel informed him simultaneously with the emperor's decision that his appointment would be made only on condition that »Your Reverence submits a request to the Holy See to appoint an auxiliary bishop of Slavic nationality.«¹⁷ In one of his replies, however, Nagl pointed out that the appointment of an auxiliary bishop or vicar on grounds of nationality »would possibly entail the danger of a division of the diocese into two parts.«¹⁸ The appointments of bishops show clearly that, especially in dioceses of more than one language, all those involved were highly aware of how sensitive the selection had to be: language skills were taken into consideration, but also a candidate's (supposed to be) nationality.

Since the clergy dominated in the implementation of episcopal (political) interests, it is of interest how attempts were made in linguistically diverse dioceses to ensure having sufficient priests with language skills available. Archival research has shown that many bishops were generally keen to make already their seminarians multilingual so that the priests could be then deployed anywhere after ordination. Jitka Jonová describes the organization of Bohemian and Moravian seminaries and the Bohemian College in Rome. She points out special rules for internal communication. The young men were obliged to communicate only in German on one day of the week and in Czech on another by adding Latin as a third colloquial language (Jonová, 2021, 82–98). This seems to have been a cautious maneuver due to local language diversity, an effort not

to marginalize one language and to ensure enough priests available who were language skilled. However, there were also dioceses where parishioners were bilingual, which did not seem to pursue such a policy. This was drastically demonstrated after the First World War and the plebiscite of 1920 when many Slovene speaking priests no longer lived in Austrian but became Yugoslav citizens (Grafenauer, 2019, 121–141). The correspondence between the head of the seminary and the bishop reveals that suddenly there was a shortage of priests who spoke Slovene in addition to German. It was made clear more than once that before 1918 no attempt was made to offer obligatory Slovene courses in the seminary,¹⁹ not to mention a system as highlighted above for Moravian and Bohemian dioceses.

Even those dioceses that recognized only one language had to deal with other domestic languages on their territory, although they were not provincially recognized, sometimes in increasing numbers. The language use of the population changed, in some cases drastically, in the course of the late 19th century, most often due to strong internal labor migration (Steidl, 2015, 379). Ultimately, these dioceses had to ensure that sufficient pastoral care was provided for the newly arrived. Beside parishioners, also clergy migrated. From time to time there were shortages in priests, why bishops accepted clergy from other dioceses. Borut Klabjan points to Moravian and Bohemian priests of Czech native tongue employed in Istria (Klabjan, 2022, 1059). German native speakers changed territory too. In any way, some of these priests brought their often locally influenced prejudices towards other languages to another province. Therefore, bishops also tried to sort out those who were already seem to have an unwelcomed national behaviour. However, how bishops judged language patriotism and nationalism was very different. In any case, national behavior of priests was given space in the argumentation for acceptance and refusal, although their language skills were (often desperately) needed. The correspondence between the minister for Religion and Education and the Bishop of Linz, Ernst Maria Müller, shows this. The latter rejected the proposal to appoint the rector of the so called German national church Santa Maria dell'Anima in Rome, the Bohemian-born Karel Jaenig (in German language sources referred to as Karl Jänig), as parish priest in a Czech-speaking parish in Linz, arguing:

I must not fail to mention that there is a small Bohemian parish in Linz with the church of St. Martin; so far there has been peace between

16 AEW-BN, Hartel to Nagl, undated.

17 AEW-BN, Hartel to Nagl, 08. 01. 1902.

18 AEW-BN, Nagl to Hartel, 11. 02. 1902.

19 ADG-S, 102, Konv. Priesterhaus, Slowenische Sprachkurse, 1920–1921.

*Germans and Bohemians, although recently there has been no lack of attempts by Czech intruders from afar to stir up the peaceful Linz Bohemians by forming a Czech national association and the like. If Monsignor Jänig should come to Linz, it is reasonable to assume that, overcome by his well-known national feeling, he would want to lay claim to this community in a way that would certainly not serve peace and consequences would be regrettable in any case.*²⁰

Jaenig did not get the job. He was appointed to a parish next to Prague after his post in Rome had ended (Scheer, 2020, 71–72). As with the considerations of other situations, however, it must always be kept in mind that disputes and conflicts are far less common in the sources than the probably countless other situations in which no friction occurred. Therefore, it is important to mention these unrecorded situations in the analysis as well.

What happened to priests who refused to use the other language for nationalist reasons is of additional interest. Beside parishioners' complaints sent to the bishops and their ordinariates or reports in the local press (of which diocesan archives hold strong record, see recently analysed by: Techet, 2022), there was a moment in diocesan events that could have revealed such behavior in large scale, the *Visitationes*. The servant of the Viennese archbishop Gottfried Marschall meticulously recorded in his diary his bishop's visitation in monolingual Lower Austrian parishes. The many situations on the occasion of these episcopal visits to their territory show clearly the importance of language use – were it the speeches given by the local elite, the bishop's addresses, or the language used during the accompanying interrogation of the local children (Loidl, 1978; Sonnleitner, 2014, 122). These reports, depending on the bishops, were sometimes very lengthy. Jan Bernot mentioned the ones of bishop Jeglič (Laibach/Ljubljana) who meticulously differentiated between the political and social situation of a parish's locality (Bernot, 2016, 19–21). In the case of multilingual parishes, the question of language domination and marginalization had been of much greater importance, not only through the language use of those acting on the spot during the visitation, but also whether parishioners approached the bishop with complaints. However, the parishioners often had a great say in accepting or refusing a proposed parish priest suggested by the bishop. Parishes often belonged to estate owners, municipalities or even state institutions. Locals therefore often occupied important financial and organisational posts, including, for example, the church patrons, usually a landowner or landlord on whose property the parish was located, and the church fathers, an elected or ap-

pointed representative of the parish, who, together with the parish priest, were responsible for overlooking the property, collecting revenue and disbursing expenditure, as well as keeping the accounts (Loidl, 1978, 8). Techet in his micro historical study analyses meticulously how parishioners in the multilingual Austrian Littoral tried to get rid of unwanted priests, who had been already appointed by their bishops to take over a parish (Techet, 2021). It was therefore of importance, how carefully a bishop designated a priest, and if he fitted into the local language situation.

Priests came from a broad social and political spectrum, reflecting all shades of opinion: from »nationally indifferent«, who did not associate their own nationality with all decisions and often tended to treat all languages equally, often speaking more than one language themselves, to »nationalist activists« who, for example, openly refused to learn another language or provide pastoral care in another language, even though they spoke it (Judson, 2006; Zahra, 2010, 93–199). Regardless of their political opinion, Roman Catholic clergy often found themselves already at the forefront of a local language discourse. Even more, many among the Roman Catholic clergy did not focus only on spiritual work in the parishes, rather were very active in politics and therefore visible in the Habsburg Austrian public sphere. They took part in the public political discourse, because many of them were elected delegates in the provincial diets or even in the *Reichsrat*. In one of the new mass parties, the Christian Socialist, overwhelmingly dominated by members of German nationality, priests had been at the forefront and they often followed a German nationalistic rhetoric (Cole, 2000, 184). From the many examples of political clergy, I highlight here only two who stemmed from neighbouring regions: Ignacij Žitnik and Lambert Ehrlich. Žitnik was a member of the Lower House of the *Reichsrat*. He was already mentioned earlier, as having been the only delegate who gave his speech in another language than German at the *Katholikentag*. Of Slovenian nationality, he publicly advocated that German remain the lingua franca in the Austro-Hungarian army (Stergar, 2020, 217–233). Also of Slovene nationality was Lambert Ehrlich (diocese of Gurk/Krka-Celovec/Klagenfurt), who openly advocated the Slovene nation and published writings, including, for example, the anonymously published »*Aus dem Wilajet Kärnten*« (From the Vilajet of Carinthia, 1913 together with the Carniolan politician Janko Brejc). With the meaningful title, the authors, according to historian Marija Wakounig, alluded to »Ottoman conditions in Carinthia, degrading the Habsburg crown land to an Ottoman province« and thus hinting at foreign rule (Wakounig, 2020, 197). However, these two, although both of Slovene native tongue, looked back on a totally

20 ÖSTA-HHSTA-MDÄ-AR, F26, Nationalinstitute, Konv. Anima in Rom, Letter from Ernst Maria Müller, bishop of Linz, to Austrian minister of educational and religious affairs, 28. 01. 1887.

different socialisation within their dioceses' territories. Slovene native speakers dominated Carniola, while in Carinthia Slovene speakers were often marginalized by provincial administration and the diocese alike. »Ottoman conditions« allude to that, they allude to the fact that linguistic rights guaranteed by Article 19 were habitually ignored in Carinthia.

An analysis of the clergy's biographies and their arguments advocated in the public reveals that a unifying approach expected by some of the bishops was not shared by all of them. This became even more apparent, because of their status as part of the local intelligentsia and urban notables, i.p. because religion played an important role in the everyday life of the population. Especially in rural areas and smaller towns, much of social life took place in or with the participation of church institutions or the many religious associations that were often divided along language lines. The diocesan archive of Gurk/Krka-Celovec/Klagenfurt holds strong records of religiously connected associational life in the second half of the nineteenth century from all over Carinthia. They show that most of these efforts had been divided along language lines, there was a publishing house closely connected to the diocese that published in German, and later one was founded that focused on Slovene. Seemingly, one of the few associations that aimed at including both languages equally, was the *Abstinenzverein im Priesterseminar* (the Seminary's Abstinence Club).²¹ Especially in smaller villages with only a limited number of associations, if one was unable to participate or contribute because one did not speak the language or the priest refused to use the other language, one was excluded from pastoral care and often from social life as a result. Laurence Cole, however, provides many examples for Tyrolean parishes where the population expected that kind of politicization from their priests, not only in diverse but also in linguistically more homogenous regions (Cole, 2000). In general, and this becomes obvious in each diocese, regardless if there was one or more languages recognized. Blurred were the lines between what was praising someone's own culture and its achievements, and when it became nationalistic.

The distinctive line between what was referred to in German language to be *Heimatliebe* (love of the homeland) and nationalism was blurred between a diocese's official standpoint in regard of the language use, and the priests' behavior in the public. Under the pretext of the term *Heimat* (homeland) many priests of German nationality published and became well known novelists and poets. An illustrious figure, although he met with others from other nationality background, was the well-known so called *Heimatsdichter* Bruder Willram which was finally a *nom de plume* for the priest Anton

Müller (born 1870 in Tyrolean Bruneck/Brunico).²² His poems, sermons, speeches, publications, even postcard texts, used German excessively when they were about the Tyrolean population, history and culture. He used it to such an extent that it suggested to readers that there had been no autochthonous Italian- and Ladin-speaking Tyroleans in that period (Schnaiter, 2002). Finally, it was up to the bishops to judge whether this kind of rhetoric and engagement was living one's own culture or already stretched in nationalism. But even these priests who were not openly following such an approach, meaning to openly highlight the value of their own language whenever possible, often mentioned language use in their publications. They did not only in a religious/pastoral context, but also what role their native tongue played in the general and in the regional Habsburg nationality discourse (Scheer, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Many Austrian Roman Catholic bishops looked on more than one language spoken within their territories, and had to find a way of how to administer this diversity fairly. What became apparent is that there was no uniform approach. It is therefore not possible to speak of the Roman Catholic Church. Language politics differed on all levels: from the internal language use, the so called ordinariate language, that was applied in a diocese's official correspondence, to publications like gazettes and pastorals, and signage on buildings. When it came to provide enough linguistically skilled priests in the many parishes, dioceses also followed different approaches. They ranged from bilingual seminaries to not even offer language classes in the other language. However, bishops had to carefully avoid complaints about grievances, which in the worst case became open conflicts, got out of hand.

There was more than one reason for the variety of the Roman Catholic Church in Habsburg Austria when it stressed language politics. Beside so called historical traditions to use only one local language, most importantly it was individuals acting. On top were the bishops. Most Austrian bishops were chosen from a shortlist of three by the emperor, who carefully watched over a candidate's linguistic suitability (was it native tongue or later acquired skills), and his political reliability (mostly connected to nationalism). However, it usually were local bishops who first came up with candidates. Beside bishops, it was, however, the many priests who actively took part in local (nationalist) language discourse. Bishops often judged their activity differently. What was in one diocese seen to be language nationalism, was in the other downplayed to be only *Heimatliebe*.

21 ADG-S, Konv. Büchereiwesen/Akademie-Eröffnung, Presse, Alumna, Statuten des Abstinenzvereins im Priesterseminar zu Klagenfurt, 08. 03. 1914.

22 The *Forschungsinstitut-Brennerarchiv* at University of Innsbruck holds a comprehensive collection of Bruder Willram's writings, including sermons and speeches.

NEENOTNOST CERKVE: JEZIKOVNA RAZNOLIKOST V RIMOKATOLIŠKIH ŠKOFIJAH ZADNJEGA OBDOBJA HABSBURŠKE AVSTRIJE

Tamara SCHEER

Univerza na Dunaju, Inštitut za vzhodnoevropsko zgodovino, Spitalgasse 2, 1090 Dunaj, Avstrija
 Papeški inštitut Santa Maria dell'Anima, Via della Pace 20, 00186 Rim, Italija
 e-mail: tamara.scheer@univie.ac.at

POVZETEK

Mnogi avstrijski rimokatoliški škofje so na ozemlju svojih škofij imeli opravka z več kot enim jezikom in so morali najti način, kako pravično upravljati to raznolikost. Seveda enotnega pristopa ni bilo in ga tudi ni moglo biti. Jezikovna politika v rimokatoliških škofijah se je hkrati oblikovala na več ravneh, in ne samo na ravni notranjejezikovne rabe tako imenovanega škofijskega jezika, ki so ga uporabljali v uradni korespondenci škofije (npr. v škofijskih publikacijah ter oznakah na stavbah). Tudi ko je bilo treba v številnih župnijah zagotoviti dovolj jezikovno usposobljenih duhovnikov, so škofije sledile različnim pristopom – od upravljanja dvojezičnih semenšč do tega, da se določena škofija ni ozirala na večjezičnost in torej ni niti ponujala jezikovnih tečajev v drugem jeziku za semenščnike, duhovnike idr. Pri tem so morali škofje paziti, da nezadovoljstvo, ki je v najslabšem primeru preraslo v odprti konflikt, ne bi ušlo izpod nadzora. Ko govorimo o jezikovni politiki, lahko naštejemo več razlogov za neenotne prakse rimokatoliške cerkve v habsburški Avstriji. Poleg tradicionalne uporabe samo enega lokalnega jezika, so veliko vlogo odigrale odločitve določenih posameznikov, predvsem škofov, ki jih je iz ožjega nabora treh izbral cesar. Poleg škofov pa so v cerkvi seveda delovali tudi številni duhovniki, ki so prav tako uvajali in sodelovali v različnih jezikovnih praksah.

Ključne besede: rimokatoliška cerkev, Avstrija, jezikovna raznolikost, nacionalizem

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