
**LANGUAGE IN CENTRAL EUROPE'S HISTORY AND POLITICS:
FROM THE RULE OF *CUIUS REGIO, EIUS RELIGIO*
TO THE NATIONAL PRINCIPLE OF *CUIUS REGIO,*
*EIUS LINGUA?****

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The author traces the development of Central European languages and the transition from religion-based self-determination to language-based nationalism. He explores the emergence of nation-states through linguistic component. He names ethnolinguistic groups and minorities existing in Central Europe and evaluates their influence within nation-state.

Keywords: *language, ethnolinguistic, nationalism, identity, nation-state, multilingualism.*

The Multilingualism of Central Europe

There are many definitions of Central Europe. For the sake of this contribution it is the middle one-third of the continent or the zone bordered by Italy and the German-speaking polities of Germany and Austria in the west and the multilingual Russian Federation in the East. I exclude Scandinavia from the purview for the sake of brevity (Magocsi 2002: xi).

The general linguistic shape of Central Europe as we know it today emerged between the arrival in the 10th century of the Hungarians (or rather a coalition of Finno-Ugric and Turkic ethnic groups) in the Danube basin and the 14th-century founding of the Romance-speaking principalities of Walachia and Moldavia (that is, the predecessors of modern-day Romania and Moldova). In the middle of the region the East Romance languages of Moldovan and Romanian alongside the Finno-Ugric one of Hungarian are spoken from the Black Sea to Austria which is part of the German-speaking zone. This multilingual belt separates the North and South Slavic dialect continua (that is, geographically continuous zones within which language changes gradually from locality to locality; the cleavage of mutual incomprehensibility occurs where two continua meet). At present the former is identified with Polish, Czech, Slovak, Belarusian, Ukrainian and Russian, while the latter with Slovenian, Croatian, Bosnian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Macedonian and Bulgarian (Schenker and Stankiewicz 1980).

At Central Europe's southern end terminating in the Mediterranean and the Bosphorus, the Indo-European isolates (mutually incomprehensible languages, with no cognates) of Albanian and Greek rub shoulders with Turkish which is part of the Turkic dialect continuum extending to Kazakhstan, Central Asia and eastern China. In the North the sole surviving Baltic languages of Lithuanian and Latvian are squeezed between the North Slavic dialect continuum and the Finno-Ugric language of Estonian. All the mentioned idioms belong to the Indo-European family of languages with the exception of the Finno-Ugric ones and Turkish (Plasseraud 2005).

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Religion, Language and Identity

Well until the modern times people in Central Europe chose to express their identity through religion rather than language. Christianization of the region was completed in the late 14th century when this religion was adopted in Lithuania. On the other hand, the northward expansion of the Ottoman Empire, from the 14th to 17th centuries spread Islam across the Balkans. During the 14th and 15th centuries expulsions and persecution caused Ashkenazim (Germanic-speaking Jews) to leave Western Europe for the center and the north of Central Europe, and Sephardim (Romance-speaking Jews from the Iberian Peninsula) for North Africa and the Balkans. Afterward, the majority of the world's Jews (those who confessed Judaism) lived in Central Europe until the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany during World War II.

All three monotheistic faiths come complete with their Holy Writs and respective traditions of literacy, most visibly expressed by various scripts (alphabets) employed to write in the 'sacred languages'. Accordingly, Jews write in the Hebrew characters of the Hebrew-language original of the Pentateuch and Muslims in the Arabic letters of the Arabic-language original of the Koran. In the case of Christians, these who pay allegiance to the pope in Rome (Catholics) write in Latin (Roman) letters of the Vulgate, or the official Latin translation of the Bible. Those who adopted Christianity from Byzantium, and at present consider the ecumenical patriarch in Constantinople (Istanbul) the highest authority in the Orthodox Church, were allowed a greater degree of multilingualism. Greeks (and earlier also Orthodox Slavs, Albanians and Turks under Constantinople's direct ecclesiastical control) write in Greek letters of the ancient Greek-language original of the New Testament. In the mid-9th century the Slavs of Greater Moravia (today's Czech Republic, Hungary, southern Poland, and Slovakia) adopted Christianity from Byzantium but in the Slavic language of Salonika written in a specific script, Glagolitic. In the following century Cyrillic (developed in the Bulgarian Empire) replaced Glagolitic and the language, known as Church Slavonic, remains the language of liturgy among Orthodox Slavs (mainly in the eastern Balkans, Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine) to this day.

Regarding the issue of literacy, faith and identity in the context of Central Europe, it is necessary to mention Armenia and Georgia, which were the first two states to adopt Christianity as their state religion in the early 4th century. This event was coupled with the a bit later devising of the specific Armenian and Georgian scripts which were used in the translation of the Bible into Armenian and Georgian. With time the Georgian Church became part of the Orthodox Church, while the Armenian (Apostolic) Church retained its singular character and organization. Christianity and the respective traditions of literacy, complete with their specific scripts, let the Armenians and the Georgians survive as separate ethnic groups when their lands were overrun by Byzantium, the Muslim Arabs, Zoroastrian and, later, Islamic Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and Russia. The subsequent destruction of the two Armenian kingdoms in the 11th and 14th centuries at the hands of Byzantium and the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt, respectively, drove waves of Armenian refugees out of their homeland. They established themselves as a significant diaspora in Central Europe. Most lost their native language, and spoke initially the Turkic idiom of Kipchak, and later, other languages dominant in Central Europe. But until the modern times, they wrote all these languages in Armenian characters.

In the Catholic areas of Central Europe, due to the rise of distinctive and durable polities and reaffirmation of the secular power in them, people began to write in the new administrative languages of German (12th–13th cc.), Czech (14th–15th cc.), Polish

(15th–16th cc.), and Croatian (16th–17th cc.), using the Latin script. The only exception was northwestern Croatia's Adriatic littoral where the Catholic Glagolitic-based tradition of Church Slavonic liturgy survived until the mid-20th century. In the Orthodox zone of the region, Romanian began to be used for official purposes in the 16th century, and was written in Cyrillic until the mid-19th century. The Cyrillic-based Slavic idiom of Ruthenian (seen as the common predecessor of Belarusian and Ukrainian) was an official language of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (coterminous with present-day Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine) until the end of the 17th century. In the Ottoman Empire the Ottoman language (Osmanlıca or Old Turkish) and Persian were employed for administration and literary endeavors, respectively, and predictably both were noted down in Arabic characters. In the 15th century the need arose among Bosnia's Slavophone Muslims to write in Slavic, which was done in the Arabic script. Slavic publications in Arabic characters written and published there until the early 1940s are perceived as the beginning of the Bosnian language. (Muslim Tatars who settled in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 14th century followed the same practice of using Arabic letters to write in Ruthenian and Polish.) In a similar fashion, ethnic Greeks and Albanians professing Islam wrote down their idioms in the Arabic script, too. Likewise, when beginning in the 15th century Jews developed their written tradition in the Germanic language of Yiddish and the Romance idiom of Spanyol (Ladino), they wrote both in Hebrew characters.

In the Catholic segment of Central Europe the development of new written languages in the 16th and 17th centuries is connected to the Reformation, which called for the translation of the Bible into the ethnic languages of the faithful. Later, the Catholic Church also adopted this approach in an effort to reform itself and reverse the spread of Protestantism. Hence, Protestant and Catholic translators made Hungarian into an official language in the Ottoman fief of Transylvania; ushered into being Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Slovenian; revived Czech and Croatian; and inspired Slovak. This last language was actually formed in the first half of the 19th century, mainly under the influence of the novel force of nationalism (Burke 2004; Fine 2006).

The splitting of the north and center of Central Europe between Catholicism and Protestantism (mainly Lutheranism) was also reflected in scriptural practices. Catholics employed the Antiqua type of the Latin alphabet, while Protestants the Gothic type (Black Letter, Fraktur). It was not an absolute norm, as Catholic German-speakers and Czech-speakers employed Gothic, while Calvinist Hungarian- and Polish-speakers used Antiqua. In the nationalist 19th century the use of Gothic was gradually limited to the German language, though some Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian books were published in Gothic until the interwar period.

Another effect of the Counter-Reformation was an attempt to bring the Orthodox population of the Catholic polities of Poland – Lithuania and historical Hungary (coterminous with today's Hungary, Slovakia, southwestern Ukraine, northwestern Romania, northern Serbia and northwestern Croatia) into a union with the Catholic Church. As a result Uniate (Greek Catholic) Churches were founded. They accepted the authority of the pope but kept their Cyrillic-based Slavonic liturgy. In the case of Transylvania's Uniate and Orthodox Romanians this change facilitated the adoption of Romanian as their language of liturgy, increasingly written in Latin characters. Significantly, today many Ukrainians perceive their Greek Catholic Church as their national Church (Barbour and Carmichael 2000; Myhill 2006: 88–90).

Modernity, Language and Nationalism

At the beginning of the 19th century the invading Napoleonic armies brought the idea of nationalism to Central Europe as part and parcel of modernization expressed through the centralization of state administration and transportation networks, industrialization, popular free elementary education, and conscript military service and suffrage for all males. German and Italian nationalists worked out the specifically Central European form of nationalism that is aptly qualified with the adjective 'ethnolinguistic'. This ideology entailed that all the speakers of various dialects construed as a single language form a nation. In turn the contiguous area inhabited by the members of such a linguistically defined nation should be organized into their nation-state. The success of the Kingdom of Italy (1861) and the German Empire (1871) built in this way from a variety of polities encouraged the rise of various ethnolinguistic national movements across Central Europe. These movements endangered the existence of the multiethnic empires of Russia, Austria and the Ottomans among which the region was divided then (Gellner 1983; Hroch 2000; Fishman 1973; Kamusella 2001, 2004).

In the Habsburg hereditary lands (that is, the Austrian Empire after 1804) German replaced Latin as the official language at the close of the 18th century, but an outcry against this imposition in the Hungarian half of the monarchy led to the reinstatement of Latin in the Kingdom of Hungary where it remained the official language until the mid-19th century. The 1867 restructuring of this empire into Austria-Hungary made Hungarian the official language of the Kingdom of Hungary. In the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy German remained the most important language, but in the non-German-speaking crownlands (administrative regions) and communes Croatian (Serbo-Croatian), Czech, Polish, Slovenian, and Cyrillic-based Ukrainian (pressure exerted in the 1850s for coaxing Ukrainians to write and print in Latin characters eventually failed) were introduced as official, co-official and auxiliary languages. In the Hungarian half of the empire only Croatian was recognized as official in the kingdom's Croatian lands, though Serbian (Cyrillic-based Serbo-Croatian), Slovak, Romanian, and Cyrillic-based Rusyn were grudgingly accepted as media of education and pastoral service. In Bosnia, occupied by Austria-Hungary in 1877, apart from German, variously named Slavic (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbo-Croatian) was employed in administration and print, in Latin characters for Catholics (identified as Croats), in Cyrillic for Orthodox (identified as Serbs) and in Arabic characters for Muslims (identified as Bosnians).

In the western provinces of the Russian Empire German and Polish were used as official languages. The former on the territory of present-day Estonia and Latvia, and the latter in what today is Lithuania, Belarus and central Ukraine. The formation of the Russian language began with Peter the Great's early 18th-century decree to use modernized Cyrillic (Grazhdanka or civil script modeled on the Latin script, or its most popular form today, Antiqua) for the production of non-ecclesiastical books in Church Slavonic. In the second half of the 18th century Russian written in Grazhdanka was standardized on the basis of Church Slavonic and the dialect of Moscow. The use of Russian for literary pursuits and administration spread in the first half of the 19th century. In the second half of the century Russian replaced German and Polish as the sole official language in the western provinces. A ban was placed on Belarusian and Ukrainian because they were construed as 'unworthy peasant' dialects of the (Great) Russian language. The fledgling use of Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Cyrillic-based Moldavian (Moldovan) in ele-

mentary schools was abolished until 1905. Then German and Polish were reintroduced as languages of instruction, as well (Haugen 1966; Hroch 1985, 2000).

In the Ottoman Empire the population was divided into non-territorial confessionally defined millets. Thus, Orthodox Greek-, Slavic-, Turkic- and Albanian-speakers belonged to the Orthodox millet and their Muslim counterparts to the Muslim millet. The administrative language of the latter millet was identical with the empire's official language, Ottoman written in the Arabic script. In the Orthodox millet archizing Byzantine Greek dominated though some use of Church Slavonic was reluctantly accepted in low-key liturgy and elementary schools in some Slavophone areas. In the 18th century the sultan replaced local Romanian rulers in Walachia and Moldavia (southern and eastern Romania) with more loyal Greek administrators from Constantinople, which led to the replacement of Cyrillic-based Romanian with Byzantine Greek as the official language. The Ottomans reversed this arrangement in the 1820s when the Greek War of Independence led to the founding of an independent Greece (1832), where Byzantine Greek replaced Ottoman as the sole official language.

The period from the 1810s to the 1910s was marked by the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkans due to the rise of autonomous and then independent (predominantly) Christian nation-states, encouraged by the West and Russia. Bulgarian, Montenegrin and Serbian national leaders wrote in Cyrillic-based Church Slavonic and marked their ethnic difference vis-à-vis one another by referring to the tradition of medieval polities and Orthodox patriarchates erected in them. These patriarchates had continued to exist after the incorporation of the polities into the Ottoman Empire in the 14th century. The first Balkan nation-state founded purely on the basis of language was Albania (1913), or the polity for Albanian-speaking Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Catholics.

In the 1880s the movement for the replacement of Byzantine Greek (Katharévousa, or 'purifying language') with modern-day Greek (Demotic) unfolded in Greece. Between 1917 and 1974 first Demotic and at a later time Katharévousa were announced successively as the official language, before the former won the contest, apparently definitively. The two varieties of Greek did not diverge into two different languages because the linguistic difference was not translated into an ethnic cleavage but political one. Greek conservatives side with Katharévousa and liberals with Demotic. On the other hand, the liturgy in Greek Orthodox churches continues to be said in the ancient Greek of the New Testament.

Likewise, to this day Church Slavonic is preserved as the language of liturgy in Slavic Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches. Modern vernacular-based Slavic languages written in Cyrillic were initially reserved for temporal matters. This new trend spread from Russia to the Balkans, where the tsar reaffirmed his international role as the protector of Christians (the Ottomans agreed to this in a treaty of 1774). The codification of Bulgarian followed the Russian model of mixing elements of Church Slavonic and the dialect of Sofia. Serbian as employed in Serbia and Montenegro also developed in this direction (obviously, with the use of different dialects), but in the second half of the 19th century the idea of creating a common Serbo-Croatian language for the Slavic-speakers in the western half of the Balkans won the day. However, Catholics were to write this language in the Latin script and Orthodox Christians in Cyrillic. The Albanians were undecided whether to write their own language in Greek, Latin, Cyrillic, Arabic characters or a mixture of those before they settled on the Latin alphabet in 1911.

The significance of ethnic languages written in their specific scripts for separate (usually national) identification rose with the spread of popular literacy. Although full literacy was achieved among Central Europe's German-speakers and Czechs by the 1870s, elsewhere in the region the process was completed only after the founding of the communist regimes in the wake of World War II. Earlier, literacy was a privilege of the narrow elite (often only its male half), meaning the nobility (later the intelligentsia and middle class), 'professional Ottomans' (Muslim administrators) in the Ottoman Empire, and clergy. In the Catholic zone of Central Europe the elite employed Latin, the knowledge of which spread eastward among the Orthodox due to the rise of the Greek Catholic Churches. The 18th-century disavowal of Church Slavonic was accompanied with the elevation of Latin and German as the languages of learning and progress in Russia. Besides, beginning in the 18th century French emerged as the language of cultured discourse across all of Europe. It remained the main sociolect of Central Europe's and Russia's aristocracy and richer nobility until their destruction as a cohesive group during and after World War II. The modernization of the Ottoman Empire, which commenced in the 1840s also made French the language of choice among the elite there.

Due to this modernizing process in the Ottoman Empire, beginning in the 1860s Sephardim accepted French as the preferred language of instruction in their schools. Its influence was such that they gradually switched from the Hebrew to Latin script for writing and printing in their ethnic language of Spanyol. On the other hand, despite the bans on the use of Hebrew characters in legal documents and contracts in Austria-Hungary and the Russian Empire Sephardim stuck to their Hebrew script for writing in Hebrew and Yiddish. Simultaneously thanks to the emancipation of Jews in Germany and Austria-Hungary and to the establishment of Russian-language elementary schools for Jews in Russia, German and Russian alongside Polish and Hungarian became their main languages of interethnic communication. But the Dreyfus affair (1894) in France convinced many Jews that full assimilation would never be possible in Europe.

As a result, at the turn of the 20th century the Jewish national movement developed. One section revived Hebrew as a living language and proposed to establish a Hebrew-speaking Jewish nation with its national polity in Palestine. The other group made Yiddish, reviled even by Jews as a 'corrupt jargon', into the national language of Ashkenazim who wished to stay in Europe as a distinct but accepted minority. The Holocaust annulled the latter option and paved the way for the modern Hebrew (Ivrit)-speaking Jewish nation-state of Israel (1948).

Interestingly, wishing to bridge the linguistic gap between Ashkenazim and Sephardim, and later with an eye to providing a language of neutral communication, L. L. Zamenhof from the town of Białystok (then in Russia, today in Poland) developed Romance-based Esperanto (1887), the most successful artificial language ever. It could have become an official language of the League of Nations but France intervened to stop such a development. In the interwar period Esperanto was hugely popular in Germany and the Soviet Union until the 1930s when Hitler and Stalin banned this language and persecuted Esperantists, who were accused of 'rootless cosmopolitanism' (Kamusella 2008: ch. 3; Okuka and Krenn 2002; Todorova 1992; Tornow 2005).

Linguistic Nation-States

In the course of the Great War the German and Austro-Hungarian occupation administrations banned Russian and discouraged the use of Cyrillic in Russia's western provinces. Russian was replaced with German and Polish as official languages. Then for

the first time in history Belarusian (in Cyrillic and also in Latin characters), Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Yiddish (in the Hebrew script) were employed for local administration and as languages of instruction in elementary and secondary schools. This practice encouraged the coalescence of ethnolinguistic national movements with the use of which Berlin and Vienna hoped to create a buffer zone between postwar Russia, on the one hand, and the German Empire and Austria-Hungary, on the other.

Interwar Period

However, the collapse of the Central Powers, coupled with the breakup of Austria-Hungary and the revolutionary turmoil in Russia opened up Central Europe for a political reorganization. The Western Allies, pressured by delegations of various national movements, agreed to create ethnolinguistic nation-states in this region, that is, polities for nations speaking their specific languages, not shared by any other nations or polities, namely: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary (or one-third of the former Kingdom of Hungary), and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (since 1929, Yugoslavia). The sole non-national polity of interwar Central Europe was the Free City of Danzig, predominantly inhabited by Germans. Short-lived independent Belarus and Ukraine were divided between Poland and the Soviet Union. However, the administrative division of the latter polity was based on ethnonational union republics with their specific languages as official ones. Thus, Ukrainian was the official language of Soviet Ukraine. Soviet Belarus was exceptional in the fact that apart from Belarusian and Russian, Yiddish and Polish were also used there as co-official languages until 1938. Hence, three scripts were in use in interwar Belarus: Cyrillic, Hebrew and Latin.

The Soviet authorities consciously used language as an instrument of politics and social engineering. For instance, in order to prevent the rise of a Turkicophone Muslim nation that extending from the middle Volga to the Crimea and the Caucasus, and from what today is Kazakhstan to Central Asia would have endangered the demographically dominant position of the Russians, the Bolsheviks banned the long-established Arabic script-based Turkic languages of Tatar and Chaghatai employed for widespread communication among Turkic Muslims. The use of Tatar was limited to Tatarstan and elsewhere it was replaced with the brand-new languages of Azeri, Bashkir, Chuvash, Crimean Tatar and Kazak, developed on the basis of local dialects. Chaghatai disappeared completely and in its stead Karakalpak, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, and Uzbek were created. Furthermore, in 1923 the Arabic script was replaced with the Latin alphabet for writing these languages, as the latter was perceived to be a 'tool of progress'. In the 1930s Cyrillic superseded the Latin script for writing these languages. Thus, in reality the changes in script made the Soviet Union's Turkic Muslims unable to peruse earlier writings in 'reactionary' Arabic script-based Tatar and Chaghatai.

The developments in Central Europe and the Soviet Union convinced Turkish nationalists that their cause could be served only by giving up the Arabic-speaking areas of the Ottoman Empire and converting the Turkish-speaking core into a Turkish nation-state. The Republic of Turkey was proclaimed in 1923. Ottoman, replete with numerous Arabic and Persian linguistic loans, was replaced with vernacular-based Turkish, intensively purged ('reformed') of non-Turkic elements especially in the 1930s and 1940s. Impressed by Soviet linguistic and social engineering, the Arabic alphabet was replaced with the Latin script for writing Turkish in 1928. This event triggered the Cyrillicization of the Latin alphabets of the Turkic languages in the Soviet Union, due to the Kremlin's fear of opening a channel of Latin-script based communication that would allow for

the flow of unwanted ideological influence from Turkey to the Soviet Union. Interestingly, like in Greece, the ongoing competition between Ottoman-style and radically reformist Turkish was not translated into a new ethnolinguistic cleavage but the former became associated with pro-Islamic conservatives, the latter with westernizers (the army, liberals and socialists) (Estraikh 1999; Grenoble 2003; Ioffe 2003; Kamusella 2006; Shevelov 1989; Smith 1998).

The normative imperative of one language for one nation-state was of such importance for statehood legitimization in Central Europe that the par excellence multiethnic polities of Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes proclaimed Czechoslovak and Serbocroatoslovenian as their respective official and national languages. The two languages were a constitutional fiction as in reality, both Czech and Slovak were used in Czechoslovakia, while bi-scriptural Serbo-Croatian and Latin script-based Slovenian were used in the Kingdom. After the 1929 proclamation of Yugoslavia, Serbocroatoslovenian became eponymously known as Yugoslavian.

The ethnolinguistic nation-states engaged in various (frequently extralegal) policies that, through voluntary or forced assimilation of ethnolinguistic minorities, were to produce ethnolinguistically homogenous populations in these polities. Linguistic difference was frowned on as a possible source of irredentism and delegitimization of statehood. In this atmosphere the two-century-old tradition of grassroots multilingualism in the vicinity of the Slovak capital of Bratislava disappeared. Earlier in the region's villages predominantly illiterate Croatian-, German-, Hungarian- and Slovak-speaking peasants lived next to one another. In order to cross the linguistic divide they exchanged their children for a couple of months at a time so that they would become fluent in all the languages spoken by neighbors (Liszka 1996).

World War II

The interwar division of Central Europe into ethnolinguistic nation-states was briefly overturned during World War II when German and Russian replaced in their official capacity other languages in the northern half of the region. The breakup of Czechoslovakia and the founding of an independent Slovakia with Slovak as its official language meant the end of Czechoslovak. Likewise, the breakup of Yugoslavia into Croatia and German-dominated Serbia spelt the end of Yugoslavian. Croatian was declared the former polity's official language and Cyrillic was banned there. By the same token, the Cyrillic-based language employed in wartime Serbia became known as Serbian.

The Communist Years

After 1945 all of Central Europe, with the exception of Greece, found itself either in the enlarged Soviet Union (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), or in the Soviet bloc (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania), or, at least initially, in the Soviet sphere of influence (Albania and Yugoslavia, which remained communist polities even after they broke with Moscow). During the war and after it until 1950, vast border changes and huge multidirectional ethnic cleansing were effected. About 47 million people were expelled or displaced. The most visible result of this exercise was the disappearance of German-speaking communities in Central Europe and of German as the region's leading language of interethnic communication.

The Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany claimed the lives of 5 million Jews and 0.5 to 1 million Roma (Gypsies). The recurrent waves of anti-Semitism in the Soviet bloc sent most of the Jewish survivors either to Israel or the West. The ethnolinguistic distinctiveness of the Roma tended to be denied in the Soviet bloc. They were

defined as 'lumpenproletariat' (the lowest, most degraded stratum of the working class) and their traditional way of life was destroyed through forced sedantization (Bakker and Kyuchkov 2000; Magocsi 2002: 186, 189–193).

In this manner an unprecedented level of ethnolinguistic homogeneity was achieved in Central Europe's nation-states. The non-national polity of the Free City of Danzig was removed from the map. The post-war constitutional construct of the Czechoslovak people consisting of the two fraternal nations of the Czechs and the Slovaks was seen by the latter as an instrument of the perpetuation of Czech dominance over Czechoslovakia. In 1969 the polity was transformed into a bi-national federation with genuine full Czech-Slovak bilingualism. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, annexed by the Soviet Union, were made into union republics with their respective languages accorded official-cum-national status; unusually, the Cyrillic script was not imposed on these languages. However, the ideological drive to mold the Soviet Union's inhabitants into a potentially global-wide communist people (or nation) with Russian as their 'international language' ('interlanguage') meant the swift Russification of the three Baltic republics (Barbour and Carmichael 2000; Grenoble 2003; Isayev 1977).

Neither the constitutional fiction of Yugoslavian nor the unitary character of state was possible to maintain in postwar Yugoslavia. The polity was federalized. Slovenian and the newly formed Cyrillic-based language of Macedonian were excluded from the commonality of Yugoslavian and made into the official and national languages of the Yugoslav Republics of Slovenia and Macedonia, respectively. Officially named Serbo-Croatian / Croato-Serbian was retained as the common language for other republics, but it was written in Latin characters in Croatia, in Cyrillic in Serbia, and in both scripts in Bosnia and Montenegro. However, the dialectal base of this language slightly differed in all the four republics, as provided by law. Furthermore, in Serbia's Autonomous Province of Kosovo Albanian was made co-official, while in Serbia's other Autonomous Province of Vojvodina this status was shared by Hungarian, Slovak, Romanian and Rusyn. A similar Soviet-style autonomous region was established for Hungarians in Romania, with Hungarian as a co-official language, but it was short-lived (1952–1968) (Greenberg 2004; Lučić 2002).

After Communism

Post-Soviet States

The fall of communism in 1989 also spelt the end of it as a viable ideology of statehood legitimization. This precipitated the breakup of the studiously non-national communist polity of the Soviet Union into 15 ethnolinguistic nation-states, including Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, and Ukraine in the case of Central Europe. The transformation into ethnolinguistic national polities was most successful in the case of the three Baltic republics where no official status was accorded to Russian, though Russian-speakers account for as many as one-third of Estonia's and Latvia's inhabitants. In Ukraine an Autonomous Republic of Crimea was founded with Latin alphabet-based Crimean Tatar and Russian as co-official languages. In Belarus, after the period of 1991–1995 when Belarusian was the sole official and national language, Russian was made into a co-official language, though *de facto* it *is* the dominant language, which effectively de-Belarusified the polity. Thus, at present Belarus is the only Central European nation-state that does not draw statehood legitimization from language. De-communized Sovietism functions as the legitimator of this state.

In Moldova Cyrillic was replaced with the Latin script for writing Moldovan, which for all practical reasons made it identical with Romanian. This, coupled with a drive to unite the country with Romania, alienated Russian-speakers concentrated east of the Dniester River. With Russian help in 1992 they waged a successful secessionist war and founded their unrecognized polity of Transnistria. As in the case of Belarus, Transnistria draws its legitimacy not from language but decommunized Sovietism. The citizenry is defined as a 'multinational people' (reminiscent of the Soviet Union's Soviet people/nation), while Cyrillic-based Moldovan, Russian and Ukrainian were made into co-official languages. Significantly, all of them are united by the same script, perhaps, reflecting the Kremlin's 2002 decision to impose Cyrillic for writing the languages of the 'peoples' (nations, ethnic groups) native to the territory of the Russian Federation. (This federal law was passed to prevent the implementation of the Autonomous Republic of Tatarstan's decision to supplant Cyrillic with the Latin alphabet for writing Tatar. In that Tatarstan wanted to emulate such a change in script already implemented in post-Soviet Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.)

In an effort to re-establish the territorial unity of Moldova, autonomy was granted to Transnistria, and Moldovan (constitutionally kept separate from Romanian) remains the state's official language. In addition the autonomous region of Gagauzia was established for the Gagauzes, or Turkic-speaking Orthodox Christians, whose language is close to Turkish. In the Soviet times Cyrillic was used for writing Gagauz, but today the Latin script is employed for this purpose. In Gagauzia Russian is recognized as a co-official language, as well.

The Fate of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia

In 1993 Czechoslovakia split into the two ethnolinguistic nation-states of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Interestingly, only then for the first time in history Czech was made into the sole official language in the Czech lands (earlier it shared this role either with German or Slovak). The breakup of Yugoslavia was followed by bloody wars and successive waves of ethnic cleansing. Eventually, between 1991 and 2008 the process spawned seven polities, including six clearly ethnolinguistic nation-states. The latter group is composed of Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia. In order to conform to the normative paradigm of ethnolinguistic nationalism the previously common language of Serbo-Croatian was split into Latin script-based Bosnian and Croatian, Cyrillic-based Serbian, and bi-scriptural Montenegrin. (Between 1920 and 2008 out of official Serbocroatoslovenian [Yugoslavian] six languages emerged, namely: Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Serbian, and Slovenian.) In reality about half of the publications produced in Serbia are in Latin characters. Latin script-based Serbian is used by liberal and pro-European Serbs, while the official Cyrillic version is used by nationalists and conservatives.

Bosnia does not conform to the usual paradigm of the ethnolinguistic nation-state, as this polity is composed of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Serbian Republic (not to be confused with Serbia proper). In the former entity Bosnian and Croatian are employed, both written in Latin characters, while Cyrillic-based Serbian is used in the latter entity. Initially, in Bosnia, not language but religious difference (or ascribed from above religious heritage in the case of non-religious persons) was used to differentiate between Bosnians, Croats, and Serbs, construed, respectively, as Muslims, Catholics, and Orthodox. It is only nowadays that the ethnoreligious difference is translated into the linguistic one. (Sometimes Bosnians and their language are referred to as

'Bosniak' and the label 'Bosnian' is reserved for referring to Bosnia's entire citizenry, irrespective of ethnic, religious or linguistic difference.) Similarly, Serbia is not a model of an ethnolinguistic nation-state either, with its Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, where after the split of Serbo-Croatian, Croatian was added to the four co-official languages alongside the new statewide language of Serbian.

Kosovo is the sole non-ethnolinguistic nation-state spawned by the breakup of Yugoslavia, and the only recognized one of such a character in today's Central Europe. The polity's de facto official and dominant language is Albanian and Kosovo's Albanian-speakers define themselves as Albanians. Hence, Kosovo is a second Albanian nation-state, which is in clear breach with the unspoken principle of Central Europe's ethnolinguistic nationalism that the speakers of a single language form a nation, which should live in its own single nation-state. The Kosovan constitution of 2008 accords the status of a state co-official language to Serbian, while at the local level Bosnian, Romani and Turkish are to serve as co-official languages.

But a linguistic difference that could be translated into a Kosovan language does exist. There are two Albanian dialects, Tosk spoken in southern Albania and Gheg in northern Albania and Kosovo. These two dialects are as different from each other as Dutch is from German or as Polish is from Russian. Although two-thirds of Albanians speak Gheg, standard Albanian, codified after the war in communist Albania, is steeped in Tosk. Nowadays standard Albanian is increasingly interlaced with Gheg or even replaced by it in publications produced in Kosovo. However, most agree that more space should be made for Gheg in the standard, rather than transform Gheg into a separate language of Kosovan (Greenberg 2004; Kamusella 2008; Lučić 2002; Pipa 1989).

Future

It is worthwhile remarking that as in the case of Czech and Slovak, all the four post-Serbo-Croatian languages are mutually comprehensible. However, with time the separation reinforced by different linguistic practices and state borders may be translated into gradual incomprehension among these languages' speakers born and raised in the new states. This phenomenon is already clearly visible among the younger generation of Czechs and Slovaks who were not exposed to the bilingualism of federal Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, at the political level, such processes of differentiation can be denied or opposed, usually from outside. For instance, Romania (alongside many Romance-speaking Moldovan citizens) does not recognize the separateness of Moldovan, considering it to be nothing more than Romanian with a handful of regionalisms and Russian linguistic loans thrown in. Bulgaria takes a similar stance vis-à-vis Macedonian, considering it Bulgarian written in the Serbian-style Cyrillic and sprinkled with Turkicisms (or rather Ottomanisms, as many are unknown to Turkish-speakers in modern-day Turkey).

In the two successive rounds of the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004 and 2007 ten Central European linguistic nation-states joined the EU. As a consequence, their respective national languages also acquired the status of official Union languages. These languages are: Bulgarian, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Slovak, and Slovenian. Prior to 2007 only two scripts were in official use in the EU, Latin and Greek. With the accession of Bulgaria, Cyrillic was added to this repertory.

English

The intensive development of economic, cultural and social relations, alongside tourism, in post-communist Central Europe required agreeing on a means of effective com-

munication not readily available due to half a century of enforced isolation in the Soviet bloc, which tended to enforce nationally conditioned monolingualism. In the 1990s English emerged in the role of the main language of interethnic communication in the region. Central Europe's inhabitants decided on this language for pragmatic reasons, as English is currently the sole language of worldwide communication. On the other hand, they shunned the region's two former lingua francas, German and Russian, as irretrievably tainted by their association with the atrocities of nazism and communism, respectively. French, the pre-World War II sociolect of the region's elite and a popular lingua franca in Romance-speaking Romania and elsewhere in the Balkans even in the communist period, now also lost this status to English.

This privileged position of English as the language of wider communication in Central Europe was recently fortified by the founding of the transitional international English-language administrations in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the stream of refugees from both polities to the United States and the United Kingdom. Today these erstwhile refugees and their offspring, who speak English with a native fluency, regularly shuttle between their countries of residence and origin. This phenomenon is repeated on an even wider scale in the case of about 3 to 4 million inter-EU migrants from Central Europe, who after 2004 have moved mainly to the English-speaking polities of the United Kingdom and Ireland. Other old EU members, geographically much closer to Central Europe than the United Kingdom or Ireland (namely Germany, Austria, France and Italy) elected to keep their job markets closed to Central European migrants (which they can do until 2011). Perhaps this doomed any remaining possibility of reviving French and German as languages of interethnic communication in Central Europe.

Forgotten Languages

Romani

In the wake of the fall of communism Roma intellectuals and leaders from many Central European countries began to cooperate in order to address the dire economic and social plight of the Roma, but also to codify their Romani language and to create a Romani national movement. The first efforts to publish in Romani were undertaken in the interwar Soviet Union (in Cyrillic) and in communist Yugoslavia (also in Cyrillic). Two-thirds of the world's 10 to 12 million Roma live in Central Europe, mainly in the Balkans, Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia. They usually adhere to the dominant religion in a given polity, that is, in Central Europe, Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, Islam or, more rarely, Protestantism. Likewise, they tend to write in the script of the national language of the polity where they live, that is, in the Cyrillic, Greek, or Latin alphabet. Despite many centuries of persecution at least half of the Roma continue to speak Romani. Besides the language, they use their specific customs, way of life and endogamy to maintain their ethnic difference. The traditional orality of their culture stands in the way of making Romani a written language. Various codifications of Romani, based on different dialects, and conducted using, variously, the Cyrillic, Latin or Greek script have been created in Central European polities. Interestingly, the Romani Wikipedia is available in Latin characters and the Indian script of Devanagari, which is a reflection of New Delhi's 1970s policy to recognize and support the Roma as one of India's peoples (ethnolinguistic nations).

There are no regular schools with Romani as the medium of education, yet it is generally recognized as a minority language. At present the only place in the world where Romani is employed as an official language is the municipality of Shuto Orizari

within the administrative borders of the Macedonian capital of Skopje. But in line with the Kosovan constitution, further municipalities in Kosovo may adopt this language as co-official. Romani is an Indo-European language of the Indic branch which comprises the Indo-European languages of India and Pakistan.

National Minority Languages

The construction of ethnolinguistic nation-states in Central Europe required the ethnic and linguistic homogenization of populations in such polities. The next step was to spread the officially adopted standard of the national language, meaning the liquidation of dialectal variety. Forces including universal popular education, the recruitment of mass conscript armies and ultimately the pervading of society by the truly ubiquitous mass media of radio and television were mobilized to this end. However, frequently changing borders, persisting historical or religious legacies and persecution triggered by linguistic and ethnic difference (perceived as unjust by the target group) repeatedly nullified state-directed efforts to homogenize the population and to eliminate dialectal differences, especially so in the borderland regions, which changed hands most often.

With Soviet approval Central Europe's communist regimes used ethnolinguistic homogenization as an instrument for their own legitimization. After the fall of communism democratization allowed for increasingly freer expression of surviving ethnolinguistic and dialectal difference, which often began to be deployed for political ends, due to the fact that the linguistically defined national polity remained the foundation of the political organization of the region. Bowing to this revival, and under the pressure of the West (expressed in the form of the French-organized Balladur Plan), in the 1990s most Central Europe's states contracted bilateral treaties with neighboring states in which they agreed to recognize and protect national minorities ethnolinguistically associated with the nation of the neighboring polity. The European Council completed this process with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which entered into force in 1998.

Stateless National, Ethnic Minority, Regional and Immigrant Languages

But these steps fell short of recognizing and reaffirming the languages of stateless nations, or of ethnic, religious and regional groups, protected by no ethnolinguistic nation-state, because they could not be identified with any. This problem was slowly recognized and addressed by the European Council through the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages that entered into force in 1998. An NGO, the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL), founded in 1982 in Dublin (initially to canvass for making Ireland's co-official Celtic language of Irish an EU official language, an aim achieved in 2008), strives to support the recognition and use of these languages, and closely cooperates to this end with the European Union and the Council of Europe. However, when everything is said and done, the actual decision to recognize such a language rests exclusively with the state on whose territory it is spoken. Not surprisingly, many Central European nation-states, having invested so much in the building and maintaining of ethnolinguistic homogeneity (or its illusion), are reluctant to grant such recognition.

In Central Europe small ethnic and regional languages abound in the borderlands of the former Kingdom of Hungary, all of them Slavic, namely: Cyrillic-based Rusyn (today in eastern Slovakia, eastern Hungary, southwestern Ukraine and Serbia's Vojvodina), and Latin script-based: Paulician (cognate with Bulgarian, eastern Romania),

Bunjevacian (Serbia's Vojvodina), Čakavian and Kajkavian (western Croatia), Prekmurjan (northeastern Slovenia) and Burgenland Croatian (eastern Austria). Two further languages belonging to this group already became fully recognized national languages complete with their respective nation-states, that is, Bosnian and Slovak. In the meeting zone between the West Romance and South Slavic dialect continua, the Slavic languages of Molisean (cognate with Croatian) and Resian (cognate with Slovenian) emerged in what today is northeastern Italy.

In southern Italy and Sicily, the Latin alphabet-based Arbëresh is spoken, while the Greek script-based Arvantika is spoken in central Greece; both are cognate with Albanian, or its Tosk dialect. The remnants of the Romance-speakers who used to be the link between the West and East Romance dialect continua, today are spread thinly across the Balkans from Greece and Bulgaria to Croatia's Istria. Their three distinctive groups go by the names of Aromanians, Megleno-Romanians and Istro-Romanians. (The two former groups are also referred to as 'Vlachs'.) They write their languages variously in the Latin, Greek or Cyrillic script. In southern Bulgaria, and across the border in northern Greece, the Muslim Slavophone group of Pomaks live. They also use the three alphabets to write their Pomakian language.

In the former meeting zone between the West Germanic and North Slavic dialect continua (after 1945 shifted by ethnic cleansing to the Oder-Neisse line) the following Slavic languages (with strong Germanic influence on lexicon, syntax and phonology) emerged: Mazurian (in present-day northeastern Poland), Kashubian (northern Poland), Sorbian (eastern Germany), Silesian (southern Poland and the northeastern corner of the Czech Republic) and Moravian (the southeast of the Czech Republic). At the confluence of the current Belarusian, Polish and Ukrainian borders the bi-scriptural, Cyrillic and Latin, Polesian language coalesced (also construed as Podlasian in Poland). In a similar manner Goralian (Podhalanian) emerged in the Polish-Slovak borderland of the High Tatras.

In Latvia and Lithuania the use of former parallel dialectal bases of Latvian and Lithuanian have revived Latgalian in eastern Latvia and Samogitian in western Lithuania. Significantly, Latgalian- and Samogitian-speakers amount to a one-third of all Latvian- and Lithuanian-speakers, respectively. Latvia protects the northwestern littoral of the Gulf of Riga, dubbed as the Livonian historical territory, which is more of cultural and tourist importance than linguistic, because the remaining speakers of the Finno-Ugric language of Livonian number less than 50. In Estonia southern Estonian, which used to be a former dialectal basis of the Estonian language, was also revived. Nowadays it comes in two closely related varieties, one used by the Lutheran inhabitants of the Estonian town of Võro and its vicinity and the other by Orthodox Finno-Ugric-speakers living across the border in Russia, who refer to themselves as Setus. Thus, it is usual to refer to this language as Võro-Seto.

Across Central Europe some languages other than Romani, Yiddish or Spanyol remain in diasporic use. The most important ones include Karaim and Armenian. The former is the idiom (akin to Crimean Tatar, and Krymchak, or the Hebrew script-based language of Crimea's Jews) of the Karaites (Karaims), that is, the Turkic-speaking community who profess a religion (Karaism) close to Judaism. They write their language in Hebrew characters. The traditional Armenian diaspora has only a limited knowledge of Grabar (the classical language of the 4th-century Armenian translation of the Bible) used in the liturgy, or modern Armenian, for that matter. But after the fall of communism they were joined by numerous Armenian immigrants from post-Soviet Armenia, who

speak contemporary Armenian. During communist times, as part and parcel of the Soviet bloc's ideologized cooperation with Asia's communist states, Vietnamese and North Korean immigrant communities made an appearance in Central Europe. Nowadays, they have been joined by further immigrant (refugee) communities of Chechens, Chinese, Georgians, Indians (mainly Hindi- and Punjabi-speakers), Kazaks, Nigerians, Russian-speakers and Ukrainians, among others.

Some of the mentioned languages are tiny, weak or even moribund, and thus usually of little or no political significance (Istro-Romanian, Livonian, Mazurian, Megleno-Romanian, Molisean, Paulician, Polesian, Prekmurjan or Resian). Some are fully or almost fully recognized as national languages of stateless nations (Aromanian, Sorbian and Rusyn, the last-named also known as Lemkian in Poland). Others are recognized as specific to regional groups of a nation enjoying its own nation-state (Čakavian, Goralian, Kajkavian, Kashubian, Latgalian, Samogitian or Võro-Seto). Still others are construed as of separate ethnic groups which do not express any clear desire to transform themselves into nations (Arbëresh, Arvantika, Burgenland Croatian, Čakavian, Kajkavian, Kashubian or Pomakian). Some of these languages are also deployed for building political movements that may be qualified simultaneously as regional and national (Bunjevician, Kashubian, Moravian or Silesian). Unfortunately, languages of immigrant and refugee communities are neither recognized nor employed by administration or schools in order to facilitate their integration into Central Europe's societies.

Interestingly, although the Silesians constitute the largest ethnic or national minority in today's Poland (according to the 2002 Polish census), neither they nor their language are recognized in the country. Similarly no recognition was granted to Goralian. In emulation of the French example Greece does not recognize any minorities or minority languages on its territory, except Turkish. Bulgaria considers Pomakian a dialect of Bulgarian, though the Pomaks, also due to their language being interlaced with numerous Turkicisms, are customarily excluded from the commonality of the Bulgarian nation. Romania claims Aromanian, Istro-Romanian and Megleno-Romanian as the southern dialects of Romanian, but the speakers of the three languages dispute this. Although Čakavian and Kajkavian are more different from standard Croatian than Bosnian, Montenegrin or Serbian, nevertheless they are construed as dialects of Croatian (Blanke 2001; Dulichenko 2003–2004; Hannan 1996; Kamusella 2008: ch. 3; Magocsi 1996; O'Reilly 2001; Tornow 2005; Wicherkiewicz 2003).

NOTE

* The prose of this article was kindly streamlined by Michael O'Gorman. Obviously all remaining infelicities are the sole responsibility of the author.

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