

CANADIAN CONFEDERATION AND *AUSGLEICH*: A COMPARATIVE
CASE STUDY IN IMPERIAL DEVOLUTION AS IMPERIAL RULE AND
THE EFFECTS ON NATIONAL FORMATION, 1867-1918

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ABSTRACT

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Scholarly thinking on empires is changing. These scholars see empires as flexible states which are fully capable of meeting the challenges of modernity. This newer line of scholarship challenges the standard narrative of the emergence of nations. Recent scholarship stresses that the history of successor states is not a complete break from the imperial past, but rather that the empires impacted the nature of both the successor states and the nations within.

This thesis examines the Confederation of Canada and the *Ausgleich*, which resulted in the creation of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, as successful imperial responses to challenges facing each empire. The subsequent development of national consciousness and national identity among the Canadian and the Hungarian elites emerged as a constituent part of the empire, rather than as a challenge to imperial legitimacy.

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CHAPTER 1. A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT EMPIRES

Empires occupy an odd place in the human imagination. They are admired for their grandeur and their achievements. At the same time many individuals and groups deplore the exploitation that accompanied empire-building, and these interests portray empires as outdated and incompatible with Modernity. Yet empires are currently the subject of renewed scholarly interest. The principle causes of this new interest are the collapse of the Soviet Union and the recreation of the former Soviet States in a non-Socialist political system and the phenomenon of globalization. Much of this new interest in empires investigates the long-term prospects for imperial systems of government and contradicts the well-worn teleology of “decline and fall” that dominated previous generations’ conceptions of empires.¹ This new historiographical trend conceives of empire as a form of state organization that is fully compatible with modernity and not only a system of conquest and exploitation.

Other scholars have begun to investigate the impact of imperial heritage on constituent nationalities. Previous generations of scholars traced the development of national identities, and later nationalism, out of the opposition many individual nationalists expressed against imperial regimes. Recently scholars have begun to argue for a more positive influence the imperial connection played in the birth of nationalisms and asserting that the “new” nations reflect a greater degree of their imperial backgrounds than allowed by the existing historiography.

This paper will briefly introduce a comparative case study of two acts of imperial devolution as methods of “imperial rule,” the Confederation of British North America into

¹ Alexei Miller (ed.), *Imperial Rule, Past Incorporated* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 1-2, 6.

the Dominion of Canada and the *Ausgleich*, or the Compromise of 1867, that re-defined the Habsburg Empire as Austria-Hungary. By examining these acts of devolution, I hope to illustrate what historian Alexei Miller identified as interactions between pragmatic and dogmatic methods of rule.² These imperial states possessed official ideologies that rested on state traditions, but these official ideologies were flexible and subject to interpretation and re-interpretation when the need arose.

Chapter Two will present the historiographies of the *Ausgleich* and Confederation in their respective empires and will place this essay into a specific area in the literature. Chapter Three will examine the historical background of the *Ausgleich* and Confederation by examining the histories of Hungary and Canada in their imperial contexts and the constitutional issues that beset each empire. Chapter Four will then present the establishment of both the *Ausgleich* and Confederation, and the domestic and international reactions to each of these imperial developments.

Chapter Five will examine the post-devolution histories of Canada and Hungary to 1918 and highlight nation-building themes that indicate a greater impact of the imperial heritage of Hungary and Canada than generally allowed by the empire-to-nation narrative.³ The imperial experience played a stronger role in the shaping of national consciousness than acknowledged in the national self-determination model of previous generations. The works of previous historians, such as A.J.P. Taylor or Donald Creighton, emphasize the progressive and democratic ideals represented by the nation-state, and they portray empires as obstacles to social and political progress. For these historians, a nameless supernatural

² Miller, *Imperial Rule*, 2.

³ Joseph W. Esherick, Hasan Kayali, and Eric van Young (eds.), *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World* (Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield, 2006), 2-5, 13, 15, 19.

force moves history toward the creation of nation-states. The newer scholarship of Alexei Miller, Joseph Esherick, and others presents the emergence of the nation and the nation-state as a process of negotiation between individuals and groups which is often shaped by internal and external factors. These negotiations do not necessarily oppose the continued existence of the imperial state. In Canada and Hungary the emergence and spread of national consciousness often manifested itself as expressions of loyalty to the imperial regime, which the dominant nations in the new devolved states needed to maintain an imperial dominance over other peoples their territories.⁴

This thesis aims to sketch a complementary narrative for both empires; one which distances itself from the well-worn narrative path of the collapse of empires and the triumph of the concept of the nation while avoiding nostalgia for bygone grandeur and supra-national ideals. These empires were organic constructs which could adapt to changing demands of interstate relations and domestic legitimacy. Rather than serving as examples of imperial decay and the emergence of nations, I offer the *Ausgleich* and Confederation as cases in which the imperial relations between the political center and the peoples of the empire were successfully re-negotiated. While the English-speaking Canadians and the Hungarians benefited most from these acts of imperial devolution, these cases offered the imperial center a blueprint for further systemic reform in the face of changing demands of legitimacy.⁵

While broad in scope and ambition, this work is limited in a couple of important

⁴ While something of an oversimplification, both Canada and Hungary contained more than two distinct ethnic groups and it was not uncommon to see the various groups in each territory compete with one another for imperial preference.

⁵ The Hungarians concluded a very similar arrangement with Croatia the year after the conclusion of the *Ausgleich*, while the British used the idea of federating the settler colonies Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand.

ways. First, it is based on entirely on sources and scholarship available in English. My inability to read Hungarian and my rudimentary knowledge of German prevented use of sources in those languages which prevents the work from addressing the mindset of non-elites. I was also unable to make use of any archival materials as part of this project, and I relied on source books, digitized primary sources, and sources that provided by other scholars in the indices of their works. Thus, the work focuses on elites in both Empires. This in-and-of-itself is not necessarily a negative. Nationalism is a phenomenon that originates in the elites of a community and then spreads out to the masses via conduits such as public orators, art and popular culture. It is when nationalism becomes a mass phenomenon that the nation becomes fully identifiable. The weakness of this work stems from the greater emphasis it places on the elite mindset.

Also, in this thesis, the narratives for each act of imperial devolution will follow separate courses. The narrative of Confederation in the British Imperial context takes on a greater focus on the imperial center, while the narrative of the *Ausgleich* is more focused on the periphery. This imbalance is a result of the sources used for this thesis. There are more sources available in English that describe the Hungarian context and Hungarian attitudes than are available for the Habsburg court.

Definitions

Some concepts require definition in order to acquaint the reader with subjects at the heart of this paper. To begin both the British and Habsburg territorial holdings will be identified as empires. It is frequently difficult to find broad agreement on what exactly an empire is; however a nominal definition of empire, that is self-identification as an empire, is adequate for the purpose of this paper. Both of these states used the term empire to

describe themselves at various points, so identifying them as empires is safe.

The following characteristics of empires should be helpful and acceptable to most readers. First, empires are large polities and associated with or legitimized by grandeur. Second, empires involve both a core and a periphery and involve the incorporation and domination of at least two peripheries by the center, with each periphery containing a different ethno-linguistic population from the center.⁶ Finally, the empire as a whole involves non-democratic rule; certain parts of the empire may have democratic institutions operating within them, but the center retains coercive powers over the periphery.

The emphasis on elements of “imperial rule” differentiates this work from others. “Imperial rule” is different from “imperialism.” Imperialism is the process by which a state or a people assert itself and its culture over another state or people, subjugating them and destroying or refashioning the indigenous culture and its institutions to legitimate the imperial project. “Imperial rule” focuses on the formal administration of the periphery by the center, and not the acquisition of territory or resources from the periphery nor the colonization of the indigenous inhabitants of the periphery. One could conceive the study of “imperial rule” as focusing on the evolution of imperial administration and decision-making.

“Canada” will refer to the original members of the British North America Act of 1867 which were Ontario (formerly Upper Canada and with more limited borders), Quebec (formerly Lower Canada), Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. At that time, modern Canada

⁶ Alexander J. Motyl, “Thinking About Empire,” in Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen (eds.), *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian, Habsburg and Ottoman Empires* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 20. This differentiates an empire from an ethno-territorial federation such as the former Czechoslovakia, and present-day Canada.

was known as British North America, which in 1867 made-up by the Dominion of Canada, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Vancouver, and Rupert's Land.⁷ The various provinces will be referred to by their names. This is condensing of a lot of political geography, but it is important to keep these terms in mind because it keeps the perspective on one of the goals of Confederation, the reorganization of these scattered colonies into a new, large state to compete with the United States and facilitate westward expansion. More importantly, the above terms will be appear frequently in this work.

“Confederation,” in this work, is the agreement by which the colonies of Upper and Lower Canada (at that point joined together under the name “Canada”), New Brunswick united to create a federal system of government. But, “Confederation” is also an act of the British Imperial Parliament, and is articulated by the British North America Act of 1867. Confederation resulted from a two-stage process, the negotiation and adoption of the Quebec Resolutions, the framework for the union and the new federal government, in the provinces and their subsequent passage of the Quebec Resolutions in the Imperial Parliament. Finally, the large group of men who negotiated the Quebec Resolutions in 1864 are known as the Fathers of Confederation. “Confederation” is of the utmost importance to the construction of Canadian identity. Modern Canada, much like the United States and the rest of the New World, is an invented nation and an invented state. It does not have a lengthy historical presence, and its construction resulted from the efforts of individuals and groups who shared a background as colonists with little regard to

⁷ Prior to Confederation, British North America was organized as the Union of Canada (Ontario and Quebec), the Maritimes (Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia), Newfoundland, Rupert's Land and Vancouver. Additionally, Rupert's Land was made up of today's provinces of Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Northwest Territories and part of present day Western Ontario.

ethnicity.⁸ The Dominion of Canada, in the minds of the Fathers of Confederation, was meant to be a bulwark against US expansionism and the shortcomings of republicanism.

Unlike Confederation, the *Ausgleich* refers specifically to the agreement made between the Habsburg emperor Franz Joseph and Ferenc Deák, the leader of the Hungarian political classes, to divide the empire in two and elevate the Hungarian people as a ruling nation within the empire, and the subsequent enactment of this agreement as law in Hungary and in the rest of the monarchy. In this paper, the German term for the Compromise of 1867, *Ausgleich*, which means compromise in German, will be used. This is to differentiate The Compromise from the many other historical “Compromises,” and because there is scholarly recognition of this term as referring specifically to the Compromise of 1867.

The Hungary of 1867 did not match today’s Hungary either. The modern Hungarian borders resulted from the Treaty of Trianon at the end of World War I. The Hungary of 1867 included all of modern day-Croatia, the Romanian province of Transylvania, and territories in present day Serbia, Ukraine and Slovakia. After the enactment of the *Ausgleich*, these lands became the Kingdom of Hungary. The term Transleithania is also used to describe the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy, though this is infrequent.⁹ It is important to remember this distinction between the Kingdom of Hungary and modern Hungary since it is integral to how Hungarian nationalists conceptualized Hungarian identity and grandeur before WWI and in the inter-war period (1919-1939). The historic Hungarian lands and the fanatical desire to preserve them and

⁸ Of course, however, the majority of Canada’s Anglo-Saxon make-up at the time of Confederation is important to the fashioning of Canadian identity.

⁹ The Leitha River separated the two halves of the Dual Monarchy.

prevent other nations from claiming them was, perhaps, the most prominent part of Hungarian nationalist rhetoric and agendas. Oddly, in the post-WWII era, the heavy emphasis on the unity of the historic Hungarian lands nearly disappeared from Hungarian nationalist rhetoric, though the recent economic recession which began in 2008 has fueled the rise of right-wing Hungarian nationalist rhetoric which argues for the Hungarian right to those lost territories.¹⁰

The terms “Austria” and “Cisleithania” describe the other half of the Habsburg Empire, which included the Polish province of Galicia, present-day Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, Slovenia, and the Ukrainian province of Bukovina, and later, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

“British” will be used generally and no distinction between English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish will be made. Canada, unlike Australia and New Zealand, had much less Celtic influence beyond the community level, and none of the British ethnicities played a disproportionate role in the shaping of Canadian identity. The more salient factor in

¹⁰ This is seen through the rise of the right-wing nationalist political party Jobbik. Jobbik’s 2010 election manifesto explicitly discusses a historic right to the lands ceded by Hungary in the Treaty of Trianon, and is available in English at <http://jobbik.com/temp/Jobbik-RADICALCHANGE2010.pdf> (accessed 7/16/10). Specifically, see pages 2 and 15-16. Jobbik took nearly 17% of the vote in both rounds of voting in the 2010 Hungarian Parliamentary Elections. This translated into 47 seats in the Hungarian Parliament. In contrast, Jobbik won approximately 2.2% of the vote in the 2006 Hungarian Parliamentary Elections. See http://eed.nsd.uib.no/webview/index.jsp?study=http://129.177.90.166:80/obj/fStudy/HUPA2006_Display&mode=cube&v=2&cube=http://129.177.90.166:80/obj/fCube/HUPA2006_Display_C1&top=yes and http://eed.nsd.uib.no/webview/index.jsp?study=http://129.177.90.166:80/obj/fStudy/HUPA2006_Display&mode=cube&v=2&cube=http://129.177.90.166:80/obj/fCube/HUPA2006_Display_C1&top=yes for the results of the 2006 and 2010 elections, respectively (both accessed 7/16/10). Also, see “Inside Hungary’s anti-Semitic right-wing” by Paul Hockenos, which is available on the *Global Post*’s website at <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/europe/100528/hungary-jobbik-far-right-party?page=0,0> (7/17/10).

Canadian identity has always been linguistic heritage. In the case of the Habsburg Empire, this paper will refer to the specific ethnicities of both groups and individuals. Unlike the term British, which has a definite meaning, the term “Austrian” was an ambiguous term both before and after the *Ausgleich*. No one effectively defined what it meant to be “Austrian” during the nineteenth century, and most individuals identified themselves as subjects of the Habsburgs and as members of their ethnic group.¹¹ It was only in the early twentieth century after the Habsburg Empire had collapsed that the term Austrian gained traction as a term defining a supra-national entity and identity.

The terms “nation,” “nation-building”, and “national consciousness” also require definition. Benedict Anderson defined a “nation” as “an imagined community” which is both limited and sovereign.¹² The nation is both sovereign and limited because a nation has to be able to define itself, and it must be able to exclude. By “imagined,” Anderson means that a single member of a nation does not have the ability to become personally acquainted with every other member of his or her nation. Thus, individuals must construct mental images of what their fellow nationals look like, how they speak, the mores they accept and so forth. Anderson’s work is also important for shifting national narratives away from the traditional histories stating that nations arise out of opposition to empires, because of his emphasis on the role empires played in defining the nations in the lands they colonized and annexed. This was done through education, inter-mingling and assimilation, but also by imparting institutions, such as museums and maps on territories and cultures that did not

¹¹ For example, the Germans in the Habsburg Empire defined themselves as Germans, not Austrians, or Austro-Germans. This is partially attributable to the fact the Habsburg Empire served as a homeland to many ethnicities, but also to many ethnicities that were not restricted to the Habsburg lands such as the Poles.

¹² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* Revised Ed., (New York: Verso, 1983, 2006), 6.

possess either.

The role a map plays in the imagining of a community is very important in this paper. A map is both a tangible item and a mental projection. Maps are material items. They are products of human endeavor and have shape, mass and occupy space. A map is also a projection of an individual's or a group's mind which defines territorial holdings by excluding others. The construction of a shared mental map in the mind of a nation is central to the forging of a group identity, and national identity becomes intertwined with the land they conceive of as belonging to that ethnicity.¹³ The *Ausgleich* allowed the Hungarians to continue to maintain the unity of their historic lands despite the presence of significant numbers of other ethnicities in regions such as Transylvania, modern day Slovakia and Vojvodina. Confederation facilitated the westward expansion of the new Dominion of Canada and prevented the United States from possessing and settling the lands west of Upper Canada to the Pacific Ocean.

The final significance of Anderson's model for this work is his definition of "official nationalisms." An "official nationalism" is the use of national identity by a state or hereditary monarchy as a tool for naturalization and the maintenance of political power over remotely related territories and peoples.¹⁴ In other words, it is a top-down imposition of identity, culture and mores to prevent social disintegration and political revolution. Anderson further notes that "official nationalisms" developed after, and were a reaction against, the national movements that had been spreading on the European continent since the 1820s. In the context of this work, the expression of Hungarian and Canadian

¹³ This idea affected both the Hungarians and the Canadians both in their internal and external relations, but in vastly different ways, as will be seen later in this work. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 170-178.

¹⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 86.

nationalism mimicked “official nationalism” to varying degrees.

“Nation-building” and “national consciousness” are also important terms in this thesis. Here, “nation-building” is the process by which imagined community is constructed. Nations do not magically appear out of thin air and are not given historical constructs. Nations are artificial creations of modernity that have definite origins. They are malleable to an extent but are most easily changed early in their existence; the longer a nation exists, the harder it is to change that mental construct. Adaptation and evolution are possible, but it takes greater and greater impetus or trauma to change the existing construct.

“National consciousness” refers to the mindset of the nation as it attains self-awareness. A nation must become aware of itself as a nation before it can begin to believe in its own intrinsic value vis-à-vis other groups. The historical context in which a nation attains its self-awareness is of equal importance to this process. The context in which a nation is forged directly affects which values, mores, customs, etc. are chosen to be celebrated. These markers of identity must be broadly agreed upon by the individuals in the community.

Empires as States and Their Impact on Nations

The specific intention in this work is to show that both the Habsburg and British Empires faced a crossroads in their governing strategies in their respective empires and how each empire responded with a mixture of pragmatic and dogmatic solutions which helped to stabilize imperial relations.¹⁵ It should be remembered that throughout the nineteenth-century, both of these empires were seen by observers as stable entities, and the disintegration of either state was unthinkable. Certainly each imperial state, and other

¹⁵ Miller, *Imperial Rule*, 2.

observers, acknowledged that problems existed, but the disappearance of either state remained absurd. Finally, both empires survived, and in many ways thrived, for a long after Confederation and the *Ausgleich*, and neither empire collapsed because of an inherent incompatibility with modernity.¹⁶

Furthermore these empires affected the national consciousness among the peoples of each empire in ways beyond those stressed by imperial opponents, and the imperial connection strongly influenced the particular contours of the emerging national consciousness. Previous narratives of the emergence of the nation and the principle of national sovereignty emphasize that the nation-state possessed a moral authority which the pre-modern empires did not, and that nations arose by defining themselves in opposition to these empires. This model of nations as emerging from opposition to empires fails to understand the myriad of ways in which national identification with an empire profoundly affected, and in some cases still affects, national consciousness. It also views the emergence of national consciousness only in opposition to empire and ignores other avenues for national expression and asserts that the nation is the only subjugated group. While both Confederation and the *Ausgleich* provide fodder for nationalists and are often seen as evidence for the emergence of each nation, the reality is more nuanced. At the time of each act of imperial devolution, the elites of British North America and Hungary understood each event as a political achievement and as a means of re-binding each population to the each imperial state.

¹⁶ This point is the main thrust in the final chapter of Alan Sked's *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire* (1989), while the views of various historians arguing in favor of understanding decolonization not as a retreat but an attempted reorganization that spun out of control is seen in John White's *Decolonization: The British Experience* (1999).

CHAPTER 2. HISTORIOGRAPHIES

While Confederation and the *Ausgleich* strongly resemble one another in their constitutional forms, their respective historiographies differ significantly from one another. This is not surprising given the charged nature of the debate in the field of Habsburg studies as well as the general neglect of the imperial connection between Britain and Canada by both British Imperial and Canadian scholars.¹ The two historiographies share the passions of nationalist authors as well as nostalgic ones, and they do generally support the traditional model of the nation emerging from a decaying empire.

Habsburg Historiography

When it comes to the role of the *Ausgleich* in the history of the Habsburg Empire the broad historiographical themes are “nostalgia,” “hostility,” “pessimism,” and “optimism.” These themes do tend to correspond with the individual historian’s personal inclinations as well as the historical contexts in which they wrote. Many historians’ opinions regarding the *Ausgleich* reflect their personal attitudes toward the long-term viability of the empire.

The first theme to be examined in this section will be “hostility,” and many of the criticisms from these Habsburg historians are organized around the idea of empire as a force of social retardation that is inconsistent with the march of history in the 19th and 20th centuries by preventing the growth democratic and national social relations and institutions. A.J.P. Taylor stands out as an excellent example of those hostile toward the Habsburg Empire, empires in general, and the Habsburgs’ attempts at domestic constitutional reform.

¹ This is perhaps best summed up by Phillip Buckner who recalled asking at a Canadian history conference “Whatever happened to the British Empire?” and receiving a decidedly icy response. Phillip Buckner, ed., *Canada and the End of Empire* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 2.

In his work *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918*, Taylor attempts to trace the “imperial thread” that runs throughout the history of the Empire and argues that the empire was essentially a dying entity that survived only by the goodwill of the other European Great Powers.² While the failure of any reform effort was certain, the *Ausgleich*’s failure was manifest in two ways. First, Taylor argues that the *Ausgleich* “preserved the antiquated social order in Hungary until the twentieth century.”³ Second, the *Ausgleich* wedded the dynasty and the Austrian Germans to the Hungarians, and this marriage led to mutual “ruin.”⁴ For Taylor, the Habsburg Empire was a force that retarded the development of Central and Eastern Europe, not only by preserving archaic social structures, but also by preventing the growth of democratic institutions in the region, making it ripe for dictatorships to emerge in the successor states during the interwar period.

Barbara Jelavich also saw the nature of the Habsburg state, and by association the *Ausgleich*, as being the cause of weakness for the Habsburg Empire.⁵ While less hostile toward the Habsburg Empire than Taylor, Jelavich stressed that, “the nineteenth century in European history marked the victory of the national principle in the organization of states and in international relations. The acceptance of this idea [the victory of the nation state], if carried to its logical conclusion, was bound to be destructive to a state based on other concepts and composed of peoples whose prime loyalties were increasingly being drawn away from the central government toward their own national organizations.”⁶ This meant

² A.J.P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918* revised ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, 1976), 7.

³ Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy...*, 27.

⁴ Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy...*, 32.

⁵ Barbara Jelavich, *The Habsburg Empire in European Affairs, 1814-1918* (Chicago: Rand McNally Co., 1969), 3.

⁶ Jelavich, *The Habsburg Empire...*, 176.

that the multi-national Habsburg Empire could not successfully appeal to its peoples' loyalty since its organization was based on dynasticism. László Kontler's *A History of Hungary: Millennium in Central Europe* is equally negative in its appraisal of the *Ausgleich*'s ability to satisfy the Monarchy's disintegrative forces and blames the collapse of the Habsburg Empire on the *Ausgleich*.⁷ For these two historians, the imperial nature of the state and by extension the *Ausgleich*, a system meant to save the imperial state, directly caused the end of the empire because that system could not compete with the principle of the nation-state. While not as hostile as Taylor, Kontler and Jelavich agreed with his point that the *Ausgleich* negatively affected the future of the Empire and negatively affecting the Hungarian people by preventing the growth of democratic society and by preserving the power base of a group of elites whose conception of Hungary was not compatible with demographic realities.

The second theme in Habsburg historiography to be explored will be "nostalgia." These histories are less concerned with empire as a social and political organization and instead mourn the collapse of the Habsburg Empire while glorifying it as a supra-national paradise. While some of these historians frequently turn a blind eye toward some of the less appealing aspects of the empire, their line of argumentation stresses the relative social equality of the peoples of the empire, and the contingency of the end of the empire.

Particularly notable in this scholarly vein is Alan Sked's *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918* which argued that the Habsburg Empire was becoming more prosperous and politically stable, as opposed to the teetering structure presented by

⁷ Kontler, *A History of Hungary...*, 263. Kontler felt that the Dual Monarchy which emerged from the *Ausgleich* could not provide "...a satisfactory solution to all constitutional issues, and the centrifugal forces unleashed by the national question." 263

Taylor.⁸ Sked argues that the *Ausgleich* enjoyed significant general support of Germans and Hungarians, the Hungarians defended the *Ausgleich* from any change that threatened their status, and none of the peoples of the Monarchy desired full independence.⁹ Historian Paula Fichtner added to this line of thinking by arguing that the *Ausgleich* was, in her assessment, like many other reforms in the Habsburg empire, a short-term program meant to stave off real systemic reform for as long as possible while reserving as much power as possible for the Emperor, and should be looked at as a “qualified success.”¹⁰

Deep-felt nostalgia for the Empire has been around since its dismemberment in 1919, and can be seen in Joseph Roth’s novels *The Radetzky March* and *The Emperor’s Tomb*, in scholarly works like Edward Crankshaw’s *The Fall of the House of Habsburg*, and in some modern conservative thought.¹¹ Crankshaw’s work, written in the early 1960s, is a product of its age. Coinciding with the rise of the “New Left,” Crankshaw’s arguments often reflect the growing appeal of non-socialist internationalism and supra-nationalism in Europe despite the anti-imperialism of much of the new left scholarship.¹² Crankshaw wants the reader to understand that the original intent of the *Ausgleich* in the minds of Franz Joseph and his ministers, which was to chastise the German nationalists by colluding with the Magyars. It was not meant to elevate the status of the Hungarian people to a

⁸ Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918* (London: Longman, 1989), 188, 198, 218.

⁹ Sked, *The Decline and Fall...*, 188, 231. The small numbers of Italians remaining in the monarchy after 1859 represent the one exception to the above statement.

¹⁰ Paula Fichtner, *The Habsburg Empire: From Dynasticism to Multiculturalism*, The Anvil Series (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Co., 1997), 60-61.

¹¹ For this politically conservative nostalgia, see James Kurth, “The Tragic Death of the Habsburg Empire,” *Modern Age* (2007): 498-507. Kurth’s article describes a hypothetical situation where a continued Habsburg Empire somehow translates into no Nazi Germany, no Holocaust, no WWII, and no Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe.

¹² Edward Crankshaw, *The Fall of the House of Habsburg* (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), 3-4.

“master nation” within the empire.¹³ Crankshaw blamed the Magyar people and individuals such as Ferenc Deák and Gyula Andrassy, the principle architects of the *Ausgleich*, and their “inferior successors” for the Empire’s inability to become a fully federalized state, and for the end of the Empire itself.¹⁴

Easily the largest grouping of *Ausgleich* historiography belongs to the pessimists. These historians often believe that the empire’s dismemberment was not unavoidable, but that the challenges presented by modernity, and not just the national question, proved too great to overcome. This body of scholarship walks the middle ground by criticizing the empire for its various shortcomings without condemning it, or the conception of empire, as being incompatible with modernity.

The principal historian in this line of thought is Robert Kann. Many of Kann’s works dealt with the effects of the national question on the empire and the empire’s long-term prospects.¹⁵ Kann described the *Ausgleich* as an event that made “a non-revolutionary solution” to the nationality questions “highly improbable.”¹⁶ Kann then blames the breakdown of the *Ausgleich* on the attitudes of the Hungarian and Imperial leadership and not on any intrinsic failing.¹⁷

Kann is not alone in this assessment. Other historians of the twentieth- and twenty-first-century echo his basic argument that the disintegrative forces in the Monarchy were

¹³ Crankshaw, *The Fall of...*, 201.

¹⁴ Crankshaw, *The Fall of...*, 203.

¹⁵ Specifically here, the focus will be upon Kann’s works *The Multinational Empire Volumes I & II: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Empire, 1848-1918* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), *The Habsburg Empire: a Study in Integration and Dis-Integration* (New York: Praeger, 1957) and *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

¹⁶ Kann, *The Habsburg Empire: A Study...*, 36.

¹⁷ Kann, *The Habsburg Empire: A Study...*, 81, 129-130.

too strong for any successful resolution. C.A. Macartney asserted that the centrifugal forces that were pulling the empire apart cannot be easily classified as internal or external forces, but that even when it came to discussing solutions to these problems, the various leaders were simply not of the same mind to even begin working on reform.¹⁸ The Hungarian historian Miklós Molnár, in his analysis of the period, stated that the Hungarian leadership and public were satisfied with the contours of the agreement,¹⁹ but that further reform to sustain the empire was unlikely without a change in attitudes, especially in regards to the idea of Greater Hungary.²⁰

Canadian Historiography

Confederation and Canada's place within the British Empire does not have the same spirited debate as the *Ausgleich* and Hungary have in the Habsburg Empire, nor is it the subject of moralizing analyses. That said, the historiography of Confederation and Imperial Canada possesses a variety of interpretations, and that debate does correspond with some of the major events of the twentieth century in the British World.

The early histories of Confederation can be generally described "Whiggish," especially among the early historians of the British Empire. Generally, what is seen in this type of history is the emphasis on the "progressive" aspect of the British Empire; that is, focusing on the "civilizing" features and the evolutionary character of the empire. Colonies, in theory, were meant to go from indirectly ruled territories to self-governing dominions when their populations were "educated" and anglicized. In this respect, Canada (and later Australia and New Zealand) led the way. Many histories of this type were

¹⁸ C.A. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire, 1790-1918* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 810.

¹⁹ Molnár, *A Concise History...*, 208-210.

²⁰ Molnár, *A Concise History...*, 248.

written in the late 19th and early 20th century, and correspond with the attempt of European powers to justify their global expansion and their moral rectitude in the aftermath of WWI.

A good example of this line of scholarship is William Harrison Woodward's *The Expansion of the British Empire* (1912).²¹ Woodward asserts, "The determination to strengthen the tie between the Mother country and her premier colony has grown steadily with the development of the Dominion, and the fears guardedly expressed in England in 1867 lest the Act of Confederation should prove a first step towards separation have been signally falsified."²² Woodward believed that Confederation showed that a colony could mature and develop its own governing system without severing its ties to the greater British world.

Another excellent example of this line of scholarship is *A Short History of British Expansion* by James A Williamson. Williamson remarks in his summation of Confederation that Confederation has succeeded in forging a Canadian nation and that by "Taking a wider view..., we can see that the corporate strength of the Empire has gained greatly by the consolidation, imitated later in Australia and South Africa, of many small units into a few larger ones."²³ This remark can almost be seen as an endorsement of the virtues of Empire; that is, why not organize many small states into a larger collective? It is the emphasis on the universalism and rationalism of this period's liberalism that marks these works' attitude towards empire, which is seen as a force for civilization and as a vehicle for greater participation in global affairs.

²¹ William Harrison Woodward, *The Expansion of the British Empire*, The Cambridge Series for Schools and Training Colleges, 3rd ed, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899, 1912).

²² Woodward, *The Expansion...*, 260.

²³ James A. Williamson, *A Short History of British Expansion* 2d ed, two volumes in one (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1931), 79.

This sort of “Whiggism” remains in many of today’s general histories of the British Empire, though most do acknowledge that political life under the self-governing Dominions differed from the British ideal. Historian Lawrence James points out “Without an aristocracy to act as a brake on reform and with a large population drawn from the British working class, it was inevitable that the colonies soon had a wider franchise than Britain and governments willing to undertake novel and far-reaching social reforms.”²⁴ British historians Niall Ferguson and David Cannadine also see the development of the Empire post-Confederation optimistically, however, both Ferguson and Cannadine differ from James’ nostalgia by championing Empire as a mode of global development.²⁵ Again, these works make similar arguments about the benefits empire has in making a coherent, if not always cohesive, collective vision and set of attitudes and responsibilities.

While it is not surprising that nostalgia for the British Empire still exist, the study of the empire turned away from a “progressive” interpretation toward a more critical and nationalist one after WWII. In Canadian scholarship, the debate focuses about what it means to be Canadian, what Confederation meant, and what it still means. It is no coincidence that this reassessment of the meaning of Confederation and “Canadian” occurred at the same time as the centennial of Confederation, decolonization, and the growth of Quebec separatism. One should also point to the growth of Canada’s presence in international affairs, which may serve to identify Canada as an example for the new post-colonial states. Many of these types of histories tend to de-emphasize the imperial, but not the British, connection between Canada and the Empire. Rather than placing Canada

²⁴ James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire*, 311.

²⁵ Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise...*, xx-xxvi, 91 and David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

within the imperial mission, these historians emphasize other common factors such as the English language and parliamentary democracy.

An excellent starting point in this Canadian branch of identity historiography is the nationalist historian Donald Creighton and in particular his work *The Road to Confederation: The Emergence of Canada, 1863-1867*. For Creighton, Confederation was the result of the march of history (as the title suggests) and the point at which the Canadian nation forged itself as British and distinctly not American.²⁶ Creighton's definition of Confederation is still prevalent in Canadian historiography, with Richard F. Gwyn's recent first volume in a proposed two-volume biography of the Father of Confederation and first post-Confederation prime minister of Canada, John A. Macdonald.²⁷ This more nationalist approach stresses the uniqueness of Canadian identity, especially vis-à-vis the United States, rather than the importance of Confederation to the future of the British Empire.

Many of the other works in this period (1945-2000) focus much more on the decision of Confederation, why it took the shape it did, and what this has meant to the course of Canadian history. An early example of this approach to Confederation historiography is P.B. Waite's *The Life and Times of Confederation 1863-1867*, which Waite felt represented a "shift in emphasis and direction."²⁸ Waite wanted to move the narrative away from the interactions of the Fathers of Confederation, emphasize instead the place of politics in British North American society, and show how Confederation was an

²⁶ Creighton, *The Road to Confederation...*, 141-143, 369.

²⁷ Gwyn, *John A: The Man Who Made Us...*,

²⁸ P.B. Waite, *The Life and Times of Confederation 1863-1867: Politics, Newspapers and the Union of British North America*, reprint (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962, 1967), iv.

achievement of its age, but that it was not a popular phenomenon.²⁹ Waite wanted to defend Confederation while offering a post-colonialist critique of it.

With the growth of Quebecois separatism and the first push for a renegotiation of the union of the Canadian provinces by Quebec, many works began to focus further on what the idea of Confederation meant to the various peoples and the nature of Canadian Federalism. Examples of this line of scholarship are W.L. White's *Canadian Confederation: A Decision-Making Analysis*, A.I. Silver's *The French Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900*, Christopher Moore's *1867: How the Fathers Made a Deal*, and Paul Romney's *Getting It Wrong: How Canadians Forgot Their Past and Imperiled Confederation*.³⁰ These works share a concern with how Confederation should be viewed, and reinforce that the agreement was integral to the process of forming and maintaining a

²⁹ Waite, *The Life and Times of...*, 3-5. Waite even goes so far to say that Confederation was "successfully imposed" by the Colonial Office and by Canada, "But it must be said that New Brunswick was pushed into Union, Nova Scotia was dragooned into it, and Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island were subjected to all the pressure that could be brought to bear...and still refused." 4-5.

³⁰ W.L. White, R.H. Wagenberg, R.C. Nelson, and W.C. Soderlund, *Canadian Confederation: A Decision-Making Analysis* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979), White and his collaborators were interested in illustrating the organic elements of Canadian Federalism, and attempting test Barrington Moore's and Lou Hertz's models emphasizing the "point of origin of a system" and its "decisive importance" to understanding that system, (3). A.I. Silver, *The French Canadian Idea of Confederation, 1864-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982). Silver's argument that Confederation played an instrumental role in the forging of French-Canadian, and specifically Quebecois, national identity, (20-23). Christopher Moore, *1867: How the Fathers Made a Deal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1997). Moore is much more interested in the nuts and bolts of negotiation and reminding present-day politicians about the importance of compromise in systemic reform, (XIII). Paul Romney *Getting It Wrong: How Canadians Forgot Their Past and Imperiled Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999). Romney's thesis is that Confederation is best understood as both a compact between two nations of peoples as well as a compact made between politicians and provinces, and that as time went on the latter understanding came to dominate which then alienated francophones in Canada (4-10).

state and a nation.³¹ All of these works place Confederation in Canadian terms and eliminate the imperial connection entirely as part of the process of determining the exact meaning of being Canadian.

Scholarship regarding the British Empire and Canada's place within it is beginning to come full circle. Early scholarship on the British Empire emphasized the mother-daughter relationship between Britain and her Dominions, the self-governing, and primarily white, colonies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Ireland, and the close ties between them. However, from the 1950s to the present, Imperial and Dominion scholarship began to drift away from one another. Imperial scholarship emphasized India and Africa, while Dominion scholarship stressed social and cultural independence. This trend led Canadian historian Phillip Buckner to pose the question of "What ever happened to Canada in the British Empire" to a decidedly unenthusiastic and uninterested audience at a Canadian history conference in the early 2000s.³²

Recently the topic of Canada's imperial connection has been re-inserted into Canadian historiography. While there has been more works emphasizing the imperial ties between Britain and the Dominions, there were some precursors to this recent movement. The first relevant example of this newer scholarship emphasizing the imperial ties is Peter J. Smith's article "The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation."³³ In a clear nod to Bernard Bailyn's *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, Smith lays out the ideas underpinning the precise shape of Confederation, and he posits that understanding the

³¹ White, et al, *Canadian Confederation...*, 3, 111, 135, Silver, *The French Canadian...*, Moore, *1867...*, and Romney, *Getting It Wrong...*, 6-9.

³² Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire*, 2.

³³ Peter J. Smith, "The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation," *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne science de politique* 20, no. 1 (March 1987), 3-29.

debate between a British-style commercial state and an agrarian democracy, and knowing who the winners were, is essential to understanding why Confederation took the form it did.³⁴ Much of this debate, according to Smith, had its origins in Enlightenment Britain and France, and in the end it was the British Tory vision for a strong centralized commercial state that won the day.³⁵

A second vanguard work in the new Imperial Canadian historiography is Ged Martin's *Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation, 1839-1867*.³⁶ Martin's central argument is that the unopposed passage of the British North America Act owed more to the active public debate in Britain deciding that the union of the British North American colonies was an end to be sought, and that this debate was independent of not the "Little England" movement and the debate over the 1867 Reform Bill.³⁷ What distinguishes the works of Martin and Smith from earlier Imperial histories is their focus on how debate and ideas in Britain were exchanged across the Atlantic in a highly contingent fashion – the winners of this debate were not decided and that once "on the ground" these ideas had to be translated by Canadian leaders.

Recently, there have been a number of works which explore the various links between Canada and Britain, as well as those between Britain and all of her settler colonies,³⁸ during the Imperial Era.³⁹ Many of these involve the Canadian Historian Phillip

³⁴ Peter J. Smith, "The Ideological Origins...", 3-5.

³⁵ Peter J. Smith, "The Ideological Origins...", 25.

³⁶ Ged Martin, *Britain and the Origins of Canadian Confederation, 1839-1867* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1995).

³⁷ Martin, *Britain and...*, 1-2,

³⁸ While the abovementioned works by David Cannadine and Niall Ferguson (especially Ferguson's argument of British Imperialism as the original agent of globalization) could be placed in this category as well, one should particularly look at Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich (eds), *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (London: Frank Cass,

Buckner as editor-in-chief. While Buckner's name is on the cover, these collections of essays are important because the contributing scholars are Canadian-born historians who investigate Canada's past links with the British Empire and reinterpret Canadian attitudes toward the empire and imperial connections.

Of final note in this recent body of scholarship, exploring the imperial connections between Canada and the Imperial Britain is Andrew Smith's *British Businessmen and Canadian Confederation*, which combines P.J. Cain's and A.G. Hopkins's narrative of gentlemanly capitalism and Niall Ferguson's assertion of the British Empire as the agent of the first phase of globalization.⁴⁰ Smith argues with this framework "British businessmen played a crucial role in the achievement of Canadian Confederation. Without the support of a small but influential group of investors, Confederation would not have occurred in 1867, if at all."⁴¹ He also asserts that the goal of Confederation was less about nation-building, and more about resetting the ties between colony and mother country.⁴² In Smith's narrative, Confederation was an imperial project that furthered the imperial goals of increasing the number of available markets for British capital and re-defining the relationship between the imperial center and one of its peripheries.

2003) and P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* 2d ed (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2002).

³⁹ Buckner (ed), *Canada and the British Empire*, Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), Buckner (ed), *Canada and the End of the British Empire* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), and Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (eds), *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006).

⁴⁰ Andrew Smith, *British Businessmen and Canadian Confederation: Constitution-making in an Era of Anglo-Globalization* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008). That title pretty much says it all.

⁴¹ Smith, *British Businessmen...*, 3, 16.

⁴² Smith, *British Businessmen...*, 16.

Summary

This paper aims to situate itself in the historiography of the *Ausgleich* by emphasizing that the imperial connection between the peripheries and centers profoundly affected the shaping of national consciousness in each state in more profound ways than the stoking of nationalist fires. It also places itself within the tradition of understanding both acts of devolution as improving the long-term viability of both imperial states and emphasizes the pragmatic evolution of each state as they attempted to negotiate and meet the changing demands of the populace.

In regards to Habsburg historiography, this thesis will place itself in a similar school of thought as Alan Sked's *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*. The *Ausgleich* effectively addressed the empire's principal domestic fissure prior to 1867 and contributed to the long-term survival of the empire. The end of the Habsburg Empire was not the result of the *Ausgleich*. Further, this paper will argue that the *Ausgleich* influenced the shape of collective Hungarian identity more profoundly than earlier narratives allowed. By incorporating the Hungarians into the ruling elite, and by allowing the Hungarians to control their own domestic issues, the Hungarian nation and Hungarian nationalism took on the characteristics of what Benedict Anderson termed an "official nationalism."

This thesis is also in agreement with the recent historiography of the British Empire and Confederation by arguing that Confederation cannot be fully understood if the imperial component is eliminated from its narrative and that the act of imperial devolution provided the British with a new model of imperial organization. Confederation's imperial connection also affected the growth of a Canadian national identity as British, and that

Confederation strengthened the ties between Britain and Canada, and that those ties continue to influence Canadian identity today.

CHAPTER 3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT: 1526-1860

On the surface of their histories, one would not think that the autocratic Habsburg Empire and the relatively liberal British Empire had much in common. Despite their differences, both empires faced similar challenges during the early- and mid-nineteenth century. Further, both empires maintained autocratic imperial relations between the center and periphery despite the extension of political rights and economic expansion. This is especially so when looking at the course of development that led toward their respective devolutions of power from the center to a defined and isolated portion of the periphery. Though very different in political and social culture, the fact that both empires answered similar questions of legitimacy in nearly identical fashions is indicative of how empires functioned as systems of government. These responses to the challenges presented by the early period of Modernity were a mixture of pragmatism and dogmatism. However, the situations of Hungary and Canada in their respective empires must be explored before Confederation and the *Ausgleich* can be compared.

Hungary

It is a fair statement to describe Hungary as having a special position within the Habsburg territories largely due to the previous existence of the Kingdom of Hungary (896-1526). During this period, the Hungarian state established a constitutional model similar to that of England at the time. Hungary's involvement with the Habsburgs can be divided into three periods.¹ The first period, here called the "Turkish Period," is between 1526 and 1699, when conflict between the Habsburgs and the Ottoman Turks dominated the era. The second period, here called "consolidation and reform," is between the

¹ These periodizations are those of the author.

immediate end of the “Turkish Period” in 1699 and the end of the “Reform Diets” in 1830. The third, here termed the “national period,” occurred between the emergence of Hungarian nationalism as a potent force in 1830 and the end of WWI in 1918.

Hungary had been an independent kingdom in East Central Europe from its establishment in 896 until its defeat by an army of the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Mohács in 1526. The battle was a debacle for the Hungarian military and resulted in the death of the Hungarian King Louis Jagiellon (Louis II) and the end of the Jagiellonian dynasty. Louis II had been married to Mary of Habsburg, but the union had not produced any heirs to the throne. The Hungarian nobility proceeded to elect Archduke Ferdinand of Habsburg (later Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I) as their new king.

Ferdinand faced a contested succession as the conquering Ottomans split the country in two and installed the nobleman János Szapolyai as ruler of their territories and a challenge to Ferdinand’s legitimacy. The ruling Habsburgs faced an additional obstacle to their rule with the constantly shifting Hungarian borders. Between 1526 and 1699 when the Treaty of Karlowitz ended the Ottoman-Habsburg Wars, the Habsburgs and Ottomans were nearly in a constant state of war, with the Ottoman army advancing all the way to Vienna in 1529 and 1683.² Additional strain on the tenuous grip on Hungary maintained by the Habsburgs came from the presence of a significant Calvinist population in Hungary, the fighting of the Thirty Years’ War, and the efforts to install the Counter-Reformation in Hungary.

In addition to the political instability briefly described above, Hungary began

² Daniel Chirot (ed.), *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe: Economics and Politics from the Middle Ages until the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 9.

trending backward both socially and economically during this same period as well.³

Whereas in other parts of Europe dominated by the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman bureaucracy erased feudal institutions and privileges in favor of centralization, the great magnates and lesser nobility of Hungary survived, and saw their political power and social position increase to the detriment of the peasantry.⁴ This concentration of power and social standing into the hands of the very few negatively impacted the growth of towns and the middle classes, while also setting the stage for later noble intransigence. At the same time, Hungary also experienced the negative effects of the demographic decline associated with the turmoil of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe.⁵ Due to the wars of the period, plague epidemics, and the “mini ice-age,” Hungary emerged from the period with a net population loss of ethnic Hungarians and an increase in the population numbers of other peoples, especially Slavic nationalities.⁶

The “Consolidation and Reform” period began with the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, which pushed the Ottoman armies out of the lands of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary. The early part of the period is marked by the enactment of the Pragmatic Sanction in 1723. The Pragmatic Sanction saw the ruling Magyar great magnates accepting the future succession of Maria Theresa to the throne of the then hereditary Habsburg lands (Hungary, Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, and Carinthia) in exchange for greater political autonomy of Hungary vis-à-vis the imperial center.⁷ A compromise was

³ Daniel Chirot (ed.), *The Origins of Backwardness...*, 3-7.

⁴ Molnar, *A Concise History of Hungary*, 97-100.

⁵ Philip Longworth, *The Making of Eastern Europe: From Prehistory to Postcommunism* 2d ed (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, 1997), 214-236.

⁶ Miklós Molnár, *A Concise History of Hungary* Cambridge Concise Histories, trans. by Anna Magyar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 95-96.

⁷ Molnár, *A Concise History...*, 140-141.

needed to bring Hungary into the Pragmatic Sanction, though they acknowledged the Habsburgs as the hereditary monarchs of their lands, because they refused to recognize a female inheritance, and demanded the right to “elect” their monarch. The Court and the Hungarian nobles then made a deal to “elect” Maria-Theresa in exchange for greater political autonomy. This was done because Hungary was the one area of the empire in which ethnic Germans Catholics did not make up a majority of the aristocracy, but in reality, the powers ceded to the Magyar magnates were mostly ceremonial.

Political reforms and centralization of the empire’s domains marked Maria-Theresa’s reign (1740-1780). This centralization occurred only with the assent of the aristocrats of the realm, and was very modest in both means and ends.⁸ The radical reformer of the empire was Maria Theresa’s son, Joseph (Joseph II, r. 1780-1790). Particularly, it was Joseph II’s idea to standardize the monarchy’s bureaucracy by replacing Latin with German as the Empire’s bureaucratic language, which drew true opposition to Habsburg rule.⁹ Eventually, Joseph’s reforms were defeated, and he himself was forced to acknowledge the failure of his reform movement. After the death of Joseph II’s younger brother, the more cautious reformer Leopold II (r. 1790-1792), control of the empire fell into the hands of the deeply conservative Emperor Francis II (1792-1835). Much of Francis II’s time was devoted toward the threat of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, and life during this period can be summed up as repressed. It was during this period of centralization and repression that the Hungarian literary revival began. This literary revival, while largely non-nationalist and apolitical, did signal an early attempt to

⁸ Molnár, *A Concise History...*, 141 argues that Maria Theresa’s absolutism had its benefits and was moderate in nature, however, it was also a fragile system, and required constant renegotiation.

⁹ Molnár, *A Concise History...*, 157-158.

articulate a Hungarian identity while it also provided the groundwork in Hungarian linguistics and historiography.¹⁰ The development of historiography and linguistics is connected to the development of nationalism and national identity as history and language are central to binding a people together into a collective.

The history of Hungary and the Hungarian people changed direction in the period between the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 and 1848 Revolution. During this period Francis was forced by political events at home to convene the Hungarian Diet, which had not been held since the early days of the Napoleonic Wars. These Diets, known as the Reform Diets, began in the mid 1820s and extended into the 1830s, served as the origin of Hungarian nationalism despite their limited agenda.¹¹ The “Reform Diets” ignited nationalistic feelings by stressing the need for regeneration of the Hungarian land and its infrastructure, and by establishing an academy for the preservation of the Hungarian language. This effort to preserve and strengthen the Hungarian language, which increasing numbers of Hungarian public figures began to see as threatened by the German and Slavic languages, provided the catalyst that changed the reformist programs of the 1820s and 1830s into the more radical nationalism of the late-1830s and early-1840s. This change also caused Hungarian political leadership to pass from the cautious and tolerant István Széchenyi (1791-1860) to the fiery demagogue Lajos Kossuth (1802-1892).

While it is generally not possible to attribute movements of history to specific individuals, it is helpful to a point to do so when attempting to re-insert contingency into the historical narrative. The case of the rivalry between Széchenyi and Kossuth illustrates

¹⁰ Molnár, *A Concise History...*, 166.

¹¹ For an excellent treatment of this period and its leader, István Széchenyi, see George Baranyi, *Stephen Szechenyi and the Awakening of Hungarian Nationalism, 1791-1841* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968).

this point, with Kossuth's emergence as a leader central to the course of Hungarian history prior to 1848. With that in mind, rather than focus on the biographical details that likely shaped the choices Széchenyi and Kossuth made, one should look at ideas themselves, and the reasons as to why one became favored over the other.

Both men were nationalists, and both believed in maintaining Hungary as a unitary state, which would not provide any political privileges to other ethnic groups, or autonomy to the regions that were no longer dominated by ethnic Hungarians (especially Croatia, Slovakia and Transylvania). Additionally, both men believed in the assimilatory appeal of Hungarian culture. They only differed in the means. Széchenyi believed that political reform and improving economic interests would encourage linguistic assimilation. Kossuth, on the other hand, believed the extension of democracy would encourage full assimilation. This access to the levers of political power would give the national minorities a greater stake in the Hungarian state, and encourage them to become Hungarian both linguistically and culturally.

Széchenyi had been the leading figure in the reform period in the 1820s and 1830s, but the context he operated in and his style of reform leadership played a significant role as to why Kossuth became the leader in the 1840s. Széchenyi came from one of the most ancient and prominent Hungarian noble families and enjoyed easy access to the Emperor and Klemens von Metternich, the archconservative Habsburg Chancellor. Széchenyi saw himself as an English-style, paternalistic reformer, a loyal Habsburg subject, and a Hungarian patriot. Unfortunately, his attitudes toward reform and the best means to achieve it did not enjoy much support among some very important sections of the Hungarian political body. The conservative Hungarian nobles saw Széchenyi as someone

who threatened the privileges of their class and their pocket books. Nor did Széchenyi appeal to the hearts and minds of the rising Hungarian bourgeoisie because of his aristocratic background and intellectualism. Finally, despite Széchenyi's status and his friendship with Metternich and other court figures, he was seen as a dangerous figure who should be marginalized because his ideas threatened the conservative political and economic order. All of these factors worked against Széchenyi, despite his more humanitarian vision of the best means to build both the Hungarian nation and strengthen the unitary Hungarian state.

Kossuth, on the other hand, had none of those handicaps working against him in the early 1840s. He came from the minor nobility with mixed ethnic heritage which meant that he did not enjoy any privileges in Vienna at court, and which made it easier for him to ally himself with the reactionary elements of the Hungarian high nobility. Much more important than that though was Kossuth's ability to popularize his ideas with the growing bourgeoisie through his newspaper, *Pesti Hírlap*. Though not a mass movement in the modern sense, Kossuth's base of support, the Hungarian bourgeoisie, was the fastest growing segment in society and provided him with a much stronger political hand with which to pursue his program of nation-building and state-building. Unfortunately, the emphasis Kossuth placed on the democratic access to political power served an opposite purpose – the national minorities began to press for political self-determination in their lands, which increased the centrifugal tendencies in Hungarian politics, and laid the foundation for a Hungarian rebellion that eventually failed. Kossuth's supplanting of Széchenyi as the leader and mouthpiece of Hungarian nationalism by allying himself politically with the Hungarian aristocracy and by appealing to the bourgeoisie laid the

foundation for the rebellion in 1848-1849.

This transformation from reform to revolution and from civic to ethnic nationalism, or loyalty to an ideal or to a state versus loyalty to a culture or an ethnicity, can be seen in the poetry of Sándor Petöfi, one of the Hungarian rebellion's leaders. Petöfi's early political poems go from decrying those ministers surrounding and misleading Emperor Ferdinand V (r. 1835-1848), to his later poems accusing the Emperor of maliciously violating his contract with the Hungarian people.¹² Petöfi's poetry also reflects the general path of the 1848 Revolution in Hungary. Both the 1848 Revolution and Petöfi's poetry begin with loyalist reform and then transform into outright rebellion and a war for independence.

In the "National Period" from 1830 to 1918 Hungary attained national consciousness, a short-lived independence (April 1848 to June 1849), the *Ausgleich*, explosive economic growth, and eventual independence. The last event came with the loss of many of the historic Hungarian territories at the end of WWI, scarring the Hungarian psyche and fueling the rampant national chauvinism of the interwar period. These developments were not caused by the emergence of the nation-state ideal, and it is not fair to interpret the history of nineteenth and early-twentieth century Central and Eastern European history in a framework that disallows the possibility of successful internal reform.

Canada

Canada, on the other hand, did not have any tradition of autonomy vis-à-vis Great

¹² Sándor Petöfi, *Sándor Petöfi: His Entire Poetic Works* 2d ed., trans. by Frank Szomy (Boca Raton: privately printed, 1972, 1973). Specifically, the poem "To Ferdinand V" 128, while the poem "Austria" displays Petöfi at his most anti-German and anti-Habsburg, 595-596.

Britain, with the exception of what would become Lower Canada (and then Quebec), which had been owned by France from 1534 to 1763. British North America, unlike Hungary, is of more recent vintage, and its colonial period does not begin in earnest until the late seventeenth-century, whereas Hungary can speak of colonial periods under both Ottoman and Habsburg rule in the sixteenth-century. The first European exploration of Canada began with the Viking excursions around the year 1000, which resulted in a few permanent settlements, did not last very long, and left few marks on the culture of the First Nations.

The origins of modern European involvement in British North America are to be found in the explorations of John Cabot (c.1450-c.1509) and the allure of the abundant cod fisheries off the coast of Newfoundland. This new source of food, specifically the protein that the cod could supply to a protein-deficient peasant diet, was the catalyst for European interest in what would become British North America. The development of the fisheries off Newfoundland led to the first permanent British settlements in British North America and to greater commercial contact between the Europeans and the First Nations. However, these early settlers faced a variety of challenges, including the climate and Dutch pirate attacks.

While British interests were originally limited to the fishing industry and small, related entrepreneurs, the French saw British North America literally as a potential gold mine. The French king, Francis I (1494-1547) commissioned Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) to claim territory for France in the New World specifically to bring back gold and other precious metals to combat the Spanish King Ferdinand, who was also a Habsburg, who used the riches Spanish explorers brought back from the New World to fund his wars.

Cartier never found any gold for Francis; however, he introduced American furs into the European market and eventually led a failed expedition to found a colony in what would become Quebec in 1540. After Cartier's failed attempt, the French would not again try to settle in Canada until the early 1600s when European demand for furs exploded. The fur trade then led directly to the establishment of New France.

The French firmly established colonial life in New France during the reign of Louis XIV (r.1643-1715). After this establishment, however, the French-Canadian identity diverged from European-French identity early on due to activity by Jesuit missionaries. This resulted in a more militant attitude toward Catholicism in New France. Catholicism in New France became more firmly entrenched in the communities, and Catholic priests would work to quell religious dissent in the region. The influence of the Church in New French society also resulted stronger feudal land relations, which prevented the growth of commercial farming and the growth of an urban, merchant bourgeoisie.

Though economically valuable due to the abundant fur trade, New France was willingly ceded to Britain as part of the Treaty of Paris (1763) which ended the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), though the British had been in military occupation of territory since 1760. The British wartime administration of New France was very tolerant, especially when one considers the antipathy between France and Britain. During this administration, the French, if they chose to stay, were given security of property and person, and were allowed to practice their Roman Catholic faith with impunity. During the negotiations that ended the conflict, France made very little effort to regain their Canadian possessions, and simply left the French settlers in these territories to the new British rulers.

While undoubtedly difficult, the French in British North America adjusted to the

reality of British rule with little resistance, and were given some latitude in religious affairs. The British were highly suspicious of Roman Catholicism, but they allowed the Church to continue to exist in the territory, and even aligned with the clerical class. This alliance presented each side with a win-win agreement, in which the priests preached loyalty to the new imperial power, and the church left largely to its own affairs. When the American Revolution began, the French Canadians largely abstained from the conflict and did not assist the Americans during their attempted invasion of Quebec, nor did the French Canadians support the Americans a generation later during the War of 1812.¹³ This incorporation of New France into the British colonies in the new world completed the British Imperial project of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the “First British Empire” reached its full extent by 1776.

The “First British Empire,” which included the 13 Colonies that would become the United States, British North America, Australia, parts of India, and the Caribbean island holdings such as Jamaica, was a maritime empire based on the economic theory of mercantilism. Mercantilism defined the colonies as resources to be exploited for the profit of the center in the center’s attempt at autarky.¹⁴ This left the colonies economically undeveloped and dependent upon Britain and with little relationships with each other. This is especially the case in British North America since the scattered colonies produced many of the same raw materials such as lumber, grain, and fish.

In addition to this backward economic state, the colonies were administered directly

¹³ Don Gillmor and Pierre Turgeon, *Canada: A People’s History, Vol.1* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd, 2002), 145, 147, 172-175.

¹⁴ Lawrence James, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1994), 28.

from Britain, and drew on much of the same “Old Corruption” as existed there.¹⁵ The “Old Corruption” was a political system not of merit, but of patronage, in which the British landed aristocracy was significantly more powerful than their proportion in society warranted. This system extended to colonies, and further hindered their economic and political development by preventing social advancement and entrepreneurial spirit. Private corporations, such as the Hudson’s Bay Company held the remaining political power in British North America.

British North America was very sparsely populated throughout this period from 1763 to the 1830s, and many of its residents were poor farmers. However, there were two population booms prior to the ones of the 1840s and 1850s. The first came at the end of the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) which resulted in the British acquisition of “New France,” when all of the citizens of that colony became subjects of the British Crown. The second came at the end American War for Independence (1776-1783), when between 30,000 and 50,000 loyalists fled the American Colonies for a safe haven in the British North American Colonies.¹⁶ These events boosted population of British North America, but the number of inhabitants remained low compared to the United States and Great Britain. In Canadian historiography, the loyalist immigrants played a decisive role in separating British North America from the United States. This reliance upon the loyalist influx in the 1780s in

¹⁵ William B. Willcox and Walter L. Arnstein, *The Age of Aristocracy, 1688-1830* 8th ed (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), 321-323. See also Thomas Thomer and Thor Frohn-Nielsen (eds.), *“A Few Acres of Snow:” Documents in Pre-Confederation Canadian History* 2d ed. (Peterborough, Ontario and Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 1997, 2003), 162-164, Margaret Conrad, Alvin Finkel, and Cornelius Jaenen, *History of the Canadian Peoples Volume 1: Beginnings to 1867* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd, 1993), 404- 434.

¹⁶ Conrad, Finkel and Jaenen put the number as high as 70,000. Margaret Conrad, Alvin Finkel, Cornelius Jaenen, *History of the Canadian Peoples Beginnings to 1867* Vol. 1 (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1993), 290.

Canadian historiography downplays the significance of continued immigration from Britain, and the limited number of immigrants from other countries after 1850, while also attributing loyalty to England as the only reason these people relocated to British North America.¹⁷

The political make-up of British North America prior to the 1850s followed this general form. The British Colonial Secretary of the Imperial Government appointed a Governor-General of British North America who represented the Government and the Monarchy. The Governor-General acted as the executive authority in all of the British North American colonies, but only directly administered Lower Canada. His appointed Lieutenant Governors acted in his place in the other colonies. The Governor-General or the Lieutenant Governor would then appoint the Executive and Legislative Councils for each colony, and would direct the Civil Administration through the Executive Council. Qualified voters in each colony would then elect a Legislative Assembly, whose role it was to advise the Executive and Legislative Councils. This basic system changed very little between the Constitutional Act of 1791 and Confederation in 1867. The two significant systemic changes came in 1840 with the Union of the two Upper and Lower Canada with the Act of Union (1840) and the institution of Responsible Government in 1848. After the passage of the Act of Union, the Governor-General became the executive to the United Canada, and the Legislative Assembly had an equal proportion of French Canadians and English Canadians. The real change in the British North American political system was the institution of Responsible Government in 1848, which directed the Governor-General to yield to the wishes of the Legislative Assembly, which he had not been previously required

¹⁷Conrad, Finkel and Jaenen emphasize the economic appeal the “loyalists” saw after the end of the American Revolution; Conrad, Finkel, Jaenen, *History of ...*, 291.

to do.

The dreary picture of life in British North America presented in the preceding paragraphs does not do full justice to what was experienced by the settlers living at this time. Civil society, that is public discourse and social interaction, was burgeoning; newspapers were beginning to be published, public and private social groups had formed and met consistently, and relations between the English and French communities functioned smoothly. Finally, industry in the various colonies emerged and their economies began to diversify. This is not to say that the British North American colonies remained untouched by the larger ideological movements and events of the day. The outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 spurred political reform in New France with the Constitution Act of 1791, which separated those lands into Upper and Lower Canada. This division is the beginning of the separation of the English and French communities in Canada. While much of the Act provided greater rights for Anglophones in the territory, it also provided the ideal of a distinct homeland for Francophones and protections of their rights. While the War of 1812 threatened the existence of British North America, the colonies were able to come together and reject incorporation into the United States uniformly.

The emergence of both industrialism and political liberalism began to affect the social relations of the colonies, which led to a voracious argument over the organization of politics in the colonies. Some of these political, social and economic changes resulted in greater political and economic domination of Lower Canada by Upper Canada, infringing on the ideal of the separate and distinct French homeland. Industrialism and capitalism began to disrupt the feudal property relations that existed in Lower Canada, which

increased pressure for land reform and created great discontent among the masses. All was not rosy in Upper Canada either. Similar arguments to those made in Lower Canada were made in favor of land reform, while clamor for American-style democratic political reforms increased. This discontent would take a radical turn, and the Rebellions of 1838 and 1839 began. Unfortunately for the rebels, this was not a cohesive mass effort, with the rebels fighting in their own lands and not joining for mutual support, which meant that the colonial government was never in any extended danger. These rebellions played a significant role in raising the debate about the future of the British overseas possessions.

Summary

Hungary and Canada do not have similar histories when it comes to their pre-revolutionary periods. However, both periods do affect the shape of political reform that occurred in the late 1860s. What is important for both is not traditions of independence, nor the growth of ideological distances between center and periphery, but that the center and periphery were undergoing growing pains associated with modernity. While Hungary had declared independence in 1849, and both Upper and Lower Canada revolted against elements of the existing order in the 1830s, neither Canada nor Hungary renounced the ideology behind either imperial center, but merely offered a critique. That is, neither Hungary nor Canada directly challenged the right of existence of the empire, instead offering only re-negotiated center-periphery relations.

CHAPTER 4. DEVOLUTIONS: 1864-1868

Both external and internal factors played distinct roles in the shaping of Confederation and the *Ausgleich* prior to 1867 when both agreements were concluded. Both Austria and Britain had rebellions against autocratic rule in the previous generation – Upper and Lower Canada in 1837-38 and in Hungary during the revolutionary wave of 1848-49.¹ Both rebellions demanded greater political reform and localized government, but not immediate independence.² Independence became a goal only after the demands for reform were not met, or granted reforms abrogated. These rebellions did weaken the imperial ties between the center and periphery, and the centers' ruling ideologies directed the course of imperial response.

Canada

Britain, in the same spirit of liberalism that inspired the 1832 Reform Act, installed the suggestions made by Lord Durham's *Report on the Affairs of British North America*.³ Primarily the Colonial Office followed Durham's suggestion for the political union of Upper and Lower Canada. It still took a decade for installation of "Responsible

¹ Kann, *The Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 299-326 and Niall Ferguson, *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 90-91. For a fuller treatment of the rebellions, see Phillip A. Buckner, *The Transition to Responsible Government: British Policy in British North America, 1815-1850* (London: Greenwood Press, 1985).

² Thomas Thorner and Thor Frohn-Nielsen, "*A Few Acres of Snow*": *Documents in Pre-Confederation Canadian History* 2d ed, (Peterborough, ON and Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 1997, 2003), 162. Lower Canada did not declare its independence until 1838 as seen by Robert Nelson, "Declaration of Independence," February 22, 1838 in Thorner and Frohn-Nielsen, 177-179. For the course of the 1848 Hungarian Revolution see László Kontler, *A History of Hungary: Millennium in Central Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 247-259.

³ Lord Durham, *Report on the Affairs of British North America*, and Ferguson, *Empire...*, 91-92.

Government” in all of British North America, finally allowing the colonists a greater share in the political decision-making. Responsible government was not a new idea in British North America in the 1840s,⁴ what was new was the institution of uniting previously separate colonies to alleviate constitutional and ethnic questions such as civic participation and protection for French and English speaking communities.

Durham saw the French Canadians and the British Canadians as being “different races engaged in a national contest,”⁵ and recommended the union of the Canadas as a way to facilitate the assimilation of the French into the larger British Imperial Culture.⁶ By doing so, Durham is not talking about anglicizing the francophones in Lower Canada, but about providing them with a more direct path to greater participation in imperial culture. Had Durham and his fellow British political leaders wanted to end French identity in British North America, they probably would have expelled them from their lands or effectively disenfranchised them. Instead, they provided for the protection of French identity in Lower Canada within the structure of the union with Upper Canada; representation in the local legislature was based on equality of the two peoples.

The British at this point had just emerged from their first period of political reform, which had culminated in the Reform Act of 1832. While the 1832 Reform act did not result in a large increase in democratic participation in the institutions of the state, it did recognize that the British political society had become corrupted. It also recognized that there were an increasing number of individuals who received a similar education as the

⁴ Paul Romney, *Getting It Wrong: How Canadians Forgot Their Past and Imperiled Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 52.

⁵ Lord Durham to Lord Glenelg, August 9, 1838 in *Imperial Blue Books Relating to Canada*, 1839, quoted from Thorner and Frohn-Nielsen, *A Few...*, 179.

⁶ Lord Durham, *Report on the Affairs of British North America* quoted from Thorner and Frohn-Nielsen, *A Few...*, 189.

aristocracy, and that these individuals should be included in governance of the state. In that particular ideological climate, it does not take a great leap of mind to see Lord Durham's recommendations as directed at rooting out British corruption, which had spread into the Colonial administrations. However, the notion of the empire as outdated or antithetical to British conceptions of constitutional government did not play a role in the institution of "Responsible Government" for the colonies, and it was only a minority viewpoint.⁷ While it may not seem so on the surface, this understanding of reforming and maintaining the Imperial connections between Britain and her colonies and specifically British North America, Lord Durham's suggestions and their implementation and their alterations for the Australian colonies were reasonably dogmatic in that they were addressing an imperial question with a determinedly domestic solution. The relationship between Britain and her colonies remained as undefined as before.

The 1850s and 1860s were similarly a trying time for the British North Americans and for the Canadians in particular. The Maritime Provinces (Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland) were relatively poor, under-populated, and faced growing dependence on both Britain and on the United States.⁸ Upper and Lower Canada were economically better off, but were constitutionally stalemated.⁹ The previous two general elections had not provided a firm working parliamentary majority. The

⁷ P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000*, 2d ed (London: Longman, 1993, Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), 230. Cain and Hopkins put it thusly; "[A] few radicals might be prepared to abandon the empire: no English ministry could take such a cavalier attitude."

⁸ See Father of Confederation A.T. Galt's descriptions in Reid, McNaught, and Crowe, *A Source-book in Canadian History*, 196-197.

⁹ Creighton, *The Road To Confederation*, 39-52. See also Father of Confederation George Brown describing why he had joined the government in coalition after so many years in opposition in Reid, McNaught, and Crowe, *A Source-book of Canadian History*, 200-201.

constitutional issues stemmed from Upper Canada's demographic boom that gave it the largest population of all the British North American colonies, but it remained politically dependent on Lower Canada, made up almost entirely of French Canadians by the terms of the 1840 Union. Externally, nearly all of the provinces looked with growing concern at the alarming rise of the United States as an industrial-military power, especially the North, which had reason to turn its military might against both British North America and Britain, due to their Confederate sympathies.¹⁰

Britain's imperial identity crises, which began in 1783 with the loss of the Thirteen American Colonies and caused many debates about the future of foreign involvement, did not end after the rebellions of 1839-1840. Other uprisings against British rule occurred in that era – Jamaica in 1831 and 1865, and most notably India in 1857, which caused many to wonder what, if any, role the Empire should play in British affairs. This context furthered the identity crisis in regards to the Empire that had originated with the loss of the Thirteen American Colonies.¹¹

This identity crisis co-existed with domestic difficulties at the same time. In domestic politics, Britain was in upheaval with the growth of Chartism, an early form of social democracy, and the debate over further electoral reform. Four Prime Ministers formed new governments in the three years after the death of Lord Palmerston, who had

¹⁰ This is a broad theme throughout the debates over Confederation as well as the historiography of the period; see especially the Canadian nationalist historian Donald Creighton, *The Road to Confederation*, 90, 244-46.

¹¹ Ged Martin, *Britain and the Origins of Confederation, 1837-1867* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1995), 77, 81, 115, 124, 132. Ferguson, *Empire...*, xx.

been Prime Minister since 1855, in 1865.¹² While the rhetoric surrounding political reform was not connected to the issue of the Empire, the extension of political rights further to the middle class did raise certain questions about the future of the Empire. While the stereotype of the anti-imperial mid-19th century may be overstated,¹³ the anti-imperial “Little Englander” trend influenced many public individuals such as Manchester factory owner and MP for Durham and later Manchester John Bright and William Gladstone, while many private citizens remained ignorant of the empire.¹⁴ Men like Bright, and others, represented one of the conflicts of the Empire. Many, like Bright, made their livings on the back of the Empire, but since they did not have the same education as the upper classes,¹⁵ this meant that many were ignorant of economic role the Empire played in British life, and they were not instructed to be the imperial administrators envisioned by the social philosopher and historian Thomas Carlyle. Rather, these individuals only understood the Empire as an existing institution, and something of a relic. These external and internal issues combined to advance Confederation as both a locally driven issue, and an imperial issue in Britain.

The work of historian Ged Martin illustrates how the understanding of British North America within the “imagined community” of the British Empire underwent a profound change during the period of 1839-1864. Martin contends that during this period, the British

¹² Palmerston was Prime Minister from February of 1855 to February of 1858 and again from June of 1859 to his death in October of 1865. Lords Russel and Derby, Benjamin Disraeli and William Gladstone each served as Prime Minister from 1865 to Gladstone’s second term as Prime Minister, which began in 1868.

¹³ Companion to 19th Century Britain.

¹⁴ This is the central argument in Bernard Porter’s *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society and Culture in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vii-xv, xix, 3.

¹⁵ The gender bias here is because women’s attitudes toward the Empire did not influence imperial politics.

public came to see a united British North America as both logical and desirable.¹⁶ Martin further states that after the emergence of a consensus about the desirability of a British North American union, the British wished to maintain imperial control over the process of the joining of the colonies.¹⁷

Creating a union of the British North American colonies was not the only plan available to British policy and opinion makers. In the early 1860s, William Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, considered trading British North America to the American Union as part of peace deal to end the Civil War.¹⁸ This option appealed to Gladstone's economic instincts because Britain had not yet replaced its dependence on Confederate cotton with Indian cotton. It also appealed to Gladstone's pacifism; though the British had not directly aided the Confederacy, there was real concern that the Union, once victorious, would turn its wrath against Britain by striking at British North America. How seriously he considered this plan is unknown, but it does represent a different course of action for the imperial future in British North America. What is important is that the British people began to imagine their colonial brethren as being part of a larger community of British speakers and not simply as colonists on individual colonies.

A marked difference between the situations regarding the position of Hungary in the Habsburg Empire and Canada in the British Empire is that the groundswell for reform moved in two different directions. The Hungarian aristocracy and gentry were looking for a restitution of their traditional privileges vis-à-vis Vienna, and acknowledgement of their status as a non-German, non-Slavic people. The British North Americans, and the

¹⁶ Martin, *Britain and the Origins...*, 85-115.

¹⁷ Martin, *Britain and the Origins...*, 112.

¹⁸ Martin, *Britain and the Origins...*, 42.

Canadians specifically, were looking for systemic change that reflected the demographic changes in order to make their political system more equitable. At this time, the right to vote in the British North American colonies was more open than in Britain, but less open than in the United States, while in Canada equal representation was given to the French Canadians despite the fact that a greater proportion of the population were Anglophones. When the time came for the negotiation and passage of each act of imperial devolution, a spirited debate rose among the peoples of Hungary, Canada, Austria and Britain about what the new constitutional situation meant.

In Canada, where loyalty to both Britain and the Empire was a pervasive feeling and identity marker,¹⁹ the Fathers of Confederation routinely stressed that Confederation did not signal a desire to separate from Britain and the Empire. John A. Macdonald, who became the first Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, argued that the Quebec scheme did not push toward independence but showed “a unanimous feeling of willingness (from the people of British North America) to run all the hazards of war, if war must come, rather than lose the connection between the Mother Country and these colonies.”²⁰ Similar comments appeared in *The New York Times* in the immediate aftermath of Confederation, asserting that Confederation was definitely not a step towards independence, but a step towards making the Canadian people more equal vis-à-vis their British counterparts, and that the Canadian people were not interested in independent government.²¹ Later

¹⁹ See Phillip Buckner (ed.), *Canada and the British Empire*, Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), vii, x, 7, 8, 62 Richard J. Gwyn, *John A: The Man Who Made Us: The Life and Times of John A Macdonald, Vol.1 1815-1867* (Toronto: Random House Canada, 2007), 253-259, 365-369.

²⁰ John A. Macdonald, Speech February 3, 1865, quoted from Reid, McNaught and Crowe, *A Sourcebook...*, 221.

²¹ *The New York Times* June 22, 1867.

scholarship has insisted that loyalty to Britain and the empire remained high throughout Canada until the era of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s, and even lasted well into the 1970s.²²

Of course, critics and advocates of independence existed on both sides of the Atlantic, but they were a minority. These were individuals such as British-Canadian historian Goldwin Smith, John Bright, and Nova Scotian politician Joseph Howe, while the opposition of the Maritime Colonies of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick has long been a part of the historiography of Confederation, though this is changing.²³ This is a natural course of public debate, as overwhelming public support for an issue is the exception rather than the rule, and the opponents to Confederation and the Empire often couched their arguments in loyalty to Britain, and to their countrymen. As Martin so effectively argued in his work *Britain and the Origins of Confederation*, opposition to Confederation and Empire in Britain gradually lost more and more sway with the general populace.

It is also possible that nationalist scholars such as Donald Creighton have inflated the effectiveness of the arguments against Confederation simply for the reason that it is difficult to present Canadian history in any epic sense without the overcoming of strong challenges. More typical of the opposition to Confederation, both in British North America and in Britain is that of the journalist Edward Goff Penny. Penny's short pamphlet *The*

²² Philip Buckner, "Canada and the End of Empire, 1939-1982," in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 117-123, 124-125.

²³ Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, "Howe, Joseph," http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=5049 (accessed May 24, 2009). For a standard tale of Maritime opposition see Creighton, *The Road to Confederation...*, 91. For further remarks about generalized opposition in the Maritimes and changing historiographical trends, see Philip Buckner, "CHR Dialogue: The Maritimes and Confederation: A Reassessment," *Canadian Historical Review* 71 (1990): 7-12.

Proposed British North American Confederation: Why It Should Not Be Imposed on the Colonies by Imperial Legislation (1867), argued that the Quebec Resolutions were not a satisfactory answer to the problems Canada faced, were anathema to English Constitutional precedent, and were not an expression of the popular will.²⁴ Finally, the failure of the Resolutions would simply fuel discontent toward the Imperial Government.²⁵ Dire consequences for the Empire would follow, according to Penny, but the oppositionists never really stood a chance.²⁶ Setting aside his conjecture about what the acceptance of the Quebec Resolutions would mean for the future of the Empire, Penny's argument is more about how Confederation is a good thing, but it is the system of government laid out by the Quebec Resolutions which is unsatisfactory.

Criticisms like Penny's were a distinct minority by 1867. *The New York Times* published an article on October 23, 1866 which stated that the people had "lost interest" in the issue of Confederation, and though the agreement had essentially been forced upon the people of Canada, the people generally accepted it.²⁷ Two days later, *The New York Times* then asserted that "people are naturally anxious to have the much-talked of scheme finally settled, as it must be, by the action of Imperial Parliament."²⁸ During this same period of debate, the French Canadians desired more autonomy but remained loyal to the British Government.²⁹ That being said, the effects Confederation had upon the French-Canadians, and especially the Quebeckers, will be treated at greater length later.

²⁴ Penny, *The Proposed...*, 6, 10-12.

²⁵ Penny, *The Proposed...*, 19.

²⁶ *The New York Times* November 23, 1866.

²⁷ *The New York Times* October 23, 1866.

²⁸ *The New York Times* October 25, 1866.

²⁹ Colin M. Coates, "French Canadians' Ambivalence to the British Empire," in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 185, 187, 191, 195.

After the passage of the British North America Act of 1867, the idea of confederating colonies and creating them as Dominions came to be thought as the solution for what Canadian Studies scholar Paul Romney called “the new British Empire” which had to be distinguished from the old, colonial empire.³⁰ That is, the model of Confederation came close to being a new ruling dogma for the British Empire. The case in point here is the proposition of a similar scheme for what is present-day South Africa. Lord Carnarvon, the Conservative Party’s head of the Colonial Office and the man who spirited the British North America Act of 1867 through Parliament, attempted to impose a very similar scheme on the South African colonies, and failed in the 1870s.³¹ British Imperial historians P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins assert that the scheme failed due to South African hostility and the inability of diamonds to generate the resources to press Confederation through.³² Here it seems that a possible counter-argument could be made that it was the imposition of an ill-fitting model to an alien situation, while the British Imperial administrative apparatus was not strong enough.³³ Whatever the case, no attempt to confederate another colony was made for another quarter-century until the Federation of Australia in 1900.

Hungary

Whereas the British responded to the rebellion and demands for reforms with a provision of greater autonomy for the colonies, Austria, on the other hand, responded to

³⁰ Romney, *Getting It Wrong...*, 96-97.

³¹ Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism...*, 316-317.

³² Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism...*, 320.

³³ Cain and Hopkins firmly believe that economics, and specifically concerns of British financiers drove British imperialism. However, an effective counter-argument could be made that South Africa at this particular time was too anarchic. This is period that saw the end of the Bantu Migrations, the “Great Trek” of the Afrikaners, and the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879.

Hungary's rebellion with military suppression and autocracy. Prior to the 1848 revolt, Hungary had enjoyed a measure of self-rule in the Empire under the constitutional rules of Habsburg regency as well as the Pragmatic Sanction.³⁴ While this autonomy was limited in scope, it did provide, in the institution of the Hungarian Diet, a means for a small segment of the population to set internal policies as long as they were acceptable to the Habsburg Court. It was, however, the Hungarian Diet that promulgated the April Laws in 1848 that initiated the Hungarian Revolution, and the 1849 Declaration of Independence.

These two documents are illustrative of the two schools of Hungarian Nationalism, the loyalist and the revolutionary. The April Laws set forth a system of near national sovereignty, a constitution, a free press and other, liberal ideals all while remaining loyal to the empire and the Emperor. Independence for Hungary was not the next logical step after the promulgation of the April Laws. The impetus for independence came from Ferdinand V's abdication in favor of Franz Josef and the subsequent revocation of the April Laws, Radetzky's victories in Italy, which freed the Austrian military, and Kossuth alienating both the moderate elements in his government and the other ethnicities of Hungary.

After the Rebellion of 1848-49, the Habsburg Regime in the early reign of Franz Joseph I (1848-1916), invigorated by the military victories in the 1848-49 rebellions in Hungary, Prague, Vienna and the Italian holdings and by the presence of the new, young emperor, attempted to erase Hungary's previous privileges, and ruled Hungary as a police state until the return of constitutional rule in the late-1850s and early-1860s.³⁵ These

³⁴ Kann, *The Habsburg Empire...*, 70-77, and Miklós Molnár, *A Concise History of Hungary*, Cambridge Concise Histories, trans. by Anna Magyar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 97-99, 140-141.

³⁵ Kann, *The Habsburg Empire...*, 313-326 and A.J.P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809-1918*, revised ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 83-94.

attempts included proroguing the Hungarian Diet, and attempting to coerce them into participating in the centralizing political system, and deciding all Hungarian political questions without any input from Hungarian leaders.

Franz Joseph and his advisors, such as Felix von Schwarzenberg, Minister-President and Foreign Minister for Austria (1848-1852) and von Schwarzenberg's successor Alexander von Bach (1852-1859), believed that by revolting, Hungary had forfeited its privileges. While the policies that flowed from this line of thought insulted many Hungarian nationalists, they did largely pacify the country and represented the only coherent ethnic policy the monarchy pursued after the 1848-49 rebellions. Hungarian resistance to Habsburg "neo-absolutism" in this period was passive in nature and largely centered on attempting to ignore centralism as much as possible by refusing to partake in court politics. This passivity allowed the moderate wing of the Hungarian political class to rise to prominence in the country's politics because they advocated the restoration of some of the gains made during the 1848 Revolution (specifically the April Laws).

One may attribute the different responses by each imperial regime to the rebellions to the different historical contexts in which the rebellions took place given the relative isolation of the events of 1837 in Canada versus the European continent-wide spasms of 1848-49. The differences in response can also be assigned to the differences between ruling a land-based contiguous empire and a maritime one, but the ideological predispositions of each regime played a stronger role in conditioning those responses. In the Austrian case, the Habsburgs and their court were deeply conservative and autocratic, and did not believe their regime needed mass support. Habsburg power based itself on the dynasty, the military, the bureaucracy and the church. Franz Joseph had been well schooled

by conservatives such as Klemens von Metternich and Anton Kolowrat, and he and his advisors understood the liberalism of the 1848 Revolution as an insult to be dealt with severely. It is fair to characterize this style of rule as being dogmatic; Franz Joseph and the advisors of his early reign meant to stick to the Josephine desire for a highly centralized empire regardless of popular opinion.³⁶

The turning point for both empires in their relations with these regions occurred in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Austria's non-involvement in the Crimean war and its losses to Piedmont-Sardinia and France in the Austro-Sardinian War in 1859 and to Prussia in 1866 eroded the regime's legitimacy among its peoples and led to an identity crisis in the regime and an increasingly isolated international position. The Habsburgs had championed themselves as the leaders of the German states for several centuries, and the expulsion from a unified German state at the hands of the Prussian Hohenzollerns proved an exceptionally bitter pill to swallow. In international relations, the Habsburgs' relationship with their other traditional ally, Russia, soured after the Crimean War. The Habsburgs' neutrality during that conflict upset Russia's political leadership, who felt that the Habsburgs owed them for the Russian military invasion of Hungary toward the end of the 1848-1849 Rebellions.

The Habsburg Court realized that it could no longer continue on the same course, and they began to make concessions to the people. This process of concession increased after the loss to Prussian forces at the Battle of Sadowa on July 3, 1866, which forced the Habsburg lands out of a united Germany and highlighted the political leadership's ineffectiveness. The monarchy responded to this crisis of legitimacy and identity first with

³⁶ Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy...*, 161, 171-173.

constitutional reform, and then with negotiations with the Hungarian moderate liberals, led by Ferenc Deák and Gyula Andrásy.³⁷ The negotiations and resulting agreement were a recognition by the Habsburg Monarchy that the regime could not rule its lands without some legitimacy derived from the peoples of the empire, and that German predominance could not continue without the support of at least one of the nations in the empire.

Here the notions of contingency and agency need restoration to the narratives of both the Habsburg Empire and Hungary. First, previous histories fail to address adequately the effects of the early constitutional reforms of the empire, the October Diploma, which attempted to create a system of aristocratic federalism, and the February Patent which created an indirectly elected lower house of parliamentary. Neither of these documents were particularly popular, nor were they far-sighted, but both documents attempted to provide the empire with a constitution and a federal structure in which the various nationalities of the empire were organized with virtual parity. It is also worth noting that the February Patent introduced the parliamentary system that continued in Austria until WWI. There was no inherent problem with the contents of either constitution; the problem lay within the spirit in which they were written and promulgated. Neither document was the product of honest negotiation and collaboration, nor was the monarchy interested in tinkering with the system to improve its functioning after promulgating the February Patent. These were cynical documents, which the Emperor and his advisors hoped would quickly pacify the regime's critics and strengthen the Emperor's hand in foreign affairs. Had the emperor and his advisors been truly interested in domestic constitutional reform

³⁷ Kann, *The Habsburg Empire...*, 331 Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire* (London: Longman, 1989), Mark Cornwall, *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary: A Multinational Experiment in the Early Twentieth Century*, Revised and Expanded ed, Exeter Studies in History (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2002), 97.

instead of international prestige, both documents could have served as a path to federalize the monarchy.

When negotiations with Deák opened in 1865, the Monarchy had several open paths for reform, illustrating further contingency in the narrative of the monarchy. There existed the option that Deák presented (negotiation and settlement with the Hungarians for a dualist system). However, a lesser known, but equally viable plan at the time, would have been a federal solution sponsored by Czech politicians.³⁸ The demands made by Deák and his cadres were more appealing to the Habsburg Court for several reasons. The regime did not trust the Czechs and the other Slavic peoples, because they feared Pan-Slavism and Russophilia. Furthermore, the simpler dualist system proposed by Deák proved a better fit with the Franz Joseph's conservative instincts than the more radical Czech plan.³⁹ Franz Joseph and his ministers had options available, and they made a choice – which, right or wrong, allowed them to pursue stability in the empire while retaining as much power for the emperor as possible in a new system.

Finally, some of the blame for the failure of the February Patent and the October Diploma lay squarely on the Hungarian political leaders themselves. The documents offered greater political participation to non-members of the imperial court as well as increasing the political participation of the various ethnicities, and would have been

³⁸ Robin Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy: From Enlightenment to Eclipse* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 187. Okey also notes that the Czech plan suffered the additional burden of not having the support of the Poles, Croats or Slovenes. However, see also Miklós Wesselényi, "Oration on the Matter of the Hungarian and Slavic Nationalities," in Bálasz Trencsényi and Michael Kopaček, *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945): National Romanticism – The Formation of National Movements* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 338, for a Hungarian take on the need for Federalism.

³⁹ Okey, *The Habsburg...*, 116, 87-188, 256-57.

congruent to the political systems of the other European powers. No country was “democratic” in the modern understanding of the word, and the idea of national ethnic rights in every state was unheard of. The monarchy, by recognizing ethnicity as not only a means of territorial division, but also as a means of organizing access to the levers of political power is reasonably prescient and tolerant. Instead of compromising, and taking the unprecedented offer, the Hungarian political elite declared that being in opposition to the regime was more important to them, rather than admitting responsibility to the regime and the other nationalities in the monarchy.

In Hungary, the situation was murkier with regard to loyalty to the Habsburg Dynasty and the Austrian ideal, but much of the discourse remained centered on the ideas of loyalty to the monarchy. Antagonism to the regime and the *Ausgleich* pervaded the discourse more in Cisleithania, especially in the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia, though it was not absent from the Hungarian lands.⁴⁰ While the principle Hungarian architects of the *Ausgleich*, Ferenc Deák and Gyula Andrassy, hoped that independence would develop gradually within the framework of the dualist system,⁴¹ these men and their followers pledged their loyalty to the dynasty, and did not actively seek independence themselves. Deák himself stated, “For us Austria’s existence is just as necessary as our existence is for Austria.”⁴² This indicates that characterizing the *Ausgleich* in terms other than loyalty to the regime would be mistaken.

In the official minds of the center, essentially Friedrich Ferdinand von Beust and

⁴⁰ Sked, *The Decline and Fall...*, 188.

⁴¹ F. Tibor Zsuppán, “The Hungarian Political Scene,” in Cornwall, *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary*, 97.

⁴² This quote comes from L.C. Tihany, “The Austro-Hungarian Compromise, 1867-1918: a half century of diagnosis; fifty years of post-mortem,” *Central European History* 2 (1969), 118.

Franz Joseph, the *Ausgleich* was both necessary and not incongruous with the aims of the regime. It should be remembered that this regime did not rely on, nor adhere to, public opinion – it was their own beliefs that mattered. Beust, who conducted the negotiations for the Austrian half of the Monarchy would later assert in his memoirs that he felt that his efforts did not create a new system and kingdom, but instead were a resumption “of an old monarchy and an old constitution.”⁴³

The London Times, which provides an insight into what “liberal” minds thought about the *Ausgleich*, argued that “Austrian dualism is now reconstituted, but on the broadest democratic principles,” and that “the only common interest is the instinct of self-preservation; a feeling acting with greater force on Hungary than on Austrian Germany; as in the rear of Germany is the strong and well-organized German Fatherland; at the back of the former is only Pan-Slavism and chaos.”⁴⁴ *The New York Times* offered an equally laudatory assessment of the agreement; “The recent reforms and wise internal policy adopted by Austria have inspired fresh confidence in her financial abilities, and the credit of the Government is improving here on the continent.”⁴⁵

Though Beust almost surely engaged in some political spin in his memoirs, his viewpoint adequately sums up the feelings of the regime at the time. In the latter days of Franz Joseph’s reign, the Emperor, for better or for worse, made strict adherence to the *Ausgleich* the basis for dealing with Hungarian demands and issues.⁴⁶ At the time of the *Ausgleich*’s conclusion, the *London Times* felt that if the agreement “was sincere,” then the

⁴³ Friedrich Ferdinand von Beust, *Memoirs of Count von Beust* vol 1, 2d ed. (London: Rimington, 1888, St. Clare’s Shores: Scholarly Press, 1972), xxv.

⁴⁴ *The London Times*, June 10, 1867.

⁴⁵ *The New York Times*, June 26, 1867.

⁴⁶ Cornwall, *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary...*, 17.

Empire could look forward to a new and brighter future.⁴⁷ *The New York Times* also echoed this opinion, essentially declaring the *Ausgleich* a success scarcely less than a year later.⁴⁸ These assessments offer, perhaps, a more dispassionate opinion on the *Ausgleich*, as these papers did have a tendency toward hostility towards the Austrian Empire, and in *The New York Times*'s case, a hostility toward all empires that was reasonably prevalent in the United States at the time.

Summary

What is striking in this comparison of the events, debates and analyses of process by which Confederation and the *Ausgleich* came about is that several choices did exist for these Empires to answer the questions of legitimacy posed to them. While the British did not have to pass Confederation, they did so with a broad, cross-party vote, with little real debate, and they believed the idea was in their best interests. An interesting endnote to the case of Confederation is that the British became so enamored with the scheme that they took the general outline of the plan, which had been specifically a Canadian solution to a specifically Canadian problem, and attempted to impose it on the British interests in South Africa.⁴⁹ This idea of confederating colonies came to the British political class as a

⁴⁷ *The London Times* June 10, 1867. The exact quote is far too entertaining to be left out entirely: "If the reconciliation is sincere, if the two leading nations of the Austrian Monarchy re-assert their ascendancy over the less civilized races, and Austria by the side of Prussia resumes her position as a first-rate Power, Europe may look forward with calmness and confidence to the solution of the Eastern Question."

⁴⁸ *The New York Times* May, 26, 1868. Again, this quote is good enough that it needs a full recounting: "Austria, without Venice to hold down, without Italy ready to spring at her throat, with Hungary well affected, and with a certain solidarity of interests with the entire Polish race, would possess enormous power in a European war."

⁴⁹ Though in some ways, it was not a bad idea by the British; the Cape colonies were demographically similar to British North America with British settlers, another group of long-time European settlers (the Boers), and a variety of indigenous peoples. However,

pragmatic one meant to solve one provincial issue, quickly became a ruling dogma, at least for the White settler colonies – however, when India began to petition for a similar status within the Empire as Canada and Australia, the idea of confederating colonies lost its influence.

In the case of Austria, political reform was unavoidable for the state to remain viable. However, the exact shape that reform finally took was the result of a slow negotiation and re-negotiation. However, once the *Ausgleich* was set in stone and began functioning (reasonably) smoothly, the maintenance of the terms and spirit with which the *Ausgleich* came about became the dogma of Emperor Franz Joseph. His nephew, Franz Ferdinand had some nascent schemes for further reform, but the course of history prevented those schemes from ever taking a concrete shape.⁵⁰

Most contemporaries, as seen in newspapers like *The New York Times* and *The London Times*, and in the words of those principally involved, saw both agreements as contributing to the long-term stability of both Empires. While such positive views may be attributed to initial over-exuberance, it is a fair statement to say that these contemporaries saw nothing in either agreement that would be destructive to the long-term viability to either state. Those who opposed these agreements did so out of personal or political reasons, and rarely argued that after the passage of these agreements the Imperial state itself was threatened.

British settler support and central authority did not match the situation in British North America.

⁵⁰ Any ideas that Franz Ferdinand may have supported regarding a further federalization died with him on June 28, 1914 when Gavrilo Princip assassinated him.

CHAPTER 5. EMPIRES IN NATIONS, NATIONS IN EMPIRES: 1868-1918

The constitutional results of both the *Ausgleich* and Confederation share many similarities. Both Hungary and Canada received essentially full control over their own domestic affairs while surrendering control over international relations, foreign affairs, and economic policies.¹ Both empires shared a quasi-federal structure, in which both the center and the devolved periphery were united through the monarchy, which retained a certain amount of executive authority, but no shared higher body of government existed.² Hungary joined in the Austro-Hungarian Imperial Army, which represented the supra-national ideals of the monarchy, and accepted German as the language of command. Canada did not have to make such a contribution, though Canadian soldiers could, and did, join the British military. Finally, and this is probably the most significant difference between the two acts of devolution, the Dual Monarchy was organized as a customs union and dispensed with the various internal tariffs each region of the monarchy possessed. Free trade already existed throughout the British Empire, and the new Dominion of Canada remained part of it, though participation was not coerced. These provisions allowed each state to begin developing on its own, and to address domestic issues without much interference from the center.

The internal political and social organization of Hungary and Canada largely replicated the Imperial center. Both Hungary and Canada had parliamentary governments with franchises similar to that the United Kingdom and Cisleithania and were populated by

¹ British North America Act of 1867 in Reid, McNaught, and Crowe, *A Canadian History Source-book*, and Robert Kann, *The Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918*, 333-334

² British North America Act of 1867 in Reid, McNaught, and Crowe, *A Canadian History Source-book*, 245-246, and The Austrian Constitution of 1867, available at <http://h-net.org/~habsweb/sourcetexts/auscon.htm>.

several different ethnic groups. Hungary, like the Monarchy, had its own semi-autonomous region after it concluded its own agreement with Croatia in 1868. This replication of the center by periphery stresses the continuity of imperial rule and devolution.³ The problem becomes defining and standardizing the nation – which most often, but not always, means assimilationist policies directed toward minorities, and perhaps a more rigid international system.

Now, did these acts of devolution taken by the centers effectively stabilize the peripheries and maintain the resiliency of the empire? A safe, if restricted, conclusion is that they did. In the case of Canada there are questions as to what would have occurred had Britain not granted the British North American provinces their autonomy under the Quebec scheme that formed the basis of the British North American Act of 1867, or if the scheme had failed to garner enough support in British North America itself. In the provinces themselves, a high level of fear of annexation by the United States existed, and it frequently came to the front of debate about the future of the provinces.⁴

The acts of devolution were not beneficial for every member of the new semi-independent states, however.⁵ After the *Ausgleich*, Hungarian nationalism followed Benedict Anderson's model of "official nationalism," and began pushing increasingly

³ Eric J. Hobsbawm, "The End of Empires," in Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen (eds.), *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building: The Soviet Union and the Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires* (Boulder: Westview, 1997), 14-15.

⁴ Creighton, *The Road to Confederation*, 244-246, 373-374. This is also noted by Sir Frederick Bruce, a member of the British Legation to Washington during the U.S. Civil War, see Reid, McNaught, and Crowe, *A Canadian History Source-book*, 196.

⁵ Sked, *The Decline and Fall...*, 188-190, 208-218 and John Herd Thompson, "Canada and the Third British Empire, 1901-1939" in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 93-94, and Elizabeth Jane Errington, "British Migration and British America, 1783-1867" in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 154-155, and Marjory Harper, "Rhetoric and Reality: British Migration to Canada, 1867-1967" in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 163-164.

aggressive assimilatory policies. The Canadian form of “official nationalism” followed some similar policies, but wedded itself to the ideals of the British Empire much more than the Hungarians took to the Habsburg mission.

Hungary

The tepid embrace of Habsburg identity is illustrated by Count Albert Apponyi, an ardent nationalist, critic of the Empire and one of the men who later negotiated the treaty of Trianon after WWI. Apponyi stated in his memoirs “This *Ausgleich* problem (the exact relationship between the Hungarians and the Habsburg Court) was not merely of a legal or political nature, but one of century-old antagonisms between a nation and a dynasty, and between nations economically interdependent, yet without any mutual understanding of each other’s outlook. It could not therefore be solved completely by legal paragraphs and political agreements.”⁶ Thus, to Apponyi’s mind, the *Ausgleich*, though not doomed to failure, did not start out on a strong foot.

After the negotiation and passage of the *Ausgleich*, Hungarian nationalists redefined their relationship with Franz Joseph into one that better fit their “imagined” Magyar community. The original concept of the Emperor, both personal and institutional, in the minds of the Hungarian nationalists included the conflicted image of both loyalty and hostility since Franz Joseph was also the King of Hungary. One of the earliest presentations of the latter attitude comes from the 1794 document “Catechism of the Secret Society of Reformers in Hungary.”⁷ In the “Catechism,” the authors excoriate Maria Theresa, Joseph, Leopold I, and Francis I referring to them as despots who wish to destroy

⁶ Albert Apponyi, *The Memoirs of Count Apponyi* (New York: Macmillan, 1935), 39.

⁷ The text of this document comes from Stephen Fischer-Galati, *Man, State and Society in East European Society* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1970), 147-155.

Hungarian unity and who have rendered the majority of Hungarian noblemen a class which “has wholly lost its vitality, sells its patriotism to the Cabinet of Vienna in exchange for vain titles, and has retained the liberty of the nobleman in name only.”⁸ The “Catechism” is an extreme example of anti-Habsburg sentiment among Hungarian elites as the document later calls for the complete abolition of the monarchy and the organization of Hungary as a unitary state “in matters of external security” and “a confederated republic in matters of internal security,” in which every nation has its own province, and society is organized in a two-class system of nobility and non-nobility.⁹ It is interesting to note that the model for Hungarian government proposed by the “Catechism” strongly resembles the system proposed by Czech federalists in the 1850s and 1860s that was so repugnant to the Hungarian political class.

While the “Catechism” provided some of the intellectual roots for the 1849 “Declaration of Independence by the Hungarian Nation,” the declaration has a more moderate tone, stating that despite the horrible treatment the Hungarians have allegedly suffered under the Habsburgs, they always “respected the tie by which it (the Hungarian state) was united to this dynasty.”¹⁰ It is important to keep the Hungarian Declaration of Independence in perspective. First, the Habsburgs were on the rebound from the 1848 revolutionary wave. Field Marshal Joseph Radetzky (1766-1858) had successfully concluded the campaign against the Italians of the empire, who had also rebelled, which allowed the monarchy to focus on reining in the Hungarians. Additionally, the newly crowned Franz Joseph and his court had recently issued the statement of forfeiture for the

⁸ Fischer-Galati, *Man, State...*, 148.

⁹ Fischer-Galati, *Man, State...*, 152-153.

¹⁰ “Declaration of Independence by the Hungarian Nation,” taken from Fischer-Galati, *Man, State, ...*, 162.

Hungarian lands, which wiped out the privileged status the Hungarians possessed, but also broke apart the unitary Hungarian state on an ethnic basis. Finally, Kossuth, who had attained supreme political power in the country, had been abandoned by most of the moderate voices in Hungarian politics and was left with only his extremist colleagues, who felt that there was no possibility of negotiation with the Monarchy, and so went to the other extreme and declared independence.

Positive attitudes toward the Emperor and the Empire existed as well. György Bessenyei in his “Oration on the subject-matter of the country” claimed that Hungarian idleness had led to the decline of both the Hungarian people and the Hungarian language.¹¹ József Kármán struck a similar, if less emphatic note in his *The Refinement of the Nation*.¹² Dániel Berzsenyi offered a startlingly hostile critique of his Hungarian peers, asking in his poem “To the Hungarians” “[W]hat are Hungarians now?! Sybaritic wrecks – they’ve ripped their splendid native insignia off while, their homeland’s ravaged bulwarks, building a palace as lair of leisure.”¹³ And as noted earlier, “the greatest Hungarian” István Széchenyi considered himself a Habsburg loyalist while the early political poems of Petöfi expressed loyalty to the Emperor. While it would be too far of a stretch to say that these represent a more prevalent loyalist strain in Hungarian society, it may be fair to say that these early nationalists were far more concerned about the crimes their own countrymen

¹¹ Taken from Balász Trencsényi and Michael Kopeček, *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945): Late Enlightenment – Emergence of the Modern ‘National Idea’* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 152-154, translated by Dávid Oláh.

¹² Taken from Trencsenyi, *Discourses...*, 234-236, translated by Dávid Oláh.

¹³ Taken from Balász Trencsényi and Michael Kopeček, *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945): National Romanticism – the Formation of National Movements* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 24, translated by Adam Makkai.

had committed against Hungarian nationhood than the Emperor in Vienna.

Prior to the *Ausgleich* the feelings of the Hungarians toward the Emperor, both as a person and as an institution, were ambivalent, with feelings ranging from hostility toward the imperial system to loyalty to the emperor with anger toward those around him. After the conclusion and enactment of the *Ausgleich*, the Empire, and more specifically the person of the Emperor became wildly popular. This increasing idolization of the Emperor comes through in the re-creation of the medieval Hungarian royal coronation ceremony, which was painstakingly replicated. In addition to this ceremonial incorporation of the Emperor into Magyardom, journalist and historian, Paul Lendvai notes, “After 1867 astonishing attempts were made to prove the ruler’s Hungarian origins. Festivities in connection with the ‘descent of Franz Joseph from the house of Arpád’ were held, which were supposed to turn the emperor into a Hungarian.”¹⁴ A safe assertion can be made that the Hungarian nation began post-*Ausgleich* period by recognizing and celebrating their connection to the Habsburg Family, and by extension, though more faintly, the rest of the empire. It would be a slight mischaracterization to leave the previous statement as representative of the imagined Hungarian community during the *Ausgleich* period. The conception of “Habsburgo-philia” by Hungarian nationalists did mutate, but not necessarily toward independence from the Monarchy, or the rest of the empire for that matter. Perhaps time mellowed the attitudes of Count Apponyi, but what is true is that his memoirs, published in English in 1935, described the post-*Ausgleich* period as being a “Hungarian renaissance.”¹⁵ Apponyi’s prime example of this cultural flourishing is the famous Hungarian composer, Ferenc (Franz) Liszt; according to Apponyi, Liszt’s genius would

¹⁴ Lendvai, *The Hungarians...*, 277.

¹⁵ Apponyi, *The Memoirs...*, 66.

have been wasted without his immersion in Hungarian folk music or his easy access to the music capital of the world, Vienna.¹⁶

An interesting phenomenon grew alongside the explosive economic growth Hungary experienced in the decades following the *Ausgleich*, in which many in the monarchy began to express a desire for a greater, Hungarian-led reform of the empire. In this conception, outlandish as it may seem to some, the imperial court would shift away from Vienna, and transplanted to the Hungarian capital Budapest.¹⁷ How exactly this would come about, and the future of the other ethnicities in the empire are not very well defined unfortunately, so it is hard to characterize this as anything more than a delusion of grandeur.

Another important way in which the *Ausgleich* and the imperial relationship affected the development of the Hungarian national identity among the elites, stems from the constitutional result of the agreement, Specifically the near total freedom of action the Hungarian leadership possessed within the lands of the Crown of St. Stephen. Domestically, the *Ausgleich* gave the Magyars the standing of an imperial people, and gave them a share in the continuation of the empire. An independent Hungary would not have remained independent for very long since it was squeezed between two powerful neighbors, the German Empire and Russia. The Croatian and Serbian populations of Hungary would not have remained quiet as this was a high point of “Yugoslavism,” a nationalist movement aiming at the brotherhood of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bosnians,

¹⁶ Apponyi, *The Memoirs...*, 76-77.

¹⁷ Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, 317; Okey even went so far to suggest this was part of plan for “Magyar imperialism,” which wished to dominate the smaller Balkan peoples.

Montenegrins, and Macedonians, and an aggressive Romania.¹⁸ The *Ausgleich* provided Hungarian nationalists the only possibility of maintaining Magyar political hegemony over the lands of the Crown of St. Stephen. Independence certainly would not have allowed Magyar hegemony to continue which is shown by those inspired by the ideal of “national self-determination” who drew up the Treaty of Trianon. This continued cultivation of the “cult of the lands of St. Stephen” profoundly influenced the reaction of the Hungarian people to the harsh terms of Trianon.¹⁹ Another interesting idea is that perhaps some of the growing Magyar egotism could possibly stem from their greater control over the other peoples in their half of the monarchy, while Austrian federal politics were so fractious.²⁰

The *Ausgleich* also allowed the Magyars to assume a status of an international “Great-Power” people, as “Austria” became “Austria-Hungary.” Further acknowledgement of this status also came from the appointment of Gyula Andrassy, one of the architects of the *Ausgleich*’s final form, as Foreign Minister. Andrassy became the man who negotiated the 1879 alliance with Bismarck’s Germany, which would eventually result in Germany’s participation in WWI. This arrangement is one of the factors several scholars have pointed to in their assertions that the *Ausgleich* led to the eventual domination of Habsburg foreign policy by the Hungarians.²¹ Again, Count Apponyi serves as an excellent example of this new, higher standing of the Magyar people in the monarchy, as he was deemed important enough to meet with then United States President

¹⁸ Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, 194, 400-401

¹⁹ Lendvai, *The Hungarians...*, 374 puts it best “a trauma from which Hungary...has never completely recovered.

²⁰ Lendvai, *The Hungarians...*, 289. Mark Twain painted a vivid picture of what political life was like in Cisleithania in his essay “Stirring Times in Austria,” here Mark Twain, *The Complete Essays of Mark Twain*, edited by Charles Neider (New York: Doubleday, 1963), 208-235.

²¹ Lendvai, *The Hungarians...*, 287.

Teddy Roosevelt in 1904. Apponyi recollected this meeting with Roosevelt. Roosevelt saw the continuation of the Monarchy as an issue of importance, and Apponyi saw the nationalistic aims of his cohorts as being compatible with that aim.²² This discussion between Roosevelt and Apponyi helps illustrate the point that prior to WWI the continuation of the Habsburg Empire was seen as a necessity, and that even a nationalist leader such as Apponyi was still seeking a solution to the national question in the imperial framework. While it is not within the scope of this argument to judge Magyar influence on foreign policy, it is fair to say that perhaps this influence was repaid to a degree by the terms of Trianon, and provided a precedent for Hungary looking toward Germany as an ally in Central Europe which the Hungarians would do during the interwar period.

The goal of an independent Hungary did not die out among some nationalists after the *Ausgleich* and it intensified toward the end of the 19th Century. However, the separatist movement never pulled together an absolute majority in the Hungarian Diet, and one of its leaders, Apponyi, certainly seems to have mixed feelings on whether or not independence was the actual goal, as indicated by some of the previous statements. Most tellingly, when the Magyar pro-independence nationalists threatened to hold up the negotiations of the Customs Union between the two halves of the empire, Franz Joseph threatened them with universal manhood suffrage, which would have ended the predominance of the Magyars in the Diet. This particular episode illustrates the continued imperial relationship between Hungary and Vienna. While Hungary had its autonomy, the Emperor still had means of coercion at his disposal to achieve his desired result, and further, the Hungarian political elites recognized that their standing was based on keeping the franchise as limited as

²² Apponyi, *The Memoirs...*, 165.

possible.²³ However, the constitutional struggle in the early part of the twentieth century was resolved, and political life in the monarchy continued as usual.²⁴

Additional evidence of Hungary's continued dependence on Austria comes from the domestic economics of the empire as well as geo-political realities. The economic expansion and industrialization Hungary experienced in the post-*Ausgleich* period owed a tremendous amount to the flow of Austrian capital.²⁵ While Hungary could have sought foreign capital from other sources, the customs union between the two regions of the Monarchy and the resulting free trade between the two halves of the empire made Austrian capital more appealing. This is especially so when one considers that the 1870s marked a resurgence in economic protectionism by many of the other economic powers. One must also keep in mind that an independent Hungary would have been sandwiched between both Germany and Russia, and owed much of its continued survival to Habsburg military backing as well as international recognition of the need for the Habsburg Empire.²⁶

When war broke out with Serbia, and then with everybody else, in 1914, the Hungarians lined up with equal enthusiasm as every other nationality in the monarchy, and

²³ Peter Sugar, "The Nature of Non-Germanic Societies Under Habsburg Rule," *Slavic Review* 22, no. 1 (1963), 7-8.

²⁴ F. Tibor Zsuppán, "The Hungarian Political Scene," in Cornwall, *The Last Years...*, 107 and Lothar Höbelt, "Well-tempered Discontent: Austrian Domestic Policies," in Cornwall, *The Last Years...*, 60.

²⁵ Joel Mokyr, "And Thou, Happy Austria? A Review Essay." *The Journal of Economic History* 44, no.4 (December, 1984), 1097. Mokyr even goes so far to say that "Hungary owed a great deal to Austria, more than Austria owed to Hungary" and that "Proponents of the so-called dependency theories should read up on the Habsburg Empire as a case study of the periphery benefiting from the core. The Habsburg Empire was clearly a case of economic symbiosis." (1097).

²⁶ Joachim Remak, "The Healthy Invalid: How Doomed the Habsburg Empire?" *The Journal of Modern History* 41, no. 2 (June 1969), 131. Remak provides two excellent quotes, one from Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, and one from Czech intellectual František Palacký, both of which assert the necessity for the continued existence of the Empire (131).

served with equal distinction until the end of the empire. The monarchy's end did not come about because it devolved political power from the center to the periphery, but rather, as historian Mark Cornwall put it that "In 1914 the decision makers in Vienna judged (rightly or wrongly) that the monarchy was in crisis."²⁷ The monarchy had flaws, and the Hungarians prevented reform in Cisleithania, but it is a fair assessment to say that the Habsburg Monarchy was viable until the end of WWI.²⁸

Canada

An interesting aspect of both the *Ausgleich* and the British North American Act of 1867 is the replication of the center by the periphery – that is, each of these territories were almost like miniature versions of the larger empires, with some modifications and exceptions of course. Both were multi-national with significant minority nationalities in historically defined regions, and both used the political structure of each empire.²⁹ In Canada, there were many non-British people, most significantly the French Canadians in Quebec, but also the various indigenous peoples and the *Métis* (descendants of French traders and indigenous peoples). Hungary, on the other hand, had a significant numbers of Croats and Slovaks alongside smaller numbers of Germans, Jews, Serbs, and Romanians.

The Confederation scheme passed, however, and in the words of John A. Macdonald, a Father of Confederation and Canada's first Prime Minister Post-Confederation, that "The colonies are now in a transition state... Instead of looking upon us as a merely dependent colony, England will have in us a friendly nation – a subordinate

²⁷ Cornwall, *The Later Days of Austria-Hungary*, 10. See also, Lothar Höbelt, "Well-tempered Discontent: Austrian Domestic Politics," in Cornwall, *The Later Days...*, 69.

²⁸ Sked, *The Decline and Fall...*, 262-264, 265, 268.

²⁹ Reid, McNaught, and Crowe, *A Canadian History Source-book*, 246-52, and Sked, *The Decline and Fall...*, 187-197.

but still a powerful people – to stand by her in North America in peace or war.”³⁰

Macdonald’s assertion can be taken as representative of British North American public opinion at this time since both before and after the Confederation scheme passed, most British-Canadians prided themselves on their firm loyalty to the Mother country. On at least one occasion, this loyalty developed into one imaginary vision of future grandeur.

That occasion is a 30-page book entitled, *The Dominion in 1983*, written pseudonymously by “Ralph Centennius” and presented to the Canadian Parliament in 1883. In this pamphlet, the author forecasts a great and bountiful future for Canada and her peoples, but of more importance here are the remarks about Canada’s attachment to the British Empire, and the leading role each play in the world.³¹ Why the document is described earlier as overly optimistic about the future of Canada and Canada’s role in the world, is seen at the end, in which the author asserts that after the century of tumult endured by the United States, there is no longer any serious discussion about joining the United States nor any panic of war:

“The only sort of union that is quite likely to come about is the joining by the Americans of the United Empire, or Confederation of all English-speaking nations, with which we have been connected for some years. The seat of the Imperial Government has hitherto been London, but British influence has made such strides in the East that there is every probability of another city being chosen for the capital, and of the seat of Government being made more central. Should one of the now restored ancient cities of the

³⁰ Taken from J.H. Stewart Reid, Kenneth McNaught, and Harry S. Crowe, *A Source-book of Canadian History: Selected Documents and Personal Papers* (Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1959), 209.

³¹ Ralph Centennius, *The Dominion in 1983*, available online at Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4290/4290.txt> (accessed July 1, 2009).

East become the metropolis of this glorious Imperial Confederation, the United States would certainly come into the Confederation, as great numbers of Americans have already migrated to the Orient.”³²

“Ralph Centennius” is suggesting with this quotation that the British, and by extension the Canadians, have achieved a higher level of morality over the other peoples of the Earth, and that Canada will become the conduit through which the prodigal son of English Speaking peoples, the United States, can return and take its rightful historical place. Additionally, the author of this piece certainly felt that Canada’s future greatness would be best served under the aegis of the British Empire.

A more conflicted and yet still positive view of the imperial connection can be seen through the 1904 novel *The Imperialist* by Canadian Author Sara Jeanette Duncan (1861-1922). The novel, set in the fictional small Ontario town of Elgin, is placed within the context of the debate over the preferential imperial tariff advocated by then Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain. Some hoped that the preferential imperial tariff would provide the first step toward an imperial federation. The novel follows two siblings, the enthusiastic imperialist Lorne and the “bookish and unconventional” Advena Murchison, and parallels the course of their professional and personal lives as the town of Elgin deliberates on the meaning of their relations with Britain and the United States and Canada’s national identity.

The Imperialist shows that loyalty towards the Empire, while palpable throughout the community, was also a double-edged sword. This is seen when the local branch of the Liberal Party uses Lorne, and by extension his ardent support for the empire, in an effort to

³² Centennius, *The Dominion in 1983*, available at Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4290/4290.txt> (accessed July 1, 2009).

take control of the local Parliament seat, despite the fact that the Liberals have no desire to support the idea of Imperial Trade Preference. Lorne loses the election, but the race is close enough to force a run-off election, in which the Liberals will use some one else to finish the job that Lorne began.³³ Duncan paints the issue of the Empire as one which is divisive, yet effective in drumming up electoral support. Yet, Lorne lost his campaign for Parliament due to his support for Imperial preference, and because the people themselves were unenthusiastic and unknowing about events outside of parochial interest.³⁴ In *The Imperialist*, it seems that Duncan shows Canadians as being loyal to the Empire, yet wary about any constitutional change because of an understandable fear of the unknown.

While the majority of Canada's population was of British descent, Confederation played a strong role on the minds of the non-British peoples – the French Canadians, the Métis and the First Nations.³⁵ French-Canadian attitudes toward the new state, and the British Empire, may best be described as ambiguous.³⁶ One of the principle Fathers of Confederation was the French-Canadian George-Étienne Cartier, and there were many similar individuals, who looked upon the new state as a great achievement. Cartier represents a segment of the Francophone Canadians, and other segments were highly suspicious of the new state and what their rights were going to be in it. At the same time, however, many French-Canadian political leaders began to use the British Imperial

³³ Sara Jeanette Duncan, *The Imperialist*, Chapter 33, available on Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/5301/5301-h/5301-h.htm> (accessed October 11, 2009).

³⁴ Duncan, *The Imperialist*, Chapter 7, Chapter 33, available on Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/5301/5301-h/5301-h.htm> (accessed October 11, 2009).

³⁵ In the United States, we call them Native Americans. I will use the Canadian term since this paper is focused on Canadian history.

³⁶ Colin Coates, "French Canadians' Ambivalence to the British Empire," in Buckner, *Canada and the British Empire*, 181-199.

connections as a means to pry more autonomy from the new Canadian state.³⁷

The new Dominion was not a perfectly functioning multinational society, and there were issues that were used to restrict the rights of Francophone Canadians after Confederation. The issue of language of instruction in schools, and especially the new schools as the new Canadian state began its own westward expansion, and Anglophone Canadians attempts to restrict the spread of French to these schools, provides an example of friction between the two communities. Francophone rights were infringed upon, but the incidence of these occurrences was infrequent. Moreover, the Francophone communities did benefit from Confederation. Francophone politicians have been successful in the Canadian Liberal Party which has been the more successful party in Canadian politics beginning when Sir Wilfrid Laurier became Prime Minister in 1896.³⁸

Confederation also allowed French Canadians to create the notion of French-Canadianism. Prior to Confederation, the largest group of Franco-phones was the Quebeckers, Franco-phones in Lower Canada, but Franco-phone communities existed in New Brunswick and in the Canadian prairies (mostly Métis). However Confederation, as historian A.I. Silver argued, forced the more numerous, and more introverted, Quebeckers to begin to think of the Franco-phone communities outside of the province as their brethren, and to fight for their political rights.³⁹ Additionally, since the British North America Act provided for the westward expansion of the new state, the Act unintentionally

³⁷ Coates, "French Canadians' Ambivalence...", 181.

³⁸ Since 1867, the Liberals held a majority of seats in the House of Commons 62 of the 142 years since Confederation, and have a minority Government for an additional 12 years. At the same time, there have been five Prime Ministers of French-Canadian descent out of the 22 Prime Ministers (it should be noted there have been four Canadian PM's who were in office for one year).

³⁹ A.I. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation*, 20.

strengthened the ideal of Quebec as the French-Canadian haven.⁴⁰ The idea of French-Canadian homeland in Quebec, and the continuation of French in Canada, did not lead to any real challenge to either Confederation, or Canada's continuation in British Empire.⁴¹

Two other issues that must be commented upon in regards to Franco-phone Canada, are growth of French-Canadian nationalism and Quebec separatism. The growth of French-Canadian nationalism and Quebec separatism was not the result of Confederation and Imperial devolution, but was caused by the dissolution of the imperial bonds between Canada and Britain in the period of decolonization. With the end of "Imperial" protection, many French Canadians began to re-evaluate their relationship with the Canadian Federal Government.⁴² While the 1994 referendum on Quebec secession failed, and Quebec remains in the Confederation, contemporary Canada is still negotiating what relationship the francophones have with the federal state.

If the French Canadian response to Confederation and Empire was ambiguous, the First Nations of Canada became more acutely pro-Imperial, though this position benefited them little.⁴³ Paradoxical as this may seem, the First Nations came to see the Empire as something that could safeguard their interests against encroachments by the Canadian

⁴⁰ A.I. Silver, *The French-Canadian...*, 74, 112-130.

⁴¹ One could certainly argue in the early Confederation period that the most significant political cleavage in post-Confederation Canada was in Joseph Howe's Nova Scotia. However, the Nova Scotian anti-Confederates remained solidly pro-British. Indeed, French-Canadians, while not active participants in British Imperialism, were cognizant of events in the Empire, and frequently supported those actions that were taken in the name of European Christians. Silver, *The French-Canadian...*, 224-25, 227.

⁴² There are some definite caveats to the above statement. One can not completely discount the effect of social and economic reform in Quebec at the time. Nor can one underestimate the importance of renewed rhetorical support from France (Charles de Gaulle inserted the phrase "Vive le Québec Libre" into a speech he gave in Montreal on July, 24, 1967).

⁴³ J.R. Miller, "Petitioning the Great White Mother": First Nations Organizations and Lobbying in London," in Buckner, *Canada and the End of Empire*, 299-318.

Federal Government and the expansion of the Canadian state. In the late Victorian period, Queen Victoria was seen by the First Nations as “The Great White Mother,” and delegations from the First Nations would occasionally seek redress of their grievances by petitioning the Queen and the Imperial Parliament. This seldom yielded any concrete results, but it continued well into the twentieth century, including a trip by First Nation leaders to Britain in an attempt to lobby against the passage of the British North America Act of 1982 which handed over the remaining sovereign powers Britain had over Canada.

Métis attitudes toward Confederation and Empire have not been well studied, but Métis attitudes toward the Empire remained neutral while attitudes toward the Canadian state were occasionally tense.⁴⁴ The Riel Rebellions in the 1870s and 1880s were directed against the expansionism of the new Federal Canadian Government and not against the Empire. Many Métis were forced onto Reserves (equivalent to Reservations in the United States), while others made a greater assimilatory effort. Métis culture thrives, and does not threaten the future of Confederated Canada.

Canadian support for the empire continued after WWII, and can be seen through the election of Conservative John Diefenbaker as Prime Minister in the 1957 general election,⁴⁵ and the vigorous debate around the issue of changing the national flag, which at that point was the Union Jack, in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁴⁶ Canada’s loyal support

⁴⁴ A.I. Silver spared some remarks on the Métis in his work, *The French Canadian Idea of Confederation* in regards to how the French Canadians saw their “cousins.” With the exception of some rhetorical support during the Riel Rebellions, French-Canadians did not see the Métis as their cultural kin, and did not argue in support of them as being part of the French-Canadian nation. Silver, *The French-Canadian Idea of Confederation*, 74-87.

⁴⁵ Buckner, “Canada and the End of Empire, 1939-1982” in *Canada and the British Empire*, 121-123.

⁴⁶ Buckner, “Canada and the End of Empire, 1939-1982,” in *Canada and the British Empire*, 123-124. Buckner’s interpretation of the flag debate was not marking Canada’s

of both Britain and the empire remained firm and Canada did not officially exit the Empire until 1982.⁴⁷

Summary

Hopefully what emerges from this section is that both Canada and Hungary reflected their imperial connections in the growth of their national consciousnesses more than previous narratives offer. This greater reflection of the empire in the nation emerges in the delusions of imperial grandeur exemplified by *The Dominion in 1983* and Hungarian pretensions of replacing Vienna as the imperial capital. It is also visible through more subtle recognitions of the importance of the imperial to all strata of society.

full separation from the British Empire, "...it was really a struggle between two groups of Canadian nationalists, those who believed Canada ought to be a British nation and those who believed that Canada ought to redefine itself with symbols with which Canadians of all ethnic origins – especially French Canadians – could identify."

⁴⁷ Specifically this was done with *The Canada Act of 1982*.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

Empires have been the most common and most successful form of state organization throughout human history, and it is only today that the world knows no self-identified empire.¹ That empires no longer officially exist is not because they are incompatible with modernity or that the ideal of the nation-state proved its superiority. The collapse of the British and Habsburg imperial systems was due to economic factors and a loss of legitimacy stemming from WWI and WWII, and an inability to renegotiate their legitimacy with their peoples in the time that they had.

In his book *Nations and Nationalism*, Ernst Gellner argues that nationalism is a political principle “that holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent,” and that nationalism originates as a society transitions from an agrarian based society to an industrial and that nationalism becomes a tool to construct and enforce cultural homogeneity to ensure that the suddenly socially mobile and socially equal populace functions as a cohesive unit.² As a tool, however, nationalism is not perpetually effective as a means of maintaining legitimacy, nor is it the only means available for a state to legitimate itself in the eyes of its population, and states must constantly renegotiate their social contracts with the populace to continue their survival.³ One could extend this model

¹ Many individuals on both sides of the political spectrum believe that the United States is a modern empire. For example, historian and conservative pundit Niall Ferguson quipped that America is the empire “that dare not speak its name” and his book *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (New York: Gardner’s Books, 2004), while referring to America as an empire has long been a component of leftist rhetoric since WWII.

² Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1, 35, 39-40.

³ Such as Warren Harding’s campaign to “Return to Normalcy,” or Barak Obama’s recent campaign theme of “Change.” This does extend beyond the federal government; think about after the 2009 Spring flood, much of the Fargo government’s agenda shifted to

for the growth of nationalism to explain the breakdown of the Habsburg and British imperial systems without resorting to a teleological explanation. Imperial societies use tools other than nationalism to maintain their legitimacy and encourage unity.

Under a framework of constant renegotiation of state legitimacy, the imperial relations between the center and the periphery in the British and Habsburg empires broke down due to events filled with contingency and nuance and caused not only the loss of legitimacy but also the destruction of the basis for any possible renegotiation. The breakdown of imperial relations differed from region to region since imperial rule had been variously construed in different areas.⁴ Furthermore, the traditional narrative of empire-to-nation state is overly simple, and attempts, in a way, to relieve the new states of the burden of their imperial histories, and create vacuum of blame. At the same time, the imperial relationship did affect the contours of the national identities of the Canadians and the Hungarians, and shaped their subsequent post-imperial histories.

A similar idea to Gellner's has been advanced by recent historians of British decolonization, who contend that decolonization was originally about renegotiating the relationship between the center and the periphery.⁵ The idea could then be advanced that

handling the issue of clean-up and prevention of future flooding to protect its residents that areas along the Red River will be cleared of houses to build a permanent dike.

⁴ Prior to the *Ausgleich*, the political cleavage in the Habsburg territories was the Italian lands not Hungary or Bohemia and Moravia, because the Italian population had an outside territory to look at and yearn for in their imaginations. Additionally, in the belle époque and during WWI, the Habsburgs had very strong support in Slovenia, Croatia, and to a lesser extent, Poland. In the British case, the cleavages of Ireland and non-Princely state India are well known, but less known is South Africa, which had a more tenuous relationship with Britain, while many other non-Dominion territories, such as Jamaica were quieter.

⁵ White, *Decolonization: The British Experience*, 14-15. This is also a theme in John Darwin's *Britain and Decolonization* (New York: Macmillan, 1988) and *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate* (New York: Blackwell, 1991). Ronald Hyam has

all governments must consistently renegotiate their legitimacy with their people. In the case of Confederation, its success as imperial reform, and its affect on Canadian identity, the evidence presents a clear picture. Canada remained firmly within the imperial fold, and the structure of Confederation became the template for further imperial devolution. As noted in the previous chapter, Canadian identity retained a very strong, if less overt, British component well into the 1970s. In addition to this, the debates that were previously understood as “nationalist,” such as the changing of the Canadian flag from the Canadian Red Ensign (which featured the Union Jack in the upper left-hand corner) to the Maple Leaf of today, are now being interpreted as part of this imperial renegotiation.⁶ While we can today consider Canada a post-Colonial state and society, the likelihood is that Canada will not undergo the “nationalization” of public space that the non-settler colonies have seen.⁷

The story of renegotiation in the Habsburg Empire is much more difficult to establish because of the empire’s sudden dismantling at the end of WWI. The *Ausgleich*, however, worked in the sense that it quieted Hungarian demands for independence while retaining as much political power as possible for the emperor in the system. Any further reform of the empire never had an opportunity because of the outbreak of WWI. The *Ausgleich*’s affects on Hungarian identity are much clearer. With the *Ausgleich*, the

echoed these sentiments as well in his introduction to Hyam (ed.), *The Labour Government and the End of Empire, 1945-1951*, Volume One (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1992).

⁶ C.P. Champion, “A Very British Coup: Canadianism, Quebec and Ethnicity in the Flag Debate, 1964-1965,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 40 (April 2006), 69.

⁷ Nationalization generally refers to the process in which a government or state takes over possession and management of businesses or industries. It also is coming to refer to the process by which ethnic groups mark, or in some cases, re-mark public spaces. An excellent example of the former British colonial centers in India that have been renamed post-Independence such as Kolkata (Calcutta), Mumbai (Bombay), and Chennai (Madras).

Hungarians were able to enforce coercive assimilatory ethnic policies while at the same time strengthening the concept of the congruency between Transleithania and the Hungarian nation. When the Treaty of Trianon stripped Hungary of two-thirds of Transleithania, Hungarian national identity felt victimized, and this helped to make the country susceptible to revisionism and, later, fascism.

At this point, some comments are justified regarding the nature of empires, and their place in history. Empires have been among the most stable forms government since the dawn of human civilization. Yet “Empire” and “imperialism” are dreaded words these days. Grave injustices and inhumane acts have been carried out in the name of empire. With that in mind, the above work is not in any way a defense of, or apology for, the history of empires and imperialism. Nor is this paper a wistful look back at the stability empires provided in certain parts of the world.

While empire as a form of state organization has gone the way of the dodo, the world should not treat empires as the aforementioned now extinct bird.⁸ This essay has argued that the British and Habsburg empires successfully adjusted themselves amidst changing domestic and international social, political and ideological contexts, and that the breakdown of their imperial systems did not stem from incompatibility with the modern world.

It should also be born in mind that the nation-state has experienced its own problems. Many states in Central Asia and Africa have fallen apart, or, remain as oligarchies that do not serve the needs of their peoples. In our own lifetimes, we have seen

⁸ And while the Dodo’s extinction was in-and-of-itself not a guaranteed occurrence, both its temperament and physiology lent itself readily to destruction when foreign predators were introduced into its environment.

the violent collapse of Yugoslavia and the more peaceful breakup of Czechoslovakia, and the recent political tensions that paralyzed the government of Belgium, threatened the existence of that constitutional monarchy, and caused it to move from a unitary state into a federation. Colombia has its problems with drug cartels, while Ethiopia remains based on balancing clan ties and rivalries. While a cursory glance over a list recent “failed states,” such as Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, would lead one to believe that multi-nation states are precarious creations, it might be more profitable to consider the myriad of social processes that forge and maintain both a nation and a state. This is not simply an exercise in reductionism in the vein of Barrington Moore or Jared Diamond,⁹ but rather an exploration of the complex and fluid processes that hold a state together. With this idea in mind, every state becomes a work-in-progress, and even successful states can face systemic crises.¹⁰

⁹ Moore’s seminal work is *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), while Diamond is most famous for *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1997).

¹⁰ British journalist and U.S. correspondent for *The Guardian*, Paul Harris, recently asked “Will California become America’s first failed state?” *The Guardian* online, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/04/california-failing-state-debt>, October 4, 2009 (accessed October 11, 2009).

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