Imperial Demopolitics and National Identity Formation in Central-Eastern Europe

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Abstract

Under what conditions do imperial powers transform the ethnic identities of the populations within their dominions? This study argues that if an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will direct ethnicization policies at ethnic groups that meet at least one of the following conditions of vulnerability: (1) their ethnic structure is similar to that of the imperial power in either language or religion, or (2) their ethnic structure has not yet been solidified by the experience of self-government. By drawing on novel primary source documents collected during four months of archival fieldwork in Poland, this study examines the ways in which the imperial powers of Central and Eastern Europe used ethnic identities as a means of exerting control over their dominions while simultaneously subverting foreign influence. Specifically, the study focuses on the area of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which following the partitions of the late 18th century constituted the borderlands between the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian empires until end of the First World War. The study's principal findings challenge primordial and constructivist theories as well as intuitive expectations about imperial ethnic politics. This study thus demonstrates that rather than not targeting any groups, targeting all groups, or only targeting the dominant group in their dominion, imperial powers instead direct ethnicization policies at ethnic groups whose ethnic structures are most vulnerable. The results of this study offer a new understanding of the relationship between great power politics and the development of ethnic identities.

Keywords: Central and Eastern Europe, Ethnic Politics, Imperialism, International Relations, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

Introduction

Under what conditions do imperial powers transform the ethnic identities of the populations within their dominions? Despite the long history and global prevalence of multiethnic empires, there remains a lack of scholarly consensus about how imperial powers influence the ethnic identities of their subjects (Gellner, 1983; Martin, 2001). This study of ethnicization policies contributes to the existing literature on "ennationalization" processes by which states transform the national identities of their populations (Kamusella, 1999). Such policies, which entail the transformation of ethnic identities among a population, are employed to either assimilate ethnic minorities into the imperial ethnic group or balance the influence of some ethnic minorities by empowering others. However, the study presents a point of departure from previous works in its structuralist conceptualization of ethnicity that differs from prevailing definitions of nationhood or group identity based primarily on language (Anderson, 1983; Laitin, 1988), religion (Grzymala-Busse & Slater, 2018; Huntington, 1996), values (Kolsto & Blakkisrud, 2005), or civil society (Dobbins et al., 2007). Most significantly, however, the study's theoretical departure from the traditional primordial-constructivist dichotomy challenges the primordial hypothesis that imperial powers do not direct ethnicization policies at any group within their dominion, the constructivist hypothesis that imperial powers direct their ethnicization policies at all groups within their dominions, as well as the intuitive expectation that imperial powers direct their ethnicization policies at the dominant and therefore most dangerous group within their dominion. Instead, the study's structuralist theoretical framework and analysis of novel primary source evidence renders a contradictory hypothesis of imperial ethnicization policies. This study thus demonstrates that rather than not targeting any groups, targeting all groups, or only targeting the dominant group in their dominion, imperial powers instead direct ethnicization policies at ethnic groups that meet at least one of the following conditions of vulnerability: (1) their ethnic structure is similar to that of the imperial power in either language or religion, or (2) their ethnic structure has not yet been solidified by the experience of self-government.

To test this hypothesis, archival fieldwork was conducted over a period of four months in the Polish cities of Bydgoszcz, Poznan, Krakow, and Warsaw. These locations were chosen for their historical significance to the partitions of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which was divided between its Prussian, Austrian, and Russian imperial neighbors from the late 18th to the early 20th century. While the geographic and temporal scope of the partitions has

received considerable attention from historians (Davies, 1981; Snyder, 2003), it remains undervalued in the comparative politics literature pertaining to ethnic identity formation. In total, over 1,600 primary source documents were collected from the three partitions. To supplement this novel archival data, the study also draws on a collection of specialized secondary source material.

This analysis proceeds as follows. First, this study articulates possible rival hypotheses and proposes a structuralist theory of ethnic identity as a middle ground between the primordial-constructivist dichotomy that has traditionally dominated the discipline. Third, the study presents an overview of its methodological considerations, namely the research design and sources of data used. Fourth, based on original archival sources, the study examines a case study of imperial ethnicization in Central and Eastern Europe that encompasses the geographic and temporal scope of the partitions of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The study concludes with a discussion of its key empirical findings and theoretical implications before addressing some of its limitations and identifying opportunities for future research.

Theoretical Framework

Theories of ethnic identity have traditionally been dominated by the dichotomy between primordial and constructivist theories, each rending its own conception of what ethnic groups are and how they change over time. According to a primordial theory, ethnic groups are essentially fixed biological categories and only subject to alteration through what Pierson (2003) calls "big, slow-moving, and invisible" macrosocial processes or what Braudel (1958) refers to as the "longue durée", effectively rending them resistant to transformation by ethnicization policies. Primordial theories tend to conceive ethnic groups in genetically racial terms and their associated cultures as timeless (Fallaci, 2001). In such a view, there is nothing that imperial powers can do to transform the ethnic demographics of their dominions short of genocidal policies like ethnic cleansing or population resettlement. Thus, the primordial hypothesis states that imperial powers do not direct ethnicization policies at any group within their dominion.

According to a constructivist theory, on the other hand, ethnic groups are socially constructed categories, which produce what Sierakowski (2014) calls "flexible identities" that are malleable and subject to transformation through ethnicization policies. Davenport (2020), for example, argues that "early pseudoscientific theories of race posited that racial differences were biological, rigid, and indisputable", but today "race is understood to be subjective, a construct in

which group membership is based on phenotypical attributes and rooted in a common descent but also structured by malleable social rules" (p. 222). In such a view, imperial powers can easily transform the ethnic demographics of their dominions by implementing top-down cultural policies on their populations. Thus, the constructivist hypothesis states that imperial powers direct their ethnicization policies at all groups within their dominions.

Occupying the middle ground between the primordial and constructivist ends of the theoretical spectrum, a structuralist theory views ethnic groups as socially constructed but robust and difficult to transform once their structures are fixed. As Van Evera (2001) explains, "the constructivist claim that ethnic identities are socially constructed is clearly correct", but "it does not follow, however, that we should drop the assumption of fixed ethnic identity". He continues that "this is because ethnic identities, while constructed, are hard to reconstruct once they form" (p. 20). Some scholars propose that language is the primary component of ethnic structures in Central and Eastern Europe, making it the most salient cultural variable for group identity (Anderson, 1983; Laitin, 1988). The reduction of ethnic structures to a single cultural variable, however, is not sufficient for explaining all cases of ethnic divisions. For instance, while modern Belarusian and Ukrainian ethnic identities are primarily distinguished by their respective languages, ethnic Austrians and Germans cannot use language as their primary ethnic identifier because that would invalidate the existence of an Austrian ethnic identity altogether. For this reason, it is also important to consider the role of religion in the formation of ethnic structures (Grzymala-Busse & Slater, 2018; Huntington, 1996). Despite sharing a common language, ethnic Austrians have historically differentiated themselves from ethnic Germans by religion, as the former have identified with the Roman Catholic Church while the latter instead identified with Protestant movements of the Reformation. Therefore, ethnic groups in Central and Eastern Europe are populations that identify with a unique linguistic-religious structure, just as the Belarusian ethnic identity is unique in its Belarusian-Eastern Orthodox structure and the Austrian ethnic identity is unique in its German-Roman Catholic structure. Once formed, these ethnic structures remain relatively vulnerable to ethnicization by external forces until they are solidified through the experience of self-government, which grants ethnic groups the opportunity to institutionalize their languages and religions in the education system, public administration, and other organs of state power.

To summarize the theoretical framework presented thus far, this study first adopts the perspective that imperial powers must rely on ethnicization policies to exert control over the multiple ethnic groups that, through expansive acts of conquest, become absorbed into the imperial state. Second, this study utilizes a structuralist theory to conceptualize ethnic groups in Central and Eastern Europe as unique linguistic-religious structures, whose populations identify with this pairing and use it as a marker of mutual affiliation and distinction from groups with different linguistic-religious structures. Once formed, these groups remain relatively vulnerable to external political manipulation and transformation until their ethnic structures are solidified through the experience of self-government, by which they can institutionalize their language and religion by means of sovereign, or at least autonomous, political power. This theoretical framework thus contradicts the primordial hypothesis that:

> **H_1**: *If an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will not direct ethnicization policies at any group within its dominion.*

Secondly, it also contradicts the constructivist hypothesis that:

> **H_2**: *If an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will direct ethnicization policies at all groups within its dominion.*

Thirdly, it likewise contradicts the intuitive expectation that:

> **H_3**: *If an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will direct ethnicization policies at the dominant ethnic group within its dominion.*

Instead, this study's theoretical framework renders a contradictory hypothesis that:

> **H_4**: *If an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will direct ethnicization policies at ethnic groups that meet at least one of the following conditions of vulnerability: (1) their ethnic structure is similar to that of the imperial power in either language or religion, or (2) their ethnic structure has not yet been solidified by the experience of self-government.*

Figure 1: Causal Diagram of Proposed Theory and Hypothesis

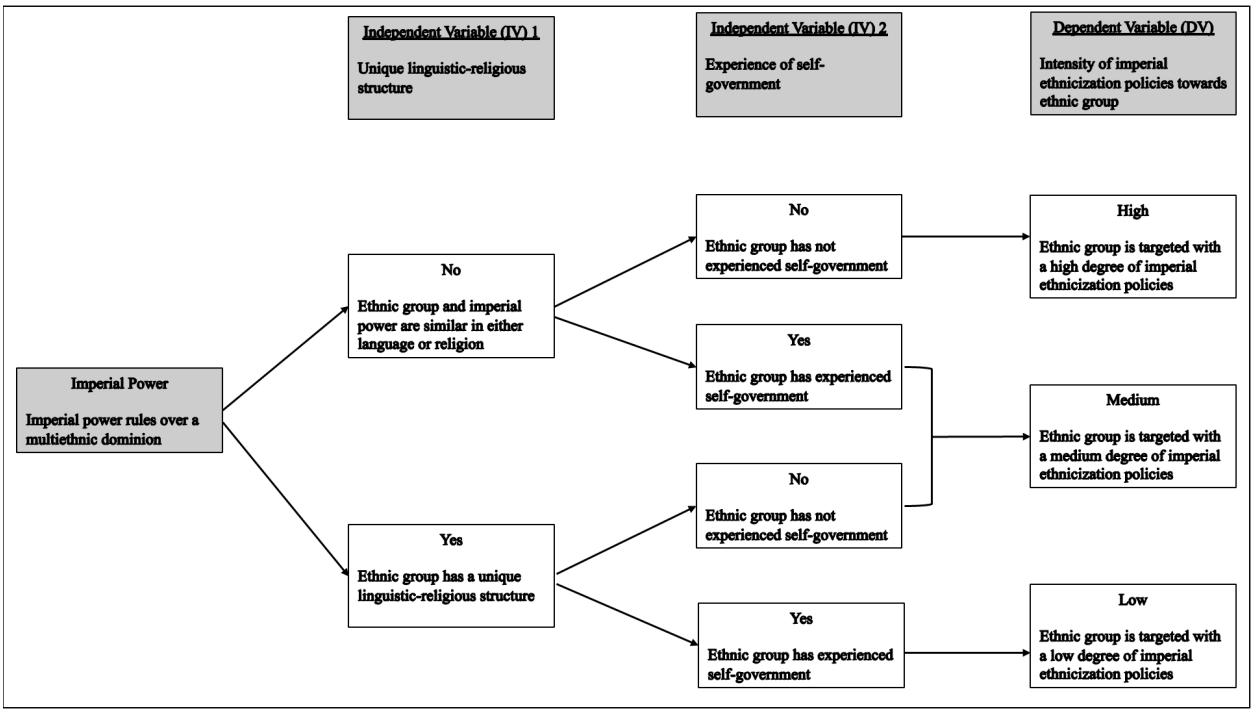

Figure 1 presents a causal diagram of the study's proposed theoretical framework and hypothesized relationship between the independent and dependent variables ($\mathbf{H_4}$).

Methodology

Research Design

This study investigates the conditions under which imperial powers ethnicize the populations within their dominions. The geographic scope of this study is limited to the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian imperial partitions of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the temporal scope is limited to the period between the beginning of the partitions in 1772 to the end of the partitions in 1918. Each imperial partition is itself divided into two cases, comparing ethnicization policies in the Polish heartland with those in the peripheral borderlands. These six cases present a valuable opportunity for research not only for their direct relevance to the study of ethnic identity formation in the Central and Eastern European context, but also for their ability to shed light on the conduct of ethnicization policies more broadly. To date, the global historical record offers researchers few cases in which a multiethnic state was simultaneously partitioned between rival imperial powers over a period spanning several generations and then restored, albeit partially, after the simultaneous collapse of the same partitioning powers. The partitions of the

former Commonwealth, therefore, offer political and social scientists the possibility of pursuing a most similar systems research design based on Mill's method of difference (Van Evera, 1997). The most similar systems design of this study is made more robust by incorporating within-case process tracing (George & Bennett, 2005).

Sources of Data

This study relies on the qualitative analysis of both primary and secondary source data. Archival fieldwork was conducted in the Polish heartland cities of Poznan and Bydgoszcz (Prussian partition), Krakow (Austrian partition), and Warsaw (Russian partition) over a period of four months to gather material related to various modes of ethnicization. Constitutions and other statutes passed during the period of the partitions were examined to test whether the imperial powers codified any modes of ethnicization into law within their dominions. Vital records like birth, death, and marriage certificates were collected from churches of each denomination with the greatest temporal range of available documents from the period of the partitions as well as from the civil register in each city to test whether the imperial powers attempted to break linguistic-religious structures by imposing their languages on different religious groups. All available school reports, which were published annually by most schools in each city during the partitions and included a full curriculum and syllabus for each class, were collected to test whether the imperial powers pursued either linguistic or religious ethnicization through the education system. Finally, newspapers from each city were collected to test whether the imperial powers discriminated based on language, religion, or ethnic identity in the dissemination of information during the partitions. Following Thies' (2002) guidelines on minimizing the effects of selectivity and bias in archival research, the documents collected were first evaluated based on what is known about their authors and historical contexts and triangulated with a variety of other types of primary source data.

In sum, 593 documents were collected from the Prussian partition, 594 documents were collected from the Austrian partition, and 420 documents were collected from the Russian partition. It should be noted that documents from the Russian partition are scarcest, particularly collections of vital records from the Warsaw civil register and Warsaw school reports, due to the destruction of the Central Archives of Historical Records and other historical depositories during the Nazi occupation of the city in the Second World War (Gieysztorowa, 2005). As the fieldwork was conducted in cities located within the Polish heartland, where Poles constituted the dominant ethnic group, these documents primarily reveal to what extent the imperial powers directed their

ethnicization policies at the Polish population. Information about ethnicization policies in the peripheral borderland regions—Silesia in the Prussian partition, Galicia in the Austrian partition, and former Lithuania in the Russian partition—is largely based on secondary source material that has remained inaccessible to non-Polish speaking researchers due the lack of English translations. The incorporation of information from secondary sources follows Trachtenberg's (2006) method of critical analysis.

Results

Historical Background

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was established through the Union of Lublin in 1569, combining the lands and peoples of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania into a single state. Under pressure from the Roman Catholic Polish and Lithuanian nobility, who held political power despite constituting a demographic minority in the eastern regions of the Commonwealth, the Eastern Orthodox Ruthenians agreed to the Union of Brest in 1596, thereby establishing the Uniate—or, commonly, Greek Catholic—Church, which adhered to Papal authority but still preserved Orthodox liturgical traditions (Nelson, 1983). Before the partitions, the Commonwealth occupied a territory roughly congruent with present-day Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, and western Ukraine. Following a period of political instability and military weakness, the first partition of the Commonwealth prompted an initial territorial encroachment by the Prussian, Hapsburg, and Russian empires in 1772, followed by another partition by Prussia and Russia in 1793, and a third and final partition by all three imperial powers in 1795, resulting in the complete disappearance of the Commonwealth state. However, through his initially successful campaign against Prussia, the newly renamed Austrian empire, and Russia, Napoleon established the Duchy of Warsaw as a French protectorate in 1807. This short-lived state included the Polish heartland cities of Poznan, Krakow, and Warsaw, giving Napoleon’s Polish allies hopes of eventually regaining their sovereignty until his ultimate defeat and the subsequent Congress of Vienna, which formally dissolved the duchy in 1815 (Nelson, 1983). Although the Congress of Vienna was intended to bring peace to Europe following the ravages of the Napoleonic wars, it did not resolve the perpetual state of rivalry and competition between the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian empires, which once again shared a border at the point where their respective partitions of the former Commonwealth coincided.

The Prussian Partition

The Prussian partition of Poland resulted in the eastern expansion of the Prussian empire to unite the enclave of Konigsberg with the rest of Prussia. The General Land Law for the Prussian States, introduced in 1794, was silent on matters of language but explicitly stated that every subject is assured religious freedom (art. 40). With respect to education, the constitution decreed that "children who are to be educated in a religion other than that taught in the public school […] cannot be compelled to attend religious instruction in the same" (art. 11). While most of the partitioned territory was incorporated as an integral part of the Prussian state, an autonomous administrative division was created out of Prussia's inheritance of the former Duchy of Warsaw. The resulting Grand Duchy of Posen, which consisted of the Polish heartland cities of Poznan and Bydgoszcz, was allowed a considerable degree of self-government within the framework of the Prussian empire until its dissolution in 1848 as retribution for the failed Greater Poland uprising of that same year. Thus, the cities of the former Grand Duchy were assimilated into the standard legal and administrative framework of Prussia, which introduced a new constitution in 1850. Like its predecessor, it made no explicit mention of language but upheld the freedoms of religion and education, adding that "censorship of the press may not be introduced" (art. 27). In 1871, Prussia was rebranded as the German empire, an evolution that was notably marked by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's policy of *Kulturkampf*, or a culture war against the Roman Catholic Church, which Bismarck viewed as a foreign agent whose allegiances lied not with Germany but with foreign powers like Austria and the Vatican. Conveniently vague, the Constitution of the German Empire made no explicit references to freedoms of language, religion, education, or the press.

To test whether Prussian authorities attempted to break ethnic linguistic-religious structures by imposing the German language on different religious groups, vital records were collected from Protestant, Jewish, Roman Catholic, and civil registry sources in Poznan and Bydgoszcz. Data from Eastern Orthodox or Greek Catholic sources were not collected because neither city had a church of either denomination during the period of the partitions. As expected, records from the Protestant Church of the Holy Cross in Poznan—whose congregation consisted primarily of ethnic Germans from Prussia—were written bilingually in German and Latin from 1779-1794, monolingually in German from 1795-1835, bilingually in German and Polish from 1836-1850, and then monolingually in German until 1918. Moreover, since the Prussian imperial census and statistics bureau did not recognize Yiddish as a language but rather a dialect of German and most

Jews were not fluent speakers of Hebrew, records collected from the Jewish Religious Community in Bydgoszcz were written monolingually in German from 1820-1888. Most importantly for the ethnically Polish population, however, linguistic Germanization was not imposed on Roman Catholic churches, as indicated by records collected from the Church of St. Margaret in Poznan, which were written bilingually in Polish and Latin from 1772-1829, monolingually in Latin from 1830-1874, again bilingually in Polish and Latin from 1875-1880, and then monolingually in Latin until 1918. Even after Prussia was succeeded by the German empire in 1871, and a newly established civil register was charged with maintaining all official vital records in German from 1874-1918, the German language was not imposed on the Catholic Church of St. Margaret, which used either vernacular Polish or liturgical Latin for its own records.

To test whether Prussian authorities imposed either linguistic or religious ethnicization through the education system, all available school reports from Bydgoszcz during the partition period were gathered, resulting in a collection of documents from nine schools for the years 1827-1915. Both Polish and German were mandatory languages of instruction until 1848, after which German became the primary language of instruction. This change coincided with the dissolution of the Grand Duchy of Posen, when the cities of Poznan and Bydgoszcz were stripped of their autonomy in retribution for the failed Greater Poland uprising. Polish language nevertheless remained an elective course until Prussia was succeeded by the German empire in 1871, beginning a period of gradual removal of the Polish elective course from most school curricula. Despite this limitation on language, Roman Catholic classes were consistently offered alongside Protestant classes as an option to fulfill students' religious education requirement throughout the duration of the partition. Interestingly, while most schools initially offered Hebrew classes as a language elective but not Jewish classes as an option for religion, this trend was generally reversed in the 1870s, when Jewish classes were introduced to the religious curricula while Hebrew was removed from the language curricula.

Finally, to test whether Prussian authorities discriminated based on language, religion, or ethnic identity in the dissemination of information during the partition, newspapers from Poznan were collected to examine press coverage of the Kosciuszko uprising of 1794, the Greater Poland uprising of 1848, and the Wrzesnia school strike of 1901. While the Polish-language *Gazeta Poludniowo-Pruska* (South Prussian Gazette) took a neutral stance towards the first anti-Prussian movement of the partitions, the *Gazeta Polska* (Polish Gazette) was permitted to publish explicitly

anti-Prussian and subversive content during the Greater Poland uprising. For instance, in an open letter to the Roman Catholic clergy of Poznan, the editorial board wrote the following:

> "[God] did not send us away with a sword of iron or steel forged for the world, but with the double-edged sword of His word. With this spiritual sword [...] we are to strike at the hosts of crime and iniquity […] before we are to break down those mountains and ramparts of transgressions and crimes, with which oppression has surrounded itself and on which it has established its throne, crying: here we are your gods, you bow to me!" (iss. 4, p. 14).

Similarly, when students in the nearby town of Wrzesnia went on strike to protest the introduction of German language in Catholic religious classes, the editorial board of the *Dziennik Poznanski* (Poznan Daily) regularly provided information about demonstrations and published a series of columns in solidarity with the protesters under the title "Uczmy dzieci po polsku!" (Let us teach children in Polish!) (iss. 114, p. 3).

While the Polish heartland cities of Poznan and Bydgoszcz were initially granted a considerable degree of self-government, first within the Duchy of Warsaw from 1807-1815 and later within the Grand Duchy of Posen from 1815-1848, only losing their autonomy in retribution for the failed Greater Poland uprising, the region of Silesia was the primary target of Prussian ethnicization policies from the beginning of the partition. Although once under Polish rule, most of the region was acquired by Prussia from the Austrian Hapsburgs in the aftermath of the three Silesian wars fought between 1740-1763 (Solsten, 1996). Following the Congress of Vienna and the formation of the German Confederation in 1815, Prussia established the Province of Silesia and fully integrated the region into its administrative and legal framework (Gorzelik, 2023). As a result of generations of close contact and intermarriage between the ethnic Poles, Germans, and Austrians who inhabited the region, Silesia became home to many Polish-speaking Protestants and German-speaking Catholics who could neither fully identify with the Polish-Catholic structure of ethnic Poles nor with the German-Protestant structure of ethnic Germans. Therefore, as Prussia's rivalry with Austria for hegemony within the German Confederation—ultimately culminating in the Austro-Prussian war of 1866—gave salience to the question of German ethnic identity, Prussia began to suspect that the German-speaking Catholics of Silesia may, in fact, be used as subversive elements by Austria.

Prussia's victory over Austria resulted in the formation of a new North German Confederation that excluded Austria and served as the predecessor for the establishment of the German empire in 1871 (Solsten, 1996). Understanding that the Poles—whose ethnic structure was different from that of the Germans in both language and religion and whose identity had already been fixed through the experience of self-government—would not be practical targets of ethnicization, Chancellor Bismarck instead directed his *Kulturkampf* policies at the Polish-speaking Protestant and German-speaking Catholic populations of Silesia, whose likeness to ethnic Germans in at least one element of their ethnic structures and no previous experience of self-government made them more vulnerable targets. As Kamusella (2007) notes, "in addition to the conflict with the Catholic Church, the *Kulturkampf* displayed some ethnic overtones in Upper Silesia". Effectively, "all languages other than German were gradually banned from state offices, education and school religious instruction in the 1870s" (p. 282). By harassing the clergy, Prussian authorities were able to push many bishops and entire seminaries to relocate to Austria. Taking advantage of the vulnerable position of the Polish-speaking Protestants and German-Speaking Catholics of Silesia, ethnic Polish nationalists from the Greater Poland region also began targeting these populations through the Polish-language Catholic press as early as 1848. Since Polish-language periodicals were not allowed in Silesia until the 1860s, "Posen Poles strove to ameliorate this dearth of Polish-language publications by facilitating Silesian subscriptions to Polish-language periodicals from their province (Kamusella, 2007, p. 74-75). A milestone in this process occurred when the weekly *Katolik* (Catholic) newspaper moved its publishing house from Chelmno, a city near Bydgoszcz, to Prussian Silesia in 1869. As Kolasa and Jarowiecki (2006) explain, *Katolik* "was often denouncing the Germanizing policies of the clergy of [Silesia]. The newspaper demanded respecting the rights of inhabitants of [Upper Silesia] to using Polish language in the public life and to developing its own culture, which exposed the newspaper to numerous confiscations" (p. 29).

Figure 2: Linguistic and Religious Demographics in the Prussian Partition (Percent), 1910 [1]

District	Language				Religion			
	Polish	*German*	*Yiddish*	*Other*	*Roman Catholic*	*Protestant*	*Jewish*	*Other*
Poznan	68.00	32.00 *(30.70)*	X *(1.30)*	0.10	74.00	24.60	1.30	0.20
Opole	57.00	40.00 *(39.20)*	X *(0.80)*	3.00	90.60	8.50	0.80	0.10

Figure 2 compares the linguistic and religious demographics of the Poznan and Opole *Regierungsbezirke* (governmental districts) at the end of the partition period (Krzyzanowski & Kumaniecki, 1915). Due to the relatively mild ethnicization policies implemented in Poznan, the ethnic Polish population not only remained the majority ethnic group but also managed to maintain a high degree of congruence in its linguistic-religious ethnic structure. With approximately 68% Polish speakers and 74% Roman Catholics (6% linguistic deficit from a 1:1 linguistic-religious ratio), and 31% German speakers and 25% Protestants (6% linguistic surplus from a 1:1 ratio), the ethnically Polish-Catholic population of Poznan showed signs of only mild linguistic Germanization by the end of the partition. Conversely, due to the combined forces of Prussian/German and Polish ethnicization in Opole, the population never achieved a high degree of linguistic-ethnic congruence with either the German or Polish ethnic structure. With approximately 57% Polish speakers and 91% Roman Catholics (34% linguistic deficit from a 1:1 ratio for ethnic Poles), and 39% German speakers and 9% Protestants (30% religious deficit from a 1:1 ratio for ethnic Germans), the mixed Polish-speaking Protestant and German-speaking Catholic populations of Opole and the broader region of Silesia showed the first signs of developing a new Szlonzokian ethnic structure based on Silesian creole—today considered a distinct language by ethnic Szlonzoks—and the predominant Roman Catholic religion (Kamusella, 2007).

The Austrian Partition

The Austrian partition of Poland resulted in the northeastern expansion of the Hapsburg empire into the Polish heartland and the region of Galicia. While most of the partitioned territory was incorporated into the empire, an autonomous administrative division was created out of Austria's inheritance of the former Duchy of Warsaw. The resulting Free City of Krakow was allowed a considerable degree of self-government under imperial military protection, even passing

[1] Since Yiddish was not recognized as a language in Prussian censuses, virtually all Jews identified as German speakers in the Prussian partition (GUS, 2003, p. 192). Taking this into consideration, the percentages of people identifying as Jewish by religion have been subtracted from the percentages of people identifying as German speakers in each city and noted in parentheses.

its own constitution in 1818. The document began by recognizing the special status of Roman Catholicism as the dominant religion (art. 1). The constitution also stipulated that "all official, legislative and judicial acts will be written in Polish" (art. 20). However, in retribution for the failed Krakow uprising of 1846, the formerly free city was partially stripped of its autonomy and assimilated into the legal and administrative framework of the Austrian empire, which passed a constitution in 1848 ensuring the equality of all ethnic groups and the right of each group to its own language (art. 5). In 1861, imperial authorities issued the Land Statute for the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria with the Grand Duchy of Krakow to decentralize state power and allow for local regulation of cultural matters, religious life, and education (art. 18). Austria's defeat in the Prussian war of 1866 and consequential exclusion from the newly established North German Confederation led to the formation of the Austro-Hungarian empire, whose constitution of 1867 permitted freedom of the press and declared that "full freedom of religion and of conscience is guaranteed to all" (art. 14). Moreover, the constitution likewise guaranteed that religious education will be decided by each school (art. 17) and that "the state recognizes the equality of the various languages in the schools, public offices, and in public life" (art. 19).

To test whether Austrian authorities attempted to break ethnic linguistic-religious structures by imposing the German language on different religious groups, vital records were collected from Protestant, Jewish, Roman Catholic, and civil registry sources in Krakow. Data from Eastern Orthodox or Greek Catholic sources were not collected because Krakow did not have a church of either denomination during the period of the partitions. Interestingly, records show greater signs of linguistic Polonization than Germanization. For example, documents collected from the Protestant Church of St. Martin were recorded in Polish from 1818-1845 and from 1851-1854 before switching to German between 1862-1918. Like its Prussian counterpart, the Austrian imperial census and statistics bureau did not recognize Yiddish as a language but rather a dialect of German and most Jews were not fluent speakers of Hebrew, so Jewish records collected from the Israelite Registry District were written in Latin from 1798-1809, monolingually in Polish from 1810-1855, and then bilingually in Polish and German from 1856-1918. Roman Catholic records from the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary were written in Polish from 1810-1855 and then in Latin between 1856-1880 and 1890-1918. Finally, documents collected from the civil register dating from 1871-1918 were written exclusively in Polish.

To test whether Austrian authorities imposed either linguistic or religious ethnicization through the education system, all available school reports from Krakow during the partition period were gathered, resulting in a collection of documents from 29 schools for the years 1812-1918. In most schools, Polish was the primary language of instruction with German offered as an elective between 1812-1849, but both languages became compulsory in all schools from 1850-1918. While most schools included Russian as either a compulsory or elective foreign language from 1823-1858, Russian disappeared from the school curricula entirely until most schools began to replace it with Ruthenian between 1899-1915. This is notable because Ruthenian-speaking students constituted only a small minority of the student body, but the inclusive nature of the Austro-Hungarian constitution of 1867 nevertheless defended the rights of all imperial subjects to be educated in their ethnic languages. This inclusivity, however, was apparently more limited in the sphere of religious education, as Roman Catholicism was the only religion present in school curricula from 1812-1868, after which Judaism started to be introduced as an elective and became commonplace between 1892-1918. Some schools also offered Protestantism as a religious option, but only for a couple of years, while Greek Catholicism was never introduced to the curricula in Krakow schools.

Finally, to test whether Austrian authorities discriminated based on language, religion, or ethnic identity in the dissemination of information during the partition, newspapers from Krakow were collected to examine press coverage of the Krakow uprising of 1846. While the Polish-language *Dziennik Rzadowy* (Government Journal) took a neutral stance towards the uprising, frequently publishing official decrees and communications during the Austrian military occupation of the city (iss. 25/26), the *Gazeta Krakowska* (Krakow Gazette) took an openly pro-Polish stance. For instance, it published the following manifesto on behalf of the revolutionary National Government of the Republic of Poland:

> "Poles! The hour of uprising has struck—all of torn Poland is rising and growing together—our Brothers have already risen in the Duchy of Poznan; in Congress Poland, in Lithuania and in Ruthenia, they are fighting with the enemy. They are fighting for the highest rights wrested from them by deceit and violence. [...] Poles! From now on, we know no difference between us, from now on we are Brothers, Sons of one Motherland, one Heavenly Father!" (iss. 44/45, p. 4).

After the uprising was suppressed, Austrian authorities temporarily took control of the *Gazeta Krakowska*, symbolically changing its header to the blackletter typeface typical of German-language print and publishing official decrees bilingually in Polish and German (iss. 257).

While the Polish heartland city of Krakow was initially granted a considerable degree of self-government, first within the Duchy of Warsaw from 1807-1815 and later as the Free City of Krakow from 1815-1846, only partially losing its autonomy in retribution for the failed Krakow uprising, the region of Galicia was the primary target of Austrian ethnicization efforts. However, unlike the case of Prussian ethnicization efforts in Silesia, the objective of which was to transform the Polish-speaking Protestant and German-speaking Catholic populations into the German-Protestant ethnic structure of Prussia, Austrian ethnicization instead sought to balance Polish cultural influence in its partition by empowering the Ruthenian ethnic identity, which had for centuries been suppressed under Polish ethnic hegemony. While Polish nobles were rebelling against Austrian imperial authority in Krakow in 1846, the peasants of rural Galicia were simultaneously revolting against Polish serfdom in the countryside (Zamoyski, 1996). The Austrians understood that the failure of the Polish nobility to gain the support of the Galician peasantry in its revolutionary activities was due not only to economic but also to ethnic cleavages, as most of the rural population—particularly in eastern Galicia—was composed of Ruthenian-speaking Greek Catholics who had been politically disenfranchised and culturally marginalized under the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Additionally, after the Hungarians were promoted from imperial subjects to imperial partners following Austria's military defeat against Prussia and subsequent exclusion from the North German Confederation in 1866, the newly reformed Austro-Hungarian empire adopted an official policy of ethnic inclusivity that was more conducive to strategic balancing than the pursuit of a single ethnic hegemony (Solsten & McClave, 1994).

Besides its desire to suppress Polish revolutionary movements by balancing Polish cultural influence in Galicia, another motivation for Austria—and later Austria-Hungary—to empower the Ruthenian ethnic identity was to secure the loyalty of its Ruthenian population from Russian influence, as imperial Russia viewed itself to be the rightful homeland of all the eastern Slavic people and promised to return them to their natural Russophone and Orthodox ethnic structure. However, according to Kamusella (2012), "in Vienna's perception, Austria's Greek Catholic Ruthenians were a separate people, different from Russia's Orthodox Little Russians, who spoke their own Little Russian language" (p. 176). This distinction was emphasized by formally

recognizing the Greek Catholic Church as a separate entity from its Roman Catholic counterpart in imperial censuses and statistics, an approach that differed sharply from the old Polish practice of categorizing both denominations under the Catholic label, which effectively negated Ruthenians' distinct religious identity (GUS, 2003). While the Russian empire legally suppressed the publication and dissemination of Ruthenian works, and the Polish intelligentsia dismissed Ruthenian as a vulgar spoken dialect of the Polish language, Austrian authorities permitted the first book of poems to be published in the Ruthenian vernacular in Galicia in 1837. Then, "between 1862 and 1873, four school textbooks of Ruthenian were published [and] in 1893, these developments allowed Austrian school authorities to approve a single standard of Ruthenian", which would serve as the foundation for the future development of the modern Ukrainian language (Kamusella, 2012, p. 175-176). This information is confirmed by primary source documents collected from Middle School IV in Krakow. The school's curriculum for the Ruthenian language in the academic year of 1915-1916 includes a syllabus with a required "reading of the more excellent monuments of old Ruthenian literature translated into modern Ruthenian according to A. Barwinski's extracts for teacher training seminars. Against the background of the reading, a view of Ruthenian-Ukrainian writing starting with Kotlarski" (p. 28). While the Ruthenian language was only offered as an elective in Krakow schools, it was first introduced as the primary language of instruction in the eastern Galician city of Przemysl in 1895, as evidenced by the school reports available from that city during the partition period.

Figure 3: Linguistic and Religious Demographics in the Austrian Partition (Percent) [2]

District Year	**Language**						**Religion**					
Krakow	*Polish*	*Ruthenian*	*Other Slavic*	*German*	*Yiddish*	*Other*	*Roman Catholic*	*Greek Catholic*	*Eastern Orthodox*	*Protestant*	*Jewish*	*Other*
1880	99.80 *(96.90)*	0.00	0.00	0.20	X *(2.90)*	0.00	97.00	0.10	0.00	0.10	2.90	0.00
1890	98.90 *(96.80)*	0.10	0.20	0.80	X *(2.10)*	0.00	97.70	0.10	0.00	0.10	2.10	0.00
1900	96.90 *(94.40)*	0.10	0.70	2.30	X *(2.50)*	0.00	96.90	0.30	0.00	0.30	2.50	0.00
1910	99.20 *(97.40)*	0.20	0.20	0.40	X *(1.80)*	0.00	97.80	0.30	0.00	0.10	1.80	0.00
Przemysl	*Polish*	*Ruthenian*	*Other Slavic*	*German*	*Yiddish*	*Other*	*Roman Catholic*	*Greek Catholic*	*Eastern Orthodox*	*Protestant*	*Jewish*	*Other*
1880	44.00 *(31.50)*	54.50	0.10	1.40	X *(12.50)*	0.00	27.00	60.40	0.00	0.10	12.50	0.00
1890	47.30 *(33.50)*	48.40	0.60	3.70	X *(13.80)*	0.00	34.60	51.30	0.10	0.30	13.80	0.00
1900	47.10 *(32.80)*	48.80	0.70	3.40	X *(14.30)*	0.00	34.30	51.00	0.00	0.30	14.30	0.00
1910	52.40 *(38.30)*	44.90	0.40	2.20	X *(14.10)*	0.00	35.40	50.00	0.10	0.40	14.10	0.00

Figure 3 compares the linguistic and religious demographics of the Krakow and Przemysl *powiaty* (administrative districts) at the end of the partition (Zamorski, 1989). Due to the absence

[2] Since Yiddish was not recognized as a language in Austrian censuses, virtually all Jews identified as Polish speakers in the Austrian partition (GUS, 2014, p. 105). Taking this into consideration, the percentages of people identifying as Jewish by religion have been subtracted from the percentages of people identifying as Polish speakers in each city and noted in parentheses.

of Austrian ethnicization policies implemented in Krakow, the ethnic Polish population not only remained the majority ethnic group by a very large margin but also managed to maintain almost perfect congruence in its linguistic-religious ethnic structure. Indeed, census data for the years 1880-1910 reveal that, with approximately 97% Polish speakers and 97% Roman Catholics (a 1:1 linguistic-religious ratio), the ethnically Polish-Catholic population of Krakow showed no signs of linguistic Germanization by the end of the partition. Instead, Austria's ethnicization efforts were primarily aimed at Ruthenians in eastern Galician towns like Przemsyl, where they had been historically subject to Polish ethnicization. With approximately 55% Ruthenian speakers and 60% Greek Catholics (5% linguistic deficit from a 1:1 ratio), and 32% Polish speakers and 27% Roman Catholics (5% linguistic surplus from a 1:1 ratio), the ethnically Ruthenian-Greek Catholic population of Przemysl showed signs of mild linguistic Polonization in 1880. Through their ethnicization policies aimed at empowering the Ruthenian ethnic identity, Austrian authorities effectively managed to halt the effects of further Polonization by 1910, resulting in a population with 45% Ruthenian speakers and 50% Greek Catholics (5% linguistic deficit from a 1:1 ratio) to 38% Polish speakers and 35% Roman Catholics (3% linguistic surplus from a 1:1 ratio). Constituting the largest ethnic group in the region and safe from further threats of Polonization, the Ruthenians of eastern Galicia would form the vanguard of the national movement for Ukrainian statehood at the end of the partition period.

The Russian Partition

The Russian partition of Poland resulted in the western expansion of the Russian empire into the Polish heartland and the lands of Lithuania. While most of the partitioned territory was incorporated into the empire, an autonomous administrative division was created out of Russia's inheritance of the former Duchy of Warsaw. The resulting Kingdom of Poland—also known as Congress Poland due to its creation during the Congress of Vienna—was allowed a considerable degree of self-government within the framework of the Russian empire, even adopting its own constitution in 1815. The constitution ensured religious freedom while simultaneously granting legal protections to Roman Catholicism as the predominant religion (art. 11) and designated Polish as the official language of administration (art. 28). However, in retribution for the failed November uprising of 1830, Russian authorities increased their control of the partitioned territory, likewise curtailing the autonomy of the Kingdom of Poland. Thus, a statute on the introduction of the Russian language to public administration in its western provinces became part of the Fundamental

Laws of the Russian Empire passed in 1832, and the Organic Statute of the Kingdom of Poland was passed the same year. This new constitution, issued bilingually in Russian and Polish, offered no legal protection for the Polish language but did preserve special protections for Roman Catholicism (art. 5). Moreover, although it made no mention of education, it did guarantee freedom of the press insofar as it did not undermine "the inviolability of the Supreme Authority" (art. 13). The Kingdom of Poland was ultimately fully incorporated into the Russian empire as the Vistula Land in retribution for the failed January uprising of 1863, and Russian authorities introduced a new imperial constitution following the failed Lodz insurrection and Russian revolution of 1905. This document established Russian as the official language of administration but clarified that "the use of local (regional) languages and dialects in state and public institutions are determined by special legislation" (art. 3). The constitution also recognized Eastern Orthodoxy as the predominant religion in the Russian empire but guaranteed religious freedom to all imperial subjects (art. 70). Although this document too was silent on matters of education, it did ensure freedom of the press (art. 83).

To test whether Russian authorities attempted to break ethnic linguistic-religious structures by imposing the Russian language on different religious groups, vital records were collected from Protestant, Jewish, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, and civil registry sources in Warsaw. Protestant records collected from the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession were originally written in German and Latin between 1805-1822, while monolingual Polish was the predominant language used from 1825-1862, then changing to bilingual Polish and Russian from 1865-1870, before finally transitioning to monolingual Russian from 1872-1912. Jewish records collected from the Jewish Religious Community in Warsaw were written in Polish between 1858-1867, then in Russian from 1868-1914, before reverting to Polish from 1915-1918. Unsurprisingly, Eastern Orthodox records collected from the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity were all written in Russian between 1837-1915. More interestingly, however, Roman Catholic documents collected from the Church of the Visitation of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary were written predominately in Polish from 1826-1868, after which they were written almost exclusively in Russian between 1869-1914. Vital records collected from the Greek Catholic Parish of Warsaw were written in monolingual Polish from 1826-1861, long after the Greek Catholicism had been banned in other parts of the Russian partition. Finally, documents collected from the civil register dating from 1808-1825 were written monolingually in Polish, although it is likely that Russian

would have been introduced in the second half of the 19th century following the failed January uprising of 1863.

To test whether Russian authorities imposed either linguistic or religious ethnicization through the education system, all available school reports from Warsaw during the partition period were gathered, resulting in a collection from six schools for the years 1872-1918. In all schools, Polish was the primary language of instruction, with Russian only appearing as a compulsory subject from 1907-1915. In terms of religious orientation, most schools offered either a general Christian or Roman Catholic education, with Protestant and Jewish electives being offered only between 1914-1917. Finally, while courses in general geography and history were offered in the period from 1872-1907, school reports from 1914-1918 show that specifically Polish geography and history were added to the curricula as compulsory subjects in all schools.

Finally, to test whether Russian authorities discriminated based on language, religion, or ethnic identity in the dissemination of information during the partition, newspapers from Warsaw were collected to examine press coverage of the November uprising of 1830, the January uprising of 1863, and the Lodz insurrection of 1905. Upon the outbreak of the first of these uprisings, the *Gazeta Polska* (Polish Gazette) was permitted to publish explicitly anti-Russian and subversive content. For instance, in its coverage of the beginning of the November uprising, the editorial board wrote the following:

> "On October 29, the Poles took up arms, not against the legal authority, not against the institutions according to which they were supposed to be governed; but against the abuses and oppressions which, in spite of those same institutions and with contempt for all laws, were constantly being perpetrated" (iss. 322, p. 1).

After the suppression of the uprising, however, the *Gazeta Polska* was terminated. When the January uprising broke out in 1863, there was no radical pro-Polish coverage in the press. On the contrary, many Polish-language newspapers like the *Dziennik Powszechny* (General Journal) instead adopted a pro-Russian stance, publishing opinions that legally and morally justified the partitions. Although the Polish-language press survived in Warsaw and the Kingdom of Poland in the second half of the 19th century, the radically pro-Polish editorial stance once taken by the *Gazeta Polska* had been effectively neutralized. At the time of the failed Lodz insurrection, itself part of the broader Russian revolution of 1905, the *Kurjer Warszawski* (Warsaw Courier) provided only superficial reports on events, focusing more on the ongoing Russo-Japanese war instead.

While the Polish heartland city of Warsaw was initially granted a considerable degree of self-government, first within the Duchy of Warsaw from 1807-1815 and later within the Kingdom of Poland from 1815-1867, only losing its autonomy in retribution for the failed November and January uprisings, the regions of former Lithuania as well as formerly Lithuanian and Polish Ruthenia were the primary targets of Russian ethnicization policies from the beginning of the partition. With most ethnic Poles (Polish-speaking Roman Catholics) contained within the Kingdom of Poland and ethnic Lithuanians (Lithuanian-speaking Roman Catholics) constituting a minority even in the lands of former Lithuania, the Russians understood that to control the vast territory of their partition they would necessarily have to control the Ruthenian population first. Fortunately for the Russians, while the ethnic Poles and Lithuanians had linguistic-religious structures completely different from their own, the Ruthenians were much more vulnerable to Russification. Through the Synod of Polotsk in 1839, Russian authorities nullified the Union of Brest that had established the Greek Catholic Church in 1596, thus converting all the Ruthenians outside the Kingdom of Poland to Eastern Orthodoxy and legally prohibiting conversions from Eastern Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism (Zasztowt, 2007). This transition was met without great resistance because the Greek Catholic Church had maintained Eastern Orthodox liturgical practices that dated from before the Union of Brest, so the only real effect of conversion was the clergy's shift of allegiance from the Vatican to the Russian Orthodox Church (Fedor, 1995).

While the Kingdom of Poland did not experience linguistic Russification until the late 1860s in retribution for the failed January uprising, linguistic ethnicization of the Ruthenian population began as early as 1830 with a law "on the introduction of the Russian language in the courts of the provinces of Lithuanian, Byelorussian and all former Polish Ukraine" (p. 1). In 1863, the Russian Minister of Internal Affairs Pyotr Valuev issued a decree known as the Valuev Circular, banning the use of Ruthenian in education and formally asserting that "a separate Little Russian language has never existed, does not exist and cannot exist, and that their dialect, used by commoners, is just the Russian Language, only corrupted by the influence of Poland" (p. 3). The decree observes that "this phenomenon is even more regrettable and deserving of attention, because it coincides with the political plans of the Poles, who might be credited with its origin, judging by the manuscripts submitted to censorship and by the fact that most of the Little Russian works are actually submitted by Poles" (p. 3-4). Effectively, in addition to organizing clandestine Polish-language schools outside the Kingdom of Poland, the Poles were attempting to empower

Ruthenian ethnic identity to counter Russian cultural influences throughout the Russian partition, just as Austrian authorities were attempting to empower Ruthenian ethnic identity to counter Polish cultural influences within their own partition (Zasztowt, 2007). Viewing Austrian ethnicization policies of Ruthenian empowerment as a direct threat to his own policies of Ruthenian Russification, Emperor Alexander II issued a decree known as the Ems Ukaz in 1876, ordering "not to allow the import into the empire […] of any books published abroad in the Little Russian dialect" and "to prohibit the printing in the empire, in the same dialect, of any works or translations" (p. 2).

Figure 4: Linguistic and Religious Demographics in the Russian Partition (Percent), 1897 [3]

District	Language							Religion					
	Polish	*Little Russian*	*Belarusian*	*Russian*	*German*	*Yiddish*	*Other*	*Roman Catholic*	*Greek Catholic*	*Eastern Orthodox*	*Protestant*	*Jewish*	*Other*
Warsaw	73.50	0.90	0.00	4.60	4.30	16.10	0.60	73.30	X	1.80	4.70	20.20	0.00
Minsk	3.00	0.00	76.00	4.40	0.00	16.00	0.60	10.10	X	73.20	0.00	16.10	0.70

Figure 4 compares the linguistic and religious demographics of the Warsaw and Minsk *guberniyi* (administrative districts) at the end of the partition (Krzyzanowski & Kumaniecki, 1915). Due to the absence of Russian ethnicization policies implemented in Warsaw, the ethnic Polish population not only remained the dominant ethnic group but also maintained almost perfect congruence in its linguistic-religious ethnic structure. Indeed, census data for the year 1897 reveals that, with approximately 73% Polish speakers and 73% Roman Catholics (a 1:1 linguistic-religious ratio), the ethnically Polish-Catholic population of Warsaw showed no signs of either linguistic or religious Russification by the end of the partition. Instead, Russia's ethnicization efforts were primarily aimed at Ruthenians in formerly Lithuanian cities like Minsk, where Russification was only partially successful in transferring the Russian ethnic structure on the local population. With approximately 76% Belarusian speakers and 73% Eastern Orthodox adherents (3% religious deficit from a 1:1 ratio), the Ruthenian population of Minsk showed signs of developing a new ethnic structure based on the Belarusian language and the Eastern Orthodox religion. However, with a linguistic-religious structure that now shared one element, Eastern Orthodoxy, with the Russian ethnic structure and still lacking the experience of self-government to solidify their ethnic

[3] Although Greek Catholicism remained prohibited in the Russian partition beyond the Kingdom of Poland and was therefore excluded as an option of religious self-identification, the imperial census of 1897 nevertheless did provide respondents with the linguistic options of Belarusian (an option overwhelmingly chosen in the lands of formerly Lithuanian Ruthenia, or modern Belarus) and Little Russian (an option overwhelmingly chosen in the lands of formerly Polish Ruthenia, or modern Ukraine) (Grabski, 1913).

identity, the nascent Belarusian population would remain vulnerable to further Russian ethnicization efforts even after the partition period.

Discussion

Figure 5: Summary of Ethnicization Processes During the Partitions

Imperial Power (Linguistic-Religious Structure)	**IV 1 Ethnic Group (Linguistic-Religious Structure)**	**IV 2 Self-Government**	**DV Intensity of Imperial Ethnicization Policies**	**Result**
Prussia (German-Protestant)	Poles (Polish-Roman Catholic)	Yes	Low ethnicization initially; Medium linguistic Germanization after loss of autonomy in 1848	Survival of Polish ethnic identity and demographic majority in the Polish heartland
	Silesians (Polish-Protestant) (German-Roman Catholic)	No	High liguistic and religious Germanization to counter Polish and Austrian cultural influences	Formation of new Szlonzokian ethnic identity
Austria (German-Roman Catholic)	Poles (Polish-Roman Catholic)	Yes	Low ethnicization initially; Medium linguistic Germanization after loss of autonomy in 1846	Survival of Polish ethnic identity and demographic majority in the Polish heartland
	Ruthenians (Ruthenian-Greek Catholic)	No	High linguistic and religious empowerment to counter Polish and Russian cultural influences	Formation of new Ukrainian ethnic identity
Russia (Russian-Eastern Orthodox)	Poles (Polish-Roman Catholic)	Yes	Low ethnicization initially; Medium linguistic Russification after loss of autonomy in 1863	Survival of Polish ethnic identity and demographic majority in the Polish heartland
	Ruthenians (Ruthenian-Greek Catholic)	No	High linguistic and religious Russification to counter Polish and Austrian cultural influences	Formation of new Belarusian ethnic identity

Figure 5 provides a summary of the ethnicization process that took place during the imperial partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Firstly, the results of this study contradict the primordial theory, according to which if an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will not direct ethnicization policies at any group within its dominion (**H_1**). Secondly, the results also contradict the constructivist theory, according to which if an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will direct ethnicization policies at all groups within its dominion (**H_2**). Thirdly, the results likewise contradict the intuitive expectation that if an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will direct ethnicization policies at the dominant ethnic group within its dominion (**H_3**). Instead, this study finds empirical support for the hypothesis derived from the theory of ethnic structuralism. If an imperial power rules over a multiethnic dominion, then the imperial power will direct ethnicization policies at ethnic groups that meet at least one of the following conditions of vulnerability: (1) their ethnic structure is similar to that of the imperial power in

either language or religion, or (2) their ethnic structure has not yet been solidified by the experience of self-government (**H_4**).

In the Prussian partition, the German-Protestant Prussians granted considerable autonomy to the ethnic Polish population located in the Polish heartland cities of Poznan and Bydgoszcz. Instead, imperial authorities primarily directed their ethnicization efforts at the Polish-speaking Protestant and German-speaking Roman Catholic populations in the borderland region of Silesia. Both groups were more vulnerable targets of ethnicization because, unlike the ethnic Poles, they shared at least one element of their ethnic structures with that of the Prussians and had no previous experience of self-government. The result was hard linguistic and religious Germanization to counter Polish and Austrian cultural influences in the region, ultimately leading to the development of a nascent Szlonzokian ethnic identity based on Silesian creole and Roman Catholicism by the end of the partition period.

In the Austrian partition, the German-Roman Catholic Austrians granted considerable autonomy to the ethnic Polish population located in the Polish heartland city of Krakow. Instead, imperial authorities primarily directed their ethnicization efforts at the Ruthenian-Greek Catholic population in the borderland region of Galicia. This group was a more vulnerable target of ethnicization because, unlike the ethnic Poles, they had no previous experience of self-government and were therefore willing to offer their loyalty to the Austrian empire in exchange for the right to cultivate their own culture. The result was hard linguistic and religious empowerment to counter Polish and Russian cultural influences in the region, ultimately leading to the formation of a nascent Ukrainian identity based on the Ukrainian language and Greek Catholicism.

In the Russian partition, the Russian-Eastern Orthodox Russians granted considerable autonomy to the ethnic Polish population located in the Polish heartland city of Warsaw. Instead, imperial authorities primarily directed their ethnicization efforts at the Ruthenian-Greek Catholic population in the borderland regions of former Lithuania. This group was a more vulnerable target of ethnicization because, unlike the ethnic Poles, they had a language and religion that were more closely related to those of the Russians and had no previous experience of self-government. The result was hard linguistic and religious Russification to counter Polish and Austrian cultural influences in the region, ultimately leading to the development of a nascent Belarusian ethnic identity based on the Belarusian language and Eastern Orthodoxy.

Conclusion

This study of imperial politics and ethnic identity formation in Central and Eastern Europe has three primary implications for future research in comparative politics. Firstly, it reveals the need to critically evaluate existing national narratives for their historical validity based on existing empirical data, much of which remains archived, unpublished, and untranslated. National narratives—such as the prevailing Polish narrative that the Poles were the primary targets of imperial ethnicization policies during the partitions—are typically created for ideological reasons and are frequently perpetuated through a lack or misrepresentation of information, and it is the work of political scientists to question and assess such narratives. Secondly, the study highlights how political scientists can utilize methods and subjects traditionally considered the domain of historians to pursue their goals of theory testing and theory building. While political and social scientists have oftentimes tried to demarcate their disciplines as epistemologically and methodologically distinct from more humanistic fields like the study of history, interdisciplinary approaches offer researchers considerably broader horizons for the goal of producing new knowledge on subjects and areas of interest. Thirdly, and finally, this study proposes a theoretical framework that requires further testing beyond the context of Central and Eastern Europe in the 19th century. The phenomena of imperialism and ethnic identity are not particular to any one region or century but are instead universal processes of human socio-political evolution. Therefore, given the limited scope of this study relative to the universe of possible cases, comparativists have numerous opportunities to further test and elaborate on the conclusions of this study. As a starting point, Ladykowski's (2015) and Fedorowycz's (2021) assessments of Poland's transition from a colonized country under the partitions to the colonizer of a multiethnic territory under the Second Polish Republic offer researchers the possibility of examining Poland's own ethnicization policies in the 20th century and comparing them to the ethnicization policies of imperial Prussia, Austria, and Russia examined in this study.

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