The Language Question and the Paradoxes of Latin Journalism in 18th-century Hungary

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“It has often been argued that the early modern period was one of the ‘emergence’, the ‘rise’ or the ‘triumph’ of the national vernaculars, at the expense of cosmopolitan Latin on the one hand and local dialects on the other. To the extent that this happened, the phenomenon was important for the creation of new ‘speech communities’ and eventually new trans-regional or super-regional loyalties. By 1750, the European linguistic system was very different from the medieval system, which had been divided between a living but non-classical Latin and regional dialects which were spoken rather than written. However, the simple statement that the vernaculars of Europe ‘rose’ is rather a crude one.”

This statement by Peter Burke can be found in his 2004 volume Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe. According to Burke, more comprehensive and differentiated models should be applied in cultural historical research into language usage and the awareness of social identity in the 17th and 18th centuries. He attempts to outline such a model with respect to, among other things, the cultural and sociological status of the Latin language in Europe. According to Burke, in 18th-century Europe Latin was not “a language without a speech community”, but “a language in search of community”. Potential users of the Latin language — that is, its 18th-century target communities — were predominantly “the Catholic Church and the Republic of Letters”, meaning Catholic clergymen, scholars, professors and their students, as well as “lawyers, officials, diplomats and travellers.”

Burke’s monograph demonstrates convincingly, in terms of Europe as a whole, the process by which the competition between native languages (“vernaculars”) and Latin became increasingly fierce in the above-mentioned language communities. As the primary reason, he suggests that Latin appeared useful for creating a virtual international community identity for these linguistic and social communities: “Post-classical Latin, like the vernaculars, exemplifies the uses of language in binding together a group. In this case, the people, who were bound together formed ‘a community of ideas’ or an ‘imagined community’ that was international in scope.”

As this ambition was damaged or modified, for various reasons, so the hegemony of Latin was damaged and modified. However, the author explores the local aspect of this process in less detail.

A very productive approach is to interpret the 18th-century use of Latin as an element of community identity, following Burke; or as a symbol, as suggested by Françoise Waquet. Nevertheless, I believe that this identity-forming function is not necessarily “international in scope”. Even when interpreted as a symbol, its function was not exclusively the representation (and subsequent elimination) of a “hegemonic cultural model” among contemporaries. While I would therefore

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1 The research project behind this study was supported by the János Bolyai Research Fellowship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
2 P. Burke, Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge 2002), 61.
3 Burke, Languages, 44.
4 Burke, Languages, 44.
6 Latin disappeared because it no longer meant anything to the contemporary world. All that it had once embodied — a certain idea of humanity, a form of discrimination, a system of power, an universal outlook, with an underlying conception of society, its
agree with these suggestions and models, I believe that, with targeted research, the models can be honed and made more useful at the level of local processes. A review of 18th-century Latin-language journalism in Hungary, such as I offer below, can be extremely valuable in this respect.

Latin-language publications have a special role in the history of 18th-century journalism in Hungary. Tellingly, the first successful attempt to create a newspaper in Hungary concerned the Latin-language Mercurius Hungaricus / Mercurius Veridicus ex Hungaria, which appeared between 1705 and 1710 on a more or less regular basis. Its purpose was to promote the diplomatic goals of Prince Ferenc Rákóczi, who was leading the Hungarian War of Independence. The first issue was probably published in Hungarian, since the target readership was the Hungarian public and the newspaper’s task was to balance the one-sided information provided by the Wienerisches Diarium.

The journal apparently dropped Hungarian language after the first issue and switched to Latin. This rapid transition to Latin was prompted by two factors. On the one hand, Latin was the language of law and public life in the Kingdom of Hungary, and as such it symbolised the historical tradition of Hungary’s independence, making it a suitable vehicle for representing the struggle for independence. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that, while copies of Cursor Ordinarius, the Latin-language gazette published since 1677 in Vienna, are rarely to be found in German and Austrian public collections, many copies have been preserved in Hungary, which suggests that, being published in Latin, it was most popular on Hungarian territory within the Habsburg Empire, even if it expressly represented the interests of the court. On the other hand, the Cursor Ordinarius may have provided its editors with proof that the use of the Latin language could also be appropriate for diplomatic and propagandistic purposes. At this time, Latin was still so prevalent in Europe that a Latin-language publication was regarded as capable of informing and influencing even foreign royal courts. This also supports Burke’s assertion that in the 15th to 17th centuries, Latin was one of the most important languages in European diplomacy, thus in the early 18th century Latin

order, its standards – no longer carried meaning, or was being said differently, and the hegemonic cultural model to which it referred was now victoriously rivalled” Waquet, Latin, 273.

With respect to Hungary, the results of such incomplete research are published in: F. Bíró, ed., Tanulmányok a magyar nyelv űgyének 18. századi történetéből [Studies on the history of the cause of the Hungarian language in the 18th century] (Budapest 2005). In this connection, J. Axer published research on the use of Latin in Poland, which has been partially taken into account by Waquet. See J. Axer, “Latin in Poland and East-Central Europe: Continuity and Discontinuity.” European Review, 2 (1994), 305-309.

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could still have been regarded as a useful language in this respect. Nevertheless, it is significant that this was the first as well as the last time that a diplomatic objective, along with diplomats as a target audience, appeared in the history of Latin-language journalism in Hungary. Latin appeared later with this function, rather in connection with tracts and pasquinades, although in Hungarian pasquinade literature, which was on the upsurge in the 1790s, the Hungarian and German languages were already increasingly evident at the expense of Latin. In contrast, the link between the Latin language and the constitutional independence of the Kingdom of Hungary, its particular degree of autonomy and the aristocratic community that represented it, seems to have lasted longer. It can be argued that the switch to Latin following the first issue of Mercurius Hungaricus not only served diplomatic goals, but that Latin also seemed more suitable as an intermediary language among the various strata of the Hungarian nobility, which comprised a wide range of different native languages.

Published by the scholar Mátéas Bél between 1721 and 1722, Nova Posoniensia was chronologically the next Latin-language newspaper in Hungary. The title itself indicates an intentional identification with traditional European Latin-language journalism, and specifically with the scholarly tradition represented by the Leipzig journal Acta eruditorum. The use of Latin was therefore justified by the fact that the lingua franca of European science at this time was still primarily Latin. In around 1700, the Leipzig publishers of Acta eruditorum stated as their main reason for choosing Latin as the language of their journals that Latin was “the common language of the Republic of the Letters”. Indeed, at the Evangelical lyceum in Pressburg, Bél encouraged his students to read the Acta eruditorum from 1718. This is a further indication that Bél, who had graduated from Halle, was attempting to put journalism into the service of education, following the teaching and example of his former professor, Francke. The goal of Nova Posoniensia was therefore not only to convey the activities and achievements of Hungarian scientific circles to the students who attended the evening classes beginning with Bél, but also to the “Republic of Letters”, which was, following the teaching and example of his former professor, Francke.


14 A good example of this is the case of József Keresztury, editor of the Latin language newspaper in Hungary.


17 A good example of this is the case of József Keresztury, editor of the Latin-language journal Ephemerides Vindobonenses, which will be presented later. Only one of his two famous pasquinades is in Latin (Leopoldus II. in campo Rákos. Visio eleutheria Pannonii, Viennae 1790), the other is in German (Joseph II. Ein Traum, Viennae 1781), and both were published within one year in Hungarian translation.


21 “At the end of the 17th century, in Glaucha near Halle, August Hermann Francke established a Pedagogium for noble youth, the curriculum of which included reading newspapers once a week — namely on Mondays between 3 and 5 pm. From the Latin-language newspapers, students were not only able to learn of new discoveries, Francke argues, but can also broaden their knowledge of geography, history and genealogy. In chapter 4 of the curriculum, Francke also provides for the reading of German newspapers to supplement geographical studies. As a methodological proposal he suggests that teachers should read the newspapers before the class and should call students’ attention at the beginning of the class to the most important things, in the interests of optimal time management. The school also taught the French language, and as a supplement to the curriculum the reading of French-language newspapers in the period from 1699 to 1702. By reading various newspapers at school, Francke certainly came to the conclusion that a newspaper established primarily for educational purposes might achieve the goal more effectively, thus he launched his own paper, the Halleische Zeitung, in 1708.” K. Feher, Székiapági pasquinádás Magyarországon a 18. században, [Reading newspapers in schools in Hungary in the 18th century] Magyar Könyvszemle 120 (2004), 131-150, at 131-132. See also A. Bierbach, Die Geschichte der Hallischen Zeitung, Landeszeitung für die Provinz Sachsen, für Anhalt und Thüringen. Eine Denkschrift aus Anlaß der 200jährigen Bestehens der Zeitung am 25. Juni 1908 (Halle/Saale 1908).
international scientific community, and vice versa. It was also a medium in the sense that its news section conveyed to students in Pressburg news from the wider world and from their homeland, augmenting their geographical, historical and cultural awareness.\(^9\) This goal is clearly reflected in the newspaper’s supplement Syllabus, which listed the most important political and cultural events of the month, scientific discoveries, as well as the work of scientific societies. The editor even included a glossary to the news, explaining lesser-known historical and geographical concepts. The use of Latin was linked to this objective, since Latin was the language of instruction at the Pressburg Lyceum, attended by large numbers of Hungarian-, German-, and Slovak-speaking students from Hungary. Finally, collecting materials for publication in Nova Posoniensia was an integral part of Bél’s regional studies research project.\(^20\) As the focus of this project was a description of Hungary and the Hungarian population as a whole, it had to take into account the linguistic diversity of Hungary and consequently the linguistic diversity of its prospective readers, Hungarian, German, and Bél’s native Slovak would not have offered an appropriately neutral solution to this problem, as each would have given preference to a particular language/ethnic group. The role of the Latin language was therefore appreciated, in that it was capable of connecting and addressing as a single community the various ethnic groups of Hungary that spoke different languages. As such, Latin implicitly came to represent in journalism a kind of regional community-based national identity, the so-called Hungarus consciousness.\(^21\) The editor of Nova Posoniensia was exploiting three functions of Latin simultaneously: firstly, he was using it as the lingua franca of the Republic of Letters; secondly, it was the official language of education; and thirdly, it was able to address as a community ethnic groups in Pressburg and in Hungary.

The publisher of the next Latin-language periodical seems to have chosen Latin because it was the language of education. Since the 1777 Ratio Educationis, Queen Maria Theresa’s decree on education,\(^22\) prescribed the reading of newspapers for educational purposes, there is every reason to associate with it the Ephemerides Vindobonenses, which was launched in Vienna by József Kereszty in 1776.\(^23\) This association can be supported by a number of arguments. The invitation for subscriptions specifically highlighted the paper’s intention to provide useful reading matter for students. It was published twice a week, precisely in line with how often the Ratio Educationis made the reading of newspapers mandatory for

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\(^9\) According to Ephemerides Scholasticae, the diary of a study published by the Evangelical Lyceum in Bratislava, reading newspapers is primarily intended to enhance students’ skills in languages, history and geography. This is explained in detail in Fehér, “Iskola újságolvasás,” 133.


\(^21\) On the history of the Hungarian mentality, see the article by Ambrus Miskolczy in the present volume.

\(^22\) On the political background of the era, its rulers and their decrees, see É. H. Balázs, Hungary and the Habsburgs, 1765-1860: An Experiment in Enlightened Absolutism (Budapest 1997). For the Ratio educationis see the article by Shek Ilmarić in this volume.

\(^23\) The journal is described in detail by Gy. Kókay, Az Ephemerides Vindobonenses. 1776-1785 (Budapest 1958) (Az Országos Széchényi Könyvtár kiadványai [Publication of the National Széchenyi Library], 43).
students in secondary schools. The journal comprised two sections: Res politicae featured mainly Viennese and Imperial news, while Res litterae included book reviews and educational articles. Among others, the newspaper provided detailed articles about the implementation of the Ratio Educationis, the moving of the university from Pressburg to Buda, as well as Samuel Tessédik’s progressive school of economics in Sarvas. In 1785, an editorial announced the termination of the paper, referring to Joseph II’s decree on the German language, which promoted German as the official language of instruction in place of Latin, among the reasons for its demise.

However, the editor also implies that, in addition to educational purposes, there were other reasons for using Latin. On the one hand, Latin was used because the paper was intended for educated people, and the intention was to popularise science.

On the other hand, he referred to the political profile of the paper, since it was aimed not only at Hungarians but at all those living in the Habsburg Empire, especially Croats, Slavonians, Dalmatians and Transylvanians. He made special mention of Poles as potential readers — in a good sense, since the Latin language still played a very important role at this time in Polish culture. He clearly treats as a community the inhabitants of one particular area, namely the Habsburg Empire, regardless of their native language. It is no coincidence that the cover page of the magazine featured the imperial eagle and the coat of arms of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine, flanked by Chronos/Saturn with wings and scythe, and Mercury, the god of messengers. The Ephemerides Vindobonenses thus aspired to be representative of some kind of imperial community consciousness via the medium of the Latin language.

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25 Ephemerides Vindobonenses, 1777, 165-166.
As we can see, Latin was partly a mediatory language in the service of education. As such, its target audience comprised mostly students in secondary schools and higher education along with their teachers and other Hungary-based nationals, for whom Latin was the language of communication at the various levels of the political institutional system. The stress on the Croatian language it was this shared historical tradition that remained disregarded, leading to a conflict between different national groups. For members of the Croatian nobility, who participated in the work of Hungarian political institutions, replacing Latin with Hungarian as official language was unacceptable, as this would mean being condemned to silence on issues of common concern, or being unilaterally obliged to learn the Hungarian language, as Nikola Škrlec explained in his contemporary Latin-language pamphlet on the subject.

As we can see, besides Hungarians, the large number of Croat readers, for whom Latin was a second language, are brought to the fore. At the same time, native German readers get only a brief mention, probably because of the large number of German-language papers in existence. The stress on the Croatian language indicates that for them, Latin represented as much of a historical tradition as for Hungarians and other Hungary-based nationals, for whom Latin was the language of communication at the various levels of the political institutional system. When the Diet of 1790-1792 endeavoured to reinforce the Hungarian language it was this shared historical tradition that remained disregarded, leading to a conflict between different national groups. For members of the Croatian nobility, who participated in the work of Hungarian political institutions, replacing Latin with Hungarian as official language was unacceptable, as this would mean being condemned to silence on issues of common concern, or being unilaterally obliged to learn the Hungarian language, as Nikola Škrlec explained in his contemporary Latin-language pamphlet on the subject.
In 1779-1870, some manuscript drafts and proposals suggested establishing a Latin-language newspaper for students by the University of Buda under the working title Ephemerides Budenses. These documents say a great deal about the educational function of Latin-language journalism. The most interesting among them is a proposal by Pál Makó31, which insists that the specialist journal should not be political but scientific and bibliographic in nature. He suggested using book reviews and descriptions of scientific results to inform foreign countries about Hungarian cultural achievements, and familiarise Hungarian audiences with foreign achievements. The attempt to establish the university paper was not successful. It is clear that, in the 1780s and 1790s, the German language was seen as more suitable for achieving these goals: This view is supported by Márton György Kovachich’s Merkur von Ungarn32, and Lajos János Schedius’s Johann Ludwig von Schedius’s Literarischer Anzeiger33. Published in Banská Štiavnica (Selmecbánya) between 1793 and 1803, the periodical Novi Ecclesiastico-Scholastici Annales Evangelicorum August. et Helvet. Confessionis in Austria Monarchia can also be of interest in this respect.34 Its editor, the Lutheran minister Sámuel Ambrozy, who graduated from the University of Jena, cleverly combined an educational objective with the paper’s clerical target audience, and like the Ephemerides Vindobonenses, he placed the publication in an imperial context. His example clearly explains how the clerical target audience of the Latin language was primarily, but not exclusively, the Catholic Church. An examination of documents concerning the contemporary Lutheran Church in Hungary clearly reveals a preference for Latin.35 It was most importantly the linguistic (Hungarian, German, Slovak) diversity of the Lutheran Church that explains the weaker impact of Protestantism’s otherwise characteristic cult of the vernacular.

In any case, the use of Latin in journalism as the common language of the Republic of Letters had long provided access to international scientific discourse. The fact that Latin was regarded as a workable alternative, even in the second half of the century, is clearly illustrated by Maximilian Hell’s journal of the same name, Ephemerides Astronomicae ad Meridianum Vindobonensem, published annually between 1757 and 1792. The journal contained primarily astronomical tables, but also featured short studies and reports on the subject.36 However, this example also demonstrates that scientific journalism in Latin did no longer aim

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30. These have prevailed in the English section of the National Archives. For a detailed presentation see D. F. Csanak, A Ratio Educationis és az iskolai írások, [A Ratio Educationis and school newspapers], Magyar Könyvszemle 91 (1975), 243-261.
33. Literarischer Anzeiger für Ungarn (1798-1799).
35. The language distribution of documents in Archivium Generalis Ecclesiae of the Central Archives of the Lutheran Church in Hungary is telling in this respect.
36. Hell’s main work at the observatory was to publish each year the Ephemerides Astronomicae (astronomical ephemerides) – that is, astronomical almanacs with the precise time on every day of the year of sunrise and sunset, the positions of the moon and planets and other astronomical data. This type of publication, which was to become for a long time a common procedure of observatories, had only begun to be published in the Paris observatory a few years before. The first volume of 250 pages, written in Latin, appeared in 1757; it also included other astronomical observations and scientific results. This was the first publication of this type in German-speaking countries. Hell published 37 volumes of ephemerides between 1757 and 1792. In this work he was helped by his co-workers and students, among them Franz Triesnecker (1745-1809) and Anton Pilgram (1730-1793). A. Udias, Searching the Heavens and the Earth: the History of Jesuit Observatories, (Dordrecht 2003), 27. On Hell’s scientific-political

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32. His example illustrates that Lutheran clericals still preferred the Latin language in Hungary, an examination of documents concerning the contemporary Lutheran Church in Hungary supports this claim. (The hold of Latin within the Catholic Church is clearly less surprising.)
34. However, this example also demonstrates that scientific journalism in Latin did no longer aim

The promotion of science, but was increasingly limited to a range of specialist academic journals: the target audience was a specialised, skilled stratum of the professional sciences.

The use of Latin is also connected with political intentions. While, in the case of cultural papers, Latin was used as a kind of “prestige language” for the interdependent forms (i.e., educational and disciplinary) of scientific communication, the various intentions of politically motivated Latin journalism differed from, and in some cases even contradicted, one another.

As we have seen above, Latin, as the symbol of an independent Hungarian statehood and of constitutional independence, making it a suitable vehicle for expressing distance from the Habsburg emperors as well as aspirations to independence. Clearly this intention was put into practice in response to Joseph II’s 1784 decree, making German the official language in Hungary; the counties protested largely by arguing for Latin rather than Hungarian as the state language. Thus it was not merely the case, as mentioned in Burke’s monograph, that Latin was the common language of officials. In Hungary, due to its traditional role in public life it was appropriate for Latin to become one of the symbols of the feudal political community that was the Hungarian nobility. On the other hand, the Latin language was considered a suitable means of representing multilingual Hungary as a cultural and political unity within the Habsburg Empire. Latin therefore became particularly important for non-Hungarian groups, in particular members of the German- or Slovak-speaking bourgeoisie of Hungary, who, boasting of outstanding cultural achievements, wished to acquire political rights (Matthias B. being a perfect example). In this case, Latin again functions as a community symbol, as the representation of the so-called Hungarian consciousness with its medieval roots. Due to the many languages used in Hungary, the ideal medium of this common patriotic feeling, whether in scientific works or journals, was Latin. Finally, the example of the Ephemerides Vindobonenses demonstrates that Latin was also considered an ideal medium primarily for those court-related efforts that aimed to represent the whole of the various linguistic and identity groups of the Habsburg Empire by means of a politically and culturally grounded imperial community awareness. In other words, Latin-language media suited just as well the goals of Hungarian feudal politics, which emphasised constitutional independence, as those of the Habsburg court, which aimed at reducing imperial disparities or at least covering them up. 


*tip: The choice of Latin language was also a political decision.*

*tip: journals (but I doubt cultural journal is a good term).*

*tip: motives behind ?

*tip: in which he made …asking German the official language.*

*tip: ve

formázott: Nem felsorolás vagy számzással

formázott: Betűtípus: Nem Félkövér

formázott: "...Ertelmezi minták és a Hungarus-tudás..." (Intellectuāl models and the Hungarus consciousness)

formázott: "...Ertelmezi minták és a Hungarus-tudás..." (Intellectuāl models and the Hungarus consciousness)

formázott: The choice of Latin as a kind of “prestige language”

formázott: Latin could appropriately

formázott: symbol of a community

formázott: whether in scientific works or journals, was Latin. Finally, the example of the Ephemerides Vindobonenses demonstrates that Latin was also considered an ideal medium primarily for those court-related efforts that aimed to represent the whole of the various linguistic and identity groups of the Habsburg Empire by means of a politically and culturally grounded imperial community awareness. In other words, Latin-language media suited just as well the goals of Hungarian feudal politics, which emphasised constitutional independence, as those of the Habsburg court, which aimed at reducing imperial disparities or at least covering them up.

*tip: ...*
However, in the 1790s feudal politics started increasingly favouring Hungarian as the official language of Hungary. In court politics, as indicated by the language decree of Joseph II, aspirations towards the generalisation of the German language, and at the same time towards the linguistic unification of the Empire, appear from the 1780s. Even those endeavours aimed at strengthening a sense of imperial identity by cultural means had a preference for the German language. However, seeing the strong opposition of the Hungarian estates in 1790, and later in the crisis situation of the Napoleonic Wars, the court was forced to make concessions, first with respect to Latin and later with respect to Hungarian as official language. 

Also in popular scientific journalism vernaculars were gaining ground, while Latin was confined to strictly scientific organs. Published between 1790 and 1793, the Latin-language Ephemerides Budenses can be considered a rarity, and almost as an anachronism, in terms of choice of language. It may therefore be instructive to examine the reasons behind the unusual choice of language in the case of the last major Latin paper in Hungary.

The curious case of the Ephemerides Budenses

Significantly, the title Ephemerides Budenses, as I suggested above, had already been considered a few years earlier as the title of a journal to be published by the university for Hungarian scientists and students for scientific and educational purposes. Besides, the Ephemerides had strong associations with the Viennese Ephemerides Vindobonenses, both in terms of the Latin wording of the title, and in terms of its main sections (Politica, Litteraria). The political section often featured news from Vienna, while the cultural section frequently contained educational news. The typographical similarity was reinforced by the use of an A5 format and ornate frontispiece. The journal’s image therefore suggests that it was published as part of an existing tradition that was officially supported and recognised by the court.

It is also noteworthy that the date and location of the launch of the journal coincide with the 1790-1792 Diet, where the explicit goal of the Hungarian estates was to strengthen and extend Hungarian constitutional autonomy. The Ephemerides published continuous and detailed news about this diet, and its tone was far from loyal to the court. Lack of loyalty in tone is best demonstrated by the presence of lines that are struck through, especially in 1792-1793, indicating the censoring of the journal’s content. News items containing such deletions had probably attempted to provide information about certain events of the French Revolution. The journal’s frontispiece is visually very expressive. Although it is typographically similar to the emblem used in the Ephemerides Vindobonenses, it is very different in terms of content. Among the many crests that surround the emblem, the largest is the Hungarian coat of arms in the centre, while the Croatian coat of arms is also given special place. At the centre of the emblem is the Royal Castle of Buda: the remains of the Renaissance palace, built in the 15th century by King Matthias, which was at that time

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41 See Gy. Székfű, Irodalma a magyar államnyelv kérdésének történetéhez 1790–1848 [Documents on the history of the Hungarian state language], Budapest 1926, 64-65.
perhaps the most impressive architectural symbol of the tradition of a previously independent Hungarian statehood.

Figure 2. The title page of the Ephemerides Budenses

It is also remarkable that, while the Ephemerides Vindobonenses specifically intended to use Latin as a bridge to link the multilingual residents of the Habsburg Empire, and the Kingdom of Hungary within it, the Ephemerides Budenses apparently represents entirely different linguistic priorities. An examination of the journal’s news and book reviews from this perspective reveals the outlines of an explicit programme of language cultivation, with a focus on the Hungarian language. Published as an appendix to the Ephemerides, and written by the then editor Paul Spielenberg, the programmatic statement that became known as Monita de Lingua et theatro hungarico stabiliendo is a concise summary of this programme.44 Spielenberg establishes that the development of the Hungarian language is an essential condition for the development of the Hungarian sciences, the arts, industry, commerce, and in general a condition for national existence. It is followed by a list of the steps of a language cultivation project. The first step is the elimination of multilingualism in Hungary. According to the author, in non-Hungarian-speaking villages and towns it should be a legal requirement that small children be looked after by Hungarian-speaking nannies and servants so that they learn Hungarian through mutual communication, especially if this is enhanced by the establishment of appropriate local schools.45 The next step is to make Hungarian the official language, especially in public life, in other words, to introduce the use of Hungarian in the county and national diets, in the administration, and in the judicial system. Finally, the position of the Hungarian language should be confirmed in the cultural sphere. The means for this would be the construction of theatres for Hungarian-language companies, and the creation of philological societies.

The statement of the programme was followed by an overview of the potential obstacles. On the one hand, the author makes clear that the programme would take at least five to ten years to accomplish, and

44 Ephemerides Budenses (furthermore: EB) 29/10/1792, Appendix. It is no coincidence that in 1837 this programme was translated into Hungarian: this was the time when its radical stance on behalf of Hungarian found followers (translated in Honművész 22/12/1837).
45 The idea was first raised by Báróczy...
that the results would only be enjoyed by the next generation. On the other hand, he refers to the potential response of the country’s non-Hungarian-speaking population. Spielenberg assumed that the national consciousness of Croatia-Slavonia was based primarily on legal privileges, while with respect to Transylvania he took only the language identity of the nobility into account, thus he presents this obstacle as being far smaller than it actually was.

The outlined programme was influential in terms of the thematic composition of the *Ephemerides.* The journal contained a remarkably large proportion of news and reviews related to the development of the Hungarian language: almost every issue included at least one item on the subject. The related news, announcements and reviews published in the *Ephemerides* can be divided into eight main thematic categories. First of all there were general articles on the situation of the Hungarian language and the cause of language cultivation, which were usually written with programmatic intent.

Another important thematic group comprised articles on the situation and development of Hungarian-language literature. Pál Spielenberg’s overview of the situation of Hungarian poetry deserves special mention here: it emphasised, along with linguistic and prosodic issues, the importance of the cultivation and teaching of aesthetics in the development of Hungarian poetic language. The diagram below illustrates the distribution of reviewed books according to language.

Figure 3. Language of books reviewed in the *Ephemerides Budenses*

What is of interest here is the fact that a significant change in the number of printed publications in Hungary occurs in around 1790 — the time when the previously dominant Latin was being replaced by Hungarian-language works. Between 1781 and 1790, published works comprised 36.8% Latin, 33.8% Hungarian, 23.3% German, 5.4% Slavic and 0.7% other, while between 1791 and 1800, the proportions were 37.3% Latin, 40.4% Hungarian, 16.9% German, 5.1% Slavic and 0.3% other. The reviews featured in the *Ephemerides* follow this trend with striking sensitivity, and despite being a Latin-language journal it reflects

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1 For a detailed demonstration supported by quotes see my earlier study: P. Balogh, M. Szilágyi,…” *quibus Linguae Hungaricae propagatio contitit:* Az Ephemerides Budenses a magyar nyelvhasználat kérdéseiről. [The Ephemerides on the issues of using Hungarian language in Bíró, Tanulmányok a magyar nyelv, 23-69.

no preference for Latin-language literature. Rather than trying to cover it up, it in fact underlines the increasingly significant number and proportion of Hungarian-language published works. These data also confirm that the Ephemerides paid particular attention to contemporary Hungarian-language literature and endeavoured to promote its development.

I have grouped into another category those writings that concern the relationship between the Hungarian language and the sciences. On the one hand, these works attempt to demonstrate that various disciplines can be practised and propagated in Hungarian. On the other hand, they reject the creation of grammar, books and monolingual dictionaries, as debates over such things would only delay the rendering of scientific language into Hungarian. Instead, they regard the Hungarian translation or revision of technical or popular scientific works as the way forward.

The publications examine the practical conditions for this programme of translation, touching upon several issues, like the question of institutional background of language cultivation. The main question at hand was whether learned societies (or an academy) could be more efficient than a patronage system in supporting the development of the Hungarian language. The Ephemerides clearly advocates the establishment of societies or an academic institution.

Education is another priority area for the praxis of language cultivation. Another group of writings therefore comprises news on the language used in the education system. The programme outlined in the journal targets the exclusive and primary use of the Hungarian language in education in Hungary. The possibility of minority language education is mentioned, but only at a basic level, as a support language for teaching Hungarian. Latin is interpreted now as a cultural code that provides access to the cultural patterns of ancient art, while knowledge of German is apparently fitted into the utilitarian requirement for learning modern European languages.

Another group of publications explore a theme that is also relevant to the practice of language cultivation. They include writings on the development of Hungarian-language theatre, news about Hungary's first theatrical company in Pest-Buda, and appeals on its behalf.

Other articles touch on the social and political dimensions beyond the cultivation of language. They illustrate attempts at and options for promoting Hungarian as an official language. According to reports in the Ephemerides, this was a clear-cut objective. The concept of introducing Hungarian as the official language allowed for an independent language area only in Croatia, but that was to be based on the continuity not of the vernacular Croatian language but of Latin. This was obviously related to the legal and historical traditions of independent Croatian feudalism and feudal autonomy.

In closing, it is worth mentioning a topic to which fewer articles are devoted, but which is noticeably present, mostly in connection with the everyday use and usability of the Hungarian language. Even if not presented as a problem, and even if not emphasised, the need to use Hungarian as the language of conversation and religion is also referred to in pages of the Ephemerides.

Based on the above, the obvious question is why the Ephemerides Budenses chose Latin as intermediary language for an ostensibly radical Hungarian-language programme. One possible answer is...
that using the Latin language the aim was to conceal and moderate the radicalism of the programme, particularly with respect to censorship. But do any of the editors provide a direct answer to the question?

At the launch of the journal, its first editor, Mihály Tertina, did not reflect on the problem. On the other hand, it was mentioned on many occasions by Pál Spielenberg, who took over the role of editor a few months later and who remained in this post until the journal ceased publication.

He was forced to reflect on the issue, since the journal’s choice of language was not self-evident, even at that time. This is clearly illustrated by an anonymous letter, published without comment in one of the issues of Ephemerides, which contained ironic exhortations addressed to the editor. Following various other remarks, the author of the letter states that it is not clear why the editor has chosen Latin as the language of his journal. Firstly, he considers it obvious that the editor of the Ephemerides is an apostle of the Hungarian language cause. Secondly, in his opinion the Ephemerides can have few readers who are unable to speak another foreign language apart from Latin and Hungarian. Thirdly, the writer of the letter points out that the editor of the Ephemerides wishes to eliminate the use of Latin in the fields of science, public affairs and justice — but why does he couch his arguments in Latin?

Another attack against Spielenberg was reported in a news item written by the editor himself. According to this report, in March 1791, during a German-language theatre performance, a member of the Pest German theatre company made an unscripted, scathing remark about Spielenberg’s earlier, unsuccessful efforts as a poet and his current editorial activities: ‘‘... si, inquit, Poësis mea non iuverit Latina scribam nova’’. The article in the Ephemerides claimed that this piece of sarcasm was revenge for a report in the Ephemerides about how the leaseholder of the German theatre company had made the situation of the Hungarian company untenable. Interestingly, the use of Latin has a negative connotation in both the reader’s letter and the actor’s remark, but neither case made an apology for the Hungarian language.

The editor’s responses were based on two key arguments. On the one hand, the editor argued that Latin-language journalism had a centuries-old tradition that was now represented in Europe exclusively by his publication. On the other hand, since the language of public life in Hungary had been Latin for eight centuries, Spielenberg believed it to be the most effective means of presenting public affairs in such a way that the news reached everyone interested. In his editorial notes, in which Spielenberg reflects on the continuous decline in subscriber numbers, he frequently formulates a somewhat paradoxical wish: If only the falling number of subscriptions were caused by a growing interest in the Hungarian language. Incidentally, the Ephemerides published positive reviews of Hungarian-language weeklies and journals.

46 For a detailed exploration of Mihály Tertina’s editorial practice, see S. A. Tóth, Tertina Mihály a lapszerkesztő és a latin poéta [M.T. journal editor and Latin poet] (Baja 2011).
47 One of the most important parts of the letter: ‘‘Alterum est, quod satis mirari nequeo, Te tantum Patrii Idiomatis Hungarici esse Apostolum, laudabile sane est, sed cum ii, quantum interioret simulata volatitate id non optet, et nullo paene effectu adlaborent, oleum, et operam perdis, suspicatque Tuas efficias pagellas, hoc idem discretum Tuum prodit animum, et propositum, non minus tamen dubito, anna multi Tuas Ephemerides constituutas habeant, qui praeter Hungaricam, et Latinam pe oleum, et operam perdis, suspectas Tuas efficis pagellas, hoc idem discretum Tuum prodit animum, et propositum, non minus tamen dubito, anna multi Tuas Ephemerides constituutas habeant, qui praeter Hungaricam, et Latinam pe

48 One of the most important parts of the letter: ‘‘Alterum est, quod satis mirari nequeo, Te tantum Patrii Idiomatis Hungarici esse Apostolum, laudabile sane est, sed cum ii, quantum interioret simulata volatitate id non optet, et nullo paene effectu adlaborent, oleum, et operam perdis, suspicatque Tuas efficias pagellas, hoc idem discretum Tuum prodit animum, et propositum, non minus tamen dubito, anna multi Tuas Ephemerides constituutas habeant, qui praeter Hungaricam, et Latinam pe

49 NSF 2012/1791, 384; EB 07/06/1791, Nuncium 1, moreover EB 08/11/1791, 287.
50 EB 08/03/1791, 119-120.
which suggests that it did not regard itself as a competitor in the field of Hungarian-language journalism.\textsuperscript{54} Another anonymous reader’s letter in the Ephemerides claimed that the situation could be explained by the general decline in interest in public affairs.\textsuperscript{55} The letter argued that Hungarian-language journals were not being read either, and that the Ephemerides still attracted greater numbers of readers than the number of students studying with the few Hungarian-language professors at the academies (the five higher educational institutions), whose academic chairs had been established with so much fatigue.

These statements, as well as the type and nature of the articles, suggest that, in using the Latin language, the editors of the Ephemerides were targeting those readers in Hungary who had primarily learned about public events in other living European languages (German, Italian or French), but had little access to local news in these languages. This group can hypothetically be identified with teachers and students of newspaper reading seminars, since, as I mentioned earlier, even though it was not the Ephemerides’ main profile, the journal contained news on educational matters and for educational purposes. The target audience also included readers who valued the traditional use of Latin in Hungarian public life, perhaps more than the potential spread of the Hungarian language. Finally, it included all those who were living in Hungary but whose native language was not Hungarian and who could not therefore be addressed in the press in Hungarian, but only in Latin. The latter two groups are sociologically clearly defined: the nobles, who used the Latin language as a feudal symbol of the tradition of Hungarian public policy; and the non-Hungarian-speaking, mostly civic and intellectual strata, who regarded themselves as Hungarians. From this, it can be concluded that the Ephemerides was intended as the vehicle for an educational Hungarian-language programme. The programme addressed three types of Hungarian audience: students with various mother tongues who were studying journal reading; a non-Hungarian bourgeois readership with Hungarius consciousness; and nobles, who preferred Latin but who were somewhat averse to journal reading. Through Latin language the journal indirectly popularised among its readership both journal reading and the use of the Hungarian language, by demonstrating (in Latin) its values and benefits. More precisely, Latin was functioning only temporarily as a medium for the multilingual audience of Hungary: its goal was to prepare the ground for Hungarian journalism and to broaden the base of readers who understood and preferred the Hungarian language. The wish, quoted above, that the declining readership of the Ephemerides might be in inverse proportion to the number of readers of Hungarian journals—that is, the wish that the Ephemerides might fill the role of an intermediate re-educational organ in the interests of the Hungarian-language press, is particularly telling in this respect.

\textsuperscript{54} Pl. Erdélyi Magyar Hírvivő [Transylvanian Hungarian Messenger]: EB 1602/1790, 40.: Hadí és Más Nevezetes Történetek [Famous Stories, Military and other]: EB 03/12/1790, Mindenes Größtemény [General Collection]: EB 00/12/1791, 352.

\textsuperscript{55} Quod ad nos attest: mihi dolet summopere, eo res latinas esse loco: ut quamur possessionem nuper in summa Gentis Hungaricae laudibus reponebamus, iam negligentur penitus, neque qui labentibus auxiliatricem manum portagat, inveniatur. Pulcherimos tuos in conservando latino sermone conatus nulla unquam delebit oblivio. Ego quantum per me stetit lectis ius 7. Ianuarii Ephemeridibus omnem movi lapidem, nec dubito quin similbatem suam aliqui in huius Postae officio deposuerint. Apud plerisque adhuc frustra sumus; nec Hungaricae Ephemerides leguntur; atque ego forsitam non fallor, si credam te plures habere Auditores.” EB 1002/1792, 63.
This approach, albeit unusual, is not entirely unique to cultural public in late 18th-century Hungary. In some respects, Miklós Révai’s inaugural speech at the university is a good analogy. On his appointment as head of the Hungarian language department in 1802, the professor delivered an excellent speech on the value of the Hungarian language and the importance of its development and research, in Latin. He did so not only because the official language of university education was Latin, but also out of consideration for the multilingual audience at the solemn event, which could best be persuaded of the value of the Hungarian language in Latin. Similar parallels can be found in the Latin-language grammar books on the teaching of the Hungarian language, published in the 1780s and 1790s, which were written for non-Hungarian-speaking students in secondary schools.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, it is worth mentioning another aspect that emerges not from an examination of the text of the journal, but from the correspondence and legacy of its editor, Pál Spielenberg. Spielenberg’s network of connections is important because it encompassed many editors of contemporary Hungarian-language journals, and also because he had strong links with a particular Masonic organisation. The Draskovich observance was one of the leading organisations within Hungarian freemasonry. Spielenberg was a member of the observance’s Pest lodge, *Magnanimitas*. This organisation was independent from the Austrian lodge that was subordinated to the Berlin Mother Lodge. It had its own, independent constitution, and its official language was Latin. This was mainly because the organisation had been founded on Croatian territory, suggesting that Latin must have been a well-functioning medium among its Croatian- and Hungarian-speaking members. On the other hand, the use of the Latin language indicated independence from the Austrian and German lodges, while being functional internationally. The organisation’s constitution emphatically encourages members to engage in cultural activity. It was probably no coincidence that many editors of Hungarian-language journals in the 1780s and 1790s (Ferenc Kazinczy, Orpheus, János Batsányi of Kassai Magyar Múzeum), were members of this organisation, just like Spielenberg and several editors of German journals (such as Lajos János Schedius and Márton György Kovachich). Interestingly, these journals were mutually supportive: Spielenberg’s name appeared in the pages of the *Magyar Museum*, the *Ephemerides* was cited by Orpheus, and the *Ephemerides* published detailed and very

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57 For example Gábor Dayka’s Latin-language Hungarian grammars that he compiled as a teacher at the Lavoia secondary school for his non-Hungarian students. His reason was not only the fact that grammatical terms were more elaborate in Latin than in Hungarian, but also because it was an ideal medium for German as well as Slovak students. G. Dayka, *Prolodium in Institutiones Linguae Hungaricae,* *Termo grammaticae Hungaricae 1794,* in *Dayka Gábor összes műve* [G.D.’s collected works], ed. by P. Balogh, K. Bődi, B. Szep, R. Tasi (Budapest 2009), 243-305.

58 For a detailed summary of this research and the partial publication of this handwritten legacy, see P. Balogh, *Mozaikok egy hajdani formázott szerkesztő arcépéhez – Spielenberg Pál[,] in Kollégium. Tanulmányok a 70 éves Bíró Ferenc tiszteletére [Colligatum. Studies for the 70 year old Ferenc Bíró],* eds. M. Szilágyi, B. Devencsői, G. Vaderna (Budapest 2007), 15-44.

positive reviews of both Hungarian journals. Not to mention those celebrations, or eulogies, that consistently followed in the wake of Kazinczy’s published articles of greater or lesser import. The implicit political programme of these journals also appears consistent on a number of points, such as the specific reinterpretation of the originally medieval office and role of the palatine in the Hungarian state organisation, which was an important topic in the pages of both the Ephemeresides and Orpheus. Interestingly, Croatian issues and news from those territories are given emphasis in the Ephemeresides, and behind such information we may perhaps find the Masonic relationships of the Croatian-based Draskovich observance. I think we may risk the hypothesis that the preference for the Latin language in the Ephemeresides was not, or was not exclusively, an editorial decision but can be interpreted as part of a cultural concept represented by the Draskovich observance.

The history of 18th-century Latin-language journalism currently under review therefore partly supports and partly complements Burke’s and Waquet’s claim that the Latin language in 18th-century Europe is “a language in search of community”, which, at the same time, also functions as an element of community identity and a community symbol. How does the present study support this claim?

On the one hand, it can be seen that major changes were taking place within Latin’s two main language communities in this period. Although the hegemony of the Catholic Church with respect to the use of Latin, as highlighted by Burke, is unquestionable, it is significant that the only Latin-language journal with a religious affiliation in contemporary Hungary was connected to the Lutheran Church, thus an examination of Protestantism should not be neglected. The history of 18th-century Latin-language journalism suggests a possible reason for this: by the end of the 18th century, the system of specialist sciences had emerged in European culture. At the same time, this system was becoming more and more sharply distinguished from the popularisation of sciences, which targeted non-professional audiences and which was becoming increasingly dominant. The latter was justifiably, from the point of view of the sociology of readership, carried out in vernacular languages, while Latin was restricted to the arcane world of professional scholars. The next step in the process takes place in the 19th century, when the specialised sciences must somehow prove their social usefulness, thus increasingly seek connections with the efforts towards popularisation. Native models of the specialist sciences therefore emerge, naturally at the expense of the Latin language. Thirdly, our analysis of Latin-language journalism has also indicated that the use of Latin language in government offices and jurisdiction can be attributed not only to the survival of a historical tradition, especially in the multilingual and multinational Habsburg Empire. In the 18th century, the official and political use of Latin is often linked to the self-identification of emerging and competing social groups. Latin played a symbolic role in the identity of such groups, which

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60 EB 11/05/2010, Appendix 125-127; EB 20/12/1792, 614.
61 A detailed examination on Kazinczy’s career: EB 28/01/1791, 66; further reviews: 20/12/1792, 614; 28/01/1791, 66-67; 27/07/1790, 318; 01/02/1791, 75-76; 28/01/1791, 65-66; 23/08/1791, 721.
62 For more details on the subject see P. Balogh, Moz吗kol, 26-29 and P. Balogh, “Orpheus sive philosophia – Kazinczy fel铆olvasa” [Kazinczy’s journal read from Bacon’s perspective], Sic Iuris Et Aed Atroz 61 (2010), 173-188.
cannot necessarily be described as “an ‘imagined community’ that was international in scope”.

In Hungary, the use of the Latin language acquired a symbolic role in noble/feudal community consciousness, in the Hungarus identity of the non-Hungarian-speaking bourgeoisie, in the creation of an Habsburg imperial community awareness, as well as in other, smaller communities, such as the Masonic Draskovich observance. Although the latter was an international organisation, the use of Latin was intended to support its autonomy and independence. However, the example of the *Ephemerides Budenses* also demonstrates that, by the end of the 18th century, such forms of community identity were becoming increasingly marginalised in contrast to the emerging ethnicity-based national consciousness, which at the same time called for the dominance of native languages at the expense of Latin. The decline of Latin did not therefore signify a loss within the language user communities, but rather resulted from a transformation in the composition and self-ideology of those communities.

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63 See note 4.