

## DISZIPLINGESCHICHTE

### *HISTORY OF GEOGRAPHY*

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# THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF GEOGRAPHY AND ITS ACADEMIC LEADERS IN THE MULTIETHNIC CONTEXT OF THE HABSBURG EMPIRE (1849–1918)

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*Initial submission / erste Einreichung: 06/2025; revised submission / revidierte Fassung: 11/2025;  
final acceptance / endgültige Annahme: 12/2025*

with 6 figures and 4 tables in the text

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### Summary

*The history of the institutionalisation of geography as a discipline within the Habsburg Empire is a well-researched topic in the literature. However, this body of literature remains highly fragmented, as the development of geography within the Empire's multiethnic context has almost exclusively been examined through nationalistic lenses. As a result, the institutions and leading figures of Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Polish(-Ukrainian), and Croatian geography are discussed in separate pieces of literature, written predominantly by scholars from the respective nations and often in different languages. This phenomenon is not surprising, given that geography initially played a crucial role in shaping national identities. Even today, scholars' perspectives remain influenced by this legacy.*

*Nonetheless, there is an alternative and still largely unexplored approach: a non-nationalistic perspective grounded in the constitutional and administrative realities of the time. From this standpoint, it is reasonable to argue that, within the framework of a single state, subject to the same (or at least partially shared) legal and educational policies, the development of geographical institutions should be studied as part of a unified process. While it is well established that leading figures, their theories, and methodologies of German geography had a significant impact on the development of geography across the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, there is still no comprehensive comparative analysis of the various national traditions or the interactions between them.*

*This paper aims to adopt this non-nationalistic, state-centred perspective to examine the institutionalisation of geography across the unified space of the Habsburg Empire. It focuses on the work of leading academics at the heads of fourteen geography departments from the establishment of the first institutions up to the collapse of the Monarchy in 1918. However, this study is not merely a synthesis of existing literature on Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Polish(-Ukrainian), and Croatian geography in this period. Rather, it offers a comparative biographical analysis of all department heads within the Empire, with particular attention to the methodological and thematic development of both physical and human geography, in relation to the broader theoretical trends in German geography.*

*Keywords: Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Habsburg Empire, scientific institutions, geographies of science, history of geography, Austrian geography, Hungarian geography, Czech geography, Polish geography, Croatian geography*

### Zusammenfassung

#### DIE INSTITUTIONALISIERUNG DER GEOGRAPHIE UND IHRE AKADEMISCHEN FÜHRUNGSPERSÖNLICHKEITEN IM MULTIETHNISCHEN KONTEXT DES HABSBURGERREICHES (1849–1918)

*Die Geschichte der Institutionalisierung der Geographie als wissenschaftliche Disziplin innerhalb des Habsburgerreiches ist ein gut erforschtes Thema der Fachliteratur. Dennoch*

*bleibt dieser Forschungsbereich stark fragmentiert, da die Entwicklung der Geographie im multiethnischen Kontext der Monarchie nahezu ausschließlich aus nationalistischen Blickwinkeln betrachtet wurde. Infolgedessen wurden die Institutionen und führenden Persönlichkeiten der österreichischen, ungarischen, tschechischen, polnisch (-ukrainischen) und kroatischen Geographie in separaten Studien behandelt, die überwiegend von Wissenschaftlern der jeweiligen Nationen und häufig in unterschiedlichen Sprachen verfasst wurden. Dieses Phänomen ist kaum überraschend, da die Geographie ursprünglich eine zentrale Rolle bei der Konstruktion nationaler Identitäten spielte. Auch heutige geographische Forschungsperspektiven sind vielfach noch von diesem Erbe geprägt.*

*Dennoch existiert eine alternative, bislang weitgehend unerforschte Herangehensweise: eine nicht-nationalistische Perspektive, die auf den damaligen verfassungsrechtlichen und administrativen Gegebenheiten beruht. Aus dieser Sichtweise erscheint es naheliegend, die Entwicklung geographischer Institutionen – innerhalb eines einheitlichen Staatswesens und unter weitgehend gemeinsamen gesetzlich-regulativen sowie bildungspolitischen Rahmenbedingungen – als Teil eines zusammenhängenden Prozesses zu analysieren. Obwohl gut dokumentiert ist, dass führende Akteure, ihre Theorien und methodischen Ansätze – insbesondere aus dem Bereich der deutschsprachigen Geographie – maßgeblichen Einfluss auf die geographische Entwicklung in der gesamten Doppelmonarchie hatten, fehlt bislang eine umfassende vergleichende Analyse der nationalen Entwicklungen sowie möglicher Interaktionen zwischen diesen.*

*Der vorliegende Beitrag verfolgt das Ziel, diese staatszentrierte, nicht-nationalistische Perspektive einzunehmen, um die Institutionalisierung der Geographie im einheitlichen Raum der Habsburgermonarchie zu untersuchen. Im Mittelpunkt stehen die Arbeiten der führenden Professoren an den insgesamt vierzehn geographischen Universitätsinstituten von der Gründung der ersten Einrichtungen bis zum Zusammenbruch der Monarchie im Jahr 1918. Die Studie versteht sich jedoch nicht bloß als Synthese der bestehenden Literatur zur österreichischen, ungarischen, tschechischen, polnisch(-ukrainischen) und kroatischen Geographie dieser Epoche, sondern als vergleichende biographische Analyse aller Institutsleiter im Reich. Besonderes Augenmerk gilt dabei der methodischen und thematischen Entwicklung der physischen und anthropogeographischen Teildisziplinen im Licht der theoretischen Strömungen der deutschsprachigen Geographie.*

*Schlagwörter: Österreichisch-Ungarische Monarchie, Habsburgermonarchie, wissenschaftliche Institutionen, Geographie als Wissenschaftsdisziplin, Geschichte der Geographie, Österreichische Geographie, Ungarische Geographie, Tschechische Geographie, Polnische Geographie, Kroatische Geographie*

## 1 Introduction

The institutionalisation of geography began in the age of nation-states when the discipline held a distinct position among the sciences due to its dual role: strengthening national identity and supporting empire-building, particularly in the context of colonisation (GYURIS and GYÓRI 2023). The Habsburg Empire occupied a delicate position concerning both

the institutional and intellectual development of geography. The Empire's multiethnic composition, combined with an unequal distribution of political authority, particularly the right to oversee education, posed considerable challenges. With the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, jurisdiction over scientific and educational matters was divided between the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments (LICHTENBERGER 2001). In addition, the Croatian-Hungarian Compromise of 1868 and the de facto autonomy of Galicia allowed Croatian and Polish science to follow relatively independent paths. Czech geography was likewise able to establish institutional foundations during the Dual Monarchy era.

Given this fractured institutional landscape and the divergent nationalist motivations, it is hardly surprising that today's historiography of geography regarding the Habsburg Monarchy remains sharply divided along national lines. Separate bodies of literature exist on the histories of Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Croatian, Polish, and Ukrainian geography, each typically focusing on its institutions and prominent figures and often written in the respective national languages. While this fragmentation is understandable, it also reveals a compelling paradox: based on the legal foundation of the customs union created between Austria and Hungary, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy constituted a single state, with a unified external border and no internal customs barriers. Labour, capital, goods, enterprises, and indeed academic knowledge and personnel could circulate freely within the empire's territory (HILBERT 2023).

Furthermore, although the legislative responsibility for science and education was divided among the Austrian, Hungarian (and Croatian and Galician) parliaments, the overall legal and institutional framework for the sciences still depended fundamentally on the will of a single emperor, including the establishment of university departments, such as those dedicated to geography. From this perspective, it becomes evident that the institutionalisation of national geographies occurred within a shared legal and administrative framework and that intellectual developments in one part of the empire likely could influence others. This justifies a research approach that foregrounds constitutional and institutional commonalities, rather than narrowly nationalistic narratives. The fact that such a perspective has not yet been comprehensively applied to the history of geography concerning the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy underscores both its necessity and its potential to yield novel contributions to the topic.

This paper seeks to explore the institutionalisation of geography as a scientific discipline throughout the Habsburg Empire, from the establishment of the first university geography department in 1849 to the collapse of the Monarchy in 1918. In addition to examining the foundation of university departments and geographical societies, the study undertakes a biographical analysis of the key academics who held chairs or leadership roles in geography departments. This paper not only intends to synthesise the relevant national historiographies but also wishes to offer a comparative analysis, especially concerning the selected biographical features of the leading figures in the field. The scholarly contributions of these figures are closely connected to broader international trends in geography, especially the influence of German geography, whose prevailing theoretical and methodological frameworks significantly shaped the development of geographical research across the Habsburg Empire. Accordingly, the next chapter offers a concise overview of the role, key theories, and methodological foundations of 19<sup>th</sup>-century geography.

## 2 The International Context and Key Figures Influencing 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Central European Geography

The development of the institutional system of geographical science in an international context can be traced back to the era of the great geographical discoveries. Geography later gained additional momentum during the colonising activities of the European empires, which spurred its formal establishment as an academic discipline and, in most cases, allowed it to surpass the institutional development of neighbouring fields such as geology, meteorology, and sociology. Initially, geography functioned as a melting pot of scholars from various branches of science and lacked a clearly defined research focus (MATTES 2020).

The founding of geographical societies and, subsequently, the establishment of geography departments at universities marked key milestones in the strengthening of the discipline. Geography became a central instrument of imperialism and colonial expansion among the European powers, which elevated the discipline's status within the scientific hierarchy. Beyond map-making, the geographical description of colonies, and the logistical organisation of colonial life, geography also served the political objective of reinforcing national identity (LIVINGSTONE 2001). The existence and development of this role are particularly intriguing in the context of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which lacked overseas colonies. Moreover, the dualist political structure and multinational composition of the Monarchy rendered the formation of a unified national identity highly problematic. Nevertheless, geographers within the Habsburg Empire remained keen observers – and occasionally participants – of international colonisation efforts (GYURIS et al. 2024).

The international context is equally essential when examining the theoretical foundations of geographical science. However, such an examination must be approached cautiously, as the literature is often shaped by a presentist narrative style that is difficult to fully avoid (LIVINGSTONE 1992). Analysing Austrian and Hungarian geography from an international perspective is justified by the intense cross-border transmission of geographical theories in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (PROBÁLD 2018). Especially, Austrian and German geography had become particularly intertwined during this era. The historiography of 19<sup>th</sup>-century geographical science often focuses on the emergence of so-called “dualistic geography” which refers to the growing distinction between physical and human geography as the two main branches of the discipline. The nature and methods of geographical research varied depending on which branch a scholar pursued. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the ideas of three German geographers – Carl RITTER, Ferdinand von RICHTHOFEN, and Friedrich RATZEL – had a decisive impact on the development of geographical science both in Europe and within the Dual Monarchy.

The geographical science originally developed by Alexander von HUMBOLDT (1769–1859), which aimed at comprehensively describing the Earth by integrating the natural sciences, transformed the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (BOBEK 1972). In the early decades of the century, Carl RITTER (1779–1859), who had studied “Staatswissenschaften” (state sciences) and became the first professor of geography at the University of Berlin, rede-

defined the essence of geography. Unlike HUMBOLDT, RITTER approached geography from a human-centred perspective, focusing not on the entire Earth, but on its surface and smaller spatial units. The principal objective of RITTERian geography was to describe the interaction between nature and human society, placing greater emphasis on the historical and statistical analysis of populations (HENNIGES 2017) while deriving its physical-geographic insights primarily from map reading (MENDÖL 1999). This so-called “comparative geography” which had not yet adopted analytical methods, may best be described as a descriptive (encyclopedic) science (FODOR 2006).

RITTER was succeeded as the head of the geographical department in Berlin in 1883 by Ferdinand von RICHTHOFEN (1833–1905). That same year, he published a work asserting that geography draws more from the natural sciences than from history, and its central task is to study the Earth’s surface and its associated phenomena (FODOR 2006). RICHTHOFEN thus defined geography strictly as the study of the Earth’s surface, an approach that laid the foundations for the emergence of geomorphology (MENDÖL 1999). Trained primarily as geologists, RICHTHOFEN and his followers initially excluded the human element from their research, which only later gained secondary importance as geomorphology began to separate from geology. In contrast to RITTER’s “armchair scholars”, RICHTHOFEN advocated for general geography based on field-collected data and analytical interpretation, distancing himself from purely descriptive approaches. His concept of geography remained dominant in European scholarship until the First World War, during which time the physical-geographic approach, particularly geomorphology, could fully crystallise.

The development of human geography, the branch of the discipline concerned with society, followed a much more complex path around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries than did physical geography. Although RITTER had already outlined a possible research methodology for human geography, his ideas soon became outdated, particularly after RICHTHOFEN’s physical geography gained prominence. Nonetheless, RITTER’s legacy was carried forward by his students, who laid the theoretical basis for two early schools of human geography: one rooted in economic geography, and the other was emerging from RICHTHOFEN’s physical geography. While the approach based on economics had some influence, it was the latter stream that proved more impactful in shaping geographical science before World War I.

Friedrich RATZEL (1844–1904) provided the theoretical foundation for the latter direction in his 1882 work “Anthropogeographie”, where he defined the discipline’s task as studying human phenomena as dependent on surface characteristics. In RATZEL’s view, this made human geography a branch of physical geography; the field would not achieve full independence until after the First World War. RATZEL’s other major work, “Politische Geographie”, published in 1897, laid the groundwork for yet another new branch of the discipline (MENDÖL 1999).

The theories of these three German geographers – RITTER, RICHTHOFEN, and RATZEL – demonstrate the 19<sup>th</sup>-century development of dualistic geography. Both physical and human geography were in the process of defining themselves independently and concerning each other. Over the 19<sup>th</sup> century, geographical research, whether concerning nature or human society, gradually became more analytical, moving away from its earlier encyclopedic nature (FODOR 2006).

Building on these theoretical and historical foundations, this study examines how the institutional and intellectual trajectories of geography unfolded within the multiethnic and complex administrative framework of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The preceding overview has shown that the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed both the analytical differentiation and the institutional consolidation of geography across Europe, shaped significantly by German scientific influence.

Against this background, the present research asks how these broader disciplinary trends were reflected in the Habsburg context: to what extent did the imperial framework facilitate or constrain the institutionalisation of geography, and in what ways did the leading figures of Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Croatian, and Polish geography engage with the dominant theoretical paradigms of their time – especially concerning the dualistic division between physical and human geography and the methodological shift from descriptive to more analytical approaches? The following chapters address these questions through a systematic examination of the institutional development of geography and a biographical analysis of the leading figures who shaped the discipline within the Dual Monarchy.

### **3 The Institutionalisation of Geography within the Habsburg Empire (1849–1918)**

The institutionalisation process of geography within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is mostly related to the shifts in political power across time and space. Prior to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, during the period of absolutist rule under the Habsburg dynasty, German Austrians occupied a privileged position within the Empire and were the first to engage in systematic geographical description and data collection (LICHTENBERGER 2001). While the Habsburg Empire did not participate in overseas colonisation, it expanded significantly in Central Europe through the expulsion of the Ottomans from Hungary. The Viennese court initiated the training of numerous experts to survey and plan the development of these newly annexed provinces. The Engineering Academy (“Kaiserliche Ingenieurakademie”), founded in Vienna [Wien] in 1717, and the imperial military survey ordered by Empress Maria Theresia played key roles in establishing Austrian cartography (FASCHING 2017).

Alongside cartographic efforts, statistical surveys also commenced, resulting in several comprehensive works encompassing the entire Empire during the absolutist period. By the beginning of the Dualist Era, many natural sciences closely connected to geography had already become institutionalised (e.g., the Geological Institute, the Geomagnetic and Meteorological Institute, and the Meteorological Society). The knowledge amassed during the absolutist period provided the foundation for much of the later work by Austrian geographers. In contrast, Hungarian scholars also made notable contributions to geographical knowledge and data collection, such as János HUNFALVY (1820–1888) and Elek FÉNYES (1807–1876), yet their efforts were hindered by financial limitations and a disadvantaged position within the Empire. Still, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was established earlier (in 1825) than its Austrian counterpart (in 1847) (LICHTENBERGER

2001). From an international comparative perspective, the institutionalisation of geography in the Habsburg Empire began relatively early, though within an overly centralised state structure that created significant inequalities between the empire's various regions. Between 1849 and 1867, the Hungarian part of the empire was under military administration, effectively blocking the development of higher education, while the Austrian part was governed in a strongly absolutist manner which gradually loosened toward 1867, bringing several modernising reforms to the educational system of "Cisleithania" (i. e. the Crownlands of Austria) (SURMAN 2019).

Surprisingly, the first official university geography department in the Empire was not established in the Empire's capital, but at the Jagiellonian University of Cracow [Kraków] in 1849, also the first such department in Polish-inhabited areas (TRACZ 2011). Called "general geography," this unit functioned within the Department of Natural History and was headed by Wincenty POL (1807–1872). However, the department operated for only a short period, until September 30, 1852, when the university's autonomy was suspended during the Neoabsolutist era. The department was not reinstated during the years of the Dual Monarchy. Thus, the first permanent geography department was founded at the University of Vienna in 1851 (FASSMANN 2004). At that time, comparable departments existed only in Berlin, Göttingen, and Paris. For nearly two decades, university-level instruction in geography was available exclusively in Vienna.

After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, legislative responsibility for managing education and science was divided between the Austrian and Hungarian parliaments, giving strong political influence respectively to the German Austrians and the Hungarians. The establishment of geographical departments across the empire could be understood within the broader political and institutional framework of university and chair foundations and the appointment of professors. In both parts of the empire, the establishment of a university required an act of parliament and the emperor's signature, while the creation of a university chair or the appointment of a professor followed a multi-step process: a proposal by the university was submitted to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance, and finalised by an imperial decree (MAKKAI 1942; SURMAN 2019).

In Austria, the report of the provincial government was also part of the procedure – particularly decisive in the crownlands of Bohemia and Galicia, where ethnic and linguistic tensions over instruction between Czechs and Germans, and between Poles and Ukrainians, were acute (SURMAN 2019). After Galicia obtained *de facto* autonomy in 1869 in return for supporting the German Austrian faction in the Austrian parliament – effectively leading to the Polonisation of the crownland (KUZMANY 2016) – Polish political elites controlled higher education policy and were able to suppress Ukrainian academic initiatives. Similarly, although Croatia-Slavonia received *de jure* autonomy in 1868, including authority over education, its legislative process was still heavily influenced by the Hungarian government, since provincial bills required approval by the Hungarian parliament before obtaining the emperor's assent (ČEPULO 2010). Thus, paradoxically, Galicia's *de facto* autonomy proved more stable and granted Polish elites broader powers than the *de jure* autonomy enjoyed by the Croats (HILBERT 2024).

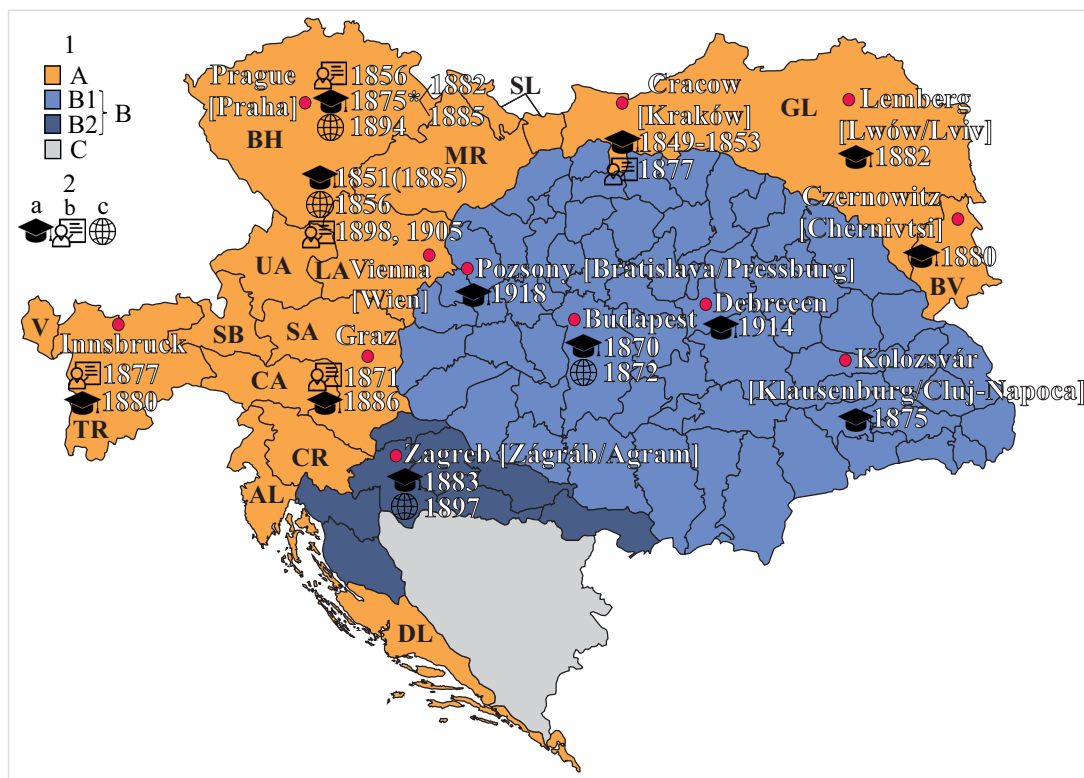
The legislative dominance of the German Austrians and Hungarians, combined with the autonomous status of Galicia and Croatia, was clearly reflected both in the establishment of universities after 1867, beyond the reinstatement of historical institutions, primarily located in the most populous urban centres of the empire and founded before the nineteenth century, and in the downgrading of others throughout the period. In Hungary (excluding Croatia-Slavonia), three universities were founded after 1867 – at Kolozsvár [Klausenburg/Cluj-Napoca], Debrecen, and Pozsony [Pressburg/Bratislava] – all located in cities that held important places in Hungarian culture and history, had predominantly Hungarian populations (with a significant German population in Pozsony), and were already notable centres of education. In Croatia-Slavonia, the establishment of the University of Zagreb involved several actors. The founding of the institution was initiated by a proposal from Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer in 1861, when Croatia-Slavonia was a *de facto* administrative part of Austria. This proposal was strengthened by a decree signed by Emperor Franz Joseph in 1869, and the Act of Foundation was passed in 1874 by the Croatian Parliament (with the approval of the Hungarian Parliament). Finally, the Emperor signed the act, officially establishing the university (UNIZG 2025).

In Austria, the establishment of new universities pursued different objectives, yet also reflected the broader aims of the (German) Austrian government. The University of Prague [Praha] was divided in 1882 into separate Czech and German institutions, addressing ethnic tensions in Bohemia and providing distinct academic spaces for Czech and German scholars. However, the decision not to reinstate the University of Olmütz [Olomouc] in Moravia after 1867, which had been closed in 1856 by decree of Emperor Franz Joseph, significantly limited the development opportunities of Czech science and education. The foundation of the University of Czernowitz, by contrast, served multiple purposes: it aimed to promote German academic influence in the eastern part of the empire and functioned as an instrument of foreign policy by attracting Romanian and Ukrainian students to German-language education, particularly in competition with the University of Iași in Romania (SURMAN 2019).

The political motives of both German Austrians and Hungarians were also clearly reflected in debates over the establishment of a university in the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a territory governed by the empire's Joint Minister of Finance since 1878. By establishing a university in Sarajevo, the common government sought not only to pursue foreign-policy objectives by countering the cultural influence of the University of Belgrade in the region, but also domestic ones by balancing the dominance of the University of Zagreb among the South Slavs. Besides the opposition of Croats and local residents, this policy was further complicated by protests from Slovenes, whose demands for a university dated back much earlier. In the end, the Austro-Hungarian administration abandoned the idea of establishing a university in Sarajevo (KASUMOVIĆ 2020). Apart from the Poles, Czechs, and Croats, no other smaller nationalities succeeded in advocating for the establishment of a national university, reflecting their limited political power to represent their own interests.

The significance of geography during this period is underscored by the fact that between 1849 and 1918, institutional instruction in the discipline was established at all universi-

ties of the Habsburg Empire (Figure 1). After 1867, the first geography department was founded in Pest-Buda in 1870, becoming the first in “Transleithania” (the Lands of the Hungarian Crown) and the second permanent department in the entire empire, after the



**Legend:** 1 – Parts of the Habsburg Empire and its administrative units; A – Cisleithania (Crownlands of Austria), B – Transleithania (Countries of the Hungarian Crown); B1 – Counties of Hungary, B2 – Counties of Croatia-Slavonia, C – Bosnia and Herzegovina;  
2 – Institutions of geography; a – University geography department, b – Extraordinary or associate professor, c – Geographical society.

**Abbreviations (Crownlands of Austria):** AL – Austrian Littoral, BH – Bohemia, BV – Bukovina, CA – Carinthia, CR – Carniola, DL – Dalmatia, GL – Galicia, LA – Lower Austria, MR – Moravia, SA – Styria, SB – Salzburg, SL – Silesia, TR – Tirol, UA – Upper Austria, V – Vorarlberg

**Note:** \* The geographical departments at the University of Prague were formally established following the university’s division in 1882: at the German University in 1882 and at the Czech University in 1885.

**Source:** Own design based on LICHTENBERGER 2001; FASSMANN 2004; CUNI.a 2025; Hrvatsko Geografsko Društvo 2003; MFT 2025; CUNI.d 1989; ÖGG 2025; PMF 2014; PTE 2021; SEDLMEYER 1970; UNIDEB 2025; UNIVIE 2025.

**Figure 1:** Institutionalisation of geography within the Habsburg Empire between 1849 and 1918: Geographical Societies and Geographical University Departments

one in Vienna. Although geography had already been taught in the Hungarian capital (in German) since 1857 at the Polytechnic Institute by Austrian professor Adolf SCHMIDL (1802–1863) (MATTES 2020).

Thereafter, the number of geography departments in the Empire grew rapidly. In Cisleithania, following the division of the Vienna department in 1885 and the split of Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague into a Czech (Czech University in Prague) and a German (German University in Prague) institution in 1882, a total of eight geography departments operated during the Dualist Era, all founded before the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As noted earlier, geography was not institutionalised at the Jagiellonian University in the form of a formal department; it was instead taught through an extraordinary professorship. A similar situation existed at the “Exportakademie” in Vienna, where geography was taught without a dedicated department, a pattern also found at several other universities (Prague, Innsbruck, Graz) prior to the formal establishment of departments.

In Transleithania, geography departments were fewer in number and established later. Nonetheless, the founding of the first Croatian geography department at the University of Zagreb [Zágráb/Agram] in 1883 was a significant milestone, marking the creation of the first geography department in Southeastern Europe (PMF 2014). Additional departments in Debrecen and Pozsony were founded during the final years of the Monarchy. A counterpart to Vienna’s Exportakademie also existed in Budapest – the “Eastern Commercial Academy” (Keleti Kereskedelmi Akadémia, KKA) – where Professor Rezső MILLEKER taught a course titled “Economic Geography of Asia Minor and the Near East” in the 1913/14 academic year. However, MILLEKER soon assumed a chair at the University of Debrecen, and the course was discontinued. The KKA continued to offer geography-related courses, although these were classified under economics and commerce (SZÖGI and ZSIDI 2007).

In terms of geographical societies, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was also a global leader. The “Imperial and Royal Geographical Society” (Kaiserlich-Königliche Geographische Gesellschaft), founded in 1856, was renamed the Austrian Geographical Society (Österreichische Geographische Gesellschaft) after 1959 (ÖGG 2025). The “Hungarian Geographical Society” was established in 1872, a decade and a half after the founding of its Austrian counterpart (MFT 2025). The Viennese institution was the eighth geographical society founded worldwide (SITTE and SITTE 2006), while the Budapest-based society was the sixteenth (FODOR 2006).

The creation of these Austrian and Hungarian societies enabled closer cooperation between the two national geographical communities: one notable example being the Austro-Hungarian North Pole Expedition of 1872–1874 (PAPP-VÁRY 2006). By 1918, two additional societies had emerged within the Monarchy: the Czech Geographical Society (Česká společnost zeměvědná) in 1894 (EUGEO 2010), and the Croatian Geographical Society (Hrvatsko geografsko društvo) in 1897 (Hrvatsko Geografsko Društvo 2003). The Austrian, Hungarian, and Czech geographical societies each launched journals soon after their founding: “Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Geographischen Gesellschaft” (Annals of the Austrian Geographical Society), “Földrajzi Közlemények” (Geographical Review), and “Sborník České společnosti zeměvědné” (Proceedings of the Czech Geographical Society), which is today published under the title “Geografie”.

#### 4 Research Interests, Methods and Academic Contributions of University Geography Department Heads (1849–1918)

Undoubtedly, the most important centres for conducting research and shaping the general direction of geographical thought were the university departments. In some cases, a single influential academic was able to establish a distinct school of thought, thereby significantly shaping both geographical research and education. Accordingly, this section focuses exclusively on the activities and scholarly contributions of the heads of geography departments at universities within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In institutions where no dedicated geography department existed, the study examines the work of extraordinary professors (Figure 2).

The organisational structure of this section is primarily based on aspects that enable effective comparison within the history of geography. The first subsection of this chapter introduces the “founding fathers” of national geographies within the Empire. In the subsequent subsections, (German) Austrian and Hungarian professors are grouped, while professors of other nationalities are placed in a separate section. This differentiation is justified by the fact that, in the cases of Austrian and Hungarian geography, a higher degree of institutionalisation – linked to greater access to political power – allowed for a more effective separation of physical and human geographical branches. In addition, institutions of Austrian and Hungarian geography are further divided between those located in the capitals (Vienna and Budapest) and those based in provincial universities.

It is important to note that this study limits its scope to developments up to 1918. Consequently, the careers of academics whose most significant contributions occurred after that year fall outside the purview of this research. As stated earlier, the main goal of this section is to provide a concise biographical analysis of selected academics. This serves a crucial purpose: to offer a comprehensive overview, within a single study, of the academic development of geography in the Habsburg Empire. Importantly, it seeks to move beyond the narrow constraints of national historiographies (Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Polish, Ukrainian, Croatian, etc.), which tend to dominate the existing literature on the history of geography in the region.

In order to more deeply analyse the intellectual formation of geographical thought and methodology, the study explores the development of geography through three key lenses, largely reflecting broader international – particularly German – trends in the discipline:

1. The interconnectedness of academic networks both within and beyond the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy,
2. The evolution of geographical thought: the influence of Ritter, Richthofen, and Ratzel in the work of the selected academics;
3. The dualistic nature of geography: the parallel development of physical and human geography.

Based on these three key aspects, each biography focuses mostly on the geographer’s university education, research focus and/or geographical areas of interest, teaching and research methods, and academic contributions to the further institutionalisation of geography.

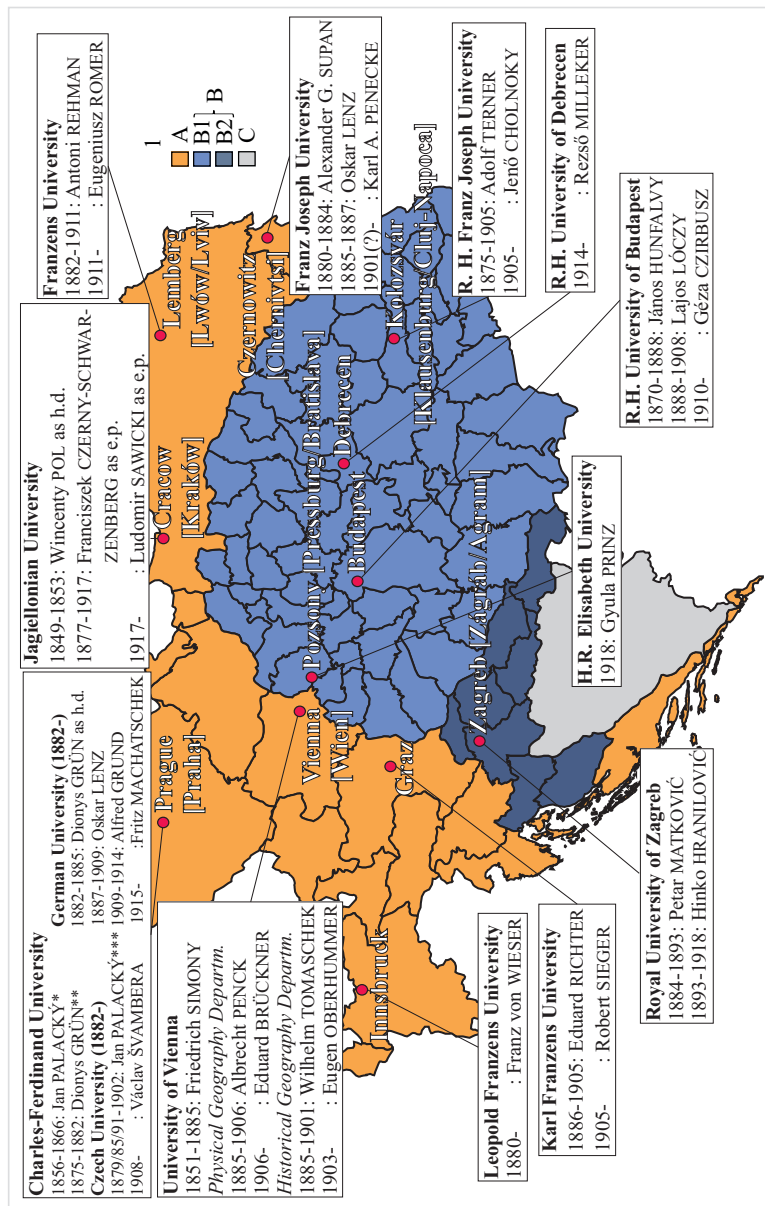
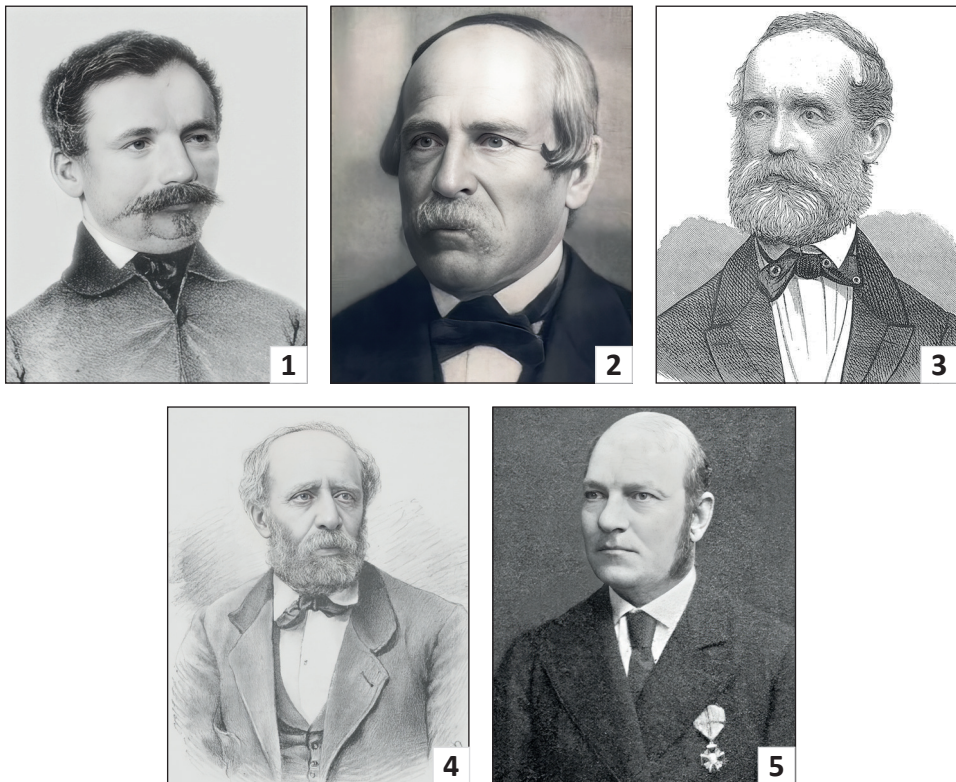


Figure 2: Heads of geographic departments and extraordinary professors at the universities of the Habsburg Empire (1849–1918)

#### 4.1 The First Heads of University Geography Departments: The Founders of National Geographies

As mentioned in the second section, the first university geography department in the Habsburg Empire was founded at the Jagiellonian University of Cracow, just two years before a similar institution was established at the University of Vienna. Although the Cracow department was short-lived, this study presents the biography of its first head professor as a starting point. Thereafter, the biographies in this section follow a chronological order based on the establishment dates of their respective university geography departments (Table 1 and Figure 3).<sup>1)</sup>



Sources: 1. Polish Scientific Publishers (PWN), online encyclopedia: Wincenty POL; 2. Horolezecká abeceda, official website: Friedirch SIMONY; 3. Hungarian Electronic Library (MEK), National Széchényi Library: János HUNFALVY; 4. Wikimedia Commons: Jan PALACKÝ (1885); 5. Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU), official website: Petar MATKOVIĆ.

Figure 3: Portrait photographs of the first heads of university geography departments, as indicated in Table 1 (the numbers correspond to the numbers in column 2 of Table 1)

<sup>1)</sup> To ensure good print quality, the original portrait photos in Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been digitally enhanced.

University Affiliation*	Name, Date and Place of Birth and Death	Higher Education	Years in Academic Position	Main Academic Focus /Subdiscipl./	Noteworthy Publication(s) before 1918 (transl. into English)
C	<b>Wincenty POL [1]</b> Born: 1807, Lublin Died: 1872, Cracow	University of Lemberg	1849–1853 as h.d.	Physical and human geography /Regional geography/	Mainly poems with geographical themes, such as “Songs of Our Land” (1843) and “Pictures of Life and Travel” (1846)
V	<b>Friedrich SIMONY [2]</b> Born: 1813, Hrochowitz [Hrochův Týnec] Died: 1896, Sankt Gallen	University of Vienna	1851–1885 as h.d.	Physical and human geography /Geomorphology/	“The Dachstein Region: A Geographical Portrait of the Austrian Northern Alps” (1889–95)
B	<b>János HUNFALVY [3]</b> Born: 1820, Nagyszalók [Velký Slavkov/Großschlagen-dorf] Died: 1888, Budapest	Universities of Berlin and Tübingen	1870–1888 as h.d.	Human geography /Ethnography/	“Geography of the Hungarian Empire, with Special Regard to Ethnographic Conditions” (1886)
P	<b>Jan Křtitel Kašpar PALACKÝ [4]</b> Born: 1830, Prague Died: 1908, Královské Vinohrady	Universities of Prague, Dresden, and Paris	1856–1866 and 1879–1885 as a.p. 1885–1891 as e.p. 1891–1902 as h.d.	Physical geography /Regional geography and biogeography/	“Geography General Scientific Comparative I.” (1857–60); “Phytogeographical Studies” (1866, 1883, 1884)
Z	<b>Petar MATKOVIĆ [5]</b> Born: 1830, Senj [Zengg] Died: 1898, Vienna	Universities of Vienna, Prague, Göttingen, and Berlin	1884–1893 as h.d.	Human geography /Historical geography, Cartography, Statistics/	“Croatia and Slavonia According to Their Physical and Social Relations” (1873); „Geographic-Statistical Scheme of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy” (1874)

\* Abbreviations: B – University of Budapest; C – Jagellonian University (Cracow); P – University of Prague; V – University of Vienna; Z – University of Zagreb; a.p. – associate professor; e.p. – extraordinary professor; h.d. – head of department

Note: Square-bracketed numbers in the second column of the table refer to the corresponding portrait photographs in Figure 3.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 1: Key information on the first heads of university geography departments

**Wincenty POL** (1807–1872) was born in the city of Lublin (then part of the Habsburg Empire until 1809), studied at the University of Lemberg [Lwów/Lviv], and became the first university professor of geography in both the Habsburg Empire and the Polish national territory. In addition to his academic work, POL was a well-known poet and is regarded in contemporary Polish literary studies as the successor to Adam MICKIEWICZ in the tradition of national prophetic poetry (ZARECHNYUK 2023). By the time of his appointment as head of the geography department at the Jagiellonian University, POL had already amassed extensive empirical knowledge of the physical and human geography of Eastern Europe, the Carpathians, and the Habsburg Monarchy through field excursions. He also incorporated field excursions into his teaching at the university, a novel approach at the time. His methods were primarily inspired by Alexander von HUMBOLDT (ZARECHNYUK 2023), though elements of RITTER's Comparative Geography are also evident in his research and pedagogy (TRACZ 2011). He taught mainly regional geography, along with courses in physical and commercial geography. His excursions combined physical and human geographical insights in an interdisciplinary fashion. After the Jagiellonian University lost its autonomy, POL continued his geographical and archaeological work in Cracow and Lemberg, contributing significantly to the institutionalisation of geography in the crownland of Galicia (TRACZ 2011).

**Friedrich SIMONY** (1813–1896), a scholar born in Bohemia with Hungarian ancestry on his father's side, studied natural sciences at the University of Vienna and was a polymath of exceptional breadth. Initially trained as a pharmacist and an avid mountaineer in his leisure time, he became a professor of geography in 1851, at the age of 38, and the founding head of its first geography department (LEHR 1996). By today's standards, SIMONY would be considered a geographer, geologist, and alpinist, with expertise in geomorphology, glaciology, climatology, hydrology, limnology, and astronomy (ÖBL.d 2004). During his 34-year tenure as department head, Austrian geographical research became deeply integrated with the natural sciences. Nevertheless, he also made significant contributions to human geography, publishing numerous works in cultural geography, linguistics, and history, often exploring the relationship between natural conditions and cultural development (PENCK 1898).

SIMONY's lifelong research centred on the Dachstein Mountains, where he conducted extensive fieldwork from 1840 to 1890, producing maps, sketches, watercolours, and photographs. He played a crucial role in institutionalising Austrian geographical science, initiating not only the establishment of the geography department in Vienna but also the founding of the Imperial and Royal Geographical Society ("Kaiserlich–Königliche Geographische Gesellschaft") (IfGR/Uni/UB 2013). His methods closely aligned with those of RITTER; he described and compared his observations in a self-taught manner and structured his university lectures around narratives of his research journeys, effectively "narrating" his maps (PENCK 1898). Although often referred to as "the founding father of Austrian geography," Simony did not establish a lasting school of thought; his students pursued diverse academic careers (LICHTENBERGER 2001).

**János HUNFALVY** (1820–1888) who was born in the Northern Hungarian village of Nagyszalók (Velký Slavkov/Großschlagendorf) to a Saxon family (originally Johann

Hunsdorfer), is regarded as the first true representative of Hungarian geographical science. Like SIMONY, he did not begin his academic career in geography but studied philosophy, law, theology, and history. As a young man, HUNFALVY attended several renowned Western European universities, including the University of Berlin, where he studied under Carl RITTER (HEVESI 2001). His geographical career began in earnest after the Hungarian War of Independence (1848–1849). His first major geographical work, „A Magyar Birodalom természeti viszonyainak leírása” (Description of the Natural Conditions of the Hungarian Empire), published in 1863, integrated the observations of Austrian scholars on Hungary (FODOR 2006). In 1870, he was appointed head of Hungary’s first university geography department, and in 1872, he became the inaugural president of the Hungarian Geographical Society.

HUNFALVY’s influence on Hungarian geography during the Dualist era was profound. His approach was largely descriptive, rooted in historical analysis, and less oriented toward the natural sciences (FODOR 2006). His major works – such as „Egyetemes Földrajz” (Universal Geography) and „A magyar birodalom földrajza, különös tekintettel a néprajzi viszonyokra” (Geography of the Hungarian Empire, with Special Regard to Ethnographic Conditions) – brought him international recognition. He frequently traveled abroad and maintained ties with foreign geographical institutions. Strongly influenced by RITTER, HUNFALVY championed the human branch of geography. His students, adherents of the “Hunfalvy school,” played influential roles in shaping Hungarian geography throughout the Dualist period (FODOR 2006).

**Jan Křtitel Kašpar PALACKÝ** (1830–1908) was born in Prague, the only son of the renowned Czech historian and politician František PALACKÝ (1798–1876). He studied law at Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague, where in 1856 he became the first associate professor of geography (JELEČEK et al. 2006). His father played an instrumental role in establishing Czech historiography at the university, a development that also paved the way for the institutionalisation of geography (SEMOTANOVÁ and CHROMÝ 2012). PALACKÝ taught at Charles-Ferdinand University until 1866, after which he entered politics, first in the Moravian Diet and later, in 1870, in the Austrian Reichsrat (CUNI.b 2006). During the interim, Dionys VON GRÜN (1819–1896) was invited to lead geographical teaching. Later, GRÜN became the head of geography in the German section of the university in 1882.

PALACKÝ returned to academia in 1878, founding the Geographical Cabinet, which was later renamed the Geography Institute. He was awarded a full professorship in 1891 and lectured mainly on regional geography and biogeography (JELEČEK et al. 2006). His body of work included encyclopedic studies rich in statistics, such as „Zeměpis všeobecný vědecký srovnávací I.” (Geography General Scientific Comparative I.) (1857–1860), „Pflanzengeographische Studien” (Phytogeographical Studies) (1866, 1883, 1884), and „Zeměpisné rozšíření želv” (Geographical Distribution of Turtles) (1897), which reflected the influence of Carl RITTER (CUNI.b 2006). Despite setbacks in his academic promotion – partly due to political ambitions and tensions with younger scholars like Tomáš Garrigue MASARYK (1850–1937) – PALACKÝ left a lasting academic legacy.

**Petar MATKOVIĆ** (1830–1898) became the first head of the geography department at the Royal University of Zagreb in 1883, already possessing an impressive body of work. Born in the Adriatic port of Senj [Zengg], he studied in Vienna, Prague, Göttingen, and Berlin, where he attended the lectures of Carl RITTER (PMF 2014). MATKOVIĆ was instrumental in founding both the Croatian Geographical Society and the Croatian Statistical Office (CRLJENKO 2013).

His scholarly contributions were especially strong in historical geography, historical cartography, topography, and statistics. His writings were characterised by an encyclopedic, statistical-topographic, and descriptive style, closer to that of Alexander von HUMBOLDT than RITTER (CRLJENKO 2013). Later geographers sometimes criticised him for a perceived overreliance on historiography and statistics. MATKOVIĆ also published historical travelogues and biographies. He had a significant influence on his students, most notably Arturo GAVAZZI (1861–1944), who went on to establish the first Slovenian geography department at the University of Ljubljana in 1919 (PMF 2014).

#### 4.2 Differentiation of Research Methods in Physical Geography and the Emergence of Human Geography: Heads of Geography Departments at the Universities of Vienna and Budapest

Due to the separation of the geography department at the University of Vienna in 1885, this subsection will chronologically pair two biographies of professors from the University of Budapest with two sets of biographies from Vienna, representing both the physical and historical geography departments (Table 2).

**Albrecht PENCK** (1858–1945), a native of Saxony, played a pivotal role in shaping both Austrian and German geographical sciences. After commencing geological studies in Leipzig in 1875, he earned his doctorate in Munich [München] in 1882. Shortly thereafter, he was appointed professor in Vienna (Spektrum 2025). A leading scholar in geomorphology, geology, and meteorology, PENCK rose swiftly in prominence and, at just 27 years old, was invited to head the newly established Chair of Physical Geography at the University of Vienna in 1885. His research in morphological geography, combined with the internationally renowned geological work of Eduard SUESS and the meteorological research of Julius von HANN, helped establish Vienna as a major centre of geoscientific scholarship in Europe at the turn of the century.

During his tenure (1885–1905), PENCK significantly advanced Austrian physical geography. His most notable contribution – shaped by RICHTHOFEN’s theories – was the emancipation of geomorphology from geology, effectively founding it as an autonomous discipline (LICHTENBERGER 2001). He introduced systematic academic training, including cartographic exercises and regular field excursions, emphasising the importance of “learning to see”. PENCK’s approach combined observation, critical thinking, and hypothesis formation, fostering “Denkstil” (thinking style) among his students (HENNIGES 2014). His legacy extended across historical geology, glaciology, marine studies, and cartography. In 1906, after two decades in Vienna, he succeeded RICHTHOFEN as Chair of Geography at

the University of Berlin, where he reached the peak of his career, also serving as rector and as president of the German Geographical Society (Austria-Forum 2017).

**Wilhelm TOMASCHEK** (1841–1901), a Czech-Austrian geographer born in Moravia, studied at the University of Vienna and began his academic career at the University of Graz. In 1885, following the division of the unified geography chair in Vienna, he was appointed to lead the newly established Chair of Historical Geography. TOMASCHEK's research focused mainly on classical sources and historical geography, underpinned by a strong background in linguistic studies. Methodologically, he remained aligned with the earlier generation of descriptive geographers. Considerably less is known about TOMASCHEK's academic impact compared to that of PENCK, a reflection, perhaps, of the fact that while PENCK succeeded in institutionalising geomorphology as a distinct discipline, neither TOMASCHEK nor his successor achieved a comparable separation of human geography from its historical roots (LICHTENBERGER 2001).

**Lajos LÓCZY** (1849–1920), similarly to PENCK, was one of the leading geographers of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and a central figure in the development of Hungarian physical geography. He studied in Zurich [Zürich] under some of Switzerland's foremost geologists and participated in several research expeditions in the Alps. Between 1877 and 1880, he joined a scientific expedition to East Asia (PAPP 1922). In 1889, he was appointed head of the Department of Geography at the University of Budapest and became president of the Hungarian Geographical Society the following year. Influenced by RICHTHOFEN's scientific philosophy, LÓCZY aimed to modernise Hungarian physical geography and shift his own research emphasis from geology to geography (FODOR 2006). Nevertheless, he was unable to strike a balance between subfields: physical geography became dominant, while human geography remained marginal (CHOLNOKY 1930). In addition to modernising physical geography in the tradition of RICHTHOFEN, LÓCZY redirected geographical inquiry toward national concerns, a focus previously neglected by HUNFALVY and his descriptive school. His work gained international acclaim, particularly his research on Lake Balaton, for which he established a dedicated research committee. While his emphasis on physical geography sidelined human geography in Hungary, LÓCZY raised the scientific standard of Hungarian geography to Western European levels and fostered strong international collaborations. His global reputation was further cemented when, in 1906, he was offered the Chair of Geography in Berlin, vacant after RICHTHOFEN's death, but declined the post (SZÉKELY 1999). The position was subsequently given to PENCK. However, the disciplinary innovations initiated by LÓCZY did not continue after his departure from the Budapest department.

**Eduard BRÜCKNER** (1862–1927), born in Jena to Baltic German parents, studied geography, geology, paleontology, meteorology, physics, and history at the universities of Dorpat [Tartu], Dresden, and Munich. In Munich, he became a student of PENCK and later collaborated with him on glaciological projects. After completing his studies, BRÜCKNER was appointed professor at the University of Bern, eventually becoming rector (STEHR and STORCH, 2008). Following a brief tenure in Halle, he was invited in 1906 to assume the

Chair of Physical Geography at the University of Vienna, where he served until his death in 1927. BRÜCKNER made pioneering contributions to glaciology, climatology, marine and lake studies, Ice Age research, and geomorphology (PENCK 1928). He was among the first to examine the societal impacts of climate change. In Vienna, he focused particularly on Alpine glacier research and its connections to climate fluctuations and glacial cycles. His international work earned him the presidency of the International Glacier Commission. Before World War I, he had begun investigating Antarctic glaciation. Like PENCK, BRÜCKNER also engaged in Adriatic research and made significant strides in cartography. He remained head of Vienna's physical geography department until his death.

**Eugen OBERHUMMER** (1859–1944), born in Munich, studied geography and geology at the University of Munich, earning his doctorate in history and geography in 1882. He later became a lecturer at the same institution. Following TOMASCHEK's death in 1901, the Chair of Historical Geography in Vienna fell vacant. OBERHUMMER was appointed in 1903 and held the post until his retirement in 1931. He was repeatedly elected president of the Austrian Geographical Society and, like PENCK and BRÜCKNER, was deeply involved in international geographical organisations, undertaking research expeditions across several countries (ZIMMERMANN and DÖRFLINGER 1983). OBERHUMMER was the last chairholder in Vienna to approach human geography primarily through a historical lens (LICHTENBERGER 2001). Although he did not entirely distinguish the geographical approach from the historiographical one, he made early efforts to define historical geography in his 1891 publication (ZIMMERMANN and DÖRFLINGER 1983). He also initiated academic research into the history of cartography at the University of Vienna (KRETSCHMER 1999). Beyond historical studies, OBERHUMMER published on religious, urban, and political geography (WGW/1 2022). Unlike TOMASCHEK, OBERHUMMER gradually moved away from a strictly historical approach, a transition evident in the evolution of his publications (ZIMMERMANN and DÖRFLINGER 1983).

**Géza CZIRBUSZ** (1853–1920) completed his university studies in Budapest, where he studied geography, history, and German philology. Before his professorial appointment, he spent 34 years teaching in secondary schools in twelve Hungarian towns, conducting fieldwork and documenting observations across Hungary (FODOR 2006). A representative of the human-geographical tradition and a student of HUNFALVY, CZIRBUSZ had limited training in physical geography. After LÓCZY's resignation in 1908, a two-year leadership vacuum ensued due to personal conflicts between CZIRBUSZ and Jenő CHOLNOKY, LÓCZY's most prominent student. In 1910, CZIRBUSZ was appointed chair, signaling a major disciplinary shift: human geography became the primary focus of research at the University of Budapest, replacing LÓCZY's earlier emphasis on physical geography. However, Hungarian geography's progress was hampered by ongoing rivalries between advocates of the two traditions, often at the expense of scholarly productivity. CZIRBUSZ was influenced by Friedrich RATZEL's *Anthropogeographie*, though he opposed several of RATZEL's key theories (HAJDÚ 2002). Simultaneously, the natural-science-oriented legacy of LÓCZY remained influential within the department. CZIRBUSZ's theoretical outlook was shaped by a mix of RITTERIAN ideas, transmitted via HUNFALVY, and the more modern but contested concepts of

RATZEL. Ultimately, he failed to synthesise these into a coherent human geography school. His primary contribution lay not in methodological innovation, but in the institutional establishment of human geography within Hungarian academic discourse (FODOR 2006).

University Affiliation*	Name, Date and Place of Birth and Death	Higher Education	Years in Academic Position	Main Academic Focus /Subdiscipl./	Noteworthy Publication before 1918 (transl. into English)
V	<b>Albrecht Penck [1]</b> Born: 1858, Reudnitz Died: 1945, Prague	Universities of Leipzig and Munich	1885–1896 as h.d.	Physical geography /Geomorphology/	„The Alps in the Ice Age” (1889–1891), co-authored by Eduard BRÜCKNER
	<b>Wilhelm TOMASCHEK [2]</b> Born: 1841, Olomouc [Olmütz] Died: 1901, Vienna	University of Vienna	1885–1901 as h.d.	Human geography /Historical geography/	“The Ancient Thracians: An Ethnological Study” (1893–1894)
	<b>Eduard BRÜCKNER [3]</b> Born: 1862, Jena Died: 1927, Vienna	Universities of Tartu, Munich and Dresden	1906–1927 as h.d.	Physical geography /Geomorphology, Climatology/	„The Alps in the Ice Age” (1889–1891), co-authored by Albrecht PENCK
	<b>Eugen Oberhummer [4]</b> Born: 1859, Munich Died: 1944, Vienna	University of Munich	1903–1930 as h.d.	Human geography /Historical geography, Political geography/	“The Development of Alpine Maps in the 19th Century” (1902–1905)
B	<b>Lajos LÓCZY [5]</b> Born: 1849, Pozsony Died: 1920, Balatonfüred	University of Zurich	1888–1908 as h.d.	Physical geography /Geomorphology/	“Results of the Scientific Study of Lake Balaton” (1898–1918)
	<b>Géza CZIRBUSZ [6]</b> Born: 1853, Kassa [Kaschau, Košice] Died: 1920, Budapest	University of Budapest	1910–1920 as h.d.	Human geography /Ethnography/	„Anthropogeography” (1915–1919)

\* Abbreviations: B – University of Budapest; V – University of Vienna; h.d. – head of department

Note: Square-bracketed numbers in the second column of the table refer to the corresponding portrait photographs in Figure 4.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2: Key information on the heads of geography departments at the Universities of Vienna and Budapest



Source: 1. Wikimedia Commons: Albrecht PENCK; 2. Wikimedia Commons: Wilhelm TOMASCHEK; 3. GeschichteWiki Wien (Vienna City Archives): Eduard BRÜCKNER; 4. University of Vienna, Department of History, image collection: Eugen OBERHUMMER; 5. Wikimedia Commons: Lajos LÓCZY; 6. Hungarian Scientific Works Database (MTDA), online image archive: Géza CZIRBUSZ

Figure 4: Portrait photographs of the heads of geography departments at the Universities of Vienna and Budapest, as indicated in Table 2 (the numbers correspond to the numbers in column 2 of Table 2).

### 4.3 The Subsequent Heads of University Departments in Czech, Croatian, and Polish(-Ukrainian) Geography after their Institutional Foundations

The institutionalisation of Polish geography within the de facto autonomous territory of Galicia was able to develop relatively freely, particularly at the Jagiellonian University of Cracow and the Franzens University of Lemberg. Although the legacy of Wincenty POL significantly influenced the discipline at Jagiellonian University, there was no suitably qualified geographer available to reactivate the geography department after his tenure.

University Affiliation*	Name, Date and Place of Birth and Death	Higher Education	Years in Academic Position	Main Academic Focus /Subdiscipl./	Noteworthy Publication(s) before 1918 (transl. into English)
C	<b>Franciszek CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG [1]</b> Born: 1877, Cracow Died: 1917, Cracow	Universities of Vienna and Leipzig	1877–1917 as e.p.	Physical and human geography/Geomorphology, Ethnography/	“The Variability of Climate and Its Causes” (1881)
	<b>Ludomir SAWICKI [2]</b> Born: 1884, Vienna Died: 1928, Cracow	Universities of Lemberg, Vienna, Berlin and Lausanne	1917–1928 as e.p.	Physical and human geography/Geomorphology, Karst studies, Ethnography/	“From the Physiography of the Western Carpathians” (1907)
L	<b>Antoni REHMAN [3]</b> Born: 1840, Cracow Died: 1917, Lemberg	Universities of Cracow, Lemberg, Vienna, and Bonn	1882–1911 as h.d.	Physical and human geography/Regional geography/	„The Tatras from a physical and geographical perspective” (1895)
	<b>Eugeniusz ROMER [4]</b> Born: 1871, Lemberg Died: 1954, Cracow	Universities of Cracow, Lemberg, Vienna, and Berlin	1911–1931 as h.d.	Physical geography and Cartography /Geomorphology/	“Geographical and Statistical Atlas of Poland” (1916)
Z	<b>Hinko HRANILOVIĆ [5]</b> Born: 1860, Zagreb Died: 1922, Zagreb	Universities of Vienna, Berlin, Graz, and Oxford	1893–1918 as h.d.	Physical and human geography/Regional geography, Geomorphology, Ethnography/	„Geographical and Ethnographic Description of the Kingdoms of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia” (1905)
CP	<b>Václav ŠVAMBERA [6]</b> Born: 1866, Peruc [Perutz] Died: 1939, Prague	Universities of Prague and Berlin	1908–1936 as h.d.	Physical geography / Hydrology/	„Congo” (1901–1905) “The Lakes of the Šumava Mountains” (1913–1914)

\* Abbreviations: C – Jagellonian University (Cracow); CP – Czech University in Prague; L – University of Lemberg; Z – University of Zagreb; e.p. – extraordinary professor; h.d. – head of department  
 Note: Square-bracketed numbers in the second column of the table refer to the corresponding portrait photographs in Figure 5.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 3: Key information on the subsequent heads of university departments in Czech, Croatian, and Polish(–Ukrainian) geography after their institutional foundations



Source: 1. KRAWCZYK A. (1999), p. 333: Franciszek CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG; 2. Polish Scientific Publishers (PWN), online encyclopedia: Ludomir SAWICKI; 3. Wikimedia Commons: Antoni REHMAN; 4. Wikimedia Commons: Eugeniusz ROMER; 5. Uskok–Sošice official website: Hinko HRANILOVIĆ; 6. Wikimedia Commons: Václav Švampera.

Figure 5: Portrait photographs of then subsequent heads of university departments in Czech, Croatian, and Polish(–Ukrainian) geography after their institutional foundations, as indicated in Table 3.

In 1874, the Polish “National School Council” requested the reinstatement of the geography department to ensure proper training for teachers. To that end, the council designated **Franciszek CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG** (1847–1917) as the department’s future head, contingent upon his earning a scientific degree in geography through studies at the universities of Vienna and Leipzig (KRAWCZYK 1999; TRACZ 2011). In 1877, CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG was appointed associate professor of geography at the Jagiellonian University. The department was not reactivated; instead, an extraordinary professorship was established. Although CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG did not continue most of Wincenty POL’s educational initiatives, he organised field excursions for his students. His research interests were broad, ranging from physical geography and ethnography to the history and regional as-

pects of geography (KRAWCZYK 1999; TRACZ 2011). During his professorship, Cracow became a significant centre of Polish geographical education, and he also supported the foundation of the Polish Geographical Society, which was established shortly after his death, in 1918, in Warsaw (KRAWCZYK 1999).

CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG was succeeded by **Ludomir SAWICKI** (1884–1928), who had studied in Vienna, Berlin, Lemberg, and Lausanne. In Berlin, he took lectures under Ferdinand von RICHTHOFEN. First, his research focused on geomorphology, primarily karst studies. Later, he achieved noteworthy results in anthropogeography, even during CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG's tenure; his role as head of the geographical department at the Jagiellonian University came to full prominence only after the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy (ÖBL.b 1990).

Geography education also had a longstanding tradition at the University of Lemberg, founded in 1661. However, a formal institutional foundation for geography was only established in 1882, when Emperor Franz Joseph authorised the creation of a geography department (BILANYUK and IVANOV 2023). Although a qualified Ukrainian geographer, Anatol' ВАХНЯНИН (Анатолий Вахнянин), 1841–1908, was available to assume the professorship, the Galician government preferred to appoint a Polish scholar instead (SURMAN 2019). **Antoni REHMAN** (also known as Anton REHMANN, 1840–1917) became the department's first head. Born in Cracow, REHMAN initially studied botany and philosophy there, later continuing with geography, geology, and astronomy in Bonn under RICHTHOFEN and in Vienna under SIMONY (BILANYUK and IVANOV 2023). His academic career culminated at the University of Lemberg, where he was elected dean and later rector. REHMAN established a scholarly tradition through his students, including Hryhorii VELYCHKO (1863–1932) and Stephan RUDNYTZKY (1877–1937), both of whom played influential roles in the development of Ukrainian geography (BILANYUK and IVANOV 2023). Like many of his contemporaries, REHMAN had wide-ranging research interests encompassing both physical and human geography.

In 1911, REHMAN was succeeded as head of the department by one of his students, **Eugeniusz ROMER** (1871–1954). ROMER studied geography at the universities of Lemberg and Cracow and later received a scholarship to study in Vienna, where he attended lectures on morphology and hydrography. In Berlin, he further specialised in aerology, meteorology, climatology, and geomorphology. He became the founder of modern Polish cartography. During the First World War, ROMER compiled the Geographical-Statistical Atlas of Poland, a key resource used to support Poland's territorial claims at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 (BAJER 2012). Similar to SAWICKI, ROMER's career reached its peak only after the period of the Dual Monarchy, evidently because of the short time remaining before 1918.

After Petar MATKOVIĆ retired from the geography department at the University of Zagreb in 1893, his student **Hinko HRANILOVIĆ von Cvetašin** (1860–1922) took over the leadership. Born in Zagreb, HRANILOVIĆ studied in Vienna, Graz, Berlin, and Oxford. Before he was elected head of the university department, he taught at secondary schools in Zagreb, Fiume [Rijeka] and Zemun [Zimony/Semlin] (ÖBL.a 1959). His research focused on geographical theory and regional geography, but he also published on geomorphological

topics (MAGAŠ 2015). Alongside botanist Antun HEINZ (1861–1919), he co-founded the Croatian Geographical Society (MAGAŠ 2015). One of his most significant works was the “Geographical and Ethnographic Description of the Kingdoms of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia” (1905) (HEVESI et al. 2024).

The development of Czech geography was long shaped by the work of Jan Kašpar PALACKÝ, whose influence continued until his death in 1908. One of his students, **Václav ŠVAMBERA** (1866–1939), eventually assumed leadership of the geography department at the Czech section of the Charles-Ferdinand University. Although heavily influenced by PALACKÝ, ŠVAMBERA also studied in Berlin, where he attended RICHTHOFEN’s lectures and was intellectually shaped by RATZEL’s works (HŮRSKÝ 1989). He served as PALACKÝ’s assistant and collaborated with him on multiple research projects during his professorship (JELEČEK et al. 2006). ŠVAMBERA’s principal field of research was hydrology. His 1905 monograph “Kongo” earned him international recognition, while his studies of the Šumava lakes also gained distinction (CUNI.c 2011). After taking over the department, he focused increasingly on institutional management at the expense of scientific work. Nevertheless, his academic career reached its peak only after the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, during the interwar period (JELEČEK et al. 2006).

#### 4.4 Heads of University Departments of (German) Austrian and Hungarian Geography outside of Vienna and Budapest

Geography education in the German-speaking regions of the Austrian countryside first began at the **University of Graz** in 1871 with the appointment of **Eduard Robert ROESLER** (1836–1874) as professor. ROESLER, a historian-geographer from Moravia, studied at the University of Vienna and had previously taught Austrian history at the University of Lemberg (FASSMANN 2011). Given his academic background, he approached geographical research through a historical lens; his lectures typically combined historical and geographical information in varying proportions (MORAWETZ and PASCHINGER 1987).

After ROESLER’s death, the geography professorship remained vacant until 1878. In the interim, geography lectures were delivered by the historian Adam WOLF (1822–1883) and the historian-geographer Wilhelm SCHMIDT (1843–1924) (MORAWETZ and PASCHINGER 1987). In 1878, **Wilhelm TOMASCHEK** succeeded ROESLER. Like his predecessor, he was born in Moravia and studied at the University of Vienna. TOMASCHEK established a “geographical cabinet” (FASSMANN 2004) and offered courses covering both physical and human geography. He remained at Graz for only a short period before departing for the University of Vienna in 1885.

After that, **Eduard RICHTER** (1847–1905) was appointed head of the newly formed geography department in 1886 (Table 4). Born in Lower Austria, Richter studied history and geography at the University of Vienna (MORAWETZ and PASCHINGER 1987). Unlike his predecessors, RICHTER received formal training in geography and was notably influenced by Friedrich SIMONY. He specialised in physical geography, especially glaciology and geomorphology, and reoriented the department’s focus accordingly (FASSMANN 2004), while

also making significant contributions to historical and regional geography (MORAWETZ and PASCHINGER 1987).

The final head of the department during the Dualist period was **Robert SIEGER** (1864–1926), who was born and educated in Vienna. A student of Friedrich SIMONY, he also developed a close academic relationship with SIMONY's successor, Albrecht PENCK. Additionally, he studied in Berlin under Ferdinand von RICHTHOFEN. SIEGER focused the department's research on human geography and contributed notably to the „Historischer Atlas der Alpenländer“ (Historical Atlas of the Alpine Countries) (MORAWETZ and PASCHINGER 1987).

At the **University of Innsbruck**, **Franz von WIESER** (1848–1923) was the first to teach geography, beginning in 1877. He became head of the newly established geography department in 1880 and held the position until 1923. WIESER, born in Kufstein, studied history at the University of Innsbruck. As department head, he focused on the history of cartography – especially of the Age of Discovery – and on the history of geographical exploration (FASSMANN 2004). He collaborated closely with Eugen OBERHUMMER at the University of Vienna, co-editing several atlases that reproduced medieval maps (OBERHUMMER 1925). WIESER was also active in prehistoric research in Tyrol and engaged in monument preservation, participating in the restoration of several castles (KYRLE 1925; CRETIAZ-STÜRZEL 2011).

At the **German section of the Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague**, **Wilhelm Dionys von GRÜN** (1819–1896) – the first extraordinary professor of the Department of Geography before the split of the university – continued to serve as the inaugural head after 1882. Born in Přerov [Prerau] in Moravia, Grün pursued his studies at the universities of Prague and Berlin, where he attended geography lectures by Carl RITTER (HANTZSCH 1904). Between 1872 and 1875, GRÜN served as geography tutor to the young Crown Prince Rudolf – a role that earned him the title “Ritter” (Knight) from Emperor Franz Joseph (HANTZSCH 1904). At the University of Prague, GRÜN's lectures encompassed both physical and human geography, ranging from mathematical geography and hydrology to political and regional geography (SEDLMEYER 1970).

Following GRÜN's retirement in 1887, **Heinrich Oskar LENZ** (1848–1925) succeeded him as head of the department. Born in Leipzig, LENZ studied mineralogy and geology at the University of Leipzig (BITTMANN 2012). In 1872, he joined the Imperial Geological Institute (Kaiserlich-Königliche Geologische Reichsanstalt), where he was responsible for geological mapping of the eastern and southern regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (NFP 1925). From 1874 onward, LENZ was a research traveler, undertaking three major expeditions to different parts of Africa (Gabon, Sahara, and Congo) (VÁVRA 1970). Over time, his research interests shifted from geology to human geography, particularly in relation to the colonial regions he explored, establishing his reputation as one of Austria-Hungary's leading “colonial experts” (DEDRYVÈRE et al. 2017). At the University of Prague, he first founded the Geographical Institute, later served as dean (1892) and rector (1902) (GW/2 2024). His principal lectures were General Geography and Physical Geography (SEDLMEYER 1965). LENZ also published numerous commentaries on colonial and political issues in newspapers (DEDRYVÈRE et al. 2017).

In 1910, after LENZ's retirement, **Alfred GRUND** (1875–1914) succeeded him as head of the department. Born in Smíchov [Smichow], GRUND studied geography, history, geology, and meteorology at the University of Vienna, where he obtained his doctorate under the supervision of Albrecht PENCK (LEHMANN 1966). GRUND's primary research interests lay in karst studies and hydrology, but he also contributed to historical geography, notably through his „Historischer Atlas der österreichischen Alpenländer” (Historical Atlas of the Austrian Alpine Countries, 1910) (ÖBL.c 1957). After 1910, he participated actively in the Austrian Adriatic Commission (Permanente österreichische Adria-Kommission), including several joint Austrian-Italian oceanographic expeditions investigating the hydrographic, biological, and meteorological characteristics of the Adriatic Sea (NFP 1914). Following Albrecht PENCK's suggestion, GRUND also conducted hydrological and geomorphological studies in the Dinaric Alps, which exerted a lasting influence on karst research (LEHMANN 1966). During the First World War, GRUND served in the Austro-Hungarian Army and was killed on the Serbian front at the age of 39.

In 1915, **Fritz MACHATSCHEK** (1876–1957) became the final head of the department before the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire. Born in Vyškov [Wischau], Moravia, MACHATSCHEK studied geography and geology at the University of Vienna, where he, like his predecessor, also completed his doctorate under Albrecht PENCK (LINDGREN 1987). He subsequently studied under Eduard SUESS and Albert HEIM in Switzerland and Ferdinand von RICHTHOFEN in Berlin (LINDGREN 1987). Although his tenure at the University of Prague was brief before the end of the war, MACHATSCHEK had already established his academic reputation through works such as „Das westliche Tienschan. Ergebnisse einer geographischen Studienreise” (The Western Tien Shan: Results of a Geographical Study Tour, 1912), and „Gletscherkunde” (Glaciology, 1917) (POSCH 2024). The principal body of his scientific work was published during the interwar period, earning him wide recognition and, after his death, the naming of a mountain in Antarctica by a British committee in honor of his contributions to glaciology (POSCH 2024).

The **Franz Joseph University in Czernowitz** was a unique institution within the multi-ethnic crownland of Bukovina. Although German was the official language of instruction, the university held significance for all ethnic groups: *“German, as the medium of instruction, was hailed as an oasis of civilization and a German outpost in Slavic ‘Half-Asia,’ a Ruthenian refuge from the Polonization of the University of L'viv, and the only university for the Romanian minority in Bukovina”* (SURMAN 2019, p. 106).

The geography department was founded in 1880, with **Alexander Georg SUPAN** (1847–1920) appointed as its first head. Born in Tyrol to Slovenian parents, SUPAN studied at the universities of Graz, Vienna, Halle, and Leipzig (BILOUS 2021). In 1877, while teaching in Laibach [Ljubljana], he relocated to Czernowitz [Chernivtsi/Cernăuți] and obtained his habilitation in geography. Between 1877 and 1884, his work focused mainly on physical geography, particularly climatology, and he also contributed to cartography (CIGALE and OGRIN 2016). One of his most notable publications was *“Grundzüge der physischen Erdkunde”* (Fundamentals of Physical Geography), produced during his professorship (BILOUS 2021). In 1884, SUPAN left to become editor of *“Petermanns Mitteilungen”* in Gotha.

At the time, **Oskar LENZ** was assigned to Galicia by the Imperial Geological Institute, where he also assumed the editorial position of a geographical journal. This period marked a decisive turning point in his career, as he gradually shifted his focus from geological to geographical research. To consolidate this transition, he accepted the chair of geography at the University of Czernowitz in 1885. However, soon thereafter, LENZ received an invitation from the Geographical Society in Vienna to lead an expedition to the Congo, which significantly limited his ability to contribute to the academic activities of the geography department in Czernowitz, and he resigned in 1887 (SEDLMEYER 1965).

There is no clear information in the literature about who, if anyone, held the position of head of the department in the following decades. The only reference comes from a 1922 study that assessed geographical institutions and their activities across Europe. According to this source, **Karl Alfons PENECKE** (1858–1944), an entomologist, geologist, and paleontologist from Graz, who served as head of the Chair of Geology at the University, was also listed as representing geography (JOERG 1922, p. 481). It can therefore only be inferred that PENECKE may have also served as head of the Department of Geography, possibly beginning in 1901, when he was appointed professor at the University of Czernowitz. However, the literature suggests that PENECKE did not contribute significantly to the development of geography, as his research primarily focused on his original fields (MEIXNER 1958).

In Hungary, the institutionalisation of Hungarian geography progressed with the founding of the geography department at the **Royal Hungarian Franz Joseph University in Kolozsvár** in 1875. On the recommendation of János HUNFALVY, **Adolf TERNER** (1835–1917) was appointed department head. Born in Buda, TERNER studied in Budapest, Leipzig, and Brünn [Brno]. His lectures focused on comparative geography, encompassing both branches of the discipline, and were influenced by RITTER's methodology, although his scholarly output was minimal, limited to book reviews and commentary on the Austro-Hungarian polar expedition (FODOR 2006). He also served as dean and later as rector during his tenure at the University of Kolozsvár (CSEKE and HAUER 1999).

Upon his retirement in 1905, **Jenő CHOLNOKY** (1870–1950) succeeded him. Born in Veszprém, CHOLNOKY studied in Budapest and became an assistant professor at the University of Budapest under Lajos LÓCZY in 1894. Collaborating with LÓCZY, CHOLNOKY adopted RICHTHOFEN's methodological approach and focused primarily on physical geography, including geomorphology, climatology, and hydrology (FODOR 2006). His tenure at Kolozsvár served as a counterweight to the University of Budapest, where Géza CZIRBUSZ represented human geography under the influence of RATZEL's theories.

Besides Kolozsvár, two other universities in Hungary had geography departments: Debrecen and Pozsony. When the Department of Geography was established at the **Royal Hungarian University of Debrecen** in 1914, a rivalry ensued between the followers of CZIRBUSZ and CHOLNOKY over its leadership. Ultimately, **Rezső MILLEKER** (1887–1945), a former assistant to CZIRBUSZ, was appointed. MILLEKER studied in Budapest, Berlin, Göttingen, and Paris. At the time of his appointment, he had not yet produced significant scholarly work; his first major publication, on political geography, appeared in 1917.

Uni- versity Affilia- tion*	Name, Date and Place of Birth and Death	Higher Education	Years in Academic Position	Main Academ- ic Focus /Subdiscipline/	Noteworthy Publication before 1918 (transl. into English)
G	<b>Eduard RICHTER [1]</b> Born: 1847, Manners- dorf am Leithagebirge Died: 1905, Graz	University of Vienna	1886–1905 as h.d.	Physical geography / Glaciology, Geomorphol- ogy/	“Observations on the Glaciers of the Eastern Alps” (1883–1888)
	<b>Robert SIEGER [2]</b> Born: 1864, Vienna Died: 1926, Graz	Univer- sities of Vienna and Berlin	1905–1926 as h.d.	Human geog- raphy	“The Geographical Foundations of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Its Foreign Policy” (1915)
I	<b>Franz von WIESER [3]</b> Born: 1848, Kufstein Died: 1923, Innsbruck	University of Inns- bruck	1880–1923 as h.d.	Human ge- ography and Cartography /History of cartography/	“The Lost Globe of Johannes Schöner from 1523” (1888)
GP	<b>Wilhelm Dionys von GRÜN</b> Born: 1819, Přeřov [Prerau] Died: 1896, Prague	Univer- sities of Prague and Berlin	1875–1882 as e.p.* 1882–1885 as h.d.	Physical and human geog- raphy /Mathemati- cal, political, regional geography/	„Geography. Regional and Eth- nological Studies” (1870)
	<b>Heinrich Oskar LENZ [4]</b> Born: 1848, Leipzig Died: 1925, Soob	University of Leipzig	1885–1887 as h.d.** 1887–1909 as h.d.	Physical and human geog- raphy /Ethnogra- phy, Political geography/	„Journey through Morocco, the Sahara and Sudan” (1884)
	<b>Alfred GRUND</b> Born: 1875, Smíchov [Smichow] Died: 1914, Smederevo (Serbia) [Smederewo/ Szendrő]	University of Vienna	1909–1914 as h.d.	Physical and human geog- raphy /Karst studies, hydrology and historical geography/	„The Geograph- ical Cycle in the Karst” (1914)
	<b>Fritz MACHATSCHEK [5]</b> Born: 1876, Vyškov [Wischau] Died: 1957, Munich	Univer- sities of Vienna, Berlin, and Zu- rich	1915–1924 as h.d.	Physical geography /Glaciology/	„Glaciology” (1917)

University Affiliation*	Name, Date and Place of Birth and Death	Higher Education	Years in Academic Position	Main Academic Focus /Subdiscipline/	Noteworthy Publication before 1918 (transl. into English)
CZ	<b>Alexander Georg SUPAN [6]</b> Born: 1847, Innichen Died: 1920, Breslau [Wrocław]	Universities of Graz, Vienna, Halle, and Leipzig	1880–1884 as h.d.	Physical geography /Climatology/	„Fundamentals of Physical Geography” (1884)
K	<b>Adolf TERNER</b> Born: 1835, Buda Died: 1917, Lajtszentmiklós [Neudörfel an der Leitha]	Universities of Budapest, Leipzig, and Brünn [Brno]	1875–1905 as h.d.	Physical and human geography /Comparative geography/	„Payer and Weyprecht’s Preliminary Expedition, The Austro-Hungarian Expedition” (1873)
	<b>Jenő CHOLNOKY [7]</b> Born: 1870, Veszprém Died: 1950, Budapest	University of Budapest	1905–1940 as h.d.	Physical geography /Geomorphology, Climatology, and Hydrology/	„The Hydrography of Lake Balaton” (1918)
D	<b>Rezső MILLEKER [8]</b> Born: 1887, Versec [Werschetz /Vršac] Died: 1945, Budapest	Universities of Budapest, Berlin, Göttingen, and Paris	1914–1945 as h.d.	Human geography /Political geography/	„The Fundamentals of Political Geography” (1917)
P	<b>Gyula PRINZ [9]</b> Born: 1882, Rábamónári Died: 1973, Budapest	Universities of Budapest and Breslau	1: March–Oct. 1918 as h.d. 2: 1921–1923 3: 1923–1940 ***	Physical geography /Geomorphology/	“The Geography of Hungary” (1914)

\* Abbreviations in Column 1: CZ – University of Czernowitz; D – University of Debrecen; G – University of Graz; I – University of Innsbruck; GP – German University in Prague; K – University of Kolozsvár; P – University of Pozsony; e.p. – extraordinary professor; h.d. – head of department.

Notes: Square-bracketed numbers in the second column of the table refer to the corresponding portrait photographs in Figure 6.

\* Before the split of the Charles-Ferdinand University of Prague; \*\* At the University of Czernowitz; \*\*\* 1: Before the dissolution of the Empire; 2: After the dissolution of the Empire, the University of Pozsony was moved first to Budapest (2), then to Pécs [Fünfkirchen] (3)

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 4: Key information on heads of university departments of (German) Austrian and Hungarian geography outside of Vienna and Budapest



Source: 1. Wikimedia Commons: Eduard RICHTER; 2. Digiporta.net, online image archive: SIEGER; 3. Wikimedia Commons / University of Innsbruck: Franz R. von WIESER; 4. Austria-Forum: Oskar LENZ; 5. ETH-Bibliothek Zürich: Fritz MACHATSCHKE (1876–1957); 6. Alchetron, online image archive: Alexander Georg SUPAN; 7. Wikimedia Commons: Jenő CHOLNOKY; 8. University of Debrecen (UD), OJS image collection: Rezső MILLEKER; 9. Wikimedia Commons: Gyula PRINZ.

Figure 6: Portrait photographs of heads of university departments of (German) Austrian and Hungarian geography outside of Vienna and Budapest, as indicated in Table 4.

The final geography department established in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was at the **University of Pozsony** in March 1918. Its short-lived operation was led by **Gyula PRINZ** (1882–1973). PRINZ began his career as a geologist-geographer, studying under LÓCZY and CHOLNOKY and later at the University of Breslau [Wrocław]. He would go on to become a prominent figure in Hungarian political, economic, settlement, and cultural geography after the collapse of the Empire (FODOR 2006).

## 5 Analysis of the Research Results and Final Conclusions

This study has demonstrated that the institutionalisation and intellectual development of geography followed a markedly unique trajectory within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, shaped primarily by political factors and the unequal distribution of power among its nationalities. There was a clear distinction in the evolution of geography between the dominant nationalities within the Dualist state structure (German Austrians and Hungarians) and those subordinated to them. In light of the three analytical attributes defined at the beginning of Chapter 4, we can observe significant divergences in the patterns of geographical development across these nationalities and their respective universities.

Before the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, Hungary was under military administration, which placed geographers from Cisleithania in a more favorable position to pursue scientific research. These advantages facilitated the early institutionalisation of geography in Austria, marked by the establishment of the first permanent university geography department in Vienna in 1851 and the founding of the Empire's first geographical society in 1856. Furthermore, the accumulated geographical knowledge and the education of professionals during this period also accelerated the later process of institutionalising and modernising German Austrian geography. More broadly, Cisleithania maintained a significantly more favourable environment for academic development.

The first university geography department in the Habsburg Empire was founded at the University of Cracow in 1849, with geography also introduced early at the University of Prague. Nevertheless, the progress of Czech and Polish geography was soon curtailed by the neo-absolutist policies of the Viennese government. As a result, the Geography Department and the Geographical Society in Vienna remained the only such institutions for nearly two decades. Only the Compromise of 1867 enabled Transleithania to begin developing its own scientific infrastructure in earnest.

Following 1867, geography was most rapidly and thoroughly institutionalised in regions predominantly inhabited by German Austrians and Hungarians. Austrian geography, especially in Vienna, was marked by a notable continuity among department heads, whose work often built upon the research of their predecessors. This era saw the steady, parallel advancement of both physical and human geography, particularly at the Universities of Graz and Innsbruck. In contrast, the development of Hungarian geography in Budapest was far more erratic. In Kolozsvár, Adolf TERNER did not emerge as either a prolific or innovative scholar. In Budapest, department leadership frequently oscillated between an emphasis on physical and human geography, often accompanied by intense academic disputes.

From the outset, the founders of Austrian and Hungarian geography set these two national traditions on divergent trajectories. János HUNFALVY deeply embedded the framework of RITTER in Hungarian academic circles, which delayed the acceptance of newer geographical theories advanced by RICHTHOFEN and RATZEL. In contrast, Friedrich SIMONY did not establish a lasting intellectual school, and his successor, Albrecht PENCK, trained in Germany, was not ideologically bound to SIMONY's legacy. PENCK thus could adopt RICHTHOFEN's theories with minimal difficulties. Both PENCK and Lajos LÓCZY based their work on RICHTHOFEN's framework and successfully elevated Austro-Hungarian physical geography to international prominence. However, their institutional contexts differed significantly: LÓCZY oversaw a unified geography department in Budapest, while PENCK led only the Physical Geography Department in Vienna. Human geography in Austria was institutionally supported by TOMASCHEK's department, as well as by FRANZ von WIESER in Innsbruck, Robert SIEGER in Graz and Oskar LENZ in Prague, while in Hungary, human geography became increasingly marginalised.

Eduard BRÜCKNER, Alfred GRUND and Fritz MACHATSCHKEK, as PENCK's students, continued the research agenda of the Viennese physical geography department and each of them achieved international recognition. A similar legacy was established in human geography under the leadership of Eugen OBERHUMMER. In Budapest, human geography briefly resurged under Géza CZIRBUSZ, but soon clashed with the physical geography paradigm promoted by Jenő CHOLNOKY in Kolozsvár. These conflicts dominated Hungarian geographical discourse for nearly a decade, hindering substantial scholarly progress. Human geography began to strengthen in Hungary in the final years of the Monarchy through the work of Rezső MILLEKER in Debrecen and Gyula PRINZ in Pozsony. However, neither of them significantly influenced the broader trajectory of Hungarian geography before 1918. In this context of disciplinary instability, OBERHUMMER's career stands out as a formative milestone, while CZIRBUSZ's role appears more as a temporary deviation from the path that would later culminate in a new conceptualisation of human geography. This redefinition was ultimately carried forward by Hugo HASSINGER (1877–1952) and Pál TELEKI (1879–1941), both of whom published foundational works in 1917: HASSINGER's *Atlas der Wiener Kunstgeschichte* [Atlas of Viennese Art History] and TELEKI's *A földrajzi gondolat történeti alakulása* [The historical development of geographical thought] are now regarded as seminal texts in the development of Austrian and Hungarian human geography (LICHTENBERGER 2001; FODOR 2006).

Beyond the Austrian and Hungarian traditions, Czech, Polish, and Croatian geography followed similar institutionalisation patterns, albeit with important distinctions. Cisleithania held a more advantageous political position before 1867, and its federal system allowed crownlands some autonomy in managing their educational institutions. This led to the relatively early establishment of Polish geography in Cracow and the partial institutionalisation of geography in Prague. However, the subordinate status of these nationalities constrained progress. In Cracow and Lemberg, despite Galicia's autonomy, the lack of a strong (Polish) scientific authority and a shortage of trained academics hampered development. Simultaneously, the Galician government, led by Polish elites, actively hindered the development of Ukrainian academics and geographers through the professorial appoint-

ment process. For the Czechs, the absence of a strong regional government supporting science posed similar challenges, both in the case of the Czech University of Prague and the failed reestablishment of the University of Olmütz. On the Hungarian side of the empire, Croatia gained *de jure* autonomy in 1868, including authority over education and science. Nevertheless, the institutionalisation of Croatian geography began somewhat later than that of Czech or Polish geography. It was not until the 1880s that geography professorships were established at the relevant universities.

In each case, a prominent scholar laid the foundation of the department and shaped its research focus for decades. However, Polish geography diverged slightly: Wincenty POL belonged to an earlier generation, and his work concluded before MATKOVIĆ in Zagreb and PALACKÝ in Prague assumed leadership. Unlike MATKOVIĆ and PALACKÝ, whose successors belonged to their close circle of students (Hinko HRANILOVIĆ and Václav ŠVAMBERA, respectively), POL's successor, Franciszek CZERNY-SCHWARZENBERG, did not build on his legacy but instead reoriented the department's research focus, moving away from RITTERian methods toward RATZEL's theories. A similar dynamic played out in Lemberg, where geography had no prior academic tradition. Antoni REHMAN, having studied under RICHTHOFEN, was able to introduce modern theories into his teaching and research. Among this first generation of department heads, only HRANILOVIĆ had sufficient time to establish a substantial body of work, including synthetic studies on Croatia-Slavonia. By contrast, ŠVAMBERA in Prague, SAWICKI in Cracow, and ROMER in Lemberg lacked the time to fully develop their research before 1918. Their academic influence peaked in the interwar period, although both ŠVAMBERA and ROMER published notable works before the end of the Monarchy.

Partly because the Czech, Polish, and Croatian regional governments had, albeit to varying degrees, less political power to manage educational and academic affairs and to represent their interests before the national parliaments and the emperor than the German-Austrian and Hungarian governments, geography in these regions was unable to achieve a clear institutional and intellectual separation between physical and human geography. Most influential academics engaged in a broad spectrum of research topics, typically in the RITTERian tradition. The second generation of scholars was more open to the theories of RICHTHOFEN and RATZEL, but had insufficient time to fully incorporate these approaches into their work before the collapse of the Empire. Meanwhile, the University of Czernowitz followed the most atypical trajectory among all the examined universities. Located in the multiethnic, less developed, and most remote Austrian crownland, Bukovina, a crownland with three major ethnic groups, its geography department was artificially created, lacking any local academic foundation. Alexander Georg SUPAN was appointed from Slovenian Carniola, served for only four years, whereas Oskar LENZ, originally from Leipzig, never formally assumed his position, as he was engaged in an expedition in Africa at the time of his appointment. Finally, Karl Alfons PENECKE, a geologist by training, made no significant contribution to the development of the discipline at the university, and geography remained confined to instructional teaching.

In conclusion, the primary factors explaining the divergent development of Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Polish, and Croatian geography were political power and the result-

ing institutional frameworks. Additionally, strong intellectual and institutional ties linked Austrian geography to the broader German tradition. Despite national differences, geographers across the Monarchy generally followed similar intellectual trajectories. The ideas of RITTER, RICHTHOFEN, and RATZEL were influential throughout the Empire, though their reception and interpretation varied.

This study has shown that the institutional development of geography and the adoption of German scientific paradigms broadly corresponded to three factors: (1) political favourability before 1867, (2) political power after 1867, and (3) socio-economic development. Austrian geography was in the most advanced position, followed (in a relative order of advancement) by Hungarian, Polish, Croatian, and Czech geography. Although Ukrainian and Slovenian geography were not yet institutionalised before 1918, their later founders were already active scholars with notable scientific output within the institutional framework of the discipline throughout the Habsburg era.

Finally, this study has demonstrated that the national traditions of geography, often treated separately in historiography, share much in common. They were deeply influenced not only by German geographical thought but also by each other, as many geographers received training in universities located in other parts of the Empire. The University of Vienna exerted a widespread influence across Cisleithania and Transleithania, while the University of Budapest emerged as a key centre for Hungarian geographers. Another interesting example of geographical interconnectedness within the Empire is that Croatian geographers were more influenced by Austrian than by Hungarian geography, while the University of Czernowitz employed professors who were German speakers and born and educated on the opposite end of the empire or in Germany. As a final remark, it must be emphasised that the state-centred approach adopted in this study is not only grounded in constitutional realities but also demonstrates its potential for future research in the history of geography and related fields.

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