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“The Wickedest Man on Earth”: US Press Narratives of Austria-Hungary and the Shaping of American National Identity in 1898

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“The Wickedest Man on Earth”:

US Press Narratives of Austria-Hungary and the Shaping of American National Identity in 1898

The press is one of the cornerstones of American society. Their ability to record and influence the history of the United States has shown itself countless times throughout the country’s history, and although its power has moved through various mediums and time periods it remains a vital part of how Americans perceive themselves and the world around them. It is at once a mirror and a window; the problem is that this window is not always clear, and our mirror does not always show us the truth. The same was true in 1898. Newspapers were a vital source of information for almost all Americans. They were the major shapers and distributors of the discourse that shaped American perceptions and impacted policies. In this study, I will examine major US newspapers’ coverage of Austria-Hungary in 1898 to provide an example of this phenomenon.

The year 1898 was chosen because of the high concentration of events related to Austria-Hungary in the news that year. Not only was it the year of the Spanish-American War, in which Austria-Hungary was heavily implicated in the newspapers, but it was also the year of the Empress Elizabeth’s assassination and the fiftieth year of Franz Josef’s reign. These major events and a host of smaller ones meant that there was no shortage of material to keep Austria-Hungary in the papers and no shortage of ways to misrepresent Austria-Hungary.

However, to understand the importance of press misrepresentations, one must first know what Austria-Hungary was really like. Despite what many would go on to say, Austria-Hungary was still a great power. There is evidence that it was in 1898 a strong and functional state.¹ Its political structure was a constitutional monarchy, with the Emperor Franz Josef having ruled both Austria and Hungary since 1848. The representational section of the government was made up of two parliaments, one for each country, and smaller diets, or local representative bodies, in each crownland. The Austro-Hungarian population included speakers of German, Hungarian, Czech, Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, Romanian, Polish, Italian, Ukrainian, Slovene, Slovak, and Yiddish. These different linguistic groups were not

contained in distinct crownlands, but were intermingled unevenly throughout the country, and the majority of people were bi- or multilingual. Austria and Hungary shared ministries of war, finance, and foreign affairs. Despite the obvious complexity in administering an empire of this size and diversity, the consensus among recent generations of historians of the empire is that the system put in place by the Habsburgs functioned quite well.ⁱⁱ

Regardless of how well the system functioned in practice, readers of American newspapers would never have seen it that way. Austria-Hungary was important to the United States because there was a massive and constantly moving exchange of people between the two countries. Many thousands of Austro-Hungarian travelers went to and from the United States, especially as short-term workers. This was done before passports were well established, making the question of citizenship difficult. Meanwhile, the United States and Americans as individuals were trying to find their place in global politics. One tool aiding in that process was comparison with other countries, and Austria-Hungary proved useful as a measuring stick in 1898. It was especially useful because the stick could be made to any size. In terms of domestic politics, American policy makers, now tasked with writing laws about immigration, border control, and labor conditions, were looking for a narrative to explain to the average American what Austria-Hungary was and to assign traits to it and its people that could easily be understood. What these traits were and how they should influence policy making were subject to change depending on the desired effect.

Most frequently that desired effect was to other or vilify Austria-Hungary. The goal was often to at once foster American nationalism and pride in the functioning of American political institutions and report that Austria-Hungary was a backward, deteriorating, monarchy on the edge of utter collapse and imminent race war. The reader in 1898 would see Austria-Hungary as an enemy and an opposite to the United States. As a byproduct of the way these articles were written, the reader would also come to see the United States as modern, progressive, and run with the utmost efficiency. The goal of these articles was not merely to exaggerate or create problems with Austria-Hungary, but to make readers forget about America's problems. When the American reader read about Austria's role as a behind-the-scenes agitator

in the Spanish-American War, they might come to support the war more. Or when they read reports of race war and political dysfunctionality, they would forget the race problems and political inefficiencies in the United States. That double effect was the goal of the newspapers. They were able to make use of the public's lack of knowledge to create this image of Austria-Hungary that better served their goals.

The goal of the American press in 1898 was above all to make money. That meant moving issues and advertising space. Historian Michael Stamm writes in his study of the American newspaper that “the printed newspaper was, like the automobile, a product of industrial capitalism.”ⁱⁱⁱ He also offers a quote from a 1907 trade journal that reminds that “they [newspapers] are conducted for the purpose of making money.”^{iv} All the major newspapers in the United States in the nineteenth century were experiencing an enormous amount of growth, what Stamm refers to as “the exploding scale and scope of industrial operations.”^v Two important factors in this growth were also important to the nature of the coverage of Austria-Hungary. The widespread use of freelance authors, who not only faced less scrutiny in their work, but also published their work in whichever newspapers would accept it, created an environment wherein one author could have disproportionate exposure and write contrary to the facts. Second, the expanding wire service that was available to these newspapers allowed for news from across the Atlantic to be transmitted and published in a day's time. This allowed newspapers to capitalize on fast-moving events like political incidents or war coverage more than in the previous century. As a result of these developments, the coverage of Austria-Hungary in major US newspapers was made up of pieces contributed not only by Americans, but also by Britons and, in a few cases, by Germans and Austrians.

In this study, I have examined coverage of Austria-Hungary in several major US newspapers. The papers include the regional papers of record that served not only large audiences of voters, but also the officials whom they elected. They also served communities with a vastly different number of Austro-Hungarian immigrants. These papers were chosen for a number of reasons. The *Washington Post* carried more detailed diplomatic coverage and often a greater number of politically in-depth articles; it had also developed strong imperialist leanings.^{vi} The *New York Times* was one of the largest and most successful papers in the country in 1898. It was concerned with issues on a global and nationwide scale. The editor

at the time, Adolf Ochs, ran the paper as “non-partisan,” looking “to invite intelligent discussion from all shades of opinion.^{vii}” The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* was both a large midwestern paper and a paper published in an area with a high concentration of Hungarian immigrants. The *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, today the *Times-Picayune*, provides a southern perspective. New Orleans was also a major port city and was interested in trade and foreign affairs. The *Boston Globe* was at this time a widely circulated New England paper whose editorial staff was composed mostly of Irish-American Catholics, who bring an important religious dynamic into the study of the coverage of a Catholic power. The *Los Angeles Times* provides a western perspective. Though it was the most removed from the issues involving Austria-Hungary, its depictions of the country are no less important. Despite its obvious lack of evidence or expertise in dealing with Austria-Hungary, it still published many articles, especially “fluff” articles that hid some strong opinions on the empire, thinly veiled behind humor. In 1898, these papers published at least 281 articles about Austria-Hungary.^{viii} As these papers were published more than one hundred years ago the reader must consider the difference in language and the changing definitions of certain words. In this paper I have used the term “race” to reflect its use in the newspapers in order to ease understanding. The more correct term to refer to the various instances of the word “race” in these newspapers would be “ethnicity” but at the time this term was not yet in use. My usage of the term in this sense does not mean that I accept what is written in the articles as truth, merely that my analysis stays as close to the source material as possible.

The diversity of these newspapers provides a start to understanding the United States as a whole in 1898. The United States was in the process of changing from a secluded republic of former colonies to a world power that was both willing and able to make its power known across the globe. With this enormous change came many smaller changes for Americans. Industrialization had led to enormous economic growth, but Americans were beginning to see similar growth in the strength of radicalized labor. The Civil War and Reconstruction had separated and then reunified the country, but had left in their wake the institutionalized racism of Jim Crow. Racism showed itself not only in the streets, but also in Congress, as the representatives hammered out immigration restriction after immigration restriction in

an effort to protect what many of them saw as the “true” American “race.” These laws were most often aimed at immigrants coming from Asia and Southern Europe, and while they succeeded somewhat in keeping immigrants from those regions out, they could not stop the presence of these immigrants from causing Americans to question their own identity and future.^{ix} Americans had a great deal to think about, and debate about the future of the United States was widespread. This can be seen particularly clearly in 1898, when Americans found themselves on the verge of war with Spain. This war raised many questions about the place of the United States in the world and how the United States would conduct itself during and after the war.

The American press was ready to meet the demands of the questioning Americans. They printed articles to help Americans figure out not only their present identity and opinions, but also their past, in the form of articles that reminded readers of key historical events, as well as their future, in the form of articles that presented opinions on policy choices that would shape US society and politics. One common method that newspapers employed for these purposes was to publish articles about other countries. These articles allowed American readers to measure and define themselves against the image presented of the other country. These articles did not need to be factual to accomplish this task, and they seldom were, especially when the articles concerned Austria-Hungary.

Diplomatic Debacles

In presenting the themes of Austrian hostility and pro-Spanish sentiment, diplomatic relations were a natural first choice for the newspapers. Here they could easily present a narrative of a hostile, backwards country and still report on contemporary events. They simply reinforced the ideas that they had already been presented to the American public. Austria was a country that was not going to support the United States; even if it did, it was not going to support the United States enough to satiate the press and the public, who wanted nothing short of one hundred percent backing. Of course, they were not going to be neutral, either. The press was keen to

explain the “shady” maneuvering of the Austrians by bring up their close dynastic and religious connections to the Spanish government, and the press was not above bending the events and the evidence to make these themes painfully apparent to the American readers.

The *Washington Post* provides a case in point. The newspaper was read by politicians in Washington, leading to a greater effect on the policy of the United States. Because of the imperialist leanings of the paper, it is natural that their coverage of Austria-Hungary’s opposition to the war in Cuba would be more aggressive; their detail and extensive coverage highlight the importance of the relationship with Austria-Hungary. Two themes are overtly present in the coverage of Austria-Hungary’s foreign policy: the condemnation of anything short of total support for the United States, and an American fixation on 1848 that is also found throughout all the coverage of Austria-Hungary. Given the hostile attitude among readers, it is not surprising that, especially with regards to the war with Spain, anything less than full support of the United States was insufficient. The American press and, by extension, the American people would have been suspicious of anything that might have constituted a slight against the United States or aid for the Spanish. While there are many narratives that are repeated often in the coverage, one that is particularly compelling is the portrayal of Austria-Hungary as a power that sought to create an anti-American “holy alliance” and make the United States into a new Napoleon that Europe should come together to defeat.

Austrian hostility to the United States along with the Anglo-American partnership was reinforced in an article from March 16, titled “Emperor Josef’s Crusade,” which offered a British take on the problems of Austrian foreign policy as it pertained to Americans.^x The article presents very pro-American and a very anti-Austrian sentiments as the general opinion in Britain. As it says in the article, “Greatly as most Englishmen would welcome a clear Anglo-American

understanding, in the face of the world, in opposition to closing neutral markets, the difficulties of a departure from the accepted American policy which this implies is fully appreciated here.”^{xi} Americans and Austrians knew that Britain’s cooperation was necessary for the kinds of policy that the Austro-Hungarian government was trying to pursue. Britain’s neutrality was tantamount to allowing the United States conduct their war against Spain; however, the British also had the opportunity to join Austria-Hungary’s anti-war protests. Britain’s place as a world superpower made it an important diplomatic relationship for both countries. This article is in a sense prophesizing US victory in that contest.

This is almost the opposite of what the paper attempted to do with regards to Austria; they want to show that everyone, or at least all politicians, were supportive of the United States. This illustrates how the paper attempted to try and erase some of the anti-British sentiment that its readers might have still held. This became increasingly important when those readers also happened to be Washington policy makers: after seeing coverage like this, the choice of improving relations with Britain appeared obvious. Though many prominent Britons and Americans were already thinking in terms of Anglo-American partnership, for many Americans the idea of an alliance with the British Empire was by no means taken for granted. The British were concerned with maintaining a balance of power, both among the Europeans and between continental Europe and the United States in order to protect their colonial empire; they saw the United States as a potential colonial partner that contributed to their alliance. However, in Europe itself they were by no means friendly to the United States. The British were just as worried as the other European powers when it came to the possibility of America holding colonial territory that would conflict directly with European interests. The reservation is made clear in the quotation above; this is by no means a statement of object alliance. The primary goal

of the British government was “[not] to say one word which would increase her enemies or discourage her friends.”^{xii} In the United States, there was a real anti-British sentiment, especially among voters of the Democratic Party that often courted Irish-American support by supporting anti-British policy and “twisting the lion’s tail.” According to historian Stephan Tufnell, 1895 was the “last flashpoint of major antipathy between the two countries,” and according to the newspaper article, the British were more likely to side with the Americans, thereby defeating the supposed Austrian-European alliance.^{xiii} This Anglo-American comradeship had a lot to do with the circumstances of the time. Historian Paul Kramer argues that Anglo-American cooperation was born out of racial identification between the two countries. He says, “Anglo-Saxon racism evolved as a self-conscious bond between the two countries.”^{xiv} This unspoken bond between the two countries also served to separate the United States and the United Kingdom from the other European countries who did not share the same unifying racial characteristics.

The idea that the German and Austrian Empires were effectively one giant country would become accepted fact among many in the years leading up to World War I and it would persist in certain writings through World War II. The second and third paragraphs of the article provide an example. This is a perfect mirror to the racially identified union between the United Kingdom and the United States that Kramer describes. The author binds the German and Austrian empires into a single entity and creates blocs within the European political system, furthering the idea of a united Europe. The article frames the conflict in terms of “greatly-welcomed Anglo-American understanding” versus the continental powers, the “German and Austrian Emperors” in this case. This article ran with the subtitle “Austria and Germany Both Believed to Be Interested in Preventing War.”^{xv} The idea that Germany and Austria were one and the same is an idea that was

frequently manipulated in the American coverage.^{xvi} They were seldom mentioned separately. Nearly all discussion of European politics mentioned the two countries in the same breath.^{xvii}

The notion of a unified Europe was very powerful among politicians and voters. The idea that the Europeans could band together to attack American interests was a real threat at the time. The concept of Austria as the leader of a new holy alliance, pulling the strings behind the other European powers is very interesting. The idea that America in 1898 was being portrayed as the Napoleon attempting to defeat a “holy alliance” from almost one hundred years earlier is a strange use of imagery. The real Holy Alliance was much more complex than the states for Europe coming together in the face of an enemy, and the European alliance had suffered serious degradation by 1898.^{xviii} Not much had changed by 1898; the various European powers were far from unified. Perhaps the only unifying factor among them was that they were European powers, yet the idea of an alliance is portrayed here and in other articles as a very threatening and very real possibility. The depiction of the United States as Napoleon, especially by American journalists, is also odd. Napoleon was not normally the type whom Americans were anxious to identify with because of his reputation among Americans as an overly militaristic and very European figure.^{xix} These journalists were not wanting to compare politics; rather, they were interested in depicting the United States as the ever strengthening, expanding, and modernizing force that would then be opposed by the old-world empires led, of course, by Austria-Hungary—the country, which was by all American journalistic accounts, the most devoted to its traditions.

The newspapers wanted to foster confidence in the United States that the British would hold to their alliance with the Americans. Those themes showed US readers that, although the Austrians supposedly had grandiose ideas to defeat the United States, they were not taken particularly seriously, at least in Britain.^{xx} The fourth paragraph of the article shows a

considerable lack of concern among American and British politicians because they are either convinced that Austria's plans are hollow or that the Spanish have no chance of winning the war. This is written into the article but is taken indirectly from the politicians themselves: "Not much concern is expressed by members of the administration over the reported intention of the European governments."^{xxi} The paper does not want to injure any potential alliances with the United States, so the article shows a clear partnership between the United States and the British Empire, with the article itself coming from a British publication.

There were many examples of the newspapers inviting comparison by discussing topics that were well known or held a particular significance for Americans. The topic of neutral rights was particularly dear to politically minded Americans, so it made a natural choice to reinforce the theme of Austrian hostility and less than full support of the United States in this instance by describing their treatment of neutral rights. An article from May 13 titled "The Attitude of Austria" describes the diplomatic issues surrounding the Austrian government's refusal to issue a declaration of neutrality after the beginning of the Spanish-American War.^{xxii} This was concerning to Americans; without a declaration of neutrality, the diplomatic door was left open for Austria-Hungary to provide clandestine aid that would be impossible for a neutral country to provide within the accepted framework of neutral wartime rights. They also reserved their ability to enter the war on the Spanish side. The relationship between the Spanish and Austrian states was especially well-known during this time, thanks to the massive amount of press generated by the war. It is important to note that there were also long-term links between Spain and Austria going back to the time of the Holy Roman Empire. The immediate connection, with reference to the approaching war, was held together by dynastic links—the queen regent of Spain was a Habsburg cousin who used her family ties frequently in the months leading up to the war to

appeal for help; this was also well documented in the papers, as was any help Austria even thought of offering.^{xxiii} The newspapers were also keen to report that the two states were also bound by their strong connection to the Catholic Church, regardless of the actual strength of the bond. The papers sought to play on another long-standing American prejudice namely, anti-Catholicism.^{xxiv} Many Americans held a deep-seated mistrust of the Catholic Church, and the papers were only too happy to explain this link to already suspicious Americans, with the intention of furthering Austria's bad reputation.^{xxv}

According to the Austrian Government as quoted in this article, it was neither necessary, nor in keeping with Austrian diplomatic practice to issue a formal declaration of neutrality. According to the article, Austria thought that the terms of their relationships with both countries were implied without the need of a declaration that Austria was going to be neutral. This was a controversial statement for the Americans, and it, like all Austrian political maneuvers during the war, was viewed with intense suspicion. The declaration of neutrality would have restricted Austria to established international rules for neutral powers, and they may not have been able to effectively aid the Spanish, or as was more likely their goal, to either prop up the Queen Regent's government or at the very least save her life. Whatever Austria's reasons were for not formally declaring their neutrality, the American papers only concerned themselves with presenting it in as negative a light as possible. This was only compounded when Austrian aid did reach the Spanish.^{xxvi}

The theme of Austrian hostility toward the United States was not limited to the context of the war. Even after the war newspapers continued to present this theme wherever they could, including their coverage of diplomatic ceremony, with which the United States was increasingly concerned as it came closer to completing its transformation into a world power. On September

9, 1898 the *Washington Post* ran an article titled: “Austria in Bad Humor.”^{xxvii} The article endeavored to explain a recent diplomatic hiccup between the United States and Austria-Hungary, which they said was “among the many evidences of unfriendliness towards the United States which Austria has given of late”^{xxviii}

This particular article deals with the concept of diplomatic rank. This was an integral part of the system of European diplomacy at the time. However, it was not something that the United States happily participated in. During this time the Department of State preferred for the most part to keep their representatives at the lowest rank possible; however, toward the beginning of the twentieth century, the image of the United States as a great power began to hold a place of greater significance among American politicians, and the United States began to enter the system gradually. The system rested on the reputation of the country sending diplomats. The great European powers protected their power through this system of diplomatic rank by only recognizing each other’s diplomats at the highest rank.^{xxix}

The author states that the government in Washington and even President McKinley himself were “anxious” to advance the rank of the envoy in Austria to the rank of ambassador so as to properly represent the grandeur of the United States at the upcoming festivities for Franz Josef’s jubilee. This idea is summed up by the statement in the article that “Ambassadors have a right to a seat at the table of the sovereign and the reigning family at all court and official functions.”^{xxx} The proverbial seat at the table was the main object of US interests. The United States often found itself fighting for its own seat at the table of great powers. The position of the United States with relation to the European concert system of diplomacy at this time was a complex one. Historian Nicole Phelps notes that the “United States became integrated gradually—if not unwillingly—into the system over the course of the long nineteenth

century.”^{xxxix} American opinion was in a transition period between the dismissal of diplomatic practices as un-American and indicative of the old-world and the idea that the United States ought to have great power status and that diplomacy was the only means to become recognized as a great power. It may well have been that McKinley was anxious to advance the rank of the American diplomat in Austria-Hungary because that would constitute a growth of American status in diplomatic spheres. However, all did not go to plan, as the article states. The Austrians refused and, in the process, inflicted a slight on the nationalist American conscious. There are two responses that can be seen in this and the other articles surrounding the issue. First, as the author of this article suggests, the United States could pursue retribution through further diplomatic maneuvering. The author suggests lowering the rank of the American diplomat, suggesting that the United States saw the Austrian government as insignificant. The other option that is expressed in some other articles was the classic American response that Phelps also describes: Americans would return to their previously held sentiments and criticize the entire system, falling back on nineteenth-century rhetoric. This duality of opinion is an important part of diplomatic newspaper coverage in 1898. It shows that the diplomatic politics and popular opinion as reflected by the newspapers did not always match. This duality was not something that merely existed in the opinions of Americans. The two sections, those for “civilized” diplomatic behavior and against “European” diplomatic norms, continued to play themselves out in the American political sector and in active American policy. Phelps notes that the Habsburgs “pursued policies in these incidents that they believed would result in U.S. adherence to the great power system.”^{xxxix} That statement on the official intent of the Habsburg government is far removed from the intent that readers are supposed to interpret from this article. Regardless of what side the reader was on regarding diplomacy, it is clear that this article wanted the reader to

see Austria as an aggressor, trying to illicit a response from the United States, rather than a quiet partner whose goal was mutual compliancy and recognition.

The author goes on to say that the now defeated Spain has an ambassador in Austria who “will walk far in advance of the United States.”^{xxxiii} He continues by listing the countries who have ambassadors at Vienna, including Turkey, Great Britain, Russia, Italy, Spain, France, and Germany, and those who maintained a minister, the same rank as the United States: Switzerland, Portugal, Greece, Serbia, and the “Petty South American Republics.”^{xxxiv} These lists reinforce the idea for the reader that Austria is deliberately insulting the United States. The average American reader, who may not have known about the diplomatic policy of the United States, could easily see those lists and assume that the United States was not being taken seriously; even if readers did not recognize those countries, the author notes that the ambassador of “vanquished” Spain would sit in front of the United States. This was even more recognizable as an insult. He then describes how delivering insults through diplomatic slights was common practice for the Austrian Government, whose members seemed only too happy for a chance to pull one over on the United States. He then gives examples of previous attempts similar to this that the Austrian government had used before and how those attempts failed. He then describes some other diplomatic follies of Austria, with the lack of diplomatic contact with Mexico as the primary example. This example, which many Americans remembered as an attempted subversion of the Monroe Doctrine, was a colossal failure for Habsburg power abroad.^{xxxv} In many ways, it was this type of failure in which revolution in the wake of war ended the life of a Habsburg monarch that was what Austria was attempting to guard against in Spain. Its inclusion in this article serves as a recent example of Habsburg attacks on American policy.

The author ends the article by describing the lack of privilege afforded to the wives of Austrian diplomats, who, according to the article, were excluded from any court activities unless they were ennobled or had aristocratic backgrounds of their own. That is not to say that American elites did not practice the same kind of exclusion, but the inclusion of this detail in the article was to reinforce the foreign nature of court politics to Americans ignorant of both. The idea of these examples is to imply that the Austrian government knows that they are attacking the United States and give their reasons for doing so; the author wants to establish the Austrian government as the enemy.

The first and perhaps most important conclusion from this coverage of diplomatic relationships that the Austrian Government is generally unfriendly toward the United States. The lack of evidence is also critically important across all the topics of coverage of Austria-Hungary. Very few if any of these articles offer any kind of evidence or even examples to justify their opinions. They are for the most part unsubstantiated, yet they are widely read accounts of Austria-Hungary for most Americans. The second is that the Austrian Government and specifically Count Gołoschowski, the Polish-born minister of foreign affairs who was quite unpopular in the United States, was happy at any chance to belittle the United States on the diplomatic stage.

These two ideas create the idea that the Austrian government was opposed in a fundamental way to the United States and would do anything to attack it. This falls perfectly in line with the presentation that the paper wanted to make, though it was made to fit that way by the papers. Nevertheless, the Austrians were successfully portrayed as slippery and underhanded in diplomatic relations. Their modus operandi was underlaid in American minds with an anti-American sentiment that seemed to govern all of their actions. The newspapers took advantage

of Austria Hungary's relative obscurity and created a convenient enemy state that could be shaped to fit any mold of anti-Americanism of the time. They were the perfect candidate to be bent into the anti-American pro-Spanish mold waiting to be filled by the American people.

Domestic Disputes

The portrayal of Austrian domestic politics in relation to those of the United States worked in much the same way as the foreign politics. The United States sought to define itself against Austria, which, despite some marked differences from the United States, sometimes bared a striking resemblance to the United States in terms of tumultuous domestic politics. The greatest area of similarity was that both experienced violence rooted in labor inequality, though they would be interpreted and reported differently. Naturally, there is a strong theme of hypocrisy within many of the articles that berate the terrible conditions within the Habsburg Empire. In terms of domestic Austrian politics, the Austrian government is shown to be a paralyzed, barely functioning collection of "madmen" politicians^{xxxvi} supporting the rickety throne of an evil old man of an emperor.^{xxxvii} This is meant to contrast to supposedly the stable and more democratic government of the United States. Meanwhile, the domestic politics of Austria-Hungary were supposedly charged with ethnic tension and clashes between the different races of the empire that threatened to rip it apart at the seams. This is, again, not very factual; much of the ethnic struggle was local in nature. On a country-wide scale many people were loyal to the emperor, and the empire.^{xxxviii} This fact is acknowledged by some articles, but it is far from a consistent theme.^{xxxix}

Second, the only reason that the institutional politics of the United States was not racially charged in 1898 was that voters of different races were being systematically discriminated against and forcibly kept from participating. Historian Matthey Frye Jacobson explained the anti-foreign^{xl} system in the United States in his book *Barbarian Virtues*. He notes that American

political character in the late nineteenth century “was characterized by a paradoxical combination of supreme confidence in the U.S. superiority and righteousness, with an anxiety driven fierce parochialism.”^{xli} The American political climate was by no means unified, but anti-foreign and anti-immigrant policy was something that many different Americans agreed upon, from the pro-labor nativist arguments that immigrants were destined to destroy the white man’s labor market to the popular nativist sentiments that called for immigration restriction and created the idea of unwanted immigrants in the US political consciousness. The country was ripe for conflict, and it was easy for these papers to frame whatever conflict arose as “us” vs. “them,” paying no mind to the facts.^{xlii}

By focusing on the seemingly troubled domestic politics, the newspapers presented a lasting image of Austria-Hungary that would come to be accepted as historical fact—a historical fact that would distract Americans from their own domestic political problems. The coverage of Austro-Hungarian domestic politics is underscored by an incredible amount of hypocrisy when the relevant issues are compared to the domestic politics of the United States. The coverage is negative, exaggerated, and oftentimes contrary to factual evidence. This is especially true with regards to American depictions of the Austrian Reichsrat. Historian Lothar Höbelt explains that, unlike the American system, in which the legislature was expected to actually produce workable laws as part of a democratic system, the Austro-Hungarian system was not expected to produce legislation. Instead it served as a sounding board, expressing the different views of the people to be taken into consideration by the emperor and his ministers before they would issue the laws in the form of decrees.^{xliii} This constitutes a double standard on the part of the Americans. On one hand, they assumed that the Austrian Parliament functioned in a similar fashion to the American Congress despite the different form of government, while on the other hand, they assumed that

Austrian politics were more unhinged and unstable because the Austrian parliament could not function in the way that Americans expected it to function. The American assessment of Austria-Hungary in these articles is compounded by yet another double standard constructed in terms of representation. Americans contrasted their own “orderly” democratic politics with the supposedly wild and ethnically charged politics of Austria-Hungary without acknowledging that the American political system was kept orderly by the suppression of minority voters. The Austro-Hungarian parliament in 1898 included political entities that represented several religions, races, and political persuasions.^{xliv} That is not something that could be said for US Congress. In fact, the Reichsrat was only eight years removed from a massive overhaul of its voting system, which, in 1890, had enfranchised a large number of middle class and ushered in a new era of “white-collar politics” in Austria-Hungary.^{xlv}

The newspapers depicted Austro-Hungarian politics as a fractured mirror of reality. They selected certain political mishaps and presented them as if they took place within a system similar to that of the United States so as to present Austro-Hungarian politics as a shamble. At the same time, they refrained from any mention of American issues or explicit comparisons of any kind, leaving the comparison to be drawn by the reader under the guidelines laid out by the newspapers in their articles. An article called “Civil Strife in Austria” appeared in the *New York Times* on July 4, it provides an example declaring that “Matters in Austria-Hungary are going from bad to worse.”^{xlvi} The article begins by describing a demonstration by the German party,^{xlvii} who are described in the article as “Teutonic madmen.” These were radical nationalists who advocated for the incorporation of Austria-Hungary into the relatively new German state under the Hohenzollern dynasty, often employing political obstructionism and the encouragement of displays of militant German nationalism. The article asks, “In what other country would such a

manifestation [of ethnic nationalism] be tolerated?” Racial politics and the supposed weakness of the Imperial government are important themes not only in this article, but in the coverage and subsequent historiography of the Habsburg Empire. It is worth mentioning that, in fact, the German Freedom Party, despite their sometimes-aggressive politics, were actually seated among the concurrent majority parties of the Thun administration, and that eight years later they would be part of the ruling majority opposing the then-obstructionist pan-Germans—in short doing the exact opposite of what they had been accused of just eight years earlier. They were hardly the Teutonic obsessed fringe politicians that the American paper makes them out to be.^{xlviii} It would not be exaggeration to say that the entire political momentum of Austria-Hungary was being misrepresented. In his case study of the Christian Social Party in Vienna, historian John Boyer details the trend toward greater inclusion and organization of politics in Vienna and at the national level.^{xlix} The coverage does not make the distinction between the radicalization of policies and programs and the proceedings themselves, which were becoming steadily more organized. Boyer’s argument for the radicalization and organization of politics, combined with Höbelt’s argument that the Austrian parliament was more an opinion poll than a legislative body, show just how much different the Austria-Hungary depicted in the newspapers was to the real Austria-Hungary.

To adequately describe the nuances of domestic politics it is necessary to differentiate “politics,” from “government.” “Government” refers to the activities of state institutions, while “politics” refers to a wider context over power that may include violence, demonstrations, and other types of politically motivated actions. The focus on this type of racial politics and the seeming inability of the government to cope would become cornerstones of American perceptions of Austria-Hungary. It is also one of the most important ways in which Americans

defined themselves against this image of Austria. In 1898 many white Americans considered themselves to part of a homogenous state. Therefore, according to the articles, something like what was happening in Austria would never be possible in the United States. However, this is actually far from the truth: The United States simply was not homogenous.^l Authors of articles making similar claims were likely referring to those they perceived to be “real” Americans: white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle-class people, who in the opinions of many constituted the American “race.” This supposed homogeneity was contrasted to the racial tension in Austria-Hungary that was presented as being both loud and centrally important by the newspapers. Race politics in US political institutions were neither loud, nor obvious, thanks to the openly racist policies and barring of people not of the American “race” from political participation, and the American government was certainly not tearing itself apart over racial injustice.^{li} This hypocritical contrast is the perfect example of the interaction that was the diplomatic coverage of Austria-Hungary in American newspapers.

The author provides a contrast to the actions of the German Party by describing the endemic loyalty that the rest people of Austria-Hungary had to their emperor, while stating as a matter of fact that Franz Josef was the only thing holding the country together. The author makes reference to the fact that every citizen outside the radicals shared a collective, worshipful picture of Franz Josef. By reinforcing this loyalty, the author creates room to further embellish the direness of the political situation, setting the emperor up as the lynch-pin of an eventual downfall. This is another particularly important idea to American perceptions of Austria-Hungary. The idea that the country was so unstable that an ageing monarch was the last straw holding together an otherwise broken government would become akin to historical fact for decades.^{lii} This was also important to the American identity, as Americans were proud of their

ability to criticize their government and had an inherent distaste for hereditary monarchy. Americans would have seen their own system of government as much more stable, though in reality recent histories of the imperial government in Austria have shown the imperial government to be quite healthy.^{liii} The German party as shown in the article, despite their loud politics and even louder press coverage, was only one of a handful of parties in an Austrian Reichsrat national or otherwise.

The United States in 1898 was not the buttoned up, well-behaved collection of “civilized” folk that the newspaper authors invoked in their description of Austria-Hungary. In reality, the United States was also dealing with a great deal of domestic unrest stemming from race, class, and party politics. In many cases, the events in the United States were of greater significance for American readers, yet they are not discussed in the same way. One prominent example was the Pullman Strike in 1894; historian Priscilla Murolo describes how the US Army needed to be brought in to suppress what could be considered a violent uprising, perpetrated by those whom “Americans” considered “anarchistic foreign trash.”^{liv} This represents both a serious example of domestic unrest represented by the strike itself and how it was dealt with and a visceral response by Americans. The violent response is by far more extreme than anything that could ever be fabricated by the newspapers about Austro-Hungarian domestic politics. It was *Harper’s Weekly* that referred to “anarchistic foreign trash;” these are not the words of a fringe writer, but rather words meant for mainstream America.^{lv} Rather than describing the injustices done to the people of Chicago, as they might have done with Czech or Hungarian dissidents, they instead reduce the mob of Americans to “foreign trash.”

This comparison is the heart of the hypocrisy that governed the relationship between the press in these two countries. Whereas Habsburg dissidents were increasingly represented as

patriots fighting the tyrannical Habsburgs for their ethno-national freedom, the American strikers were stripped of their ethnicity and reduced to a faceless foreign mob, even though the demands of the strikers were in many ways significantly lesser than those of the various political activists in Austria-Hungary. The fact that these people were reduced in this article to a single trait, “foreign” says a lot about the intentions and attitudes of the author. The one quality that he believed was defining about this group of Americans was the fact that they were foreigners, before any demands, actions, or crimes. They were foreign and that is the central information for the reader. They found their demands and their cause even more difficult to understand because the author put so much effort into othering them, separating them from any American readers who might have otherwise been sympathetic. The location of these instances of political dissidence are also downplayed. In many cases, the racial political tension of the Habsburg Government was played out in the Reichsrat or the lower representative bodies, which, as Höbelt argues, were designed as political arenas to better advise the emperor and his cabinet, so that issues like what was happening in the United States did not need to happen in Austria-Hungary. It is true that there was a great deal of argument in these political arenas that the American press would falsely portray as a political system paralyzed by ethnic tension and on the verge of collapse, but in the United States, Congress was so unrepresentative and weak that Americans like the Pullman strikers had no choice but to adopt more drastic action in the form of public violence.

The author wants to remind the reader that the monarchy is exceptionally fragile and that without Franz Josef it would completely cease to exist. The author then moves on to the Ausgleich re-negotiation, in which the Austrians and the Hungarians were failing to reach any kind of agreement. He then lists some reasons for the deep-seeded hatred between the two groups

noting that “the intense hatred of the Magyars for their old foes has increased a marked degree since the beginning of the negotiations.”^{lvi} He goes on to say in the next paragraph that the Magyars were becoming violently upset with the state of politics. He describes one instance in which several Austrian Court actors were ejected from a theatre by a politically charged mob, with police having to save them the account says that “hundreds of spectators interrupted the performance with savage yells.”^{lvii} The tone is consistent throughout in characterizing the political dissidents as wild and uncontrollable, much the same as the treatment dissidents received in the United States. He reports that these Hungarians were aligned politically with the aforementioned German Party. The author also describes the problems in Bohemia between Czech and German Bohemians and the wider problem between Austria and Bohemia. He also touches on smaller conflicts, most having to do with ethnic politics between the smaller races present within the empire naming Poland and Italy as well as some Slavic groups. Race politics in Austria-Hungary and in the United States were incredibly complicated. However, the Americans did not have as much of an upper hand as they thought when it came to race politics. That is not to say that political violence did not occur in Austria-Hungary, but much like the political tension, it was greatly exaggerated by the American press coverage and presented in a way that made it appear as a common occurrence.^{lviii}

In Austria-Hungary the politics of race were loud, well-covered in media, and well documented; this is mostly due to the fact that most of the political action took place within the elected bodies of the Imperial government. In the United States, however, the race politics were more easily swept under the rug, primarily because of the exclusion of non-whites from participation in government. This comparison reveals the level of hypocrisy with which American newspapers covered Austria-Hungary.

In terms of politics, the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* carried some of the most negative coverage of Austria-Hungary. They were mostly concerned with portraying the Habsburgs in a generally bad light. The coverage tends to display the terrible conditions of the Austrian peasant, an image that provoked sympathy among many Americans. Many of the articles describing the disloyalty and dishonesty of the Habsburgs were colored with economic undertones, whether they were fearful of the creation of a European trade alliance against the United States or they were chafed after the “attempted subversion” of the Monroe doctrine by Franz Josef’s brother Maximilian; the coverage of Austria-Hungary in New Orleans was far from positive.^{lix} All this can be easily seen in an article from May 22 titled “Franz Josef: Austria’s Greatest Despot and Spain’s Greatest Friend.” This article, which even included a full body likeness of the emperor, describes in depth not only the reasons why Americans should dislike Franz Josef, but also why they should be paying attention to his politics in the first place. The reason given is that “he may at any time spring into notice as the author of a European concert against the new forward policy of this country.”^{lx}

The choice to run such detailed coverage of Franz Josef is not without significance. In focusing on him as a monarch they are at once emphasizing the monarchical character of Austria-Hungary and his personal role as an enemy of the United States. They characterize him as a monarch, but the absolutism of his reign is not the focus; rather the focus is on the melding of the concept of Austria-Hungary and the person of Franz Josef. The newspapers wanted their readers to have a fixed image of Austria-Hungary that they could call upon in other writings. Franz Josef was the medium, the symbol for this conception. This article presents him as the avatar for his country. Whatever the newspapers printed about him readers could readily associate with Austria-Hungary as a whole. Some examples include his advanced age, his monarchical personage, and

his customary military dress. This was the reason for the inclusion of his likeness in the article. He became a caricature for the newspapers' depiction of his country.

The articles relate the Austrian Emperor to the celebrity revolutionary Lajos Kossuth, who had gained fame in the United States as one of the “patriots” of the 1848 Hungarian revolution. Kossuth had died on March 20, 1894. The equation of revolutionary patriots like Kossuth with the American revolutionaries of 1776 was an attempt to garner sympathy from American readers. This is yet another historical comparison designed to shape opinions. The Hungarian revolution of 1848 and the American Revolution of 1776 are far from similar. The dissimilarity can be seen in the articles that attempt to make the comparison in that they can only cite a vague sense of “revolutionary spirit.”^{lxi} Regardless of actual similarity, the picture of the Hungarians as similar to the early Americans stuck in the minds of American readers and only increased the popular support for the Hungarians. The article goes on to describe the “beer garden” politics of Austria-Hungary, by which the author meant the fractionalized and ethnically charged racial politics that were supposedly paralyzing the country; this term was often used to describe communists, anarchists, and socialists. Like in the previous articles, this is an indictment of the Austrian parliament and other elected bodies, including the regional diets, the oft-cited sources of ethnically charged political problems, which according to the US coverage were only so lively because they included the various ethnicities of the country, unlike the US Congress.

The author then turns to Franz Josef, describing his actions in the wake of the 1848 revolutions and launching a condemnation of the Habsburg family as a whole by saying that, “For a thousand years the house of Habsburg has maintained itself by crimes that call for the condemnation of that demagogue.”^{lxii} In Austria-Hungary itself, many people especially outside

of Hungary had forgotten about the actions taken by the Habsburg government in suppressing the revolt of 1848, but thanks to the couple decades removal from the revolutions, American journalists were able to relate the actions without much context to American readers, effectively erasing the successful reparative decades Franz Josef had had in Austria since 1848. The tone of this article does not waver. Its goal is without question to destroy or create in a negative light the image of Franz Josef. This piece was intended as a kind of precautionary propaganda. It primed poor opinions of Franz Josef in the event that conflict may arise between the United States and Austria-Hungary. The points articulated within could be appreciated by native-born Americans or immigrants, Austro-Hungarian or otherwise. Hungarians were urged to remember the suppression of the revolution. The American newspapers were able to make Franz Josef out to be a revolution-crushing monarch even though, as far as Americans were concerned, there had not been a revolution in Austria-Hungary since his first year on the throne fifty years earlier. One of the article's subtitles reads, "A Ricketty Old Throne and a Scheming Old Man Who Is Making Every Effort to Secure European Interference in the Present War."^{lxiii} This sets the ground for a comparison of the US intervention in Cuba with Austria-Hungary's intervention in Bosnia. He then describes Franz Josef's bad reputation outside the United States in various other countries. Lastly, the author reminds the reader of the problems with Emperor Maximilian in Mexico.

Without a doubt the primary point of this article is to make sure that the reader understands that Franz Josef was "one of the wickedest men on Earth."^{lxiv} This depiction was needed for a number of reasons. Firstly, there was the problem of Franz Josef's enormous popularity in Austria-Hungary. Many Americans had either friends or relatives in Austria-Hungary or vice versa, and the newspapers needed to write a narrative that framed Franz Josef's actions as anti-American as a way of making clear to those people living in the United States that, however

magnanimous he might seem to his subjects, he held a profound hatred of the United States. That hatred represented what could have been a considerable threat to the US war effort, or any subsequent designs of the United States. There is also the idea of political identification through criticism that was often used by the newspapers. Franz Josef was made to be the symbol of monarchy as a form of government. He was old, rigid, and, despite ruling for almost fifty years, his government was hardly stable. Americans could contrast that with their own government that, at the very least, had a new face every eight years and was in little danger of collapse. However, at the same time the journalists capitalized on the idea of a monarch as personification of the state to categorize all of Austria-Hungary as a wicked old man who would always be opposed to the young vibrant United States.

If the personal attacks against the Habsburgs failed to sway readers who might not care about some emperor halfway across the world, the *Times Picayune* also ran articles that described the inhuman living conditions of Hungarian peasants, who, according to the papers, were suffering under the tyrannical yoke of the Habsburgs. One example of this, from April 3, was entitled “Serfdom Survives in Austria.”^{lxv} This article describes the terrible conditions of peasants in Hungary. The article states that, “It is not uncommon to see four men tied to a plow instead of horses.”^{lxvi} It also describes the abysmal living conditions and the forced labor of the peasant men, their wives, and their children. The evil deeds of Franz Josef may not have touched every reader, but the idea of exploited labor was something with which many Americans could understand and empathize. Many of these descriptions of the Hungarians are drawing from the popular Social Darwinist thought of the time. Especially pertinent is the idea that, the progress of cultures and the evolution of a creature followed the same model. That way of thinking allowed for one culture to be far more advanced than another. It also includes the idea that like a scientist

might study the evolution of a creature to determine the course of its circumstances, one could also judge a civilization by its history.^{lxvii} In effect, this meant that however modern a country had become or was becoming, one could still use its “primitive” past against it. This technique was frequently used in the coverage of Austria-Hungary. Rather than being informed of progress in Austria-Hungary, readers were constantly reminded of its practices that were reminiscent of the dark ages.^{lxviii} The concept of Social-Darwinist evolution of cultures allows for that kind of categorization and assertion to take place among readers, namely distancing the progressive Anglo-Saxon United States from Austria-Hungary.

The depiction of Hungarians also provides another example of the hypocrisy of the American news coverage of Austrian domestic politics. The papers gladly printed this glaring image of the violation of human rights, but similar offences against human rights were happening just as often in the United States. Readers of this article might have felt sympathy for the Hungarian men forced to pull a plow without any animals, or the women forced to clean the houses of a Hungarian nobleman for nothing, but similar conditions existed for Americans all over the country. American voters of all strains were turning a blind eye to it every day. This hypocritical coverage highlights the politicizing of the coverage: it was not that the papers or the readers were concerned with the human rights violations themselves; it was more important that they were violations of human rights caused by the Habsburg government. There is also a comparison to be drawn between the “patriotic” Hungarians of the last article and the noblemen of this article. In reality, many of these men came from similar social backgrounds, even though they may not have been land owners.^{lxix} This shows the ability of the papers to draw whatever characters are convenient in the moment out of their subjects. It also shows that they paid little attention to facts and “unimportant” details that reveal their hypocrisy.

The newspapers were just as successful in domestic affairs as they had been in diplomatic relations. The theme of Austrian hostility that was always primary was driven into the American conscious through the lens of domestic politics, and the American system was bolstered, its problems momentarily forgotten by people who would rather criticize a hostile state than subject themselves to self-examination. Again, the newspapers were able to invent to an even greater extent most of the descriptions they utilized by cherry-picking certain instances and manipulating facts to reinforce these themes, while papering over important and very similar issues within the United States.

“Dance of the Starving”: The Depiction of Race

The papering over of important issues did not stop with labor disputes; the most egregious discrepancies between the coverage and historical fact came in articles that addressed the topic of race. American journalists took every opportunity to cover what they saw as a “race war” within the Habsburg Empire while ignoring similar, often more heinous racially motivated crimes in the United States.^{lxx} The American journalists’ narrative that the empire was doomed to tear itself apart specifically because it was inconceivable that a racially and ethnically diverse state could sustain itself displays the irony and the falsehoods of the coverage’s position perfectly. Despite its inaccuracy, it became one of the most prevalent and widely believed facts about Austria-Hungary; it would later become one of the largest contributing motivations behind Austria-Hungary’s breakup at the Paris Peace Conference.^{lxxi} Race also played a role of inflated importance in the opinions of and reporting on Austria-Hungary, which is no coincidence. The irony is that the United States itself was well on its way to becoming what one might describe as a “multi-national empire,” even if many Americans did not want to believe it. These Americans were not adjusting well to their new multiethnic status. Racial violence in the United States was

widespread throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century especially in the Jim Crow South.^{lxxii} Despite this, the newspapers preferred to focus on violence in Austria-Hungary, with coverage that was designed to make the United States look better in comparison.

The article “Where Tall Hats Don’t Go,” published in the *Washington Post* on January 1, 1898, is a perfect example.^{lxxiii} This article attempted to describe racially motivated violence in Bohemia. In 1898 Bohemia was inhabited by a Czech majority and a significant German minority.^{lxxiv} For most of the region’s history as a Habsburg crownland, Czechs and Germans lived together peaceably in the region, many hardly considering their “ethnic” differences. Most spoke both languages and conducted their business in whichever was convenient.^{lxxv} Only recently had certain groups, because of ulterior motives, begun to aggravate along racial lines.^{lxxvi} In his study on the town of Budweis, historian Jeremy King studied the local racial politics of Bohemia in depth. He argued that in many instances the politics that the American newspapers and other observers were keen to label as “race war” were actually instigated for political or personal gain; race was a convenient cover that allowed politicians to instantly mobilize a groundswell of support regardless of the actual political issues at hand. There were without a doubt some instances of violence or even what might be called terrorism; however, these were largely isolated instances that did not reflect the political feelings of the majority of Bohemians.

The specific instance described in this article involved men being assaulted through various means for wearing a type of tall “stovepipe” hat, which, according to the article, had become an “oriflamme of the Teutonic race.” The explanation of the violence was that all Czechs regarded the hat as “symbolic of everything that is German and antagonistic to their race.” The “and” is most critical. The article assumes here and for the reader that the German and Czech cultures

were inherently opposed to each other when in truth the cultures had existed together for hundreds of years. Here the American readers were naturally led to assume that these cultures, who in this article seem incapable to coexist, were being forced to occupy the same space, rather than the homogenous kingdoms that they could be living in were it not for the Habsburg government. This line of reasoning led to the Habsburg Government being cast as an opponent of self-determination. That supposed denial of the right to self-determination was also the reason these racial tensions were widespread.

Americans were well aware that racial tensions could have more complex causes and that violence could easily break out; many of them had seen it in their own country. However, the newspapers, in order to discourage a contemporary comparison, provided their own American example. The author of this article draws a harmless, even cartoonish image of a time when one might have run across unfortunate circumstances for wearing a tall silk hat in the United States. This image is of the “wild and woolly west” wherein a “flatfoot” has the silk hat shot from his head for the amusement of the local cowboys. Though the newspaper is quick to remind that the cowboys would “scarcely kill the wearer.” There is a lot of symbolic significance here. This kind of imagery was about as far as one could get from the streets of Prague or the Jim Crow south, and the author knew this. The playfulness and harmlessness of this American image is also in great contrast to the animalistic image that the author presents of the Czechs. The author notes that the “presence of the hat had the same effect on a Czech as the red flag on a bull.”^{lxxvii} In this instance, the Czechs are compared to rampaging bloodthirsty animals, while the Americans are lighthearted cowboys, only looking for a laugh. Naturally, only those kinds of animals would be able to engage in a “race war” on the scale of the one supposedly taking place in Bohemia. Naturally, the author offers no explanation as to how the Czechs got that way, stating only that

the reason for the brutality was another story. Obviously, the author had no evidence and needed none. These kinds of images, of race wars, and violence in the street was the accepted narrative of Austria-Hungary in the minds of the American people, and it would continue for some time.

The scope of these narratives is not to be overlooked. The omniscient power that the newspapers had to create the narrative of racial separation in Austria-Hungary was central to their ability to influence policy. The newspapers made the rules and told the stories when it came to the “warring races” of Austria-Hungary. Along with drawing the lines of battle between the races, the newspapers also made sure to reinforce the idea that the United States, its [white] people, and its civilization held the highest place. This often meant a favorable comparison within the coverage to whichever conflict was being covered. An article from February 20, 1898 illustrates these concepts perfectly. “Slavs, Czechs, and Ruthenians” was an article that came to the *New York Times* from *The Contemporary Review*. It aims to convince the reader that there is no political unity among the Slavs. Saying in its opening sentence that “the unity between the Slavs is hardly more than an ethnographical abstraction.”^{lxxviii} It is speaking against pan-Slavism. Pan-Slavism is the idea that all of the “Slavic” nations, practically this meant all those nations who spoke Slavic languages, should have a natural unity and political alliance. This article presents all of the Slavic peoples within Austria-Hungary and proceeds to offer explanation as to why there is no political unity among them.

This article follows the typical guidelines for defining a nation in the late nineteenth century. It argues that common language, history, religion, and culture indicate that a group of people belong to the same nation. It is also important to remember the bevy of pseudo-sciences that were extremely popular at this time, especially for the purpose of scientifically setting the borders of a nation. However, the fact that this article needed to be written proves that there were

some foreign observers, including those in America, who considered pan-Slavism to be a very real and politically viable force; it was perhaps a threat to the American designs in the region, or at least, pan-Slavism represented groups of people whom Americans did not want to gain political equality in any context.

The article begins by comparing the Poles and the Czechs; the article offers as evidence for this difference the literature of the two groups: the “very poor” Polish tradition and the “rich” tradition of the Czechs.^{lxxix} This is an arbitrary and baseless judgement, but one that was believable for Americans, who tended to characterize Poles as stupid and lazy.^{lxxx} The author could have chosen any aspect of culture and presented the same narrative to an American audience, because it not only serves the argument of the article by posing the question of how a cultured and civilized people like the Czechs as presented here could ever associate politically with the Poles, but because it also draws parallels to the American condition at the time. White Americans were increasingly having to work politically with other peoples, Poles included, who as immigrants and newly minted citizens demanded political inclusion. The author suggests here that both of these proposed unions were impossible, on the grounds of politics and social-Darwinist compatibility. The second piece of evidence offered for the incompatibility between the Czechs and Poles is that four years ago the Poles had allied with the Germans against the Czechs in some unspecified political conflict. This is purposely vague because Eastern European politics and even more so Austro-Hungarian politics were so volatile that one could muster evidence pointing to a recent relationship or a disagreement between any two nations, that is assuming that the all the members of one particular nation acted out of political unity, which was seldom the case.^{lxxxi}

With that evidence taken care of, the author then introduces the Ruthenians, who “loathe the Poles and have no great love for the Czechs.”^{lxxxii} Although this statement may be exaggerated for the purposes of the article, it is true that there were significant tensions between the Ruthenians and the Poles. However, these tensions stemmed from a legitimate desire for political representation; the majority of Ruthenians lived in Galicia, where the Poles enjoyed considerable political power. There was tension over political representation, but not to the degree or for the purposes implied by the author in this article. The author is trying to bend the social Darwinist narrative to his own uses. He wants to narrow the scope to include these smaller nations but wants to use the same logic to discredit the pan-Slavic idea. This is a classic example of Americans applying their forward-thinking ideas only in places where it is convenient to them. This would play itself out later in the aftermath of the Paris Peace Conference. The author is making use of selectively applied social Darwinism. He uses science to say on one hand to claim that Croats are the “Purest specimens of the [Slavic] race.”^{lxxxiii} thereby supporting his opinion that pan-Slavism was impossible, while at the same time maintaining his position at the top of the social-Darwinist hierarchy to make judgements on these groups of people whom the author considers inferior. That is yet another kind of hypocrisy present in these newspapers designed to influence American opinion. The author does not stop there; he retains his social-Darwinist ideas on a worldwide scope to attest indirectly that the United States, his readership, was inherently above these struggling nations. Whatever backwardness not assumed by readers was explicitly written into the article by the author. We see this in the description of the Slovenians, who were characterized as backward and stupid in the author’s account. Not only is this obviously inaccurate, but it is also a baseless generalization just like the other presentations and the pretend superiority that is implied in this article. The author’s self-appointed position can be seen in his

condemnation of the Slovenians. He says that, if they were to be mistaken for a different Slavic group, that “their very backward state of civilization would lead them to regard it as a compliment.”^{lxxxiv} This article demonstrates that ideas about race were so easily manipulated that one author could invoke the same logic on three different scales arguing against one while advocating for two others. This elasticity of supposedly factual newspaper coverage was not only used to manipulate the opinions of Americans about the conditions of Austria-Hungary, but it was were used to distract Americans from racial issues in their own country.

That kind of thinking also had significant implications for US immigration policy. From thousands of miles away American politicians and theorists felt perfectly comfortable in picking and choosing the states that deserved self-determination and how that self-determination should take place. The conclusions reached when talking about countries and people thousands of miles away did not mesh with the conclusions Americans made about the same people after they had arrived in the United States. This was a time of “armchair anthropology” in the United States. People offered their opinions on the different races as they related to Americans as easily as they might their opinion on a sports team: “Science remained largely at the mercy of traveler’s haphazard impressions.” Many of the opinions that were formed by these writers, published like this article in major newspapers, then became widely held ideas would go on to influence official US policy toward immigrants. In this article the author attempts to include the various “pan-Slav” races into a more or less existing hierarchy that almost all Americans would have been familiar with. He does this by describing exactly how Slavic a particular race was. The Slavs were counted among the European races, but they were the lowest rung of “Europeans.” Therefore, by explaining that the Ruthenians were more Slavic than the Czechs, for example, and by placing the Czechs closer to the Germans, he is able to say without a direct comparison that

the Czechs are a more “civilized” and or “evolved” race than the Ruthenians. This can also be seen in the description of literature in the comparison between the Czechs and the Poles. The possession of Literature was one of the qualities which separated “civilized” peoples from those belonging to various degrees of “Barbarism.”^{lxxxv} As for the effect this had on immigration, it is easy to see that, because of opinions and measures like this one, more Americans would have preferred Czechs, perhaps thinking about them as “lesser Germans” rather than the Slavic, inferior Ruthenians.

A different example of this kind of manipulation may be seen in a comparison of the coverage of Hungarians. The American press favored Hungarians, and their struggles were often covered in the newspapers, where they were presented as an earlier version of a Western republican state. Their struggle was framed as one of a patriotic people against a tyrannical monarch. They were not counted among the more “dangerous” left-leaning social revolutionaries also common in the late nineteenth century. Hungary was rife with political conflicts; the larger struggle of the Hungarian people against the Habsburgs was only one of the many political conflicts covered in the American newspapers. Another frequently covered topic was the struggle of the Hungarian peasant class against the landowners. This was by all accounts a labor dispute, but rather than drawing the direct parallel to the labor inequity in the United States, the newspapers instead attempted to explain the labor struggle as a symptom of the larger feudalistic system, and thus blame the tyrannical Habsburgs, who were after all the kings of Hungary. The newspapers wrote this as a struggle between the working people and the Habsburg government, rather than a tale of exploitation wherein Hungarian landowners took advantage of Hungarian peasants while the government looked the other way out of convenience, only occasionally stepping in on behalf of the landowners fearing the possibility of revolution.

It is clear that the situation in Hungary was similar to some of the labor disputes that arose in the United States. The clearest difference appears in their treatment by the American press. The American journalists assigned to cover Hungary wrote pieces that emphasized the struggle of the working class against an oppressive system and hinted at their eventual triumph, while those journalists writing about strikes in the United States debased the strikers as faceless foreigners who did not belong in the United States and served only to destroy the work of honest American “businessmen.” These depictions are really two heads of the same coin. The key difference is distance. When American journalists considered Hungarians in the wider political context of the Balkans, the Hungarians looked like a people whom the United States wanted to support, especially considering their contempt for the Habsburg government, but when the Americans were faced with many millions of immigrants seeking entry into the United States, the Hungarians became foreigners; what is more, they were even considered to be on the lowest rung of the nativist immigrant hierarchy.^{lxxxvi} The American reader was left to infer given these two widely held beliefs that the reason for their mass immigration and their perceived ineptitudes might have been their development under the rule of the Habsburgs. How else could a reader reconcile the glorious depictions of the Hungarian patriots with the criminal and degenerate types who arrived in the United States to become coal miners? This sentiment led even more toward the United States wanting to support the Hungarian revolution, on one hand to upend a monarchy, but on the other hand ebb the tide of dangerous immigrants and begin to “fix” the Hungarian people as a whole.

One example of how the Hungarians could be shown as dangerous, yet righteous, can be seen in the article “Dance of the Starving.” It appeared in the New-Orleans *Times Picayune* on February 10, 1898 with the subtitle “How the Hungarian Peasant is Getting Even with the

Government.” It is one of those articles that described the latest developments in the struggle of the Hungarian peasants. The article itself is actually a commentary on another article by the same name that reportedly appeared in the *Neues Wiener Journal*. It describes how the politically active of Hungary’s lower classes had been organizing widely attended balls, though they were neither happy, nor prosperous. The article explains that these balls were not held for the purpose of celebration, but for political planning. The article goes on to state that the Hungarian Reichsrat passed a bill that was the trigger for these gatherings: the bill regulated the relationship between the landowners and the peasant workers. In essence, regulation meant that the landowners had succeeded in legalizing the abuses that they had committed toward the peasants for decades. The article continues to state that, because the liberties of speech and public meeting were restricted, the peasants had taken to using these balls as staging grounds for political action, usually tax strikes or “acts of pillage” that often required the intervention of the military.^{lxxxvii} The author then explains further, stating that this movement and the recent bill were products of a large-scale strike that had happened that summer. The author then covered the details of the bill that the *Neues Wiener Journal* had called obnoxious. In short, the article says that the bill “delivers up the laborer to the arbitrary description of the employer.”

The text of this article, aside from the warped frame of the struggle, is not the most interesting thing about it. The comparison which the author invites and those that he attempts to dissuade the reader from give this article its significance. The author is keen to frame this conflict in terms of labor. In this sense he is trying to frame the conflict within the more modern and easily understandable context for American readers. The author wants the readers to understand the conflict as the fault of the Habsburg government. There is even a sense of Robin-Hood type pride that is being directed at the Hungarian dissidents for getting the better of the

monarchy and trying to improve their own station at the expense of the government. The last line of the article sums displays this idea with the proclamation “Such injustice as this, as the writer remarks, might convert a strike easily into a rebellion.”^{lxxxviii} At the same time, the author draws no comparison to the very similar labor disputes that had been going on in the United States. The author includes themes of a hostile government and abuse by wealthy civilians, even hinting that they were in league together through the passing of the labor regulation bill, but rather than invite the comparison and criticism that seems so logical, the author retreats back into the comfortable territory of American exceptionalism, and throughout his description of the bill there is a marked change in tone that conveys to the reader the foreignness and backwardness that made this system possible. This direction of thinking leads naturally to another aspect of American exceptionalism, namely the thought that something like this could never happen in the United States, because Americans had never invited the corrupt system of monarchy to the nation. The article would have the reader believe that this conflict could only grow under these old-world circumstances and would likely lead to a revolution that would erase the corrupt government.

The reality was that in the democratic capitalist United States laborers were having to take on similar or perhaps more extreme actions to protect their rights. The 1800s had seen some of the most drastic actions and growth of labor thanks in large part to the industrialization of the country. In the United States, society’s wealthiest put in place their own systems designed to keep workers in their control and minimize their rights, oftentimes working closely with the federal government as they did this.^{lxxxix} This system of exploitation of foreign workers formed the groundwork for many an American industry. Indeed, many of the attacks against immigrants were based in the fact that many saw them as “job seekers.” They were a danger to the white

worker and to the industry in which they worked. It was often noted that foreign workers caused disturbances, and many believed that they were to blame for inciting strikes and other such demonstrations. Given this kind of logic it is easy to see how the white readers of this story could characterize these strikers as the faceless foreigners. Indeed, many of the readers identified more with the honest American businessmen who were being put out by the strikers. Luckily for the good republican consciences of these readers, they did not need feudalism. These cases are similar, but the newspapers did not see it that way. When they looked at organized, unionized American strikers, many of them citizens, they saw a faceless foreign mob, but when they looked at what was according to this article that quotes no leaders, nor mentions any organization, an actual foreign faceless mob, they and the American people through their guidance saw heroic laborers fighting the good fight against a corrupt government and evil aristocrats. This hypocrisy and influence over the opinions of the American people underline the importance of the newspapers when it came to questions of race.

The newspapers were writing the questions *and* the answers to race when it came to Austria-Hungary. Not only did the newspapers ignore a possible comparison of the race conflicts in the two countries, but they also inflated the importance of racial conflict and its consequences in Austria-Hungary. An article from May 22, 1898 titled “The Outlook in Austria” appeared in the New-Orleans *Times-Picayune*. This article makes bold claims not only about the presence of race conflict in Austria, but also its long-term consequences, and it even provides solutions for those symptoms. The article appeared with the subtitle “The Conflict of Nationalities is not Confined to Bohemia.”^{xc} Despite that foreboding title, little of the article’s body deals directly with the “conflict of nationalities.” Instead the author wrote a larger diagnosis and prescription of the political problems of Austria-Hungary and used nationalistic conflict as its basis for speculation

and prescription. The “new” conflict that the author was likely mentioning was the growing power and increasing volatility of the German nationalist parties within the local assembly of Styria, a forested and largely rural state in the south of Austrian hereditary lands. The author gives no tangible context or evidence, nor does he explain any further to the nature of this political conflict. Regardless, he goes on to attribute the recent rise of agrarian politics to this same conflict. From there he launches into a substantial amount of political theory and suggestions for the future of the Austro-Hungarian state as a whole, all based on his one unexplained conflict. The economic focus of this article was a typical feature of articles published in New Orleans, visible in one of the authors prescriptions for Austria’s problems: “Austria needs to seek other markets.”^{xcii}

This omission is the key to understanding the kind of material that race provided for journalists writing to an American audience. This author wrote an entire article covering a breadth of topics that extended to the entire country, all based on one conflict in regional government that had something to do with nationalism. This article illustrates the speculative power that conflicts of nationality brought with them to the media at the time. Racial ideas were used as a justification of theories. This was an important theme in American thought about Austria-Hungary well into the 1920s.^{xciii} In fact, the structure employed in this article – a small conflict is given as justification for an examination of the empire at large – continued from journalism to official policy to mainstream history. There is definitely an implication here that given the “destruction” wrought upon Austria-Hungary because of these warring races, that the United States would suffer a similar fate should it become multinational. It is also the reason that race and ethnicity tend to occupy an inflated amount of the thought regarding Austria-Hungary.

There are many reasons why race and conflicts of nationality became a major topic in American newspaper coverage of Austria-Hungary and subsequent historiography. One reason was the popularity of the social-Darwinist view of race, ethnicity, and nationalism during this time. Many people were just beginning to comprehend nationality through these lenses, and the newspapers were a big part of that transition and the formation of that idea. Secondly, because of the newness of the idea there were a great many people who did not understand these concepts. The basic ground rules were still in a state of flux. This added freedom made it especially easy for the newspapers to bend the facts and the outcomes to their own will. Lastly, there was the fact that, given the liberal interpretations of the word that the newspapers had in 1898, there was indeed a great deal of nationalistically motivated “conflict” to be found. Regardless of the actual severity or impact of the individual conflicts, the newspapers often chose to report them for the reasons above. This over-reporting of issues that in light of recent scholarship were seldom newsworthy combined with the liberties taken using these conflicts to give race its unequal significance in American thought about Austria-Hungary.

“Monarchs Envy our Millionaires”: The Significance of Fluff Journalism

The majority of the coverage of Austria-Hungary was written with a serious tone and attempted to present facts and news even if those facts and news were not accurate. Not all the coverage of Austria-Hungary was so dry. Some articles contain many of the same themes present in their more serious counterparts, but they were written to entertain. These were the examples of fluff journalism that chose Austria-Hungary as its subject. Though they chose to present the similar themes in a lighter tone, that does not detract from their importance or impact in the minds of the American readers. In fact, because of their lighter tone, American readers may have

been less likely to pick up on the overarching image of Austria-Hungary that was slowly being constructed by the newspapers.

Articles like “Monarchs Envy our Millionaires,” which appeared in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* on July 31, 1898, is a disarmingly entertaining example. The central themes are American exceptionalism and the othering of Austria-Hungary. The article is at first glance a description of the actual fiscal earnings of the European monarchs compared to those of an American millionaire, stating that the American had everything a European monarch could hope for save “empty titles.”^{xciii} In this nationalistic statement of the success of capitalist democracy, there is a sense of nationalistic pride. This is a kind of pride that goes beyond the traditional scope of American exceptionalism. Perhaps because of this pride the article is far less disparaging toward the Habsburgs than its more serious counterparts. The article counts the Habsburgs as being the second richest royal family, just behind the Romanovs of Imperial Russia; their income is stated in the article to be not less than \$7.5 million annually.^{xciv} The effect that comparing the great royal families of Europe to the “American Millionaire” has many interesting implications. It places the millionaires on even keel with the ruling figures of Europe, surpassing the US government as the true rulers of the country. While this was an attempt to portray American superiority in fiscal matters, it sends a different message when one takes into consideration the absence of the US government from the conversation. This article also represents an attempt to claim the millionaire as an American concept, an American creation, or at very least to insinuate that for some reason American millionaires were a special unique breed who were capable of much more than their counterparts from elsewhere in the world. This article is much more an example of the American self-image than a representation of the relationship between the United States and Austria-Hungary, but understanding the American self-image is

crucial to understanding the image presented of Austria-Hungary in the fluff articles because it differs significantly from its portrayal in the more serious articles.

That image can be seen in “Paradise for the Waiter,” an article that appeared on December 18, 1898 in the *Boston Globe*. The image of Austria-Hungary that the newspapers worked so hard to create in the serious articles was the image of a backward and crippled, yet conniving and dangerous old man of a country who, despite not being long for this world, was determined to try and undermine the United States. In contrast, the image that the fluff journalists chose to create was much more suited to their subject matter. They chose a carnivalesque, colorful, and fairytale-like image. Theirs was a country that had become so backward that it was now a novelty; this country could never present a serious threat to the modern giant that was the United States, so why not poke some fun at some of their quaint traditions and strange customs? This image is perfectly represented in this article. The article describes Austria as the waiter’s paradise. In essence it means that the waiters, which included bellhops, porters, and manservants, who in the United States were seen as lower class, were entitled to many more legal rights in Austria because of the elevated standing of the position. The reason for the elevated position of waiters is not given in the article, nor is it told to have any political importance. Austrian culture elevates the waiter from what Americans would consider a servile job to a respectable position, even a profession. The case is very much the same with tipping. It is nothing more than a delightful and strange difference that affects no one except the miserly and the poor tippers. This article perfectly illustrates the different nature of the relationship that was written in the lighter journalism. Austria-Hungary posed no danger and offered no affront in allowing its waiters this level of power; it was simply entertaining. The United States needed think nothing more than that about this European fairytale holdover.

This image of the fairytale Austria-Hungary extended from the humble waiter all the way up to the royal family and the government itself, as evidenced by “The Comic Opera of Royalty,” an article that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* on October 23, 1898. This is an article in two parts. The first part may be called the comic and the second the opera. The comic part of the article follows the theme set up by the other fluff articles. It takes a firm stance within American exceptionalism and begins by disparaging the kings of Europe. The author claims that he once loaned money to the king of France, who he described as a “greasy, drunken, little wretch.”^{xcv} The author wished to convey an idea of fallen monarchy. He implies to his readers that the great kings of Europe were no more, and that standing in their places were these impish, or otherwise ill-mannered kings. The author spoke broadly about the condition of European monarchy, but he mentioned specifically Milan I of Serbia and Wilhelm II, the German emperor, though he notes wryly that “the Emperor never borrowed F.5.”^{xcvi} This section of the article serves as an introduction and explains the character the author wanted in his readers before the second section. The author’s main point is that the monarchs and their actions had become little more than spectacle. They were, as he said, like actors in an opera. He meant that, although they were grand, stuffed into sparkling costumes, and capable of taking actions that seemed significant, they were all already fixed into their positions and spiraling into a tragic end. No matter what the monarchs attempted to do, they were nothing more than play actors in the greater world. Their final opera could be comic like the French king or tragic as in the second section of the article.

The second section is much more specific; it describes the oft-repeated tragic tale of Habsburg Crown Prince Rudolf and his 1889 suicide. He and his mistress were found dead in his lodge in the Austrian forest. It was a sudden and oft-sensationalized instance. Neither the story nor its representation in this article are entirely accurate. Regardless of its accuracy, the author

uses it to explain how the monarchs of Europe and their courts behaved as great stage operas. Though this story carries great weight and significance, that significance is reduced to a plot in which its ending is inevitable from the very beginning. He is setting the events of decline into a mold of inevitability through his use of the opera metaphor. In fact, the metaphor of the opera is quite fitting in terms of the Americans interest in Europe. Whether or not the ending is cast as tragic, with the murder suicide of the blue-blooded lovers as in this half of the article, or it is cast as laughable with the short, fat king begging in the streets is irrelevant. The importance comes from the fact that this author is prescribing an ending to a system that was really in no danger at the time. That is where the metaphor gets its true meaning. The political events in Europe that lead to the unraveling of most of the monarchies were in no way predictable in 1898, but this author was writing as though he had the script in his hand, and many Americans held similar opinions after reading this. It is perhaps a more elegant version of the “sick-man” idea that is often quoted in connection with the monarchies’ transition into the twentieth century. Its proliferation and its beginning in the newspapers as early as 1898 is highly significant because it led Americans to think not only of their own superiority, but of the impotence and the eventual downfall of the monarchies of Europe, though neither could be readily observed at the time of this article’s publication. The next logical step in these arguments would be to compare directly the United States and some example of this romanticized, outdated world.

The article “Fitch and Feudalism: The American Novelist goes boar hunting in Silesia” does just that. This article, which appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* around two weeks later on the November 6, 1898, tells the story of Clyde Fitch, a popular American playwright, as he visited the estate of a Silesian prince for an afternoon of boar hunting. This piece is the culmination of the themes that the other articles employ. This is the clearest example of a comparison among the

fluff articles. It is perhaps the most direct example of comparison among any of the articles. The article wants to depict the contrast between an average American and what it wants its readers to accept as an average, or at least representative, Austrian. The humorous article describe the trials that poor Fitch faced during his journey, drawing the instances of culture shock in a particularly satirical way. One example from the article is the account of the retinue that was sent to meet the American author at the train station. The article describes them as “eight silent befeathered dignitaries.”^{xcvii} The confusion and embarrassment were drawn to the front by the author who notes that the hapless author had no idea whether to “salaam the earth or tip the leader.”^{xcviii} This is the kind of the comparison that forms the point of the article. The relationship between our checker-suited American and our feudal lord, which is evocative of the relationship between the two countries they represent, is a perfect representation of how the newspapers wanted to represent the United States and Austria-Hungary.

When the individuals are taken as representing the countries, some phrases that the author included become interesting. There is the seemingly intentional unpreparedness of the American and, despite Clyde Fitch’s intelligence and relative success, the insinuation that he is actually rather “dim,” as the article notes. This is included for the purposes of relatability. The image of a dopey, yet intrinsically American figure among the fairytale feudalism personified by the prince who is scarcely described in the article, presumably because American readers needed only hear “Austrian prince” to understand exactly who they were dealing with. The only characterization the author felt was necessary was the addition during the hunt that the boar showed itself and gave itself up to be shot to death, “rather than being talked to death in Moravian Viennese.”^{xcix}

This article was meant to establish the relationship between Austria and the United States in silly and comprehensible terms to the reader who may not have wanted to interpret the

intricacies of high politics or complicated race disputes. Here that relationship was presented in easily understood and easily read terms. Naturally in the use of fluff writing the newspapers were able to extend the audience for their message, but they also left what little fact they had used in the more serious coverage. These articles are little more than stories or gossip. Those detractions do not diminish the importance of the narrative they include. In fact because of their ease-of-consumption and the fact that they no longer had to rely on fact, these articles are the most egregious example of the conscious shaping of American readers' opinions.

Conclusion

The coverage of Austria-Hungary had important short- and long-term effects on American thought and policy. In the short term, the coverage strained relations, especially over the Spanish-American War and immigration, which included a proliferation of new exclusions that fell heavily on Austria-Hungary. The discourse about the relationship that reached the average American reader and went on to become part of the popular perception was an important part of the historical impact of the relationship, and an important part of the historical narrative.

The importance of the discourse created by the newspaper coverage of Austria Hungary in 1898 can be seen when Americans had to make policy decisions that directly affected Austria-Hungary during World War I and the Paris Peace Conference. They fell back on these narratives without seeing a need to critically challenge them.^c These mostly fabricated stories and narratives went from articles in American newspapers to official US policy with global political ramifications in twenty-two years. Even in the wake of the decisions made at the end of the World War I, these narratives continued to dominate Anglo-American historiography on the empire from histories and memoirs of the peace through mid-century histories like those written by A. J. P. Taylor and others. These histories feature nationalism as a major theme and posit a narrative of inevitable collapse

for Austria-Hungary. The line between the newspaper coverage and these histories is significantly blurred, with the histories featuring many of the same narratives and themes. The early historians were contributors to newspaper coverage during the First World War, and many participated directly in the peace planning process.^{ci} The narratives remained for so long because they continued to be useful in reinforcing Anglo-American politics in the Second World War and the early Cold War.

The coverage of Austria Hungary in 1898 was the first step. It began many of the dangerous trends that would continue to occupy the public opinion of Austria-Hungary. The coverage formed a bridge from earlier nineteenth century thinking to the American opinion during the world wars. The stories present in these articles still exist in the American psyche, not only with relation to Austria, but Europe in general, and it is obvious that the press still enjoys a similar power over the American consciousness. It was so effective in reaching not only average Americans, but also policy makers that it would not be until almost one hundred years later that it was questioned by historians.

It was not until archival openings and the rise of social history in the 1960s and 1970s that these narratives were challenged, and more work is necessary, including further investigation of their impact on US policies. These histories make extensive use of archives and other primary source documents, and they often challenge the accusations of the older historians. There was also a shift in interest among historians towards social history, which often requires more empirically based sources. They regularly argue that nationalism played a less central role in the dissolution and/or that the empire was actually stronger and more cohesive than previously thought, and that nationalism played a lesser role in its dissolution.^{cii}

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- ⁱ There is a great deal of scholarship dealing with the actual strength of Austria-Hungary. I have selected a few of the best examples for further reading.
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- ⁱⁱ See previous note.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Michael Stamm, *Dead Tree Media: Manufacturing the Newspaper in Twentieth Century North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 2018).
- ^{iv} *Ibid.*, 8.
- ^v *Ibid.*, 32.
- ^{vi} Chalmers M. Roberts, *The Washington Post: The First 100 Years* (Houghton Mifflin: Boston, 1977), 42-51.
- ^{vii} Meyer Berger, *The New York Times: 1851-1951* (Simon and Schuster: New York, 1951), 108.

^{viii} Preliminary searching of these newspapers yielded 281 articles about “Austria” or “Hungary,” as well as a modest number of one- or two-sentence snippets that mention Austria-Hungary. I have read and categorized these articles to determine the themes of the coverage. My thesis will feature close reading of representative articles to showcase those themes and assess the accuracy of the coverage in light of recent scholarship. In order to form the base of research that serves as a foundation of this paper those 281 articles were surveyed in order to identify trends and select articles that represented those trends for analysis.

^{ix} Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, (New York: Hill and Wang 2000).

^x “Emperor Joseph’s Crusade,” *Washington Post*, March 16, 1898.

^{xi} *Ibid.*

^{xii} *Ibid.*

^{xiii} Stephen Tufnell, “Uncle Sam is to be Sacrificed”: Anglophobia in Late Nineteenth Century Politics and Culture,” *American Nineteenth Century History* 12, no. 1 (March 2011): 77-99.

^{xiv} Paul A. Kramer, “Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule Between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910,” *Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (March 2002): 1315-1353.

^{xv} Emperor Joseph’s Crusade, *Washington Post*, March 16, 1898.

^{xvi} Other articles from 1898 that demonstrate this theme include “Europe’s Concert Broken,” *New York Times*, May 16, 1898; “War May End Soon,” *Washington Post*, April 27, 1898; “Anti-American Feeling: Strong Feelings Against Us in France, Italy, Austria, and Germany,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, June 12, 1898.

^{xvii} One notable exception was those articles whose goal was to show that the two countries could never really work together to present a threat, or those highlighting tensions between the two. See “Meeting of the Emperors,” *Washington Post*, May 25, 1898; and “Austria and Germany,” *Washington Post*, December 25, 1898.

^{xviii} Stella Ghervas, “A Peace for the Strong,” *History Today* 64, no. 9 (September 2014): 30-32.

^{xix} For examples of the American attitudes towards Europe and subjects that were identified as European see Nicole M. Phelps, “Mr. Roosevelt’s Costume: Great Power Status, US-European Relations, and the Problem of Dress at the Funeral of King Edward VII,” *SHAFR* 28 (June 2008).

^{xx} The grandiose plans mentioned in this article have to do with a naval demonstration that was planned by Austria-Hungary with the intention of deterring the Americans from war with Spain. The demonstration was quickly axed by the British, who refused to participate as mentioned in the article.

^{xxi} “Emperor Joseph’s Crusade,” *Washington Post*, March 18, 1898.

^{xxii} “Attitude of Austria,” *Washington Post*, May 13, 1898.

^{xxiii} Examples of coverage of Austrian aid for the Spanish include: “Aid for the Enemy,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, June 21, 1898; “Advised to Declare War,” *Washington Post*, May 3, 1898; “Meeting of the Emperors,” *Washington Post*, May 25, 1898.

^{xxiv} For examples of American anti-Catholicism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries see Paula M. Kane, *Separatism and Subculture: Boston Catholicism, 1900-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

^{xxv} For a more general picture of Austrian diplomacy within the great power system; see F.R. Bridge, *The Habsburg Monarchy Among the Great Powers, 1815-1918* (New York: Berg, 1990).

^{xxvi} For the reporting of Austrian aid to Spain see “Secret Sympathy for Spain,” *Boston Globe*, April 29, 1898, “Austria Suspected: Alleged that her Minister Tried to Engage the Services of a Spy for Spain,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, May 5, 1898.

^{xxvii} “Austria in Bad Humor,” *Washington Post*, September 9, 1898.

^{xxviii} *Ibid.*

^{xxix} For more detail on the participation of the United States in the great power system; see Chapter 1 of Nicole M. Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations from 1815-Paris Peace Conference: Sovereignty Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

^{xxx} “Austria in Bad Humor,” *Washington Post*, September 9, 1898.

^{xxxi} Nicole M. Phelps, “Mr. Roosevelt’s Costume”: Great Power Status, US-European Relations, and the Problem of Dress at the Funeral of King Edward VII, *SHAFR* 28, (June 2008).

^{xxxii} Nicole M. Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations from 1815-Paris Peace Conference: Sovereignty Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 40.

^{xxxiii} “Austria in Bad Humor,” *Washington Post*, September 9, 1898.

^{xxxiv} *Ibid.*

^{xxxv} For a detailed explanation of the failure of Habsburg power abroad and its place in American memory, see Stephen J. Valone, "Weakness Offers Temptation": William H. Seward and the Reassertion of the Monroe Doctrine," *Diplomatic History* 19, no. 4 (September 1995): 584.

^{xxxvi} "Civil Strife in Austria," *The New York Times*, July 4, 1898.

^{xxxvii} "Francis Josef: Austria's Great Despot and Spain's Greatest Friend: A Rickety Throne and a Scheming Old Man Who is Making Every Effort to Secure European Interference in the Present War," *Times-Picayune*, May 22, 1898.

^{xxxviii} Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2016)

^{xxxix} For a more accurate description of the structure of the Austrian Government and its ability to function, see Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016) See also John W. Boyer, "Power, Partisanship, and the Grid of Democratic Politics: 1907 as the Pivot Point of Modern Austrian History." *Austrian History Yearbook* 44 (April 2013): 148–74 and Paul W. Schroeder, "The Luck of the House of Habsburg: Military Defeat and Political Survival." *Austrian History Yearbook* 32 (2001): 215–24.

^{xl} "Foreign" in this context was generally taken to mean any American who was not white.

^{xli} Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, (New York: Hill and Wang 2000): 4.

^{xlii} Jacobson offers in great detail the various aspects of anti-immigration anti-immigrant, and anti-foreign ideas and systems that were in place both formally and informally.

^{xliii} Lothar Höbelt, "Parliamentary Politics in a Multinational Setting: Late Imperial Austria," (Working Paper 92-6, Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota, March 1992).

^{xliiv} *Ibid.*, 11 Figure 1.

^{xlv} John W. Boyer, *Political radicalism in late imperial Vienna: Origins of the Christian Social movement, 1848-1897*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) See 256 for a description of the political effects and 273 for the franchise itself.

^{xlvi} "Civil Strife in Austria," *The New York Times*, July 4, 1898.

^{xlvii} The problems with translation affecting the wider relationship between the two countries could fill its own book, and as such I have stayed away from touching on the semantics of translation. However, in this section, it is worth noting that the "German party" mentioned in the American newspaper probably referred to the German Freedom Party however, there were also fringe parties at the time that would not until later be represented in the Reichsrat; one of these, the Pan-Germanists, exhibited radical politics. (See note 31)

^{xlviii} Lothar Höbelt, "Parliamentary Politics in a Multinational Setting: Late Imperial Austria," (Working Paper 92-6, Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota, March 1992).

^{xlix} John W. Boyer, *Political radicalism in late imperial Vienna: Origins of the Christian Social movement, 1848-1897*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

^l For relevant explanation of just one group that comprised a heterogenous America see Annemarie, Steidl, Wladimir Fischer-Nebmaier, and James W. Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations: Austro-Hungarian Migrants in the US, 1870-1940* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2017).

^{li} For an example of how well the US government functioned in terms of "racial" issues, see Paul R. Spikard, *Almost All Aliens: Immigration, Race, and Colonialism in American History and Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

^{lii} For an example of the persistence of this narrative as well as its explanation see A.J.P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarch, 1809-1918; A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary* New ed. (London: H. Hamilton, 1966).

^{liii} For the health of the Habsburg Imperial Government see Gary B. Cohen, "Neither Abolitionism nor Anarchy: New Narratives on Society and Government in Late Imperial Austria," *Austrian History Yearbook* 29, part 1 (1998): 37-61.

^{liv} Murolo, Priscilla. "Wars of Civilization: The US Army Contemplates Wounded Knee, the Pullman Strike, and the Philippine Insurrection." *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 80 (2011): 77-102. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41307194>.

^{lv} Murolo is quoting in this instance, Frederic Remington, "Chicago Under the Mob," *Harper's Weekly*, July 21, 1894, 680-81; "Chicago Under the Law," *Harper's Weekly*, July 28, 1894, 703-5 (quotations from 703); "The Withdrawal of U.S. Troops," *Harper's Weekly*, August 11, 1894, 748. She also recommends Peter Hassrick, "Frederic Remington the Painter: A Historiographical Sketch," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 46 (Summer 1996): 18-35.

^{lvi} "Civil Strife in Austria," *New York Times*, July 4, 1898.

^{lvii} Ibid.

^{lviii} For More on political tensions in Austria Hungary see Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague 1861-1914*, New ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006) and for more on political violence see Jeremy King, *Budweisers Into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

^{lix} For a detailed explanation of the failure of Habsburg power abroad and its place in American memory see Stephen J. Valone, "Weakness Offers Temptation": William H. Seward and the reassertion of the Monroe Doctrine," *Diplomatic History* 19, no. 4 (September 1, 1995): 584.

^{lx} "Francis Joseph: Austria's Greatest Despot and Spain's Greatest Friend," *Times-Picayune*, May 22, 1898.

^{lxi} For more on the similarities of the Hungarian revolutionaries and the American patriots see Nicole M. Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations from 1815-Paris Peace Conference: Sovereignty Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015). For more on Lajos Kossuth see István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution: Lajos Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-1849* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1978).

^{lxii} "Francis Joseph: Austria's Greatest Despot and Spain's Greatest Friend: Francis Josef: Austria's Great Despot and Spain's Greatest Friend: A Rickety Throne and a Scheming Old Man Who is Making Every Effort to Secure European Interference in the Present War," *Times-Picayune*, May 22, 1898.

^{lxiii} Ibid.

^{lxiv} Ibid.

^{lxv} "Serfdom Survives in Austria," *Times Picayune*, May 22, 1898.

^{lxvi} Ibid.

^{lxvii} For explanation of this theme see Paul A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule Between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910," *Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (March 2002): 1315-1353.

^{lxviii} For continuation of the theme of Austrian backwardness see "A Soldier and a Student in Vienna," *Washington Post*, February 27, 1898; "Abuses in Prisons: The World's Prison Reformers to Meet in Paris," *Times-Picayune*, March 6, 1898; "Fitch and Feudalism: The American Novelist goes Boar Hunting in Silesia," *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1898.

^{lxix} For Kossuth as a particularly well known and specific example see István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution: Lajos Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-1849*, (New York: Colombia University Press, 1978).

^{lxx} "Where Tall Hats Don't Go," *Washington Post*, January 1, 1898.

^{lxxi} Nicole M. Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations from 1815-Paris Peace Conference: Sovereignty Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

^{lxxii} Murolo, Priscilla, "Wars of Civilization: The US Army Contemplates Wounded Knee, the Pullman Strike, and the Philippine Insurrection." *International Labor and Working-Class History*, no. 80 (2011): 77-102.

^{lxxiii} "Where Tall Hats Don't Go," *Washington Post*, January 1, 1898.

^{lxxiv} Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

^{lxxv} Ibid.

^{lxxvi} Ibid.

^{lxxvii} "Where Tall Hats Don't Go," *Washington Post*, January 1, 1898.

^{lxxviii} "Slavs Czechs and Ruthenians," *New York Times*, February 20, 1898.

^{lxxix} "Slavs Czechs and Ruthenians," *New York Times*, February 20, 1898.

^{lxxx} For an example of this in an article, see "Slavs Czechs and Ruthenians." For a secondary source see Alexander Anta, "Barriers into Bridges: Notes on the Problem of Polish Culture in America." *The Polish Review* 2, no. 2/3 (1957): 79-97. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25776119>.

^{lxxxi} Lothar Höbelt, "Parliamentary Politics in a Multinational Setting: Late Imperial Austria," (Working Paper 92-6, Center for Austrian Studies, University of Minnesota, March 1992).

^{lxxxii} "Slavs Czechs and Ruthenians," *New York Times*, February 20, 1898.

^{lxxxiii} "Slavs Czechs and Ruthenians," *New York Times*, February 20, 1898.

^{lxxxiv} Ibid.

^{lxxxv} Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, (New York: Hill and Wang 2000).

^{lxxxvi} Ibid.

^{lxxxvii} "Dance of the Starving," *Times-Picayune*, February 10, 1898.

^{lxxxviii} "Dance of the Starving," *Times Picayune*, February 10, 1898.

^{lxxxix} Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, (New York: Hill and Wang 2000): 65.

^{xc} "The Outlook in Austria," *Times-Picayune*, May 22, 1898.

^{xc} *Ibid.*

^{xcii} For an explanation of this see:

Gary B. Cohen, "Neither Absolutism nor Anarchy: New Narratives on Society and Government in Late Imperial Austria." *Austrian History Yearbook* 29, part 1 (1998).

^{xciii} Monarchs Envy our Millionaires, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, July 31, 1898.

^{xciv} *Ibid.*

^{xcv} "Comic Opera of Royalty," *Los Angeles Times*, October 23, 1898.

^{xcvi} *Ibid.*

^{xcvii} "Fitch and Feudalism," *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1898.

^{xcviii} "Fitch and Feudalism," *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1898.

^{xcix} *Ibid.*

^c Nicole M. Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations from 1815-Paris Peace Conference: Sovereignty Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 40.

^{ci} *Ibid.*

^{cii} See note 1.